

The

GUITAR

of

CHARLES HENRY
CHRISTIAN
“CHARLIE”

Solographer: Jan Evensmo
Previous update: Jan. 5, 2015
New update: Sept. 28, 2020, based upon research work by James Accardi
Correction: Nov. 19, 2020

Born: Dallas, Texas, 1916
 Died: New York, March 2, 1942

Introduction:

Charlie Christian was a great favourite of Oslo Jazz Circle, and personally I consider him not only a brilliant guitar player and improviser, but one of the most important jazz artists ever, having a profound influence on the development of this art form, although he passed away so tragically early, 26 years old. I wrote his solography in my Jazz Solography Series Vol. 4 back in the 1970s, and this work is the basis of the revised solography below.

History:

All four of his brothers were musicians, two (at least) worked professionally: Edward (piano/bass) and Clarence; their father, a blind musician, played guitar and sang. The family moved to Oklahoma City in 1921. Charlie started on trumpet, then specialized on guitar from the age of 12, he also worked on string bass and piano during the 1930s. Played in the 'family' band from early teens, did local club work at 15 and there met Lester Young for the first time. Played in his brother's band, 'The Jolly Jugglers' during the early 1930s, and is also reported to have worked as a tap-dancer, singer baseball pitcher, and prize-fighter. Played in Anna Mae Winburn's band, led own band, worked with trumpeter James Simpson in Oklahoma City and toured (playing bass and guitar) with Alphonse Trent ca. 1938. With Leslie Sheffield band in 1939 (by this time, Charlie's musical skill had been 'noticed' by Teddy Wilson, Norma Teagarden, and Mary Lou Williams). On the recommendation of John Hammond he joined Benny Goodman in Los Angeles in August 1939, subsequently made New York debut with Benny Goodman in September 1939. Was featured mainly with the sextet, but occasionally played with the full band. Whilst on a Middle West tour with Goodman he was taken ill and was subsequently admitted to Bellevue Hospital, New York, in June 1941, where tuberculosis was diagnosed. He was transferred to the Seaview Sanitarium, Staten Island, and spent the rest of his brief life there. (ref. John Chilton: "Who's Who of Jazz").

Message:

I have chosen to omit references to 78s and LPs containing CC's music but added a CD reference list at the end of the solography. I have also omitted some technical information I got from Jerry Valburn way back then. All references to spliced versions are removed, having no actual importance and interest anymore as the complete and unspliced versions are available. I have used my own original comments and evaluations but occasionally supplemented them with statements by other researchers, particularly Masters of Jazz liner notes by Claude Carriere. Assuming that new information appearing in the last thirty years concerning recording dates is reasonably correct, I have included those in the presentation. Quite a lot of new broadcast items have also been discovered, and they are of course included with comments. Please, dear reader, go carefully through the CC solography below and offer your feedback with regard to possible omissions, errors or otherwise.

Note also the extremely interesting book: Wayne E. Goins & Craig R. McKinney: "A Biography of Charlie Christian, Jazz Guitar's King of Swing" (The Edwin Mellen Press, 2005).

Message of Sept. 2020:

More than five years have passed since the last CC-version. In the meantime James Accardi has done extensive research, and finally we decided to publish a new version, see below. We don't expect many more CC-items to turn up now, but we hope we are wrong!!

CHARLIE CHRISTIAN SOLOGRAPHY

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. Aug. 19, 1939**

Benny Goodman (cl), Lionel Hampton (vib), Fletcher Henderson (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm).

WEAF "Camel Caravan" broadcast from The Hollywood Bowl, one title:

Flying Home

Solo 32 bars. (M)

When John Hammond brought Charlie Christian and his guitar to Los Angeles in the middle of August 1939, he made one of his greatest contributions to the development of jazz as we know it. The twenty-three year old musician from Oklahoma turned out to be one of the greatest improvisers in jazz and a personality which was to influence not only all future guitar players but a whole new generation of musicians. The story says that Goodman was not too excited by the idea of having his organization augmented by a young and unknown Negro guitarist and that their first musical encounter took place by a conspiracy. Hammond had placed Christian with his guitar and amplifier together with the band on the stage without Goodman's knowledge, and when he discovered it, it was too late to protest. Goodman gave the signal for "Rose Room" and "condescended" to give Christian a solo. He took it, they went on for 45 minutes, and there never were any further discussions about Christian's presence. He stayed with Goodman until his death less than two years later. The date of that historical meeting was Aug. 11, 1939, confirmed by Hammond. The first title listed here, "Flying Home", could not be more suitable, since it turned out to be one of Christian's finest vehicles. At the moment fourteen versions are known with certainty and every single one has memorable guitar playing different from the others. This version follows the same line-up as the 78 rpm. version, and one may hear applause from a large crowd after the end of the presentation. The guitar solo is easily remembered by the characteristics of the 25 - 28 bars.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**Detroit, Sept. 2, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast from Michigan State Fair, one title:

Stardust

Solo 32 bars, last 8 with ens. (S)

Benny Goodman himself introduces this collector's item with these words: "You've all heard "Stardust" played by the trio, the quartet and the band. The other night, while the new group in the band, the Sextet, was jamming, Charlie Christian, our new guitar player, tore out on a chorus of "Stardust" no one ever heard before, nearly broke up the session. So tonight we thought you'd like to hear it. The Sextet playing "Stardust". And then Christian is on. The way he treats the tune shows one very important side of his musical personality, namely his strength of *not* being tempted to improvise when a satisfactory musical construction already is worked out. It differs very slightly from the later studio version, not only is the general structure the same but also most of the details. There are some minor variations in bars 5-6 and 13-14, and the solo is perhaps a little bit more modest and reserved, but that is all. However, it might have been Goodman's and not Christian's own idea to present "Stardust" this way forever. Ordinary I am a strong opponent to such ideas, but in this case I can understand it. The solo *is* perfect!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**Detroit, Sept. 9, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast, one title:

Flying Home

Solo 32 bars. (M)

This version was not known when I wrote the solography many years back, and it fits nicely into the "Flying Home" pile, one of CC's most successful themes for improvisation, great! And dig Benny's final solo!

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

Dizzy Gillespie (tp), Benny Carter (as), 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:

41406-1	When Lights Are Low	No solo. (FM)
41406-2	When Lights Are Low	No solo. (FM)
41407-1	One Sweet Letter From You	Obbligato 30 bars. (SM)
41408-1	Hot Mallets	No solo. (F)
41409-1	Early Session Hop	No solo. (FM)

“Sweet Letter ...” belongs to my favourites, perhaps because it is so wonderfully undramatic. CC’s accompaniment on acoustic guitar to Lionel’s vocal effort is all chords and every one so well thought out that it is a marvel. Such relaxed playing is really soothing to the soul. There are many beautiful accompaniments in recorded jazz, perhaps more interesting if you feel that way, but none resembling this one. One cannot leave this session without mentioning the rhythm section, of which Christian with acoustic guitar is a significant part. Perhaps no place ever in jazz is there such a coherent work to be heard, a unity in rhythm (postscript: tough words, what about Basie ...?). Note for instance “... Lights ...”, everything is so smooth and easygoing that one nearly forgets to be attentive. However when one stops for close listening, rhythmic perfection is obvious. Therefore do not take the “no solo” as a signal for bypassing these items!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **Buffalo, NY. Sept. 16, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

“Camel Caravan” broadcast from Shea’s Theatre, one title, Rutgers collection:

Opus Local 802 Solo 32 bars. (M)

Interesting with a new title, and CC plays his usual good self. The sound quality is excellent, and the audience applauds afterwards.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **St. Paul, Minnesota, Sept. 23, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

“Camel Caravan” broadcast, one title:

Opus 1/2 Chord intro 4 bars. (FM)

JERRY JEROME QUARTET **Minneapolis, Sept. 24, 1939**

Jerry Jerome (ts), Frankie Hines (p), Charlie Christian (g), Oscar Pettiford (b).

Four titles were recorded live at “Harlem Breakfast Club”:

I Got Rhythm #1 Soli 32 and 32 bars. (F)

I Got Rhythm #2 Soli 32 and 32 bars. (F)

Stardust Solo 64 bars. (SM)

Tea For Two Intro 8 bars. Soli 64 and 32 bars. (F)

Exact information regarding this very interesting session is lacking. Probably it took place during a visit by the Goodman orchestra to Minneapolis in Autumn 1939, and the date Sept. 24, 1939 which has turned up recently may be correct. The setup does not resemble a jam session: there are for instance two versions of “... Rhythm” with the same solo sequence. This implies that the session had a more formal purpose, supported by the fact that no audience is heard. However, the music does not seem to be very carefully planned. In “... Rhythm” there is some uncertainty in the transition from soloist to soloist, and the end of “Tea ...” is rather abrupt. Apart from all speculations, the guitar playing is more than usually interesting. Particularly one notes a “Stardust” of “double length”. The first chorus is completely new, being mainly a single string improvisation on the theme, rather straight in the beginning but more luxurious further out and with great elegance. The last chorus is known to us from earlier and later versions, apart from some slight modifications. However, the somewhat higher tempo creates some new rhythmic finesses, and the atmosphere of the piece is rather different from the studio version. “... Rhythm” and “Tea” belong to Christian’s fastest recordings but do not seem to cause him particular trouble. In the first version of “... Rhythm” he seems perhaps a little uncertain of his role and the contact with his fellow musicians is not the best. The second version, however, is definitely better, and in “Tea ...” he really excels, both in ideas and technique.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **Chi. Sept. 30, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

“Camel Caravan” broadcast, one title, Rutgers collection:

Stardust Solo 32 bars, last 8 with ens. (S)

Another version of “Stardust” has appeared, and as demanded by Goodman, CC always plays the same solo; the variations are so slight that you should have a very sharp ear to hear to hear any differences. What is interesting however is that this version is notably slower than the other three this autumn.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Oct. 2, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

26132-A Flying Home Solo 32 bars. (M)

26133-A Rose Room Solo 32 bars. (M)

26134-A Stardust

Solo 32 bars, last 8 with ens. (S)

This is the first session that gives a really clear picture of Charlie Christian, and alone it is sufficient to give him a prominent place in jazz history. "Stardust" is already mentioned earlier in the solography. This version is the one which most jazz collectors are acquainted with, and the sound quality is better than on any of the other casual recordings. The logic of the solo is marvelous, and the total result is extremely beautiful. The instrument is exploited to a wide extent, and the alternations between single string and chords are masterly. It is no improvisation as the comparisons show, only a minor modification of a fixed pattern. "... Home" demonstrates the perhaps the most important side of his musical personality, the rather limitless improvisational capabilities. While "Stardust" is fixed, "... Home" is used as a base for rhythmic and harmonic variations, convincingly demonstrated by the existence of two takes. Take A is a real masterpiece of logic, while take B is somewhat looser in shape (this is not meant degradingly, just purely relatively). Note also that Christian uses two different approaches to the opening of the soli. The one in take B is the most common, while the take A approach is only to be found additionally on the version of April 15, 1941. I love them both, but the A is more airy and the one I prefer. The numerous versions of "... Home" bring one to think of Lester Young and his versions of "Lady Be Good". However, the resemblance is far more important than that. They both were innovators in harmonic sense, using large and unusual intervals daringly. They were masters of rhythmic freedom, playing with a sure touch, around and between the basic rhythmic pattern without ever losing command. They were technically beyond criticism, and they both created a new sound on their instrument. They both were creators. At last do not forget "Rose Room", a piece as faultless as one can wish for. A lower register phrase in bars 8-12 is utterly original and an example of what a genius can do! If I have to choose what I consider CC's most beautiful recorded solo in medium tempo, this one would be among the strongest candidates! *Important postscript of Sept. 2020:* Note that 26132-B "Flying Home / Homeward Bound", originally issued on V-Disc 731-B together with orchestral "Bolero" has been omitted from the list above!! Later research has documented that it in fact stems from an Oct. 13, 1939 broadcast and is no alternate take from the Columbia session. Nevertheless, we have chosen to let the comments above on the differences between the two versions stand unchanged.

**IDA COX WITH
BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**

NYC. Oct. 2, 1939

Personnel as above plus Ida Cox (vo).

Bill Savory collection, a fourth title belonging to CC's first sextet studio session:

26135-A Unknown Title

No CC to be heard. (S)

The item should be noted here, but it seems that CC has left for home now.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET

NYC. Oct. 6, 1939

Personnel as Aug. 19.

ASCAP 25th Anniversary Program from "Carnegie Hall", two titles:

Flying Home

Solo 32 bars. (M)

Stardust

Solo 32 bars, last 8 with ens. (S)

This concert offers new versions of two of the tunes from the studio recording four days earlier and expands the picture of Christian. The "... Home" version resembles take B but is definitely better, both more forceful and continuous. It is a true mastersolo in its own right. Note for instance the dynamic opening which really swings magnificently. The "Stardust" version is a Siamese twin, and it would have been extremely difficult to separate it from the commercial version if it was not for the surroundings. Only in a very few places are there some slight differences in the accentuations and rhythmic shiftings.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET

NYC. Oct. 7, 1939

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast from "Waldorf Astoria Hotel", one title:

Memories Of You

Solo 8 bars. (SM)

The first of five versions of "Memories ...", slightly faster than the studio versions, and one of the best. It's difficult to explain why, so I won't, instead quoting MoJ-liner notes: "He weaves two superb phrases, then pauses at the fourth bar before fashioning a bold line in the lower register that completes the bridge ...". One can hear applauding after a standard solo line-up.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET

NYC. Oct. 9, 1939

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Mutual broadcast from Waldorf Astoria Hotel, "Columbia Records Present: Young Man With A Band", one title:

Rose Room

Solo 32 bars. (M)

This “Rose Room” is shockingly different from the recorded one. It follows a slower tempo, and the details are all different. It is beautiful and refreshing, and it may even be compared to the unforgettable Columbia version, it is definitely an original solo worthy of a great guitarist.

LIONEL HAMPTON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 12, 1939**

Henry “Red” Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Earl Bostic (as), Clyde Hart (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Sid Catlett (dm), Lionel Hampton (vib, vo-42041,43).

Three titles were recorded for Victor:

42941-1	I’m On My Way From You	No solo.
42942-1	Haven’t Named It Yet	Solo 16+8 bars,(tp) on bridge. (FM)
42943-1	The Heebie Jeebies Are Rockin’ The Town	Intro 4 bars. Obligato with (tp) 32 and 12 bars. (M)
42943-2	Thee Heebie Jeebies Are RTT	As above. (M)

“... Yet” is the item calling for our interest, presenting a fine driving solo with no lack of inspiration. There are several charming and inventive details, note in particular the beginning of the last eight bars. “Heebie Jeebies ...”, however, is not very engaging, CC’s role is rather ‘accidental’. He fills out when necessary but with no clear purpose like in the earlier “... Sweet Letter ...”. Not even the existence of two takes creates more than casual attentiveness. However, the fault is not really CC’s, the whole setup is rather disorganized.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Oct. 13, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Broadcast “Young Man With A Band”, two titles:

“26132-B”	Flying Home / Homeward Bound	Solo 32 bars. (M)
	The Jazz Me Blues (NC)	No solo. (M)

As written as postscript under the Columbia session of Oct. 2, this “... Home” belongs here and is not an alternate take.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Oct. 14, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19, with Louis Armstrong (vo) guesting on “Ain’t ...”.

NBC “Camel Caravan” broadcast, two titles:

Ain’t Misbehavin’	No solo.
AC-DC Current	Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)

“... Current” is not CC’s baby, and his small tags are not particularly noteworthy. However, there are some minor modifications compared with the studio version of Dec. 20, 1939.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Oct. 16, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Mutual broadcast from Waldorf Astoria Hotel, one title:

Flying Home	Solo 32 bars. (M)
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Another “... Home”, and quoting again MoJ-liner notes: “The guitar solo begins with the same rhythmic phrase as on the V-Disc “Homeward Bound” version of the piece, but the rest is different. Note the insistent, very swinging repetition of one particular note between bars 25 and 28”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Oct. 21, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC “Camel Caravan” broadcast, one title:

Soft Winds	In ens/coda. (M)
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Quote MoJ-liner notes: “CC plays a purely orchestral role, cleverly exploiting the resources of amplification, on the theme statement he holds the notes in the same way as Goodman. He repeats the process when guitar and clarinet, playing an octave apart, fashion a boogie-woogie motif in support of Hampton’s solo. The CC presence is quite simply indispensable to a performance such as this”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Oct. 23, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Mutual broadcast from “Waldorf Astoria Hotel”, one title:

Memories Of You

Solo 8 bars. (S)

This version of “Memories ...” is really worthy of a great jazz musician. It is clean and well conceived with an unusually beautiful introduction in the lower register. Really masterly! It is also rather different from the other known versions. The sound quality is not very good here.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET

NYC. Oct. 28, 1939

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC “Camel Caravan” broadcast, one title:

Rose Room

Intro. Solo 32 bars. (M)

A nice new version of “Rose ...”, another one of CC’s most successful titles with the sextet, “swings a little more than the other (previous) two”, as MoJ-liner notes states it.

IDA COX ACC. BY HER ALL-STAR BAND

NYC. Oct. 31, 1939

Hot Lips Page (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), James P. Johnson (p-25509-11), Fletcher Henderson (p-26239-42), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Lionel Hampton (dm), Ida Cox (vo).

Seven titles (or more) were recorded for Vocalion:

25509-BD1	Deep Sea Blues	Part of intro. (SM)
25509	Deep Sea Blues (complete 1)	Part of intro. Obbligato 16 bars. (SM)
25509-2	Deep Sea Blues (complete 2)	Part of intro. Obbligato 16 bars. (SM)
25509-BD2	Deep Sea Blues	Part of intro. Obbligato 8 bars. (SM)
25509-1	Deep Sea Blues (complete 3)	Part of intro. Obbligato 16 bars. (SM)
25510	Death Letter Blues (complete 1)	Obbligato 12 bars. (S)
25510	Death Letter Blues (complete 2)	As above. (S)
25510-BD	Death Letter Blues	As above. (S)
25510-2	Death Letter Blues (complete 3)	As above. (S)
25510-1	Death Letter Blues (complete 4)	As above. (S)
25511	One Hour Mama (complete 1)	Part of intro. (SM)
25511-BD1	One Hour Mama	As above. (SM)
25511	One Hour Mama (complete 2)	As above. (SM)
25511-BD2	One Hour Mama	As above. (SM)
25511-2	One Hour Mama (complete 3)	As above. (SM)
25511-1	One Hour Mama (complete 4)	As above. (SM)
26239-A	‘Fore Day Creep	Obbligato 12 bars. (SM)
26240-A	Pink Slip Blues	Intro 4 bars. Obbligato 12 bars. (S)
26241-A	Hard Time Blues	Obbligato 12 bars. (S)
26242-A	Take Him Off My Mind	Obbligato 12 bars. (S)

Note: Brian Rust quotes Jazz Information of Nov. 14, 1939 which states that ten sides were cut, the other three were probably undocumented tests. The differences in matrix sequence is accounted for by the use of two different studios, 25509 - 25511 at Liederkrantz Hall and 26239-26242 at 711 Fifth Avenue. Postscript of Sept. 2020: Mosaic’s notation from the James P. Johnson box is now used.

The stage is all set for Ida Cox on this date with no room for soloists, not even Christian. However, some useful obbligato is delivered. The tempi are very slow and perhaps not too inspiring, but CC shows a deep feeling for the blues and executes his parts well. The recording setup does not favor him, but he is heard to particular advantage in “Hard Time ...”, “Deep Sea ...” and “... Creep”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET

NYC. Nov. 4, 1939

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC “Camel Caravan” broadcast from Waldorf Astoria Hotel, one title:

Shivers

Chord intro 4 bars. Solo
16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. (FM)

This first version of “Shivers” is excellent and highly inspired. It swings beautifully and is definitely more exciting than the otherwise good studio version a little later. Note also the prominent part CC has in the ensemble. And some MoJ- quoting: “Taken at an infectiously bouncy tempo, it has CC wonderfully present throughout, Most striking of all, the phrase he invents as he reenters after the bridge bears the mark of an outstanding modern musician”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Nov. 6, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Bill Savory collection, broadcast:

Shivers

Solo 16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. (FM)

Nothing wrong with this version either!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Nov. 11, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC “Camel Caravan” broadcast, one title:

I’m A Ding Dong Daddy

No solo. (FM)

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Nov. 18, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

NBC “Camel Caravan” broadcast, one title:

South Of The Border

Chord intro 8 bars. Straight.
Chord close 8 bars. (M)

An unusual tune, and not particularly important with regard to CC, but note a brilliant vibraharp solo!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Nov. 22, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

26284-A	Memories Of You	Solo 8 bars. (S)
26284-B	Memories Of You	As above. (S)
26285-A	Soft Winds	With ens/coda. (M)
26285-B	Soft Winds	As above. (M)
26286-A	Seven Come Eleven (Roast Turkey Stomp)	Solo 32 bars. (FM)

The studio versions of “Memories ...” are well played and quite dexterous to be held in slow tempo. They are also remarkably different, although I think I find other versions, like the Oct. 23, 1939 one, more exciting. “the first restrained, the second more adventurous” says MoJ. The two takes of “Soft Winds” offer good music, but CC’s part is limited to ensemble chording apart from some single-string phrasing at the end. At last, “Seven ...” is alright but not as flowing as one might wish, and it belongs to CC’s more ordinary ‘products’. The bridge is the most interesting part. Quoting again MoJ-liner notes: CC, as so often on these 32-bars compositions of AABA structure, restricts himself to a series of rhythmic phrases on the A passages, then tears loose on the bridge, giving full vent to his remarkable harmonic sense. Even so, this particular solo by no means ranks among his best”.

BENNY GOODMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Nov. 22, 1939**

Bigband personnel including Charlie Christian (g) as soloist.

One title was recorded for Columbia:

26290-A	Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
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A fine and absolutely inventive solo. However, it is obvious that big band surroundings are not the most fitting. The sound quality of the recording makes CC stand apart from his fellow musicians, but it seems that he did so musically too on this date. The playing is somewhat academic, and in relation to the many other more informal sessions described in this solography, the listener never really jumps. Afterthought, quoting MoJ: “On no account miss the phrase he concocts at the beginning of this final eight bars, a perfect musical transposition of the steps of a great dancer”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Nov. 22, 1939**

Personnel as Aug. 19.

CBS broadcast from Waldorf Astoria, one title, Bill Savory collection:

Flying Home Solo 32 bars. (M)

This solo does not resemble any of the others, as far as I can remember There seems to be a small ghost note in bar 2.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Nov. 25, 1939
Personnel as Aug. 19. Mildred Bailey (vo) and orchestra added on "St. Louis ...".
NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast from "Waldorf Astoria Hotel", two titles:

Seven Come Eleven Solo 32 bars. (FM)

St. Louis Blues No solo. (M)

This version of "... Eleven" is noticeably more relaxed and inspired than the studio performance, he has a more steady grip on the tune here. The ideas come more easily, and the result definitely seems more inventive.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Nov. 27, 1939
Personnel as Aug. 19.
Mutual broadcast from "Waldorf Astoria Hotel", one title:

AC-DC Current Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)

As said before, "... Current" is not very interesting where CC is concerned, but all the same he manages to create some minor modifications of what is known from the studio recording. Note for instance how he drives his riffs behind Goodman and ensemble - he seems happy!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 2, 1939
Personnel as Aug. 19.
NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast, one title:

AC-DC Current Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)

Not much to add or subtract from what has been said five days before!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 4, 1939
Personnel as Aug. 19.
Bill Savory collection, broadcast:

Honeysuckle Rose Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Same. NYC. Dec. 6, 1939

Roast Turkey Stomp (NC) Solo 32 bars. (M)
(Seven Come Eleven)

An excellent versions of "... Eleven", as well as "... Rose", the latter better suited for sextet than full orchestra. Note also that Fletcher Henderson's participation in the sextet now comes to an end.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 9, 1939
Personnel as Aug. 19.
"Camel Caravan" CBS broadcast, one title:

Pick-A-Rib Solo 24 bars. (FM)

An exciting solo, tooting on the start of the second chorus.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 16, 1939
Benny Goodman (cl), Lionel Hampton (vib), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm).
NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast, one title:

Dinah Solo 32 bars. (FM)

"Dinah" is a great surprise. It is nice for once to listen to a tune not recorded in studio by the Sextet, and both CC and the rest of the group seem very free and happy. There is some stride-piano accompaniment which sends the guitar off with a flying start. And it continues to fly!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 20, 1939
Personnel as Dec. 16.
Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

26354-bk Shivers (NC) As below. (FM)

26534-A Shivers Chord intro 4 bars. Solo

16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. (FM)

26355-A AC-DC Current Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)
 26356-A I'm Confessin' Solo 8 bars. (S)

CC's part in "... Current" is rather simple. He takes the first four bars as a break in three of the blues choruses. The result is alright, but he does not exert himself much, and for once, his fellow musicians attract more attention to their parts. "Shivers" is more interesting, being a fine swinging piece, simple in structure but very fascinating. His intro is straight chording. Note also his driving riffs at the end with ensemble. The best solo is to be found on the slow "Confessin'". It is so beautiful as only CC can make it in his very best mood. His daring intervals place him far ahead of most of his contemporaries. The reason for the record being unissued is probably that something went wrong with the recording; the test I have heard on tape is so much off center that I nearly suffer by listening, and my highly positive comments above is valid only if one manages to correct the sound mentally. Postscript: The correction has been successfully made on the Columbia CD-set. And another version of "Shivers" has appeared, not complete, but the breakdown happens close to the end, so we get all the soloing! And of course a different CC!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 21 or 22, 1939
 Personnel as Dec. 16.
 Bill Savory collection, broadcast:

Honeysuckle Rose Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Interesting to compare this version to the one eighteen days earlier, having a change of pianist. CC does not however seem to be influenced by this, playing as good as ever!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET NYC. Dec. 24, 1939
 Personnel as Aug. 19.
 John Hammond's Carnegie Hall Concert No. 2: "Spirituals to Swing", five titles:

Flying Home Solo 32 bars. (M)
 Memories Of You Solo 8 bars. (SM)
 Honeysuckle Rose Intro 4 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
 I Got Rhythm No solo.
 Stompin' At The Savoy No solo.

The five tracks with the Sextet are amongst the most attractive numbers on this concert. CC's part is not as important as one might wish though. He does not solo at all on two items, however, his playing on the remaining three is excellent. This version of "... Home" is again proof of his masterly improvisational capabilities. "Memories ..." is a great surprise, being very much different from the previous versions. It is much more direct and outward without losing musical significance. Finally, the "... Rose" version here is more attractive than the Columbia bigband recording. The rhythmic support is much stronger, and the solo achieves a better continuity with several fine details. Postscript quote from MoJ-liner notes: Particularly memorable are the bridge of CC's solo on "... Home", which he crosses in one single breathtaking run; and his closing phrase on the bridge of "... You", a veritable monument of melodic and harmonic invention that within the space of a few magic seconds seems to anticipate several decades of jazz".

JAM SESSION NYC. Dec. 24, 1939
 Count Basie's orchestra: Harry Edison, Buck Clayton, Shad Collins, Ed Lewis (tp), Dicky Wells, Benny Morton, Dan Minor (tb), Earl Warren (as), Lester Young, Buddy Tate (ts), Jack Washington (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm) + members of Benny Goodman's sextet: Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm) + Joe Sullivan, Pete Johnson (p).
 Same concert as above, one title:

Lady Be Good Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars, last chorus with ens. Solo 8 bars. (FM)

In my old solography I wrote the following: "CC gets his chance to stretch out on this jam session, but he disappoints us a little. His ideas are all well known, and he lacks drive. He does an able job out of it, but he can do much better". I must have had a really bad moment then, because it sounds much, much better today! Note also that the abbreviated version we knew then also had abbreviated CC!! He played in fact not two but three choruses!!!

KANSAS CITY SIX NYC. Dec. 24, 1939

Buck Clayton (tp), Lester Young (ts), Charlie Christian, Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (p), Jo Jones (dm).

Same concert as above, three titles:

Pagin' The Devil	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
Good Morning Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	Solo 20 bars. (F)

This is really a jazzhistorical occasion! The concert is one of the only two recorded encounters between two of the greatest innovators in jazz - Charlie Christian and Lester Young. I have commented upon their musical relationship earlier in the solography, and it is not necessary to add any more. One might perhaps wish that CC had been guitar soloist with the Basie orchestra... Let us however be happy with the existence of this session containing music of a nearly unearthly character. The two important tracks are the slower ones, and CC's soli are among his greatest ever. His ability to play the slow blues is rarely revealed with the Goodman sextet, and the music on "Good ..." and "... Devil" is so perfect that it will be remembered as long as a single jazz fan is alive. Note the balance and the masterly restraint in the first chorus of "Good ...". A musician of less stature would never have dared to let the rhythm run along like that without getting panicky. CC however dares and continues with a masterly second chorus, turning the theme upside down. "Way Down ..." is rather untidy as a piece, the tempo changes all the time, and when CC starts his solo, he is four bars too late. That he manages to make anything worthy of preservation is quite impressive.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Dec. 30, 1939**
Personnel as Dec. 16.
NBC "Camel Caravan" broadcast, one title:

Pick-A-Rib	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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A brilliant two blues choruses on "Pick-A-Rib", dig this one!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Dec. 31, 1939**
Personnel as Dec. 16.
NBC "Fitch Bandwagon" broadcast from Waldorf Astoria Hotel, one title:

Till Tom Special	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
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Pretty comments will be made about "Till Tom ..." later in connection with the studio recording. Let me just say that this version is an unforgettable experience, a masterpiece!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Jan. 15, 1940**
Personnel as Dec. 16.
NBC radio "shortwave broadcast for Scandinavia", two titles:

Flying Home	Solo 32 bars. (M)
Stardust	Solo 32 bars, last 8 with ens. (S)

These are new items! Supplied by James Accardi upon my quest in a newsletter, we get another version of "... Home" with a fine and different guitar solo from all the others. "Stardust" however is played exactly as before, obviously Benny demanded it to be that way.

METRONOME ALL STARS **NYC. Feb. 7, 1940**
Charlie Spivak, Harry James, Ziggy Elman (tp), Jack Teagarden, Jack Jenney (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Toots Mondello, Benny Carter (as), Eddie Miller, Charlie Barnet (ts), Jess Stacy (p), Charlie Christian (g), Bob Haggart (b), Gene Krupa (dm), Fletcher Henderson (arr).
Two titles were recorded for Columbia, no CC on 26489-A&B "King Porter Stomp" but:

26490-bk	All Star Strut (NC)	As below. (M)
26490-A	All Star Strut	Solo 12 bars. (M)
26490-B	All Star Strut	As above. (M)

Rather ordinary soli in surroundings which seem not to be particularly inspired, at least when it comes to giving CC rhythmic support. Take B is definitely the best one where guitar is concerned. Note the opening phrase on take A which is not well conceived and which definitely contains an error, though a small one. I do not think there is any similar occasion, a fact which tells quite a lot of CC's technical and musical abilities. Postscript: A third version has appeared, with a fluff in the beginning, or is it technician which makes the sound drop?

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Feb. 7, 1940**

Benny Goodman (cl), Lionel Hampton (vib), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia:

26494-A	Till Tom Special	Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (FM)
26495-A	Gone With "What" Wind	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
26495-B	Gone With "What" Wind	As above. (FM)

"Till Tom ..." is really 'special' in all respects. It is very blue, and the atmosphere is quite exceptional. The solo is full of ideas, and the inspiration is very much there. Again he uses large harmonic intervals quite easily. Note for instance the last eight bars of this remarkable piece of music. The two choruses on "... Wind" are also fine, swinging along easily on a high musical level without being sensational. The two takes are very different in all respects, not only due to CC.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. March 19, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16, 1939.

NBC broadcast from "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

Gone With "What" Wind	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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Again we marvel at the improvisational capabilities of this great guitar player. Each version is different, compare for instance this one with the following one! It is first-rate and easily identifiable by the restrained opening.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. March 20, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16, 1939.

Broadcast from "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

Memories Of You	No solo. (SM)
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Strangely enough CC does not solo on this "... You", as he usually does, and we are not even sure he is participating.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. April 3, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16. Date falsely given as April 10.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

26718-A	The Sheik Of Araby (78)	Soli 32, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)
26718-B	The Sheik Of Araby	As above. (FM)
26719-bk	Poor Butterfly (NC)	No solo. (SM)
26719-A	Poor Butterfly	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
No mx-bk	Untitled Tune (NC)	Solo 12 bars. (M)
No mx	Untitled Tune	Soli 12 and 2 bars. (FM)

These soli are of good quality but not sensational. The way CC divides the solo on "The Sheik ..." into sub-structures is however very surprising. Note for instance bars 10-12. "Poor ..." is nice and unpretentious and deserves no further comments. Postscript: Take B of "The Sheik ..." is quite different and possibly with a better guitar solo. Note also that the sound technician is a bit late here, the first bars are weakly recorded. Finally, the appearance of a hitherto unknown blues title is very exciting, but it is understandable rejected, being somewhat loose and undeveloped, as also evident by the increase of tempo from the breakdown to the complete version.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. April 5, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16. Date earlier given falsely as April 9.

Broadcast from "Cocoanut Grove", Bill Savory collection, one title:

Soft Winds	In ens. (M)
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BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. April 6, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

ABC broadcast from "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

Gone With "What" Wind	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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A lovely "untidy" solo with a lot of charming details piled on top of each other just for fun. A happy occasion.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. April 10, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16. Date falsely given as April 16.
Two titles were recorded for Columbia:

26743-bk1	I Surrender Dear (NC)	No solo. (S)
26743-bk2	I Surrender Dear (NC)	No solo. (S)
26743-A	I Surrender Dear	As below. (S)
26743-B	I Surrender Dear (78)	Solo 16 bars. (S)
26743-A	Grand Slam (Boy Meets Goy)	As below. (FM)
26743-B	Grand Slam (Boy Meets Goy) (78)	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

In "... Dear" one can listen to one of CC's master soli, a perfect construction of great beauty. Not a single note is superfluous or wrongly placed, and the necessary balance and relaxation are always present. Quoting MoJ: "... offers us a 16-bar solo from CC nothing short of a mini-masterpiece: of perfect structure, striking serenity, immense harmonic richness, and delectable sonority – a sonority approaching that of an acoustic guitar, except for the sustained notes made possible by amplification". "Boy ..." has a well played swinging solo on a pleasant musical level without offering anything sensational. Note that "Goy" is Yiddish and means gentile, or Christian. It was Hammond's title, and the publisher was furious! Postscript: Two alternate takes appearing since then, particular "... Dear" is exciting, completely different from the 78 rpm. version.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **LA. April 12, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

NBC broadcast from the "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

The Sheik Of Araby Solo 32 bars. (FM)

One of the hottest BG-sextet recordings preserved! Everybody play like crazy, and I would like to quote Claude Carriere's liner notes: "This version ... knocks the commercial recording two days earlier (postscript: not correct, see above, nine days) right out of sight. The guitar solo finds Charlie alternating long phrases (bars 8 to 15) with short, breathtakingly imaginative, diabolically swinging flurries (bars 1 to 4, and 19 to 21) that he launches with prodigious rhythmic daring. This rendering is brought to conclusion without the four-bar exchanges of the earlier version". In the old solography I wrote: "This is really a contrast to the recording session only two days earlier. While the previous "Sheik" was good, this one is much better! It is very daring from the outset, and the way he treats the last 16 bars is shocking. They are subdivided in such a manner that it is incredible that the soloist manages to return from his musical round-trip. In addition, the solo swings like mad!".

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **LA. April 13, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

NBC broadcast from the "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

Soft Winds In ens. (FM)

Another quote: "... appears here despite the fact that Christian is given no solo space. His very presence in the rhythm section makes such an impact, however, that inclusion of this piece seems imperative".

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **LA. April 19, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

Bill Savory collection, broadcast:

I Surrender Dear Solo 16 bars. (S)

The last of the sextet items in the incredible treasure chest left us by Bill Savory, and this is the most valuable of them all, a magnificent guitar solo!!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **LA. April 26, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

NBC broadcast from the "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

The Sheik Of Araby (NC) Solo 32 bars. (FM)

A very inspired version with CC laying down a firm rhythmic support behind all soloists. His own solo is very good also, note particularly the gay opening!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **LA. April 27, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

NBC broadcast from the "Cocoanut Grove", Hotel Ambassador, one title:

Poor Butterfly

Solo 8 bars. (SM)

A scratchy acetate but a lovely guitar solo!

FRED ASTAIRE / BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **LA. April 30, 1940**

Personnel for sextet as Dec. 16 and for orchestra the usual for the period. Fred Astaire (vo, tapdancing). Date falsely given as May 9. One title was recorded for Columbia:

26809-A/3 Just Like Taking Candy From A Baby Acc. (tapdancing). (FM)

26809-1 Just Like Taking Candy From A Baby As above. (FM)

A combination of orchestra and sextet, with the latter backing Fred Astaire's vocal and tapdancing, and CC's chord guitar can be clearly heard behind the tap. A more peculiar event than really exciting.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**San Francisco, May 28, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

Mutual broadcast from "Peacock Court", Mark Hopkins Hotel, one title:

Seven Come Eleven

Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Lovely swinging version of "... Eleven" here!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**San Francisco, June 4, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

Mutual broadcast from "Peacock Court", Mark Hopkins Hotel, one title:

Six Appeal

Intro with (cl) 4 bars.

Solo 16 bars. (M)

It seems that "Six ..." was one of those few titles, like "Stardust" where CC was content with repeating more or less a perfect construction, once built.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**Santa Catalina, Ca., June/July 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16. Date is known to be in the range June 5 to July 10.

Broadcast from Casino Ballroom, one title, kindly supplied by Reinhard Scheer-Hennings:

Avalon (NC)

Solo 8 bars. (FM)

A quite unexpected and enjoyable solo in the bridge of the final ensemble. Probably the complete performance also had a full chorus in addition, who knows?

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**LA. June 11, 1940**

Benny Goodman (cl), Lionel Hampton (vib), Dudley Brooks (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm).

Date falsely given as June 20.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

26940-bk Six Appeal (NC) As take A. (M)

26940-bk Six Appeal (NC) Intro with (cl) 4 bars. (M)

26940-B Six Appeal (1st) As take A. (M)26940-C Six Appeal (2nd) As take A. (M)26940-D Six Appeal (3rd) As take A. (M)26940-A Six Appeal (4th, 78) Intro with (cl) 4 bars.
Solo 16 bars. (M)

26941-bk These Foolish Things (NC) Intro with (cl) 4 bars. (S)

26941-A These Foolish Things (78) Intro with (cl) 4 bars.
Solo 8 bars. (S)

26941-B These Foolish Things As take A. (S)

26942-A Good Enough To Keep (1st, 78) Solo 32 bars. (FM)26942-B Good Enough To Keep (2nd) As above. (FM)26942-C Good Enough To Keep (3rd) As above. (FM)

This is a very interesting session, with three titles giving the listener valuable insight into three different parts of CC's musical personality. "Good Enough ..." is swinging and inspired, but most notable is the way he transforms the basic rhythmic pattern of the tune. Sometimes he lies behind, sometimes he lies before he is expected, but it is always done with such cleverness that it is completely

overwhelming. It certainly shows how far advanced his musical mind was. Note also the gay phrase of bars 25-26. "These ..." is one of his almost unequalled presentations. The intro is surprising enough with clarinet and guitar interweaving without other rhythmic support. The solo itself is wonderful and rare since it utilizes the lower register all through in a very moving way. And last but not least: "Six ...", an original and moving piece in a minor mood, which has an equally original and very moving solo. It is one of CC's most easily recognizable soli beside "Stardust", and probably it was one of his semi-permanent constructions. Comparison with the two later broadcast versions seems to imply this. Postscript: The appearance of several new versions of "Six ..." shows that CC always plays the same solo, though with minor variations if you listen closely, and he has some initial problems on take B. However, Lionel's vibraphone is certainly highly different!! Enough guitar differences on "Good Enough ...", and particularly a magnificent new take of "... Things"!!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **Catalina, Ca., June 22, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

Broadcast from Catalina Casino, St. Catharine's Hotel, two titles:

Honeysuckle Rose (NC)	Part of intro 4 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Six Appeal	Intro with (cl) 4 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)

A good version of "... Rose" warms us up without giving more than the usual 'happy' feeling one gets with good music and CC. However, then comes "Six Appeal", and it blows us completely off the chairs! It is a pity that the Sextet never gave room for extended soloing even on broadcasts, because CC really plays up to his very best here. Just listen to the opening statement and hear how he is applauded by his fellow musicians. A masterpiece!

BENNY GOODMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA **LA. June 25, 1940**

Bigband personnel as usual for the period. Helen Forest (vo).

One title was recorded for Columbia:

26982-A	Li'l Boy Love (3 rd)	Solo 6 bars. (M)
26982-B	Li'l Boy Love (2 nd)	As above. (M)

I find it rather peculiar that this CC item was overlooked on 78 rpm. by everybody for so many years, how come? A well recorded, typical and nice solo, although brief, but there ought to have been many Goodman collectors around to have discovered it!? Note also an alternate issued on Columbia CD.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **Catalina, Ca., June 30, 1940**

Personnel as Dec. 16.

Broadcast from Catalina Casino, "St. Catharine's Hotel", one title:

AC-DC Current	Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)
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Yet another version of "AC-DC ..." with minor details different, but as mentioned earlier, this tune is not made for CC.

EDDY HOWARD **NYC. Oct. 4, 1940**

Bill Coleman (tp), Benny Morton (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), Bud Freeman (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Charlie Christian (g), Billy Taylor (b), Yank Porter (dm), Eddy Howard (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia (complete session from safety acetates):

28794-fs	Old Fashioned Love (NC)	No solo.
28794-1	Old Fashioned Love	No solo.
28794-2?	Old Fashioned Love	No solo.
28795-1	Star Dust	Solo 8 bars. (S)
28796-2?	Exactly Like You	No solo.
28796-1	Exactly Like You	No solo.
28797-bk	Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (NC)	As below. (S)
28797-n/c	Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (NC)	As below. (S)
28797-bk	Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (NC)	As below. (S)
28797-bk	Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams (NC)	As below. (S)
28797-1	Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams	Intro 4 bars. (S)

We do not hear much from CC on this date, but an exquisite intro on “Wrap ...” is worth taking along with us. Also, a new variation on “Stardust”, although brief, is valuable. It is actually in the key of C, instead of D-flat (as is every other surviving performance) (ref. James Accardi). The main pattern is quite similar to the Sextet versions, but the details are refreshingly different. The atmosphere is rather lame though, but the playing is well constructed and definitely worth listening to. Postscript: The appearance of a safety acetate for the complete session is exciting but not really for CC. His solo feature “Star Dust” is made easily with one take, and the intro on “Wrap ...” is obviously one of those perfect constructions not to be changed; all five versions are close to identical, at least to my modest ears!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. Oct. 28, 1940**

Buck Clayton (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Lester Young (ts), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Five titles (and a tune-up) recorded for Columbia on rehearsal session:

Tune Up & Blues	0:17. (FM)
Ad-Lib Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
I Never Knew	Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (FM)
Charlie’s Dream	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
Lester’s Dream	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
Wholly Cats	Solo 36 bars. (FM)

This is a lovely day! I must admit that the years of wishful thinking about what the combination Young/Christian might have created did influence me so much that when dreams at last came true, first in “Spirituals to Swing” and recently this date, I cannot be objective. I just think the music is lovely! Well, let’s try to be objective. It is easy to understand why the sides were not released, they have a ‘loose jacket’ atmosphere to them which to us now is heaven, but which understandably wasn’t in 1940. However, the contents of immemorable jazz music is great from all participants. CC’s most memorable contribution is the opening ‘polonaise’ of the session, the “Ad-Lib Blues”. He knew how to play the blues! The best solo however is on “I Never Knew” which swings like mad, note particularly the piano/guitar “frenzy” after the bridge, and you will learn what swing is all about! The solo on “... Cats” is also very good and again the creative power of CC is dominant. The two “... Dream”’s are good but the least interesting, CC is cut short before he really gets started. A wonderful session! Postscript: Note a few seconds of tune up on Columbia CD, CC can be heard.

BENNY GOODMAN QUINTET **NYC. Nov. 4, 1940**

Benny Goodman (cl), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm).

ABC/NBC/Mutual/Independent broadcast from “Madison Square Garden” – “Democratic Rally”, one title:

Gone With “What” Wind	Solo 24 bars. Riffs behind (cl) at the end. (M)
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“... Wind” slightly slower in tempo than the Columbia recording and of approximately the same quality. Note also the quote from MoJ: “And we catch ourselves wondering what Goodman’s regular sextet would have sounded like with a bassist and drummer like these two”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. Nov. 7, 1940**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Harry Jaeger (dm).

Note: The group is often called ‘Sextet’, but there are seven musicians! It is really ‘Benny Goodman & his Sextet’, but that doesn’t help much! I have chosen to use ‘Septet’ in the following sections.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

29027-5	Wholly Cats (1 st)	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
29027-3	Wholly Cats (2 nd)	As above. (FM)
29027-4	Wholly Cats (3 rd)	As above. (FM)
29027-bk	Wholly Cats	No solo. (FM)
29027-1	Wholly Cats (4 th , 78)	As above. (FM)
29027-2	Wholly Cats (5 th , 78)	As above. (FM)
29028-2	Royal Garden Blues (1 st)	Soli 8 and 8 bars. (FM)
29028-3	Royal Garden Blues (2 nd)	As above. (FM)

29028-1	Royal Garden Blues (3 rd , 78)	As above. (FM)
29029-1	As Long As I Live (78)	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
29029-2	As Long As I Live	As above. (SM)

same date

One additional title, 29030 “Benny’s Bugle” was recorded, and a safety acetate lasting 27 ½ minutes exists, now also issued on CD. It contains talk, practice, try-outs and complete takes, some rather half-hearted. Apart from the guitar soli listed below, CC is heard clearly at least nine times, so you had better take half-an-hour to listen to it all!

	Benny’s Bugle (NC)	Solo 16 bars (NC). (FM)
	Benny’s Bugle	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
	Benny’s Bugle	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
	Benny’s Bugle (NC)	Solo 11 bars (NC). (FM)
	Benny’s Bugle	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
	Benny’s Bugle	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
29030-1	Benny’s Bugle (78)	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

Cootie Williams joined Goodman on Nov. 6, and already the new Septet is in the recording studio with no obvious hang-over! Certainly there are a lot of takes but all of them seem rather coherent and not work of beginners. To take “As Long ...” first, too bad this tune has only one take, because it is a beautiful melody with a top-quality solo though too brief, too brief!! Five takes of one melody is an unequalled experience and we will always be grateful for “Wholly Cats”! If it wasn’t clear by now, it is definitely proved here that the guys improvise! To select favourite soli is a very difficult task and not necessary really, compare yourself! “Royal ...” is an excellent swinger with fine details. The takes are superficially similar. The first solo shows him using as large intervals as possible while the opening of the second one contains a three bar passage of maximum elegance. This pattern is repeated but with happy variations on the two other takes. Note particularly the ending bar of the last solo, small surprises! At last “... Bugle”, a fantastic experience, a real jazz workshop without precedence in the swing-era. So much can be learned about the way Goodman worked with his Septet and of the improvisational capabilities of the participants. CC’s soli are all different, and try to rate them is just impossible. Let it only be said that this is one of the most important discoveries ever made in recorded jazz. Postscript: Wrong, another take of “As Long ...” has appeared, and with regard not only to CC but the septet as such; it is even more different than might be expected! Postscript of Sept. 2020: Note that there are seven, not six CC soli as I wrote earlier, pointed out by James Accardi who has provided me with a pitch-corrected copy of both rehearsal segments.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**NYC. Nov. 19, 1940**

Personnel as Nov. 7.

WNEW broadcast “The Make Believe Ballroom” (Martin Block Show), three titles:

Benny’s Bugle	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
Wholly Cats	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Honeysuckle Rose	Intro 4 bars. Solo 32 bars. In ens to coda. (FM)

Again some interesting comparisons can be made to the studio recordings. “... Bugle” is different, indeed, note for instance the surprising ending where CC appears to say goodbye to the melody with a really defiant phrase. “... Cats” has a definitely slower tempo than usual, and the version is easily recognizable by its opening bar, an idea which I never have heard before. “... Rose” is alright with no special merits, however quoting MoJ: “It is on the bridge of his solo chorus that the guitarist, like Lester Young in similar 32-bar contexts, opts to be at his most daring”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**NYC. Dec. 10, 1940**

Personnel as Nov. 7.

CBS Radio Network, “We The People”, Rutgers-IJS collection:

Flying Home (NC)	Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (M)
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This was exciting! “... Home” has got a new structure here, and the sound quality is excellent. CC’s solo is brilliant, listen in particular to the beginning of bars 5-8!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**NYC. Dec. 19, 1940**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Ken Kersey (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Harry Jaeger (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

29259-5	Breakfast Feud (1 st)	Soli 8 and 8 bars. (FM)
29259-4	Breakfast Feud (2 nd)	Solo 20 bars. (FM)
29259-3	Breakfast Feud (3 rd)	Solo 20 bars. (FM)
29259-bk	Breakfast Feud	No solo. (FM)
29259-bk	Breakfast Feud	No solo. (FM)
29259-2	Breakfast Feud (4 th)	Solo 20 bars. (FM)
29259-1	Breakfast Feud (5 th)	Solo 20 bars. (FM)
29260-2	I Can't Give You Anything But Love	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
29260-x	I Can't Give You Anything But Love (bkd)	No solo. (SM)
29260-3	I Can't Give You Anything But Love	As above. (SM)
29260-1	I Can't Give You Anything But Love (78)	As above. (SM)
29261-bk	Gilly/Gone With What Draft	As below. (FM)
29261-3	Gilly/Gone With What Draft	Intro 4 bars. In ens 12 bars. (FM)
29261-2	Gilly/Gone With What Draft	As above. (FM)
29261-1	Gilly/Gone With What Draft	As above. (FM)

I have always been like a hound for new alternates, but maybe it can be too much! No, I do not mean that, definitely I do not! But life would have been easier and several dark evenings might have been used for reading instead. The highlight of the session has always been the guitar solo on take 1 of "I Can't ...", and it still is. At the same time it has relaxed, pleasant, beautiful phrasing + technically fingerbreaking passages. Really one of his greatest soli on record! The two newly issued alternates are also excellent and almost, almost as memorable. "Gilly", like "AC-DC Current" is not a vehicle for CC who only receives some written-out parts as his task. He executes them perfectly, but one take is enough. At last "... Feud" with 96 bars of guitar distributed over five takes. The first rehearsal lets the ensemble take the first four bars of both choruses, but other versions are satisfied to take the first chorus only. To say that some are good and some bad is hopeless, it is all CC at his best. Postscript of Sept. 2020: A breakdown version of "... Love" exists, 32 seconds, thus no CC solo.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**unknown loc., Dec. 25, 1940**

Personnel as below.

Broadcast, one title, Rutgers-IJS collection:

Wholly Cats	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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A new archeological discovery, a fine new version of "... Cats", buried in the vaults in Newark!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**NYC. Jan. 15, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

29512-4	Breakfast Feud (1 st)	Solo 20 bars. (FM)
29512-3	Breakfast Feud (2 nd)	As above. (FM)
29512-1	Breakfast Feud (3 rd)	As above. (FM)
29512-2	Breakfast Feud (4 th , 78)	As above. (FM)
29513-1	On The Alamo	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
29514-2	I've Found A New Baby (1 st)	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
29514-1	I've Found A New Baby (2 nd , 78)	As above. (FM)
29519-bkd	Gone With What Draft (1 st)	Not available.
29519-3	Gone With What Draft (2 nd)	Intro 4 bars. In ens 12 bars. (FM)
29519-2	Gone With What Draft (3 rd)	As above. (FM)
29519-1	Gone With What Draft (4 th , 78)	As above. (FM)

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Johnny Guarneri (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Dave Tough (dm), Red Norvo (xylophoning "Flying Home"). Orchestra added on "... Home".

WJZ broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", two titles:

Wholly Cats	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
Flying Home	Solo 32 bars. (M)

This "Flying ..." is different from all others with a xylophone added to the ordinary septet, but of course sounding different from Hampton. The tempo is also slower than usual, and I believe CC has better versions than this one. Note orchestra added in the last part. And note also in particular the opening of the second chorus of "... Cats", a version very swinging and different from all previous versions. Important quote from MoJ: "From the first few bars, we detect a difference in the rhythm section, the immense class of drummer Dave Tough placing his head and shoulders above his predecessor".

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. Feb. 16, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Bill Rowland (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Dave Tough (dm).

NBC broadcast "Fitch Bandwagon", one title:

Gone With What Draft	Intro 4 bars. In ens 12 bars. (FM)
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BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. Feb. 17, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Milt Raskin (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Dave Tough (dm).

WJZ broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Breakfast Feud	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
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Note that "... Feud" here is different from all other known versions by containing only one chorus, which is good enough.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. Feb. 19, 1941**

Personnel as March 13, 1941. Ralph Burton (mc).

WNYC broadcast "America in Swingtime", 2nd annual American Music Festival, seven titles:

Rose Room (NC)	Solo 4 bars (NC). (SM)
Flying Home	Solo 32 bars. (M)
The Blues	Solo 24 bars. (S)
The Sheik Of Araby	No solo.
Body And Soul	No solo.
Gone With "What" Wind	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Stompin' At The Savoy (Theme)	Solo 8 bars, drowned behind (mc). (M)

A complete Benny Goodman smallband session on a broadcast, kindly supplied by James Accardi, something quite special, mostly there is a combination of smallband and orchestra. Fine versions of old vehicles like "... Home" and "... Wind", while most of CC's guitar solo on "Rose ..." is performed before the program starts. The highlight of the day is however clearly "The Blues", two slow blues choruses are not everyday occurrence!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. Feb. 24, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Dave Tough (dm).

WJZ broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Gone With What Draft	Intro 4 bars. In ens 12 bars. (FM)
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BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET & ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 3, 1941**

Septet personnel as Feb. 24. Orchestra personnel as usual for this period.

WJZ broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", two titles, the first septet, the second orchestra:

Six Appeal	Intro behind announcer. Solo 16 bars. In ens to coda. (M)
Chonk, Charlie, Chonk (Solo Flight)	Solo with orch 64 bars. (M)

“Six ...” presents a solo which like “Stardust” is almost note for note identical to the Columbia studio version. However, the atmosphere is quite different, somewhat arrogant, and the tempo is much quicker. CC wails along with the beat, swinging like hell, and the listener is taken completely by surprise. Really a sensation! “Solo Flight” is an abbreviated version compared to the studio recordings the next day but good and somewhat more loose-jacket and informal.

BENNY GOODMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 4, 1941**

Bigband personnel including Charlie Christian (g).
One title with CC solo guitar was recorded for Columbia:

29865-1	Solo Flight	Soli with orch 80 and 16 bars. (M)
29865-2	Solo Flight	As above. (M)

It seems that CC thrives with the full Goodman orchestra on this occasion. The ideas come easily with many fine details, and the swing is more than sufficient. No sensations appear, and “Solo Flight” does not belong to his most important works, but it shows him to advantage in an unusual setting. The two takes are equal in quality, comparatively similar but with many different details which identify them. Quote MoJ: “... the second is perhaps the better ... this was not the take selected by Goodman for release, however, no doubt because of his own somewhat untidy solo. This being said, CC’s solo on the issued version is of extremely high caliber, and only fractionally inferior to his second run”.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. March 10, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Count Basie (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Gene Krupa (dm).
WJZ broadcast “What’s New? – The Old Gold Show”, one title:

Flying Home	Solo 32 bars. (M)
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Another very interesting version, different from the others. Particularly the opening phrase and the characteristic “knocking” of the last eight bars serve to identify it completely. Note also Krupa guesting on drums.

**REHEARSAL FOR RECORDING SESSION
WITH BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET** **NYC. March 13, 1941**

Personnel as below without Benny Goodman:
The warming-up to the recording session was recorded, a rather unusual thing to do, and it resulted in 21 minutes of informal jamming:

Waitin’ For Benny (A Sm-o-o-oth One)	Collective improvisation, 7:00. (FM)
I Can’t Believe That YILWM	Collective improvisation 6:00. (M/SM)
Rose Room	Collective improvisation 4:00. (M)
I Hadn’t Anyone Till You	Collective improvisation 2:00. (M)
Blues In B	Collective improvisation 1:30. (M)

same date

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Dave Tough (dm).
Two titles were recorded for Columbia:

29942-3	A Smo-o-o-oth One (1 st)	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. (SM)
29942-1	A Smo-o-o-oth One (2 nd)	As above. (SM)
29942-2	A Smo-o-o-oth One (3 rd , 78)	As above. (SM)
29943-2	Good Enough To Keep (1 st)	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
29943-1	Good Enough To Keep (2 nd , 78)	As above. (FM)

Note: “Good Enough To Keep” is better known as “Air Mail Special”.

This date will be remembered far into the future by any guitar/swing/CC addict for the two informal tracks, “Blues ...” and “Waitin’”, which are rehearsals before the real recording session starts. They are very informal indeed, just music for the fun of it, showing how meager a view of jazz music one gets through records. “Blues ...” is for CC the most significant track, letting him show off for five choruses. We hear that the music evolves from nothing. Somebody shouts: “Hey Charlie, let’s play the Blues. Let’s play the Blues in B!”. And they do! They sort out after two choruses and note the exuberant start of the third chorus. Time is non-existent, and the improvisation could go on for ever. That it is cut off after one and a half minutes is very sad and seemingly unnecessary. “Waitin’...”, lasting a whole five

minutes, is also a joy to the heart. CC has the lead during the first half, doing not very much from a melodic point of view, more or less warming up. However, he swings like everything and makes a foundation for his fellow musicians. He picks up a phrase, throws it in the air and catches it like nothing. One of these is the theme of "A Sm-o-o-oth One", later in the session recorded in a more formal way. This theme really sets Williams and Auld going, and the swing is completely overwhelming for a while. When CC wants to return, the supervisor is there again but more in his right, because there are signs of deterioration to be heard. The two 'planned' titles are almost insignificant compared with the two mentioned above. "... One" features CC in arranged parts, a chord intro and a bridge, and the takes are identical. "Good ...", however, offers two excellent soli, quite similar in general structure but with several refreshing differences. Take 1 is the better, note the ending! Their obvious inspiration places them among the best soli with the Septet. Postscript: After this was written, much more warming-up appeared, with lots of goodies. Note how CC plays along behind Cootie and ensemble or duets with tenorsax on "I Can't Believe ...". Or how he guides the guys along into and around "Rose ..."! So exciting!! Note also that this is CC's last studio recording session with the septet, followed only by three months of occasional broadcasts.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. March 17, 1941**

Personnel as March 13.

WJZ/NBC broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Air Mail Special Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Excellent solo, comparable to the studio versions.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. March 24, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Johnny Guarneri (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Dave Tough (dm). Guest: Eddie South (vln).

WJZ broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Caprice XXIV (Paganini) No solo.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. April 7, 1941**

Personnel as March 13.

WJZ/NBC broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Wholly Cats Solo 24 bars. (FM)

The last version of "Wholly Cats" is not the slightest bit inferior to its numerous predecessors. The first chorus swings along as steadily as a machine, while the start of the second one brings forth a smile!

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. April 7, 1941**

Will Bradley (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Johnny Guarneri (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Ray McKinley (dm, vo).

Broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Southpaw Serenade No solo.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. April 14, 1941**

Personnel as March 13 ("Benny's Bugle" is an orchestra item with soloists from the septet).

WJZ/NBC broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", two titles:

Breakfast Feud Solo 20 bars. (FM)

Benny's Bugle No solo.

"Breakfast ..." fits nicely into the family of similar versions.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. April 21, 1941**

Personnel as March 13. Date earlier believed to be April 14.

WJZ/NBC broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Ida, Sweet As Apple Cider Solo 32 bars. (FM)

"Ida ..." is a very charming piece of music, and it is always a pleasure to hear a completely new Sextet/Septet number. CC's solo is of the best quality which is proved by the happy opening signal as well as the goodbye tag.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **NYC. April 28, 1941**

Personnel as March 13.

Broadcast "What's New? – The Old Gold Show", one title:

Song Of The Islands Intro 4 bars to duet with
(cl) 16 bars. (SM)

“Song ...” is also a very pleasant surprise, another “new” number for the Septet with excellent music all over. CC’s part is not the most important, but his introduction to the tune together with Goodman is beautiful and moving.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**Alexandria, Va., May 1, 1941**

Personnel as March 13.

Broadcast, Mutual Radio Network, Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival, Rutgers-IJS collection:

Moppin’ It Up / A Smooth One Intro 4 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)

This was also a great recent surprise! The item starts out with CC’s usual chord intro, but later he takes a full chorus, never did that before. It seems that the pianist intended to solo, but then our man pushes him away and gives us an unexpected good time!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**NYC. May 5, 1941**

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Jo Jones (dm).

WJZ/NBC broadcast “What’s New? – The Old Gold Show”, one title:

Flying Home Solo 8 bars. (M)

A much too brief version for CC’s part, but good as such. The whole setup is rather untidy.

JAM SESSION**NYC. May 8, 1941**

Hot Lips Page, Joe Guy (tp), Rudy Williams (as), Don Byas, Kermit Scott (ts), “Tex” (p), Charlie Christian (g), Nick Fenton (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

One title was recorded at Minton’s Playhouse, 230 West 118th Street, by Jerry Newman, playing time 10:20:Stompin’ At The Savoy Solo 2 choruses of 32 bars. In ens
5 choruses at the end, particularly
in the 1st, 4th and 5th chorus. (FM)

A recently-discovered (then) additional jam on “... Savoy”. The sound is inferior to the well-known one but quite acceptable. The two solo choruses are excellent and comparable to the choruses on May 12. The conclusion of the jam is a rather disorganized five chorus’ “everybody-takes-part”. However, on close listening one can follow CC nearly all the way through the mess, and it is definitely worth it. He seems to be ‘the fixed point about which everything revolves’. We are happy to take part!

JAM SESSION**NYC. May 12, 1941**

Joe Guy (tp), Thelonious Monk (p), Charlie Christian (g), Nick Fenton (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

One title was recorded at Minton’s Playhouse by Jerry Newman:

Topsy (Charlie’s Choice) Solo fades in, 6 choruses of
(Swing To Bop) 32 bars (except the first 8 bars) are
preserved. Solo 3 choruses. (FM)**NYC. May 12?, 1941**

Same + unknown (ts) and one or two unknown (tp). One title:

Stompin’ At The Savoy Soli 3 and 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

These live recordings from the birthplace of modern jazz music, “Minton’s Playhouse” are truly some of the most costly jewels. Particularly “... Choice”, or “Topsy” as its real name is (with close relationship to Edward Grieg’s: “In The Hall of The Mountain King”), is a historical document, here CC shows the future his bottomless resources as an improviser. His playing is rather different from his works with the Goodman groups, those being comparatively of brief duration. Here he has all the time in the world, and he uses it. Every idea is exploited to the uttermost and builds to a large musical structure. Note for instance the last solo where the first chorus is rather straight, but where he slowly expands the musical perspective. Rather than being a long outdrawn sequence of playing, like for instance some modern recording sessions, this music is all the way important, logical and full of ideas, and the swing is present in every bar. “... Savoy” is also an excellent piece and would in the absence of “... Choice” have been held as a marvel, though it is somewhat looser and more restless.

JAM SESSION**NYC. May 1941**

Personnel unknown but definitely including Joe Guy (tp), Don Byas (ts), Charlie Christian (g).

Two titles were recorded at Minton’s Playhouse by Jerry Newman:

Up On Teddy's Hill Solo fades in, 3 choruses of 32 bars
(except the first 2 bars) are preserved.
In ensemble to coda. (FM)

Down On Teddy's Hill Solo fades in: 2 ½ choruses
of 32 bars are preserved. (FM)

Note: "Up ..." and "Down ..." are "Honeysuckle Rose" and "I Got Rhythm" respectively. "Down ..." is also issued as "Rhythm-A-Ning".

Quite the same immortality is not present at this session compared to the previous one. This is partly due to a drummer with heavier manners. The playing also seems to lack continuity and concentration. However, the session is valuable enough, it just suffers from the comparison to the fantastic "Topsy". Both items really have worthy soli with fine details, note for instance the last chorus of "Up On ...".

JAM SESSION

NYC. May 1941

Hot Lips Page, Victor Coulsen, Joe Guy (tp), Rudy Williams (as), Don Byas, Kermit Scott (ts), Allen Tinney (p), Charlie Christian (g), Ebenezer Paul (b), Taps Miller (dm).

Two titles were recorded at Clark Monroe's Uptown House on 198 West 133rd Street by Jerry Newman:

Guy's Got to Go Some warming up behind the
announcer, then solo 64 bars. (M)

On With Charlie Christian Solo 80 bars. (FM)

Note: "... Go" and "On ..." are "I Got Rhythm" and "Stompin' At The Savoy" respectively. "On With ..." is also issued as "Lips Flips".

This jam session is the weakest one of those recorded by the amateur Jerry Newman (may his name be praised). It seems that CC has to do everything by himself here, the rhythm section is of very little help, and he sounds somewhat uninspired. But of course there are positive details to be found, particularly in "On ...".

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET

NYC. May 28, 1941

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Walter Iooss (b), Nick Fatool (dm).

Mutual broadcast "Monte Proser Dance Carnival" from Madison Square Garden, one title:

Benny's Bugle Solo 24 bars. (F)

Another fine version of "... Bugle", quoting MoJ: "on which the guitarist, no doubt spurred by the brisker than usual tempo, comes up with a joyous solo that is bursting with vitality".

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET & ORCHESTRA

NYC. May/June 1941

Septet personnel probably as June 6. Orchestra personnel as usual for this period. Mutual broadcast "Monte Proser Dance Carnival" from Madison Square Garden, two titles, first title with orchestra, second title with septet:

Solo Flight Soli with orch 80 and 16 bars. (M)

Stompin' At The Savoy (NC) Solo 22 bars (NC). (M)

This broadcast version of "Solo Flight" fits nicely in as a "third take" of the studio recording three months earlier. We find the same setup, the same atmosphere, the same quality and the same inspiration. But as always, we find new details, always reminding us about the master in the art of improvisation.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET

NYC. June 6, 1941

Cootie Williams (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Walter Iooss (b), Nick Fatool (dm).

Mutual broadcast "Monte Proser Dance Carnival" from Madison Square Garden, one title:

Rose Room Solo 24 bars. (SM)

A very beautiful, almost shy version in a slower tempo compared to the Columbia recording. It is very much different from this one and again shows wonderful improvisational capabilities. This may be CC's last solo ...

No further recording sessions.

Corrections of July 6, 2012 and Sept. 28, 2020:

BENNY GOODMAN QUINTET

NYC. Jan. 10, 1943

Benny Goodman (cl), Jess Stacy (p), Dave Barbour (g), probably Sid Weiss (b), Louis Bellson or Kenny Unwin (dm).

“The Cresta Blanca Carnival”, Mutual Radio Network broadcast, one title:

Rose Room

Solo 16 bars. (SM)

Quoting from my ‘very old’ solography: “Although the Sextet is announced, it sounds more like a trio, piano, clarinet and guitar, though bass and drums are present. CC plays quietly, very relaxed and quite different from the other versions known. In fact, this is a quite memorable piece with a very good cooperation within the group”. Although this now has been shown not to be a CC item, I am not afraid to show my/our mistake, because the solo really sounds like CC!

The early summer of 1941 was to become the conclusion of Charlie Christian’s musical life, this extraordinarily creative musician whose art would have far reaching influence also after his death. After the famous jam sessions at Minton’s and Monroe’s (and what a luck that his illness still had not progressed so far as to stop him from joining!), there were only a few casual broadcasts, nevertheless showing that he could still play as well as ever before. I wish he had had the opportunity to say goodbye with a colourful final recording session, but that was never to be. Nine months after the diagnosis, Charlie Christian died.

Final quote from MoJ-liner notes by Claude Carriere: “After a religious service at the Calvary Baptist Church in Walnut Avenue, Oklahoma City, Charlie Christian was buried on 9 March 1942 at the Gates Hill Cemetery in Bonham. It would seem there was not enough money to have his name engraved on his tombstone”.

CD Availability section, main sources:

For the serious collector of Charlie Christian’s exceptional music, I have tried to identify the most easy way to obtain completeness. There are two major productions, and you need to have both:

* Columbia C4K65564, a four-CD set containing (almost) complete the Benny Goodman studio recordings.

* Masters of Jazz, Vol. 1-9 (MJCD 24, 29, 40, 44, 67, 68, 74, 75 and 189), containing a solid part of the Benny Goodman studio recordings (but not as complete as the Columbia set), and also a more or less complete set of broadcast versions.

Finally Jazz Unlimited UCD2013 contains a few breakdowns not elsewhere.

Postscript:

* Session of Jan. 15, 1940: Currently available only on Jazz Heritage Society CD 5262997

* Session of Feb. 19, 1941: “Gone With “What” Wind” and “The Sheik Of Araby” currently available only on Encore CD: “Benny Goodman – A Tour De Force: The Small Groups LIVE! 1937 – 1972”

* Bill Savory collection items are currently available only if you go to the National Jazz Museum in Harlem!

* Note the Rutgers University – Institute of Jazz Studies collection items, go to Newark!

Final note of Sept. 26, 2020: The recording of “You’re A Lucky Guy” from Minton’s including Thelonious Monk has otherwise unknown personnel, leading to a lot of very weakly founded speculations. Both Benny Goodman and Lester Young have been suggested, quite wrongly in our opinion. Even CC has been suggested, playing bass!! Without anything substantial to present, such out-of-the-air ideas should not be published, as they are almost impossible to get rid of.

... 000 ...