

The

ALTOSAX

of

BENNETT LESTER CARTER
“BENNY”

Solographers: Jan Evensmo, Per Borthen, Ib Skovsted Thomsen
Last updated: May 24, 2021

Note: This is a complete solography with comments to each session. However, there are several occasions open for discussion, please join!

Born: NYC. Aug. 8, 1907
Died: L.A. July 12, 2003

Introduction:

Benny Carter was a fantastic altosax player, maybe the best one from the swing era and a favourite of mine and Oslo Jazz Circle from the early days. Together with my friends trumpeter Per Borthen and Danish Ib Skovsted Thomsen we published the Benny Carter Solography as Vol. 8 (1982) in my Jazz Solography Series. It had altosax integrated with his other instruments, but I have chosen to separate the instruments in this new version almost thirty years later. New information on alternates and broadcasts has been added.

Early history:

His cousin, Theodore 'Cuban' Bennett (1902-65), was a distinguished trumpet player, Darnell Howard was also Benny's cousin. Benny's father was a self-taught guitarist, his mother played organ and piano. Began on piano at an early age, did odd jobs as a milkman's assistant, laundry deliverer, and upholsterer in order to save up for an instrument. Inspired by Bubber Miley, a local San Juan resident, he bought a secondhand trumpet, after several hours abortive blowing he returned to the shop and swapped it for a 'C melody' sax. 'Subbed' for Ben Whitted at John O'Connors' Club, then in August 1924 joined June Clark's band and switched to alto sax. Soon afterwards he joined Billy Paige's Broadway Syncopators at the Capitol, New York, went to Pittsburgh with them in October 1924. They soon disbanded and Benny (with 'Cuban' Bennett) worked with Lois Deppe's Serenaders, then on baritone with Earl Hines at the Grape Arbor in Pittsburgh (late 1924). In May 1925 he went to Wilberforce College, Ohio, intending to study theology, but joined Horace Henderson's Collegians instead. Left Horace Henderson in 1926, during that summer worked with Billy Fowler's band in Baltimore and New York. Briefly with James P. Johnson, also spent two weeks in Duke Ellington's band (deputising for Harvey Boone). Short spell with Fletcher Henderson, then spent over a year with Charlie Johnson. Rejoined Horace Henderson in Detroit, briefly with Fletcher Henderson (autumn 1928), then formed own band for Arcadia Balkoom, New York. Led own band on tour, then again with Fletcher Henderson from January 1930. Joined Chick Webb c. March 1931, left during the summer of 1931 to become musical director of McKinney's Cotton Pickers. From this period onwards regularly doubled on trumpet. Worked with McKinney's for almost a year, during this period also played dates with Don

Redman and Fletcher Henderson. Led own band again from c. September 1932 (briefly fronted by Fletcher Henderson in Pennsylvania, December 1932). Mainly active leading own band 1933-34, some touring, also residencies at Lafayette Theatre, Savoy Ballroom, New York, etc. Rejoined Fletcher Henderson briefly in September 1934. BC had been arranging regularly since the time he joined Charlie Johnson's band, he arranged for Duke Ellington, Teddy Hill, McKinney's, Mills Blue Rhythm Band, Fletcher Henderson, etc., in 1934 he began arranging for Benny Goodman. Worked on trumpet with Willie Bryant in spring 1935, subsequently worked occasionally for Charlie Barnet before settling in Europe. After emigration delays, BC joined Willie Lewis's band in Paris in the summer of 1935. On the 18th March 1936 he took up appointment as staff arranger for Henry Hall and his Orchestra in London, after touring Scandinavia (autumn 1936) he returned to London. Moved on to the Continent, played with Freddy Johnson in Amsterdam from March 1937, also appeared in France before leading International Band at Scheveningen, Holland, during summer 1937. Led band at Boeuf sur le Toit in Paris before returning to U.S.A. in May 1938. After a long vacation, he organised own big band which made its official debut at the Savoy Ballroom, New York. Led own big band 1940 to summer 1941, then cut down to a sextet in autumn 1941. Moved to West Coast early in 1943, led own band at Billy Berg's Club, Los Angeles, followed by residencies at The Hollywood, Casa Manana, etc. Started 1944 with a residency at the Apollo in New York, continued to lead own band through 1944. In 1945 made the permanent move to Los Angeles, residencies at The Trocadero, Hollywood, Plantation Club, etc. Reorganised new seven-piece band in summer of 1947, residency at Billy Berg's Club from July. (ref. John Chilton).

BENNY CARTER ALTOSAX SOLOGRAPHY

CHARLIE JOHNSON'S ORIGINAL PARADISE TEN NYC. Feb. 27, 1927

Personnel may, but unlikely, contain Benny Carter (cl, as).

Three titles were recorded for Victor, but there are no altosax soli.

NYC. Jan. 24, 1928

Suggested personnel: Jabbo Smith, Sidney de Paris (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), Edgar Sampson (cl, as, vln), Benny Carter (cl, as), Benny Waters (cl, ts), Charlie Johnson (p, ldr), Bobby Johnson (bjo), Cyrus St. Clair (tu), George Stafford (dm). Three titles were recorded for Victor, no altosax on 41641-1&2 "Hot-Tempered Blues" but:

41639-1	You Ain't The One	Probably break 4 bars. (FM)
41639-2	You Ain't The One	As above. (FM)
41640-1	Charleston Is The Best Dance After All	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
41640-2	Charleston Is The Best Dance After All	As above. (FM)

Benny Carter is present here, as evident from the altosax solo on "Charleston ...". Already we hear the light, romantic touch so typical of BC. The soli are too brief to make any real impact, but it is interesting to note that they are quite different from take to take. The break on "You ..." seems likely to be played by BC.

HENDERSON'S HAPPY SIX ORCHESTRA NYC. Nov. 1928

Rex Stewart (cnt), Charlie Green (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Benny Carter (as), Coleman Hawkins (bsx), Fletcher Henderson ? (p), Charlie Dixon or Clarence Holiday (bjo).

One title was recorded for Cameo:

3491-A Old Black Joe's Blues Solo 2 bars. (M)

Brief altosax break, not particularly exciting. It sounds similar to BC but cannot be considered 100% certain.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Dec. 12, 1928

Rex Stewart (cnt), Bobby Stark (tp), Charlie Green ?(tb), Buster Bailey (cl, as), Benny Carter (as, vo, arr), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Fletcher Henderson (p, ldr), Clarence Holiday (bjo), June Cole (tu), Kaiser Marshall (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia, one has altosax:

147421-3 Come On, Baby! Soli 8 and 6 bars. (FM)

Now BC's altosaxophone is starting to shimmer! These brief soli are unmistakably personal and very promising. Somewhat hectic with too many notes, perhaps, but still quite pleasant. We have also the pleasure of hearing BC's voice for the first time on this title. He is no great singer and strives with the intonation, but nevertheless a further proof of his versatility.

THE LITTLE CHOCOLATE DANDIES NYC. Sept. 18, 1929

Leonard Davis (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Don Redman, Benny Carter (cl, as), unknown (not Coleman Hawkins) (ts), Fats Waller (p), probably Dave Wilborn (bjo), probably Billy Taylor (tu), Gene Stafford (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Okeh:

402965-C That's How I Feel Today Solo 16+6 bars, (reeds) on bridge. (FM)

402966-D Six Or Seven Times Solo 16 bars. Duet with (vo-DR)
16 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars. (SM)

Postscript of May 24, 2021: I have decided to trust Karl-Bernhard Rau and his thorough research on the personnel of these recordings. Comments unchanged: OK 8728, the first true Benny Carter record! Just before the end of the decade, his style is maturing rapidly. On both items he plays very fine altosax. It is not as fluent yet as it was to become some years later, the staccato playing of the twenties is still in evidence, however the whole musical thinking seems free and not hampered by traditions, and the technique is very impressive. Particularly "... Times" is a memorable piece with a lot of good music, soloing and a magnificent 'obbligato' to Don Redman's scat song. Also "... Today" has fine altosax.

McKINNEY's COTTON PICKERS NYC. Nov. 5-7, 1929

Joe Smith, Leonard Davis, Sidney de Paris (tp), Claude Jones (tb), Don Redman (as, vo, arr), Benny Carter (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins, Ted McCord (cl, ts), Leroy Tibbs (p-57064,65), Fats Waller (p-57066-68,139-40), Dave Wilborn ? (bjo), Billy Taylor (tu), Kaiser Marshall (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Victor, four have altosax, probably not BC on 57139-3 "Peggy" and 57140-2&3 "Wherever There's A Will, Baby" but:

57065-1 Gee, Ain't I Good To You Solo 16 bars. (SM)

57066-2 I'd Love It Solo 32 bars. (FM)

BC makes a notable entrance into the MKCP with a beautiful altosax solo on "Gee ..." in a pleasant slow medium tempo. The style is still somewhat staccato and primitive, but, nevertheless, at that time he had very few competitors on the altosax. "... It" also has a fine solo, but moderate tempi seem to suit him better than fast. "... Baby" features altosax but briefly, and it may be played by BC but probably not. Also "Peggy" is a very doubtful BC item. The phrasing seems less sure compared to "... It", and we believe this solo is played by Don Redman.

McKINNEY's COTTON PICKERS NYC. Nov. 3-5, 1930

Rex Stewart (cnt), Langston Curl, Buddy Lee (tp), Ed Cuffee (tb), Don Redman (cl, as, bar, vo, arr, ldr), Benny Carter, Jimmy Dudley and/or Ed Inge (cl, as), Prince Robinson (cl, ts), Todd Rhodes (p, cel), Dave Wilborn (bjo, g), Ralph Escudero (tu), Cuba Austin (dm), Bill Coty, George Bias (vo). Carter is not a member of the band, only a temporary replacement for George Thomas, recently killed in a car accident.

Eight titles were recorded for Victor, four have BC's altosax:

64605-1	Talk To Me	Solo with orch 6 bars. (FM)
64605-2	Talk To Me	As above. (FM)
64606-1	Rocky Road	Solo 8 bars. (M)
63195-1	I Want Your Love	Solo 4 bars. (FM)
63195-2	I Want Your Love	As above. (FM)
64609-2	After All, You're All I'm After	Solo 8 bars. (FM)

These sessions belong to our most treasured bigband ones, but BC is not heavily featured, unfortunately. All altosax contributions are rather brief, however, they are very nice. Particularly "... Road" and "After All ..." are worth mentioning.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Dec. 2, 1930**

Rex Stewart (cnt), Russell Smith, Bobby Stark (tp), Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones (tb), Benny Carter, Harvey Boone (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Fletcher Henderson (p, ldr), Clarence Holiday, bjo, g), John Kirby (tu, b), Walter Johnson (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia, one has altosax:

150997-2	Keep A Song In Your Soul	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
----------	--------------------------	--------------------

Note that BC's arranging is very evident in "Keep ...", particularly in the beginning there are some parts for saxes which are quite typical. Later we hear a very fine altosax solo, his very best till now. Note for instance the flashing opening phrase!!

THE CHOCOLATE DANDIES **NYC. Dec. 4, 1930**

Rex Stewart (cnt), Jimmy Harrison (tb), Benny Carter (as, vo), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Horace Henderson (p), probably Clarence Holiday (g), John Kirby (b).

One title was recorded for Columbia:

404566-A	Goodbye Blues	Solo 16 bars. (M)
----------	---------------	-------------------

NYC. Dec. 31, 1930

Same except Bobby Stark (tp) replaces Rex Stewart, Benny Carter (cl, as).

Four titles, two have altosax:

404596-B	Cloudy Skies	Solo 8 bars. In ens 4 bars. (M)
404598-B	Bugle Call Rag	Solo 12 bars. (FM)

Postscript of May 24, 2021: I have decided to trust Karl-Bernhard Rau and his thorough research on the personnel of these recordings. Comments unchanged: These sides belong to the most charming of the small band swing of the very early thirties. Informal and swinging they are, with excellent soloing by all participants. The three-minute limit does not give much space to each man though. BC divides his contributions between alto and clarinet, both instruments to great advantage. There is fine saxplaying here, both on "Cloudy ..." which is a thrill and on "...Rag".

CHICK WEBB & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 30, 1931**

Shelton Hemphill, Louis Hunt (tp), Louis Bacon (tp, vo), Jimmy Harrison (tb), Benny Carter (cl, as, arr), Hilton Jefferson (cl, as), Elmer Williams (cl, ts), Don Kirkpatrick (p), John Truehart (bjo, g), Elmer James (b, tu), Chick Webb (dm, ldr).

Three titles were recorded for Vocalion, one has altosax:

36433-A Blues In My Heart Probably lead 16 and 8 bars. (M)

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. June 23, 1932

Louis Bacon, Frankie Newton, unknown (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Wayman Carver (fl, as), Benny Carter (cl, as), Chu Berry (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), unknown (g), Richard Fulbright (b), Sid Catlett (dm), unknown female (vo).

One title was recorded for Crown:

1765-1 Tell All Your Dreams To Me Solo 32 bars. (FM)

A strange recording with a corny melody, a corny vocalist, and even BC regresses to the stiff phrasing of the twenties. Particularly the first half is heavy, later he warms up, but this is no great BC.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. March 14, 1933

Shad Collins, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tp), Benny Carter (tp, cl, as, vo?), Wilbur De Paris, George Washington (tb), Howard Johnson (as), Chu Berry (ts), Rod Rodriguez (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Ernest Hill (b), Sid Catlett (dm, vib).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, two have altosax soli:

265090-2 Swing It Solo 32 bars. (FM)

265093-2 Love You're Not The One For Me Soli 4 and 12 bars. (SM)

Now things get going! The year 1933 constitutes a long step forward for Benny Carter, both as leader and instrumentalist. This star-studded orchestra was predestined to produce first rate music, and it certainly does. The four items from this session must be considered successful, although to a degree influenced by commercial considerations. His soloing on "Swing It" is superb! Now he really has found his style, an elegant phrasing showing that he completely masters the alto saxophone. Rhythmically sure he moves around and between the beat just as he likes. His altosax soli on "Love ..." are also very attractive and counterbalance the somewhat too sweet atmosphere created by the vocal. All four items contain orchestral contribution of historical value. Note for instance the bridge to Collins' trumpet solo on "Swing It". The staccato "Six Bells ..." shows that Spike Hughes knew his Benny Carter! Or the opposite way around, SH composed it and recorded it in England in 1932!

SPIKE HUGHES & HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA NYC. April 18, 1933

Shad Collins, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tp), Dicky Wells, Wilbur De Paris, George Washington (tb), Benny Carter (cl, as, vo), Wayman Carver, Howard Johnson (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (cl, ts), Rod Rodriguez (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Ernest Hill (b), Kaiser Marshall (dm-13257,58), Sid Catlett (dm-13259,60), Spike Hughes (dir, arr).

Four titles were recorded for British Decca, three have BC's altosax:

13258-A Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn Solo 8 bars. (FM)

13259-A Pastorale Solo 16 bars. (M)

13260-A Bugle Call Rag Solo 16 bars. (F)

For many reasons the Spike Hughes sessions are among the most beautiful ones of the early thirties. The titles and arrangements, although formally attributed to Spike Hughes, have also a typical BC flavour. This feeling is strengthened by the orchestra mainly being made up of musicians from BC's band. Everything is beautiful! There is not much space for each soloist, but BC gets his share. "Bugle ..." is his best contribution, having a magnificent solo in a tough tempo. The sweet "Pastorale" is also very nice, "... Horn" too, albeit a bit vague. Note: The label of the original DeE of "... Horn" gives the vocalist as Monette Moore. The young lady had been contacted but failed to show up, and BC had to deputize at the very last moment, and after the record label had been printed.

SPIKE HUGHES & HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA NYC. May 18, 1933

Personnel as April 18 except Henry Allen (tp) replaces Collins, Luis Russell (p) replaces Rodriguez, Chu Berry (ts) added, Wayman Carver (fl, cl, as), Marshall omitted.

Four titles were recorded for British Decca, one has BC's altosax:

13355-A Music At Midnight Solo 12 bars. (FM)

same date

Henry Allen (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Benny Carter (as), Wayman Carver (fl), Chu Berry, Coleman Hawkins (ts), Rod Rodriguez (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Spike Hughes (b), Sid Catlett (dm). One title:

13356-A Sweet Sue, Just You Solo 32 bars. (F)

On this session BC's main contribution is "Sweet Sue". We do not quite agree on the superlatives, however. While JE finds it very good and worthy of notice, PB does not quite feel that BC has reached maturity yet, and rates "Swing It" from March 1933 higher. "... Midnight" has good but slightly formal sax playing.

SPIKE HUGHES & HIS NEGRO ORCHESTRA NYC. May 19, 1933

Same as May 18 except Howard Scott (tp) replaces Davis or Dillard, Rod Rodriguez (p) replaces Russell, Benny Carter (cl, sop, as).

Four titles, only one having BC's altosax

13359-A Air In D Flat Break. (M)

same date

Personnel as May 18, 13356, one title but no altosax.

Just a brief break on "Air ..." is all the solo space allotted to BC on this day. A waste of talent! We take the opportunity to express some disagreement: PB feels that BC's playing at this time lacks the authority of a few years later in his playing, and that his soli, while interesting, are not to be top rated. JE feels, however, that although the developing style of the early thirties may give the impression of immaturity, the craftsmanship of BC already had reached a level far above that of most of his contemporaries. He plays somewhat staccato at times, but this is more in accordance with the surroundings than due to technical shortcomings and musical insecurity. Note that he leads the final ensemble of "Firebird" on soprano sax.

THE CHOCOLATE DANDIES NYC. Oct. 10, 1933

Benny Carter (tp, as), Max Kaminsky (tp), Floyd O'Brien (tb), Chu Berry (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Ernest Hill (b), Sid Catlett (dm-265156-58), Mezz Mezzrow (dm-265159).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, no altosax on 265158 "Once Upon A Time" but:

265156-2 Blue Interlude Solo with ens 32 bars. (SM)

265157-1 I Never Knew Soli 8 and 8 bars. (FM)

265157-2 I Never Knew As above. (FM)

265159-1 Krazy Kapers Soli 8 and 32 bars. (F)

265159-2 Krazy Kapers As above. (F)

Here there is no doubt about Carter having come of age! This is another of those legendary sessions where the sum of many details not always perfect adds up to a charming and treasured total. The most important altosax playing is on "Krazy Kapers". Here no disagreements exist, we find here a terrific sense of rhythm combined with a superb technique and harmonically advanced conceptions. One of his most memorable soli from this era. Add to this two fine though brief soli on "... Knew" and a comparatively straight but majestic introduction to "Blue ..." and the success is ensured. Postscript: Quite recently an alternate of Krazy Kapers appeared (not commonly available)!! Obviously the correct choice for 78 rpm. was made from a total viewpoint, but BC plays so daringly and innovative

here that I find this new take much more exciting, not necessary better. Note also that it has a prolonged ensemble conclusion. A major discovery!!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 16, 1933**

Eddie Mallory, Bill Dillard, Dick Clark (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, Keg Johnson, Fred Robinson (tb), Benny Carter (cl, as), Wayman Carver (fl, as), Glyn Paque (as), Johnny Russell (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Ernest Hill (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, two have altosax:

265160-1	Devil's Holiday	Solo 8 bars. (F)
265160-2	Devil's Holiday	As above. (F)
265163-2	Blue Lou	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)

A very modest presentation of the leader himself, he only solos on two tracks and then but briefly. Note, however, how superbly he bridges Wayman Carver's flute solo on "... Holiday". The session becomes more important when listening to the orchestral arrangements. Benny Carter, the arranger, is a genius! Who else can produce such accuracy and concentrated music in a sax section like BC does on the beautiful "... Nights"? Or on the faster "... Riffs"? Note also the sweet and sensitive way in which "Blue Lou" is presented. A session like, this, where BC's instrumental gifts are modestly exploited, is therefore even more important in demonstrating his abilities as leader and arranger.

MEZZ MEZZROW & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 6, 1933**

Benny Carter (tp, as, vo-14275, arr-14272,75), Max Kaminsky, Freddy Goodman, Ben Gusick (tp), Floyd O'Brien (tb), Mezz Mezzrow (cl, as, arr-14273,74), Johnny Russell (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Clayton Duerr (g), Pops Foster (b), Jack Maisel (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick, no BC altosax.

CHARLIE BARNET & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 23&29, 1934**

Personnel uncertain but, according to Ed Berger, including Benny Carter (tp, as), Charlie Barnet (ts, vo), Toots Camarata (tp), Red Norvo (vib), Helen Heath, Jackie Martin (vo).

Seven titles were recorded for Melotone, the following six issued: "Infatuation", "I Lost Another Sweetheart", "Emaline", "Butterfingers", "Baby, Take A Bow" and "This Is Our Last Night Together", however no soli by BC.

MEZZ MEZZROW & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. May 7, 1934**

Max Kaminsky, Reunald Jones, Clelsea Quealey (tp), Floyd O'Brien (tb, arr), Mezz Mezzrow (cl, as, arr), Benny Carter (as), Bud Freeman (ts), Willie "The Lion" Smith (p), John Kirby (b), Chick Webb (dm), Alex Hill (arr).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, three have altosax:

82393-1	Apologies	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
82394-1	Sendin' The Vipers	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
82395-1	35 th And Calumet	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

BC's contributions to the second Mezzrow session are o.k. but not extraordinary. The solo on "Apologies" shall be remembered for its original growl opening. "... The Vipers" is feeble and not very inspired. Best are the two blues choruses on "... Calumet". Note that "Apologies" is based on King Oliver's famous "Dippermouth Blues".

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 25, 1934**

Russell Smith, Irving Randolph, Henry Allen (tp), Claude Jones, Keg Johnson (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson (cl, as), Benny Carter (as), Ben Webster (ts), Fletcher Henderson, Horace Henderson (p, arr), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, one has altosax:

38728-A	Liza	Solo 32 bars. (F)
---------	------	-------------------

A fine solo in fast tempo. Note particularly the flashing second eight bars. Who else could produce such a sequence on altosax in 1934? The altosax soli on “Wild Party” and “... Swing” are by Jefferson, who also can be heard in an 8 bars’ solo on “Liza”.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Dec. 13, 1934**

Russell Smith, Irving Randolph, Otis Johnson (tp), Benny Morton, Keg Johnson (tb), Russell Procope, Ben Smith (as), Benny Carter (cl, as), Ben Webster (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Clarence Holiday (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm), Charles Holland (vo-16415).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, one has altosax:

16414-1 Everybody Shuffle Soli 4, 4 and 16 bars. (F)

Again we are confronted with a bigband session of highest quality, where BC is very modest about exposing himself. His only important contribution is on “... Shuffle”, where his altosax appears happy and swinging. One is very impressed by the musical logic BC exhibits, the solo seems to be contrived as a whole, in advance. It is the band as a whole and particularly the sax section which are BC’s instruments on this session, and he ‘plays’ them like nobody else.

**BUSTER BAILEY
& HIS SEVEN CHOCOLATE DANDIES** **NYC. Dec. 28, 1934**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Benny Carter (as), Charlie Beal (p), Danny Barker (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm), Fletcher Henderson (arr).

Two titles were recorded for Vocalion:

16445-1 Call Of The Delta Solo 8 bars. (S)

16445-2 Call Of The Delta As above. (S)

16446-1 Shanghai Shuffle Soli 8 and 14 bars. (FM)

This session presents BC in top form. The soli on “... Delta” are very, very beautiful, with a sound warm and cool at the same time. Superficially they seem rather similar, but closer listening reveals a slight difference. In “Shanghai ...” the first solo is straight, the second, however, is fine improvisation.

BOB HOWARD & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 2, 1935**

Benny Carter (tp, as), Buster Bailey (cl), Teddy Wilson (p), Clarence Holiday (g), Elmer James (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Bob Howard (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, one has altosax:

39220-A You Fit Into The Picture Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (M)

NYC. Feb. 25, 1935

Same except Ben Webster (ts) replaces Bailey. Two titles but no altosax.

NYC. March 4, 1935

Same as Feb. 25 except Barney Bigard (cl) replaces Webster, Rex Stewart (cnt) added. Four titles, one has altosax:

39393-A Breakin’ The Ice Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (FM)

NYC. May 7, 1935

Same as March 4 except Russell Procope (cl, as), Billy Taylor (b) replace Bigard and James, Stewart omitted. Four titles but no altosax.

In spite of the impressive personnels on these sessions, the setup is too informal. When the sessions are compared to Teddy Wilson’s own, or to those of the ‘competitors’ Fats Waller and Putney Dandridge, they certainly fall right through. JE enjoys this kind of music and is not too demanding, while PB does not. None of us are impressed by BC’s contributions. The altosax is sparingly used, only on two tacks. On both, “... Picture” and “... Ice” he performs acceptably but

without much inspiration. One should probably not be too concerned about BC himself, just listen and judge the sessions on general criteria. Then the last session of May 7 probably will seem to be the most attractive.

WILLIE LEWIS & HIS ORCHESTRA **Paris, Jan. 17, 1936**

Benny Carter (tp, as), Alex Renard (tp), Bobby Martin (tp, vo), George Johnson (as), Willie Lewis (as, vo, dir), Joe Hayman, Coco Kiehn (ts), Herman Chittison (p), cel), John Mitchell (g), June Cole (b), Ted Fields (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Pathe, two have BC's altosax:

2450-1	I've Got A Feeling You're Fooling	Solo 8 bars. (M)
2453-1	Just A Mood	Solo 16 bars. (S)

This is where the real thing begins! With all the kind words on the preceding pages, Benny Carter's playing now takes on another dimension. The same thing happened to Coleman Hawkins when he settled in Europe, and to Ben Webster when he joined Duke Ellington in 1940. The altosax is and will always be BC's main instrument, from now on he masters it to perfection. His two contributions here are unforgettable, not only the slow, moving, elegant "... Mood" but the brief medium "... Fooling". Also brilliant trumpet on this session. Again, items belonging to the best of jazz of the nineteen thirties, which deserve an important place among Benny Carter's recorded works.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **London, April 15, 1936**

Benny Carter (tp, cl, as, ts, p-105?, vo-105), Max Goldberg, Tommy McQuater, Duncan Whyte (tp), Ted Heath, Bill Mulraney (tb), Andy McDevitt (cl, as), E. O. Pogson (as), Buddy Featherstonhaugh (ts), Pat Dodd (p), George Elliott (g), Al Burke (b), Ronnie Gubertini (dm).

Four titles were recorded for British Vocalion, no BC altosax on 104 "Nightfall" but:

103-1	Swingin' At Maida Vale	Solo 16+8 bars, (tp-TMcQ) on bridge. (FM)
103-2	Swingin' At Maida Vale	As above. (FM)
103-3	Swingin' At Maida Vale	As above. (FM)
105-1	Big Ben Blues	Solo 24 bars, last half with ens. (SM)
105-2	Big Ben Blues	As above. (SM)
106-1	These Foolish Things	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 and 2 bars. (SM)
106-2	These Foolish Things	As above. (SM)
106-3	These Foolish Things	As above. (SM)

You just cannot believe this! If there was no reason for a solography before, there is now!! From now on all the talents of Benny Carter blossom freely. He switches from instrument to instrument with great ease. To pick individual highlights seems to be an impossible task, everything is perfection. The presence of several alternate takes also demonstrates his extraordinary improvisational talents, the details are just so different, in a casual way. One must notice the beautiful altosax on "Big Ben ...", and then his tenorsax on "Nightfall", his first recorded solo on that instrument. It sounds just like an alto pitched lower, there is no fundamental difference in style. Not many contemporaries treated the tenorsax in such an elegant way. Note also the altosax for 8 bars in "... Things" and ..., no, stop, and just listen!! Postscript: After this was written, one alternate of "... Blues" and two of "... Things" have appeared. Note again the differences, try the opening of his solo on "Big Ben ..." as a good example. The intro on "... Things" seemed so straight, but the final bar tell a different story! And what do you think about the 8 bars soli?...

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **London, late April 1936**

Personnel as April 15 except Goldberg, Heath, Mulraney, Pogson and Burke omitted.

Four titles were recorded for British Vocalion, no BC altosax on 109 “Just A Mood” but:

107-1	When Day Is Done	Solo 32 bars. (M)
107-2	When Day Is Done	As above. (M)
107-3	When Day Is Done	As above. (M)
108-1	I’ve Got Two Lips	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
108-2	I’ve Got Two Lips	As above. (FM)
108-3	I’ve Got Two Lips	As above. (FM)
110-1	Swingin’ The Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)

Again our enthusiasm knows no bounds. We all have heard a lot of how great an influence Benny Carter had on the European jazz scene. However, there is no doubt that it was a two-way street, and that Europe’s influence on BC was just as important. The free and happy music he creates in London would seem to indicate that he felt at home here, much more than in his native U. S. A.? His three, so different altosax soli on “When Day Is Done” are rare pieces of beauty. Every note, every bar is something special, a composition in its own right. We never tire of playing them, again and again! Note also here that the first take is introduced by BC on piano, a fact BC himself has confirmed in ‘Swing Music’, June 36. We are not impressed and would never have guessed it was played by a black artist. Obviously others made a similar judgement since the piano was exchanged for a very fine muted trumpet. The two takes (not three it seems) of “... Lips” also are unforgettable! On “... Blues”, the rhythm is a little stiff, but the altosax is still shocking, note for instance the concluding phrase! We receive on this date more than mortal souls deserve!! Postscript: The third take of “... Lips” appeared later! Of course quite different from the two others!!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **London, mid-June 1936**

Benny Carter (tp, cl?, as, ts, p-117?, ldr), Max Goldberg, Tommy McQuater (tp), Leslie Thompson (tp, tb), Lew Davis, Ted Heath (tb), Freddy Gardner, Andy McDevitt (cl, as), Buddy Featherstonhaugh (ts), Billy Munn (p), Albert Harris (g), Wally Morris (b), George Elrick (vo-120).

Six titles were recorded for British Vocalion, no BC altosax on 115 “Scandal In A Flat”, 117 “You Understand” and 119 “If I Only Could Read Your Mind” but:

116-1	Accent On Swing	Solo with orch 14 bars. (FM)
118-1	Gin And Jive	Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)
118-2	Gin And Jive	As above. (F)
120-1	I Gotta Go	Solo with orch 10 bars. (SM)
120-2	I Gotta Go	As above. (SM)

Another lovely session. It cannot rank as high from a solistic point of view as the two previous sessions, simply because BC is not featured so much, but his spirit and arranging are felt and heard all over. The tenorsax is surprisingly the most prominent instrument, but the few altosax soli are good enough. Postscript: At that time, this “Gin ...” was not available, later appearing on CD with two takes. The altosax are good and again quite different, note the opening for easy comparison.

BENNY CARTER & HIS SWING QUARTET **London, June 20, 1936**

Benny Carter (tp, as, ts), Gene Rodgers (p), Bernard Addison (g), Wally Morris (b), George Elrick (dm), Elizabeth Welch (vo-121).

Three titles were recorded for British Vocalion, no altosax on 123 “Tiger Rag” but:

121-1	When Lights Are Low	Solo 8 bars to weak obbligato parts. (M)
122-1	Waltzing The Blues	Solo 12 bars. (SM)

1879-A	Some Of These Days	Solo 32 bars. (F)
1879-B	Some Of These Days	As above. (F)

Close to the same immortal status as the Danish date(s). We are brought right into the middle of the very greatest excitement when after a brief piano intro BC's altosax presents two incredible versions of "Some ...". How it is possible to play so perfectly will always remain a mystery to us! (Cannonball Adderley: "Benny could and can play as many notes as anyone, but he makes it look so easy!").

ELIZABETH WELCH **London, Oct. 13, 1936**

Benny Carter (tp, cl, as), Gene Rodgers (p), Ivor Mairants (g), Wally Morris (b), Elizabeth Welch (vo).

Four titles were recorded for English Vocalion, no altosax on 126 "The Man I Love" and 127 "That's How The First Song Was Born" but:

124-1	Poor Butterfly	Obbligato 32 and 16 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)
125-1	Drop In The Next Time YP	Solo 32 bars. Obbligato 32 bars. (M)

This is the kind of old-fashioned session bound to create debate among jazz listeners half a century later. The jazz contents of the vocal is not remarkable, and the atmosphere is certainly not that of Hot Harlem. Still, in our opinion, just this kind of surroundings constitutes a special challenge to giants like Benny Carter and Lester Young. All four items are full of exquisite details. The altosax soli on "... Butterfly" and "Drop In ..." (note the surprise ending) and the beautiful trumpet solo on "The Man ..." are the highlights, but every bar here should be noted. Lovely!! (But it is possible to understand those who wish this to be a non-vocal session).

BENNY CARTER & HIS SWING QUINTET **London, Oct. 19, 1936**

Tommy McQuater (tp), Benny Carter (cl, as), Gerry Moore (p), Albert Harris (g), Wally Morris (b), Al Craig (dm).

Four titles were recorded for English Vocalion, no altosax on 130 "There'll Be Some Changes Made" but:

131-1	Jingle Bells	Solo 32 bars. (M)
131-2	Jingle Bells	As above. (M)
132-1	Royal Garden Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
133-1	Carry Me Back To Old Virginny	Duet with (tp) 16+8 bars, solo on bridge. Solo 32 bars. (M)

Wow, what a lot of exquisite alto playing! There is good clarinet also, particularly "... Changes ..." with its two takes in different tempi. However, the main instrument of BC, the altosax, is the thing here. Medium tempi are chosen, and BC thrives. Our favourite is "Royal ..." with two perfect choruses, one of the most everlasting soli!! "... Virginny" is almost as good, and very interesting are the two takes of "... Bells". Apart from a loose ending in take 2 everything is beautiful.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **London, ca. Jan. 11-16, 1937**

Benny Carter (tp, as, vo), Leslie Thompson, Tommy McQuater (tp), Lew Davis, Bill Mulraney (tb), Freddy Gardner, Andy McDevitt (cl, as), George Evans, Buddy Featherstonhaugh (ts), Eddie Macaulay (p), Albert Harris (g), Wally Morris (b), Al Craig (dm).

Four titles were recorded for British Vocalion, no BC trumpet on 143 "I'm In The Mood For Swing" but:

140-1	Gin And Jive	Solo 32 bars. (F)
140-2	Gin And Jive	As above. (F)

141-1	Nagasaki	Solo 32 bars. (F)
141-2	Nagasaki	As above. (F)
142-1	There's A Small Hotel	With orch. (M)
142-2	There's A Small Hotel	As above. (M)

The end of the Vocalion sessions in London. A sad fact which no tear can change. A fantastic creative period, item after recorded item contain pearls of music. This is no bad finale, alternate takes exist of all four items, and the pleasure of comparing cannot be truly estimated by those not loving this music as we do. The two takes of "Nagasaki" belong to the treasury kit, and also the other items have their merits, fine altosax on "Gin ..." and straight open trumpet on "... Hotel" and "... Swing". The two takes of "... Hotel" are interesting inasmuch as BC's vocal on take 1 is replaced by altosax on take 2, not Carter's but Freddy Gardner!! This brilliant musician should have his own solography, now his works are largely overlooked, and we must admit we almost fluffed in preparing these comments. His solo on take 2 of "... Hotel" is a very attractive one. By the way, FG is also heard in an 8 bars' solo on "Gin ...".

BENNY CARTER & THE RAMBLERS **Laren, March 24, 1937**

Benny Carter (tp, cl, as, ts), George van Helvoirt, Jack Bulterman (tp), Marcel Thielemans (tb), Wim Poppink, Andre van der Ouderaa (cl, as), Sal Doof (ts), Freddy Johnson or Nick de Roy (p), Jack Pet (b), Kees Kranenburg (dm), Theo Uden Masman (dir).

Four titles were recorded for Dutch Decca, no BC altosax on 371 "I'll Never Give In" but:

368-1	Black Bottom	Soli 8 and 8 bars. (FM)
368-2	Black Bottom	As above. (FM)
369-2	Rambler's Rhythm	Soli 24 and 8 bars. (FM)
369-3	Rambler's Rhythm	As above. (FM)
370-1	New Street Swing	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
370-2	New Street Swing	As above. (FM)

Another beautiful multi-instrument session. All items have first rate soli, and they are of such even merit that it is more difficult than ever to pick highlights. However, the only slow medium theme, "... Give In" with its majestic trumpet solo must be mentioned. Otherwise the altosax soli on "... Rhythm" and "... Swing" are memorable, as is the tenorsax on "... Give In". Postscript: But then we had heard only one take of each title, now we have two! It seems that we forgot to praise the first brief solo on "... Bottom", and now we get a fine variation! The same goes for a new exciting and different "... Swing", while the new "... Rhythm" is however for once surprisingly similar to the original take.

COLEMAN HAWKINS
& HIS ALL-STAR JAM BAND **Paris, April 28, 1937**

Benny Carter (tp, as), Andre Ekyan (as), Alix Combelle (cl, ts), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Stephane Grappelly (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Eugene d'Hellemmes (b), Tommy Benford (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Swing, two have BC's altosax:

1742-1	Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 8 bars. (M)
1743-1	Crazy Rhythm	Solo 32 bars. (F)

About this session in general, so many nice words have been said that any more seem unnecessary. The very best of U. S. and France in a gigantic encounter! The rhythm section on this date is better and stronger than on most European sessions, making everybody give their best. "... Rose" has always been our favourite item, but for BC's altosax the longer solo on "Crazy ..." is more noteworthy. The opening phrase is something you never forget. Why not arrange this solo for a 'Super-Sax' ensemble, like it was done for Charlie Parker?

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **The Hague, Aug. 17, 1937**

Benny Carter (tp, cl, as), Sam Dasberg, Cliff Woodridge, Rolf Goldstein (tp), George Chisholm, Harry van Oven (tb), Louis Stephenson (as), Bertie King, Jimmy Williams (ts), Freddy Johnson (p), Ray Webb (g), Len Harrison (b), Robert Montmarche (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Dutch Decca, all have altosax:

393-3	Skip It	Solo with orch 12 bars. (M)
394-2	Lazy Afternoon	Solo 34 bars. (SM)
395-1	I Ain't Got Nobody	Solo 14 bars. (FM)
395-2	I Ain't Got Nobody	As above. (FM)
396-1	Blues In My Heart	Soli 34, 2 and 2 bars. (SM)

A very prominent session, not only for its soloing but for the fine arrangements. They carry BC's trademark and are a real pleasure today as then. For instrumental highlights, no doubt that "Lazy ..." ranks foremost. Not only has it fine muted trumpet at a pleasant tempo, but a very long altosax solo of the greatest elegance and creative power. "Blues ...", which is not a blues", is very similar in atmosphere and performance. The remaining soli are all very noteworthy.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **The Hague, Aug. 18, 1937**

Benny Carter (tp, cl, as), George Chisholm (tb), Jimmy Williams (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Freddy Johnson (p), Ray Webb (g), Len Harrison (b), Robert Montmarche (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Dutch Decca, two have altosax:

399-1	Pardon Me, Pretty Baby	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
399-2	Pardon Me, Pretty Baby	As above. (FM)
400-1	My Buddy	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
400-2	My Buddy	As above. (FM)
400-3	My Buddy	As above. (FM)

This session, and in particular "My Buddy" was the authors' first encounter with Benny Carter and one which marked them for life! The perfect elegance and elegant perfection of the sixteen bars of altosax on "My Buddy" planted a seed for this solography. Later we came to know the magnificent altosax on "Pardon Me ...", plus the trumpet playing which here ranks high above average quality, look to the BC trumpet section! This is the session never to be forgotten. Postscript: Also these comments were made based upon the original 78s only! So you can imagine how we felt when three alternates appeared!! A fine variation on "Pardon Me ..." is interesting enough, note bars 9-12, but the 'buddies' just knock you out!!! The take 1 is still something of the most perfect I can imagine, but the two new versions are also just lovely (a slight fluff in the beginning of the take 3 solo)!!!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Paris, March 7, 1938**

Benny Carter (tp, as), Fletcher Allen (as), Bertie King (cl-6, ts), Alix Combelle (ts), Yorke de Souza (p), Django Reinhardt (g), Len Harrison (b), Robert Montmarche (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Swing, no altosax on 6-1 "Blue Light Blues" but:

4-1	I'm Coming Virginia	Solo 22 bars. (FM)
5-1	Farewell Blues	Solo 32 bars. (M)

The final European session, marking the end of the most important (in JE and PB's opinion) and creative period in Benny Carter's career, and a very important period in the history of jazz altosax. Why did this almost three year 'exile' become so fruitful? Maybe because BC in his heart was and is a romanticist? His sweet and gentle approach to music seems to be quite different from what we

know in most jazz music. Perhaps only the European dance band and popular music traditions could give him the inspiration he needed? No racial prejudice as part of daily life, no having to prove himself in hostile surroundings, only friendly colleagues not believing their ears, but taking him to their hearts. Who knows? (We know that many experts disagree, feeling that BC's artistic experience in Europe culminated after returning to the U.S.. At any rate, this session has splendid soli in magnificent arrangements, particularly heart-moving are the altosax solo in "Farewell ..." and the concluding ensemble in "... Virginia".

LIONEL HAMPTON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 21, 1938**

Harry James (tp), Benny Carter (cl, as, arr), Dave Matthews (as), Herschal Evans, Babe Russin (ts), Billy Kyle (p), John Kirby (b), Jo Jones (dm), Lionel Hampton (vib, vo-24067).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, two have altosax:

24065-1	I'm In The Mood For Swing	Solo 32 bars. (M)
24066-1	Shoe Shiner's Drag	Solo 12 bars. (SM)

As a newcomer to his own country, it only seems appropriate that BC should be taken care of by a well established artist and brought to the recording studio! Lionel Hampton is a very good choice! A rhythm backing like this did not exist before he left for Europe, and he takes great advantage of it. His excellent arrangement on "... Swing", an unrivalled summit of arranging for medium sized recording group and as a vehicle for his own altosax is proof enough. His soloing on "Shoe ..." is of similar quality, note in particular the clarinet here. In fact, the clarinet playing is now at its best, therefore it is a sad fact that his use of the instrument declines rapidly. Even if "Any Time ..." lacks a BC solo, the background is a very well spent three minutes, note how he treats the sax section in the bridge of James' solo! Probably BC also is responsible for the arrangements of "... Drag" and "... Ramble", though simple they have the 'Carter sound'.

TEDDY WILSON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 29, 1938**

Jonah Jones (tp), Benny Carter (as), Ben Webster (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), John Kirby (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Nan Wynn (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

23305-1	Now It Can Be Told	Solo 30 bars. (SM)
23305-2	Now It Can Be Told	As above. (SM)
23306-1	Laugh And Call It Love	Soli 4 and 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
23306-1	Laugh And Call It Love	As above. (M)
23307-1	On The Bumpy Road To Love	Solo 32 bars. In ens 8 bars. (FM)
23307-1	On The Bumpy Road To Love	As above. (FM)
23308-1	A-Tisket, A-Tasket	Solo 32 bars. (FM)

The most happy and informal of the four Teddy Wilson sessions including BC. They might have used a better vocalist, otherwise the session has much of the high spirit of the 1935-1937 recordings. BC solos remarkably on "... Bumpy ..." and "... Tasket", two fine swinging choruses supported by a perfect rhythm section. Also "Laugh ..." has good but brief soloing. "Now ..." makes us feel slightly puzzled. Never before has the word 'sirupy' entered our minds in connection with BC. Sweet, yes, but never too much until now. Not too bad but too much sweetness, certainly. However, our Danish friends do not agree, they feel that although his sound is not perfect in the upper register, it is more than compensated for by some very elegant runs. Last minute addition (then): Two alternates have turned up! They are exactly as different as you would expect them to be!! The correct choice was made for the 78, as a whole, but for BC they might have chosen any take. Note particularly the slower tempo of take 1 of "Laugh ..." compared to take 2. Postscript: An alternate of "Now ..." does not make jazz history.

TEDDY WILSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Oct. 31 & Nov. 9, 1938

Harry James (tp), Benny Morton (tb), Benny Carter, Edgar Sampson (as), Herschal Evans, Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Al Casey (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Brunswick, two have altosax:

23688-1	April In My Heart	Solo 20 bars. (SM)
23688-2	April In My Heart	As above. (SM)
23690-1	They Say	Lead 4 bars. Solo 12 bars. (SM)
23690-2	They Say	As above. (SM)

A far more polished session than the previous Wilson session. The star studded personnel in fact serves as a background only to Billie Holiday. This does not mean the items are too polished, 'refreshingly different' is a characteristic used, and BC may have contributed to the arrangements, note for instance "They Say". BC has two solo sequences, both with alternate takes existing. He presents the melody on "April ..." and finishes off on "... Say". In both cases he produces nice elaborate constructions, note particularly take 2 of "... Say".

NAT GONELLA**WITH JOHN KIRBY'S ORCHESTRA NYC. Jan. 20, 1939**

Nat Gonella (tp, vo), Buster Bailey (cl), Benny Carter (as), Billy Kyle (p), Brick Fleagle (g), John Kirby (b), Jack Maisel (dm).

Four titles were recorded for British Parlophone:

64909-A	You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby	Solo 20 bars. In ens 12 and 4 bars. (M)
64910-A	Just A Kid Named Joe	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. In ens 8 bars. (SM)
64911-A	Jeepers Creepers	In ens 34 bars. Solo 16 bars to 20 bars in ens. (FM)
64912-A	I Must See Annie Tonight	Soli 4, 4, 4 and 8 bars to 14 bars in ens. (FM)

Nat Gonella has always been one of our particular favorites, for one reason he was the first ideal for our own great Norwegian trumpeter Rowland Greenberg. He does not spoil the fun in this charming session. There are no arrangements to speak of, and better rhythm sections have recorded. The soloing, however, is generally very good with BC as the highlight. His 8 bars solo on the lovely "... Joe" belongs to his very best in this tempo, and "... Baby" is a most original construction. "Jeepers ..." is superbly swinging, and the end of "... Tonight" is to be noted. All tracks have something to offer!

TEDDY WILSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Jan. 30, 1939

Roy Eldridge (tp), Ernie Powell, Benny Carter (reeds), Teddy Wilson (p), Danny Barker (g), Milt Hinton (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

24044-1	What Shall I Say?	Intro 4 bars. (SM)
24045-1	It's Easy To Blame The Weather	Soli 8 and 2 bars. (M)
24046-1	More Than You Know	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
24046-2	More Than You Know	As above. (SM)
24047-1	Sugar	Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge. (M)

The last of the Wilson sessions and perhaps the best one? The altosax opening on "Sugar" with Roy on the bridge certainly must take its place among the very greatest BC contributions! As must the very beautiful two takes of "More ...", but which take is the best? Soli like these tend to be overlooked in favour of more flashing items, so this, therefore, is a reminder!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. April 17, 1939**

Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (tp, cl, as, arr, dir), similar to June 29, 1939 below.

Broadcast from Savoy Ballroom, five titles (Ed Berger collection):

Melancholy Lullaby (Theme)	Straight 32 bars to coda. (S)
I'm Coming Virginia	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Gin And Jive	Solo 32 bars. (F)
More Than You Know	Trumpet only.
Honeysuckle Rose (NC)	Solo 32 bars w/announcer. (F)

Benny Carter is back in town, New York City, Savoy Ballroom, with his new bigband! He takes some terrific altosax soli here, particularly "Gin ..." is magnificent!

LEONARD FEATHER / JOE MARSALA /**PETE BROWN & HIS JUMP BAND****NYC. April 20, 1939**

Benny Carter, Pete Brown (tp, as), Bobby Hackett (cnt, g), Joe Marsala (cl), Billy Kyle (p), Hayes Alvis (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, two have BC's altosax:

65437-A	Twelve Bar Stampede	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
65439-A	Men Of Harlem	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Good solo playing by BC on all items, but not of the stuff that unforgettable soli is made of. BC seems happy but not very serious and concentrated. Note particularly "... Stampede" for altosax.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. April 22, 1939**

Same/similar.

Broadcast from Savoy Ballroom, nine titles (Ed Berger collection):

Melancholy Lullaby	Straight 32 bars to coda. (S)
Tea For Two	Soli 2, 16 and 2 bars. (M)
Scandal In A Flat	Solo with orch 16 bars. (SM)
I Ain't Got Nobody	Solo with orch 16 bars. (FM)
I'm In The Mood For Swing	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Between The Devil And TDBS	Trumpet only.
Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Stardust	Trumpet only.
Melancholy Lullaby	Straight 32 bars. (S)

Terrific altosax playing here!! My favourite is "... Swing", dig this one and the start of the last eight bars!! "Scandal ..." is also utterly fascinating.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. April 29, 1939**

Same/similar. Broadcast from Savoy Ballroom, three titles (Ed Berger):

When Irish Eyes Are Smiling	Trumpet only.
We've Come A Long Way Together	Clarinet only.
Blue Skies	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (FM)

NYC. May 6, 1939

Same. Five titles:

Melancholy Lullaby	Straight 32 bars. (S)
I'm Coming Virginia	Solo 24 bars. (M)

Have Mercy	Solo/straight 20+10 bars, orch 10 bars on bridge. (SM)
Sugarfoot Stomp (NC)	Solo 12 bars to fade out. (F)
Solid Mama	Trumpet only.

NYC. May 8, 1939

Same. Two titles:

Have Mercy	As above. (SM)
Plymouth Rock	No solo.

NYC. May 13, 1939

Same. Four titles, not available:

The Lady's In Love With You	Soli 4 and 16 bars. ()
A Home In The Clouds	Trumpet only.
I Cried For You	Trumpet only.
Patty Cake	No solo.

NYC. May 20, 1939

Same. Five titles:

Liebstraum	Lead 4 bars. (FM)
My Heart Has Wings	Solo 16 bars. (M)
Lady Be Good	Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)
Big Wig In The Wigwam	Clarinet only.
Melancholy Lullaby (NC)	Straight 28 bars, partly with announcer and orch. (SM)

NYC. May 27, 1939

Same. Two titles, not available:

How Strange	Solo 16 bars. ()
Tea For Two	Soli 2, 16 and 4 bars. ()

NYC. June 10, 1939

Same. Two titles, not available:

Blue Evening	Solo 32 bars to obbligato 32 bars. ()
Bye Bye Blues	Trumpet only.

NYC. June 12, 1939

Same. One title:

Clementine	Solo with orch 24 bars. (FM)
------------	------------------------------

NYC. June 17, 1939

Same. One title:

Strange Enchantment	Trumpet only.
---------------------	---------------

These comments are made almost thirty years after those of the following Vocalion session. The numerous broadcasts have varying sound quality, and it is not so relevant in this solo context to evaluate the orchestra itself. The main point is that BC's altosax playing is excellent and unique, whether one finds it hot and emotional or cool and detached. From the sessions above, particularly "Blue Skies" and "Clementine" should be noted.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. June 29, 1939

Joe Thomas, Lincoln Mills, George Woodlen (tp), James Archey, Vic Dickenson (tb), Tyree Glenn (tb, vib), Benny Carter, James Powell, Carl Frye (as), Ernie Powell, Castor McCord (ts), Eddie Heywood (p), Ulysses Livingston (g), Hayes Alvis (b), Henry Morrison (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

1046-A	Plymouth Rock	Solo 12 bars. (M)
1047-A	Savoy Stampede	Solo 32 bars. (F)
1048-A	Melancholy Baby	Soli with orch 24 and 8 bars. (S)
1049-A	Scandal In A Flat	Solo 16 bars. (S)

The new Benny Carter Orchestra. In spite of its many capable musicians and of the ambitious arrangements, something is lacking. There is something sterile about these items. The music desparatly tries to make itself felt, but the result is not quite up to expectations. Of course, there is first rate music to be heard. A very fine altosax solo on "... A Flat", where BC exhibits technique as never before, however, not quite with the emotional warmth we expect. There are other good soli by BC and by his fellow men, and the fine sax section on "Savoy ..." is noteworthy.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 24, 1939**

Personnel similar to June 29.

Broadcast BBC "America dances" from Savoy Ballroom, ten titles:

Melancholy Lullaby (Theme)	Solo 16+8 bars, orch/(as) on bridge, last 8 drowned by announcer. (SM)
Lady Be Good	Soli with orch 32 bars. (F)
Plymouth Rock	Solo 12 bars. (M)
A Home In The Clouds	Trumpet only.
Bye Bye Blues	Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)
Scandal In A Flat	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
I'm In The Mood For Swing	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Blue Evening	Solo/straight 32 bars. (M)
Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Melancholy Lullaby (Theme)	Solo 8+4 bars (fade out) partly drowned by announcer. (SM)

This extensive broadcast is probably the best from this period. However, the sound of the tape circulating is somewhat fragile, and the tempo is too fast, therefore listening pleasure is somewhat reduced. BC plays overall very inspiredly, particularly the uptempo items "... Swing" and "... Rose" are treated with such superb technique and vigour, that it is almost uncanny. Also "Scandal ..." is very nice.

ETHEL WATERS WITH
EDDIE MALLORY & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 15, 1939**

Eddie Mallory (tp), Tyree Glenn (tb, vib), Castor McCord (cl, ts), Benny Carter (as), Reginald Beane (p, org), Danny Barker (g), Milt Hinton (b).

Six titles were recorded for Bluebird, one has altosax:

41557	Push-Out	Solo 28 bars. (M)
-------	----------	-------------------

After playing through item after item looking for BC, suddenly he is there when we almost had lost hope! And not with a casual, uninspired solo, on the contrary, with a flashing, inventive, memorable creation, backed by Cab's supporters de luxe. Note this one!!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 31, 1939**

Personnel as June 29 except Eddie Mullen (tp) replaces Woodlen. Dell St. John (vo-1069).

Three titles were recorded for Vocalion:

1069-A	When Lights Are Low	Soli 4 and 12 bars. (FM)
1070-A	The Favor Of A Fool	Soli 32 and 4 bars. (S)
1071-A	Riff Romp	Solo 16+6 bars, orch on bridge. (F)

An old success can seldom be recreated, and “When Lights ...” is no exception. In fact, they do not even try, letting a female vocalist steal the show. BC, however, plays very nicely in the last chorus, bars 5-8 and 13-24. The slow “... Fool” presents the sentimental side of BC, pleasant but not too exciting. More interesting is the fast “Riff Romp”. Note the lovely arranging for trombones in this session, BC certainly knows more than writing for saxes!

LIONEL HAMPTON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 11, 1939**

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Benny Carter (as, arr), Chu Berry, Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster (ts), Clyde Hart (p), Charlie Christian (g), Milt Hinton (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Lionel Hampton (vib, vo-41407).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, three have altosax:

41406-1	When Lights Are Low	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
41406-2	When Lights Are Low	As above. (FM)
41408-1	Hot Mallets	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
41409-1	Early Session Hop	Solo 8 bars. (FM)

After taking the trouble of bringing so many jazz giants into one recording studio, the producer might have made more of it. Forty titles instead of four maybe? To give BC only 32 bars of soloing during a whole night is simply criminal (or per-haps many alternate takes exist somewhere ... dream, dream??). It is particularly regrettable because he plays up to his very best. No track stands above the others, but to compare the two takes of “... Low” is exciting. And the arrangement of “One ...” seems like a BC solo, superb!

ETHEL WATERS **NYC. Sept. 22, 1939**

Eddie Mallory (tp), Benny Carter, Garvin Bushell (cl, as), Reginald Beane (p), Charlie Turner (b).

Two titles were recorded for Bluebird, one has altosax:

42718	I Just Got A Letter	Solo 16 bars. (M)
-------	---------------------	-------------------

Another surprise from Ethel Waters, BC gets the opportunity to play a fine, inventive altosax solo, though not quite on the level with the remarkable “Push-Out”.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 9, 1939**

Bigband personnel same/similar to Nov. 1 below.

Broadcast from Savoy Ballroom, six titles (Ed Berger collection):

Melancholy Lullaby	Straight 32 bars. (S)
Savoy Stampede	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Scandal In A Flat	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
Russian Lullaby	Solo 16 bars.
There's Only One In Love (NC)	No solo.
Bye Bye Blues (NC)	Trumpet only.

NYC. Oct. 14, 1939

Same. Ten titles:

Melancholy Lullaby	Straight 32 bars. (S)
--------------------	-----------------------

China Boy	Solo 32 bars. (F)
It's Funny To Everyone But Me	Solo with orch 16 bars. (SM)
Plymouth Rock	Solo 12 bars. (M)
I'll See You In My Dreams	Trumpet only.
What's New?	No solo.
Strange Enchantment	Trumpet only.
Last Night	No solo.
Riff Romp	Solo 30 bars. (F)
Melancholy Lullaby	Straight 30 bars (NC). (S)

NYC. Oct. 23, 1939

Same. Three titles:

Blue Orchids	Soli with orch 24 and 8 bars. (SM)
China Boy	Solo 32 bars. (F)
What's New?	No solo.

NYC. Oct. 28, 1939

Same. Two titles, not available:

Lilacs In The Rain	Solo 16 bars. ()
Vagabond Dreams	Solo 20 bars. ()

Again several magnificent altosax soli, the two "China Boy"s and "Riff Romp" should be noted, as well as another elegant version of "... A Flat" and a new tune, equally elegant, "It's Funny ..."!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 1, 1939**

Benny Carter (tp, as), Irving Randolph, Lincoln Mills, Joe Thomas, Eddie Mullens (tp), James Archey, Vic Dickenson (tb), Tyree Glenn (tb, vib), James Powell, Carl Frye (as), Ernie Powell, Sammy Davis (ts), Eddie Heywood (p), Ulysses Livingston (g), Hayes Alvis (b), William Purnell (dm), Roy Felton (vo-1110-12).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, three have altosax:

1109-1	Shufflebug Shuffle	Solo 16 bars. (M)
1109-1 st try	Shufflebug Shuffle	As above. (M)
1109-3 rd try	Shufflebug Shuffle	As above. (M)
1110-1	Vagabond Dreams	Solo 20 bars. (SM)
1111-1	Love's Got Me Down Again	Soli 4 and 8 bars. (M)

Again we have the feeling of disappointment. The orchestra seems to try to be modern, but does not succeed and has a deficit of inspiration. The arrangements are not up to the expected BC standard, note for instance "... Shuffle", his way of featuring the trumpet section ends up in ta-ta-ing!! His arranging technique of the thirties was primarily built around the saxes, it was his secret and his trademark and his mastery. Now he tries new trends but not without problems. His instrumental solo on "... Shuffle" as a contrast is very ingenious and probably the best altosax solo of the session, but lacks proper soundings. "... Dreams" is quite uninteresting, "... Again" better. Postscript: Again one must marvel at BC's creativity, two additional and quite different variations on "... Dreams".

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 11, 1939**

Personnel probably as Nov. 1.

Broadcast from Savoy Ballroom, Bill Savory collection Vol. 3, two titles, no altosax on "More Than You Know" but:

Honeysuckle Rose Solo 32 bars, last 16 disturbed
by announcer. (F)

A magnificent solo closing the broadcast, and the announcer really does not bother too much.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 18, 1939**

Personnel probably as Nov. 1.

Broadcast, seven titles, five have altosax:

Melancholy Lullaby	Solo with orch 8 bars. (S)
I Ain't Got Nobody	Solo 14 bars. (FM)
Riff Romp	Solo 30 bars. (F)
There's A Small Hotel	Solo 32 bars. With orch. (M)
Plymouth Rock	Solo 12 bars. (M)

BC plays inspiredly, particularly "Riff Romp" seems to be the absolute highlight of this program. He also takes the bridge here, contrary to the record version, and therefore seems more free. The result must be considered magnificent. "... Nobody" is also played strongly and beautifully.

VARSITY SEVEN **NYC. Dec. 14, 1939**

Benny Carter (tp, as), Danny Polo (cl), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Joe Sullivan (p), Ulysses Livingston (g, vo), Artie Shapiro (b), George Wettling (dm), Jeanne Burns (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Varsity, one has altosax:

1160-1	Scratch My Back	Solo 24 bars. (M)
--------	-----------------	-------------------

A session looking very promising on paper, but which never really manages to come alive. The rhythm section never succeeds in bringing the soloists into orbit. BC's best contribution is undoubtedly his nice altosax solo on "Scratch ...". He also plays an attractive introduction to "... Mama".

VARSITY SEVEN **NYC. Jan. 15, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 14, 1939 except Joe Turner (vo) replacing Burns.

Four titles were recorded for Varsity, but no altosax soli.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 30, 1940**

Personnel as Nov. 1, 1939 except Russell Smith (tp), Gene Simon (tb), Stanley Payne, Coleman Hawkins (ts) replace Randolph, Mullens, Glenn, Davis and Powell.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, two have altosax:

1126 no. 1	Sleep	Solo 24 bars. (F)
1126 no. 1	Sleep	As above. (F)
1126 no. 1	Sleep (NC)	No solo.
1126 no. 1	Sleep	As no. 1&2 above. (F)
1127 no. 1	Among My Souvenirs	Solo 32 bars. (M)
1127 no. 2	Among My Souvenirs	As above. (M)
1127 no. 3	Among My Souvenirs (NC)	Solo 2 bars (breakdown). (M)
1127 no. 4	Among My Souvenirs	As no. 1&2. (M)

There is a sparkling altosax solo on "Sleep"! Benny Carter never had better technique than at this point of his career. Some may find the solo too technical, too 'smooth' in a negative sense, others may consider it the ultimate of swing altosax playing. "Among ..." has also fine soloing on both instruments. Postscript (then): It is only fair to say that this session by many is considered higher than

our comments imply. This is what was written on the basis of the four 78rpm. sides. Afterwards Jerry Valburn let us encounter the complete session with alternates! Two more altosax soli on “Sleep” quite different from the first one. Apart from being very good, they give the ‘original’ another dimension, and it is not ‘too smooth’ any more! Also two new versions of “Among ...” give evidence to high jazz capabilities, the altosax soloing is far less straight than you believe from Vo 5458 only.

THE QUINTONES**NYC. Feb. 2, 1940**

This session, featuring a vocal group, has been presented in Rust as having Benny Carter (as). Vocalion 5409 contains “Midnight Jamboree” and “The Five Little Quints”, while Vocalion 5596 contains “Honey Bunny Boo” and “Harmony In Harlem”. Only altosax solo is on “... Harlem”, eight bars in medium tempo. It is not by BC, and there is absolutely no reason to believe that he nor Coleman Hawkins participate in this session.

METRONOME ALL-STAR BAND**NYC. Feb. 7, 1940**

Harry James (tp), Charlie Spivak, Ziggy Elman (tp-26489), Jack Teagarden (tb), Jack Jenney (tb-89), Benny Goodman (cl), Benny Carter (as), Toots Mondello (as-89), Eddie Miller (ts), Charlie Barnet (ts-89), Jess Stacy (p), Charlie Christian (g), Bob Haggart (b), Gene Krupa (dm), Fletcher Henderson (arr).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia, no BC on 26489-A&B “King Porter Stomp” but:

26490-A	All-Star Strut	In ens 12 bars to solo 12 bars. In ens 24 bars. (M)
26490-B	All-Star Strut	As above. (M)

“... Strut” gives an opportunity to study alternate takes. The altosax solo is better in take A, but the opening altosax in ensemble in take B is something you should pay attention to, you’ll find it rewarding.

FREDDIE RICH & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Feb. 14, 1940**

Nat Natoli, Red Solomon, Roy Eldridge (tp), Larry Altpeter (tb), Benny Carter (as, arr), Sid Stoneburn, Sid Perlmutter (cl, as), Babe Russin, Frank Chase, Stafford Simon (ts), Clyde Hart (p), Ken Binford (g), Hayes Alvis (b), Johnny Williams (dm), Rosemary Calvin (vo-26515,17).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, no altosax on 26515 “A House With A Little Red Barn” but:

26514-A	Till We Meet Again	Solo 8 bars. (M)
26516-A	I’m Forever Blowing Bubbles	Solo 30 bars. (M)
26517-A	How High The Moon	Solo 8 bars. (SM)

This is a real BC session! The formality of leadership is quite uninteresting, this is Benny Carter & his orchestra in the real sense!! The arrangements are certainly his, typical and very nice, in fact, they sound better than his own Vocalion recordings only a fortnight before! His soloing overall is superb, and to highlight the lovely “... Moon” in a slower than usual tempo is somewhat unjust to the other items.

CHAMBER MUSIC OF**LOWER BASIN STREET ORCHESTRA****NYC. May 5, 1940**

Possible personnel: Benny Carter (tp, as), Henry Levine (tp), Jack Epstein (tb), Alfie Evans (cl), Rudolph Adler (ts), Tony Colucci (g), Henry Patent (b), Nat Levine (dm).

Two titles, no BC altosax on “Stardust” but:

Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 2 ½ choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
------------------	------------------------------------

Very fine altosax playing on “... Rose”, among the best BC soli of the period.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. May 20, 1940**

Bill Coleman, Shad Collins, Russell Smith (tp), Sandy Williams, Milton Robinson (tb), Benny Carter (cl, as, ldr), Carl Frye, George Dorsey (as), Stafford Simon, Sammy Davis (ts), Sonny White (p), Ulysses Livingston (g), Hayes Alvis (b), William Purnell (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, no altosax on “Pom Pom” but:

67781-A	Night Hop	Solo with orch 24 bars. (FM)
67783-A	O. K. For Baby	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
67784-A	Serenade To A Sarong	Soli 8 and 7 bars. (SM)

There seems to be more spirit in this big band session than in the preceding Vocalion ones. BC’s altosax soloing on “Serenade ...” is magnificent, and his other contributions are not far behind.

THE CHOCOLATE DANDIES

NYC. May 25, 1940

Roy Eldridge (tp), Benny Carter (as-2995,97, cl-2995-5, p-2996), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Bernard Addison (g), John Kirby (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Commodore, no BC altosax on 2996 “I Surrender Dear” and 2998 “Dedication” but:

2995-6	Smack	Soli 64 and 16 bars to runout. (FM)
2995-5	Smack	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
2995-4	Smack	As below. (FM)
2995-3	Smack	As below. (FM)
2995-2	Smack	As below. (FM)
2994-1	Smack	Soli 64 and 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (FM)
2997-1	I Can’t Believe That YILWM	Solo 64 bars to ens 32 bars. (FM)
2997-2	I Can’t Believe That YILWM	Solo 32 bars. (SM)

The titles from this session may be evaluated very differently depending upon the musician to be examined. As far as BC goes, “Smack” in our opinion is the most interesting item with two fine alternates offering elegant and inventive altosax playing. The lack of piano accompaniment makes the atmosphere slightly fragile, and “Smack” does not belong among the most fiery works in fast medium tempo but is nevertheless quite satisfying. We know that “Smack” in particular has been used to demonstrate BC’s virility, but if such a demonstration should be necessary, there are numerous good examples! “... Love” is very surprising inasmuch the tempo and the layout of the two takes are utterly different. The almost slow medium version seems to benefit BC compared to the fast medium one, but it may be a matter of taste. The latter, however, seems very uneven, almost schizophrenic! Certain parts of the solo are daring and active, while some seem to be just passive fingering. Maybe BC’s mind was somewhere else? Anyway, it is a very interesting item for closer study, though not for pure quality only. The piano contribution is very modest and not to be remembered. Postscript: When we wrote the above, we had two takes of “Smack”, now we have six!! Commodore has been good to us. For once I/we leave it to yours truly to decide which one you like best!!

BUSTER BAILEY & HIS SEXTET

NYC. June 1940

Charlie Shavers (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Benny Carter (as), Billy Kyle (p), John Kirby (b), Zutty Singleton (dm), Judy Ellington (vo-1841,42).

Four titles were recorded for Varsity, no BC on “Seems Like A Month Of S” but:

1842-1	Fable Of A Rose	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (SM)
1843-1	Pinetop’s Boogie Woogie	Solo 24 bars. (M)
1844-1	Eccentric Rag	Solo 16 bars. In ens. 8 bars. (FM)

To quote Helen Dance’s liner notes: The most uncharacteristic selection is the most successful. In “Pinetop ...”, BC plays two bluesy, heated choruses that are

quite untypical but very good. BC also shines in "... Rag" where his sound and style are reminiscent of his work on the magnificent version of "Crazy Rhythm" recorded abroad with Coleman Hawkins". We disagree slightly, "... Rag" seems incontestably the prominent item. "Pinetop ..." is more untypical than exciting, but on the other hand, another proof of versatility.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 23, 1940**

Russell Smith, Jonah Jones, Bobby Williams (tp), Milt Robinson, Madison Vaughan (tb), Benny Carter, Chauncey Houghton (as), George James (as, bar), George Irish, Stafford Simon (ts), Sonny White (p), Everett Barksdale (g), Hayes Alvis (b), William Purnell (dm), Roy Felton (vo-68284,85,87), The Mills Brothers (vo-68284).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

68284-A	By The Watermelon Vine, Lindy Lou	Solo 16 bars. (M)
68285-A	The Last Kiss You Gave Me	Solo 8 bars. (S)
68286-A	Boogie Woogie Sugar Blues	Soli 18, 4 and 2 bars. (SM)
68287-A	I've Been In Love Before	Solo 16 bars. (SM)

Not very exciting this soloing, purely routine work in a rather dull session. "... Before" is rather straight, and he does not seem quite at ease in "Boogie ...". "... Lou" must be considered the best BC item.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 19, 1940**

Personnel as Oct. 23 except Sidney De Paris (tp) replaces Jonah Jones, Benny Morton (tb) added, Benny Carter (cl, as), Roy Felton (vo-57657).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird, (cl)-solo only on 57656 "All Of Me" but:

57657-1	The Very Thought Of You	Solo 16 bars. (S)
57658-1	Cocktails For Two	Solo 32 bars. Long coda. (SM)
57659-1	Takin' My Time	Solo 32 bars. (M)

This is possibly the best BC big band session of the period. The technical quality of the Bluebird recordings is better than that of the Vocalions and Deccas, and the rhythm section seems more active than on the preceding sessions. BC seems to be inspired and plays several soli of noteworthy quality. We enjoy particularly the lovely "Cocktails ..." which is not as straight as one might expect. The other items are also welcome, with "... Time" in front, elegant but somewhat cool. "All Of Me" is particularly interesting due to the characteristic arrangement.

METRONOME ALL-STAR BAND **NYC. Jan. 16, 1941**

Harry James, Ziggy Elman, Cootie Williams (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, Tommy Dorsey (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Benny Carter, Toots Mondello (as), Coleman Hawkins, Tex Beneke (ts), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Buddy Rich (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Victor, one has BC's altosax:

60332-1	One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. (M)
---------	------------------	-------------------

A good but not particularly noteworthy solo, still close to being the highlight of an otherwise disappointing record. The personnel ought to have produced half a dozen smash hits!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 21, 1941**

Russell Smith, Sidney De Paris, Jonah Jones (tp), Vic Dickenson, James Archey, Joe Britton (tb), Benny Carter (tp?, cl?, as), George Dorsey, Bill White (as), George Irish, Fred Mitchell (ts), Sonny White (p), Herb Thomas (g), Ted Sturgis (b), J. C. Heard (dm), Roy Felton (vo-60354).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird,

60351-1	Cuddle Up, Huddle Up	Solo 16 bars. (M)
60352-1	Ev'ry Goodbye Ain't Gone	Solo 16 bars. (SM)

- 60353-1 Babalu Free intro. Straight 16 bars. (FM)
 60354-1 There, I've Said It Again Solo 8 bars. (SM)

Of lesser interest than the previous Bluebird session. There is a fluent solo on "There...", and also a good one on "Cuddle Up ...", but both rather brief. "Babalu" is the sort of corny thing that we did not associate with BC. The altosax contribution is of purely academic interest.

GENE KRUPA & HIS ORCHESTRA Meadowbrook, NJ. March 22, 1941

Bigband personnel with Benny Carter (tp) guesting.

CBS broadcast "Matinee at the Meadowbrook, two titles, one has BC's altosax:

- There'll Be Some Changes Made Soli 36 and 20 bars. (M)

The altosax on "... Made" is unusually happy, informal and swinging on a bouncing rhythm section, a very enjoyable item!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. April 1, 1941

Benny Carter (tp, as), Doc Cheatham, Lincoln Mills, Sidney De Paris (tp), Vic Dickenson, Jimmy Archey, Joe Britton (tb), Ernie Purce, Eddie Barefield (as), Fred Williams, Ernie Powell (ts), Sonny White (p), Herb Thomas (g), Charles Drayton (b), Al Taylor (dm), Maxine Sullivan (vo-63700,03).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird, one BC's altosax:

- 63700-1 Midnight Solo with orch 16 bars. (SM)

While these are nice recordings, they do not feature BC to any great importance. The altosax on "Midnight" is rather straight, and neither do the trumpet contributions here call for superlatives. It is the bandleader's show-off we witness here, not the work of a great improviser.

ARTIE SHAW & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. June 26, 1941

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Artie Shaw (cl, ldr), Benny Carter (cl?, as), twelve (strings), Laura Newell (harp), Sonny White (p), Jimmy Shirley (g), Billy Taylor (b), Shep Sheperd (dm), Lena Horne (vo-66147,49).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, two have altosax:

- 66146-1 Confessin' 16+8 bars 2/2 with (tb),
(tp) on bridge. (SM)
 66147-1 Love Me A Little Little Soli with orch 8, 7 and 2 bars. (M)

One very interesting item, "Confessin'" with a charming BC/Higgy duet. "Love ..." to us is not very interesting, but disagreement has been expressed. Also it has been suggested that BC plays (cl) together with Shaw for 8 bars just preceding Lena Horne's vocal on "Love ...".

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Oct. 16, 1941

Benny Carter (tp, as), Nathaniel Williams, Emmett Berry, Rostelle Reese (tp), James Archey, Benny Morton, John McConnell (tb), Ernest Purce, George James (as), Ernie Powell, Alfred Gibson (ts), Sonny White (p), William Lewis (g), Charles Drayton (b), Berisford Shepherd (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird:

- 66792-1 Sunday Soli 8 and 30 bars. (FM)
 66793-1 Ill Wind As below. (S)
 66793-2 Ill Wind Soli 16 and 8 bars to long coda. (S)
 66794-1 Back Bay Boogie Solo 24 bars. (F)
 66795-1 Tree Of Hope Soli 2 and 8 bars. (M)

The last big band session of the swing era! This Bluebird session concludes another interesting epoch in BC's career. It may not have the immense charm of the European period, and many records stress the leader's role too much, leaving

little room for masterly soloing we know he could offer any time he wanted to. We have an example here, "Sunday", where the longest solo really sparkles the way it should. "Back ..." is good, considering the boogie background. "Tree ..." has some notable details, while "... Wind" is rather dull.

Postscript: It seems appropriate to remark that JB and PB generally have evaluated the European recordings better than the American ones of this period. We know that this is a sensitive subject, and that many will disagree. IST considers that the American recordings are at least as good as the European ones, particularly the English ones. It seems fair to express, not hide, this difference in basic attitude, to let you approach the different periods with your own basic emotions!

CHAMBER MUSIC

OF LOWER BASIN STREET ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 10, 1941

Benny Carter (as), unknown (rhythm).

I Can't Get Started

Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)

Sweet but very ambitious altosax playing. The solo presents incredible technique and must be considered important!

METRONOME ALL-STAR BAND

NYC. Dec. 31, 1941

Harry James, Cootie Williams, Roy Eldridge (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, Lou McGarity (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Benny Carter, Toots Mondello (as), Vido Musso, Tex Beneke (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Doc Goldberg (b), Gene Krupa (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia:

32079-1	Royal Flush	Solo 8 bars (last). (M)
32079-2	Royal Flush	As above. (M)
32079-3	Royal Flush	As above. (M)
32080-1	Dear Old Southland	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
32080-2	Dear Old Southland	As above. (F)
32080-3	Dear Old Southland	As above. (FM)

This session does not have as much colour as the setup would lead to believe. However, BC's solo on "Dear Old ..." must be considered one of the better ones of the time. In "... Flush" he is left with so little space that there is very little to evaluate. Postscript: Two fine alternates of "Dear Old ..." have appeared since then! Tempi are notably different, as are the altosax soli!!

METRONOME ALL-STAR LEADERS

NYC. Jan. 16, 1942

Cootie Williams (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Benny Carter (as), Charlie Barnet (ts), Count Basie (p), Alvino Rey (g), John Kirby (b), Gene Krupa (dm).

One title was recorded for Columbia:

32261-1	I Got Rhythm	Solo 16+8 bars, (dm) on bridge. In ens 16 bars. (FM)
32261-2	I Got Rhythm	As above. (FM)
32261-3	I Got Rhythm	As above. (FM)

This sounds like an augmented Benny Goodman sextet, without Charlie Christian! In our opinion, BC is by far the best soloist, and three takes give him ample opportunity to show off. An unmotivated drum bridge disturbs, in fact the drums are very heavy all the way, but nevertheless "I Got Rhythm" is noteworthy. The takes are different, the altosax quality has been suggested to be ranked with the takenumber, decide for yourself!

MARK WARNOW & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Feb. 9, 1942

Mark Warnow (dir), Russ Case, Ivor Lloyd, Nat Natoli (tpp), Cliff Heather, Larry Altpeter (tb), Sid Tucker (cl, as, bar), Ezell Watson (cl, as), Bernie Ladd, Reggie Merrill (cl, as), Benny Carter (cl, as, ts), Babe Russin (ts), eight (vln), Bernie Lazaroff (p), Ben Mortell (g), R. Berman (harp), Sam Shoobe (b), John Williams (dm), The Hit Paraders (vo-group-71784,86), Joan Edwards (vo-71784,75), Barry Wood (vo-71783,84).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, one has BC:

71783-1 These Foolish Things Soli 16, 4 and 2 bars. (S)

Interesting discovery! "... Foolish ..." is a BC-item with the record label stating: 'saxophone solo by Benny Carter'. He states the theme for 16 bars and after the vocal adds some nicely constructed variations.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **L.A. Dec. 18, 1942**

Personnel, tentatively based on BC's opening at the Swing Club in LA, Nov. 1942 (ref. Down Beat, Nov. 15, 1942, p. 11 (ref. Ed Berger)): Benny Carter (tp, as), George Treadwell, Hal Mitchell, Chiefe Scott (tp), Earl Hardy, John "Shorty" Haughton, J. J. Johnson, Alton Moore (tb), Ted Barnett, Stretch Ridley, Gene Porter, Eddie De Verteuil (reeds), Ted Brannon (p), Johnny Smith (g), Curly Russell (b), Alvin Burroughs (dm), Savannah Churchill (vo).

AFRS Jubilee no. 4, no BC on "All I Need Is You" and "Unknown Title" (NC) but:

Stompin' At The Savoy Solo 64 bars. (F)

I Can't Get Started Intro 4 bars. Solo 48 bars to
long coda, orch on last 16. (S)

Ol' Man River Solo 32 bars. (F)

This is the first of the Jubilee programs with Benny Carter, and there are three very interesting items. "... Savoy" has a lovely altosax solo with only rhythm backing, although the complete orchestra is present for the rest of the item. The solo contains many repetitive phrases but at the same time, or just therefore, seems quite original concept. The version of "... Started" is magnificent, although sweet it is full of intricate details and fast fingering, and this kind of music cannot be presented more professionally than BC does here. "... River" is utterly fast, but BC seems unconcerned as if the tempo was only medium. The "Unknown Title" is a very charming riff tune featuring the band to advantage.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, Dec. 1942/Jan. 1943**

Similar. AFRS Jubilee no. 7. Details unknown.

Hollywood, early 1943

Similar. AFRS Jubilee no. 15. Details unknown.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **L.A. early 1943**

Similar. Command Performance, two titles:

Back Bay Boogie Solo 24 bars. (F)

Opening Night Solo 20 bars. (F)

This program was not in the original solography. Strongly swinging, hot numbers, but nothing particular about the altosax soloing.

CAB CALLOWAY & HIS ORCHESTRA **L.A. Jan./Feb. 1943**

Shad Collins, Jonah Jones, Russell Smith, Lammar Wright (tp), Tyree Glenn, Keg Johnson, Quentin Jackson (tb), Andy Brown (cl, as), Benny Carter, Hilton Jefferson (as), Al Gibson, Illinois Jacquet (ts), Greely Walton (bar), Benny Paine (p), Danny Barker (g), Milt Hinton (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Quote Ed Berger: "It took place on the sound stage during the filming of the picture "Stormy Weather" but was not intended for use in the film":

Body And Soul Solo 32 bars. (S)

A very nice ballad contribution, following Illinois Jacquet and preceding Hilton Jefferson (possibly there is a splice between the two altosax soli).

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **L.A. March 24, 1943**
 Benny Carter (tp, as, arr, comp), Gerald Wilson, Snooky Young, Walter Williams, Fred Trainer (tp), John Haughton, J. J. Johnson, Alton Moore (tb), Kirk Bradford, Willard Brown, Gene Porter, Eddie Davis (reeds), Ted Brannon (p), Curly Russell (b), Oscar Bradley (dm), The Charioteers (vo-group).
 Four titles from Radio Show "Blueberry Hill", one has altosax:

I Can't Get Started Solo 32 bars. ()

ALICE FAYE VOCAL WITH
BENNY GOODMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA **L.A. March/April 1943**
 Bigband personnel including guest soloist Benny Carter (as, arr).
 Soundtrack of film "The Gang's All Here":

No Love, No Nothin' Solo 14 bars. ()

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **L.A. April 10, 1943**
 Personnel as March 24. Savannah Churchill (vo). "Blues Skies" is with quartet.
 Broadcast from Hollywood Club, seven titles, five have altosax:

Melancholy Lullaby (NC) Straight 8 bars. ()

Blue Skies Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. ()

One O'Clock Jump Solo 20 bars. ()

Ill Wind Soli 10, 10 and 14 bars. ()

Back Bay Boogie (NC) Solo 24 bars. ()

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, May – Sept. 1943**
 Personnels similar to above.
 AFRS Jubilee no. 27, 35 and 44. Details unknown.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, Sept. 1943**
 Personnel similar to above.
 Downbeat 44, eleven titles, no altosax on "Fish Fry" and "Why Don't You Do Right" but:

Melancholy Lullaby Solo 4 bars. (S)

Sleep Solo 25 bars. (F)

Ill Wind Soli 20 and 6 bars to long coda. (S)

I Used To Love You Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (FM)

Honeysuckle Rose Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)

Midnight Solo 16 bars. (SM)

On The Alamo Solo with orch 16 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)

Swanee River Solo 18+6 bars, (p) on bridge.

(FM)

All Of Me Solo 14 bars. (M)

A long, fine program with no interruptions apart from some small talk between BC and the announcer. The band is very attractive here in all tempi, maybe it is appropriate to remind you to listen to slower tunes like "Ill Wind" and "Midnight", where BC plays rather in a straight fashion but with great charisma. His greatest soloing is on the altosax, "Sleep" for instance is masterly in a very fast tempo. In "... Alamo", the orchestra lays off during his long solo which is impressing, and "Swanee ..." should also be noted. "All Of Me", while good, is an amputated construction, the song 'asks' for a 32 bars solo!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA San Francisco, Oct. 25, 1943

Claude Dunson, Vernon Porter, John Buckner, Freddie Webster (tp), Alton Moore, John Haughton, J. J. Johnson (tb), Benny Carter (tp, as, arr), Porter Kilbert (as), Gene Porter, Bumps Myers (ts), Willard Brown (as, bar), Ted Brannon (p), Ulysses Livingston (g), Curly Russell (b), Oscar Bradley (dm), Savannah Churchill (vo-94).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, no BC on 94 "Just A Baby's Prayer At Midnight" but:

93-A	Poincana	Solo with orch 24 bars. Solo 7 and 4 bars to coda. (SM)
95-A	Hurry, Hurry	Solo 6 bars. (S)
95-X	Hurry, Hurry	As above. (S)
96	Love For Sale	Soli 4 and 16 bars. (M)

Not much soloing on the first Capitol date. Only the longest solo on "Love ..." is of the noteworthy kind and quite a lot so. However, the orchestra is a most valuable asset here. Our feelings may be summed up briefly as follows: The orchestra of 1940-41 was the end of something, this is a beginning! The arrangements are varied and interesting on all items and in all tempi. For some reason BC did not quite 'make it' as a top modern band leader and arranger, more or less forgotten by many today. Why? Postscript: This was written tentatively before we had heard the two takes of "Hurry ...". The altosax soli are quite different and very elaborate, maybe the highlights of the session!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA Hollywood, May 21, 1944

John Carroll, Edwin Davis, Milton Fletcher, Karl George (tp), Alton Moore, John Haughton, J. J. Johnson, Bart Varsalona (tb), Benny Carter (tp, as, arr), Porter Kilbert (as), Gene Porter, Bumps Myers (ts), Willard Brown (as, bar), Gerald Wiggins (p), W. J. Edwards (g), Charles Drayton (b), Max Roach (dm), Dick Gray (vo-255).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, no altosax on 257-3 "I Surrender Dear" but:

254-1	I Can't Escape From You	Solo with orch 6 bars. (SM)
254-3	I Can't Escape From You	As above. (SM)
255-2	I'm Lost	Solo with orch 8 bars. (S)
256-3	I Can't Get Started	Solo 32 bars. Coda. (S)
256-?	I Can't Get Started	As above. (S)

Again one should concentrate on the band and the arrangements first. Note for instance the lovely sax scoring on "... Escape ..."! The altosax soli on "... Started" are not by far as straight as you would believe, note the last 8 bars of take ? or the preceding 8 bars of take 3. The main item is however is "... Dear" with BC's trumpet soaring high!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA Hollywood, May/June 1944

Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as).

AFRS Jubilee 83, four titles, one has BC's altosax:

Ol' Man River Solo 32 bars. (F)

Hollywood, June 1944

Similar. AFRS Jubilee 87, four titles, two have BC's altosax:

I Lost My Sugar In Salt Lake City Intro 4 bars. (S)

Rose Room Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Recognize how good the band is playing at this time! This is evident from "Sweet ...", where BC's trumpet leads into some excellent big band playing. Incidentally,

the 16 bars altosax solo here is not by BC. However, there is no doubt that BC is playing altosax on "Rose Room"!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 11, 1944?**

Benny Carter (tp, as, arr), Bumps Myers (ts), probably regular band personnel.
One title was recorded for VDisc, unissued but acetate exists:

Among My Souvenirs Solo 32 bars. ()

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. prob. Nov. 22, 1944**

Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as).
Broadcast from Apollo Theatre, two titles:

Blue Skies Solo with orch 16 bars. (M)

Takin' My Time (NC) Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)

A fine altosax on "... Time" is the highlight.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, March (or April 3), 1945**

Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as).
AFRS Jubilee 125 (reissued 219), five titles, one has BC's altosax:

Just You, Just Me Solo 4 bars. (M)

Hollywood, March 1945

AFRS Jubilee 126 (partly reissued 207), seven titles, one has BC's altosax:

Back Bay Boogie Solo 24 bars. (FM)

Note another version of "Sweet ...", good but with a fluff (not intentional??) in bar 11. Apart from this, there is not much out of the ordinary on these two shows. Notable is the fast altosax solo on "Back Bay ...".

CAPITOL JAZZMEN **Hollywood, March 30, 1945**

Bill Coleman (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Benny Carter (as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Nat King Cole (p), Oscar Moore (g), John Kirby (b), Max Roach (dm), Kay Starr (vo-600,01).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol:

599-1	You Can Depend On Me	As below. (SM)
599-2	You Can Depend On Me	As below. (SM)
599-3mst	You Can Depend On Me	Solo 16 bars. (M)
599-4	You Can Depend On Me	As above. (M)
600-1	If I Could Be With You	As below. (SM)
600-2	If I Could Be With You	As below. (SM)
600-3mst	If I Could Be With You	Solo 18 bars. (SM)
601-1	Stormy Weather	As below. (S)
601-2mst	Stormy Weather	Solo 8 bars to obligato 8 bars. (S)
601-3	Stormy Weather	As above. (S)
602-1	Riffamarole	As below. (F)
602-2	Riffamarole	As below. (F)
602-3	Riffamarole	As below. (FM)
602-4	Riffamarole	As below. (F)
602-5mst	Riffamarole	Solo 24 bars. (F)

Several good contributions by BC here. The elegant “If I Could ...” is certainly the best one (note the lovely bar 7) with “Stormy ...” coming in a good second. “You Can ...” is pale and anemic, while “Riffmarole” is active and more energetic. Two alternates have the necessary differences. Postscript of Aug. 4, 2019: The complete session with alternates have now become available, giving us many new excellent altosax soli!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, April 2, 1945**
AFRS Jubilee 127, two titles, one has BC’s altosax:

La Rosita (Slick Mix) Solo 14 bars. (FM)

Quite ordinary soh, but “La Rosita” is a nice performance as a whole.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, April 2, 1945**
Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as, arr).
Two titles were recorded for Capitol:

610-5 June Comes Around Every Year Lead. (SM)

611-3 Malibu Soli and lead 16, 8 and 8 bars. (S)

A beautiful song with appropriate arrangement and a lovely altosax giving the concept ‘sweet music’ a new dimension! Look for this item for your own good.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, April 2, 1945**
Similar. AFRS Jubilee 129 (reissued 220), four titles, one has BC’s altosax:

Ol’ Man River Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)

Hollywood, April 1945

Same/similar. AFRS Jubilee 131, one has BC’s altosax:

Somebody Loves Me Solo 8 bars. (FM)

Hollywood, April 1945

AFRS Jubilee 132, two titles, but no altosax.

Hollywood, May 1945

AFRS Jubilee 136 (reissued 222), three have BC’s altosax:

Sunday Soli 8 and 30 bars. (FM)

Habanera Solo 16 bars. (FM)

The Early Bird/Boyd Solo 8 bars. (FM)

From these programs, one item is to be highlit before all others, “Sunday”. The longest solo is one of the most juicy, melodic, inspired and well constructed from this period! Fine versions of “... River” and “Somebody ...” must also be noted. The altosax on “Sleep” cannot be BC’s, if it is, he must have become ill!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, 1944-1946**
Listed below are titles not identified completely in other Jubilee and other shows:

Two Again Solo with orch 16 bars. (S)

Somebody Loves Me Solo 8 bars. (FM)

Moonglow Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (M)

After You’ve Gone Solo 42 bars. (F)

AFRS Jubilee 207:

Chicago Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Downbeat 44?

I Heard You Cried Last Night	Soli 8 and 8 bars. (S)
Prelude To A Kiss	Soli 16, 14 and 4 bars to coda, first and last with orch. (S)

Several good soli, particularly "Moonglow" should be noted. "Somebody ..." sounds very promising but has only 8 bars. The band is lovely here, though! "After ..." and "Chicago" are also sparkling affairs in uptempo. While "... Night" is only sweet, "... Kiss" is a fine improvisation, note for instance the excellent 14 bars!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Dec. 12, 1945**
Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as, arr).
Five titles were recorded for Capitol, three issued:

838-5	Cuttin' Time	Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)
839-4	Forever Blue	Solo with orch 8 bars. (S)
847-2	Prelude To A Kiss	Soli with orch 8, 14 and 4 bars, last to coda. (S)
848-1	Just You, Just Me	Soli with orch 2 and 6 bars. (FM)

Again the arrangements are more prominent than the soh. From either viewpoint, the lovely "Prelude ..." is the most noteworthy, being elegant to the point of luxuriousness.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 5, 1946**
Similar.
Three titles were recorded for DeLuxe, 165 "Lonesome Morning", issued as Lee Richardson (vo), has not been available but:

166	Jump Call	Solo 30 bars. (F)
167	Patience And Fortitude	Solo 17 bars. (M)

An elegant, almost simple solo in "Jump Call", easy to forget in the praise for the artistry of this modern arrangement and orchestra. Same comment for "Patience...", except that the solo is far from simple!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 7/8, 1946**
Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as).
Six titles were recorded for De Luxe, four have BC's altosax:

168	Diga Diga Doo	Solo 32 bars. (F)
168-alt.	Diga Diga Doo	As above. (F)
170	Some Of These Days	Solo 16 bars, first half with orch. (M)
171	I'm The Caring Kind	Solo 8 bars. (S)
173	Rose Room	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

These sessions are to our taste very treasurable. A magnificent modern orchestra, varied arrangements and lovely BC soli, supported by Dexter Gordon and Don Byas. "Diga ..." is the most impressive in a fast tempo, really fireworks! For soloing, note "... These Days". Also note the totality of the beautiful "... Boy".

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, March 31, 1946**
Personnel according to Tom Lord: Miles Davis, Howard McGhee (tp), Al Grey, possibly Britt Woodman (tb), Benny Carter (as), Bumps Myers, unknown (ts), Sonny White (p), James Cannady (g), Thomas Moultrie (b), Percy Brice (dm).
Broadcast from "The Streets Of Paris", three titles:

Just You, Just Me	Solo with orch 32 bars. Solo 36 bars (fade out). With orch 32 bars to coda. (FM)
-------------------	--

Don't Blame Me Solo with orch 20 bars (fade out). Solo
32 bars. With orch 8 bars to coda. (SM)

Sweet Georgia Brown Solo 64 bars. (F)

Nice informal real jam session with Sonny White setting a strict stride pace. "Just You ..." seems to consist of two acetate parts, and BC's solo falls in the middle, unfortunately, he seems to thrive very well! Same happens to the first solo in "... Me", but the second is a complete chorus, a magnificent contribution!! "Sweet ..." has good BC, but here Miles Davis is fantastic!

ARNOLD ROSS QUINTET**L.A. April 7, 1946**

Benny Carter (as), Arnold Ross (p), Allan Reuss (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Keynote:

145-1	The Moon Is Low	Soli 32 and 32 bars to coda. (M)
145-2	The Moon Is Low	Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (M)
145-4	The Moon Is Low	As take 2. (M)
146-1	Stairway To The Stars	Soli 16 and 14 bars to long coda. (S)
147-2	Bye Bye Blues	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. (F)
147-3	Bye Bye Blues	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (F)
147-4	Bye Bye Blues	As take 3. (F)
148-1	I Don't Know Why	Intro and solo 16 bars. Solo 6 bars to coda. (S)

Two of the titles feature ballad-Carter at his most prominent, and this time with a small group, quite a rarity among the numerous big band recordings and broadcasts. Fine sound and expertly accompaniment make "Stairway ..." and "... Why" very much treasured BC post-war items. The faster items cannot quite compare, particularly "... Low", which is rather straight. "Bye Bye ..." is better, first chorus straight, the second and third improvised, but the piano and guitar soloing are at least as good. Postscript: The above was written upon one take of each only. The full session appeared later! Dig!!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA**Hollywood, early April 1946**

Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as).

AFRS Jubilee 184, four titles, three have BC's altosax:

Hop, Skip And Jump (Who's Sorry Now?)	Lead 32 bars. (M)
I Can't Get Started	Solo 32 bars. Coda. (S)
Jump Call	Solo with orch 30 bars. (F)

Hollywood, early April 1946

AFRS Jubilee 186, three titles, two have altosax:

Just You, Just Me	Soli 6 and 8 bars. (FM)
Jump Call	Solo with orch 30 bars. (F)

Possibly belonging to Jubilee 186. Personnel: Benny Carter, Charlie Parker, Willie Smith (as), Nat King Cole (p), Oscar Moore (g), Johnny Miller (b), Buddy Rich (dm). Ballad medley, BC plays:

Body And Soul	Solo 48 bars. (S)
Cherokee	Acc. (as-CP) in coda. (F)

Hollywood, April 1946

AFRS Jubilee 191, five titles, one has BC's altosax:

I'm The Caring Kind Solo 8 bars. (S)

"Jump Call"s have flashing soli in a very fast tempo, equalled only by Charlie Parker in 1946. "Body ..." is excellent and characteristic, seems more inspired than the Calloway version.

BENNY CARTER QUINTET **L.A. April 22, 1946**

Benny Carter (as), Sonny White (p), unknown (g), (b), (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Keynote:

153-1	Moonglow	Soli 32 and 32 bars. (SM)
153-2	Moonglow	Soli 32 and 16 bars. (SM)
153-4	Moonglow	As take 2. (SM)
154-1	Give Me Something To Remember YB	Soli 8 and 16 bars. (SM)
154-2	Give Me Something To Remember YB	As above. (SM)
155-1	Lady Be Good	Solo 64 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (rhythm) on bridge. (F)
155-2	Lady Be Good	As above. (FM)
155-3	Lady Be Good	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (FM)
156-1	Deep Purple	Soli 16 and 16 bars to coda. (S)
156-3	Deep Purple	Soli 16 and 8 bars to coda. (S)
156-5	Deep Purple	As take 3. (S)

This session was unknown to us (and to almost everybody else) thirty years ago, and it is therefore a pleasure to have such an important discovery. The rhythm is mostly unknown but very good with a guitarist we should like to identify, and BC's old piano mate This is therefore definitely a swing session, a good one as such! While BC now is in the process of changing his style away from romanticism and with a cooler sound in his horn, this is enjoyable even with "old" points of views! With lots of alternate takes, the session represents a lot of new music, new examples of BC's bottomless creativity. I do not want to go into more details, all tracks are noteworthy, just go ahead!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Southgate, Ca., Spring 1946**

Similar. Broadcast from Trianon Ballroom, no altosax on "One O'Clock Jump" but:

Melancholy Lullaby (Theme)	Solo with orch 4 bars. (S)
Rose Room	Solo with orch 16 bars. (FM)
I Can't Get Started	Solo with orch 32 bars. Coda. (S)
Night And Day	Intro. Solo with orch 16 bars. (M)

Nothing in particular on this broadcast, not in the original solography.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, April 29, 1946**

AFRS Jubilee 193, four titles, two have BC's altosax:

Prelude To A Kiss	Soli 8, 14 and 4 bars to coda, first and last with orch. (S)
Back Bay Boogie	Solo 24 bars. (F)

Southgate, Ca., April 30, 1946

Broadcast from Trianon Ballroom (Ed Berger coll.), five titles, two have altosax:

I'm Gonna Make Believe IGMAS	Solo with orch 8 bars. (M)
------------------------------	----------------------------

I'm The Caring Kind Solo with orch 8 bars. (S)

Southgate, Ca., May 5, 1946

Same. Seven titles, three have altosax:

Dream Castle Soli 20 and 4 bars. ()

Back Bay Boogie (NC) Solo 24 bars (NC). ()

Night And Day Intro 4 bars.
Solo with orch 16 bars. (M)

Hollywood, June 1946

AFRS Jubilee 203, five titles, three have BC's altosax:

Love For Soli 4 and 32 bars. (FM)

I Got It Bad Solo 14 bars. (S)

Patience And Fortitude Solo 17 bars. (M)

Hollywood, June 1946

AFRS Jubilee 205, four titles, three have BC's altosax:

I'm In The Mood For Love Obligato 32 and 16 bars. (S)

Malibu Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge.
Solo 8 bars. (S)

What Is This Thing Called Love? Solo 16+8
bars,
orch on bridge. (FM)

Several very interesting items on these programs. "Love For Sale" is a magnificent version, far better than the Capitol reocording with incredible altosax. "I Got ..." is sweet but of the elaborate, tricky kind, far from straight, you should note this one! And "Patience ..." has a quite original contribution, where one particularly should keep ears open to the first 2 bars break. While "What Is ..." is quite ordinary, "Malibu" is a very beautiful song, the arrangement is a great pleasure, and BC's straight altosax is heavenly! Finally "I'm In The Mood ...", a quite sensational quartet piece with the most lovely obligato you can imagine!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Aug. 1946

Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (as).

Four titles were recorded for DeLuxe:

236 Re-Bop Boogie Solo 24 bars. (M)

237 Twelve O'Clock Jump Solo 32 bars. (M)

238 Your Conscience Tells You So Solo 8 bars. (M)

239 Mexican Hat Dance Solo 4 bars. (M)

"Mexican ..." is a corny and disappointing piece of quasi music. But "... Jump" is not!! A clever arrangement, colourful section work and a masterly solo. Compare it with those of ten years earlier, and you will find an enormous difference. It is even more refined now, seemingly spontaneous but perfect as a composition. And the atmosphere is much cooler. It is quite understandable that some Benny Carter fans treasure the bands and the soloing of 1943-1947 more than that of any other period. "... Boogie" and "You ..." do not challenge "... Jump" but have fine altosax soli.

BENNY CARTER & HIS CHOCOLATE DANDIES NYC. Aug. 23, 1946

Buck Clayton (tp), Al Grey (tb), Benny Carter (cl-2694, as-2695,96,97), Ben Webster (ts), Sonny White (p), John Simmons (b), Sid Catlett (dm, vo-2695).

Four titles were recorded for Swing, no BC on 2695 "Out Of My Way", (cl) only on 2694-1&2 "Sweet Georgia Brown" but:

How High The Moon

In ens 32 bars. Soli 64 and
8 bars. In ens 8 bars. (FM)

In a way, this can be considered the final step towards perfection, but is jazz sup-posed to be perfect? (In “Perdido”, perfection starts six bars late, he is not quite ready when his turn comes). BC plays scholarly, as being in a class room and not upon a stage! Everything is so clever, almost well thought out in advance, impressive but not really exciting. To criticize perfect performances may seem unjust, and we hope BC himself will forgive us our reservations. As the highlight we choose “One O’Clock Jump”, otherwise dominated by a fantastic performance by the great Wardell Gray.

Postscript (then): Several Jubilee shows are from late 1947 and 1948, but the contents may have been recorded much earlier. Time and space did not permit a list of such shows and items. Please help us to get the Jubilee chronology correct! Postscript (now): Nobody did ...

Such ended our solography many years ago, and I choose not to extend it further, for the moment. However, Benny Carter continues to play beautiful altosax for many, many years to come. Possibly we should look closely into his later works, with your assistance.

Late history:

Continued to do occasional tours, but from the late 1940s worked mainly as a composer-arranger for the film industry. Led own bands in and around Hollywood during the 1950s, regularly big band residency in Los Angeles (1955). In the 1950s and 1960s did brief overseas tours with Norman Granz’s ‘Jazz at the Philharmonic’, played solo engagements in Cologne, Germany (late 1961). In the late 1950s and 1960s scored for several national television series including ‘M’ Squad, Alfred Hitchcock’s series, the Chrysler Theatre programmes, etc., also acted as musical director for various vocal stars, including Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Ray Charles, Peggy Lee and Louis Armstrong. Restricted his playing to the alto sax during the 1960s. Brief spell with Duke Ellington early in 1968, later that year played solo dates in Britain. During the past 25 years Benny Carter arranged and composed music for dozens of important films; films in which he played include: ‘Stormy Weather’, ‘The Snows Of Kilimanjaro’, ‘The View from Pompey’s Head’, ‘As Thousands Cheer’, ‘Clash By Night’, etc. etc.. Resumed a more active performing schedule in the 1970s; he appeared at major festivals and nightclubs, made annual tours to Europe and Japan,, and after a ten-year hiatus, resumed recording on a regular basis. He also began a new career as an educator, spending several periods in residence at universities. Princeton University, where he was a frequent lecturer, awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1974. He remained active at least until 1997 when he visited Oslo Jazz Festival. (Ref. also ‘The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz’).

Postscript of March 3, 2014:

I have decided to include sessions for a few more years, including 1949, but still incomplete:

HOLLYWOOD HUCKSTERS

LA. May 29, 1947

Charlie Shavers (tp), Benny Goodman (cl, vo), Benny Carter (as), Dave Cavanaugh (ts), Joe Koch (bar), Red Norvo (vib, xyl), Jimmy Rowles (p), Irving Ashby (g), Red Callender (b), Lee Young (dm), Stan Kenton (vo).

Three titles were recorded for Capitol:

2006-2	I Apologize	Solo 4 bars. (S)
2007-4	Them There Eyes	Solo 16 bars. (M)

2008-1 Happy Blues Solo 12 bars. (M)

Very elegant altosax soli here, even the brief “I ...” should be noted!

JULIA LEE & HER BOY FRIENDS

LA. June 16, 1947

Bobby Sherwood (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Benny Carter (as), Dave Cavanaugh (ts), Red Norvo (xyl), Julia Lee (p, vo), Jack Marshall (g), Red Callender (b), Sam Lovett (dm), Joe Alexander (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, one has BC:

2061 Mama Don't Allow It Solo 16 bars. (FM)

LA. June 18, 1947

Same except Red Nichols (cnt) replaces Sherwood.

Four titles, three have BC:

2066-1 My Sin Solo 16 bars. (M)

2066-2 My Sin As above. (M)

2066-3 My Sin As above. (M)

2066-4 My Sin As above. (M)

2067-5 When You're Smiling Solo 16 bars. (M)

2068-3 I Was Wrong Solo 8 bars. (S)

Nice and informal sessions, predominantly vocal but with solo contributions. BC plays coolly but par excellence all over, and particularly the slow “... Wrong” is attractive. And of course, “My Sin” is the most exciting item with four fine altosax soli with the necessary and exciting differences!

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

Hollywood, Ca., July 16/17, 1947

Personnel including Benny Carter (as).

Film music “A Song Is Born”, information later.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA

Hollywood, Ca., ca. Aug. 1947

Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as), Dexter Gordon, Lucky Thompson (ts).

AFRS Jubilee 246 & 248, “Fish Fry” and “Prelude To A Kiss” have not been available, no BC on “My Gal Sal” and “One O'Clock Jump”'s but:

Jump Call Solo 32 bars. (F)

Just You, Just Me Solo with orch 8 bars. (F)

“Jump ...” is typical the perfect and cool BC in uptempo.

JOE ALEXANDER VOCAL ACC. BY

DAVE CAVANAUGH's ORCHESTRA

Hollywood, Ca., Sept. 22, 1947

Ernie Royal (tp), Clint Neagley (tb), Benny Carter (as), Dave Cavanaugh, Babe Russin (ts), Joe Koch (bar), Juan Panalle (p), Jack Marshall (g), Harry Babasin (b), Lee Young (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, three have BC:

2264 When I Close My Eyes Solo 8 bars. (S)

2265 I'm A Three Time Loser WATTG Intro 2 bars. Obligato
8 bars. Solo 12 bars. (S)

2266 So Long Darling Solo 12 bars. (S)

Postscript of May 2, 2018: This was a very pleasant surprise and stimulates the research for the remaining three items! Postscript of Jan. 4, 2020: Yes there are two more with very nice, slow and sweet altosax playing!!

RED NORVO's NINE

LA. Oct. 14, 1947

Bobby Sherwood (cnt), Benny Carter (as, arr, comp), Dave Cavanaugh, Eddie Miller (ts), Red Norvo (vib), Arnold Ross (p), Dave Barbour (g), Billy Hadnott (b), Jesse Price (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Capitol:

2345-5	Hollyridge Drive	Solo 16 bars. (M)
2345-7	Hollyridge Drive	As above. (M)
2346-4	Under A Blanket Of Blue	Solo/straight 8 bars. (S)

Two competent and different soli on "... Drive" but my favourite is the sugarsweet and yet cool "... Blue" in a very slow tempo.

KAY STARR

LA. Oct. 20, 1947

Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (as), Kay Starr (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, but no altosax soli.

JULIA LEE & HER BOY FRIENDS

LA. Nov. 11, 1947

Geechie Smith (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Benny Carter (as, tb-2441/42), Dave Cavanaugh (ts), Julia Lee (p, vo), Jack Marshall (g), Red Callender (b), Sam Lovett (dm)

Eight titles were recorded for Capitol, 2441 "Pagan Love Song" and 2442 "All I Ever Do Is Worry" have trombone soli (!), three have altosax soli:

2443	Take It Or Leave It	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
2445	King Size Papa	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
2447	I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles	Solo 32 bars. (M)

Same style, same quality as on the previous Lee session. Particularly "... Bubbles" should be noted.

PEGGY LEE

LA. Nov. 12, 1947

Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as), Peggy Lee (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, but no altosax soli.

JULIA LEE & HER BOY FRIENDS

LA. Nov. 13, 1947

Personnel as Nov. 11 except Billy Hadnott (b) replaces Callender, Smith omitted. Five titles were recorded for Capitol, 2460 "Crazy World" has trombone duet, two have altosax soli:

2458	I Didn't Like It The First Time	Solo 16 bars. (M)
2461	Tell Me Daddy	Solo 12 bars. (M)

Fine altosax soli here!

PEGGY LEE

LA. Nov. 20, 1947

Personnel including Benny Carter (as), Peggy Lee (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, but no altosax soli.

FREDDIE SLACK & HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. Nov. 25, 1947

Bigband personnel including Benny Carter (as).

Three titles were recorded for Capitol, but no altosax soli.

ANITA O'DAY

LA. late 1947

Bigband personnel with Benny Carter (as, arr), Ralph Burns (arr), Anita O'Day (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Signature, five issued, three have BC:

656	I Told Ya I Love Ya	Solo 4 bars. (M)
658	I Ain't Getting Any Younger	Solo 12 bars. (M)
660	Key Largo	Break. (SM)

There is a fine altosax solo on "... Younger"!

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. Jan. 1948

Lou Obergh (tp), Henry Coker (tb), Benny Carter (as, arr), Bumps Myers (ts), Cyril Haynes (p), Jack Marshall (g), Dallas Bartley (b), Henry Green (dm), Bob Decker, Emma Lou Welch, The Enchanters (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Reina:

Baby You're Mine For Keeps	Solo/straight 6 bars. (SM)
You'll Never Break My Heart Again	Solo/straight 6 bars. (M)
Chipancingo	Solo/straight 12 bars. (M)
An Old Love Story	Solo/straight 8 bars. (S)
Reina	Solo/straight 16 bars. (SM)
Let Us Drink A Toast Together	No solo. (M)

How did BC get into this mess? Not that he ever plays badly, but this session is less jazzy, more commercial and total worthless than you can imagine. Play his sweet straight sections once and forget the whole thing.

BENNY CARTER

& HIS ORCHESTRA

Pasadena, Ca., ca. Feb./March 1948

Personnel including Benny Carter (tp, as).

AFRS Jubilee No. 276 & 284, not available.

LEE RICHARDSON VOCAL ACC. BY

BENNY CARTER ALL STARS

LA. Sept. 1948

Personnel including Benny Carter (as).

Four titles were recorded for DeLuxe, not available.

DEBBIE ANDREWS

LA. 1949

Personnel including Benny Carter (as).

Two titles were recorded for Mercury, not available.

BENNY CARTER & HIS ALL STARS

LA. May 1949

Benny Carter (tp, as), probably Chuck Peterson (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Ben Webster (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), John Simmons (b), Jackie Mills (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Modern, "Perdido" and "Time Out For The Blues", but no BC.

LA. May 1949

Same except Charlie Drayton (b) replaces Simmons. Two titles, "Surfboard" and "You Are Too Beautiful", but no BC.

Why this is presented as a BC-session is an enigma, because it is all Ben.

KITTY WHITE WITH

DAVE CAVANAUGH & HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. July 8, 1949

Personnel including Benny Carter (as), Kitty White (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, not available.

JOE ROBINSON ACC. BY

BENNY CARTER & HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. Sept. 22, 1949

Personnel including Benny Carter (as, arr), Joe Robinson (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, but no altosax soli.