

The
TRUMPET
of
HENRY JAMES ALLEN
“RED”

Solographers: Per Borthen and Jan Evensmo
Last update: May 13, 2019

Born: New Orleans, Louisiana, Jan. 7, 1908
 Died: NYC. April 17, 1967

Introduction:

Henry “Red” Allen was one of the greatest trumpeters of the swing era but lost out to Louis Armstrong, most likely because of some similarity of trumpet style but not the same extrovert personality. However, I always held HA in high esteem. My enthusiasm was shared by my friend and trumpeter Per Borthen, and we published the Henry Allen Solography together as Vol. 8 (1977) in my Jazz Solography Series. This work is now reprinted below, almost without any changes.

Early history:

Son of the famous New Orleans Brass Band leader, trumpeter Henry Allen (1877-1952); Red’s uncles, George and Sam, were also parade musicians. Began playing violin, took a few lessons from Pete Bocage, played alto horn briefly before specialising on trumpet. Played in his father’s band from an early age - received trumpet tuition from his father and from Manuel Manetta. ‘Gigged’ with the Excelsior Band (1924), also ‘subbed’ in Sam Morgan’s band; co-led band with clarinetist John Casimir (1925), played regularly in George Lewis’ band and with John Handy at The Entertainers’ Club. Played on the S.S. ‘Island Queen’ with Sidney Desvignes’ band, returned to New Orleans, then joined King Oliver in St. Louis (April 1927), then travelled on to New York with Oliver (May 1927) – during first trip to New York made recording debut with Clarence Williams. Returned to New Orleans (summer 1927), joined Walter Pichon at the Pelican Café. Worked on riverboats with Fate Marable (1928-29), was then invited to New York to record under own name for Victor, subsequently joined Luis Russell’s band (summer 1929). Worked mainly with Luis Russell until late 1932, also briefly with Fletcher Henderson in 1932. With Charlie Johnson’s band (late 1932 - spring 1933), then joined Fletcher Henderson on a regular basis until November 1934, when he became a member of the Mills Blue Rhythm Band (directed by Lucky Millinder). Remained with Millinder until February 1937 - during this period Red ‘subbed’ in Duke Ellington’s band and worked briefly in the Eddie Condon-Joe Marsala band. Prolific free-lance recordings during the late 1920s and 1930s with Fats Waller, Victoria Spivey, Wilton Crawley, Putney Dandridge, Billie Holiday, etc. With Louis Armstrong’s orchestra from March 1937 until 28th September 1940. After a vacation in New Orleans, returned to New York, ‘gigged’ with Benny Goodman (late October 1940), then began year’s residency with own newly formed sextet at Famous Door, New York. Red’s sextet (featuring J. C. Higginbotham) played residencies in New York, Chicago, and Boston before playing in California (February 1943). (Ref. John Chilton).

Message: Dec. 3, 2018:

My deepest gratitude to Franz Hoffmann and his lifelong research work on the life and music of Henry “Red” Allen. The current extension of this solography would have been impossible without his help and encouragement.

HENRY "RED" ALLEN SOLOGRAPHY

CLARENCE WILLIAMS**& HIS BOTTOMLAND ORCHESTRA**

NYC. June 27, 1927

Henry Allen, Ed Anderson (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), possibly Alberto Socarras and another (as), Clarence Williams (p), Floyd Casey (dm), Evelyn Preer (vo-6055,58).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

6055	Slow River	In ens. (SM)
6056	Slow River	In ens. (M)
6057	Zulu Wail	In ens. (M)
6058	Zulu Wail	In ens. (M)

I believed for several years that July 16,1929 was the start of Henry Allen's recording career. However, it seems that Rust is correct in suggesting Allen on this session, dated more than two years earlier. There are no plain soli, but the ensembles are full of fine trumpet playing and one of the players definitely sounds like Allen. It is difficult and not very fruitful to sort out the details. A lot of differences are to be found between the alternate takes, but they are to me not important enough to motivate buying both records if you haven't a lot of money. However, one is very much worth while. The non-vocal take of "Slow River" is slightly faster than the vocal take.

HENRY ALLEN JR.**& HIS NEW YORK ORCHESTRA**

NYC. July 16/17, 1929

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl, as), Charlie Holmes (cl, sop, as), Teddy Hill (cl, ts), Luis Russell (p, cel), Will Johnson (bjo, g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm, vib).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

55133-1	It Should Be You	Intro. In ens 30 bars. Soli 18 and 32 bars. Breaks and in ens 22 bars. (F)
55133-2	It Should Be You	As above. (F)
55133-3	It Should Be You	As above. (F)
55134-1	Biff'ly Blues	In ens 16 bars. Solo 18 bars. In ens 10 bars. (SM)
55134-2	Biff'ly Blues	As above. (SM)
53929-1	Feeling Drowsy	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
53929-2	Feeling Drowsy	As above. (SM)
53929-3	Feeling Drowsy	As above. (SM)
53930-1	Swing Out	Solo 8 bars. Solo 18+8 bars, (as) on bridge. In ens. (FM)
53930-2	Swing Out	As above. (FM)
53930-3	Swing Out	As above. (FM)

This is one of the most outstanding trumpet sessions ever made! With exception of the "false start" in 1927, this is unbelievably enough a recording debut. However, Allen is no modest newcomer but a brilliant star, one of the brightest shining in the history of jazz. He has already found his style, an open pure sound, a sparkling technique, a fantastic inventiveness, a unique sense of harmony and a rhythmic sureness far above those of his contemporaries. Allen is to me the most underrated trumpeter in jazz. This is not the place of making comparisons with Louis Armstrong, let me just state my opinion: Nobody will ever make me put any trumpeter before Allen (Mr. Borthen does not quite agree on this point), the question is only if the golden medal is to be shared. The presence of three takes of three titles and two takes of the remaining "Biff'ly Blues" is a unique opportunity to study HA's talent. Every take is different, not only in the soli but all through the three minutes. To choose favourite takes is a hopeless task, I would not be without any of them (where is the third take of "Biff'ly Blues"??). There are some minor flaws to be found, not due to incompetence but to the taking of crazy but wonderful musical risks, it does not matter in the least. The titles naturally divide into two groups, the faster ones consisting of "It Should ...", and "Swing Out", and the slower ones, "Biff'ly Blues" and "Feeling Drowsy". If one has to choose a title, maybe the utterly moving "Feeling Drowsy" will be the one. But then one must not forget the complex rhythmic variations of "It

Should ...". And so forth. Let's stop here. These sides are musts for every jazz collector.

LUIS RUSSELL & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Sept. 6, 1929

Henry Allen, Bill Coleman (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb, vo), Albert Nicholas (cl, as), Charlie Holmes (sop, as), Teddy Hill (ts), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (bjo), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm, vib).

Three titles were recorded for Okeh:

402938-C	The New Call Of The Freaks	Soli 8 and 12 bars. (M)
402939-C	Feelin' The Spirit	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
402940-B	Jersey Lightning	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (F)

In my opinion the Luis Russell Okeh recordings are lovely, informal and gay with fine soli by all participants. HA is no exception and gives excellent examples of his style on all three sides. Note particularly the start of the longest solo on "Jersey Lightning" and you will hear the devildare attitude he has to his music. There is no question of playing safe here!

**LOU AND HIS GINGER SNAPS /
DIXIE JAZZ BAND (LUIS RUSSELL)**

NYC. Sept. 13, 1929

Personnel as above.

Two titles were recorded for Banner:

9006-1	Broadway Rhythm	In ens 8 bars. (FM)
9007-1	The Way He Loves Is Just Too Bad	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
9007-2	The Way He Loves Is Just Too Bad	As above. (FM)

Although I prefer the previous session, the two takes of "The Way ..." are quite good and with distinct differences. The atmosphere seems to be tamer than on most Luis Russell sessions, but this is largely due to inferior recording equipment.

WALTER PICHON

NYC. Sept. 16, 1929

Henry Allen (tp), Walter Pichon (p, vo), Teddy Bunn (g).

Two titles were recorded for Victor:

55843-2	Doggin' That Thing	Intro 4 bars. Obligato 18 and 16 bars. Solo 18 bars. Obligato 16 bars. (SM)
55844-1	Yo Yo	Intro 8 bars. Obligato 32 and 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. Obligato 32 bars. Coda. (M)

HA is featured abundantly on this record, a fact which makes it attractive to the collector. However, it does not belong among his most important works. He solos quite well on "Yo Yo", more ordinarily on "... Thing". The rather loose setup and the not too inspiring vocal make the obligato parts seem more like casual musical comments than a complete logical structure. HA is hardly to blame, though.

**HENRY ALLEN JR.
& HIS NEW YORK ORCHESTRA**

NYC. Sept. 24, 1929

Personnel as July 16 plus Victoria Spivey and The Four Wanderers (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

55852-1	Make A Country Bird Fly Wild	Intro 8 bars. In ens 16 bars. Solo 34 bars to 16+8 bars in ens, (cl) on bridge. (FM)
55852-2	Make A Country Bird Fly Wild	As above. (FM)
55853-1	Funny Feathers Blues	In ens 16 bars. Solo 26 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
55853-2	Funny Feathers Blues	As above. (M)
55854-1	How Do They Do It That Way?	In ens 16 bars. Solo 24 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
55854-2	How Do They Do It That Way?	As above. (M)
55855-1	Pleasin' Paul	In ens 8 bars. Solo 26 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
55855-2	Pleasin' Paul	As above. (M)

This session is almost as good as the July session, and HA contributes some first rate solo work. Again one is completely baffled by the enormous difference between the takes. Even if the outlines are the same, there are variations everywhere. The quality is also remarkably even, and to choose one take above the other is virtually impossible. My favourite title is "Pleasin' Paul", whose soli are warm, happy and melodically extremely well built. "How Do ...", which is the least interesting tune, features a stop chorus which makes up for anything, only Louis ever created similar marvels. The two remaining titles also offer trumpet playing of a very high standard. Main impression: A very important session!

FATS WALLER & HIS BUDDIES **NYC. Sept. 30, 1929**

Henry Allen (tp), Jack Teagarden (tb, vib), Albert Nicholas, Otto Hardwick (as), Larry Binyon (ts), Fats Waller (p), Eddie Condon (bj), Al Morgan (b), Gene Krupa (dm), The Four Wanderers (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Victor:

- | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|--|
| 56727-2 | Lookin' Good But Feelin' Bad | In ens 8 bars. Solo with ens 16+8 bars, (tb) on bridge. In ens. (FM) |
| 56728-1 | I Need Someone Like You | Part of intro 2 bars. (SM). Solo 18 bars. (F). In ens 8 bars. (SM) |

"Lookin' ..." is a really hot record where everybody is playing his head off, and HA is no exception. "I Need ..." is more ordinary.

VICTORIA SPIVEY ACC. BY HENRY ALLEN JR. & HIS NY ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 3, 1929**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Charlie Holmes (sop), Teddy Hill (ts-except 56735), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (g), Pops Foster (b, tu).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

- | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|--|
| 56732-1 | Bloodhound Blues | Intro 4 bars. Collective obligato on most of the record. (SM) |
| 56733-2 | Dirty T. B. Blues | Intro 4 bars. Collective obligato on most of the record. Solo with ens 20 bars. (SM) |
| 56734-1 | Moanin' The Blues | Collective obligato on most of the record. (SM) |
| 56735-1 | Telephoning The Blues | Intro 4 bars (mute). Collective obligato on most of the record (mute). (SM) |

While each one of these sides offers nice music, four of them together seem somewhat monotonous. There is very little solo space, and HA's only vehicle is "Dirty ...". His contribution here is more than satisfactory and the highlight of the session. The obligato parts are all of the same; collective contributions by two or more of the participants. They sound all right but, to my taste, never get really exciting. Note with favour "Telephoning ..." in which HA plays muted trumpet seemingly without discomfiture.

WILTON CRAWLEY & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 3, 1929**

Henry Allen (tp), unknown (tb), Wilton Crawley (cl, vo), Charlie Holmes (as), unknown (ts), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Victor:

- | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|--|
| 56747-2 | Snake Hip Dance | In ens 10 bars. Solo 8 bars. Duet with (cl) 8 bars. In ens. (FM) |
| 56748-2 | She's Driving Me Wild | In ens. (FM) |

This is a funny record, due to Wilton Crawley's eccentric and controversial style. Since this section, however, concerns Allen and not Crawley, I will not discuss Crawley further. From what we can hear in the ensemble, HA seems to have a good time. His solo on "Snake ..." proves this definitely, being a first rate, firm and inventive piece of music.

JELLY ROLL MORTON & HIS RED HOT PEPPERS **NYC. Nov. 13, 1929**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl), Jelly Roll Morton (p), Will Johnson (g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

- | | | |
|---------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 57080-1 | Sweet Peter | In ens 8, 48, 8 and 20 bars. (M) |
|---------|-------------|----------------------------------|

57080-1	Sweet Peter	As above. (M)
57081-1	Jersey Joe	In ens 32 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars. In ens 16 bars. (M)
57081-2	Jersey Joe	As above. (M)
57082-1	Mississippi Mildred	In ens 8 bars. Solo with ens 24 bars. In ens 56 and 24 bars. (M)
57082-2	Mississippi Mildred	As above. (M)
57083-1	Mint Julep	In ens 8 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars. Solo 8 bars. In ens 8, 8 and 8 bars. (FM)

This is nice New Orleans music but not at all suited for HA's forceful personality. The rhythm section plays rather heavily, and the soloists have to give way to Morton's arrangements. In this solography these sides therefore do not seem very important. There is no particular trumpet part worth noticing, and not much fun is to be had by comparing alternate takes. "Jersey Joe" seems to be most interesting. One minor point: If you manage to get hold of one of the extremely rare Victor originals in good condition, you may upgrade the music somewhat. The utterly lousy Biltmore dubs certainly do not improve the quality of the music.

SWEET PEA (ADDIE SPIVEY) ACC. BY NYC. Nov. 25, 1929
Henry Allen (tp), Charlie Holmes (as), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (g).
Four titles were recorded for Victor:

57554-1	Day Breakin' Blues	Intro 4 bars. Obligato parts. (SM)
57555-1	Heart-Breakin' Blues	Obligato parts. (S)
57555-2	Heart Breakin' Blues	As above. (S)
57556-1	Leavin' You Baby	Intro 4 bars. Obligato parts. (S)
57556-2	Leavin' You Baby	As above. (S)
57557-1	Longing For Home	Intro 4 bars. Obligato parts. (S)

As on sister Victoria's session on Oct. 3, there is no solo space. While HA's trumpet is heard frequently, there is no opportunity for creating interesting melodic lines. These sides may be of interest to the most eager HA collector and maybe for other reasons, but personally I do not think they survive sustained listening.

**LUIS RUSSELL /
LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Dec. 10, 1929**
Personnel as Sept. 6, 1929 except Otis Johnson (tp) replaces Coleman and Louis Armstrong (tp, vo) added.
Two titles were recorded for Okeh:

403493-A	I Ain't Got Nobody (vo)	See main text. (M)
490014-A	I Ain't Got Nobody (non-vo)	See main text. (M)
403494-C	Dallas Blues (vo)	In ens after (tb)-chorus. Coda 1 bar? (M)
490015-A	Dallas Blues (non-vo)	As above. (M)

NYC. Dec. 13, 1929
Same. Hoge Carmichael (vo-403496).
Two titles, weakly in orch only on 403496-A&C "Rockin' Chair" but:

403495-B	St. Louis Blues (vo)	Lead 32 and 8 bars. (M)
490016-A	St. Louis Blues (non-vo)	As above. (M)
490016-B	St. Louis Blues (non-vo)	As above. (M)
403496-A	Rockin' Chair	In ens. (SM)
403496-C	Rockin' Chair	As above. (SM)

NYC. Dec. 17, 1929
Same but Armstrong omitted, one title:

403524-C	Doctor Blues	In ens 48 bars. Solo 30 bars. In ens 8 bars. (FM)
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Original comments 1978: In an interview with Henry Allen by John Lucas in "The Record Changer" one question goes like this: "Then you went back with Luis Russell, by this time Louis Armstrong's band. Did you get much chance to play on records when you were with Louis?" The answer: "Well, no, but it was no fault of Louis'. And I played plenty on the stand. He's very fine, Louis. And we did cut one record in 1929, "I Ain't Got Nobody", on which I split a chorus with Satch so well that nobody knows to this day we did it this way!" If Red had known how much work this question has given his fans, he would have kept his mouth shut!!! On several occasions, my friends and I have played the record through and through, commenting, quarrelling and fighting (blood has not been shed yet though!). Net result: Nothing!!! Nothing whatsoever. Not on a single detail is there any agreement. True, we all agree that we can hear two trumpets in the ensemble and also vaguely a trumpet while Louis is singing. But the interesting and unsolvable question is concerning the 16 bars of solo trumpet. If the chorus is split, do they split it 8/8 or 4/4/4/4 or even as suggested 4/8/4, 4/6/6 or 4/4/8? And if so, who plays which parts? My personal opinion is: Red remembers correctly, they are splitting a chorus and they are splitting it equally, 8 bars to each man. My musical intuition is only one argument, maybe a better one is that it would be psychologically quite unlikely to split other ways than 50-50. But who's starting the ball??? You tell me, and I will present the results in an article in one of the jazz magazines as soon as possible. On "Dallas Blues" there is also two trumpeters to be heard, but from a solistic point of view the item is not of much interest. On "Doctor ..." it is no problem to identify HA's brilliant trumpet. I am particularly fond of his ensemble part, he leads the group with a firm hand and still plays in his own very personal way. The solo is good, albeit with some lesser flaws. Postscript 2011: 33 years later, the problem of "... Nobody" has not been solved. However, the alternate that appeared some years ago weakens HA's story, because here it is obviously Louis all the way. It should also be mentioned that Bengt Persson, *the* expert on Louis, does not go for HA. (K.-B. Rau also goes for Louis). Still, when I play those 16 bars, I feel there is something strange about the solo, like it is divided into four 4 bars' segments. But if so, who's playing first? I believe this enigma (maybe HA was bluffing?) only can be solved to satisfaction by advanced computer methods.... Postscript of Nov. 25, 2012: (First an apology for not including HA's contributions on the non-vocal takes of "St. Louis ...", and note in particular the trills on take B, Louis never did that! Postscript of Oct. 11, 2013: Yes, he did! Wrong! HA takes the lead, but on the alternate takes Louis plays the muted trumpet solo instead of singing. Sorry!). Second, listening to the coda of "Dallas ..." (both takes), my friend Ronnie Johanson noted that the two trumpet breaks have slightly different timbre, and quite possibly HA takes one of them, but eventually which one? Then "... Nobody". The fact that Charlie Holmes also confirmed HA's statement is very important but not necessarily decisive. However, on Nov. 23, I suddenly saw the light!! And it was the non-vocal take who gave the solution, to HA's favour!! Listening closely, it is obvious that Louis takes the first 4 bars. Then HA tries to continue but is quickly overruled by Louis, you can easily hear the mess in bars 5-6, and Louis takes the rest of the solo. On the vocal take, Louis does not interfere, and they share the 16 bars just like Henry and Charlie told us. The logic is quite clear to me (although Ronnie seems to have some 2 bars ideas), Louis first 4 bars, HA 4 bars, Louis 4 bars, HA 4 bars. That's it, curtain closed.

FATS WALLER & HIS BUDDIES

NYC. Dec. 18, 1929

Henry Allen, Leonard Davis (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Jack Teagarden (tb, vib), Albert Nicholas, Charlie Holmes (cl, as), Larry Binyon (ts), Fats Waller (p), Will Johnson (bjo), Pops Foster (b), Kaiser Marshall (dm), Orlando Robertson (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

57926-1	Lookin' For Another Sweetie	In ens 30 bars to coda. (M)
57927-3	Ridin' But Walkin'	Solo 12 bars. Coda in ens. (SM)
57928-1	Won't You Get Off It?	Solo 32 bars. Solo with ens 32 bars. (FM)
57929-2	When I'm Alone	Solo 8 bars to 32 bars in ens. (M)

One of the participants, Albert Nicholas, told Per Borthen that, on this date, Fats arrived at the studio at 10 o'clock in the morning without having been near a bed. Not even Fats knew what they were going to play, they only knew that Paul Whiteman had the studio from 12 o'clock. Then Fats wrote the numbers, rehearsed and recorded them, just like that. When the last number was being born, the Whiteman group was standing in the door. This cannot be quite connect, because on the labels the first (which is "Confessin'") and the last item are credited to Chick Smith. However, if Fats had no problems, HA had none either. His playing here is particularly inspired on "Won't You ..." which swings like it should. The weakest number is "Ridin ...", a blues tune where he seems somewhat unsure in his phrasing. But on the whole, a charming session with good trumpet playing.

LUIS RUSSELL /**LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA** **NYC. Jan. 24, 1930**

Personnel as Dec. 17, 1929 except Louis Armstrong (tp, vo) and three unknown (vln) added on 403681.

Three titles were recorded for Okeh, no HA on 403681 "Song Of The Islands" but:

403680-A Saratoga Shout Solo 32 bars. (FM)

403682-C Song Of The Swanee Solo 16 bars. (SM)

I have always had a particular affection for the Luis Russell Orchestra, it seems like the world's largest small band to me, and with an atmosphere more inspired and charming than most competitors. The soloists always get ample space and show their gratitude by playing their very best. HA has two excellent soli here. Note his masterly execution of "Saratoga Shout", here, and in the first half in particular, one may study his unique rhythmic sense.

KING OLIVER & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Jan. 28, 1930**

King Oliver, Henry Allen, Bubber Miley (tp), James Archey (tb), Bobby Holmes (cl, sop), Glyn Paque (as), two unknown (reeds), Don Frye (p), Arthur Taylor (bjo), Jean Stultz (g), Clinton Walker (tu), Carroll Dickerson (vln, ldr), Frank Marvin (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Victor:

58527-3 St. James Infirmary Duet (mute) (cnt) with (tu) 14 bars. Break. (SM)

58528-2 When You're Smiling Solo with ens 16 bars. (M)

The identification of trumpet soloists on the Oliver recordings is not always easy, and I am heavily indebted to Walter C. Allen and Brian Rust for their marvellous work on their book: "King Joe Oliver". HA is said to play cornet on this session, and his duet on "... Infirmary" shows that he has no troubles at all with this instrument either. Also "... Smiling" offers some good and intense playing.

REV. F. W. MCGEE**NYC. Jan. 28, 1930**

Rev. McGee sermons and singing with assistance. Henry Allen suggested to be present, since he is in the studio with King Oliver same day.

Four titles were recorded for Victor, but nothing audible to support this.

BUTTERBEANS & SUSIE**NYC. Feb. 1, 1930**

Arthur Williams, possibly Henry Allen (tp), Robert Freeman (tb), Leon Spruell (as), Eddie Heywood Sr. (p), Earl Tryce (bjo), Eugene Hill 8dm, Susie Edwards, Jody "Butterbeans" Edwards (vo).

Three titles were recorded for Okeh, no HA on 403712-B "Better Stop Knockin' Me Around" and 403713-B "Ain't Gonna Do That No More" but:

403711-B What It Takes To Bring You Back Possibly solo 18 bars. (SM)

The opening of "What It Takes ..." is so typical HA, that it must be him, but there is no trace on the other two titles.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Feb. 1, 1930**

Personnel as Dec. 10, 1929 except William Thornton Blue (cl, as) replaces Nicholas.

Two titles, 403714-B "Bessie Couldn't Help It" and 403715-B "Blue Turning Grey Over You" were recorded for Okeh, but no HA.

J. C. HIGGINBOTHAM & HIS SIX HICKS**NYC. Feb. 5, 1930**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Charlie Holmes (as), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Okeh:

403736-B Give Me Your Telephone Number In ens 8 and 4 bars. Solo 16 bars. In ens 8 bars. (FM)

403737-C Higginbotham Blues In ens 8 bars. Solo 12 bars. Solo 12 bars (mute). Acc. (tb) 12 bars. (SM)

This one has always been one of my favourite 78 rpm. records! The atmosphere is utterly relaxed and friendly, built around Pops Foster's slapping and bowing. The solo set-up is perfect, soloist follows soloist with the greatest ease. HA's solo on "... Telephone ..." is one of his greatest in this period, being a masterly construction of melody, executed with professional technique and force. "... Blues" has two fine choruses, one with and one without mute. Both are worthy examples of HA at his best.

HENRY ALLEN JR: & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Feb. 18, 1930**

Personnel as July 16, 1929 except Otis Johnson (tp) added, William T. Blue replaces Nicholas, Greely Walton (ts) replaces Hill.

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

58581-2	Sugar Hill Function	Soli 16, 8 and 8 bars. (FM)
58582-2	You Might Get Better, BYNGW	In ens 20 bars. Solo 32 bars. In ens. (FM)
58583-2	Everybody Shout	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
58584-2	Dancing Dave	Break 4 bars. Solo 16 bars. Solo 18 bars (mute). Coda. (SM)

A marvellous session, probably the best of all the Victor sessions under HA's own leadership. Strong words perhaps, particularly when those sessions of July 16 and 17, 1929 and July 15, 1930 are remembered. However, everything is so right here, the arrangements are original, the execution inspired, and all the soloists seem very happy. HA himself establishes himself definitely as one of the very greatest improvisers in jazz. The two top tracks seem to be "Sugar ..." and "... Dave". "Sugar ..." has three solo pieces of top quality, but particularly the first and longest are unforgettable. Listen to his daring approach, it's like fireworks! The two soli on the slower "... Dave", with and without mute, are equally among his greatest constructions ever. Also the two remaining tracks feature unforgettable trumpet. I think it is necessary to repeat it: With the possible exception of the first Victor session, this is HA's finest session until this time.

KING OLIVER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. April 10, 1930**

King Oliver, Henry Allen, Dave Nelson (tp), James Archey (tb), Hilton Jefferson, Glyn Paque (cl, as), Walter Wheeler (ts), Don Frye or Norman Lester (p), Arthur Taylor (bjo), Clinton Walker (tu), Fred Moore (dm), Carroll Dickerson (ldr).

Three titles were recorded for Victor, no HA on "Edna" but:

59748-2	Boogie Woogie	Possible solo 16+8 bars (mute), (tb) on bridge. Solo 8 bars. (F)
59749-1	Mule Face Blues	Solo 30 bars. Coda. (FM)

The solo on "Mule Face ..." is of medium quality, well constructed but a little too hectic for my taste. The flare is awkward and the broken harmonic a moment later somewhat unhappy, but the solo is an excellent example of some of HA's more readily recognisable traits. His presence on "Boogie Woogie" is not very interesting. The muted solo may easily be Dave Nelson, and the open horn solo is rather impersonal.

REV. F. W. McGEE **NYC. April 15, 1930**

Rev. McGee sermons and singing with assistance. Henry Allen has stated he recorded with McGee and is listed in the ledgers as present.

Four titles were recorded for Victor, but nothing audible to support this claim. The music has nothing to do with jazz, and should be avoided, waste of time.

LUIS RUSSELL & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. May 29, 1930**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl, sop, as), Charlie Holmes (sop, as), Teddy Hill (ts), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (bjo, g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm, vib), unknown (vo).

Three titles were recorded for Okeh:

404047-A	Louisiana Swing	Solo 48+8 bars, (as) on last bridge. (FM)
404047-C	Louisiana Swing	As above. (FM)
404048-C	Poor Li'l Me	In ens 8 and 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)
404049-A	On Revival Day	In ens 8 bars. Solo 8 bars. In ens 8 and 4 bars. Obbligato with ens 16 bars. (M)
404049-B/C	On Revival Day	As above. (M)

The most prominent solo is found on "Poor ...", one of the best he made with Russell. It is utterly well constructed and executed with both feeling and kingly technique. The "Louisiana Swing" takes are also among his best contributions. "... Day" is rather unimportant, although the brief soli are good enough.

WILTON CRAWLEY & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 3, 1930**

Henry Allen (tp), Wilton Crawley (cl, vo), Charlie Holmes (as), Jelly Roll Morton (p), Teddy Bunn (g), Pops Foster (tu), Bruce Johnson (wbd).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

62188-2	Big Time Woman	In ens 4 bars. (SM)
62189-1	I'm Her Papa, She's My Mama	As below. (SM)
62189-2	I'm Her Papa, She's My Mama	Solo 16 bars to 16 bars in ens. (SM)
62190-1	New Crawley Blues	Duet with (as) 12 bars. In ens 12 bars. (SM)
62191-1	She Saves Her Sweetest Smile For Me	In ens 8 bars. Solo 16 bars. In ens 16 bars. (M)

The atmosphere on this date is more "normal" than on the previous one with Crawley, even if there are some details that make you jump... HA gets his share of the soli and contributes successfully on "I'm Her Papa ..." in particular. These Victors are extremely hard to get, but they certainly contain important music for the HA collector.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 15, 1930**

Henry Allen, Otis Johnson (tp), Jimmy Archey (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl, as), Charlie Holmes (cl, sop, as), Greely Walton (ts), Luis Russell (p, cel), Will Johnson (bjo, g), Ernest Hill (tu), Paul Barbarin (dm, vib).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

62343-2	Roamin'	Intro 4 bars. Solo with ens 16+6 bars, (tb) on bridge. Vocal 30 bars. Solo with ens 32 bars. (SM)
62344-1	Singing Pretty Songs	In ens 6 bars. Solo with ens 16+8 bars, (tb) on bridge. Solo 16 bars. Solo with ens 64 bars. (FM)
62344-2	Singing Pretty Songs	As above. (FM)
62345-2	Patrol Wagon Blues	Solo 10 bars (mute). Vocal 24 bars. In ens 4 bars. Soli 12 and 10 bars to coda in ens. (SM)
62346-1	I Fell In Love With You	Intro 4 bars. Solo with ens 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 64 bars, last 32 with ens. (FM)
62346-2	I Fell In Love With You	As above. (FM)

When I commented upon the Feb. 18 session, I said that it was probably the best of all the Victor sessions. I still mean that, but certainly there are dangers connected with using all ones superlatives too early. This is also a magnificent session with HA playing his very best on all tracks. My favourite is "Patrol ..." where he plays with such intensity and sadness at the same time. I held it to be one of his greatest records. "Roamin'" in the same slow medium tempo is also a masterpiece, but "Patrol ..." contains more improvisational finesse, both in the mute and the open horn passages. The two fast medium sides swing from beginning to end with HA's pure, strong trumpet to be heard most of the way. Note for instance the two choruses which conclude "... Pretty Songs" or the stoptime chorus on "I Fell ...". Which trumpeter apart from Armstrong, made such contributions to the everlasting jazz music of the twenties and early thirties? The alternate takes also confirm to the fullest extent his talents, the variations are much more than you could even hope for. We hear HA sing for the first time on this date. While he never quite could compete with Armstrong in this context, he nevertheless makes a good job out of it, contributing to the overall atmosphere. In "Patrol ..." he is particularly moving, and in "I Fell ..." his scat singing intriguingly reminds us of his trumpet phrasing. Main impression: An unforgettable session!

REV. F. W. McGEE **NYC. July 16, 1930**

Rev. McGee sermons and singing with assistance. Henry Allen has stated he recorded with McGee and is listed in the ledgers as present.

Four titles were recorded for Victor, three issued, but nothing audible to support this claim. The music has nothing to do with jazz, and should be avoided, waste of time.

LUIS RUSSELL & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 5, 1930**

Personnel as May 29, 1930 except Greely Walton (ts) replaces Hill.

Three titles were recorded for Okeh, no HA on "Muggin' Lightly" but:

404429-A	Panama	Solo 32 bars. In ens 18 bars. (F)
404430-B	High Tension	Solo 14 bars. (FM)

The most important side, both as a whole and in connection with HA, is "Panama". His solo, while fast and rough, is impressively coherent and inventive. Few trumpet players master fast tempo as HA does here. "High Tension" is good but not above his usual high standard.

KING OLIVER & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 10, 1930**

King Oliver, Henry Allen, unknown (tp), Jimmy Archey (tb), Hilton Jefferson, Glyn Paque (as), Charles Frazier (ts), Hank Duncan (p), Arthur Taylor? (bjo), unknown (tu), Fred Moore (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Victor:

- | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 63639-2 | Shake It And Break It | Solo 16 bars. (FM) |
| 63640-1 | Stingaree Blues | Solo 22 bars to coda. (SM) |

NYC. Sept. 12, 1930

King Oliver, Henry Allen, Dave Nelson (tp), Jimmy Archey (tb), unknown (as), (as), (ts), (p), (g), (tu), (dm), George Bias (vo).

Two titles, no HA on 63134-3 "What's The Use Of Living Without Love" but:

- | | | |
|---------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 63135-1 | You Were Only Passing Time With Me | In ens. (M) |
| 63135-2 | You Were Only Passing Time With Me | As above. (M) |

Henry Allen himself once said to Per Borthen that he was very satisfied with "Stingaree Blues", and that it was the best solo he made with the Oliver orchestra. I not only agree wholeheartedly, but I feel that it is among his very best whatever orchestra is concerned. It is extremely cleverly built to a climax, and the details are all of the kind which make you holler with joy. "Shake It ..." has a solo of medium quality.

LUIS RUSSELL & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 15, 1930**

Personnel as Sept. 5.

One title was recorded for Brunswick, rejected.

NYC. Oct. 24, 1930

Same. Dick Robertson (vo).

Three titles were recorded for Melotone, one issued:

- | | | |
|-------|--------------|-------------------|
| 35025 | I Got Rhythm | Solo 8 bars. (FM) |
|-------|--------------|-------------------|

NYC. Dec. 17, 1930

Same plus unknown (tp), Vic Dickenson (vo).

Three titles were recorded for Brunswick/Vocalion, no HA on 35760 "Honey, That Reminds Me" but:

- | | | |
|---------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 35758-C | Saratoga Drag | Solo 16+8 bars, (ts) on bridge. (FM) |
| 35759-C | Ease On Down | Solo 32 bars. (F) |

The year 1930 closes with some of the most magnifique trumpet soli ever heard. "I Got Rhythm" has only a brief solo, but it contains some very original phrases which makes it easy to remember. However, your ears start trembling when you listen to "... Drag" and "Case ...". They swing like nothing ever did before on this earth, and the trumpet soli are the climax. To play that fiercely, that superbly, that daringly ... Note the beginning of the last part of "... Drag" and the beginning of "Ease ..."!!! If you do not understand what I mean then, you are one of those people for whom this book is not written.

LUIS RUSSELL & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 28, 1931**

Henry Allen, Gus Aiken, Robert Cheek (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl, as), Henry Jones (as), Greely Walton (ts), Luis Russell (p), Will Johnson (g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm), Chick Bullock (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, no HA on 70198-1 "Freakish Blues" but:

- | | | |
|---------|-----------------|--|
| 70195-1 | You Rascal, You | Vocal 64 bars.
Solo with orch 36 bars. (F) |
| 70196-1 | Goin' To Town | Obbligato 32 bars. Solo
with orch 20 bars. (FM) |
| 70197-1 | Say The Word | Solo 16+8 bars (mute),
orch on bridge. (FM) |

In a way this session starts a new era. HA did have a very large record production in the one and a half years concluded by the last session. The depression, however, has set recording activities far back and nine months have elapsed. This rest period has not hurt Allen the least, and we may only be annoyed by the loss of much good music. His style is the same as before, a style which never grew but

just was there in July 1929. The soh here are all excellent, and in particular, "Say The Word" is a magnifique piece of warm, romantic and beautiful music.

DON REDMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Sept. 24, 1931

Henry "Red" Allen, Bill Coleman, Leonard Davis (tp), Claude Jones, Fred Robinson, Benny Morton (tb), Ed Inge, Rupert Cole (cl, as), Don Redman (cl, as, vo, ldr), Robert Carroll (ts), Horace Henderson (p, arr), Talcott Reeves (bjo), Bob Ysaguirre (b, tu), Manzie Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick, no HA on 37222-A "I Heard" and 37225-A "Chant Of The Weed" but:

37223-A	Trouble, Why Pick On Me?	Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (SM)
37224-A	Shakin' The African	Break. Solo 16+8 bars, (ts) on bridge. (F)

NYC. Oct. 15, 1931

Same except Langston Curl replaces Coleman.
Two titles, no HA on 37292-A "I Heard" but:

37291-A	Shakin' The African	As above. (F)
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While "everybody" knows "Shakin' The African", I bet "Trouble ..." is forgotten when Allen's records are being played. I will therefore start by reminding you that he plays very beautifully on this item. Then we may talk about "Shakin' ...". It is a very amusing and fine affair, where each man executes his part well. This goes for HA too, who plays hotter than usual. Too much heat perhaps at the expense of elaborate music? The presence of two takes certainly shows that this is no straight playing. I don't think they belong to his most important works, but they are worth having in your collection.

BILLY BANKS & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. April 18, 1932

Henry Allen (tp), Pee Wee Russell (cl, ts), Joe Sullivan (p), Eddie Condon (bjo), Jack Bland (g), Al Morgan (b), Zutty Singleton (dm), Billy Banks (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Banner, three issued:

11716-1	Bugle Call Rag	In ens 76 bars with breaks. In ens 8 and 40 bars to coda. (F)
11716-2	Bugle Call Rag	As above. (F)
11717-1	Oh! Peter	Duet with (cl) 18 bars. Vocal 36 bars. Duet 36 bars. (FM)
11717-2	Oh! Peter	As above. (FM)
11718-1	Margie	Intro with (ts). Solo 32 bars to duet with (cl) 32 bars. (FM)

NYC. May 23, 1932

Same. Five titles:

11713-3	Oh! Peter	Duet with (cl) 18 bars. Acc. (b) with (cl) 18 bars. Duet 36 bars. (FM)
11713-4	Oh! Peter	As take 3. (FM)
11719-4	Spider Crawl	Intro 4 bars. Duet with (cl) 12 bars. Obbligato with (cl) 36 and 24 bars. Duet with (cl) 24 bars. (M)
11881-1	Who's Sorry Now?	Acc. (b) 16 bars. Solo 32 bars to duet with (cl) 32 bars. (F)
11882-1	Take It Slow And Easy	Duet with (cl) 18 bars. Solo 18 bars. Duet 36 bars. (FM)
11883-1	Bald-Headed Mama	Duet with (cl) 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. Duet 24 bars. (M)

These sessions are difficult to appraise. They are obviously informal "get-together" sessions, where the participants have rather different backgrounds. They belong more to the New Orleans/Chicago style than to Swing. The rhythm section while working hard and well, does not in my opinion manage to give a background quite suitable for HA. I have never been very fond of the Rhythmakers and their records, but on the other hand, there is undoubtedly a lot of good music there, mostly in the cl/tp duets. Maybe they just don't fit my temper. Some details must be pointed out: The second session is for HA better than the first. The fast "Bugle ..." and also the others seem to make him a little nervous and too eager to create the relaxed tension which he usually masters so

well. Note for instance “Margie” which has some details in poor taste. The soli on “Who’s Sorry ...” and others in the May session show the best of HA from these dates; apart from which I feel that these are not sessions where alternate masters are particularly important.

THE RHYTHMAKERS**NYC. July 26, 1932**

Henry Allen (tp), Jimmy Lord (cl), Pee Wee Russell (ts), Fats Waller (p, vo), Eddie Condon (bjo), Jack Bland (g), Pops Foster (b), Zutty Singleton (dm), Billy Banks (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Melotone:

12119-1	I Would Do Anything For You	Intro 4 bars. In ens 32 and 8 bars. (F)
12119-2	I Would Do Anything For You	As above. (F)
12120-1	Mean Old Bed Bug Blues	Obbligato 24 bars. In ens 12 bars. (SM)
12120-2	Mean Old Bed Bug Blues	As above. (SM)
12121-2	Yellow Dog Blues	In ens 24 and 36 bars. (M)
12121-3	Yellow Dog Blues	As above. (M)
12122-1	Yes Suh!	Intro 8 bars. Solo 16 bars. In ens 32 bars. (FM)
12122-2	Yes Suh!	As take 1. (FM)

This session has the same atmosphere as the previous one, and it seems that further comments are not really necessary. HA plays not at all badly, and “Mean Old Bug Blues” has some truly intriguing obbligato parts.

JACK BLAND & HIS RHYTHMAKERS**NYC. Oct. 8, 1932**

Henry Allen (tp), Tommy Dorsey (tb), Pee Wee Russell (cl), Happy Caldwell (ts), Frank Froeba (p), Eddie Condon (bjo), Jack Bland (g), Pops Foster (b), Zutty Singleton (dm), Chick Bullock (v-12453,54).

Four titles were recorded for Perfect:

12452-1	Who Stole The Lock?	In ens 16 bars. Vocal 16 and 16 bars. In ens 16 and 16 bars. (F)
12452-2	Who Stole The Lock?	As above. (F)
12453-1	A Shine On Your Shoes	In ens 32 and 18 bars. In ens 18+8 bars, (ts) on bridge. (F)
12453-2	A Shine On Your Shoes	As above. (F)
12453-3	A Shine On Your Shoes	In ens 50 and 18 bars. (FM)
12454-2	It’s Gonna Be You	In ens 16+8 bars, (ts) on bridge. Break. In ens 16+8 bars, (tb) on bridge. (FM)
12455-1	Someone Stole Gabriel’s Horn	In ens 16 bars. Vocal 48 bars. Solo 8 bars. In ens 16 bars. (FM)
12455-1	Someone Stole Gabriel’s Horn	As above. (FM)

While superficially similar to the Billy Banks’ sessions, this session under Jack Bland’s leadership is, to me, of higher quality. The atmosphere is much more relaxed and everybody swing here, an arguable point on the previous dates. HA seems happy, he does not get the blowing space he deserves but does his best. He sings more than usually inspiredly on two titles and in addition blows some very fine trumpet. Particularly note the brief solo on “... Gabriel ...” and the last ensemble on “A Shine ...”. Take 3 of the last mentioned is slower than the others and with a slightly different line-up. For all items the takes have an overall even quality.

HENRY ALLEN /**COLEMAN HAWKINS & THEIR ORCHESTRA****NYC. March 27, 1933**

Henry Allen (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Russell Procope (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Don Kirkpatrick (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), John Kirby (b), Walter Johnson (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Perfect:

13183-A	Someday Sweetheart	Duet (mute) with (as) 32 bars. In ens 8 bars. (SM)
13184-A	I Wish I Could Shimmy Like MSK	Solo 22 bars. (M)

This session may be said to mark the starting point of a new era for Allen. From now on for four years HA is the leader or the most prominent sideman in a long row of beautiful swing sessions. Don't ask me why these beautiful sides were rejected. HA plays very satisfyingly on both. "Someday ..." features him softly with mute in the background, while a straight alto takes the lead. The result is striking, better trumpet is rarely heard. "... Sister Kate" is perhaps easily passed over at first, but note the superbly executed rhythmic alternations. Details like this are enough to rate HA as a trumpeter with no peer, only a few equals at most.

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

Henry Allen, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard (tp), Wilbur De Paris, George Washington, Dicky Wells (tb), Benny Carter, Wayman Carver, Coleman Hawkins, Chu Berry, Howard Johnson (reeds), Luis Russell (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Ernest Hill (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for English Decca, no HA on "Arabesque" but:

13353-A	Fanfare	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
13354-A	Sweet Sorrow Blues	Solo 12 bars. (SM)
13355-A	Music At Midnight	Solo 8 bars. (FM)

Same date

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

13356-A	Sweet Sue, Just You	Solo 32 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (ts) on bridge. (F)
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NYC. May 19, 1933

Personnel as May 18 except Howard Scott (tp), Rod Rodriguez (p) replace Davis or Dillard, and Russell.

Four titles, no HA on "Air In D Flat", "Donegal Cradle Song" and "Music At Sunrise" but:

13361-A	Firebird	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
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same date

Personnel as May 18 (13356). One title:

13363-A	How Come You Do Me Like You Do?	In ens 16 bars. Vocal 16 bars. In ens 16 bars. (M)
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These records are among the very first which attracted my attention to Henry Allen many years ago. They have always occupied a special place in my heart because they are unique. Everything about them is beautiful: arrangements, soli, rhythm. HA is, for once, only one among many great musicians, all of whom do their very best. All his contributions, however, are sources of pride. My very favourite is the moving but authoritative "Sweet Sorrow Blues", a solo one does not easily forget. But note also the remaining items, like "Fanfare" or "Firebird", which certainly correspond to their titles. Who possesses alternate takes from this day???! Decca doesn't.

HENRY ALLEN / COLEMAN HAWKINS & THEIR ORCHESTRA NYC. July 21, 1933

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Dicky Wells (tb), Hilton Jefferson (as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Horace Henderson (p), Bernard Addison (g, bjo), John Kirby (b, tu), Walter Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Melotone:

13616-1	The River's Takin' Care Of Me	Intro 4 bars to 16 bars in ens. Vocal 16 bars. In ens 8 bars. (SM)
13617-1	Ain't Cha Got Music?	Vocal 32 bars. Soli 16 and 16 bars. Break. In ens 12 bars. (FM)
13618-1	Stringin' Along On A Shoe String	In ens 4 bars. Solo 32 bars (mute). Vocal 30 bars. In ens 8 bars. (FM)
13619-1	Shadows On The Swanee	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. (SM)

The first of the Melotone sessions is a charming and attractive one. The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed, and everybody seems to have a splendid time. It is not a blowing session, however, and the soli are therefore rather polite and a little formal. This does not mean that they are inferior in any way, only that the intense harmonic, melodic and rhythmic fireworks have to give way to a more

mellow illumination. HA sings well, while his most interesting trumpet solo is to be found on "... Shoe String".

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Aug. 18, 1933

Henry Allen, Russell Smith, Bobby Stark (tp), Dicky Wells, Sandy Williams (tb), Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (cl, ts), Fletcher Henderson (p, arr, ldr), Bernard Addison (g), John Kirby (b), Walter Johnson (dm), Horace Henderson (arr).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

13827-1	Yeah Man	Solo 8 bars. (F)
13827-2	Yeah Man	As above. (F)
13828-1	King Porter Stomp	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
13828-2	King Porter Stomp	As above. (FM)
13829-1	Queer Notions	Solo 16+8 bars, (ts) and orch on bridge. (M)
13830-1	Can You Take It?	Solo 12 bars. (FM)
13830-2	Can You Take It?	As above. (FM)

NYC. Sept. 22, 1933

Personnel as Aug. 18 except Claude Jones (tb) replaces Williams. Horace Henderson (p). Four titles:

265135-2	Queer Notions	Solo 16+8 bars, (ts) and orch on bridge. (M)
265136-2	It's The Talk Of The Town	As below. (SM)
265136-3	It's The Talk Of The Town	Solo 4 bars. (SM)
265137-2	Night Life	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
265138-2	Nagasaki	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. (F)

HA takes his turn on every single side in his first recording sessions with the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. The results are satisfactory but not above average standard. Personally I enjoy most the comparison between alternate takes on "Yeah Man" and "Can You ...". Rather brief soli but all the same surprisingly different and well conceived. "Queer Notions" is a little too queer and contrived to my taste, and "King Porter ..." is burdensome and in which you don't get anything without a hard struggle. HA plays his parts well, the variations are also notable, but my feelings are not much aroused. "Nagasaki" is almost a showcase for HA. We do not think he plays the 2 bars of intro as stated in "Hendersonia". He sings well enough, but his solo contains a lot of fill-in phrases, something we are not used to with this inventive trumpeter. His inspiration seems to be somewhat absent. Main impression: Sessions which are easily forgotten where HA is concerned (not necessarily so when other criteria are considered!).

COLEMAN HAWKINS & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 29, 1933

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Hilton Jefferson (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Horace Henderson (p), Bernard Addison (g), John Kirby (b), Walter Johnson or Sid Catlett (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Columbia:

265143-2	The Day You Came Along	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
265144-1	Jamaica Shout	As below. (FM)
265144-2	Jamaica Shout	In ens 2 and 32 bars. Soli 16, 8 and 4 bars. 4 x 4 bars in ens. (FM)
265145-2	Heartbreak Blues	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (SM)

The two slower tunes in particular have excellent HA, and "Heartbreak Blues" stands among my favourite pieces. Note, however, his unusually mellow style at this time. It works beautifully in slower tunes, but seems a little, just a little, indistinct at faster tempi. One could hear it on "Nagasaki" and "King Porter ..." in the previous session and on "Jamaica Shout" here. Compare it with Luis Russell's "Saratoga Drag" and "Ease On Down", and you will see what I mean. Apart from these specific, perhaps negatively surprising, comments to the trumpet playing, I must add that this session as a whole is very, very beautiful and belongs among my most treasured ones.

HORACE HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Oct. 3, 1933

Personnel as Fletcher Henderson Aug. 18, 1933.

Six titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on 265151-1 "I'm Rhythm Crazy Now" but:

265150-2	Happy Feet	Solo 8 bars. (F)
265152-1	Ol' Man River	Vocal 30 bars. Solo 30 bars. (F)
265153-2	Minnie The Moocher's Wedding Day	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (FM)
265154-1	Ain't Cha Glad	Solo 8 bars. (M)
265155-1	I've Got To Sing A Torch Song	Solo 8 bars. (SM)

The quality of HA's playing seems to vary from tune to tune in this period. On "...Torch Song" he plays his very best in slow medium tempo. "Happy Feet" features a brief, but firm and inventive solo, also of the very highest quality. "Minnie ..." and "... Glad" have fine soli but these are not above his average high level of performance. "Ol' Man River", however, is below par. Maybe the tempo was too fast, but this does not usually constitute a problem. The trumpet solo, however, is far from distinct in its execution, it seems as though HA stumbles over the valves to put it bluntly. His singing on this tune is far better. Note: Our critical comments, again, do not concern the session as a whole, which we think is marvellous.

**HENRY ALLEN /
COLEMAN HAWKINS & THEIR ORCHESTRA** **NYC. Nov. 9, 1933**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Benny Morton (tb), Ed Inge (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Horace Henderson (p), Bernard Addison (bjo, g), Manzie Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Melotone:

14282-1	Hush My Mouth	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
14283-1	You're Gonna Lose Your Gal	In ens 24 bars. Vocal 44 bars. In ens 12 bars. Coda 2 bars. (FM)
14283-2	You're Gonna Lose Your Gal	As above. (FM)
14284-1	Dark Clouds	Intro 4 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 8 bars. Coda. (SM)
14285-1	My Galveston Gal	Vocal 32 bars. (M)
14285-2	My Galveston Gal	As above. (M)

This session is, like the previous one on Melotone, very good but not exciting. The ambiance is utterly attractive, but HA's contributions are rather modest. He is principally featured as a vocalist, and there is surprisingly little trumpet playing to be heard. The most interesting title is probably "Dark Clouds", but there is some questionable detail. Apart from that noted above, HA's trumpet is heard in the ensemble playing but without solistic value.

DON REDMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 5&9, 1934**

Henry Allen, Shirley Clay, Sidney De Paris (tp), Benny Morton, Fred Robinson, George Simon (tb), Ed Inge, Rupert Cole, Jerry Blake (cl, as), Don Redman (cl, as, vo, ldr), Robert Carroll (ts), Don Kirkpatrick (p), Talcott Reeves (bjo), Bob Ysaguirre (b), Manzie Johnson (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Brunswick, no HA on 14559-A "Got The Jitters" but:

14536-A	I Wanna Be Loved	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
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A brief but beautiful solo on "... Loved".

BENNY MORTON & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Feb. 23, 1934**

Henry Allen (tp), Benny Morton (tb), Ed Inge (cl, as, vo), Jerry Blake (cl, as, vo, arr), Ted McRae (ts), Don Kirkpatrick (p), Bobby Johnson (g), Billy Taylor (b), Manzie Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

152717-2	Get Goin'	Solo 22 bars. (M)
152717-3	Get Goin'	As above. (M)
152718-1	Fare Thee Well To Harlem	Solo 32 bars. Coda. (M)
152719-1	Tailor Made	Intro with ens 4 bars. Solo 16+8 bars, (ts) on bridge. Solo with ens 8 bars. (M)
152720-2	Gold Diggers' Song	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 36 bars. (FM)

It seems that HA is on his way upward after a period of certain unevenness in his playing in comparison with the fantastic period around 1930. One may still have some critical remarks to make, but on the whole he is playing very well on all titles. I will not choose a particular favourite, just recommend the whole session, for HA, and for all the participants. The two takes of "Get..." are rather similar.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. March 6, 1934

Henry Allen, Russell Smith, Joe Thomas (tp), Claude Jones, Keg Johnson (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Fletcher Henderson (p), Bernard Addison (g), John Kirby (b), Vic Enge (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Victor, no HA on 81788-1&2 "Phantom Fantasie" but:

81787-1	Hocus Pocus	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
81787-2	Hocus Pocus	As above. (FM)
81789-2	Harlem Madness	Obbligato 32 bars (mute). (M)
81790-1	Tidal Wave	Solo 8 bars. (F)
81790-2	Tidal Wave	As above. (F)

Definitely too little trumpet playing on this session. Two fine but brief soli on "Hocus Pocus" and a weakly recorded but seemingly satisfactory obbligato on "Harlem ...", and then we are through. "Tidal Wave" is too fast even for HA.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. May 1, 1934

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Dicky Wells (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Hilton Jefferson (as), Horace Henderson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), John Kirby (b, tu), Walter Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Melotone:

15146-1	I Wish I Were Twins	Intro 4 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 50 bars. (FM)
15147-1	I Never Slept A Wink	Solo 8 bars (mute). Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)
15148-2	Why Don't You Practice What YP?	Vocal 32 bars. Break 2 bars to 8 bars in ens. (SM)
15149-1	Don't Let Your Love Go Wrong	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 28 bars. (FM)

This is a very pallid session, there seems to be very little inspiration, and the whole set-up is a disappointment. The atmosphere is somewhat corny and not even rhumba rhythms are avoided. The only acceptable number is "I Never ...", where two brief but well constructed soli are refreshing. On "... Twins" there is also some able trumpet playing but very far from what might have been. Let us not forget, though, that all tracks contain nice singing.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. July 28, 1934

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Keg Johnson (tb), Buster Bailey (cl, as), Hilton Jefferson (as), Horace Henderson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Melotone:

15471-1	There's A House in Harlem FS	Solo with ens 16 bars. Solo 16 bars, last 8 with ens. (SM)
15472-1	Pardon My Southern Accent	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. In ens 10 bars. (M)
15473-1	Rug Cutter Swing	Solo with ens 32 bars (mute). Solo 48+8 bars (mute), (tb) on last bridge. (F)
15474-1	How's About Tomorrow Night?	Straight in ens 16+8 bars (mute), saxes on bridge. Vocal 32 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)

This is something quite different from the last session which was rather disappointing. Here we find HA in good shape. My favourite track has always been "... House in Harlem ...". Not only because he plays beautifully, particularly on his eight pure solo bars, but because the melody, the arrangement and the overall atmosphere are rather unusual. The other three tracks are also relaxed and nice with good soloing. Particularly noteworthy is the fast "Rug ...".

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA ca. Aug./Sept. 1934

Personnel probably as Sept. 11, 1934 below.

Broadcast, two titles:

Rug Cutter's Swing	Solo 32 bars (mute). Solo 8 bars. Solo 8 bars (mute). (FM)
Wild Party	Trumpet duet 32 bars, HA probably one of the participants. (F)

The sound is utterly lousy, and I dare not comment upon the musical value. The presence of two excellent trumpeters also compounds the situation. The muted parts on "Rug ..." are similar to the Allen - Melotone recording and are definitely played by HA. 'Here comes Henry' is being shouted in the open horn solo, but no such proof is needed. However, on a substantial part of the number another trumpeter plays very well, but I do not know his identity. Possibly it is Irving Randolph. These two executes a duet which I feel would have been a real collector's gem if the sound had been better.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 11/12, 1934

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

Eight titles were recorded for Decca, no HA on 38599-A "Shanghai Shuffle" and 38605-A&B "Memphis Blues" but:

38598-A	Limehouse Blues	Solo 32 bars. (F)
38600-A	Big John Special	Solo 16 bars (last (tp) solo). (FM)
38601-B	Happy As The Day Is Long	Solo with orch 32 bars. (F)
38602-A	Tidal Wave	Solo 8 bars. (F)
38603-A	Down South Camp Meeting	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
38604-B	Wrappin' It Up	Soli 8 and 16 bars. (FM)

NYC. Sept. 25, 1934

Personnel as above plus Benny Carter (as).

Four titles, no HA on 38728-A "Liza" but:

38723-A	Wild Party	Solo 16+8 bars (mute), (ts) on bridge. (F)
38724-A	Rug Cutter's Swing	Solo 32 bars (mute). Solo 8 bars. Solo 8 bars (mute). (FM)
38725-A	Hotter Than 'Ell	Solo 32 bars. (F)

Had there ever been any doubt of HA's abilities as a big band trumpeter (and why should there be?!), these twelve sides definitely cast it aside. He seems to thrive like a fish in water and does an excellent job all over. To highlight some particular titles is difficult but let's try! The muted solo on "Wild Party" and the logical pensive open horn on "Down South ..." must be mentioned first. Or maybe "Big John ..."? "... Hell" and "... Up" have particularly 'angry' contributions, almost Eldridge-esque. "Rug ..." has a very fine open horn solo, while "Tidal Wave" is definitely more successful than the Bluebird recording. "Limehouse ..." is a little too fast for HA's top level trumpet (Borthen protests on this point), while "Happy ..." is rather arranged and not very exciting. But on the whole, his contribution here is very successful, and he assists in making these some of the most valuable Henderson's sides.

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND**NYC. Oct. 4, 1934**

Henry Allen, Wardell Jones, Shelton Hemphill (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, George Washington (tb), Gene Michaels (cl, as), Crawford Wethington, Joe Garland (reeds), Edgar Hayes (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), O'Neil Spencer (dm), Lucky Millinder (dir), Chuck Richards (vo).

Three titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on 16037-A "Out Of A Dream" but:

16035-A	Swingin' In E Flat	Solo 22 bars. (FM)
16036-A	Let's Have A Jubilee	Solo 8 bars (mute). (F)

NYC. Dec. 5, 1934

Same plus Buster Bailey (cl).

Three titles, no HA on 16273-1 "Dancing Dogs" but:

- 16271-1 African Lullaby Solo 2 bars. (S)
 16272-1 Solitude Solo 8 bars. (SM)

NYC. Dec. 11, 1934

Same. Three titles, no HA on 16465-1 "Love's Serenade" and 16466-1 "Keep That Rhythm Going" but:

- 16467-1 Like A Bolt From The Blue Solo 8 bars. (SM)

Among underrated swing orchestras of the nineteen thirties, one is more underrated than the rest. For some inexplicable reason, very few people have ever discovered this source of joy. Maybe it is because the 78's are very rare these days, but on the other hand, they are rare because too few were pressed at the time, and only a handful were issued in Europe. Even today where the pirates make LP's of almost everything. Mills Blue Rhythm Band seems to be neglected (remember this was written long time ago). The band swings better than 95% of its competitors at the time, the arrangements are varied but mainly good, the soli are on a high level, and the overall atmosphere and inspiration are magnificent. HA, in company with Higginbotham, is the band's main soloist, and he thrives! He is not featured so much on the first sessions as later on, but he offers some prime examples of his creative power. Just listen to "Solitude", "Like A Bolt ..." and "African Lullaby"! Only 18 bars together, but beautiful and more valuable than hours of routine work. "... Jubilee" has a brief but sparkling muted solo, also in the top category. The only disappointment is heard in "... E Flat", the solo here is rather loose and without much content. I fear that the prices of the beautiful blue Columbians with MBRB will not get lower after these comments!! Postscript: Now everyone can buy these treasures on CD. I suggest you do it!!

CHUCK RICHARDS**NYC. Dec. 19, 1934**

Henry Allen (tp), Benny Morton (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Charlie Beal (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Billy Taylor (b).

Three titles were recorded for Vocalion/Columbia, no HA on "Blue Interlude" and "Devil In The Moon" but:

- 16524-1 A Rainbow Filled With Music Solo 16 bars (mute).
 Weak obbligato parts. (M)

The session as such cannot by any means be called exciting to a jazz enthusiast, but when HA is present, something is bound to happen. While he sticks to plain ensemble in "Blue Interlude" and "Devil ...", he executes a brilliant muted solo in "... Rainbow ...", and suddenly the value of the record is doubled many times!

BUSTER BAILEY'S**SEVEN CHOCOLATE DANDIES****NYC. Dec. 28, 1934**

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

Two titles were recorded for Vocalion:

- 16445-1 Call Of The Delta Solo 18 bars. (S)
 16445-2 Call Of The Delta As above. (S)
 16446-1 Shanghai Shuffle Solo 16 bars. (FM)

The two takes of "... Delta" demonstrate clearly HA's abilities as an improviser. While the main lines are the same, there are variations in every bar. The sides, evaluated in total, are beautiful, and Allen is an extra benefit. Take 1 is definitely the better take, the introduction of take 2 in particular has technical shortcomings. However, both takes contain beautiful soloing. "Shanghai Shuffle" has a sparkling solo of the top quality, perhaps the best from the session.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Jan. 23, 1935**

Henry Allen, Pee Wee Irwin (tp), George Washington (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Luis Russell (p), Danny Barker (g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Melotone:

- 16671-1 Believe It, Beloved Vocal 24 bars. Solo 24 bars. (M)
 16671-2 Believe It, Beloved Solo 48 bars. (M)
 16672-1 It's Written All Over Your Face Intro 4 bars. Soli 32
 and 8 bars. (SM)
 16681-1 Smooth Sailing Vocal 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. (F)
 16682-1 Whose Honey Are You? Intro 8 bars. Vocal 32 bars.
 Solo 24 bars. Vocal coda. (F)

This is really an exciting session! A session which makes several of the previous ones seem pale and insignificant in comparison. Above all one notices the thrilling ambitions expressed in the trumpet-playing. Nothing seems to be too complicated not to be tried, mostly with great success. The best soloing is found on "It's Written ..." which has a beautiful intro and a long complex solo. "Whose Honey ..." is also a marvellous piece of inspiration, it does not matter at all that there are minor flaws. "... Sailing" sails along at full storm with a rather simple but highly effective solo. The two versions of "... Beloved" are so different from each other that it is a must for the collector to have both. He throws out fantastic ideas at great leisure. One might say that it is possible to do things too complicated, and HA is getting close to this point here. Mr. Borthen and I disagree slightly, and we urge you to judge for yourself. The non-vocal take 2 seems to be the better one.

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

NYC. Jan. 25, 1935

Personnel as Dec. 5, 1934.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on 16702-1 "Brown Sugar Mine" but:

16700-1	Back Beats	Solo 16+8 bars (mute), (tb) on bridge. (FM)
16701-1	Spitfire	Soli 8 and 8 bars. (FM)

Two excellent contributions in fast medium tempo, forceful and inspired, equally attractive with or without mute. Co 3020-D is, by the way, recommended in its entirety, it is a marvellous record!

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. April 29, 1935

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Dicky Wells (tb), Cecil Scott (cl), Chu Berry (ts), Horace Henderson (p), Bernard Addison (g), John Kirby (b), George Stafford (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

17395-1	Rosetta	Intro 4 bars to solo 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
17396-1	Body And Soul	Solo 31 bars. Vocal 31 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (SM)
17397-1	I'll Never Say 'Never Again' Again	In ens 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (FM)
17398-1	Get Rhythm In Your Feet	In ens 32 bars (mute). Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

From the very first Vocalion recording session under his own leadership, HA has a firm hand, trumpet and voice. "Rosetta" seems to define a standard format for the solo layout on this and later sessions. First a trumpet solo rather straight as a presentation of the theme, then a vocal chorus, and after some soli by sidemen, HA returns with a solo where his improvisational talents are exploited to the utmost. The standard is on the average quite marvellous. To single out details are difficult, so overwhelming is the task. I will just say this: Play the last part of "Rosetta", "Body ..." and "... Feet", and you will hear one of the greatest jazzmusicians ever!!!

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

NYC. July 2, 1935

Personnel as Dec. 5, 1934.

Three titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on 17761-1 "Once To Every Heart" but:

17759-1	Ride, Red, Ride	Solo 16 bars. (M). Solo 64 bars. Break. In ens. (F)
17760-1	Harlem Heat	Solo 18 bars. (F)

NYC. July 9, 1935

Same. Three titles, no HA on 17797-1 "There's Rhythm In Harlem" but:

17796-1	Congo Caravan	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
17798-1	Tallahassee	Solo 8 bars. (FM)

The big feature number for Henry Allen is "Ride, Red, Ride", and one expects something real great. However, one is in for a disappointment. The number is made for money and not for music, given an ultrafast tempo (some parts have a medium tempo), unfit for improvising, and a corny arrangement. HA does his best, and the beginning of the long, fast solo is fierce and well contrived, but on the whole this is not a very interesting HA item. The reverse, "Congo ...", is much better and contains a very fine 16-bar solo in a proper arrangement. Play

this one instead! Also, "Harlem Heat" and "Tallahassee" have fine trumpet, the last one in particular warms your heart!

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. July 19, 1935

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl), Cecil Scott (ts), Horace Henderson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Kaiser Marshall (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

17845-1	Dinah Lou	Solo 30 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
17846-1	Roll Along, Prairie Moon	Duet (mute) with (cl) 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (F)
17847-1	I Wished On The Moon	Vocal 30 bars. Solo 8 bars (mute). Solo 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
17848-1	Truckin'	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)

"Truckin'" has the best solo here, a fine logical structure of 16 bars executed with full control. "Dinah Lou" is also among the notable contributions. "I Wished ..." is rather uneven, the muted solo is a mess, but he concentrates masterly in the finale with open horn. "Roll Along ..." is all right without any special merit. In all, a nice session but not by a long way up to the previous Vocalion session.

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

NYC. Aug. 1, 1935

Personnel as Dec. 5, 1934.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on "Waiting In The Garden" but:

17923-1	Dinah Lou	Solo 18 bars. (M)
17924-1	Cotton	Solo with orch 16 bars. (M)
17925-1	Truckin'	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. Vocal coda. (FM)

While "Dinah Lou" with HA's own group was good, this version, slightly slower, is unforgettable. Not because it is particularly complicated, but because it is a pure, simple, forceful and melodic presentation such as only a fully mature artist could make it. In addition to this, "Cotton" and "Truckin'" both contain excellent soli, among the best with MBRB.

PUTNEY DANDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Aug. 2, 1935

Henry Allen (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Teddy Wilson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), John Kirby (b), Walter Johnson (dm), Putney Dandridge (vo).

Five titles were recorded for Vocalion:

17934-1	I'm In The Mood For Love	In ens 16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. Obbligato 8 and 8 bars (mute). Solo 8 bars. (M)
17935-1	Isn't This A Lovely Day?	Intro 8 bars. Obbligato 24 bars (mute). Solo 32 bars. (M)
17936-1	Cheek To Cheek	Obbligato with ens. Break 4 bars (S) to 16 bars in ens. (FM)
17937-1	That's What You Think	Obbligato 26 bars (mute). Solo 16+8 bars (mute) (g) on bridge. Soli 4 and 2 bars. (M)
17938-1	Shine	Solo 32 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars. Obbligato with ens 16 bars. (F)

There may be many opinions about Putney (I love him!!!), but apart from that discussion, there is no doubt that his records contain marvellous soli by many of the greatest improvisers in jazz. Allen, Eldridge, Berry and Wilson are only a few. On this session HA seems to have a wonderful time. His soloing on "... Lovely Day" and "Shine" is masterly. Note particularly "Shine", his style is a little bit different from the usual one, being more staccato but equally effective. He plays also beautifully with mute, especially in the obbligato parts, but also in a nice solo on "... Think". On "Cheek ..." and "... Love" his contributions are not so prominent but still executed with taste and style.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Nov. 8, 1935

Henry Allen (tp, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Gene Michaels (as), Joe Garland (ts), Edgar Hayes (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), O'Neil Spencer (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

18253-2	I Found A Dream	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 12 bars to coda. (SM)
18254-1	On Treasure Island	Intro 4 bars to solo 24 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 22 bars. (M)
18255-1	Red Sails In The Sunset	Intro 4 bars to solo 31 bars (mute). Vocal 32 bars. Solo 14 bars to coda. (M)
18256-1	Take Me Back To My Boots And Saddle	Solo 40 bars. Vocal 54 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

A fine, even session with all items featuring Allen at his best. Whether the theme concerns the Southern Seas or the Dusty Prairie, the musical results are still 100% jazz and 100% quality. The overall atmosphere is very good, the whole group seems happy and relaxed on this date. If I have to point out some particularly attractive details, I reluctantly offer you the last soli on "Red Sails ..." and "Take Me Back ...". However, each trumpet solo here is worth listening to with solemnity, they don't make them that way anymore!

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

NYC. Dec. 20, 1935

Personnel as Dec. 5, 1934.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on 18419-1&2 "Blue Mood" but:

18420-2	E Flat Ride	Solo 32 bars. (M)
18421-1	Broken Dreams Of You	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. (SM)
18422-1	Yes! Yes!	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

NYC. Jan. 21, 1936

Same. Two titles:

18547-2	Shoe Shine Boy	Solo 16 bars. Coda. (SM)
18548-2	Midnight Ramble	Solo 12 bars. (M)

Must admit it, I love the MBRB! Its records seem to me to contain an optimal mixture of rugged individualism and effective cooperation. They swing like hell, the arrangements may be sweet sometimes but with a special charm, and the soli are great. These sessions are probably the greatest of them all. Here you have all variations, from the sweet "Broken Dreams ..." to a gay and swinging "Yes! Yes!", with several unforgettable tunes in between. HA's contributions are among his very best, particularly in the slowest tunes, "Shoe ..." and "Broken Dreams ..." have some timeless trumpet playing. "Yes! Yes!" beats the two medium titles narrowly, "E Flat Stride" has some minor flaws, and "... Ramble" is to me somewhat paler than expected. However, the trumpet section on "... Ramble" is marvellous!! Final note: Mr. Borthen insists that I quote him saying that "E Flat Stride" is fantastic, and that I ought to upgrade "... Ramble". So there you are!

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. April 1, 1936

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), William Humphries (as), Cecil Scott (ts), Norman Lester (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

18907-1	The Touch Of Your Lips	Solo 30 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 24 bars. (M)
18908-1	Lost	Solo 16 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
18909-1	I'll Bet You Tell That TATG	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Soli 32 and 22 bars. (FM)
18910-1	Every Minute Of The Hour	Solo 16 bars (mute). Vocal 16 bars. Solo 26 bars. (SM)

The standard of these early Vocalion sessions is fantastic. To be a real 'critic' one has to find something negative now and then, but how is this possible here? Again we find a long series of brilliant soli, each better than the last. "Lost" is our great favourite, the closing solo truly demonstrating HA's masterly rhythmic capabilities combined with a melodic inventiveness almost unequalled. Each one of the remaining three items has not only its charm but its permanent place in the

history of jazz. The breaks of Cozy Cole send HA and us far away, and we never return completely!

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

NYC. May 20, 1936

Personnel as Dec. 5, 1934 except Tab Smith (sop, as) replaces Bailey.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on "Everything Is Still Okay" but:

19296-1	Red Rhythm	Soli 8 and 32 bars. (F)
19298-1	Jes' Natch'ully Lazy	Solo 6 bars. (SM)
19299-1	St. Louis Wiggle Rhythm	Solo 34 bars. (F)

In particular, the longest solo on "Red Rhythm" is noteworthy, but also the other contributions are quite satisfying. Mr. Borthen is very fond of "St. Louis ...". The brief solo on "... Lazy" should have been much longer! All four sides as a whole are beautiful.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. May 21, 1936

Henry Allen (tp, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Arville Harris (cl), Happy Caldwell (ts), Jimmy Reynolds (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

19300-1	You	Solo 56 bars. Vocal 60 bars. Solo 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (FM)
19301-1	Tormented	Intro to solo 8 bars (mute). Vocal 32 bars. Solo 14 bars. Coda. (SM)
19302-1	Nothing's Blue But The Sky	Solo 30 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (FM)
19303-1	Would You?	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)

There is some disagreement between Mr. Borthen and me on this and the later Vocalion sessions. Even if all four sides are first-rate, I do not think they are as important as those discussed earlier. The reason for my feelings is the over-standardised set-up; the surprise elements are fewer. I admit, however, that one may fall into the trap of believing HA's introductions to be straight, and not notice that his superb craftsmanship is still present in a less obvious way than before. "You" is a good example of this. Well, at least we agree that "Tormented" has the most interesting solo, and also that the last solo on "Would You?" contains some unusual details.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. June 19, 1936

Henry Allen (tp, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Tab Smith (as), Joe Garland (ts), Edgar Hayes (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), O'Neil Spencer (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

19451-1	Take My Heart	Solo 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 22 bars. (M)
19452-1	Chloe	Solo 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Soli 32 and 8 bars. (M)
19453-1	You're Not The Kind	Solo 16 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (SM)
19454-1	On The Beach At Bali-Bali	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)

Again there are discrepancies between our separate judgments. For my sake I feel that it is necessary to say it: There has crept into the Allen sessions around 1936 an element of routine. They share a similarity of format, HA presents the melody comparatively straight, then sings and finally improvises one chorus. While sounding nice all the way, nothing much happens until the end. Luckily the concluding soli usually more than make up for preceding weaknesses, but the total impression could have been more exciting. However, this particular session is better than the previous one. "... Kind" is a very beautiful piece of music with HA all the way. Also "Chloe" and perhaps especially "Take My Heart" have some very fine soli. To all this Mr. Borthen reacts violently, feels that the clean atmosphere and elaborate set-up brings the music up on a higher level, and treasures HA's "klein-kunst" immensely. I suggest you listen closely to these records and judge for yourself. The solography has never intended to give standard answers, only suggestions and personal opinions.

PUTNEY DANDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Aug. 3, 1936

Henry Allen (tp), Joe Marsala (cl, as), James Sherman (p), Eddie Condon (g), Wilson Myers (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Putney Dandridge (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

19645-1	A Star Fell Out Of Heaven	In ens 20 bars. Break. In ens 8 bars. (M)
19646-1	Mary Had A Little Lamb	In ens 36 bars. Weak obligato parts. Solo 8 bars. (FM)
19647-1	Here Comes Your Pappy	In ens 16 bars. Weak obligato parts. Solo 16 bars. Coda. (M)
19648-1	If We Never Meet Again	Solo 18 bars. Weak obligato parts. (SM)

While being an unforgettable session for Putney himself, Cozy Cole's masterly beat and the two nasty tunes "... Lamb" and "... Pappy", HA has a not very prominent role. He seems to thrive best swimming around in the background, contributing to the overall atmosphere. His most interesting solo is to be found on "If We Never ...", it is unusually fast-fingered, even for HA. His solo on "... Pappy" is also notable and don't forget to listen to Cozy Cole who has one of his very best days!

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 5, 1936**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Rudy Powell (cl, as), Tab Smith (as), Cecil Scott (ts), Edgar Hayes (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

19659-1	When Did You Leave Heaven?	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 22 bars. (SM)
19660-1	Am I Asking Too Much?	Solo 34 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)
19661-1	Until Today	Solo 16+6 bars, ens on bridge. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 16 bars. (SM)
19662-1	Algiers Stomp	Intro 4 bars. Solo 36 bars. (F)

HA does not give much space to his fellow musicians here, but we are not sorry about this. Even though the records are obviously directed at a larger public, they contain beautiful jazz. HA plays straightforwardly but majestically in the beginning, sings the more or less inspiring lyrics and then finishes with a real, improvised solo. Of the four, I find "Until Today" to be blessed with the most interesting solo, but all give well above minimum satisfaction. Finally, further congratulations to Cozy Cole for his excellent drumming.

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND **NYC. Aug. 11, 1936**

Personnel as May 20.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, no HA on 19687-2 "In A Sentimental Mood" but:

19685-1	Merry-Go-Round	Possibly soli 8 and 12 bars. (FM)
19686-1	Until The Real Thing Comes Long	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
19688-1	Carry Me Back To Green Pastures	Solo 4 bars (mute). Solo 8 bars. (SM)

"... Real Thing ..." and "... Pastures" contain just the kind of brief but perfect soli which make record hunting such an interesting and never tiring hobby. I am particularly fond of the open solo on "... Pastures". "Merry-Go-Round" has growl soli which *has* to be HA's, in fact, if he ever plays growl, it is bound to sound like this. However, I have no proof of this as he never plays that way with his own groups.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 31, 1936**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Albert Nicholas (cl), Pete Clark (as), Ted McRae (ts), Clyde Hart (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), John Kirby (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

19780-2	Darling, Not Without You	Solo 15 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 12 bars to 4 bars in ens. (SM)
19781-1	I'll Sing You A Thousand Love Songs	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 48 bars. (FM)
19782-1	Picture Me Without You	Solo 30 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 12 bars to 4 bars in ens. (SM)

19783-1 Out Where The Blue Begins Solo 16 bars. Vocal 30 bars.
Solo 24 bars. (SM)

A session quite similar to the preceding Vocalion session: A gentle and sentimental atmosphere, popular tunes, records not primarily intended to be great and exciting jazz music. Perhaps they aren't that at all, but the fact is that one appreciates this music more and more as time goes. It is so pure, honest and crafted. HA's musical taste is rarely equalled, and his trumpet playing here is majestic. Not always flashing, although that happens too as on "Out Where ...", but always well thought out to the smallest detail. All the tracks here are successful and worthy of attention, they are not strong and eager but affectionate and life lasting.

PUTNEY DANDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 1, 1936

Personnel as Aug. 3 except Clyde Hart (p), John Kirby (b) replace Sherman and Meyers.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

19794-1 Sing, Baby, Sing In ens 32 bars. Weak obligato parts. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

19795-1 You Turned The Tables On Me Intro 4 bars. Obligato 16 bars. Solo 10 bars. Weak obligato parts. (SM)

19796-1 It's The Gypsy In Me In ens 32 bars. Weak obligato parts. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

19797-1 When A Lady Meets A Gentleman DS In ens 32 bars. Weak obligato parts. Break. Solo 8 bars. (M)

Another lovely session, where Putney's particular brand of humour and artistry is heart warming. All tracks are full of fine jazz music, and HA's contributions are excellent. The most attractive item is probably "... Tables ...", where the intro, the obligato and the solo are equal to his best works. "Sing ..." is also outstanding.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Oct. 12, 1936

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Gene Mikell (cl), Tab Smith (as), Ben Webster (not Ted McRae as previously believed) (ts), Clyde Hart (p), Danny Barker (g), John Kirby (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

20049-1 Midnight Blue Solo 8 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 19 bars. (SM)

20050-1 Lost In My Dreams Solo 16 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 12 bars to 4 bars in ens. (M)

20051-1 Sitting On The Moon Solo 30 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 34 bars. (FM)

20052-1 Whatcha Gonna Do When TANS? Solo 14 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (SM)

The most exciting Vocalion session for quite a long time. Here it is not necessary to talk so much about the atmosphere, because the soli are so magnificent. It is hopeless to attempt to pick out preferences, it would be to discriminate against the remaining. I love them all!

PUTNEY DANDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Oct. 14, 1936

Personnel as Aug. 3 except Clyde Hart (p) replaces Sherman.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

20069-2 A High Hat, A Piccolo And A Cane In ens 10 bars. Weak obligato 50 bars. Solo 16 bars. Weak obligato 8 bars to 8 bars in ens. (FM)

20070-1 Easy To Love Solo 8 bars (mute). Weak obligato parts (mute). (M)

20071-1 You Do The Darnedest Things, Baby In ens 8 bars. Weak obligato parts. Solo 8 bars. (FM)

20072-1 The Skeleton In The Closet Talks with Putney! Weak obligato parts. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Vocalion 3352 with “A High Hat ...” and “The Skeleton ...” is one of my most treasured records. It is a rare combination of bizarre humour and first rate music. An unpolished but highly effective rhythm section lays down a perfect background for a supremely inspired Putney Dandridge and a Henry Allen who never played better. This record offers some soloing which is among his best performances in the middle thirties period. His strength, combined with maximum inspiration, is unforgettable. Vocalion 3351 also offers excellent soloing not only by HA but in particular by Clyde Hart, one of my favourite pianists. But back to 3352, listen to the drum break in the middle of the trumpet solo!! By the way Putney poses an interesting question on “... Cane”: “Who’s that man they call the King? The King of Swing and Everything ...”. You tell!!

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND **NYC. Oct. 15, 1936**
 Personnel as May 20 except Billy Kyle (p), Hayes Alvis (b) replace Hayes and James.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

20073-1	Balloonacy	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
20074-1	Barrellhouse	Solo 32 bars (mute). (FM)
20075-1	The Moon Is Grinning At Me	Solo 6 bars. (M)
20076-2	Showboat Shuffle	Solo 12 bars. (M)

A fine selection of MBRB tunes featuring HA in several different moods. I have a special affection for the brief soli which most people overlook, and here I have to call attention to “The Moon ...”. HA is worth the whole price of the record (which is not small!!) all alone, he plays both utterly inspiredly and with strength and beauty. “... Shuffle” and “Balloonacy” are excellent examples of good open horn style, while “Barrellhouse” (which is Basie’s “Jive At Five”) offers some really good muted trumpet. It would be correct to point out that Mr. Borthen is clearly in favour of “Balloonacy” and “Barrellhouse”. A session not to be overlooked.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 17, 1936**
 Personnel probably similar to Oct. 12.
 Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

20267-1	Did You Mean It?	Solo 20 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
20268-1	In The Chapel In The Moonlight	Intro 4 bars to solo 6 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 14 bars to coda. (SM)
20269-1	Here’s Love In Your Eye	Solo 36 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 24 bars. (FM)
20270-1	When My Dreamboat Comes Home	In ens 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)

A good session without particularly outstanding contributions. All four sides containing good music, but commercialism is not wholly absent. (I may be too negative here, Mr. Borthen would like me to upgrade the session somewhat). HA’s playing on the first part of each side is always very close to the tune, and even at the end he does not seem completely free. “... Moonlight” and “... Dreamboat...” are the most interesting.

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND **NYC. Nov. 20, 1936**
 Personnel as Oct. 15.
 Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

20294-1	Big John’s Special	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
20295-1	Mr. Ghost Goes To Town	Solo 36 bars. (FM)
20296-1	Callin’ Your Bluff	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
20297-1	Algiers Stomp	Solo 24 bars. Coda. (FM)

In spite of several long soli I am not as happy as I might be. There are signs of weaknesses in Allen’s playing, manifesting themselves in phrasing which is rhythmically somewhat looser than usual. The expected split-second timing is not present. I will not say that he plays badly, had the trumpeter not been HA, superlatives would be in order. “Algiers Stomp” seems to me to be the best of the four, while Mr. Borthen highlights “... Bluff”. A last word about MBRB: Without the blue Columbias, your HA collection will be found wanting, as will your acquaintance with the great bigbands’!

MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND SMALL GROUP NYC. Nov. 21, 1936

Personnel including Henry Allen (tp, vo), Tab Smith (as), Billy Kyle (p), Hayes Alvis (b), O'Neil Spencer (dm). Date earlier given as Nov. 5.
Saturday Night Swing Club, two titles:

Body And Soul	Vocal 32 bars. Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (S)
Ride, Red, Ride	Solo 16 bars. (FM). Solo 64 bars. Break. In ens. (F)

This very important discovery features a version of "Body ..." which is comparable in quality with the Vocalion recording with HA's own group. His vocal is particularly impressive on this version. I cannot quite decide upon the ranking of the trumpet contributions, however, the last solo with the coda on this version is unusually attractive. "Ride ..." follows the same format as the MBRB recording, to which I gave a "thumbs down". The tempo is even faster here. In honesty, however, I feel that HA makes a better job on this one, although the result is still of slight interest.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Dec. 29, 1936

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Tab Smith (as), unknown (cl, ts, bar), Billy Kyle (p), John Williams (b), Alphonse Steele (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

20458-1	I Adore You	Solo 16 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 18 bars. (M)
20459-1	He Ain't Got Rhythm	Solo 14 bars. Vocal 40 bars. Solo 56 bars. (FM)
20460-1	This Year's Kisses	Solo 12 bars. Vocal 26 bars. Solo 18 bars. (M)
20461-2	Let's Put Our Heads Together	Solo 30 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 34 bars. (F)

This session is better than the previous one and perhaps better also than the remaining Vocalion sessions. The concluding solo on "... Kisses", with its magnificent two opening bars, is sufficient proof that HA at this time is still capable of playing at his all-time best. And "... Rhythm" is as dynamic as you can get them, it swings like mad and contains a long, sparkling solo. Both "I Adore" and "... Heads ..." also have soli with several fine details, and the overall impression from the date is very satisfactory. By the way, compare Vo 3432 ("He Ain't ..." and "... Kisses") with Br 7824 under Teddy Wilson's leadership, and you will have a great opportunity for studying the different approaches to the lyrics (guess who's singing ...).

TEDDY WILSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Feb. 18, 1937

Henry Allen (tp), Cecil Scott (cl, as, ts), Prince Robinson (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Jimmy McLin (g), John Kirby (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).
Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

20698-2	The Mood That I'm In	Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars. Coda 4 bars. (SM)
20699-2	You Showed Me The Way	Solo 10 bars. Coda 4 bars. (SM)
20700-2	Sentimental And Melancholy	Solo 20 bars. Coda 6 bars. (SM)
20701-1	My Last Affair	Solo 8 bars. In ens 10 bars. (SM)

While trumpeters like Roy Eldridge, Buck Clayton and Jonah Jones had the opportunity of accompanying Billie Holiday on many occasions, poor Henry got this one only. He uses it well, though one may say that the set-up and tunes are made for Billie and not for him. However, he uses his scanty solo space effectively. All tunes are in slow medium tempo, and it is difficult to pick out a special favourite, but perhaps "My Last ..." or "... The Way" contain some extra inspiration. Mr. Borthen prefers "Sentimental ...". It is too bad there is no obbligato playing.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. March 4, 1937

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Buster Bailey (cl), Tab Smith (as), Sonny Fredericks (ts), Billy Kyle (p), Danny Barker (g), John Williams (b), Alphonse Steele (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

20759-2	After Last Night With You	Solo 16 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (M)
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20760-1	Goodnight, My Lucky Day	Solo 8 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (SM)
20761-1	There's A Kitchen Up In Heaven	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
20762-2	I Was Born To Swing	Solo 24 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 24 bars. (FM)

Of all the Vocalion sessions, this is the one which causes the greatest disagreements between Mr Borthen and me. I do not like the atmosphere, it seems tame and not quite inspired. This is obviously due to the rhythm section, where Cozy Cole is particularly irreplaceable. Mr. Borthen, however, feels that HA has really found himself on this date. He uses the beginning of the last chorus on "After Last ..." as a demonstration. I admit there are several interesting details both here and on the other items, like "... Heaven" which is the most lively one. However, HA has spoiled me so much through the previous seventy sessions or so that, even should I want to, I cannot find these items worthy of being highlighted.

VICTORIA SPIVEY **NYC. March 12, 1937**

Possible personnel: Henry Allen (tp), Albert Nicholas (cl), Charlie Holmes (as), unknown (ts), Luis Russell (p), Pops Foster (b), Victoria Spivey (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

20793-1	One Hour Mama	Obbligato parts with ens. (SM)
20794-1	Harlem Susie-Q	Obbligato parts with ens. Break. In ens. (M)
20795-1	Give It To Him	Obbligato parts with ens. (FM)
20795-2	Give It To Him	As above. (FM)
20796-1	Got The Blues So Bad	Obbligato parts with ens. (S)

The session may possibly include HA, but without any soloing nor real background playing, it is quite uninteresting.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. April 29, 1937**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Glyn Paque (cl), Tab Smith (as), Harold Arnold (ts), Luis Russell (p), Danny Barker (g), John Williams (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

21070-1	Sticks And Stones	Intro 4 bars to solo 16 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
21071-2	Meet Me In The Moonlight	Solo 16 bars. Vocal 34 bars. Solo 24 bars. (SM)
21072-1	Don't You Care What Anyone Says?	Solo 16 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
21073-1	A Love Song Of Long Ago	Intro to solo 30 bars (mute). Vocal 30 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Much better quality here than on the preceding session. Everything fits together better, and HA seems happy and in the mood for hard work. The most notable track is "... Moonlight", a perfect pop-tune of the late thirties. HA sings extremely well, and his soloing is well above average. The remaining three fast medium tracks also have fine soloing, which makes the jazz listener forget completely that a lot of other factors apart from his interests were taken into consideration when these sessions were put together. Note also the fantastic rhythmic shifts on "A Love Song ...", we played it at 45 rpm. to study them more closely'.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. May 28, 1937**

Note: The liner notes on the CD (Special Jazz Heritage Edition!) presenting material from the Fleischmann's Yeast Show broadcasts states that Henry Allen is taking a solo 'in a good break' on "Bugle Blues". However, 'the Oslo gang' has played this solo several times, and our conclusion is that this is not HA, and of course not Louis. Who do *you* think is playing?

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 19, 1937**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Edmond Hall (cl), Tab Smith (as), Bingie Madison (ts), Luis Russell (p), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

21275-2	Till The Clock Strikes Three	Solo 8 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 14 bars to coda. (M)
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21276-2	The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down	Soli 8 and 8 bars. Vocal 8, 8 and 2 bars. Soli 8 and 8 bars. In ens 8 bars to coda. (FM)
21277-1	You'll Never Go To Heaven	Intro 6 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)
21278-1	The Miller's Daughter Marianne	Solo 32 bars (mute). Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)

Same kind of session as the previous one, quite commercialised but inspired and full of fine music. The conclusion of "... The Clock ..." is masterly, so is the intro on "...Heaven". The last mentioned is, by the way, a rather unusual tune with some strange chording. "... The Clock ..." and "... Marianne" have extremely corny lyrics, and "The Merry ..." makes you shudder, but strangely enough it does not matter in the least to HA who plays unconcernedly in his same old never-die style. His works should be an example to young traditional jazz musicians of today: Why not use the current hit material as a basis for jazz improvisations?

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 7, 1937**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Edmond Hall (cl), Tab Smith (as), Sammy Davis (ts), Billy Kyle (p), Danny Barker (g), John Williams (b), Alphonse Steele (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

21630-2	I Owe You	Solo 8 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)
21631-2	Have You Ever Been In Heaven?	Solo 32 bars. Vocal 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
21632-1	Is It Love Or Infatuation?	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 24 bars. (M)
21633-2	Can I Forget You?	Solo 14 bars. Vocal 30 bars. Solo 24 bars. (SM)

In a way, this is an end. An end to the Vocalion sessions, sure, but more than that. A turning point in HA's career seems to have been reached. Whether one likes to admit it or not, HA's status in the world of jazz has been declining for the last years. His many recording sessions under his own name and with MBRB have produced much unforgettable music, but it seems to take a historical perspective to do justice to Henry Allen's contributions to jazz. In 1937 younger musicians like Roy Eldridge are on the up-swing, and HA's style seems to be considered old-fashioned. While he still blows magnificently when he wants to, as he does to some extent on this session in spite of the rather commercialised set-up, there is a feeling of resignation in his music. One might perhaps say that his playing has consolidated, but this has never been successful in jazz. Fewer opportunities lead to greater resignation and again to fewer opportunities, a vicious circle. In the years to come, before the revival of traditional music, HA is featured almost exclusively as a sideman, very often in blues accompaniments, and rarely to his fullest advantage with that marvellous force, rhythm and inspiration of the 1929-1935 period.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA **1937 – 1940**

Collective personnel: Louis Armstrong (tp, vo), Henry Allen, Louis Bacon, Bernie Flood, Shelton Hemphill, Otis Johnson (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, George Matthews, Wilbur De Paris, George Washington (tb), Pete Clark, Rupert Cole, Joe Garland, Charlie Holmes, Bingie Madison, Albert Nicholas (reeds), Luis Russell (p), Lee Blair (g), Pops Foster (b), Paul Barbarin, Sid Catlett (dm).

Eleven recording sessions for Decca, totalling forty-two items.

Since HA is not heard, even with one single bar of solo, on any of these Armstrong sessions, it would be a waste of space to present the discographical details, they can be found in any discography. However, it is tempting to comment upon this fact. I have never been particularly fond of the J ATP institution, with its affection for unlikely and unfitting combinations of big names and different styles. However, to do what Decca did to Henry Allen in connection with Armstrong is definitely worse. It shows how a musician is completely dependent upon the vicissitudes of commercialism. Since Decca did not understand that the company had not only one great trumpeter and vocalist but two, HA had to waste his talents playing the not very challenging arrangements. Imagine the jazz history some vocal and trumpet duets could have made!! The three-minute limit would of course, have hampered such enterprises but should not have been able to prevent them. There is no reason to believe that Armstrong was to blame for these lost opportunities, however, I consider it likely that his proposals and arguments would be seriously considered. Could it be that he had none in this case? ...

LOUIS ARMSTRONG**Chi. prob. Winter 1938**

Personnel same/similar to above.

Broadcasts from Grand Terrace (ref. Franz Hoffmann), two titles have HA:

Blue Rhythm Fantasy	Solo with orch 30 bars. (FM)
Mr. Ghost Goes To Town	Solo 6 bars (NC). (M)

Postscript of Dec. 3, 2018: Particularly “Blue Rhythm ...” has a fine, colourful solo!

**BLUE LU BARKER WITH
DANNY BARKER’s FLY CATS****NYC. Aug. 11, 1938**

Henry Allen (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Sam Price (p), Danny Barker (g), Wellman Braud (b), unknown (dm), Blue Lu Barker (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

64432-A	You’re Going To Leave TOHJ	Intro with (cl) 4 bars (mute). Obbligato with (cl) 96 bars (mute). (M)
64433-A	New Orleans Blues	Intro with (cl) 4 bars (mute). Obbligato with (cl) 4 and 12 bars (mute). (SM)
64434-A	He Caught That B&O	Intro 4 bars. Obbligato 12 and 4 bars to 4 bars in ens. (S)
64435-A	Don’t You Make Me High	Obbligato 8 bars (mute). Solo 8 bars (mute). Obbligato 8 bars (mute). (SM)

Nice not too bluesy session which was forgotten in the old solography process. No doubt about HA’s presence, lots of finebackground playing, a nice open intro on “He Caught ...” and muted solo “... High”.

JAMES P. JOHNSON & HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. March 9, 1939**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Gene Sedric (ts), James P. Johnson (p), Al Casey (g), John Williams (b), Sid Catlett (dm), Ruby Smith (vo-24207,08), Anna Robinson (vo-24205,06).

Five titles were recorded for Vocalion:

24205-1	Harlem Woogie	Weak obbligato 8 and 8 bars. Solo 16+8 bars (p) on bridge. (FM)
24205-2	Harlem Woogie	As above. (FM)
24206-1	Hungry Blues	Solo 12 bars. Obbligato parts. (SM)
24207-1	Back Water Blues	Obbligato 12 bars. Coda. (S)
24207-2	Back Water Blues	As above. (S)
24208-1	He’s Mine, All Mine	Intro 4 bars. Obbligato parts. (S)
24209-1	After Tonight	Solo 16 bars. In ens. 16 bars. (M)

One and a half year have passed since HA’s last recording session, and he is truly but a sideman now. He is allocated his share of solo space which he uses routinely; however, his contributions lack the fire which permeated his earlier recordings. “After Tonight” has a good solo, and “Harlem Woogie” obbligato parts are not very important. Postscript: Two alternates have appeared since the above was written, note particularly a new version of “... Woogie”! And a beautiful “Hungry Blues”!

ROSETTA HOWARD / TRIXIE SMITH**NYC. June 14, 1939**

Henry Allen tp), Barney Bigard (cl), unknown (g), (b), probably Sid Catlett (dm), Rosetta Howard (vo-65811-14), Trixie Smith (vo-65815).

Five titles were recorded for Decca:

65811-A	Plain Lenox Avenue	Intro 4 bars. Obbligato 24 and 24 bars. (M)
65812-A	Men Are Like Street Cars	Intro 4 bars. Obbligato 12 and 12 bars. (SM)
65813-A	He’s Mine, All Mine	Solo 12 bars. Obbligato breaks. (SM)
65814-A	Headin’ For The River	Intro in ens. Obbligato 32 and 16 bars. (SM)

65815-A No Good Man Obligato 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. (SM)

All sides contain really fine obligato playing, but no particular side is to be preferred. The soli on "... Man" and "... Mine" are worthy of careful listening, and one's feelings are somewhat mixed. On the one hand the solo is inspired and forceful. But on the other it seems a bit too forceful, as if HA does not quite possess the unique taste which he demonstrates on so many of his earlier recordings. I think it is necessary to state that the general level of HA's musical expression definitely, is lower than heretofore. My use of "praise-ful" comments in the following sessions must therefore be read with this in mind. It means that "excellent" from now on has a somewhat lesser value than it had earlier in the solography.

JAMES P. JOHNSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. June 15, 1939

Personnel as March 9 except Eugene Fields (g), Pops Foster (b) replace Casey and Williams. Ann Robinson (vo-24780).

Five titles were recorded for Vocalion:

24776-1	Memories Of You	Intro in ens 4 bars. Solo 32 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars to coda. (M)
24776-2	Memories Of You	As above. (M)
24777-1	Old Fashioned Love	Break. Soli 8 and 4 bars. (M)
24777-2	Old Fashioned Love	As above. (M)
24778-1	Swingin' At The Lido	Solo 16 bars. (M)
24778-2	Swingin' At The Lido	As above. (M)
24778-1st	Swingin' At The Lido	As above. (M)
24778-3rd	Swingin' At The Lido	As above. (M)
24778-2nd	Swingin' At The Lido (NC)	Solo attempt (NC). (M)
24779-1	Havin' A Ball	Solo 8 bars. Solo with ens 32 bars. (M)
24779-2	Havin' A Ball	As above. (M)
24779-3	Havin' A Ball	As above. (M)
24779-1st	Havin' A Ball	As above. (M)
24779-4th	Havin' A Ball	As above. (M)
24780-1	Hungry Blues	Solo 12 bars. Obligato parts. (SM)

A nice and quite unpretentious session with most titles at a pleasant medium tempo, HA is heard to great advantage on all sides. My particular favourite is "Hungry Blues", his sober, open horn on this item is among his best of the period. Also "... Ball" and "Memories ..." contain very good and elaborate playing. Postscript: Lots of alternate takes have been available since the above was written, and the complete session can now be wholeheartedly recommended. Try the five takes of "... Ball" and see if HA is repeating himself, in your opinion!

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

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

Three titles were recorded for Victor:

42941-1	I'm On My Way From You	Solo 32 bars. (M)
42942-1	Haven't Named It Yet	Solo 8 bars. Break (mute). In ens (mute). (FM)
42943-1	The Heebie Jeebies Are Rockin' TT	Part of intro (mute). Obligato with ens 36 and 12 bars (mute). (M)
42943-2	The Heebie Jeebies Are Rockin' TT	As above. (M)

This session has always seemed rather mysterious. It begins in the best possible way with HA having a beautiful lead on "... My Way ...". He demonstrates his marvellous sense of rhythm and majestic melodic sense in a highly personal way. Mr. Borthen has for years tried to copy the seemingly simple phrasing, but without success. It is a real masterpiece! Then, however, the whole session deteriorates. "... Yet" contains much good music, but HA's contributions are rather mediocre and beset with technical difficulties. At last, "... Heebie Jeebies ..." is a pure chaos, for what reasons I dare not speculate...

HELEN PROCTOR**NYC. Oct. 13, 1939**

Henry Allen (tp), probably Bustrer Bailey (cl), Lil Armstrong (p), Ulysses Livingston (g), Wellman Braud (b), Sid Catlett (dm), Helen Proctor (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

- 66764-A Cheatin' On Me Intro 4 bars. Solo 32 bars (mute).
Weak obligato parts. (SM)
- 66765-A Let's Call It A Day Intro 4 bars. Weak obligato
parts. Solo 16 bars. (SM)
- 66766-A Take Me Along With You Intro 4 bars. Weak obligato
parts. Solo 16 bars. (SM)
- 66767-A Blues At Midnight Intro 4 bars. (S). Breaks. (FM).
Solo 12 bars. (S). Breaks. (FM)

A rather dull date with HA as the only light, if not shining too brightly. He plays quite well, particularly on "... Me" (mute) and "Blues ..." (open horn), but never does he achieve anything above average. On several occasions technical difficulties are revealed, particularly in "... Day". Two records which may be bought by the eager collector, but by no means "musts".

BLUE LU BARKER**NYC. Nov. 17, 1939**

Henry Allen (tp), Sam Price (p), Danny Barker (g), Wellman Braud (b), unknown (dm), Blue Lu Barker (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

- 66893-A Blue Deep Sea Blues Intro 4 bars. Obligato 12 bars.
Solo 12 bars. Obligato 12 bars. (S)
- 66894-A Never Brag About Your Man Intro 4 bars. Obligato 20 bars.
Solo 4 bars. Obligato
8 bars (mute). (SM)
- 66895-A He's So Good Intro 4 bars. Obligato 12,
20 and 8 bars. (SM)
- 66896-A I Don't Dig You, Jack Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 6 and
8 bars (mute). Solo 4 bars (mute).
Obligato 8 and 8 bars (mute). (SM)

NYC. Dec. 13, 1939

Same. Four titles:

- 66956-A Handy Andy Intro 4 bars. Solo 8 bars.
Obligato 32 bars. (SM)
- 66957-A Jitterbug Blues Intro 4 bars. Obligato 12 bars. (SM).
Solo 16 bars (FM) and 4 bars. (SM).
Obligato 4 bars. (SM)
- 66958-A You Been Holding Out Too Long Intro 4 bars (mute).
Obligato 4, 12, 4 and
12 bars (mute). (S)
- 66959-A Lu's Blues Obligato 20 and 24 bars (mute). (S)

I enjoy these more than most other blues sessions. The rhythm section manages to give a swinging touch to Blue Lu's singing, even if the tempi all over are rather low. I must admit that the sides are too alike, some variation would have been very beneficial. However, HA really plays beautiful trumpet here, both in his soli and obligato parts. He seems to have some technical difficulty at times, but on the whole he produces very elaborate accompaniment. Some of my friends feel that these sessions are dull, but I cannot agree. Compared to the previous Rosetta Howard and Helen Proctor sessions, Blue Lu's is much to be preferred.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG**NYC. Dec. 17, 1939**

Bigband personnel including Henry "Red" Allen (tp).

Broadcast from the Cotton Club (ref. Franz Hoffmann), one title has HA:

- Lilacs In The Rain Solo with orch 8 bars. (SM)

Perhaps not that exciting, but typical HA anyway.

JELLY ROLL MORTON'S SEVEN**NYC. Jan. 4, 1940**

Henry Allen (tp), Joe Britton (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl), Eddie Williams (as), Jelly Roll Morton (p, vo), Wellman Braud (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).

Four titles were recorded for General:

2582	Sweet Substitute	In ens. Solo 20 bars, last 8 in ens. (SM)
2583	Panama	Intro. In ens 64, 16 and 32 bars. (FM)
2584	Good Old New York	In ens all through. (F)
2585	Big Lip Blues	In ens. Solo 12 bars. (SM)

The General sessions are quite famous, but this must be due to Morton rather than to HA. Certainly he plays strongly and willingly and seems to have a good day. However, his job is mainly to execute Morton's arrangements, and there is little pure soloing. The highlights are his solo on "Big Lip ..." and the final ensemble on "Panama". There are at least one hundred HA items more interesting than any of these.

LEE BROWN

NYC. Jan. 11, 1940

Henry Allen (tp), Lee Brown (p, vo), unknown (b).

Seven titles were recorded for Decca:

67044-A	Another Little Girl	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 12, 16 and 4 bars (mute). (S)
67045-A	Ripley Rumbling Blues	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 12, 12 and 4 bars (mute). (S)
67046-A	Rolling Stone	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 18 and 24 bars (mute). (S)
67047-A	Perlina Blues	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 14, 12 and 4 bars (mute). (S)
67048-A	Cross The Santa Fe	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 14, 14 and 4 bars (mute). (S)
67049-A	Howling Man Blues	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 14, 14 and 6 bars (mute). (S)
67050-A	Midnight Dream Blues	Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato 14, 12 and 4 bars (mute). (S)

It is not possible to create a less inventive set-up. All seven sides have the same slow tempo, muted trumpet intro and five vocal choruses where trumpet obligato alternates with plain piano accompaniment. However, the recording is good, and the session offers ample opportunity to study HA's playing. On the given premises he must be considered quite successful, the records are in fact quite nice, in small doses!

THE MORTON SIX

NYC. Jan. 23, 1940

Personnel as Jan. 4 minus Britton.

Four titles were recorded for General:

2621	Why?	In ens. Solo with ens 16 bars. Obligato parts. (SM)
2622	Get The Bucket	Soli 16 and 16 bars. (M)
2623	If You Knew	In ens. Obligato with ens. Solo with ens 14 bars. (M)
2624	Shake It	In ens. In ens (mute). Solo with ens 16 bars. (M)

Excepting some quite interesting and swingy soloing on "... Bucket", there is little of interest for a HA fan. Mostly you will hear ensemble playing and that not particularly interesting either.

THE MORTON SEVEN

NYC. Jan. 30, 1940

Personnel as Jan. 23 plus Claude Jones (tb).

Four titles were recorded for General:

2632	Dirty, Dirty, Dirty	Breaks. In ens 12 bars. (M)
2633	Swinging The Elks	In ens 40 bars. Solo 32 bars (mute). In ens 32 bars. (FM)
2634	Mama's Got A Baby	Solo with ens 32 bars. (M)
2635	My Home Is In A Southern Town	Solo 18 bars. In ens 10 bars. (M)

Apart from a fierce last ensemble on "... Elks", not much of interest is to be found. The solo in "My Home ..." is a good example of the weaknesses in Allen's playing at and around this time. He lacks the firm and directed phrasing which permeated all his earlier recordings. Now it is much looser and rhythmically less interesting. Morton's setup is not exactly inspiring and must take some of the blame, but the rest is due to HA alone.

FRANKIE "HALF PINT" JAXON **NYC. March 5, 1940**
Henry Allen (tp), Rupert Cole (cl), Lil Armstrong (p), Wellman Braud (b), Walter Martin (wbd).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|--|
| 67271-A | When They Play Them Blues | In ens 12 bars (mute). Obligato 12 bars (mute). Duet with (cl/vo) 16 bars (mute). (SM) |
| 67272-A | Somethin' Goin' on Wrong | Duet with (cl) 12 bars (mute). Solo 12 bars. Obligato with ens 12 bars (mute). (SM) |
| 67273-A | Wasn't It Nice? | Intro with (cl) 8 bars. Obligato 8 and 8 bars (mute). Solo 16+8 bars (mute), (cl) on bridge. Obligato with (cl) 16 bars. (M) |
| 67274-A | You Know Jam Don't Shake | Solo 24 bars (mute). (M) |

Quite informal music which is rather easily forgotten, but there are several passable soli to be heard. Personally I prefer the swinging "... Nice?", but the other three tracks are also worth hearing.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 22, 1940**
Personnel including Shelton Hemphill, Henry Allen, Louis Armstrong (tp).
Broadcast from the Cotton Club, one item has HA:

Keep The Rhythm Going Solo 16 bars. (M)

By courtesy of Franz Hoffmann, this item has become available, and it is quite evident that the second trumpet solo on "Keep ..." is played by HA. It is not particularly remarkable, but it seems to be the only one existing with the late Louis Armstrong orchestra, therefore interesting. Postscript of Dec. 3, 2018: No it isn't!!

FRANKIE "HALF PINT" JAXON **NYC. April 17, 1940**
Personnel possibly as March 5.
Six titles were recorded for Decca:

- | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|---|
| 67565-A | Let Me Ride Your Train | Solo 16 bars (mute). Weak obligato parts (mute). (M) |
| 67566-A | Be Your Natural Self | Intro with ens. Weak obligato. Solo 16 bars. (M) |
| 67567-A | Turn Over | Intro with ens. Weak obligato parts. Solo 16 bars (mute). (M) |
| 67568-A | Take Off Them Hips | Intro with ens. Weak obligato parts. Solo 12 bars. (SM) |
| 67569-A | Gimme A Pig's Foot And ABOB | Intro with ens. Weak obligato parts. (SM) |
| 67570-A | You Can't Tell | Intro with ens. Weak obligato parts. (M) |

The most successful tracks here are "Be Your ..." and "Turn Over", which both have some fine soloing. "Let Me ..." and "... Hips" also contain some parts worthy of note, while "Gimme ..." and "You Can't ..." are practically devoid of interest to the HA collector.

LEE BROWN **NYC. April 17, 1940**
Henry Allen (tp), Rupert Cole (cl), Lee Brown (p, vo), Wellman Braud (b), Walter Martin (wbd).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

- | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|
| 67571-A | My Little Girl | Intro with (cl) 4 bars. Obligato 12, 12 and 12 bars, first and last with (cl). (SM) |
| 67572 | Lucille Blues | Obligato 12, 12 and 12 bars, (mute), last with (cl). (S) |

- 67573 Mississippi Water Blues Intro 4 bars (mute). Obligato
12 and 12 bars (mute). (S)
- 67574-A Little Leg Woman Obligato 12 and 12 bars (mute). (S)

This is a big surprise session and much more interesting and colourful than the previous blues sessions! Playing open horn on "... Girl" and muted on the remaining three items, HA is in excellent shape here with a lot of fine details overall.

RED ALLEN /

ZUTTY SINGLETON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. May 28, 1940

Henry Allen (tp), Benny Morton (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), Lil Armstrong (p), Bernard Addison (g), Pops Foster (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Decca:

- 67839-A Down In Jungle Town In ens 40 bars.
Solo with ens 64 bars. (F)
- 67840-A Canal Street Blues In ens 24 and 12 bars. (SM)
- 67841-A King Porter Stomp Solo with ens 16 bars.
Solo 16 bars. In ens 32 bars. (F)
- 67842-A Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble In ens 16 bars to solo 16 bars.
Solo 16 bars. In ens 16 bars. (M)

This is a really fine session with a mixture of the typical 1940 revival style and the older swing tradition. The importance does not lie in HA's soloing, but in his contribution to the overall atmosphere which is happy and gay. His forceful attack on the faster tunes is particularly successful, and also the last solo on "Shim-Me ..." is well constructed, while the slower tempo reveals weaknesses in his once so perfect technique.

JOHNNIE TEMPLE

NYC. Sept. 23, 1940

Henry Allen (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Lil Armstrong p), unknown (dm), Johnnie Temple (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Decca:

- 68136-A Baby, Don't You Love Me No More? Intro 4 bars (mute).
Obligato 12 and
12 bars (mute). (S)
- 68137-A My Pony Obligato 12, 12 and 12 bars (mute). (S)
- 68138-A Jive Me, Baby Intro 4 bars. Obligato
12 and 12 bars. (S)
- 68139-A Corinne Corinna Obligato 12, 12 and 12 bars. (S)
- 68140-A Bow Leg Woman Intro with ens 4 bars.
Obligato 12 bars.
Obligato 12 and 12 bars (mute). (S)
- 68141-A Fix It Up And Go As below. (M)
- 68141-B Fix It Up And Go Obligato 12 and 12 bars. (M)

You have to be very, very fond of blues singing to enjoy this session. HA really does his best but cannot improve it: The result is dull. One tune after the other in the same slow tempo; you hear one – you have heard them all. The musical director has tried to create some excitement by changing the obligato player for every chorus, but this is far from enough. To make this session interesting is an impossible task.

IDA COX & HER ALL-STAR ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 20, 1940

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), Cliff Jackson (p), Billy Taylor (b), Jimmy Hoskins (dm), Ida Cox (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh:

- 29277-1 Last Mile Blues Obligato 8 bars. (SM)
- 29277-2 Last Mile Blues As above. (SM)
- 29278-1 I Ain't Gonna Let NBM Heart Obligato with (cl) 16 (mute).
Solo 8 bars (mute). Obligato
with (cl) 16 bars (mute). (M)
- 29279-1 I Can't Quit That Man Obligato parts (mute). (SM)
- 29279-2 I Can't Quit That Man Solo 12 bars (open). (SM)

29279-3	I Can't Quit That Man	Solo 12 bars (mute). (SM)
29280-1	You Got To Swing And Sway	In ens 16+8 bars (mute), (tb) on bridge. Obbligato parts (mute). (M)
29280-2	You Got To Swing And Sway	Solo with ens 32 bars (mute). Obbligato parts (mute). (FM)

In spite of a rather lame atmosphere this session seems much more genuine than the previous one. Everybody seems to thrive and play nicely, but the music is not very exciting. Best is the chorus on "Last Mile Blues" (which is no blues), a real superb contribution reminding of the old days when blues accompaniments really were something. Also the solo on "... Man" is interesting, showing how fond HA was of the lower register of the trumpet, this trait was enforced by the years.

HENRY RED ALLEN BAND **NYC. Dec. 29, 1940**

Personnel including Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), Ken Kersey (p).

WNEW "Bundles for Britain" program, one title:

K. K. Boogy	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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A good solo without being particularly impressive.

SIDNEY BECHET & HIS NEW ORLEANS FEETWARMERS **NYC. Jan. 8, 1941**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Sidney Bechet (cl, sop), James Tolliver (p), Wellman Braud (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

58776-1	Coal Black Shine	In ens. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
58777-1	Egyptian Fantasy	In ens. (SM)
58778-1	Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?	Intro with ens 6 bars. Solo 36 bars. In ens. (FM)
58779-1	Slippin' And Slidin'	Soli 8, 36, 8 and 18 bars. (FM)

This is one of the sessions which I feel quite incompetent to evaluate. My interest in HA's music stems from the swing era, from Vocalion recordings, from MBRB, from Luis Russell. This music here stresses the importance of co-playing and not of soloing. While I therefore do not find what I am looking for, I must admit that the music is unusually charming and melodic. I don't think HA's soh here are particularly outstanding, but I have the feeling that many listeners/readers couldn't care less.

HENRY RED ALLEN SEXTET **NYC. Feb. 24, 1941**

Personnel including Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), Ken Kersey (p).

Broadcast "Chamber of Lower Basin Street", two titles:

K. K. Boogie	Solo 24 bars. Solo with ens 24 bars. (F)
A Sheridan Square	Solo 12 bars. (FM)

Fine trumpet soli here, particularly "... Square" is successful.

RED ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. April 17, 1941**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), Ken Kersey (p), Billy Taylor (b), Jimmy Hoskins (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, no HA on 30272 "Sometimes I'm Happy Pt 2" and 30273-BDs but:

30270-01	K. K. Boogie (NC)	Solo 24 bars. (F)
30270-1	K. K. Boogie	Solo 24 bars. In ens. (F)
30270-2	K. K. Boogie	As above. (F)
30271-BD	Sometimes I'm Happy Pt 1 (NC)	Solo 6 bars (NC). (SM)
30271-1	Sometimes I'm Happy Pt 1	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
30271-2	Sometimes I'm Happy Pt 1	As above. (SM)
30273-1	Ol' Man River	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
30273-BD	Ol' Man River (NC)	Vocal 12 bars (NC). (FM)
30273-2	Ol' Man River	As take 1 above. (FM)

30273-? Ol' Man River As above. (FM)

Alas, times are a-changing! Of course it is unfair to compare this music to HA's first recordings under his own name. However, if one does, one is bound to be sad. "K. K. Boogie" is a disaster, being completely without any charm or melody. "Sometimes ..." is not that bad, but it is so unswinging that you could cry. The rhythm section must take a great part of the blame, but the leader certainly does not inspire his men much! Only Kersey manages to create some feeling. In "... River" HA is heard singing after several years of silence, but even this is not quite successful. Postscript: We were quite harsh that time back, maybe too harsh, the session is not without qualities, but I still have the opinion that HA was into a serious crisis at this point of his career, not only compared to the past but also to the many fine sessions of the fifties.

JAM SESSION **NYC. April 23, 1941**
Large personnel including possibly Henry Allen, Buck Clayton, Charlie Shavers, Bunny Berigan, H. Levine, Max Kaminsky (tp) and many others.
Two titles were recorded at Carnegie Hall, "One O'Clock Jump"(7:14) and "Blues" (5:15), but no HA on these.

HENRY RED ALLEN SEXTET **same date**
Personnel as Feb. 24.
Three titles, only one seems to have survived (very scratchy acetate):

Diga Diga Doo Solo with ens 16 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Strong and inspired trumpet playing here, but the sound is lousy.

ARTIE SHAW & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 26, 1941**
Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Artie Shaw (cl, ldr), Benny Carter (as), 12 unknown (strings), Laura Newell (harp), Sonny White (p), Jimmy Shirley (g), Billy Taylor (b), Shep Shepherd (dm), Lena Horne (vo-66147,49).
Four titles were recorded for Victor, three issued, no HA on 66147-1 "Love Me A Little, Little" but:

66146-1 Confessin' Solo 8 bars (mute). (SM)
66149-1 Don't Take Your Love From Me Solo 8 bars (mute). (SM)

"Confessin'" is a nice record with a good though slightly overplayed muted solo. "Don't Take ...", in comparison, is very modest and seems not inspired.

RED ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 22, 1941**
Personnel as April 17.
Four titles were recorded for Okeh:

30894-01 A Sheridan "Square" Solo 12 bars. (SM)
30894-02 A Sheridan "Square" (NC) Solo 4 bars (NC). (SM)
30894-1 A Sheridan "Square" Solo 12 bars. (SM)
30894-2 A Sheridan "Square" As above. (SM)
30894-3 A Sheridan "Square" As above. (SM)
30895-01 Siesta At The Fiesta (NC) As below. (M)
30895-1 Siesta At The Fiesta Solo 8 bars. (M)
30896-1 Indiana In ens 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (F)
30896-2 Indiana As above. (F)
30897-1 Jack The Bellboy Solo 32 bars. (F)
30897-2 Jack The Bellboy As above. (F)

This constitutes the end of HA's prewar period. I am very happy that this great trumpeter did not sink even deeper than on this day. His soloing is inferior, the arrangements are dull and corny, and the atmosphere is uninspired. Ken Kersey's piano again brings a shimmer of light to the pervading darkness. I love Henry Allen's music, but this is not good. Postscript: This is still not good, but the presence of alternate takes at least makes it more interesting.

The comments to the last sessions have been rather negative, much as I would have preferred it otherwise. The reader may get the impression that the jazz world had heard HA with pleasure for the last time around 1940. This would be wrong.

HENRY RED ALLEN**LA. March 1943**

Henry Allen (p, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Don Stovall (as), "General" Morgan (p), Benny Moten (b), Paul Barbarin (dm), Billie Holiday (vo—"... Light").

AFRS Jubilee No. 17, three titles, no HA on "Trav'lin' Light" and "Riffin'" but:

Intro	Solo 4 bars. (F)
Ride, Red, Ride	Solo 32 bars. (F)

Terribly corny piece and too fast for anything of artistic value. Postscript of May 2019: Note a brief introduction!

HENRY RED ALLEN**LA. March 1943**

Same, except Barney Bigard (cl-item 3,6) added, Jewel Paige (vo-item 3) replaces Billie Holiday.

AFRS Jubilee No. 22, six titles:

Theme	Solo 4 bars. (FM)
Harlem Stomp	Solo 16 bars. (F)
I Can't Believe That You're ILWM	Break. (FM)
I've Got The World On A String	Solo 16+8 bars, duet with (tb) on bridge. Solo 4 bars to ens. (S)
Don't Get Around Much Anymore	No (tp). (S)
Rug Cutter's Swing	Straight. Solo 32 bars to 16 bars with ens and rideout. (F)
'Goodbye'	Break!

One is not impressed by the musical concepts chosen by HA and his men these days (listen to what mockup they do to the old respectable "Rug Cutter"!), but concentrating upon the trumpet playing alone, there is no doubt that it still can be very good. Only the slow titles are reasonably decent, and since "... Anymore" is a feature number for altosax, we are left with a nice "... On A String". Apart from this, the solo on "Harlem ..." is worth noticing.

HENRY RED ALLEN**Chi. May 5, 1944**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Don Stovall (as), Al Williams (p), Benny Moten (b), Alvin Burroughs (dm).

Five titles were recorded for World Transcriptions (25187 "Just A Feeling" and 25189 "Dear Old Southland" are without HA present), no HA on 25190 "Red Jump" but:

25185	The Theme	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (M)
25186	Ride, Red, Ride	Solo 32 bars. (F)
25188	Dark Eyes	Long duet with (p). (S). Vocal. Solo 16 bars. (M). Solo 48 bars. (F) to coda. (S)
25191	Get The Mop	Vocal. (M)

This is so corny, that it is difficult to understand how it came about, and how could there be an audience for it? "Ride ..." is an excellent example of decay, and "The Theme" is a more civilized tempo has some fluffs and is not impressing. But when one gives up all hope, then comes an interesting item, "Dark Eyes"! Not that this has much taste either, just listen to the vocal, but if you take the trumpet part out of context, HA still knows how to blow his horn!

HENRY RED ALLEN**Chi. Aug. 1, 1944**

Personnel as above.

Broadcast from the Downbeat Room of Garrick Stage Lounge, five titles:

Get The Mop	Solo 12 bars. (FM)
Pomona	Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (F)
On The Sunny Side Of TS (NC)	In ens. (M)
St. James Infirmary	Soli 8 and 8 bars to coda. (SM)
The Crawl (NC)	With ens. Solo 32 bars (NC). (M)

To put it right, it is the choice of musical concepts which seems to be out of any taste around the middle-40s. Why bebop-simulated riffs or mops or unmotivated

laughs should be so funny eludes me. The group's tunes are either the most corny it could find, or good tunes are made corny. When this is said, and you listen closely, the guys can still play. Note the fast "Pomona" as the best example, strong trumpet here! Also this version of "The Crawl" has definite benefits.

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. Jan. 14, 1946**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Don Stovall (as), Bill Thompson (p), Benny Moten (b), Alvin Burroughs (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

1560-1	The Crawl	Intro 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
1561-1	Buzz Me	Vocal. Duet with (tb) 12 bars. (SM)
1562-1	Drink Hearty	Vocal. (SM)
1563-1	Get The Mop	Vocal. Solo 24 bars. (F)

Why all titles should start with somebody (HA?) saying 'ouaf, ouaf' (or something similar), is not quite clear, but it tells something about the artistic ambitions. These titles are obviously very popular at the time, used for broadcasts and soundies, but today they are quite undated. When listening however closely to what HA actually does, and it is fair to do that, "The Crawl" has some quite good trumpet playing, the rest has slight value. Think back and remember that Red and Higgy 17 years earlier made some of the best jazz recordings ever of the vintage jazz era ...

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. Jan. 28, 1946**

Personnel as above.

Soundies:

17M2	Drink Hearty	Vocal. (SM)
18M4	Mop (Get The Mop)	Vocal. Solo 24 bars. (F)
19M2	Crawl, Red, Crawl	Intro 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
20M3	Count Me Out	Solo 32 bars. (F)
21M5	House Of 52 nd Street	Intro 4 bars. In ens. Solo 16 bars to long coda. (FM)

These film have 'arrangements' close to the studio recording versions. Again "The Crawl" is the better item, otherwise there is not much to say.

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. July 16, 1946**

Personnel as above except Eddie "The Mole" Bourne replaces Burroughs.

Four titles were recorded for Victor:

2262-1	Count Me Out	Solo 32 bars. (F)
2500-1	Check Up	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
2501-1	If It's Love You Want	Solo 16 bars. Vocal. (SM)
2502-1	Let Me Miss You	Solo 12 bars. Vocal. (SM)

The smell of corn is still quite notable, but at least, this session is much better than the previous Victor one. The 'ouaf ouaf' trademark is still present, but when HA sings the two slow medium titles, the memories of the Vocalions come back, and his low-register trumpet soli on "... You Want" and particularly "... Miss You" are remarkable, giving us much hope for the future.

WNEW SATURDAY NIGHT SWING SESSION **NYC. March 8, 1947**

Henry Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Roy Ross (accordion), unknown (b), (dm), Art Ford (narr), special guest Earl Hines (p-"Indiana").

Several titles, three seem to have HA:

Dark Eyes	Solo 3 ½ choruses of 32 bars. (M)
Sweet Lorraine	Solo 64 bars. (S)
Indiana	With ens 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. With ens 32 bars. (FM)

This swing session has the very best Henry "Red" Allen of the 40s! "... Eyes" and "... Lorraine" are plain solo features for trumpet (only with some unusual accordion backing), while "Indiana" is a jam. It is obvious that he is in full control, and that he is developing elements of a modernized style. It is also

obvious that he has preserved his capabilities through a difficult period while trying to live by clowning more than doing what he can best, play his trumpet!!

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. probably early Aug. 1947**

Personnel as above in 1946.

Five titles were recorded for Apollo:

R1292	Mr. Wamp Walks	Solo 24 bars (mute). (M)
R1293	Old Folks, Do You Know Me Now?	Vocal. (M)
R1294	Bill's Downbeat	Solo 16 bars (open). (FM)
R1295	My Alcoholic Baby	Vocal. (M)
R1296	A Shanty In Old Shanty Town	Vocal. (M)

Nice to hear some good mute again on "... Walks", and his open solo on "Bill's ...". is also of good quality. Otherwise HA's capabilities are not used much, but maybe we should enjoy is nice vocal on "... Town".

EDDIE CONDON FLOOR SHOW **NYC. Nov. 16, 1948**

Collective personnel: Henry Allen, Wild Bill Davison (tp, vo), Brad Gowans (tb), Pee Wee Russell (cl), Sidney Bechet (sop), Dick Cary, Mary Lou Williams (p), Eddie Condon (g, vo), Jack Lesberg (b), George Wettling (dm), Johnny Mercer (vo), Teddy Hale (tapdancing), Lord Buckley (narr).

WPIX-TV telecast, two have (audible) HA:

I Told Ya, I Love Ya	Solo/straight 56 bars. Vocal. Solo 16 bars. Vocal. (F)
Blues	In ens. (S)

"I Told ..." is a feature number for HA with the rest of the group has plain background. Good trumpet playing without much improvisation. The tune is AABA with 16 bars A's.

WPIX-TV STAGE SHOW **NYC. Jan. 10, 1949**

Henry Allen (tp, vo), Vernon Brown (tb), Gene Sedic (cl), Ralph Sutton (p), Bob Haggart (b), Arthur Trappier (dm).

WPIX-TV Stage show, one title has HA:

Baby, Baby (NC)	Solo 24 bars (NC) to vocal to solo 12 bars to coda. (SM)
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This is a very fine way to end a decade, giving also great hopes for the future! The opening is incomplete, and there may be a chorus missing, but anyway, this blues has trumpet playing of high quality, very personal and highly inspired. May we hope that all the wasted 'experiments' of the forties have disappeared by now? Wait and see!

Late history:

Long stint at the Garrick Lounge, Chicago (autumn 1943 to summer 1945), in San Francisco (August 1945), Onyx, New York (November 1945 to February 1946). For the next six years the sextet worked mainly in Chicago and Boston, occasional residencies in California and New York. Red played regularly at the Central Plaza, New York in 1952 and 1953, appeared occasionally at The Metropole during 1953, then from spring 1954 until May 1965 was regularly featured at The Metropole, also toured with own band - including trip to Bermuda - and toured as a soloist. First visit to Europe in autumn 1959 as a member of Kid Ory's Band, led own sextet/quartet at The Metropole, The Embers, etc., toured Britain as a soloist in 1963, 1964, and 1966. Worked at the Blue Spruce Inn, Long Island (June 1965), L'Intrigue Club, New York (late 1965), Ryan's, New York (1966), etc.; was featured at several U. S. Jazz Festivals in the late 1950s and 1960s. Was taken seriously ill in late 1966, shortly after undergoing an operation Red made his final tour of Britain (February-March 1967). He returned to New York City, and died of cancer six weeks later.

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. Feb. 17, 1951**

Henry Allen (tp, vo-"St. Louis ...", "When ..."), Johnny Windhurst (tp-"When ..."), Sandy Williams (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Omer Simeon (cl-"When ..."), Bob Kuh (ts-"When ..."), Joe Sullivan (p), Arthur Herbert (dm).

WNYC broadcast from Stuyvesant Casino, three titles:

Royal Garden Blues	In ens. Solo 24 bars. (FM)
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St. Louis Blues Prominent in ens. (FM)

When The Saints Go Marchin' In Intro with (dm). In ens. (FM)

Hot session, mostly collective playing, but HA shows he still is great, note his solo on "Royal Garden ..."!

GEORGE LEWIS & HIS NEW ORLEANS ALL STARS NO. Aug. 6, 1951
Henry Allen (tp, vo-"... Infirmary"), Jim Robinson (tb), George Lewis (cl), Lester Santiago (p), Lawrence Marrero (bjo), Alcide "Slow Drag" Pavageau (b), Paul Barbarin (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Riverside:

41 At The Darktown Strutters Ball In ens. (FM)

42 Hindustan In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)

43A St. James Infirmary In ens. (S)

43C St. James Infirmary In ens. (S)

44 Some Of These Days In ens. (FM)

Collective oriented session with less than perfect sound. HA is almost fully in the background, so you have to concentrate to get the details. His only definite solo is on "Hindustan", excellent! However, "... Days" and the closing of "... Infirmary" have also audible trumpet.

BILL GREEN North Brunswick, NJ. Dec. 7, 1951

Henry Allen (tp, vo-"... Sister Kate"), Ben Long (tb), Tony Parenti (cl), Howie Anderson (p), Bill Green (b), Ernie Sturgeon (dm).

Two titles were recorded live at Rustic Lodge:

Squeeze Me Solo with ens 12 bars. Solo 16 bars.
Solo with ens 12 bars. Coda. (SM)

I Wish I Could Shimmy Like MSK With ens 18 bars. Solo 18 bars.
With ens 18 bars. (M)

Good sound on these, and HA plays nicely, particularly "Squeeze ..." is very noteworthy.

HENRY RED ALLEN NYC. Feb. 24, 1952

Henry Allen (tp, vo-"... Infirmary", "Ride ..."), "Big Chief" Russell Moore (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Willie "The Lion" Smith (p), Arthur Trappier (dm).

WMGM broadcast from Central Plaza, six titles:

1:30 Theme / WDYINO In ens. (M)

5:48 Struttin' With Some Barbecue In ens. Solo 64 bars. (FM)

4:02 St. James Infirmary Soli with ens 16 and 16 bars. (SM)

6:09 Snag It Soli with ens 24 and 12 bars. (SM)

3:33 Basin Street Blues In ens. Obbligato parts. (SM)

6:12 Ride! Red! Ride! In ens. Solo with (dm) 64 bars. (F)

The programs from Central Plaza are quite noisy, no doubt about that, and listeners growing up with the elegance of Victor's recordings of 1929 may not be very enthusiastic about the current concepts. However, as it struck me; HA plays with great power and inspiration here, take "... Barbecue" as a good example. However, a tune like "Ride! ..." shows the worst of this trend.

LEE WILEY North Brunswick, NJ. Feb. 27, 1952

Henry Allen (tp), Jack Honeywell (cnt), Ben Long (tb), Dom Anghelone (cl), Howie Anderson (p), Bill Green (b), Ernie Sturgeon (dm), Lee Wiley (vo).

Three titles were recorded at Rustic Lodge:

2:54 How Deep Is The Ocean? Obbligato parts. (S)

3:43 Anytime, Anyday, Anywhere Obbligato parts. Solo 16 bars. (SM)

3:55 'Deed I Do Obbligato parts. Solo 32 bars. In ens. (FM)

This is primarily a vocal presentation, but a stompy rhythm section kicks HA into orbit on "... I Do". He is not quite successful on "... Anywhere" though. He plays nice background on all three items but not very well recorded.

HENRY RED ALLEN NYC. March 9, 1952

Henry Allen (tp, vo-“Baby ...”, “... The Saints ...”), “Big Chief” Russell Moore (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Willie “The Lion” Smith (p), Eddie Phyfe (dm).
WMGM broadcast from Central Plaza, six titles:

0:41	Theme	In ens. (F)
5:00	Fidgety Feet	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (F)
3:54	Baby Won’t You Please Come Home	In ens. Solo 18 bars. (SM)
5:51	Beale Street Blues	In ens. Solo 36 bars. (M)
10:23	When The Saints Go Marchin’ In	Long intro with (dm). Soli 40 and 32 bars. In ens. (F)
0:50	Theme	In ens. (FM)

Great trumpet playing amidst all this chaos!!! On all these items HA plays just the way we enjoy, firm to the point with inventive details. Whether you go for the swinging “... Parade” or the strong “Beale ...”, be charmed and pleased, this is much better than you might think!

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. March 23, 1952**
Henry Allen (tp, vo-“... Sweet”, “... Of Me”), “Big Chief” Russell Moore (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Willie “The Lion” Smith (p), Eddie Phyfe (dm).
WMGM broadcast from Central Plaza, five titles:

3:39	Ballin’ The Jack	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
5:42	Squeeze Me	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (SM)
4:50	Ain’t She Sweet	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (F)
5:20	Snag It	In ens. Solo 8 bars. (SM)
5:09	All Of Me	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Too much drums disturbs some of the pleasure, otherwise this is a very good program where HA plays strongly and full of enthusiasm on all titles. My favourite item is “... Me”.

JERRY JEROME’S
ALL STAR JAZZ CONCERT **Brooklyn, NY. March 24, 1952**
Henry Allen (tp, vo- “... Infirmary”), “Big Chief” Russell Moore (tb), Jerry Jerome (cl, ts), Dick Cary (p), Eddie Safranski (b), Don Lamond (dm). Added on “Sweet Georgia Brown”: Billy Butterfield (tp), Buddy DeFranco (cl), Teddy Wilson (p), Eddie Safranski (b), Don Lamond (dm), Leonard Feather (mc)..
Voice of America Transcription No. 38 from Loew’s King Theatre, three titles:

4:36	Fidgety Feet	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (F)
2:26	St. James Infirmary	Soli 16 and 8 bars to long coda. (SM)
8:42	Sweet Georgia Brown	In ens. (F)

An inspired HA goes all up om “... Feet” and takes a nice presentation of the old “... Infirmary”.

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. March 30, 1952**
Henry Allen (tp, vo-“... Soul”, “... Nobody”, “... Bounce”), Munn Ware (tb), Sol Yaged (cl), Willie “The Lion” Smith (p), Arthur Trappier (dm).
WMGM broadcast from Central Plaza, five titles:

1:14	Theme	In ens. (FM)
5:32	Love Is Just Around The Corner	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (FM)
3:40	Body And Soul	Solo 32 bars. Coda. (SM)
5:59	I Ain’t Got Nobody	In ens. Solo with (dm) 32 bars. (FM)
3:55	Central Plaza Bounce	In ens. Solo with (dm) 36 bars. (FM)

The Central Plaza success continues, the programmes are not very different from each other; conventional, noisy but inspired soloing by everybody, too much drums backbgound, and HA always producing nice soli. Very interesting to hear “Body ...” again and compare it with his versions fifteen years earlier; he certainly has not lost any of his greatness! But he can also be vulgar as in “Central ...”, both his vocal and his coplaying with drums are not good choices.

HENRY RED ALLEN **NYC. April 6, 1952**

Henry Allen (tp, vo-“... Kate”, “St. Louis ...”, “... The Saints ...”), Tyree Glenn (tb), Buster Bailey (cl, vo), Willie “The Lion” Smith (p), Eddie Phyfe (dm).
WMGM broadcast from Central Plaza, six titles:

2:17	That’s A Plenty	In ens. (F)
3:28	I Wish I Could Shimmy LMSK	In ens. (M)
6:36	St. Louis Blues	In ens. Solo with ens 24 bars. (FM)
6:31	Beale Street Blues	In ens. Soli ca. 10 and 24 bars. (M)
4:46	When The Saints Go Marchin’ In	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (F)
1:39	Theme	In ens. Solo behind (mc). (F)

Better programs earlier but good trumpet particularly on “... The Saints ...”. Note that “Beale ...” is a splice, a first HA solo is cut short, the second one is fine though.

HENRY RED ALLEN & CONRAD JANIS & HIS TAILGATE JAZZBAND NYC. April 13, 1952
Henry Allen (tp, vo-“Eh ...”, “... The Saints ...”), Conrad Janis (tb, vo), Bob Lovett (cl), Elmer Schoebel (p), Bill Stafford (dm).
WMGM broadcast from Central Plaza, seven titles:

1:01	Theme	In ens. (FM)
4:23	Clarinet Marmalade	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (F)
3:57	Sweet Sue, Just You	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
3:08	Eh La Bas	In ens. (M)
4:32	Snag It	In ens. Solo 8 bars. (SM)
5:58	When The Saints Go Marchin’ In	In ens. Soli 32 and 16 bars. (F)
1:44	Theme	In ens. (FM)

The end of Central Plaza, good music in good sound, but there are better programs earlier.

LEE WILEY North Brunswick, NJ. July 5, 1952
Henry Allen (tp), Jack Honeywill (cnt), Ben Long (tb), Jerry Winner (cl), Howie Anderson (p), Bill Holiday (b), Ernie Sturgeon (dm), Lee Wiley (vo).
Three titles were recorded at Rustic Lodge:

4:22	I’m Coming Virginia	In ens. (S)
3:50	Down To Steamboat Tennessee	Obbligato parts. (S)
1:50	Baby Won’t You Please Come Home	In ens. (S)

Of no interest to HRA fans except maybe a few bars on “... Tennessee”.

GEORGE WILLIAMS NYC. June 29, 1954
Bigband personnel including Chris Griffin, Ernie Royal, Taft Jordan, Dale McMickle, Henry “Red” Allen (tp).
Four titles were recorded for Coral, but the few muted, brief trumpet fills do not seem to be by HA. Postscript of Feb. 26, 2019:

86482	Block Buster	Solo with orch 8 bars (mute). (FM)
86483	You Can’t Stop Lovin’	Break. (M)

Information from Cozy Cole via Franz Hoffmann indicates that in fact HA is playing these trumpet soli, but they are written out, not improvised.

TOMMY DORSEY WITH GUESTS
HENRY “RED” ALLEN & HIS ALL STARS NYC. Aug. 7, 1954
Henry “Red” Allen (tp, vo), Herb Fleming (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Claude Hopkins (p), Lloyd Trotman (b), Cozy Cole (dm) and members of the Tommy Dorsey orchestra.
CBS TV-program “Stage Show”:

6:44	When The Saints Go Marchin’ In	Duet with (dm) 36 bars. Vocal. Solo 4 bars. (FM)
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Fine trumpet on this program, assisted by a dynamic Cozy Cole!

JAZZ AT THE METROPOLE**NYC. May 1955**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo), Charlie Shavers (tp), Herb Flemming (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), unknown (as-"When The Saints ..."), Claude Hopkins (b), Benny Moten (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Four titles were recorded at the Metropole:

1:56	Buddy Bolden Blues	Solo with announcer 16 bars. (S)
5:45	Kiss The Baby	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
14:18	When The Saints Go Marchin' In	Solo 6 choruses of 16 bars. (F)
2:57	Trumpet Conversation	Duet with (tp-CS). (FM)

Sometimes it is difficult to understand how such a magnificent musician like HA could stand the noisy and often chaotic surroundings he happened to be in, but he seems to enjoy it, because every time he puts his horn to his mouth, he is on fire and full of inspiration, if not always taste. This version of "When The Saints ..." is a good example!

TONY PARENTI's ALL STARS**NYC. Aug. 29, 1955**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), Tyree Glenn (tb), Tony Parenti (cl), Hank Duncan (p), Milt Hinton (b), George Wettling (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Concert Hall / Jazz Tone (more without HA):

4:19	Bill Bailey, Won't You Please CH	Solo 32 bars. In ens. (FM)
6:07	Maryland, My Maryland	In ens. Solo 64 bars. In ens. (FM)
7:25	In The Good Old Summertime	In ens. Solo 64 bars. In ens. (FM)
4:05	Frankie And Johnny	Solo with ens 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. (S)
4:32	I've Been Working On The Railroad	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
3:36	The Blues	Solo 12 bars. (S)
5:37	Careless Love Blues	Solo with ens 16 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)

At last we can hear HA in a decent, civilized and great recording session!! What a pleasure to hear the 'modern' HA with good sound!! Now we can hear his playing with all its details, and the total impression is that he still is one of the greatest trumpeters of vintage jazz. He certainly has changed his style profoundly since the good old twenties and thirties, but he has done it while keeping within the tradjazz concept instead of joining the beboppers. There are four brilliant fast medium titles here, all full of fire and inspired creativity. The longer soli the better and the most brilliant seems to be "... Maryland", here and on "... Summertime" he really takes it all out, and some details are really challenging. On the other side we have the slow "... Johnny" and "The Blues" (do I hear a small fluff on bar 3 on this one?), showing how much love he has for the deepest register of the trumpet these days. Finally the session highlight, maybe, "Careless Love ...", swinging lightly, dig this solo and play the opening bars many times! To sum up; one of HA's best postwar sessions!!

HENRY "RED" ALLEN**NYC. Sept. 25, 1956**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), Herb Fleming (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Claude Hopkins (p), "Fats" Morell (poss. Pseudonym for Benny Moten) (b), Eddy Bourne (dm).

TV-program "Tonight Show", NBC studios, three titles:

1:55	Pretty Baby	Solo/breaks/ens. (M)
1:43	Squeeze Me	Solo/breaks/ens. (M)
0:48	High Society	In ens. (F)

Noisy, brief, bad sound, of very slight value.

HENRY "RED" ALLEN's ALL STARS**NYC. March 21, 1957**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo-2699, 2700), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Marty Napoleon (p), Everett Barksdale (g), Lloyd Trotman (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Three titles were recorded for RCA-Victor:

2698-1	Love Is Just Around The Corner	In ens 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. In ens 32 bars. (FM)
2699	Let Me Miss You	Solo 24 bars. In ens 12 bars. (SM)
2700	Ride, Red, Ride	Solo 64 bars. In ens. (F)

NYC. March 27, 1957

Same. Henry Allen (vo-2817). Four titles:

2815	'S Wonderful	In ens 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. In ens 32, 16, 8 bars and coda. (FM)
2816	I Cover The Waterfront	Soli 32 and 64 bars. In ens 8 bars to coda. (S)
2817	St. James Infirmary	Soli with ens 16 and 8 bars to long coda. (SM)
2818	Algiers Bounce	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. In ens (mute). (M)

NYC. April 10, 1957

Same. Henry Allen (vo-3384). Four titles:

3382	Love Me Or Leave Me	Solo with ens 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (M)
3383	I've Got The World On A String	Solo 32 bars, with (ts) on bridge. Soli 32 and 8 bars to ens. (SM)
3384	Ain't She Sweet	Solo with ens 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
3385-1	Sweet Lorraine	Soli 32 and 32 bars. Solo with (ts)/(p) 16 bars to coda. (SM)

Note: Franz Hoffman presents alternate take 2 of "Love Is Just Around The Corner" and "Sweet Lorraine" but they are both identical to take 1.

The first of several get-together-celebrations Allen/Hawkins. Quoting myself from the CH-solography: "Nice but of varying quality; dixieland concepts often seem to overrule real swing music". Now, from a HA-point-of-view, that is obviously what he wants it to be, and fair enough. The session is full of good music, and HA, and Hawk, seem to have a good time. Particularly the slow tempi make impression, and the trumpet soli on "... Waterfront" and "... Lorraine" are highly exciting.

HENRY ALLEN**NYC. May 8, 1957**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), Tyree Glenn (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Boomie Richman (ts), Willie "The Lion" Smith (p), Arvell Shaw (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Roulette, issued as "Dixiecats":

3:50	That's A Plenty	In ens. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
5:32	Tin Roof Blues	In ens. Solo 12 bars. (S)
3:32	Royal Garden Blues	In ens. Solo 48 bars. (FM)
2:49	Muskrat Ramble	In ens. Solo 16 bars. (FM)

NYC. May 15, 1957

Same except Milt Hinton (b) replaces Shaw.

Five titles:

2:20	Wolverine Blues	In ens. (FM)
4:16	Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	In ens. Solo 28 bars. (FM)
6:47	Basin Street Blues	Soli 16 and 16 bars. (S)
5:47	I've Found A New Baby	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (FM)
3:11	Beale Street Blues	In ens. Solo 12 bars. (M)

Clean, conventional and well organized dixieland jazz, recorded in studio rather than live, which at least pleases this listener. No surprises here, except the presence of a fine tenorsax which makes the ensemble sound different, but HA plays quite to satisfaction on all items, note a few minor fluffs though. The definite highlight is the three choruses of "... Baby"!

ALLEN / TEAGARDEN / ORY**Newport, Rh. I., July 4, 1957**

Collective personnel: Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo- "... Infirmary"), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Kid Ory (tb, vo- "... Ramble"), Jack Teagarden (tb, vo- "... Basin ..."), Buster Bailey (cl), Claude Hopkins (p), Arvell Shaw (b), Cozy Cole (dm).
Six titles were recorded live at Newport Jazz Festival:

8:13	Struttin' With Some Barbecue	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (FM)
5:10	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. In ens. (SM)
3:32	China Boy	In ens. (FM)
5:13	Basin Street Blues	Obbligato parts. Solo 16 bars. (SM)
4:16	Muskrat Ramble	In ens. Obbligato parts. (FM)
4:02	High Society	In ens. (FM)

Much more could have been made out of this great encounter between three of the most famous jazz trombonists with HA's group, but they rather take the attention away from the leader. A fine solo on "Basin Street ..." should be noted, but only one item shows him to his very best advantage; we get two magnificent trumpet choruses on "... Barbecue", worth the whole Newport Jazz Festival that year!

"THE SOUND OF JAZZ" NYC. Dec. 5, 1957

Rex Stewart (cnt), Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo-"Rosetta"), Vic Dickenson (tb), Pee Wee Russell (cl), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Nat Pierce (p), Danny Barker (g), Milt Hinton (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Two titles were recorded as rehearsal for TV-program Dec. 8:

59469	Wild Man Blues	Intro 4 bars to ens 4 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars. (SM)
	Wild Man Blues alt.	Intro 4 bars to ens 4 bars to solo 64 bars. Solo with ens 16 bars. (SM)
59470	Rosetta	Soli 32 and 32 bars. (FM)

NYC. Dec. 8, 1957

Same. TV-program, two titles:

Wild Man Blues	As above. (SM)
Rosetta	As above. (FM)

These are magnificent and represent some of the best mainstream from the late fifties as well as HA at his very best. His three versions of "Wild Man ..." are unforgettable, and note that the studio alternate (CD only) has double length. His old vehicle "Rosetta" is also performed with majestic greatness on both versions. Adding that all participants play on the top of their abilities, these sessions are something you must play and watch!!

HENRY ALLEN NYC. Dec. 14, 1957

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Claude Hopkins (p), Eugene Ramey (b), Eddie Bourne (dm).

Five titles were recorded at Cafe Metropole for AFRS "Bandstand U. S. A.":

2:33	Beale Street Blues	Solo 12 bars. (M)
4:55	Muskrat Ramble	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
4:24	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Solo 16 bars. In ens. (SM)
3:28	High Society	In ens. (F)
3:43	Marie	In ens. (M)

Not the best of sound on this program, and the music is quite conventional, but HA has some inspired contributions, particularly "... Ramble" is noteworthy.

HENRY ALLEN NYC. Dec. 16, 1957

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Sol Yaged (cl), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Lou Stein (p), Milt Hinton (b), Cozy Cole (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Reeves Soundcraft, issued as "Dixieland Jam Fest":

Battle Hymn Of The Republic	Intro with (dm). In ens. Solo 16 bars. (F)
Blues	Solo with ens 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. In ens. (S)
Won't You Please Come Home, Bill Bailey	In ens. Solo 32 bars. In ens. (F)

South	In ens. Solo 16 bars. Coda. (SM)
When The Saints Go Marching In	Intro with (dm) to ens. Solo 16 bars. In ens. (FM)
Frankie And Johnny	Solo with ens 12 bars. Solo 12 bars. In ens. (S)
Maryland, My Maryland	Intro with (dm). In ens. Solo 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. In ens. Coda with (dm). (F)

A pleasant session with good sound and ditto music, although one might wish for a more updated and inspiring (to me) choice of tunes. HA plays his music as well as always, but there are more challenging and inspiring sessions.

HENRY ALLEN **NYC. Dec. 28, 1957**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Claude Hopkins (org), Eugene Ramey (b), Eddie Bourne (dm).

Five titles were recorded at Cafe Metropole for AFRS "Bandstand U. S. A.":

5:32	Bugle Call Rag	In ens. Solo 48 bars. (FM)
4:34	Squeeze Me	Solo with ens 16 bars. Solo 32 bars. (SM)
4:10	Three Little Words	No solo. (F)
6:13	Indiana	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (F)
1:47	St. Louis Blues	Solo with ens 16 bars. Behind announcer. (SM)

NYC. Jan. 11, 1958

Same except Vic Dickenson (tb), Coleman Hawkins (ts) added.

Five titles:

4:01	I Would Do Anything For You	In ens. (M)
5:12	Basin Street Blues	In ens. Soli 16 and 16 bars. (S)
4:28	Ride, Red, Ride	Solo 64 bars. In ens. (F)
3:37	Song Of The Islands	No solo. (M)
3:27	Clarinet Marmalade	In ens. (F)

NYC. March 8, 1958

Same except Higginbotham and Hawkins omitted.

Four titles:

5:35	Indiana	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (F)
3:56	Yellow Dog Blues	In ens. Solo 8 bars. (SM)
5:12	Marie	In ens. (M)
0:49	Ride, Red, Ride (NC)	In ens. (F)

Back to live music and that famous Metropole Cafe (I could have been there in August 1958, but chose modern jazz instead ...). The music is noisy, sometimes vulgar, the sound is inferior, and the recording unbalanced with too much drums, so listening is not really a pleasure and mostly for HA hardliners. Note also the peculiar choice of equipping Hopkins with an organ instead of piano, creating an unusual ensemble sound. Nevertheless, after accepting the shortcomings and listening concentratedly to the trumpet (and only that), there is much of value. Two fast versions of "Indiana" are strong and different, and a slow "Basin Street ..." is very nice.

JERRY JEROME **NYC. ca. 1958**

Henry "Red" Allen (vo), Jerry Jerome (ts), unknown orchestra.

Three Ballantine Ale commercials, total 2:32, but no (tp) on these.

LANGSTON HUGHES WITH HENRY "RED" ALLEN'S GROUP **NYC. March 17, 1958**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Sam "The Man" Taylor (ts), Al Williams (p), Milt Hinton (b), Osie Johnson (dm), Langston Hughes (reading).

Four titles were recorded for Verve, issued as "The Weary Blues":

3:11	Opening Blues	Solo 12 bars (mute). (S) Obbligato parts (mute). Coda (open). (M)
6:54	Commercial Theatre	Soli 4 and 4 bars (mute).

		Obbligato parts (mute). (S)
7:40	Morning After	Obbligato 12 bars (open). (S) Obbligato 12 bars (open). (SM) Solo with ens 16 bars. (FM)
5:49	Testament	Obbligato parts (mute). (S) Obbligato parts (open). In ens. (M) Obbligato parts (mute). (S)

A very unusual session but with great qualities. The blend of reading and music works out very well, and there is plenty of room for soloing. HA's contributions are excellent everywhere, so don't bypass this session, although it is not conventional jazz.

ART FORD's JAZZ PARTY

NYC. June 19, 1958

Collective personnel: Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo-"St. ..."), unknown (tp- "Bill Bailey ..."), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), unknown (tb-"Bill Bailey ..."), Peanuts Hucko (cl), Georgie Auld (ts), Harry Sheppard (vib), Marty Napoleon (p), Vinnie Burke (b), Cliff Leaman, Jackie Cooper (dm), Big Miller (vo).

TV & radio broadcast, lots of titles, the following have HA:

3:30	Basin Street Blues	Solo with ens 16 bars. In ens. (SM)
7:01	Love Is Just Around The Corner	Solo 64 bars. In ens. (FM)
4:24	Bugle Call Rag	Intro/breaks. In ens. (F)
4:28	St. James Infirmary	Solo 32 bars. In ens. (SM)
9:40	Indiana	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (M)
4:51	After You've Gone	In ens to coda. (F)
4:46	Hello Little Girl	In ens. (SM)
12:45	Bill Bailey, Won't You Please CH	Solo with ens 64 bars. Soli 96, 32 and 32 bars. In ens. (F)

The first of the famous "Jazz Party"s, and HA is of course the most prominent artist, although only on selected titles. Another version of "Indiana" is exciting, jumpy and much slower than on Metropole should be noted, as well "... Corner" with vibraphone accompaniment. "St. James ..." is played faster and more mocking than seriously. Finally, and not to forget, an extended version of "Bill Bailey ..." having a HA with bottomless energy and love for playing. This is an example of something sounding like a real informal private jam session by night, and then it turns out to be on TV, can you believe it!!

ART FORD's JAZZ PARTY

NYC. June 26, 1958

Collective personnel: Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo- "All ..."), Buddy Iannone (tp), J. C. Higginbotham, Frank Higgins (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Hal Singer (ts), Harry Sheppard (vib), Anthony Di Girolamo (vln), Willie "The Lon" Smith (p), Chuck Wayne (g), Vinnie Burke (b), Cliff Leaman (dm), Connie Boswell (vo), members of studio band.

TV & radio broadcast, lots of titles, the following have HA:

3:20	Basin Street Blues	Obbligato parts. (S)
5:04	Them There Eyes	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
5:25	St. Louis Blues	In ens. (FM)
4:53	Ain't Misbehavin'	Obbligato parts. Solo 8 bars. (S)
7:55	That's A Plenty	In ens. Solo 48 bars. (F)
2:53	When You're Smiling	In ens. (FM)
5:07	Stardust	In ens. (S)
3:49	Hal Singer Stomp	In ens. (FM)
8:34	Rosetta	Solo with ens 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. In ens. (FM)
6:20	All Of Me	Solo with ens 64 bars. In ens 16 bars to coda. (SM)
9:50	When The Saints Go Marchin' In	Intro with (dm) to ens. Solo 64 bars. In ens. (FM)
1:37	Basin Street Blues (NC)	In ens. (SM)

HA is very active on this program, which Franz Hoffmann has supplied on video for some extra pleasure. The highlight is “All ...”, although one of the items with less than acceptable sound, but enough to hear brilliant playing. Colourful uptempo on “... Plenty” and “... The Saints ...”, and when listening to the latter, surprise struck me; how is it possible to bring such freshness and inspiration into a tune played to death like that? Whenever you hear and see HA in this program, he is leading his group in such a charismatic way, a great artist!!

HENRY “RED” ALLEN - COLEMAN HAWKINS NYC. Aug. 7, 1958

Henry “Red” Allen (tp), Earl Warren (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Marty Napoleon (p), Chubby Jackson (b), George Wettling (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Jazz Groove:

3:55	Mean To Me	Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (SM)
5:57	Lonesome Road	Solo 16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. Solo 16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. In ens. (SM)
4:34	Sleepy Time Gal	Soli 32 and 16 bars. In ens. (SM)
5:04	Summertime	Soli 32 and 16 bars to long coda. (S)
3:19	All Of Me	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
2:42	Tea For Two	Soli 32 and 16 bars to coda. (FM)
4:02	Stormy Weather	Solo 40 and 8 bars to coda. (S)

Quoting the Coleman Hawkins solography: “Pleasant but quite passive session, this is not swing jazz proper but rather ”jazz for dining”. Accepting this fact, there is a lot of nice music, particularly Red is sublime”. Yes, still think so. Even under less jazzy circumstances HA always seems to take his art seriously, no routine, no details even on titles played daily for years. Heard in this perspective all items here have great trumpet playing. The session has also good sound, so just go ahead and have a nice time. Start with the lovely “Summertime”!

ART FORD’s JAZZ PARTY NYC. Sept. 4, 1958

Collective personnel: Henry “Red” Allen (tp, vo-“Rosetta”), unknown (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Edmond Hall (cl), King Curtis (ts), Teddy Charles (vib), Stan Freed (p), Vinnie Burke (b), Joe Tarto (tu), Sonny Greer (dm), Chris Connor (vo). TV & radio broadcast, lots of titles, the following have HA:

1:39	Theme	In ens. (F)
6:39	Sweet Georgia Brown	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (F)
3:01	Basin Street Blues	In ens. (SM)
3:15	I Ain’t Got Nobody	In ens. (F)
8:59	I Found A New Baby	In ens. (F)
5:16	S’ Wonderful	Solo 32 bars. In ens. (FM)
5:16	Rosetta	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Solo with ens 24 bars to coda. (FM)
3:08	Chinatown, My Chinatown	In ens. (F)
10:21	Ballin’ The Jack	Solo 7 choruses of 16 bars. (F)
0:43	Theme / Bugle Call Rag	Breaks. (F)

Although HA appears ‘in ensemble’ only on many items, it does not mean that he does not appear properly, on the contrary his presence is felt everywhere, as in the many previous sessions. The pure solo items are however of highest interest, although the sound quality could have been better, and there are a few of those here in uptempo. “Rosetta” is always interesting, “... Brown” is jumping happily, and the highlight is the fast and furious “... Jack”.

CLAUDE HOPKINS NYC. possibly autumn 1958

Henry “Red” Allen, Charlie Shavers (tp), Tyree Glenn (tb), Vic Dickenson (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Lyle Smith (ts), Claude Hopkins (p), Milt Hinton (b), Panama Francis (dm), Julia Steele (vo).

Twelve titles were recorded for 20th Century Fox, only two have HA:

2:56	Medley 1	Solo 12 bars (mute). (M)
2:50	Messin’ Around	Solo 24 bars. (M)

A quite corny session which just about can be called jazz, obviously meant for pleasure and dancing, all in medium tempo and less than three minutes, a waste of talent. HA has a very minor role, but his solo on "... Around" is very nice and the highlight of the session.

ART FORD'S JAZZ PARTY**NYC. Nov. 6, 1958**

Collective personnel: Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo-"... Infirmary"), Buddy Iannone (tp-"Love ..."), Dicky Wells (tb), Miff Sines (tb-"Love ..."), Buster Bailey (cl), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Joe Dean (bar-"Love ..."), Willie "The Lion" Smith (p), Danny Barker (g), Vinnie Burke (b), Sonny Greer (dm), Rudy DeLuca (dm-"Love ..."), Mae Barnes (vo).

TV & radio broadcast, lots of titles, the following have HA:

5:49	Ballin' The Jack	Soli 32, 32 and 32 bars. (FM)
2:41	I Love You	In ens. (F)
4:21	True Blue Lou	Solo 32 bars. Obbligato parts. (SM)
4:16	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 24 and 12 bars to very long coda. (SM)
3:55	Charleston	In ens. (FM)
2:48	China Boy	In ens. (F)
2:28	Memphis Blues	Solo 36 bars to coda. (S)
9:45	Love Is Just Around The Corner	Solo/straight 32 bars. Solo 64 bars. In ens. Solo 8 bars. (F)

On the final 'Jazz Party' there are several great trumpet performances, starting with a dynamic "... Jack". Fine laidback soloing also on "True ...", good old "... Infirmary" and particularly on his feature number "Memphis ...". Finally a true jam item, "... Corner" in fast tempo, a true highlight and goodbye to Art Ford.

Summing up the addition to the solography, covering almost the whole of the 1950s, the conclusion is that HA still is a magnificent artist. One may often be surprised at his choice of (traditional) concepts, (often slightly outdated) fellow musicians, (retro) tunes and (uncle Tommish) appearance/humour, but he seems to be in full command of his choices, and he plays his swinging trumpet on a level achieved by only a few others of his contemporaries.

HENRY ALLEN**Newport, Rh. I., July 5, 1959**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Buster Bailey (cl, bcl), Sammy Price (p), Kenny Burrell (g), Lloyd Trotman (b), Rufus "Speedy" Jones (dm).

Three titles were recorded at Newport Jazz Festival:

7:28	Ballin' The Jack	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
10:48	Yellow Dog Blues	In ens. Solo 24 bars. (S)
7:38	The Price Is Right	In ens 60 bars. (FM)

same

Personnel as above plus Don Goldie (tp), Jack Teagarden (tb). Two titles:

8:27	I Found A New Baby	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
4:34	Bugle Call Rag	In ens. Breaks. (F)

These festival items look possibly better on paper than experienced by actual listening. The highlight is "... Baby" where HA plays a good solo but nevertheless gets heavy competition by Don Goldie, can you believe that!?

KID ORY'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND**LA. July 19, 1959**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), Kid Ory (tb, vo), Bob McCracken (cl), Cedric Haywood (p), Frank Haggart (g), Charles Oden, Morty Corb (b), Alton Redd (dm, vo).

Fourteen titles were recorded for Verve, issued as "Red Allen Meets Kid Ory", "We've Got Rhythm" and "Henry Red And The Kid". HA is all open horn (with one exception) and very prominent in the ensembles, so for simplicity, only the pure trumpet soli are listed below:

26419-1	Tishomingo Blues	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
26420-1	I Wish I Was In Peoria	Solo 32 bars. (M)
26421-2	I Wish I Could Shimmy LMS Kate	Solo 18 bars. (SM)

26422-2	Christopher Columbus	Solo 32 bars. (M)
26423-2	Some Of These Days	Solo 32 bars. (M)
26424-2	In The Mood	Solo 24 bars. (M)
26425-1	Lazy River	Solo 36 bars. (SM)
26426-3	Come Back Sweet Papa	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
26427-1	San	Solo 32 bars. (M)
26428-1	Tuxedo Junction	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
26429-1	Ain't Misbehavin'	Solo 32 bars. (M)
26430-1	I Got Rhythm	Solo 32 bars (mute) to solo 64 bars. (FM)
26431-1	Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 32 bars. (M)
26432-2	Blues For Jimmy Noone	Solo 12 bars. (SM)

There seem to be different opinions about the Allen/Ory cooperation within my local jazz community. Some held that Ory's rough style clash with HA's utterly sophisticated artist, destroying the atmosphere that could have been, and even make the latter play by routine or even uninspired. Listening to these recordings I cannot agree, finding the music well organized with clean and very good soloing by everyone involved. HA seems to thrive and use his opportunities to good measure, and there is nothing that give me the idea that he should not be happy with his trombone companion. The ensembles flow nicely, and in fact one should not limit oneself to listening only where 'solo' is indicated in the listing above. We must remember that we are not in the thirties anymore, and that music styles change with time, whether we like or not. HA himself plays differently than before, out of free will in the current contexts, and he has not become a less competent artist. Listen to the first item, "Tishomingo ...", and if this is not a brilliant trumpet solo, what is? In my opinion all items here have high quality trumpet playing, try "... Rhythm", "... Junction" and "... River" as some prominent examples, but not necessarily better than the others, matter of taste. Anyway, don't let your opinion of "the kid" spoil the fun for you!

KID ORY's CREOLE JAZZ BAND **Berlin, Sept. 22, 1959**

Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo), Kid Ory (tb, vo), Bob McCracken (cl), Cedric Haywood (p), Squire Gersh (b), Alton Redd (dm, vo).

Twenty titles were recorded at concert (two sets) in Sportpalast:

7:00	Original Dixieland One-Step	Solo 64 bars. (F)
6:30	I Wish I Was In Peoria	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
7:20	Careless Love	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
5:08	High Society	In ens. (F)
5:03	Savoy Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
4:43	Muskrat Ramble	In ens. (M)
8:15	Tin Roof Blues	In ens. (SM)
4:59	Panama	Solo 32 bars. (F)
4:28	When The Saints Go Marchin' In	Solo 32 bars. (F)
5:38	Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home	Solo 32 bars. (F)
6:53	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Vocal. Solo 16 bars. (S)
7:33	Wolverine Blues	Solo 64 bars. (F)
7:25	I Wish I Could Shimmy Like MS Kate	Solo 36 bars. (SM)
3:13	Sugar Foot Stomp	Solo 36 bars. (F)
6:12	Aunt Hagar's Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
3:59	Ory's Boogie Woogie	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
3:36	At The Jazz Band Ball	Solo 32 bars. (F)
7:28	Tuxedo Junction	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
3:24	Tiger Rag	In ens. (F)

2:24 Inspiration In ens. (S)

Paris, Oct. 4, 1959

Same. Large number of titles recorded at two concerts, 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. in Salle Pleyel. The concerts were sent on TV but mixed, so for the being I can only list twentyfive titles from Franz Hoffman's CD:

5:45	Do What Ory Says	Solo 32 bars. (M)
3:48	Clarinet Marmalade	Solo 32 bars. (F)
7:32	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Vocal. Solo 16 bars. (S)
6:52	I Wish I Could Shimmy Like MS Kate	Solo 36 bars. (SM)
5:13	Panama	Solo 32 bars. (F)
3:42	Royal Garden Blues	Solo 24 bars. (F)
4:27	Tiger Rag No. 1	Solo 32 bars. (F)
8:16	Do You Know What It Means TMNO?	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
5:32	Savoy Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
5:14	High Society No. 1	In ens. (F)
5:29	Basin Street Blues	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
3:19	When The Saints Go Machin' In	Solo 32 bars. (F)
1:52	Without You For An Inspiration Dear	In ens. (S)
4:59	I Wish I Was In Peoria	Solo 32 bars. (M)
4:19	Tailgate Ramble	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
6:30	Tin Roof Blues	Solo 8 bars. (S)
3:42	Ory's Boogie	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
4:04	Rampart Street Parade	In ens. (F)
5:54	Shine	Solo 32 bars. (F)
6:06	Wolverine Blues	Solo 32 bars. (F)
5:26	Original Dixieland One-Step	Solo 32 bars. (F)
4:41	Muskrat Ramble	Solo 16 bars. (M)
4:58	High Society No. 2	In ens. (F)
6:21	Aunt Hagar's Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
4:39	Tiger Rag No. 2	Solo 32 bars. (F)

Manchester, Oct. 24, 1959

Same. Eleven titles recorded at afternoon concert, six have been available:

5:08	Original Dixieland One-Step	Solo 32 bars. (F)
7:30	I Wish I Was In Peoria	Solo 64 bars. (M)
7:24	Careless Love	Solo 36 bars. (SM)
7:14	Bill Bailey, Won't You Please CH	Solo 64 bars. (F)
7:02	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Vocal. Solo 16 bars. (S)
5:02	That's Plenty	Solo 16 bars. (F)

Manchester, Oct. 24, 1959

Same. Eleven titles recorded at evening concert, eight have been available:

6:55	Careless Love	Solo 32 bars. (SM)
5:50	Bourbon Street Parade	Solo 32 bars. (F)
6:48	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Vocal. Solo 16 bars. (S)

5:18	Wolverine Blues	Solo 32 bars. (F)
6:23	Basin Street Blues	Soli 16 and 16 bars. (SM)
2:52	Maryland, My Maryland	In ens. (F)
5:30	Do You Know What It Means TMNO?	Soli with ens 32, 16 and 16 bars. (SM)
2:50	Muskrat Ramble	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Basel, Nov. 9, 1959

Same. Ten titles were recorded at concert in Liederhalle:

7:36	I Wish I Was In Peoria	Solo 64 bars. (M)
4:10	Basin Street Blues	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
6:21	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Vocal. Solo with (p) 16 bars. (S)
5:17	Wolverine Blues	Solo 32 bars. (F)
4:26	Savoy Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
6:15	Tin Roof Blues	Solo 8 bars. (S)
4:48	That's A Plenty	Solo 32 bars. (F)
7:15	Aunt Hagar's Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
4:32	Panama Rag	Solo 32 bars. (F)
3:20	At The Jazz Band Ball	Solo 32 bars. (F)

Copenhagen, Nov. 13, 1959

Same. Twelve titles were recorded at concert in KB Hallen:

5:31	Original Dixieland One-Step	Solo 32 bars. (F)
7:03	I Wish I Could Shimmy Like MS Kate	Solo 36 bars. (M)
5:41	Wolverine Blues	Solo 32 bars. (F)
7:18	St. James Infirmary	Solo with ens 16 bars. Vocal. Solo with (p) 16 bars. (S)
7:21	Tin Roof Blues	Solo 8 bars. (S)
4:04	Clarinet Marmalade	Solo 32 bars. (F)
4:32	Muskrat Ramble	In ens. (M)
5:20	Do You Know What It Means TMNO?	Soli with ens 32, 16 and 16 bars. (SM)
3:51	At The Jazz Band Ball	Solo 32 bars. (F)
4:43	Savoy Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
4:12	Medley: The Sheik Of Araby / Indiana	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
2:48	High Society	In ens. (F)

The European tour resulted in a lot of concerts of which many are preserved, even on TV. What more can one say about this group in addition to what already has been said in connection with the Verve studio session? One thing is evident; if one enjoys the studio, the concerts come as an additional pleasure. HA is in excellent shape, and from the tv productions his dedicated professionalism is obvious. The group as such appear extremely well organized giving traditional jazz a very positive image, and Stuyvesant Casino or Central Plaza is far away. On the other hand there is a lack of spontaneity here that worries me; it is quite natural that the repertoire is repeated in the different concerts, but the details need not be. Nevertheless, with very few exceptions, the structure of a given title is almost fully fixed, and if HA plays 32 bars on one concert, he will do it on all, no running away with some uncontrollable inspiration that real jazz should include. One has the feeling that have you heard one, you have heard them all. Time and technical constraints make it difficult to compare the trumpet soli on all versions of a certain tune, but there is little reason to believe that HA is copying himself, or does he?...

BUD FREEMAN / SHORTY BAKER ALL STARS NYC. Aug. 6, 1960

Harold "Shorty" Baker (tp), Henry Allen (tp, vo- "... Infirmary), Tyree Glenn (tb), Bud Freeman (ts), Gene Schroeder (p), Bob Haggart (b), George Wettling (dm).

Three titles were recorded in "Summer Concert 1960" at Roof Garden, Museum of Modern Art (other items without HA):

3:24	St. James Infirmary	Soli 24 and 16 bars to coda. (S)
10:11	Eddie Condon Blues	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
4:01	Crazy Rhythm	Solo 32 bars (2 nd (tp)-solo). (FM)

Interesting to hear "Crazy ..." with HA and his trumpet following Baker closely. "... Infirmary" we have heard better before. The highlight is the "... Blues", where HA seems very eager to play, in fact doubles Baker's efforts, but the results are not quite up to efforts.

HENRY "RED" ALLEN NYC. Nov. 21, 1960

Henry "Red" Allen (tp, vo-"How Long ...", "... Come Home", "All ..."), Herb Flemming (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Bob Hammer, Sammy Price (p), Milt Hinton (b), Sol Hall (dm).

Twelve titles were recorded for Verve, issued as "Red Allen Plays King Oliver":

26855	Canal Street Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
26856	Ballin' The Jack	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
26857	Someday Sweetheart	Solo 62 bars (mute). Acc. (cl). (SM)
26858	Dixie Medley	In ens. (F/M). Solo 64 bars. (F)
26859	How Long Blues	In ens. (S)
26860	Just A Closer Walk With Thee	Solo with ens 32 bars. (S)
26861	Bill Bailey, Won't You Please CH	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
26862	Snowy Morning Blues	Solo with ens 32 bars. (SM)
26863	Baby Won't You Please Come Home	Solo 18 bars. (M)
26864	Fidgety Feet	Solo 64 bars. (F)
26865	Yellow Dog Blues	Solo 24 bars. (SM)
26866	All Of Me	Soli with ens 32 and 16 bars. (SM)

Another Verve session, not so influenced by a strong personality as Ory, if that should mean anything to you, otherwise much in the same style and tunes we know (all) too well. My enthusiasm for a construction like "Dixie ..." is definitely low, although a strong final solo ("Bourbon Street Parade") should be noted. The "Someday ..." is rather unusual inasmuch it has muted trumpet, not often these days, and even with some growls in the second chorus, the result is also not above the ordinary. Good soloing in fast tempo on "... Come Home" and "... Feet", while he treats the blues in slow medium nicely on three occasions, best seems to me "Yellow ...". The highlight is definitely the unusually long and inspired solo on "Bill Bailey ...", who could match this in 1960? Or later?

HENRY RED ALLEN QUARTET Chi. June/July 1961

Henry "Red" Allen (tp), Sam Price (p), Franklin Skeete (b), Jerry Potter (dm).

AFRS ONS 5433 broadcast from London House:

1:04	Algiers Bounce (Theme)	Straight. (M)
3:58	Lover Come Back To Me	Soli 64, 64 and 20 bars. (F)
3:54	Do You Know What It MTMNO?	Soli 32, 32 and 16 bars. (SM)
4:22	Tenderly	Soli 32 and 32 bars. (SM)
5:51	Bill Bailey	Soli 32, 96 and 64 bars. (F)
6:41	Rosetta	Soli 32 and 32 bars. 96 bars with (p)/(b) to coda. (M)
2:06	All Of Me	Solo 32 bars. (M)
0:36	Algiers Bounce (Theme)	Straight. (M)

same

Same. AFRS ONS 5438 broadcast from London House:

0:36	Algiers Bounce (Theme)	Straight. (M)
3:23	Ballin' The Jack	Soli 32, 48 and 32 bars. (F)
4:16	Snowy Morning Blues	Soli 32, 32 and 16 bars. (SM)
4:41	Autumn Leaves	Soli 64 and 32 bars. (SM)
7:30	Love Is Just Around The Corner	Soli 64, 96, 80 and 16 bars. (FM)
6:52	Basin Street Blues	Soli 32, 64 and 24 bars. (SM)
1:26	Algiers Bounce (Theme)	Straight. (M)

I have some difficulty with evaluating these programs. The quartet format is transparent, and it seems that HA might be somewhat second to the real boss of the group, Sam Price, who plays very actively and strongly, also soundwise, and the performances are more like duets than soli with accompaniment. This can of course be a big plus, but I have the feeling HA is somewhat overshadowed, for once. He definitely does not play badly, and the choice of tunes like "Tenderly" and "Autumn ..." is an interesting change. And looking for a highlight the long "... Corner" could be it, he seems very eager to play on this one. There are more exciting HA sessions, but this one represents at least a change.

To be continued in 1962.

... 000 ...