The TENORSAX of EUGENE STANLEY AMMONS “GENE” “JUG”
Born: Chicago, Illinois, April 14, 1925
Died: Chicago, Illinois, Aug. 6 or 7, 1974

Introduction:

I remember we did not have so many Gene Ammons records in my early days at the Oslo Jazz Circle. However, due to the late Johs Bergh, our eyes opened to this brilliant tenorsax player, one of the major ones in jazz! Personally I become a lifelong addict when I heard his “St. Louis Blues” with his father’s group!

History:

Son of Albert Ammons, the famous boogie-woogie pianist. He studied music at Du Sable High School under Captain Walter Dyett. Left Chicago on first professional job with the band led by trumpeter King Kolax at 18. He then joined Billy Eckstine’s innovative band 1944-1947 as its principal bop soloist. From 1947 he began leading small groups and recording under his own name. After playing briefly with Woody Herman’s big band (mid-1949) he returned exclusively to leading small groups, working from 1950 to 1952, and frequently thereafter, in partnership with Sonny Stitt. Gene Ammons became a leading exponent of the impassioned blend of bop and black gospel preaching known as soul jazz. Problems with drugs then disrupted his career, although he was allowed to continue playing in jail (1958 – 60, 1962 – 69). His term in prison coincided with the rise of soul music as a commercial genre, and after his release his improvisations, now accompanied by electric instruments, were more popular than ever before (ref. The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz).
GENE AMMONS SOLOGRAPHY

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 5, 1944
Dizzy Gillespie, Maurice "Shorty" McConnell, Gail Brockman, Marion "Boonie" Hazel (tp), Gerald Valentine, Taswell Baird, Howard Scott, Alfred "Chippy" Outcalt (tp), John Jackson, Bill Frazier (as), Dexter Gordon, Gene Ammons (ts), Leo Parker (bar), John Malachi (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Tommy Potter (b), Art Blakey (dm), Billy Eckstine (ldr, vo), Sarah Vaughan (vo), Gerry Valentine, Tadd Dameron, John Malachi (arr).
Six titles were recorded for DeLuxe, one features GA:

120-3 Blowing The Blues Away Six blues choruses after the pattern:
Orch 4, DG 8, Orch 4, GA 8, (DG 4, GA 4) x 3,
DG 12, GA 12 bars. (FM)

120-? Blowing The Blues Away As above. (FM)

Gene Ammons' entrance into the jazz tenor sax race may, almost, be compared to that of Lester Young! To start with a tenor sax battle with Dexter Gordon is really something out of the ordinary, to put it mildly. Here we find two of the three most important of the young be-boppers (the third is Wardell Gray) on the same record, playing as if they had done nothing else for a decade. The reality, however, is that Dexter already has a brief recording history, and for Gene it is the night of the virgin! They play just like hell, and create one of the most memorable occasions of early modern jazz. The playing is inventive and historical, and GA already proves himself to be one of the jazz greats. I would not be the one to choose the winner of this battle! Two takes give additional spice to the encounter. The tenor sax battles are to be considered of equal quality with the details differing all the way through. In all, a magnificent occasion, a shrine for all lovers of modern jazz tenorsax!!

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. ca. late Jan. 1945
Probable personnel: Fats Navarro, Maurice "Shorty" McConnell, Gail Brockman, Marion "Boonie" Hazel (tp), Gerald Valentine, Taswell Baird, Howard Scott, Alfred "Chippy" Outcalt (tb), John Jackson, Bill Frazier (as), Budd Johnson, Gene Ammons (ts), Leo Parker (bar), John Malachi (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Tommy Potter (b), Art Blakey (dm), Billy Eckstine (tp, vtb, vo, dir), Lena Horne (vo). Date also given as Feb./March 1945.
Probably recorded at the Club Marquee, Hollywood.
AFRS Jubilee No. 119, 120, 121 and 122. The following items feature GA:

Blowing The Blues Away Solo 8 bars (last (ts)-solo). (F)
Together Solo 66 bars. (F)
Love Me Or Leave Me Solo 64 bars. (F)

We have met GA once before, just with "Blowing The Blues ...", and we know he is already one of the greatest of the young upcoming tenor stars, his chase with Dexter Gordon is just unforgettable. Therefore, this abbreviated version is a great disappointment. However, he more than compensates with two long soli in fast tempo. Not yet twenty years old, he has already found his style and is in full command of his horn. Both "Together" and "Love Me ..." are important evidence of modern tenor sax development, I have a slight preference for the latter (which also has some beautiful Fats Navarro).

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. May 2, 1945
Personnel as late Jan. except Dexter Gordon (ts) returns, Budd Johnson switches to (as) and replaces Bill Frazier, Sonny Stitt (as) replaces John Jackson.
Four titles were recorded for National, one features GA:

NSC 55 I Love The Rhythm In A Riff Soli 40 and 4 bars with orch 4 bars between. (FM)

A beautiful solo, "his Prez roots are in view ... with Blakey bombing away underneath" as Ira Gitler put it, and maybe an influence from Dexter too? An unforgettable item for GA fans!

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Sept. 4, 1945
Fats Navarro, Shorty McConnell, Boonie Hazel, Raymond Orr (tp), Chips Outcalt, Gerald Valentine, Howard Scott, Walter Knox (tb), John Cobbs, Budd Johnson (as), Gene Ammons, Arthur Simmons (ts), Teddy Cypron (bar), Richard Ellington or
probably John Wallington (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Tommy Potter (b), Art Blakey (dm), Billy Eckstine (ldr, vo).

Four or five titles were recorded for National (info from Jepsen, Bruynincx and Savoy SJL 1127 differ somewhat), but no tenorsax soli.

NYC. Oct. 1945

Probably same personnel. Four titles were recorded for National, one has GA:

**NSC 72-x**  Long Long Journey  Obbligato 12 bars. (S)

**NSC 72-y**  Long Long Journey  As above. (S)

Eight titles with only one GA performance; a terrible neglect! However, "... Journey" makes us forget all frustrations. Presenting Jug for the first time in slow tempo, the two obbligato blues choruses immediately show that he does not only master the uptempi but is a wizard of ballads and blues, with a majestic sound in his horn.

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA  
NYC. Jan. 3, 1946

Kenny Dorham, Shorty McConnell, Boonie Hazel, Raymond Orr (tp), Chips Outcalt, Gerald Valentine, Robert Scott (tb), Norris Turney, Bob "Junior" Williams (as), Gene Ammons, Arthur Simmons (ts), Tate Houston (bar), Richard Ellington (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Bill McMahon (b), Art Blakey (dm), Billy Eckstine (ldr, vo).

Four titles were recorded for National, two feature GA:

**NSC 105**  The Jitney Man  Soli 8, 8 and 6 bars. (FM)

**NSC 115** Second Balcony Jump  Solo 32 bars. (M)

NYC. Feb. 1946

Same personnel except Fats Navarro (tp), Josh Jackson (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Jimmy Golden (p) replace Dorham, Simmons, Houston and Ellington.

Four titles were recorded for National, two feature GA:

**NSC 117**  Tell Me, Pretty Baby  Obbligato 12 bars. (S)

NYC. March 1946

Similar personnel.

Four titles were recorded for National, one features GA:

**NSC 124**  Cool Breeze  Solo 26 bars. (M)

Four solo items out of twelve, could have been better, still the quality of GA's playing makes us happy for every bar. When we get such masterly constructions as "Second Balcony ..." and "Cool Breeze" in a pleasant medium tempo, it is only to bow deeply. Note the flashing opening of the second chorus of the latter! A nice "... Jitney ..." has excellent fragments.

BILLY ECKSTINE ORCHESTRA  
NYC. ca. June/July 1946

Hobart Dotson, King Kolax, Leonard Hawkins, possibly Rostelle Reese (tp), Billy Eckstine (vib, vo), Alfred "Chippy" Outcalt, Gerald Valentine, Howard Scott, unknown (tb), Porter Kilbert, possibly Robert "Junior" Williams (as), Gene Ammons, Frank Wess (ts), unknown (bar), possibly Linton Garner or Jimmy Golden (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Bill McMahon (b), Art Blakey (dm), Ann Baker (vo).

Film "Rhythm In A Riff", directed by Leonard Anderson, produced by William D. Alexander's "Associated Producers of Negro Motion Pictures".

GA soloes on the following two items:

Rhythm In A Riff  Solo 2 choruses of 32 bars, last with orch. (F)

Second Balcony Jump  Solo with orch 32 bars. (M)

Two very fine soli in the good GA/BEckstine tradition!

BILLY ECKSTINE AND HIS ORCHESTRA  
LA. Oct. 5, 1946

Miles Davis, Hobart Dotson, Leonard Hawkins, King Kolax (tp), Walter Knox, Chips Outcalt, Gerald Valentine (tb), Sonny Stitt, John Cobbs (as), Gene Ammons, Arthur Simmons (ts), Cecil Payne (bar), Linton Garner (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Tommy Potter (b), Art Blakey (dm), Billy Eckstine (ldr, vo).

Four titles were recorded for National (complete session said to exist, not available, possibly additional soli to those below), two feature GA:
N 164-A  Oo Bop Sh'Bam  Break to solo 16 bars. (M)
N 164-C  Oo Bop Sh’Bam  As above. (M)
N 167-x  Jelly Jelly  Obbligato 12 bars. (S)
N 167-y  Jelly Jelly  As above. (S)

The last GA soli with Eckstine after a stay of two years, giving many memorable soli, but too few! Here we have two takes of each, showing how inventive this young man was. His breaks on "Oo Bop ..." and cool but hot bucking of Eckstine on "Jelly ..." are historic documents of importance as long as jazz still swings!

LA. Oct. 6, 1946

Personnel as above with strings added.
Four titles but no GA.

EARL COLEMAN/
ANN HATHAWAY ACC. BY
Hollywood, Oct. 18, 1946
Miles Davis (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Linton Garner (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Tommy Potter (b), Art Blakey (dm), Earl Coleman (vo-"Don't Sing ...", "Don't Explain ..."), Ann Baker Hathaway (vo-"... Got The Blues", "Baby ...").
Produced by Eddie Laguna, never issued on 78 rpm.

168-1  Don't Sing Me The Blues  Solo 12 bars. (SM)
168-2  Don't Sing Me The Blues  As above. (SM)
169-1  Don't Explain To Me Baby  Solo 12 bars. (S)
169-2  Don't Explain To Me Baby  As above. (S)
169-3  Don't Explain To Me Baby  As above. (S)
169-4  Don't Explain To Me Baby  As above. (S)
170-1  Baby Won't You Make Up Your Mind  No solo.
170-2  Baby Won't You Make Up Your Mind  No solo.
170-3  Baby Won't You Make Up Your Mind  No solo.
171-1  I've Always Got The Blues (NC)  Solo 24 bars. (M)
171-2  I've Always Got The Blues  As above. (M)
171-3  I've Always Got The Blues  As above. (M)

For forty years nobody heard this session and then!! Presented on Black Lion with a recording quality far surpassing most from this era, including the Eckstine sessions for National, GA takes off as a rising star, which he is. Although Miles Davis gets the leader credit, this is a tenorsaxophone session! Earl Coleman has always been a favorite vocalist of mine since I first heard his "Dark Shadows” with Bird, and he creates the perfect atmosphere for Jug in slower tempi. Luckily several takes were needed and each presents marvellous, charismatic tenorsax. Note for instance the four versions of "Don't Explain ..."!! And yet, the medium "... Always ..." nails you to the worship altar; in an almost hypnotic manner GA creates the greatest musical tension in the most swinging of tempi. A magnificent session!!

As I guessed, GA does not participate on the ALBERT AMMONS session for Mercury in Chi. 1946 with titles "Doin' The Boogie Woogie", "Lady Be Good", "Mr. Bell Boogie", "Why I'm Leaving You", "I Don't Want To See You", recorded for Mercury. Who is making up such things?

PETITTE SWANSON VOCAL
WITH MARL YOUNG TRIO
Chi. March 1947
Gene Ammons (ts), Marl Young (p), Rail Wilson (b).
Four titles were recorded for Sunbeam, 654 “Lawdy Miss Claudy” has no GA, while "I'm Sorry" and “Did You Ever Feel Lucky” have not been available, and it seems nobody ever heard them!

655  My Jockey Knows How To Ride  Obbligato 24 bars. (M)
       Solo 24 bars. (M)

Postscript of Feb. 26, 2016: At last one of these two rare records have turned up! First some rather conventional background but then comes a great solo on “My Jockey …”, two blues choruses of the very best 1947 quality, great discovery!
GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA  
Chi. June 17, 1947
Gail Brockman (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), James Craig (p), Gene Wright (b), Chuck Williams (dm).
Three titles were recorded for Mercury:

848  Concentration  Break 8 bars. Solo 24 bars. Solo 36 bars. (FM)
849-1  Red Top  Solo 24 bars. (SM)
850-1  Idaho  Solo 8, 64, 4 and 8 bars. (F)

The first session under Jug's own leadership, and his strong affection for the blues is evident. Even if this looks like a bebop session, and typical boppish trumpet, one can see the start of a trend in his playing, leading up to his success as a blues tenorsaxophonist with organ backing. GA never was a real bebopper like Dexter and Wardell, and his choice of blues material shows this clearly compared to his competitors. Now "Idaho" is not a blues, mind you, but a 32 bars theme, still the blues feeling is there; "Red Top" became a hit, later to become famous when King Pleasure vocalized the ensembles and Jug's solo. And the solo is a lovely one! Yet, maybe "Concentration", also a blues, is the best item. Anyway, the Mercury sessions represent another step forward for Gene Ammons, one of the all-time greats of jazz tenorsaxophone.

ALBERT AMMONS AND HIS RHYTHM KINGS  
Chi. Aug. 6, 1947
Marvin Randolph (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Albert Ammons (p), Ike Perkins (g), Israel Crosby (b), Alvin Burroughs (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

929-1  St. Louis Blues  Solo 24 bars. (M)
929-2  St. Louis Blues  Solo 36 bars. (M)
929-3  St. Louis Blues  Solo 36 bars. (M)
930-1  Shufflin' The Boogie  Solo 20 bars. (M)
930-2  Shufflin' The Boogie  Solo 32 bars. (M)
931-1  S. P. Blues  Solo 36 bars. (FM)
932-1  Hiroshima  Solo 32 bars. Brief breaks. (FM)

If I had to select a handful of jazz 78s for a desolate island, "St. Louis Blues" with father and offspring Ammons would be one of them. Early in my jazz studies I discovered that while the combination of modern rhythm and swing brass and reeds was disastrous, the opposite could be a pure delight, like Charlie Parker with Tiny Grimes. And this session is the ultimate proof!!! The foundation is not only made by Albert's dynamic piano playing but also largely by the incredible Alvin B., drummer with the Earl Hines band and master of the high hat. Particularly on "St. Louis ..." does he swing out of this earth, believe me!!!! And the contrast when the rolling piano of old days is replaced by Jug's three choruses, inspired by Prez but yet a 100% original creation by a young tenorsax genius. Play it once, play it twice, put in on repeat!!! The other three items also have excellent soloing, particularly "S.P. ...", and note the piano/drums interplay on "Hiroshima". One of the most original recording sessions ever, and great!! Postscript: We have been heard and rewarded, the Mercury archives did contain alternate takes after all!! "... Boogie" is perhaps not a great discovery, and it is one chorus (orch 4, ts 8+12 bars) shorter than the 78 rpm version. But '30-1 alternate, and while take 3 obviously was the correct choice with regard to the performance as a whole, GA has an excellent solo quite comparable to the wellknown one. Then a take 1, more like a rehearsal take, being notably slower in tempo, and with a trumpet solo at the end, consequently GA only gets two choruses, but how he blows them!!! Run and buy the Mercury CD-box set!!!

GENE AMMONS QUINTET  
Chi. Sept. 23, 1947
Gene Ammons (ts), Leo Parker (as, bar), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Ellis Bartee (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Aladdin, 304 “Bartee Meets Gene” is unissued (the complete session with alternate takes said to exist) but:

301-5  Concentration  Solo 8 bars. Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
302  Jack's Town  Solo 48 and 8 bars. (M)
303-8  Blowing Red's Top  Solo 24 bars. (M)
These rare sides are slightly disappointing. Particularly "Blowing ..." never takes properly off, and while any GA item from this period is a must, it sounds rather sluggish. "Concentration" is better, with a fine 8 bars stop-time solo, followed by two strong baritonesax choruses, to feature GA for the rest of the record. Interesting but not up to the Mercury version. "... Town" also has some good playing for 1 1/2 chorus and later a stop-time solo. Would be interesting to have the complete session available possibly to understand better what went wrong.

**LEO PARKER's ALL STARS**
Detroit, Oct. 4, 1947
Howard McGhee (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Leo Parker (bar), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Chuck Williams (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Savoy:

- 800 El Sino Solo 16 bars. (M)
- 801 Ineta Solo 24 bars. (FM)
- 802 Wild Leo No solo. (M)
- 803 Leapin' Leo Solo 32 bars. (FM)

When Bob Porter states that "throughout this session, Jug played very close to Lester Young - probably closer than at any time before or since!", it is easy to agree. Note for instance the opening of "El Sino", after a few bars you might be inclined to believe it was Paul Quinichette, but then the typical GA sound cuts through. This is the best item, in general it seems that the Prez-feeling stems from lack of force and inspiration!

**GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA**
Chi. Oct. 23, 1947
Gail Brockman (tp), Ernest McDonald (as, bar), Gene Ammons (ts), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Ellis Bartee (dm), Earl Coleman (vo-1134), George Stone (arr).

Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

- 1133-2 McDougal's Sprout Solo 48 bars. (FM)
- 1134-2 Hold That Money Intro 4 bars. Solo 12 bars. (S)
- 1135-2 Shermanski Solo 64 bars. (F)
- 1136-1 Harold The Fox Intro 4 bars. Solo 60 bars. (F)

Chi. Dec. 1, 1947
Same, except John "Flaps" Dungee (as), A. K. Salim (arr) replace McDonald and Stone.

Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

- 1332-1 Jeet Jet Solo 66 bars. (F)
- 1333-2 Odd-En-Dow Solo 24 bars. (M)
- 1334 Going For The Okey Doak Solo 32 bars. (M)
- 1335 E.A.A.K. Blues Solo 24 bars. (M)

Chi. Dec. 10, 1947
Same. Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

- 1390 Sugar Coated Solo 32 bars. (M)
- 1391 Blowing The Family Jewels Solo 90 bars. (F)
- 1392-2 Dues In Blues Intro. Solo 24 bars. (M)
- 1393 Jay, Jay Solo 66 bars. (F)

The three Mercury autumn sessions represent a cross section of GA's music, different tempi, blues and standards. As a whole, his fellow musicians, while good, are not quite good enough to give the items the completeness and magic as for instance Bird's Savoy and Dial recordings, and I question several of the arrangements regarding taste and purpose. Still, these are minor arguments, the main point is: We experience GA in his prime, playing like an established star, not like a young man of 22 years. There is maturity in every bar rarely found even in the playing of the most highly praised jazz musicians. There is no purpose in singling out individual items here, all twelve have their particular merits!

**SKEETZ VAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA**
Chi. early 1948
Gail Brockman (tp), unknown (tp), Andrew "Goon" Gardner or John "Flaps" Dungee (as-7139), Gene Ammons, possibly Tom Archia (ts), possibly Julian "Junior" Mance (p), possibly George Freeman (g-7139), unknown (b), (dm). Possibly recorded live at Pershing Ballroom.
Two titles were recorded for Aristocrat:

U7172  Come Back To Sorrento  Featurenumber for tenorsax, various tempi. (F/S)

U7173  Bronzerville Stomp  Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars, last 2 with ens. (F)

Two recent, rare and very valuable discoveries with a lot of speculative ideas about who is playing tenorsax. But to me it seems simple, Gene Ammons no doubt! "Bronzerville ..." is a standard, a little fast to be quite successful, and it takes two choruses to warm up, but then things get going! "... Sorrento" is a peculiar piece, not easy to understand what kind of musical logic behind it, but the most is made of the occasion in different tempi, and you should really listen and be excited by this one!!

**TOM ARCHIA AND HIS ALL STARS**  
Chi. early 1948
Personnel probably as above.
One title recorded for Aristocrat, issued on a Tom Archia Classics CD. However, the leader has for some inexplicable reason given the solo to Gene Ammons:

U7139  McKie's Jam Boppers  Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

An exciting record with swing rhythm and good trumpet, altosax and piano before the tenorsax enters the scene. And somewhere, somehow, somebody must have mixed up the files, because to the best of my experience, this is pure Gene Ammons blowing the best of blues!!

**GENE AMMONS - TOM ARCHIA**  
Chi. Oct. 12, 1948
Gene Ammons (ts), Tom Archia (ts+7142), Willie Jones (p), Leroy Jackson (b), Wesley Landers (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Aristocrat (note that 7140 and 7143 are two versions of the same tune, the former recorded first as it is too long for a 78 rpm, and note also that there have been many errors in discographies and liner notes for this session):

U7140?  Jam For Boppers  First part of intro. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars (1st tenorsax solo). (F)

U7141  Swingin' For Christmas  Solo 24 bars (1st tenorsax solo). (FM)

U7142  It's The Talk Of The Town  Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)


An exciting but very rough session of great historical interest. While Dexter Gordon did his battles with Wardell Gray and Teddy Edwards, GA seems to be more of a lone wolf, and from the late forties this is the only example of a duel. The "victim" is the largely unknown but very promising Tom Archia, and he is beaten only after a hard fight. "...Xmas" is a funny thing in the passing, though with a fine GA solo, and it is the two versions of an IGR-inspired tune which should be given the closest attention, particularly "... Boppers" with four choruses by each performer. TA steps off the scene on "... Town", which is great but marred by too active and overrecorded piano backing and a drummer from out-of-space. Note GA's heavy quote of "Can't Help Lovin' That Man" towards the end, I wonder if he is being sarcastic?!

Note: "Blues Records 1943 to 1970" lists "Cabbage Head Part 1 & 2" on Aristocrat 803 as a possible Gene Ammons item. This is however not correct.

GA is reported to have joined Woody Herman in December 1948. However, this cannot be correct. Herman's Capitol recordings in LA. Dec. 30, 1948 and broadcast Jan. 1, 1949 have Stan Getz and no trace of GA. Since GA and Herman record in Chicago Feb. 1949 and May 26, 1949 respectively, I believe that GA joined Herman in Chicago Spring 1949 and travelled with him to the West Coast.

**GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA**  
Chi. Feb. 5, 1949
Jesse Miller (tp), Ernest McDonald (as, bar), Gene Ammons (ts), Junior Mance (p), Leo Blevins (g), Leroy Jackson (b), Wesley Landers (dm), Marcel Danield (vo, arr-2503).

Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

2501-1 Daddy Sauce's Airlines Break 4 bars to solo 48 bars. (M)
2502-1 Little Irv Solo 28 bars. (M)
2503-1 Abdullah's Fiesta Break 2 bars to solo 24 bars. (M)
2504-1 Brother Jug's Sermon Solo 80 bars. (M)

While GA consistently plays excellently, I must admit to some scepticism regarding his choice of material and coplayers. My simple taste leads me to select "... Sermon" with "party atmosphere, hand-clapping, shouting and a lot of spoken dialogue" to quote Dan M., and I thrive in GA's company, but it seems that he is spreading his talents thin, I do not like the tendency.

CHRISTINE CHATMAN'S ALL STAR COMBO / GENE AMMONS SEXTET
Chi. Feb. 28, 1949

Gene Ammons (ts), Christine Chatman (p, vo-7175), Leo Blevins (g), Lowell Pointer (b), Ike Day (dm), Mary Graham (vo-7179).

Six titles were recorded for Chess:

U7174 Hey Mr. Freddy Solo 24 bars. (M)
U7177 When Your Hair Has Turned To Silver Obbligato 48 bars. (S)
U7178 Do You Really Mean It? Obbligato parts.
Solo 8 bars. Coda. (S)
U7179 Bless You Obbligato parts. Coda. (S)
U7180 Stuffy With ens 32 bars to solo 48 bars.
Solo 8 bars to ens. (M)
U7181 Once In A While Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)

Note: 7180/7181 have been issued on Aristocrat 711 as "Three O'Clock In The Morning" Part 1 and 2.

The recording quality on this session is resembling that of Paramount a quarter of a century earlier, terrible. The session also seems to be quite casually prepared with only "Once ...", a feature number for GA, of class. The strong echo effect may be a nuisance (not on the Arct 711!), but the record is beautiful none the less. "Stuffy" is quite sluggish and surprisingly uninspired. The two remaining items are vocals, but just in such cases one may make interesting discoveries, and the brief solo on "Do You ..." saves the whole record, and there are some nice obbligato parts.

WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA
Chi. May 26, 1949

Ernie Royal, Al Porcino, Stan Fishelson, Charlie Walp, Shorty Rogers (tp), Earl Swope, Bill Harris, Ollie Wilson, Bart Varsalona (tb), Woody Herman (cl, as, vo, dir), Sam Marowitz (as), Gene Ammons, Buddy Savitt, Jimmy Giuffre (ts), Serge Chaloff (bar), Lou Levy (p), Oscar Pettiford (b), Shelly Manne (dm), Mary Ann McCall (vo-3794).

Two titles were recorded for Capitol, no tenorsax on 3794 "The Crickets", but:

3795-2 More Moon Solo 64 bars. (FM)

Referring to the discussion one page earlier, this studio session contains what is most likely GA's first preserved solo with Woody Herman, in fact there are only two studio solo items altogether, the remaining twenty-and-so being from broadcasts. "... Moon", which is of course a variation on "How High The ...", is a beautiful, strong, logical, authoritative, "charismatic" solo, showing that GA was just what Woody needed!

WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA
L.A. Spring? 1949

Personnel similar to July 14, 1949. GA is announced as "the recent addition to the herd". "Just Jazz". Possibly identical to items in programs No. 75 and 77. Date also given as late 1948,

Pennies From Heaven Intro 8 bars to solo
32 bars to long coda. (S)
Terry And The Pirates No solo.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Solo Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man Don't Be Ridiculous</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Man I Love</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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**L.A. Spring? 1949**
Personnel similar to July 14, 1949. Gene Norman (mc). Date also given as late 1948. AFRS Just Jazz No. 75. Date also given as Aug. 1949.

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<td>Early Autumn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keen And Peachy</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennies From Heaven</td>
<td>Intro 8 bars to solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhapsody In Wood</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What's New? (NC)</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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**L.A. Spring? 1949**
Personnel similar to July 14, 1949. GA is announced as "the recent addition to the band". Gene Norman (mc). AFRS Just Jazz No. 77. Date also given as Dec. 30, 1948 and Aug. 1949.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Terry And The Pirates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Man, Don't Be Ridiculous</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Sequence</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamaican Rhumba</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Man I Love</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detour Ahead</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Honey</td>
<td>Solo four choruses of 32 bars, last three destroyed by announcement. Solo 8 bars. (F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Balboa Beach, Ca., July 2, 1949**
Personnel probably as above. "Excursions in Modern Music" broadcast from the Rendezvous Ballroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Solo Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon Drop</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Brothers</td>
<td>Solo 16 bars (2nd (ts)-solo). Solo 2 bars. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Got It Bad</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Moon</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Crickets</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Man I Love</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry And The Pirates</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Ain't Getting Any Younger</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everywhere</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's Right</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Flame</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hollywood, July 6, 1949**
Same personnel. Movie short, Universal International Featurette, not available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Solo Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica Rhumba</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've Got News For You</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's A Great Day For The Irish</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lollypop</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skip To My Lou</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Keen And Peachy

Balboa Beach, Ca. July 9, 1949
Personnel probably as July 14. Broadcast from the Rendezvous Ballroom.

Not Really The Blues Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Blues Medley No solo.
Non Drastic Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)
What's New No solo.
Bijou No solo.
Pennies From Heaven Intro 8 bars to solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
Jamaica Rhumba No solo.
Four Brothers Soli 16 and 2 bars. (FM)
Keen And Peachy Solo 32 bars. (F)
Theme No solo.

GA certainly was a strong new asset to the Woody Herman band, and he makes his presence known on the various Just Jazz programs and broadcasts. A fine variation on "More Moon" should be particularly noted, as well as his beautiful rendering of "Pennies ..." in a very unusual tempo, making the most of it. And he slips nicely into the "Four Brothers" arrangement, as well as old vehicles like "Apple Honey", "Lemon Drop" and "... Peachy".

WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA L.A., July 14, 1949
Personnel as May 26 with Terry Gibbs (vib) added.
Five titles were recorded for Capitol, 4670 "More Than You Know" unissued, 4667 "Jamaica Rhumba" tenorsax solo 8 bars (M) but not GA, 4666 "Detour Ahead" no tenorsax, 4669 "The Great Lie" tenorsax solo 16 bars (M) but not GA. However:

4668 Not Really The Blues Solo 16 bars (1st (ts)-solo). (FM)

While not as well known as the famous "More Moon", "Not Really ..." also is a magnificent bigband item and has an excellent but much briefer GA solo.

WOODY HERMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA Balboa Beach, Ca. July 16, 1949
Personnel probably as July 14. Broadcast from the Rendezvous Ballroom.

The Goof And I No solo.
I Only Have Eyes For You No solo.
Apple Honey Soli 96 and 8 bars. (F)
A Date With The Blues No solo.
Tiny's Blues No solo.
Early Autumn Possibly solo 10 bars and coda. (S)
Lollypop No solo.
Don't Be Ridiculous No solo.

L.A. July 20, 1949
Personnel as July 14, except Joe Mondragon (b) replaces Pettiford.
Four titles, "Tenderly", "Lollipop", "You Rascal You", "Rhapsody In Wood" recorded for Capitol but no GA.

Balboa Beach, Ca. July 23, 1949
Personnel probably as July 20, plus Nat King Cole (vo-"Yes, Sir ...`).
Mutual broadcast from the Rendezvous Ballroom.

Not Really The Blues Solo 16 bars. (FM)
Detour Ahead No solo.
Rhapsody In Wood No solo.
Yes, Sir, That's My Baby No solo.
Tenderly No solo.
That's Right No solo.
You Rascal, You No solo.
I've Got News For You No solo.
Out Of Nowhere No solo.
How High The Moon Solo 32 bars. (M)
Theme No solo.

Balboa Beach, Ca. July 1949
Personnel probably as July 14 or 20. Same place.
Pretty-Eyed Baby No solo.
Unidentified instrumental (NC) No solo.

Same.
The Good Earth No solo.
Leo The Lion (NC) No solo.

Same.
Leo The Lion No solo.
Sonny Speaks No solo.
Early Autumn No solo.

L.A. July 29, 1949
Personnel similar to the above. Date doubtful, see programs No. 75 and 77.
AFRS Just Jazz No. 76 from the Shrine Auditorium.
Baby, I've Got News For You No solo.
I Ain't Getting Any Younger No solo.
Everywhere No solo.
Four Brothers Solo 16 bars (2nd (ts)-solo).
Solo 2 bars. (FM)

Keen And Peachy Solo 32 bars behind announcer. (F)

Balboa Beach, Ca. July 30, 1949
Personnel probably as July 20.
Mutual broadcast from the Rendezvous Ballroom (last broadcast).
Lollypop No solo.
I Got It Bad No solo.
Blue Flame No solo.
Four Brothers Solo 16 bars (2nd (ts)-solo).
Solo 2 bars. (FM)

Early Autumn No solo.
That's Right No solo.
How High The Moon No solo.

L.A. Aug. 1949
Personnel similar to the above. Date doubtful, see programs No. 75 and 77.
AFRS Just Jazz No. 79 from the Shrine Auditorium.
Lemon Drop Solo 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 (GA first). (F)
Keen And Peachy Solo 32 bars. (F)
How High The Moon After talk and sign off:
(named More Moon) Solo 32 bars to fade out. (M)
GA did not stay more than 3-4 months with Herman, and by considering the numerous "no solo" items, he probably felt his time was wasted. Nevertheless there is occasionally remarkable soloing to be found. A favourite may be the Aug. version of "... Moon", wailing when the program and GA run out.

**GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA**  
Chi. Oct. 4, 1949

Jesse Miller (tp), Matthew Gee (tb), Ernest McDonald (as, bar), Gene Ammons (ts), Junior Mance (p), Leo Blevins (g), Leroy Jackson (b), Wesley Landers (dm), Jimmy Mundy (arr).

Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

- **3001** Everything Depends On Me  
  Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)
- **3002** Hot Springs  
  Soli 8 and 32 bars. (M)
- **3003** When You're Gone  
  Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)
- **3004** Little Slam  
  Solo with ens 64 bars. (FM)

The final Mercury session presents Jug in the ballad mood. The way he chooses echo, backing and a very slow tempo tells that he pretentiously and consciously tries to capture attention, listeners, buyers for his records. "Everything ...", and "... Gone" are beautiful performances. Still, the smell of commerce is there. I feel ambivalent, I appreciate the beautiful slow tenorsax playing immensely, yet I do not like the development of GA's productions, he is in somebody's pocket. The air of "Little Sam" is refreshing, really the best and most honest piece of music at the session. But we should be grateful to Mercury for their efforts with Jug, without these sessions we would have a very meager knowledge of this important period in his musical development.

**GENE AMMONS SEXTET**  
Chi. Jan. 8, 1950

Jesse Miller (tp), Matthew Gee (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Junior Mance (p), Leo Blevins (g), Leroy Jackson (b), Wesley Landers (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Aristocrat/Chess:

- **U7231** Pennies From Heaven  
  Intro 8 bars to solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
- **U7232** The Last Mile  
  Solo 12 bars. (S)
- **U7233** Cha-Bootie  
  Solo 36 bars. (M)
- **U7234** More Moon  
  Solo 64 bars. Solo with ens 32 bars. (F)

GA enters the fifties as one of the leading modern tenorsax men, deeply anchored to the Chicago blues tradition. On his first recording session in this decade he tries however to capitalize on two "hits" with the Woody Herman band from the late forties, "... Heaven" and "... Moon". Although they are excellent tenorsax pieces, "... Moon" is better in the previous version, and the very slow "... Heaven" is obviously aiming to attract a new more popular market. I find most excitement in the blues; the slow chorus on "... Mile" and the session highlight "Cha-Bootie", a blues reminding of "Perdido".

**COUNT BASIE AND HIS SEXTET**  
NYC. Feb. 2, 1950

Harry Edison (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Georgie Auld (ts), Gene Ammons (ts, bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Al McKibbon (b), Gus Johnson (dm), Deep River Boys (vo-3188), Joseph "Google Eyes" August (vo-3187-1 only!).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

- **3187-1** If You See My Baby  
  Solo 24 bars. (M)
- **3187-2** If You See My Baby  
  As above. (M)
- **3188-1** Solid As Rock  
  No solo. (M)
- **3189-1** Rat Race  
  Solo 12 bars (2nd (ts-solo). 36 bars 4/4 with (ts-GA), who leads. (FM)
- **3189-2** Rat Race  
  As above, but only 24 bars 4/4. (FM)
- **3190-1** Sweets  
  No solo. (M)

One fact should be pointed out right away; it is unfortunate that Basie did not hire GA as a permanent addition to his band, he would have been tremendous! Also it would have done him good, brought him away from the trend which eventually made him end up with organs and congas. The magnificent Basie rhythm section gives a perfect base for his groovy playing, and "... See Me Baby" has two lovely choruses, demonstrating all facets of his artistry. Note two quite different takes, one vocal, one non-vocal!! "Rat Race" is a tenorsax battle, and it is very surprising how
Auld adapts to the bebop style, in fact he is sometimes uncannily resembling Wardell Gray, could you believe that?! "... Rock" has no tenorsax soli, while "Sweets" has a 16 bars solo by Auld only.

**GENE AMMONS / SONNY STITT**

NYC. Feb. 18, 1950

Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt (ts), Dick Hyman (p), Gene Ramey (b), Art Blakey (dm).

Broadcast from Birdland. Dates Feb. 2 and Feb. 10 have been suggested on Ozone 1 and Kings of Jazz (It) KLJ 20013 LP issues, which I have not heard. I assume there is only one program as noted below, but please volunteer information!

- **You're Driving Me Crazy**
  - Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars.
  - Solo 16+8 bars, (b) on bridge. (FM)

- **The Way You Look Tonight**
  - No solo.

- **Fine And Dandy**
  - Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
  - 3 choruses 4/4 with (ts-SS) to coda. (F)

Despite a very fast tempo on "... Dandy", this is the better GA item on this broadcast, "...Crazy" seems somewhat unconcentrated at times.

**GENE AMMONS BAND**

NYC. March 5, 1950

Bill Massey (tp), Eph Greenlea (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (ts, bar), Duke Jordan (p), Tommy Potter (b), Jo Jones (dm), Teddy Williams (vo), ensemble (vo-1221).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige, 1218 "Soft Winds" and 1219 "Keep Your Head From Ammons" were rejected, however:

- 1220 **Bye Bye**
  - Solo 64 bars to solo with ens 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

- 1221 **Let It Be**
  - Solo with ens 24 bars. Long coda. (M)

**Same date**

Personnel as above minus Massey and Greenlea.

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

- 1222-1 **Blues Up And Down (NC)**
  - Solo structure: GA 12, SS 12, 24 bars 4/4 GA/SS, breakdown. (FM)

- 1222-2 **Blues Up And Down**
  - Solo structure: GA 12, SS 12, 36 bars 4/4 GA/SS, 12 bars 2/2 GA/SS, GA 12, SS 12, breakdown. (FM)

- 1222-3 **Blues Up And Down**
  - Solo structure as take 2, but concluding ensemble intact. (FM)

- 1223-1 **You Can Depend On Me**
  - Solo structure: Ens 16, 8 bars 2/2 GA/SS, ens 8, GA 32, SS 32, 32 bars 8/8 GA/SS, 32 bars 4/4 GA/SS. (F)

- 1223-2 **You Can Depend On Me**
  - As above. (F)

- 1224 **Touch Of The Blues**
  - Obbligato parts. (S)

- 1225 **Dumb Woman Blues**
  - Solo 12 bars. (SM)

This is one of the most important parts of the early fifties tenorsax history!! The Ammons/Stitt combination playing at Birdland from January 1950 enters the Prestige recording studio, and some of the most incredible tenorsax battles are created. There are two titles, "Blues Up And Down" and "You Can Depend On Me" with alternate takes, and the playing is just gorgeous, building upon and even transcending the concepts of Dexter Gordon/Wardell Gray. Both players are in the shape of their lives, and the exchanges are sharp as razors. The more you play this music, lasting almost 12 minutes, the better it becomes! In addition there are four interesting items with GA alone. My favourite is the beautiful chorus on "Dumb Woman ...", but also "Bye Bye" in particular has good playing. But back to the two GA/SS items; here you have the essence of modern jazz tenorsax "battles", a unique kind of music where musical creation on the most sophisticated level is combined with an almost animalistic and primitive fight for survival! Certainly Jug survives here!!

**GENE AMMONS BAND**

NYC. April 26, 1950

Bill Massey (tp), Bennie Green (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (bar), Duke Jordan (p), Tommy Potter (b), Art Blakey (dm), ensemble (vo-86).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:
85 Cha-Bootie Solo 24 bars. (M)
86 Who Put The Sleeping Pills In Rip Van Winkle's Coffee? Solo 34 bars. (M)
87 Gravy (Walkin') Solo 36 bars. (M)
88 Easy Glide Solo with ens 6 bars. Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)

The GA band is no more than a vehicle for the master himself, and he blows some of the best tenorsax ever in the early fifties on his Prestige dates. He is always close to the blues whatever he plays, and on "Gravy", which is a blues, later made famous as "Walkin'", he is magnificent, note particularly the third and last chorus! Likewise "Cha-Bootie" has two incredible choruses preceded by SS on baritonesax, a rare occasion. Even in a crazy piece like "... Sleeping Pills ..." he manages to slip in with a first class solo, and also "... Glide" is highly noteworthy.

GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA Chi. May 2, 1950
Bill Massey (tp), Matthew Gee (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Charles Bateman (p), Gene Wright (b), Wesley Landers (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Chess:

U7247 Ten Or Eleven Solo 64 bars. (M)
U7248 Goodbye Solo feature for tenorsax. (S)
U7249 You Go To My Head Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
U7250 My Foolish Heart Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)

Back to Chicago GA seems to forget his Prestige contract and continues to record for Chess. This company works with a more commercial concept, adding echo to preferred slow songs. Since it is a giant who plays, it does not really matter much, even the rather bombastic version of Benny Goodman's sign-off theme "Goodbye" seems to work. "... Head" and "... Heart", his biggest hit on Chess, are much in the same style and quite enjoyable, but it is obvious that the music is not 'honest' in the real sense, I am convinced that GA played the ballads quite differently and deeper on a late club night. The odd item "... Eleven" has a straightforward swinging solo with no echo, more like the real thing.

GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA NYC. July 27, 1950
Bill Massey (tp), Matthew Gee (tb), Gene Ammons (ts, vo-101), Sonny Stitt (bar), Duke Jordan (p), Gene Wright (b), Wesley Landers (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

100 Back In Your Own Backyard Soli with orch 32 bars and 8 bars to long coda. (S)
101 Sweet Jennie Lou Vocal. Solo with orch 16 bars. Vocal. (M)
102 La Vie En Rose Solo with orch 40 bars to coda. (S)
103 Seven Eleven Solo with orch 24 bars. (M)

This session is not well produced and disappointing, the band is just noisy fill-in. "... Backyard" is taken in an unusual and rather unsuitable syrupy tempo, and although it is interesting with a freak vocal encounter, it is not remarkable. "La Vie
"..." is a very commercial item with only appr. 8 bars of real improvisation. Best is
the two blues choruses on "Seven ...".

**GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA**  
Chi. July/Aug. 1950

Same. Four titles were recorded for Chess:

- **U7265** Jug Head Ramble  
  Solo 24 bars. (M)

- **U7266** Can Anyone Explain?  
  Solo 22 bars. Solo bars to coda. (S)

- **U7267** Don't Do Me Wrong  
  Solo 34 bars. (M)

- **U7268** Prelude To A Kiss  
  Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)

There are elements of routine in GA's recordings now, particularly with Chess, and
"Prelude ..." is a prominent example. "... Explain" is of the same commercial lot,
and "... Wrong" also seems quite ordinary. We have to go to the 'simple' shuffle "... Ramble" to have the real thing. Of course, when GA plays the commercials, he
makes more music than most people with serious efforts, but I feel a warning is needed!

**SONNY STITT BAND**  
NYC. Oct. 8, 1950

Personnel as July 27 except Gene Ammons (bar), Sonny Stitt (ts).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige, "To Think You've Chosen Me", "After You've Gone", "Our Very Own", "S'Wonderful", but unfortunately no baritonesax soli.

**GENE AMMONS - SONNY STITT BAND**  
NYC. Oct. 28, 1950

Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (ts-116,117), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Wes Landers (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>116 Stringin' The Jug Pt 1</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars. 32 bars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8/8 with (ts-SS). (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117 Stringin' The Jug Pt 2</td>
<td>32 bars 16/16 to 32 bars 8/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to 32 bars 4/4 with (ts-SS). (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118 When I Dream Of You</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119 A Lover Is Blue</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two beautiful ballads, maybe not going very deep, being constrained to a single
chorus and coda appropriate for a juke box market, but nevertheless quite
noteworthy. "... The Jug" is another exciting but less known chase, why has not this
item been reissued?

**GENE AMMONS BAND**  
NYC. Jan. 16, 1951

Bill Massey (tp), Matthew Gee (tb), Gene Ammons (ts, vo-124), Sonny Stitt (ts, bar), Charles Bateman (p), Gene Wright (b), Teddy Stewart (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>124 Around About 1. AM</td>
<td>Intro 4 bars. Vocal. Solo 12 bars. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 125 Jug                    | Long intro with orch. Solo  
  with orch 96 and 16 bars. (F) |
| 126 Wow                    | Soli with orch 32 and 8 bars. (M) |
| 127 Blue And Sentimental   | Solo 36 bars to long coda. (S) |

Here we have a good Prestige session with more variation than the preceding ones,
emphasizing jazz and tenorsax soloing rather than purely commercial aspects.
"Around ..." has a groovy intro which immediately defines the atmosphere, and an
excellent slow blues chorus follows later. In "Jug" we get a real up-tempo item,
which is really "Dexter Digs In", and it is quite good although there are more
important GA items in this tempo. "Wow" has a remarkable last solo in double-time, note this one!! Finally, "Blue ..." has a magnificent solo feature; Herschal
Evans' old vehicle seems excellently suitable for Jug, this is my favorite item from
this session!

**GENE AMMONS BAND**  
NYC. Jan. 31, 1951

Bill Massey (tp), Al Outcalt (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (ts, bar), Charles Bateman (p), Gene Wright (b), Teddy Stewart (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>136/ New Blues Up And Down</td>
<td>Solo 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pt 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A faster version of an old hit, and although it is a recreation it has dynamics and inspiration and fits well into the important sequence of GA soloing from the early fifties. Not reissued, it is a great pleasure to find and be hypnotized by!

**SONNY STITT**

NYC. Jan. 31, 1951

Personnel as above except Gene Ammons (bar), Larry Townsend (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Prestige, "The Thrill Of Your Kiss" and "If The Moon Turns Green", but no GA.

**GENE AMMONS - SONNY STITT**

NYC. March 10, 1951

Bill Massey (tp), Wade Marcus (tb), Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt (ts), Junior Mance (p), Gene Wright (b), Teddy Stewart (dm).

Recorded at Birdland, one title has not been available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Moon</td>
<td>Soli 64, 8 and 8 bars. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Foolish Heart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After You've Gone</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ain't Misbehavin'</td>
<td>No solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues Up And Down</td>
<td>Solo schedule: GA 12 bars, SS 12 bars, 4 choruses of 4/4 (GA first), GA solo 8 choruses, SS solo 18 choruses, 2 choruses of 4/4 (GA first), Duet 3 choruses. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumpin' With Symphony Sid</td>
<td>Soli 24, 12 and 4 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A thrilling jam session, but Jug seems to lack some of Stitt's inspiration. "More Moon" proceeds according to the usual format, and in "Blues ..." he ventures after a few choruses into more noise than really good music. "... Sid" on closing seems to be his best solo feature.

**GENE AMMONS ORCHESTRA**

Chi. May 3, 1951

Personnel as July 27.

Four titles were recorded for Chess:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U7337 Baby Won't You Please Say Yes</td>
<td>Intro to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Soli 2, 2 and 8 bars to coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U7338 Happiness Is Just A Thing Called Joe</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U7339 It's You Or No One</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U7340 You're Not The Kind</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final Chess/Chicago session is like the preceding ones; the ballads are bombastic and commercial, yet with GA's strong personality giving them importance. Nevertheless here 'they' are stretching it too far, the ending of "... No One" is just too bad. The medium titles are to be preferred and have some good soloing, particularly "Baby ...".

**GENE AMMONS AND HIS BAND**

NYC. June 29, 1951

Bill Massey (tp), Eli Dabney (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Rudy Williams (bar), Clarence "Sleepy" Anderson (p), Earl May (b), Ted Stewart (dm), Sally Early (vo). 151.

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>148 Ammons Boogie</td>
<td>Break to solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149 Echo Chamber Blues</td>
<td>In ens. Solo 24 bars. Coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 Sirocco</td>
<td>Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars, partly with ens. Coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151 Fine And Foxy</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars, partly with ens. (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have a particular weakness for GA playing the groovy blues, whether in medium tempo like "... Boogie", "Sirocco" and "... Foxy", or slow tempo like "Echo ..."; in
this idiom his unique personality and strength really unfold, nobody is his superior! For a particular highlight note how he almost duets with "Sleepy" for two choruses on the latter item, vow!!

**GENE AMMONS QUARTET  NYC. Aug. 14, 1951**
Gene Ammons (ts), Clarence Anderson (p), Earl May (b), Ted Stewart (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

- **160-A** Hot Stuff
  As below but only solo 12 bars at the end. (F)

- **160-B** Hot Stuff
  As below. (F)

- **160-C** Hot Stuff
  Intro 4 bars to straight 24 bars to solo 48 bars. Solo 24 bars to straight 12 bars to coda 4 bars. (F)

- **161-A** Them There Eyes
  Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)

- **162-A** When The Saints Go Marching In
  As below. (M)

- **162-B** When The Saints Go Marching In
  Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to straight 16 bars. (M)

- **163-A** Archie
  Straight with (p) 24 bars to solo 24 bars. Solo 12 bars to straight 12 bars. (M)

A lively session with better sound than most of the earlier Prestige sessions. "Hot Stuff" is one of Jug's best fast tempo performances in the early fifties. And he even manages to blow a lot of life into the terrible nuisance "... The Saints ...". Good soloing also on "... Eyes" and the blues as only GA can make it on "Archie". In all, a very nice date. Note that when I state 'straight' above, it is an overstatement, he never plays straight really, but there is a need to discern the real soli from the melody presentations.

**GENE AMMONS AND HIS BAND  NYC. Nov. 14, 1951**
Bill Massey (tp), Eli Dabney (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (ts, bar), Clarence Anderson (p), Ernie Shepard (b), Teddy Stewart (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

- **255** Undecided
  Straight 32 bars to solo 72 bars to straight 8 bars. (M)

- **256** Until The Real Thing Comes Along
  Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)

- **257** Because Of Rain
  Solo with orch 48 bars to long coda. (S)

- **258** Charmaine
  Solo with orch 48 bars to coda. (S)

"Undecided" has some first rate GA blowing to be noted. "... The Real Thing ....", "… Rain" and the waltzlike "Charmaine", highly echoed, are however setbacks to commercialism; while quite pleasant they are not aimed at jazz listeners.

**GENE AMMONS AND HIS BAND  NYC. March 24, 1952**
Bill Massey (tp), J. J. Johnson (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (bar), John Houston (p), Ernie Shepard (b), Bob Wilson (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Decca:

- **82532** I'll Walk Alone
  Soli 8 and 36 bars. (SM)

- **82533** Old Folks
  Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)

- **82534** Beezy
  Solo 8 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Coda. (F)

- **82535** Somewhere Along The Way
  Intro 4 bars to solo 40 bars to long coda. (S)

A session fitting nicely into the Prestige atmosphere and the last chance to hear the Ammons/Stitt band, although GA takes it all, there are no other soloists except for a piano intro. Three titles are beautiful ballads, and I am not able to prefer one from the others. And then an exciting IGR-item, "Beezy", perhaps noisy by some standards due to the rather unnecessary band background, but nevertheless a fine example of up-tempo GA.
Break up of his co-led band with Sonny Stitt in 1952.

**GENE AMMONS AND HIS BAND**

**Chi. Nov. 18, 1952**

John Coles (tp), Lino Murray (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Mack or Gene or McKinley Easton (bar), John Houston (p), unknown (g), Benny Steuerville (b), George Brown (dm).

Four titles were recorded for United (later issued on Savoy):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U1163 Just Chips</td>
<td>Duet with (dm) 32 bars. Break 4 bars to solo 32 bars. Soli 4 and 4 bars. Duet with (dm) 16 bars to fade out. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1164-2 Street Of Dreams</td>
<td>Solo 16 bars (S) to 48 bars (M) to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1165-2 The Beat (Good Time Blues)</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to coda. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1166 Travellin' Light</td>
<td>Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chicago sessions for United are generally more inspired than those for Prestige, and there is some excellent tenorsax playing to be heard. In the slow tempo there are three magnificent performances with some echo added, "... Light", "... Dreams" and "Stairways ...", all majestic and rather straight, yet more interesting than most tenorsax players' indepth improvisations. Then there are several versions of the blues; the well known "Red Top" but also "Good Time ..." and "Jim Dawgs", all showing for the n'th time the immense strength of GA in this area. "Fuzzy" is not a blues, as it may seem from the ensemble, but yet having excellent solos as has "Just Chips" with some fascinating coplaying ts/dm. Finally the fast "Big Slam" featuring a tenorsax battle between GA and a quite competent Easton, whatever his first name. The Savoy LP presents two parts, but it is unclear how they are related to the original 78 rpm. issue on United. They are alternate versions of the same tune, but Part 2 contains only the last half, starting in the middle of Easton's solo. As tenorsax battles go, this is perhaps not among the historical ones, but both of them wail to utter satisfaction. To sum up: One of the best GA collections from the early fifties.

**GENE AMMONS AND HIS BAND**

**Englewood Cliffs, NY. Nov. 26, 1954**

Nate Woodyard (tp), Henderson Chambers (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), McKinley Easton (bar), John Houston (p), Benny Steuerville (b), George Brown (dm), Gerry Valentine (arr).

Note: Date given by Bob Porter as Feb. 8, 1955 but later discographies give date above.

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>643 Sock</td>
<td>Break to solo 64 bars. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>644 What I Say</td>
<td>Break to solo 60 bars. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>645 Count Your Blessings</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>646 Cara Mia</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Same. One title, with band vocal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U1302 Red Top</td>
<td>Solo 24 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Same. McKinley Easton ? (ts, bar). Four titles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U1331 Fuzzy</td>
<td>Solo 72 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1332 Stairway To The Stars</td>
<td>Solo 40 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1333 Jim Dawgs</td>
<td>Intro. Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1334 Big Slam Pt 1</td>
<td>Solo schedule: Ens 40 bars, GA 16, Ens 8, GA 32, (bar-ME) 64, 2x(GA 8, ME 8), 4x(GA 4, ME 4), GA/ME 64 bars. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1335? Big Slam Pt 2</td>
<td>Probably edited alternate take, starting on ME 32 continuing with chase as above. (F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chicago sessions for United are generally more inspired than those for Prestige, and there is some excellent tenorsax playing to be heard. In the slow tempo there are three magnificent performances with some echo added, "... Light", "... Dreams" and "Stairways ...", all majestic and rather straight, yet more interesting than most tenorsax players' indepth improvisations. Then there are several versions of the blues; the well known "Red Top" but also "Good Time ..." and "Jim Dawgs", all showing for the n'th time the immense strength of GA in this area. "Fuzzy" is not a blues, as it may seem from the ensemble, but yet having excellent solos as has "Just Chips" with some fascinating coplaying ts/dm. Finally the fast "Big Slam" featuring a tenorsax battle between GA and a quite competent Easton, whatever his first name. The Savoy LP presents two parts, but it is unclear how they are related to the original 78 rpm. issue on United. They are alternate versions of the same tune, but Part 2 contains only the last half, starting in the middle of Easton's solo. As tenorsax battles go, this is perhaps not among the historical ones, but both of them wail to utter satisfaction. To sum up: One of the best GA collections from the early fifties.
GA leaves the early fifties with good soloing in fast medium tempo on "Sock" which is a standard, and "... Say" which is a blues. The two slow items represent his "other self", they are played straight with echo for a non-jazz public but are nevertheless of more value than most tenorsax players' wholehearted improvisations!

**GENE AMMONS AND HIS BAND**  
**NYC. Feb. 8, 1955**

Nate Woodyard (tp), Edwin Moore (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Cecil Payne (bar), Lawrence Wheatley (p), Ernie Shepard (b), Gene Brown (dm), Earl Coleman (vo-694, 696), Gerry Valentine (arr).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

694  This Is Always  
Solo 8 bars. (S)

695  Blue Roller  
Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

696  My Last Affair  
Solo 8 bars. (SM)

697  Our Love Is Here To Stay  
Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)

GA continues to record for Prestige into the late fifties, and Earl Coleman's rendering of the old Charlie Parker feature "... Always" is a proper start; a brief but very nice solo. "... Roller" is a most typical GA blues performance in medium tempo of good quality. The main item of the session is however the ballad "Our Love ...", an item with many nice parts but somewhat commercialized and lacking the completeness of a masterpiece. "... Affair" is however a peculiar piece, in between EJ's nice vocal parts, GA plays just like an ordinary honker, and it is difficult to hear that it is really him.

**GENE AMMONS ALL STARS**  
**NYC. June 15, 1955**

Art Farmer (tp), Lou Donaldson (as), Gene Ammons (ts), Freddie Redd (p), Addison Farmer (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Prestige (no 78 rpm.):

755  Juggernaut  
Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars to 1 chorus of 4/4 with (dm). (M)

756  Woofin' And Tweetin'  
Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)

GA is entering the LP age, allowing him and his fellow musicians to stretch out. This is by all means a good session and good soloing by all participants, but it seems that the leader is somewhat hesitant in his approach to the new medium. Unexpectedly he lets the other horns and piano enter first on both items, and when he takes the stage himself his soloing is typical and groovy but not outstanding.

**GENE AMMONS BAND**  
**NYC. Nov. 4, 1955**

Personnel as Feb. 8.

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

810  Blues For Turfers  
Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)

811  Rock-Roll  
Solo 8 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (FM)

812  Ghost Of A Chance  
Solo 8 bars. (S)

813  I Haven't Changed A Thing  
Solo 8 bars. (S)

Rewrite of Sept. 26, 2015): Good blues playing on "... Turfers", typical slow and groovy on "... Thing", and in fact rather corny on "... Chance", while "Rock-Roll", having nothing to do with r&b nor r&roll, is the most exciting one with GA really going!

**GENE AMMONS ALL STARS**  
**NYC. April 23, 1956**

Art Farmer (tp), Jackie McLean (as), Gene Ammons (ts), Duke Jordan (p), Addison Farmer (b), Art Taylor (dm), Candido Camero (cga).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as "The Happy Blues":

880  The Happy Blues  
Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. 5 choruses 4/4 with (as/tp). (M)

881  The Great Lie  
Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
Can’t We Be Friends? Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. solo 48 + 12 bars to close, (cga) on last bridge. (SM)

Madhouse Solo 8 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (as/tp). Solo 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (tp/as).
Solo 32 bars. 32 bars 2/2 with (tp/as) to 32 bars all out. (F)

This session is a confident step forward from the previous LP-one! GA is in excellent shape here; my favourite item is "... Friends", played with humour, inspiration and great emotion. "... Happy ..." has fine blues playing, and particularly the last chorus of "... Lie" swings greatly. "Madhouse" is a slightly camouflaged "Hot House" and consists mostly of chases, interspaced with brief soli. Excellent contributions also by the other members, however, the presence of conga may be debated; while there is nothing wrong with the way it is performed, it disturbs in my opinion the "true" jazz feeling.

GENE AMMONS ALL STARS
NYC. July 13, 1956
Art Farmer, Donald Byrd (tp), Jackie McLean (as), Gene Ammons (ts), Mal Waldron (p), Doug Watkins (b), Art Taylor (dm).
Three titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as "Jammin' With Gene":

Jammin' With Gene Solo 10 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
We'll Be Together Again Solo 32 bars (S) to solo 64 bars. (FM). Solo 24 bars (FM) to solo 8 bars to coda. (S)
Not Really The Blues Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. 1 chorus 8/8 with (as), 2 choruses 4/4 with (as), 3 choruses 4/4 with (tp/tp/as). (F)

Fine blowing session without much fuss. "Not Really ..." is an ordinary 32 bars standard, and GA plays a long, inspired solo, note particularly the third chorus! And his chase with alto sax is white hot!! In "Gene ..." he plays the medium blues in the heavy, almost massive way he masters so successfully. And "... Together Again" has a find blend of tempi, also an excellent GA item. It seems that Prestige has found a very successful concept with its Gene Ammons sessions!

GENE AMMONS ALL STARS
NYC. Jan. 11, 1957
Art Farmer (tp), Jackie McLean (as), Gene Ammons (ts), Mal Waldron (p), Kenny Burrell (g), Doug Watkins (b), Art Taylor (dm), Jimmy Mundy (arr).
Four titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as "Funky":

Pint Size Solo 8 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 bars. (M)
King Size Intro 4 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (tp). (FM)
Funky Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)
Stella By Starlight Solo 32 bars (S) to break and solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M). Solo 16 bars to coda. (S)

"Stella ..." commences with a very slow, floating solo, nice, but it seems that GA wakens up when the tempo changes to medium, and the last chorus is really swinging. Returning to slow, there is more action than in the beginning, an exciting performance. "Funky" is really what it pretends to be, a juicy, well performed solo in a perfect tempo, carried by DW’s bass, and "Pint ..." is quite similar, albeit a little faster. And "King ..." swings nicely, note Farmer’s "encouragement" in the second tenorsax chorus!

GENE AMMONS ALL STARS
NYC. April 12, 1957
Idrees Sulieman (tp), Jackie McLean (as), Gene Ammons (ts), Mal Waldron (p), Kenny Burrell (g), Paul Chambers (b), Art Taylor (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as "Jammin' In Hi-Fi":

The Twister Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 with (tp/as/g). (FM)
Cattin’ Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)
Another fine jam session with emphasis on straightforward blowing rather than sophisticated arrangements. There are three standards of which "Pennies ..." with tempo change is a particularly pleasant performance, and the groovy blues is played with inspiration on "Cattin".

**GENE AMMONS ALL STARS**

**NYC, Jan. 3, 1958**

Jerome Richardson (fl), John Coltrane (as, ts), Gene Ammons, Paul Quinichette (ts), Pepper Adams (bar), Mal Waldron (p, arr), George Joyner (Jamil Nasser) (b), Art Taylor (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as "The Big Sound" and "Groove Blues":

- **1426** Ammons’ Joy  
  Break to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (SM)

- **1427** Groove Blues  
  Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (M)

- **1428** The Real McCoy  
  Break to solo 8 choruses of 12 bars.  
  4 choruses of 4/4 with (bar/fl/as/ts). (M)

- **1429** That’s All  
  Solo 64 bars.  
  Solo 16 bars to long coda. (S)

- **1430** It Might As Well Be Spring  
  Soli 2 choruses of 40 bars.  
  Solo 24 bars to coda. (S)

- **1431** Cheek To Cheek  
  Solo 5 choruses of 72 bars. (F)

- **1432** Jug Handle  
  Solo 7 choruses of 32 bars.  
  2 choruses 4/4 and 1 chorus 2/2 with (fl).  
  Soli 4 and 4 bars. (F)

- **1433** Blue Hymn  
  Soli 1, 3 and 4 choruses of 12 bars. (S)

This is one of the greatest Prestige sessions, to be highlighted several places in this book! GA has one of his great days here, and there are some very important highlights; note in particular the slow blues, "Groove ..." and "... Hymn", on this arena GA cannot be beaten by anybody! But the uptempi "Jug ..." and "Cheek ..." show that also this tempo is no match for him. Note also the outstanding and groovy "... Joy" as well as the magnificent ballad of "... Spring"!! Or quite possibly the neverending fast solo on "Cheek ..." is the real session summit, although there is some confusion with regard to the number of choruses he is supposed to take. And there is more to this session than "just" Jug ....

**BENNIE GREEN**

**Hackensack, NJ. April 28, 1958**

Bennie Green (tb, vo), Gene Ammons, Billy Root (ts), Sonny Clark (p), Ike Isaacs (b), Elvin Jones (dm), Babs Gonzales (vo—"Soul Stirrin"", "We Wanna Cook").

Six titles were recorded for Blue Note, issued as "Soul Stirrin":

- **tk2** Lullaby Of The Doomed  
  Solo with ens 32 bars. Solo 2 bars. (S)

- **tk5** We Wanna Cook  
  Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. (F)

- **tk9** That’s All  
  Solo 16 bars. Coda. (S)

- **tk12** Soul Stirrin’  
  Solo 24 bars. (SM)

- **tk15** B. G. Mambo  
  Solo 64 bars. (M)

- **tk19** Black Pearl  
  Solo 32 bars. (M)

Since GA is under contract with Prestige, he has to become a sideman on this Blue Note date, but who cares? This is great session in all respects; high quality originals, excellent rhythm section, trombone playing deluxe, a second tenorsax player which from his style I believed to belong to this book until learning otherwise ..., and finally the great GA himself, featured extensively on all items. "... Mambo" and "... Pearl" are good medium swingers, particularly the latter, and note the second chorus of the former. The very fast "... Cook" has a "Cheek To Cheek" quote in the sixth chorus, and the very groovy, almost slow "Soul ...", refers to "Flight Of The Bumble Bee"! A lovely very slow "... All" with his fullbodied sound and typical staccato phrasing is a must, but the session highlight seems to be the original and deeply moving "Lullaby ...", dig this!!
GENE AMMONS ALL STARS

NYC. May 2, 1958

Idrees Sulieman (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Pepper Adams (bar), Mal Waldron (p), Doug Watkins (b), Art Taylor (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as "Blue Gene":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1509</td>
<td>Blue Greens 'N Beans</td>
<td>Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars.</td>
<td>Soli 4 and 4 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1510</td>
<td>Hip Tip</td>
<td>Solo 48 bars.</td>
<td>($)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1511</td>
<td>Scamperin'</td>
<td>Solo 14 choruses of 12 bars.</td>
<td>(FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1512</td>
<td>Blue Gene</td>
<td>Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars.</td>
<td>($)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another fine session, similar to the one of April 12, 1957, with emphasis on the blues. One never stops marvelling at how GA is treating the slow blues, and "... Beans" and "Blue ..." represent two more examples of the kind, you're bound to love them! Or maybe the slow "... Tip" thrills you more, who knows? A final point; the use of conga represents a blind trail.

JAM SESSION

Chi. Aug. 15, 1958

J. J. Johnson (tb), Gene Ammons (ts), Pat Patrich (bar), Sun Ra (p), Ronnie Boykins (b), Robert Barry (dm).

Jam session at Pershing Ballroom, two titles have GA ("I Can't Get Started" and "Don't Blame Me" without tenorsax), issued on Transparency 0316 CD:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13:22</td>
<td>Chi-Town Blues</td>
<td>Solo 4 choruses of 44 bars.</td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Just You, Just Me</td>
<td>Solo 7 choruses of 32 bars.</td>
<td>Soli 4, 4, 4 and 4 bars. (F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An important jazzarcheological discovery, available for everybody on CD (postscript of Oct. 1, 2019). Unfortunately the sound quality is pretty poor, the trombone can hardly be heard, only the baritonesax is reasonable well recorded, and riffing and shouting do not make things better. GA suffers from this, particularly because he seems to be in excellent shape. Knowing his style and playing well, we can guess how exciting this really is!! "Chi-Town ..." is an AABA tune with A=12, B=8. "Just You ..." has a messy chase between everybody at the end. You have to be quite dedicated to enjoy this date, and I am reluctant to play it for hi-fi friends, but if you take your time, and play it several times to be familiar with it, you will be rewarded, because any GA from this time is gold.

BENNIE GREEN / GENE AMMONS

NYC. Nov. 12, 1958

Nat Adderley (cnt), Bennie Green (tb), Frank Wess (fl, ts), Gene Ammons, Frank Foster (ts), Tommy Flanagan (p), Ed Jones (b), Albert Heath (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Vee Jay, issued as "The Swingin'est", no tenorsax on "Sermonette" but:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Dog</td>
<td>Solo 36 bars (1st (ts)-solo).</td>
<td></td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Dog (alt.)</td>
<td>As above.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going South</td>
<td>Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars (1st (ts)-solo).</td>
<td></td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Little Ditty</td>
<td>Solo 24 bars (1st (ts)-solo).</td>
<td></td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swingin’ For Benny</td>
<td>Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars (1st (ts)-solo). 8 choruses 4/4 with (FF/FW).</td>
<td></td>
<td>(F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juggin’ Around</td>
<td>Solo 8 bars. Solo 64 bars (1st (ts)-solo).</td>
<td></td>
<td>(FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juggin’ Around (alt.)</td>
<td>As above.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(FM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quite a get-together with three of the top tenorsax performers of the day present. There are three examples of the blues, so basic to GA, "... South", "Jim Dog" and "... Benny", while "... Around is a standard, and "... Ditty" an unconventional ABA song. The session in general is somewhat uneven, the arrangements rather ordinary, but the tenorsax (and trumpet/trombone/flute) playing is mostly of high quality by all participants, pick your choice! GA is most exciting in the groovy "... South" and "... Dog" but needs several choruses to warm up on "... Benny", and "... Around" is somewhat stale. Two alternate takes represent an extra benefit. I wish there had been better preparations for this session; only one item use 4/4 exchanges, and more competition could have been put into the proceedings. But by all means, this is an exciting one-hour session!
GENE AMMONS  
Englewood Cliffs, NJ. June 16, 1960
Gene Ammons (ts), Tommy Flanagan (p), Doug Watkins (b), Art Taylor (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).
Seven titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Boss Tenor”:

2303  Close Your Eyes  Straight 40 bars to solo 64 bars. 
        Straight 36 bars to fade out.  (M)
2304  Stompin’ At The Savoy  Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. 
        Straight 16 and 8 bars.  (FM)
2305  Blue Ammons  Straight 2 to solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 2 choruses to fade out.  (M)
2306  Confirmation  Straight 1 to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 32 bars.  (F)
2307  Hittin’ The Jug  Straight 1 to solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 1 to straight 1 chorus.  (S)
2308  Canadian Sunset  Straight 64 bars to solo 64 bars to straight 40 bars.  (M)
2309  My Romance  Solo 48 bars to long coda.  (S)

Gene Ammons enters the recording studios again after a break of 1 1/2 years, continuing his fruitful connection with Prestige. Here he has the very best of rhythm section (the (cga) does not interrupt much here), and with a variety of tempi he shows that he still is a major force on the tenorsax arena. GA has always been strongly connected to the blues, and there are two very nice examples, “… Jug” in a very slow tempo and “Blue …” in a swinging medium. The beautiful ballad “… Romance” is also noteworthy, but possibly the session highlight is the wistful “… Eyes”. Note however that he has no problem with an uptempo title like “Confirmation”. To sum up, GA is in full command of all his former powers!

GENE AMMONS  
Englewood Cliffs, NJ. June 17, 1960
Gene Ammons (ts), Frank Wess (fl, ts), Johnny “Hammond” Smith (org), Doug Watkins (b), Art Taylor (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).
Six titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Angel Eyes”:

2310  Getting’ Around  Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. 
        24 bars 4/4 with (fl).  (SM)
2311  The Blue Room  Soli 64 and 4 bars.  (M)
2312  Water Jug  Soli 32 and 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 
        with (ts-FW). Break 2 bars.  (FM)
2313  Angel Eyes  Soli 48+8 bars, (fl) on 2nd bridge. 
        Solo 8 bars to long coda.  (S)
2314  Velvet Soul  Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars.  (S)
2315  In Sid’s Thing  Soli 64 and 16 bars. 64 bars 
        8/8 to 32 bars 4/4 to 32 bars 2/2 with (ts-FW).  (F)

Only the day after but a completely different session! It is the first of GA’s “organ sessions” of which there will be so many later. Bob Porter in his fine liner notes says that “Gene Ammons didn’t care for organists”, but “Hammond” has a laidback style that works very nicely, particularly in slower tempo. GA battles heavily with FW on the two faster titles, very satisfactory and in the best of tradition, no screaming nor honking but fine exchanges. In slower tempi he plays with great strength and inspiration. All items are noteworthy, but the album title number is something quite special, quote again: “Angel Eyes” was one of Gene’s biggest records and it should be noted that nine-minute ballads do not gain hit status very often!” Lovely!! As good as the day-before-session was, this one is likely to thrill you even more!!

GENE AMMONS  
Gene Ammons (ts), Richard Wyands (p), Doug Watkins (b), J. C. Heard (dm).
Eight titles were recorded for Moodsville/Prestige, issued as “Nice And Cool”:

2843  I Remember You  Solo 72 and 20 bars to coda.  (SM)
2844  Willow Weep For Me  Solo 48 bars to very long coda.  (S)
2845  Someone To Watch Over Me  Solo 48 bars.  (S)
A delightful ballad session! Only “… You” has a bit of tempo, all the other moves along at a very slow pace. One might point out that the session therefore is unbalanced, and possibly a bit boring. However, this absolutely to think wrongly! One does not have to play the whole of it as one piece, just take a few when you are in the mood. Each title is so beautiful, emotional and personal, GA is a master of ballads. Bob Porter hints that there is some routine here, and that there are more inspired session. I don’t know that, how can one play like this just on routine! Note also the fine rhythm section, with RW as a brilliant and underrated pianist, giving the best of background and some delicious contributions in particular on the longest titles “… Was You” and “Something …” and also “Someone …”. Forty or fifty years ago I would encourage you to play this with candlelights and your (girl)friend, but I guess most of the readers of this have forgotten what I mean …

GENE AMMONS

Englewood Cliffs, Jan. 27, 1961
Gene Ammons (ts), Clarence “Sleepy” Anderson (org.), Richard Wyands (p), Doug Watkins (b), J. C. Heard (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).
Eight titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Jug”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Lucy</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 3 choruses of 12 bars.</td>
<td>Straight 1 chorus to fade out. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exactly Like You</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars.</td>
<td>Straight 36 bars to coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ol’ Man River</td>
<td>Long intro (S) to straight to solo 44 bars to straight and fade out. (SM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy To Love</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.</td>
<td>32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to 16 bars 4/4 with (b) to straight 20 bars to coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namely You</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to straight 20 bars and coda. (SM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let It Be You</td>
<td>Solo 48 bars to very long coda. (S)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Shack</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 4 choruses of 12 bars.</td>
<td>Solo 2 to straight 2 choruses. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangerine</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars to straight 18 bars and coda. (FM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have a certain ambivalence to this session. The rhythm section is rather edgy compared to June, and the conga is rather disturbing. The setup also has too much melody presentation instead of real improvisation, and “… River” is dangerously close to corn. However, what amazes me, when listening to GA’s actual solo sections, he plays as well as anytime! Take “Tangerine”, the fastest tune, as a good example! Dig also the beautiful “… Be You”!

GENE AMMONS SEPTET

Chi. Feb. 4, 1961
Fip Ricard (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Ronald Wilson (bar), Jodie Christian (p), Alan Garrett (b), Louis Taylor (dm), Al Hayes (cga, bgo).
Broadcast from Sutherland Lounge, six titles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennies From Heaven</td>
<td>Free intro to solo 32 bars to very long coda. (S)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Sunset</td>
<td>Straight 64 bars to solo 64+48 bars to straight 32 bars. (M)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mambo</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars. (FM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juggin’ Around (NC)</td>
<td>Solo 4 and 4 bars. (FM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Romance</td>
<td>Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Title</td>
<td>Intro. Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. 3 ½ choruses 8/8, 4/4, 2/2 and 1/1 with (dm). Solo 8 bars. Coda. (F)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sound of these titles on Johan’s tape is very lousy, but with patience and concentration one can hear that GA is playing well. “Pennies” is a feature number in an extremely slow tempo, and “… Sunset” has also GA as the only soloist. “Mambo” however also has a trumpet solo. Postscript: The three remaining items have been available, “… Around” lacks the beginning which probably contained the GA solo, “… Romance” is another utterly slow performance, too slow. Finally the most interesting item of the whole session with lots of good GA!

GENE AMMONS
Englewood Cliffs, NJ. June 13, 1961
Hobart Dodson, Clark Terry (tp), Oliver Nelson (as), Gene Ammons, George Barrow, Red Holloway (ts), Bob Ashton (bar), Richard Wyands (p), Wendell Marshall (b), Bill English (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).
Seven titles were recorded for Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Arrangement</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3079 Things Ain’t What They Used To Be</td>
<td>Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. Breaks.</td>
<td>(SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3080 Makin’ Whoopee’</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars.</td>
<td>(SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3081 I Want To Be Loved</td>
<td>Solo 48 bars to long coda.</td>
<td>(S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3082 Lullaby Of The Leaves</td>
<td>Straight with orch 40 bars to solo 32 bars. Straight 16 bars to very long coda.</td>
<td>(SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3083 Too Marvelous For Words</td>
<td>Solo with orch 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. Solo with orch 32 bars.</td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3084 Love I’ve Found You</td>
<td>Solo 72 bars to coda.</td>
<td>(S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3085 The Song Is You</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars.</td>
<td>(FM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A quite different session from the above, arranged and conducted by the very personal Oliver Nelson. Most notable is the beautiful ballad “… Loved”, and also “Love…” but the latter a bit too emotional. There is strong blues on “Things …”, while “The Song …” is not that exciting. “Making …” and “Lullaby …” seem to be somewhat overarranged, but the solo sections are fine. I would like to quote some of Dan Morgenstern’s liner notes, although they might be even more tailored to other sessions: “Listening to this album makes one think about the secret of GA’s great and lasting popularity. Part of it no doubt is his talent for picking the right tempos; surely his big sound plays a key role, as does his natural swing. But it might also be a matter of content; of his ability to be rough without getting raucous, brusque without being bitter, tender without turning treacly, acerb without getting angry. No “great innovator” or character of new paths, GA tells a straightforward story of and for our times”.

GENE AMMONS
Los Angeles, Aug. 15, 1961
Gene Ammons (ts), Richard “Groove” Homes (org), Gene Edwards (g), Leroy Henderson (dm).
Three titles were recorded for Pacific Jazz:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Arrangement</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groovin’ With Jug</td>
<td>Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 36 bars.</td>
<td>(FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris The Minor</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. Straight 32 bars.</td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hey You, What’s That?</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 choruses.</td>
<td>(FM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Same. Five titles recorded live at The Black Orchid:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Arrangement</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hittin’ The Jug</td>
<td>Straight 1 to solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 12 bars.</td>
<td>(SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Vibrations (Happy Blues)</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 11 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 24 bars.</td>
<td>(M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willow Weep For Me</td>
<td>Solo 64 and 8 bars to very long coda.</td>
<td>(S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juggin’ Around</td>
<td>Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 3 choruses 4/4, 2/2 and 1/1 to straight 32 bars.</td>
<td>(F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exactly Like You</td>
<td>Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nothing wrong with the three studio items, and in fact “… Minor” and “… That” have some of the most bluesy GA around! Note though that there must be a splice in the beginning of the second solo on “… That”. Bob Porter’s liner notes says that the “… studio session was a bit of a struggle and the album had not been completed when it was decided to go to the club that evening and finish the album live”. Nevertheless things are getting more groovy in live surroundings as immediately evident in the strong, inspired and honking “… Vibrations” and later in “Hittin …”. Then a very slow and intense “Willow …” (note also the exciting organ solo on this one!), but not necessarily wholly tasteful. Then an uptempo “… Around” which is taken with great bravura, and finally an original and fascinating version of his old hit “Exactly …”! Totally, an exciting day for us and an important day for GA!

GENE AMMONS / SONNY STITT
Chicago, Aug. 26, 1961
Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (as, ts), John Houston (p), Buster Williams (b), George Brown (dm).
Ten titles were recorded for Argo, issued as “Dig Him”:

11183 A Mess Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
11184 New Blues Up And Down Soli 1 and 5 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
11185 Time On My Hands Duet with (as) 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Duet 36 bars. (M)
11186 We’ll Be Together Again Solo 32 bars. In coda. (S)
11187 My Foolish Heart Solo 32 bars. Long coda with (as). (S)
11188 Red Sails In The Sunset Solo 64 bars. Chase/duet 64 bars. (M)
11189 Headin’ West (Water Jug) Break to solo 32 bars. (FM)
11190 A Pair Of Red Pants Solo 4 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. Duet 3 choruses. (M)
11191 Autumn Leaves Soli 64, 8 and 8 bars. (M)
11192 But Not For Me Intro 8 bars to duet 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Duet 44 bars. (FM)

Chi. Aug. 27, 1961
Same. Eight titles were recorded for Verve, five issued as “Boss Tenors”:

380 Blues Up And Down Solo structure: (GA 12 SS 12)x2 to 24 4/4 to GA 12x12 to SS 16x12 to GA 12 SS 12 to 24 4/4. (FM)
384 Counter Clockwise With ens 1 chorus to solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. Soli 4 and 4 bars to ens 12 bars. (SM)
385 There Is No Greater Love 32 bars 8/8 with (as) to solo 32 bars. Chase/duet 64 bars to long coda. (M)
386 The One Before This Soli 64 and 4 bars. (M)
387 Autumn Leaves 32 bars 8/8 with (ts-SS) to solo 64 bars. Chase/duet 40 bars to coda. (M)

One might think that when GA and SS meet together in studio after ten years, it would be a dogfight, a cutting contest, winner takes all. But that is not the case here, the two tenorsax players create an atmosphere of friendly reunion and do their best to play together, for common benefit. There is very little 4/4 here, mostly only on the famous “… Up And Down”. Possibly it is my imagination, but it seems that GA and SS in style are closer to each other here than when they are recording separately. One of my favourite items is, symbolically, “… Together Again”, beautiful playing in slow tempo. The two sessions produce altogether fifteen titles ranging from the 2 ½ minutes “Water …” to the almost 10 minutes of “Counter …”, a slow medium blues. There is not one item here which does not measure up to a very high standard of tenorsax playing (SS also on altosax), and in my opinion this “together again” has some of GA’s most prominent tenorsax playing of the early sixties, with a concentration brought about by his old friend. Lots of highlights, should not mention any before others but at least try “The One …”. Note also a supportive rhythm section! Dig these sessions!!
Gene Ammons (ts), Eddie Buste (org), Gerald Donovan (dm). Thirteen titles were recorded live at the “D. J. Lounge”, ten issued:

11198  C Jam Blues  Straight 2 to solo 20 choruses of 12 bars. Duet with (dm) many choruses to solo 2 and straight 2 choruses to long coda. (F)

11199  But Not For Me  Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to Straight/solo 64 bars to coda. (F)

11200  Foot Tappin’  Straight 2 to solo 12 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 3 choruses to straight 2 choruses. (FM)

11201  It Could Happen To You  Solo 64 bars to very long coda. (S)

11202  Sweet Georgia Brown  Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 8/8 to 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 32 bars to coda. (F)

11203  Falling In Love With Love  Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 choruses to 40 bars coda. (FM)

11204  Please Send Me Someone To Love  Solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda 8 bars. (S)

11205  Scapple From The Apple  Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 32 bars to coda. (F)

11206  P.M. – A.M. (Jug’s Blue Blues)  Solo 4 and 3 choruses of 12 bars. (S)

11207  Fast Track  Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo/straight 32 bars to coda 48 bars. (F)

Being a live club recording date, the music here is somewhat different than many of the ballad-oriented sessions, “a more driving, wailing Jug” as Bob Porter states it. GA’s main choices here are fast titles like “Sweet…” and “Scrapple …”, and he goes through them with great bravura. The blues are of course also present, from the very slow and groovy “Jug’s …” (isn’t this a blues played by Lester Young sometime?) to a fast medium swinging “Foot …” to a rather too much uptempo “C Jam …” but with seven minutes of inspired if not always the most tasteful tenorsax playing. There is some beautiful ballad playing too, “It Could …” and “… To Love” comes nicely through in spite of a noisy audience. Certainly an interesting session you shouldn’t miss, if you like to be acquainted with the many sides of Gene Ammons!

Gene Ammons (ts), Walter Bishop jr. (p), Art Davis (b), Art Taylor (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).
Seven titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Up Tight” and “Boss Soul”:

3233  The Breeze And I  Straight 1 to solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to straight 36 bars. (M)

3234  Carbow  Straight 2 to solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 1 to straight 2 choruses. (SM)

3235  Moonglow  Free intro (S) to straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo/straight 20 bars. (SM)

3236  The Masquerade Is Over  Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars to long coda. (S)

3237  I’m Beginning To See The Light  Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars to straight 20 bars. (M)

3238  Jug’s Blue Blues  Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 2 choruses. (S)

3239  Lester Leaps In  Straight 1 to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 8/8 and 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 16 and 8 bars. (F)

A fine session with a variety of exciting tunes. Except for a too active drummer, there is fine balance here, and GA blows up to his very best. The beautiful “… Masquerade …” has to be mentioned first. Some remarkable swinging blues in
“Carbow” and “Jug’s Blue …” are very fascinating, in fact any title here is worth playing! Even the fast “Lester …” is played with great conviction!

**GENE AMMONS**  
*Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Oct. 18, 1961*

Gene Ammons (ts), Patti Brown (p), George Duvivier (b), Art Taylor (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).

Seven titles were recorded for Prestige, issued with the session above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3240</td>
<td>Five O’Clock Whistle</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars to straight 16 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3241</td>
<td>I Sold My Heart To The Junkman</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3242</td>
<td>Song Of The Islands</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars to 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 32 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3243</td>
<td>Up Tight</td>
<td>Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3244</td>
<td>Travellin’</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (b) to straight 24 bars to fade out. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3245</td>
<td>Soft Summer Breeze</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 24 bars to straight 8 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3246</td>
<td>Don’t Go To Strangers</td>
<td>Solo 64 and 20 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Good tenorsax playing also on this session, although there are more interesting piano players around (and unnecessary and disturbing conga). Particularly the three items in slow tempo are beautiful. Note as an example how he keeps close to the melody but yet so fascinating on “…. Junkman” and then improvises a lovely chorus. Note also an intense solo on “Travellin’”!

**GENE AMMONS**  
*Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Nov. 28, 1961*

Joe Newman (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Brother Jack McDuff (org), Wendell Marshall (b), Walter Perkins (dm), Ray Barretto (cga).

Six titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Twisting The Jug”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3288</td>
<td>Stormy Monday Blues</td>
<td>Duet with (tp) 24 bars to solo 12 bars. Solo 20 bars. Duet 24 bars. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3289</td>
<td>Satin Doll</td>
<td>Soli 64 and 4 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3290</td>
<td>Twisting The Jug</td>
<td>Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3291</td>
<td>Born To Be Blue</td>
<td>Soli 16+40 bars, (tp) on 1st bridge. Solo 8 bars to very long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3292</td>
<td>Down The Line</td>
<td>Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3293</td>
<td>Moten Swing</td>
<td>Solo with ens 32 bars to solo 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (tp). (FM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This session goes mostly rather slow, in my opinion a good idea, since GA seems to be particularly inspired by ballads and slow blues. With a soft organ background, he makes several memorable items, note particularly “Born …”. The addition of a trumpet does not seem to enhance the session quality, nor is the drummer of the most inspiring kind, but again, listening, GA’s soloing is what makes the time spent worth while.

**BROTHER JACK McDUFF**  
*NYC. Jan. 23, 1962*

Gene Ammons, Harold Vick (ts), Jack McDuff (org), Eddie Diehl (g), Joe Dukes (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Brother Jack Meets The Boss”, GA not present on 3363 “Strollin’” but:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3360</td>
<td>Watch Out</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3361</td>
<td>Mellow Gravy</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3362</td>
<td>Ballad For Baby</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars (S) to 32 bars (SM). Solo 8 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3364</td>
<td>Mr. Clean</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3365</td>
<td>Christopher Columbus</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3366</td>
<td>Buzzin’ Around</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a surprisingly weak session in a period so fruitful for GA’s tenorsax artistry. That it is sluggish with rather ordinary rhythmic support is one thing, that
the unnecessarily addition of another tenorsax player with a different and not compatible style is another thing, but that GA seems to be without his usual taste and inspiration is unexpected. But of course, there are good moments, like the blues in “… Around”, except for the clumsy solo ending.

GENE AMMONS / SONNY STITT  Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Feb. 1962
Gene Ammons (ts), Sonny Stitt (as, ts), Don Patterson (org), Paul Weeden (g), Billy James (dm).
Five titles were recorded for Verve, issued as “Boss Tenors In Orbit”:

267 Long Ago And Far Away 64 bars 8/8 to 16 bars duet. (S)
268 Walkin’ Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
269 Why Was I Born? Duet with (as) 32 bars. Solo 64 bars.
Soli/duet 24 bars. (M)
270 John Brown’s Body Solo 64 bars. 64 bars 8/8 and 4/4
to chase/duet 64 bars. (M)
271 Bye Bye Blackbird 32 bars 8/8 to solo 3 choruses
of 32 bars. 112 bars 8/8 to 4/4 and ens/duet. (M)

GA and SS are “in orbit” again but not of the highest ones. A mediocre drummer and the contribution of guitar and organ offer not the best of support, and the atmosphere in general cannot compare with the almost electric one of late August last year. But of course, when this is said, these two guys together cannot but inspire each other to a lot of good tenorsax soloing. The ultra slow “Long Ago …” consisting of a series of eights, is a good introduction to the session, and thereafter all items have good moments. Note that GA leads the chase on “John …” while SS that on “… Blackbird”.

GENE AMMONS / SONNY STITT  NYC. Feb. 19, 1962
Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt (ts), Jack McDuff (org), Charlie Persip (dm).
Six titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Soul Summit”:

3403 Dumplin’ Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars.
4 choruses 4/4 with (ts-SS). (M)
3404 Tubby Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
3405 Shuffle Twist Soli 12, 12 and 24 bars. (M)
3406 Sleeping Susan Soli 64 and 4 bars. (M)
3407 Out In The Cold Again Solo 32 bars. Very long coda
sequence with (ts-SS). (S)
3408 When You Wish Upon A Star Soli 32 and 4 bars. (SM)

Another “low orbit” session, good tenorsax playing but not with the force and chemistry these guys can exhibit. The organ backing does mostly more harm than good, note the medium blues of “Tubby”, which might have been exciting but now quite boring. “… Twist” however make you tap your foot on the groove, and “… Cold Again” has the best of ballad playing by both of them.

GENE AMMONS  NYC. April 13, 1962
Gene Ammons (ts), Patti Brown (p), George Duivier (b), Walter Perkins (dm), Etta Jones (vo-3482,83,85).
Six titles were recorded for Prestige, (one more title 3488 “Scram” has Harold Vick (ts) and no solo by GA), issued as “Soul Summit, Vol. 2”:

3482 But Not For Me Obbligato parts to solo 64 bars
to obbligato 36 bars. (SM)
3483 If You Are But A Dream Obbligato parts to solo 16 bars.
Obbligato 16 bars. (S)
3484 The Party’s Over Straight 1 to solo 2 choruses of
36 bars. Straight 36 bars. (M)
3485 Cool Cool Daddy Obbligato parts.
Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)
3486 Lascivious Straight 2 to solo 3 choruses of 12 bars.
24 bars 4/4 with (b) to straight 24 bars. (M)
3487 Soft Winds Straight 1 to solo 4 choruses of 16 bars. 32
bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 16 bars. (M)
There seem to be elements of routine in the GA sessions now. Some straight melody presentation, then solo choruses, and after a pianosolo and 4/4 bars chase with bass or drums, back to a final straight. Nothing wrong with GA’s soloing really, but with so many excellent sessions around, more should have been done to create variation and excitement. In fact, this has been done with the vocal items, something different, and with beautiful tenorsax playing, try “… Dream”!

**GENE AMMONS**

**NYC, April 14, 1962**

Gene Ammons (ts), Patti Brown (p), George Duvivier (b), Ed Shaughnessy (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Prestige/Moodsville, issued as “The Soulful Moods of Gene Ammons”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Different Worlds</td>
<td>Soli 72 and 20 bars to coda. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But Beautiful</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skylark</td>
<td>Soli 64 and 32 bars. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On The Street Of Dreams</td>
<td>Solo 32 bars (S) to 16 bars (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to 16 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’d Be So Nice To Come HT</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Straight 48 bars to coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under A Blanket Of Blue</td>
<td>Solo 64 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m Glad There Is You</td>
<td>Soli 16 and 48 bars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to very long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Little Words</td>
<td>Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solo 72 bars to coda. (M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another “soulful moods” session, mainly slow tempi, and to me GA’s ballad playing never becomes boring, and if it might be some routine in the production, the results are always gorgeous. Here PB is doing a fine job on the piano, and the rhythm section as such is excellent. Bob Porter compares this session with the one on Jan. 26, 1961, says GA is more inspired here, but also states that “it is merely a case of going from the good to the exceptional” and “some of the best he has ever committed to record”. Strong words, but play a few ballads!!

**GENE AMMONS**

**Chi. April 27, 1962**

Gene Ammons (ts), Clarence “Sleepy” Anderson (p, org), unknown (g), (b), (dm).

Ten titles were recorded for Prestige, eight issued as “Blue Groove”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Groove</td>
<td>Straight 2 to solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 12 bars to coda. (SM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yea!</td>
<td>Straight. Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm). (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It Never Goes Away</td>
<td>Straight 64 bars to solo 64 bars. Soli 16 and 16 bars. Straight 32+16 bars (b) on bridge. (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blinky</td>
<td>Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (b). (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone To Watch Over Me</td>
<td>Soli 56 and 12 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleepy</td>
<td>Intro 8 bars to straight 40 bars to solo 80 bars. 40 bars 4/4 with (dm). Straight. (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Better Go Now</td>
<td>Solo 36 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Masquerade Is Over</td>
<td>Solo 56 bars to long coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Particularly the three ballads in very slow tempo with organ backing are lovely, GA knows how to do this! The rest are of even and good quality, similar to many sessions from this time. The piano is overrecorded on most titles, particularly on “… Goes Away”, making the accompaniment more like a duet, rather disturbing.

**GENE AMMONS**

**Chi. ca. May 1962**

Gene Ammons (ts), Don Patterson (org), Paul Weeden (g), Billy James (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Argo / Prestige:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Can’t Stop Loving You</td>
<td>Solo 48 bars to coda. (S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“… Loving You” is nice and slow but certainly with more than a slight commercial touch. “My Babe” has some groovy action.

**HOWARD McGHEE & THE BLAZERS**

Chi. probably May 1962

Howard McGhee (tp), Gene Ammons (ts), Jake Fisher (g), Barney Richmond (b), Willie Mashburn (dm), Waco (bgo).

Four titles were recorded for Winley / Argo, issued as “House Warmin’”. (Note that on my Trip double-LP, the two sides of this session are identical! The two titles are called “Nothing But Soul” / “House Warming” and “Jug & McGhee” / “Jivin’ Around” but are in fact the titles called “… Beat” and “… McGhee” below!).

**Jazz With A Beat** (12:27) Solo 36 bars. Solo 12 bars to 24 bars 4/4 with (tp). Solo 12 bars. (S)

**Muggin’ McGhee** (4:51) Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (tp). (FM)

**House Warming** (6:25) Solo 3 and 2 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)

**Jivin’ Around** (10:06) Solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. Solo 2 choruses to 4 choruses of 4/4 and 2 choruses 2/2 with (tp). Solo 12 bars. (SM)

Except from his sessions with Stitt, GA seems to have preferred playing with rhythm only. Therefore this encounter with the great trumpeter HMG is something special. Note also the omission of piano. All titles are blues, “… Beat” is very slow and very groovy, “Muggin’ …” is uptempo, the two other in a pleasant slow medium. Excellent playing by all!

**GENE AMMONS**

Chi. May 3, 1962

Gene Ammons (ts), Clarence Anderson (org), Sylvester Hickman (b), Dorrell Anderson (dm).

Eleven titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Preachin’”: “Sweet Hour”, “Yield Not”, “Abide With Me”, “Blessed Assurance”, “The Prayer”, “You’ll Never Walk Alone”, “I Believe”, “Precious Memories”, “What A Friend”, “Holy, Holy, Holy”, “The Light”. This is not a jazz session but a collection of religious songs, lasting from 2 ½ to 4 minutes, all in slow tempo. It does not seem necessary to go into details.

**GENE AMMONS / DODO MARMAROSA**

Chi. May 4, 1962

Gene Ammons (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Sam Jones (b), Marshall Thompson (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Jug & Dodo”:

**Georgia On My Mind** Soli 64 and 8 bars to long coda. (S)

**For You** Straight 1 to solo 2 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo/straight 3 choruses. (F)

**You’re Driving Me Crazy** Straight 1 to solo 2 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to solo 40 bars to coda. (M)

**Where Or When** Solo 2 choruses of 40 bars. Solo 10 bars to very long coda. (S)

**Bluzarumba** Straight 2 to solo 2 choruses of 12 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 2 choruses. (FM)

**Falling In Love With Love** -1 Straight 1 to solo 2 choruses of 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (dm) to straight 36 bars to coda. (FM)

**Falling In Love With Love** -2 Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Straight 20 bars to coda. (FM)

A session with lots of good music, but possibly with a slight disappointment, since I expected something quite different with the brilliant Dodo on piano. He comps actively, but I have the feeling that the two do not really understand each other deeply, playing their separate ways, and Jug seems to be exactly the same as before. Nothing wrong with that, and his ballads on “Georgia …” and “… When” are of the beautiful kind we now are so familiar with.

**GENE AMMONS**

NYC. Sept. 5, 1962
Gene Ammons (ts), Mal Waldron (p), Wendell Marshall (b), Ed Thigpen (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Prestige:

3573  Light’n Up  Straight 2 to solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. Straight 18 bars. (SM)

3574  Short Stop  Straight to solo 36 bars. 12 bars 2/2 with (dm). (M)

3575  They Say You’re Laughing At Me  Solo 64+4 bars to coda. (S)

3576  It’s The Talk Of The Town  Solo 48 bars to long coda. (S)

3577  Salome’s Tune  Straight to solo 16 bars. Solo 8 bars to straight. (S)

3578  Blue Coolade  Straight 28 to solo 28 bars. Solo 16 bars to straight 12 bars. (SM)

3579  A Stranger In Town  Long intro to solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to long coda. (S)

3580  You Go To My Head  Solo 68 bars to long coda. (S)

The last GA ballad session …, with the unique Mal Waldron as an extra benefit. There is not much to add, there is nobody in the jazz tenor sax world who could play ballads better than Gene Ammons, only a few on the same level. For highlights, try “A Stranger …” and “They Say …”, although all titles here are very nice!

GENE AMMONS  Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Sept. 9, 1962
Gene Ammons (ts), Hank Jones (p), Bucky Pizzarelli (spanish-g), Kenny Burrell (g), Norman Edge (b), Oliver Jackson (dm), Al Hayes (bgo).

Six titles were recorded for Prestige, issued as “Bad! Bossa Nova”:

3614  Pagan Love Song  Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Duet with (g) 32 bars. (M)

3615  Anna  Solo 4+64 bars. (FM)

3616  Ca’ Purange (Jungle Soul)  Solo with (rhythm) 7 choruses of 32 bars. (M)

3617  Yellow Bird  Straight 32 bars to solo 64 bars. Straight 24 bars to fade out. (M)

3618  Cae Cae  Straight 32 bars. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars to straight 32 bars. (F)

3619  Moito Mato Grosso  Straight 12 bars. Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (SM)

Our last opportunity to hear Gene Ammons for a long time! He (or the company) has chosen to jump on the “bossa-nova-wagon”, not a bad idea, considering what Stan Getz got out of it (and a beautiful session by Ike Quebec!). However, it is really more jungle than Copacabana, and I wish we could have had a Desafinado-album with Jug, wow! Returning to what this session actually produces; there is lots of exciting music here, particularly two tracks. Take as one “Jungle …” with a long solo, almost like a chase between tenor sax and rhythm, something quite outside the ordinary. And the second, the story behind “… Grosso”, vividly told on the liner notes, must be read carefully before the item is played, but the music is a slow medium blues, with GA playing several groovy choruses.

Gene Ammons did not record again until 1968, and I have decided that the solography for the time being shall stop here.

…ooo…