

The
TENORSAX
and
CLARINET
of
LESTER WILLIS YOUNG
“PRES” “PREZ”
PART 1
1936 - 1942

Born: Woodville, Mississippi, August 27, 1909
 Died: New York City, March 15, 1959

Introduction:

Lester Young was one of Oslo Jazz Circle's greatest heroes. Whenever he soloed on a record, everybody stood up. No signal was given, so if one continued sitting, one definitely had revealed oneself and were to suffer contemptuous stares. Various attempts to teach my boxer, the 'swing dog', to identify Pres' music however failed. In my Jazz Solography Series, Vol. 5, his music of the period 1936-1942 was presented, reprinted in 1983 as Vol. 13, extending to 1949. Lots of additional material has appeared since then, lately the incredible Bill Savory collection.

Early history:

Brother of Lee Young, their father W.H. Young, who had studied at Tuskegee Institute, tutored Lester, Lee and their sister Irma. Several other relatives were musicians including the New Orleans trombonist-bassist Austin "Boots" Young and saxist Isaiah "Sports" Young. The family moved to New Orleans during Lester's infancy, he was taught trumpet, alto sax, violin and drums by his father. By the time the family had settled in Minneapolis (1920), Lester was already playing drums in the family touring band, working through Minnesota, Kansas, New Mexico, Nebraska and the Dakotas. Lester was unwilling to tour the South, and left the band in Phoenix, Arizona, he moved on to Salina, Kansas, and while at the Wiggly Cafe there, he met bandleader Art Bronson, who bought him a tenor sax. From January 1928 until January 1929 he did regular tours with Art Bronson's Bostonians, covering the Dakotas, Nebraska, Colorado etc. He left Bronson to return to the family band, then rejoined Art Bronson from June - November 1930. Bronson disbanded in Wichita, and Lester moved on to Minnesota. Worked at the Nest Club, Minneapolis, then played in Eugene Schuck's Cotton Club Orchestra in Minnesota (summer 1931). Returned to Minneapolis and played under various leaders (Frank Hines, Eddie Barefield etc.) at the Nest Club, also "gigged" with pianist Paul Cephas at the South Side Club. Lester occasionally doubled alto and baritone during the early 1930s. Early in 1932, while working at the Nest Club with Frank Hines, he was signed on as a member of the Original Blue Devils, after playing a residency in Oklahoma City (spring 1932) the band did extensive touring. Lester and several other members of the Blue Devils finally quit the band in the autumn of 1933 and moved to Kansas City to join Bennie Moten. Lester played briefly with Clarence Love's Band and with the Bennie Moten - George E. Lee Band, also worked (together with his brother-in-law, trombonist Otto "Pete" Jones) in King Olivers' Band. In early 1934 left Kansas City with band organised by Count Basie, while playing in Little Rock, Arkansas, was offered a permanent job with Fletcher Henderson's Band. Joined Henderson in Detroit (March 31, 1934), playing in the place vacated by Coleman Hawkins. Travelled to New York with Henderson, but left the band in mid-July 1934. Worked with Andy Kirk in Kansas City, then played residency with Boyd Atkins in Minneapolis (late 1934). Subsequently worked with Rook Ganz in Minneapolis, then moved back to Kansas City, "gigged" at various clubs including The Sunset and The Subway. During 1936 unsuccessfully auditioned for Earl Hines' Big Band. In 1936 joined Count Basie at the Reno Club, Kansas City. Left Kansas City with Basie, and made recording debut in late fall 1936. Remained with Basie until December 1940 - during this period Lester did many recording sessions with Billie Holiday, who gave him the nickname "Prez" - a contraction of "The President" - earlier in his career Lester had been known as "Red" Young (ref. John Chilton)..

LESTER YOUNG SOLOGRAPHY

JONES - SMITH INCORPORATED**Chi. Nov. 9, 1936**

Carl Smith (tp), Lester Young (ts), Count Basie (p), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo-1658/59).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

C-1657-1	Shoe Shine Swing	Solo 64 bars. Also 16 bars 2/2 with (p) and (tp), in ensemble 8 bars and part of coda 2 bars. (F)
C-1657-2	Shoe Shine Swing	As above. (F)
C-1658-1	Evenin'	Solo 8 bars. Two obligato parts of 8 bars, last with (tp). (M)
C-1658-2	Evenin'	As above. (M)
C-1659-1	Boogie Woogie	Solo 24 bars. Very faint obligato 48 bars. Also some riffs in ensemble and behind (tp) solo. (FM)
C-1659-2	Boogie Woogie	As above. (FM)
C-1660-1	Lady Be Good	Solo 64 bars. Also in ensemble 32 bars, and some riffs behind (tp) solo 8 bars. (FM)
C-1660-2	Lady Be Good	As above. (FM)

This session will forever be a milestone in jazz. Lester Young then put on wax a conception of tenorsax playing totally different from the conventional style of the Hawkins/Berry/Webster school. His rhythmically free playing was considered quite revolutionary, and his melodic inventions immediately put him among the greatest improvisors in jazz. He was, at least in the beginning, exposed to a lot of criticism from his fellow musicians. The main reason for this was his mellow sound, nearly without vibrato; it was claimed that he did not play the tenor sax "as it should be played". However, jazz critic John Hammond and band leader Count Basie immediately realized his possibilities, and he soon became the most prominent soloist of the Basie band. More than fifty years later, his first records are not only as fresh and alive as ever, but have achieved the status of genuine jazz classics. It is incredible that this actually was the first time Lester Young had entered a recording studio, his playing does not show any sign of modesty or lack of experience. He appears to be an outstanding and mature artist who immediately makes jazz history. If one has to select a "best" side from this session, it must be the first take of "Shoe Shine Swing", a masterpiece with an enormous drive from the very first bar, rhythmically easygoing, elegant and built upon a well developed musical logic. The appearance of the second take immediately gives a deep perspective of Young's playing, the main ideas are the same, but the details are often wonderfully different. There is no great difference in quality, but the first take is, to me, the better one, being more consistently logical in its construction. However, the second take has, in at least three places, details which are unforgettable. Of equally far-reaching importance is "Lady Be Good", played in a somewhat slower tempo and just as elegant. Observe in particular his opening phrases. That these soli are spontaneous improvisations is truly wondrous. Worthy of note is the occasional use of rather strongly vibrating notes as a special effect in "Lady ...", it can be heard in this instance and in the Basie recording of "Honesuckle Rose". Excellent solo work can also be heard on "Boogie Woogie", but his obligato is too badly recorded to make any great impression. "Evenin'" is not nearly up to the same standard as the other sides. Generally his playing is more extrovert at this date compared to his recordings later in the thirties, and the profile of this tenor sax giant would probably have been more complete if he had started recording a couple of years earlier. Anyway, this recording debut is probably the best ever made by any jazz musician. As for Young himself, it is impossible to state that any of his later recordings are really better than "... Swing" or "Lady ...". Postscript: The remaining three alternates have been found! Jazz archeology at its most profound!! And as expected, LY is different, as always. The choices of 78 rpm. issues way back then were wisely made, no doubt about that, but with regard to Pres, it is thrilling to experience his creativity. On "Evenin'", the 'new' solo is rather similar the first four bars, but then it differs completely, almost as good. On "Boogie ..." the difference is complete; take 1 is more logically coherent and definitely better, the first chorus is great! Take 2 has different constructions, with particularly the second chorus quite surprising. And then "Lady Be Good", the take 2 we have been searching for since half a century existed after all, excellent sound quality. Again

the supreme logic of take 1 cannot be challenged, but take 2 gives another perspective on Pres' early period. Count Basie's piano makes a difference; on take 2 he is less firm and concludes with a downward run disturbing the tenorsax kickoff which is so fantastic on take 1. When he is on the air, he creates a solo which is a mixture of phrases from take 1, like the beginning of the last bridge, and some completely new exciting constructions we never have heard before like bars 9-12 and 25-36 incredible! This must be the most important jazz archeological discovery in this century, together with the Bill Savory collection!!!!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 21, 1937**

Buck Clayton, Joe Keyes, Carl Smith (tp), George Hunt, Dan Minor (tb), Caughey Roberts (as), Jack Washington (as, bar), Herschel Evans, Lester Young (cl, ts), Count Basie (p, ldr), Claude Williams (vln, g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Decca, two feature LY:

61542-A	Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 34 bars. (FM)
61542-B	Honeysuckle Rose	As above. (FM)
61545-A	Roseland Shuffle	Solo 8 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (p). (FM)

These sides seem to imply that Young was not really a big band musician. It seems that he is not able to stretch out and play his own kind of music. He does not play badly on "... Rose, and the solo is built up more or less the same way as that on "Lady ...", but lacks the elegance, and the orchestra arrangement does not give him much support, the rhythm section is too active. Young preferred accompaniment without breaks of any kind, and here he gets more "help" than needed. On "Roseland ...", which in fact is "Shoe Shine Swing", we may for the first time listen to several of the phrases he used when he lacked inspiration; particularly during his output in the 40s and 50s they are repeated over and over again. They sound fresher here, but are not exciting, and his co-playing with Basie lacks spontaneity. The session gives, however, a good demonstration of his advanced conception of harmony, he is using very wide intervals considering that this is in 1936. Postscript of Oct. 11, 2016: Note the recently discovered alternate of "... Rose", issued on the Lester Young Mosaic box set. Probably a warm-up take and with a tenorsax solo completely different from the one we know, even more exciting to me, the bridge is just as out of heaven!!

TEDDY WILSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 25, 1937**

Buck Clayton (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Joe Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

20568-1	He Ain't Got Rhythm	Solo 18 bars. (M)
20569-2	This Year's Kisses	Solo 28 bars. In ens 8 bars. (SM)
20570-1	Why Was I Born?	Nearly inaudible obligato 32 bars. (M)
20571-1	I Must Have That Man	Solo 16 bars. (SM)

This is the first in a series of recording sessions made with Billie Holiday and/or Teddy Wilson, and it is fair to say that these, and not those with Basie, made Young the immortal jazz musician. The rapport and understanding existing between the three of them have probably never been equalled in jazz history. Record after record has the same exquisite artistic performance and beautiful mood, and the rhythmic tension is always present in slow as in fast tempi. The musicians all play at the limit of their capability, and the records thus get an unusual unity and cohesion, yet they never lose any spontaneity. On this session we hear Lester Young in a lyrical mood for the first time, both "... Kisses" and "... Man" contain beautiful melodic soli which are unforgettable. "... Rhythm" swings magnificently in a perfect medium tempo. The obligato on "Why ..." is unfortunately not well recorded, and it also seems that he is not so aware during this accompaniment as on later sessions.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Pittsburgh, Feb. 1937**

Personnel probably as Jan. 21, 1937.

Broadcast from The Chatterbox, Hotel William Penn.

Possibly Feb. 8, 1937

1	Oh, Lady Be Good	No solo.
2	St. Louis Blues	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

3	Moten Swing (Conclusion)	Solo cut short after 1 bar only. (FM)
4	Shoe Shine Swing	Solo 8 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (p). (FM)
5	Moten Swing (Conclusion)	Solo 32 bars, last 10 bars almost destroyed by announcer. (M)
Possibly Feb. 10, 1937		
6	Moten Swing (Introduction)	Solo 24 bars, first 16 with the announcer prominent. (FM)
7	King Porter Stomp	No solo.
8	I'll Always Be In Love With You	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
9	You Do The Darndest Things Baby	No solo.
10	Swingin' At The Daisy Chain	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
11	Yeah Man (NC)	Solo 32 bars. (F)
12	Riffin' (falsely titled "Rug Cutters' Swing")	Soli 8 and 2 bars. (FM)
Possibly Feb. 12, 1937		
13	Oh, Lady Be Good	No solo.
14	Tattersfield Stomp	Soli 8, 2, 18 and 2 bars. (F)
15	Magnolias In The Moonlight	No solo.
Possibly Feb. 8-12, 1937		
16	Moten Swing (Introduction)	Solo 32 bars, bridge almost destroyed by announcer. (FM)
17	Margie (NC)	No solo.
18	Swing Brother Swing	Solo 8 bars. Coda 2 bars. (FM)
19	You Do The Darndest Things Baby	No solo.
20	Moten Swing (Introduction)	Solo 24 bars, first 8 bars almost destroyed by announcer. (FM)
21	I Cried For You (NC)	No solo.

Note: The allocation of titles to dates above should only be taken as a guide. Items 3 and 5 are both conclusions and cannot possibly be from the same date. Items 6 - 10 are listed as Jan. 10 on JA-16. This is a typographical error, the date should be Feb. 10.

There are some marvellous contributions to be heard on these rather informal broadcasts. It seems natural to start with commenting upon Young's playing on "Moten Swing". Six versions are presented, of which five are of importance in this context. It is almost unbelievable to hear how different they are, and how surprising and charming details bloom. The introductory version listed as "16" is my favorite, although the acetate is slightly damaged. The concluding version listed as "5" is also a rare masterpiece in a slower tempo than usual. The bridge is unforgettable! The remaining versions are "only" beautiful and of top quality. What to highlight next is a matter of taste. The fresh and surprising solo on "St. Louis ..." came as a shock the first time and remains so! "Yeah Man" is incredible considering the very high tempo, likewise "Tattersfield ...", where particularly the first eight are impressive. The bridge on "Riffin" is memorable. In "Swing, Brother ..." his co-playing with Evans is an experience only the Basie organization could produce. The solo on "... Chain" is somewhat predictable, but with fine drive and an original start. Even better is "I'll Always ...", where Young gives through eight bars a concentrated and supremely successful break. "Shoe Shine ..." follows the same format as the studio recording of "Roseland Shuffle" but is, in my opinion, more inspired without belonging among my favorites. If one should regret anything concerning Lester Young on these dates, it must be his absence on "Lady Be Good"!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 26, 1937**
Personnel as Jan. 21, 1937 except Ed Lewis, Bobby Moore (tp), Freddie Green (g) replace Keyes, Smith and Williams.

Four titles were recorded for Decca, one features LY:

62078-A Exactly Like You Solo 16 bars. (FM)

This is a very good solo with an enthusiastic opening and with a continuous drive, and far more inspired than the soli from the first Basie recording session.

TEDDY WILSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. May 11, 1937

Buck Clayton (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Johnny Hodges (as), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Allan Reuss (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Cozy Cole (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick, three have LY:

21117-2 Sun Showers Intro 4 bars. Solo 16 bars,
last 4 in ensemble. (M)

21118-2 Yours And Mine Solo 16 bars, last 4
in ensemble. (SM)

21120-1 Mean To Me Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge. (SM)

21120-2 Mean To Me As above. (SM)

Lester's playing on this session is just as outstanding as on the first Wilson/Holiday session. "Sun ..." and "... Mine" have roughly the same pattern: The tempo is medium and Lester is heard soloing towards the end. Both are thoroughly relaxed and melodic, it is hard to believe anyone capable of improvising so easily. "Man ...", however, proves differently, the two takes on this one are both so straightforward and yet so incredibly different. Lester is presenting the melody in such an elegant way that by listening to just one take, one gets the impression that he plays almost straight, it seems so simple. However, the two takes reveal an almost unlimited inventiveness in melodic details and rhythmic variations, bringing us a closer understanding of Lester's genius. Take 1 is probably the better considered as a whole, but take 2 is more surprising, in particular the eight bars after the bridge are remarkable with a succession of ingenious rhythmic shifts. It is hard to claim that Lester ever played better than on this session.

TEDDY WILSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. June 1, 1937

Buck Clayton (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Joe Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo-21217,18,19).

Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

21217-1 Foolin' Myself Solo 16 bars. (SM)

21218-2 Easy Living Solo 8 bars. (SM)

21219-2 I'll Never Be The Same Intro 4 bars.
Obbligato 30 bars. (SM)

21220-1 I've Found A New Baby Soli 16 and 8 bars. (F)

21220-3 I've Found A New Baby As above. (F)

On this session one is especially taken by "I'll Never ...". For the first time on record Billie and Lester perform one of their famous duets. This is not a vocal with tenorsax accompaniment, but a mutual partnership which is almost unequalled in jazz. Lester's wonderful, long melodic lines are perfectly matched with Billie's somewhat straight vocal and the effect is startling. On this occasion, "I'll Never ..." is given an almost ethereal sound, filled as it is with sadness. "Foolin' ..." and "Easy ..." are beautiful and well played, although they do not have the same intensity as the earlier "This Year's Kisses" and "I Must Have That Man". "... Baby" is surprisingly enough a non-vocal piece with two lovely takes. Apart from being heard faintly in the opening ensemble, particularly swinging like mad on take 3, he solos with a refreshing gaiety. Take 3 is definitely the best one for the 16 bar solo, note for instance the intricate last eight. However, the last bridge is like fireworks on take 1, while stumbling rather (in comparison only) on take 3. Together they make a very great pleasure!

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA NYC. June 15, 1937

Buck Clayton (tp), Edmond Hall (cl), Lester Young (ts), James Sherman (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

21249-1 Me, Myself And I Intro 4 bars. Obbligato 32 bars. (M)

249-2 Me, Myself And I As above. (M)

21250-1	A Sailboat In The Moonlight	Solo 8 bars. Obbligato 32 and 16 bars. (SM)
21251-1	Born To Love	Obbligato 32 and 16 bars. (M)
21252-1	Without Your Love	Intro 4 bars. Obbligato 32 and 16 bars. (SM)
21252-2	Without Your Love	As above. (SM)

This is the most significant session with regard to the cooperation between Billie Holiday and Lester Young. With the exception of a short solo and some intros, Lester plays obbligato in an exceptional quantity. Both on "... Moonlight" and "Without ..." he plays along with Billie all the way, and is also abundantly present on the two remaining sides. The more important fact is, however, the consistently high quality throughout the session. It is almost impossible to give a fair description of the lovely tenor sax/vocal duets, but to this author, these records will stand as some of the loveliest ever recorded in jazz. Their roles are equally divided, with more direct and earthy tenorsax playing than on "I'll Never Be The Same", without reducing the emotional content. The most important side is "... Moonlight" with quiet, controlled richness in melody, and a number of wonderful finesses. Next, the two takes of "Me ...", totally different in all aspects, but both of them perfect. It is difficult to choose the best one, but I would settle for take 2. The two remaining titles also contain first rate jazz music, but perhaps not immortal. "Born ..." is a little too modest, and "Without ..." is lacking some of the intensity of "... Moonlight". Take 2 is to be preferred. Conclusion: One of Lester Young's most important sessions in all respects, and surely one of the most memorable sessions of recorded jazz.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. June 30, 1937**
 Personnel as March 26, 1937, except Earl Warren (as) replaces Roberts, and Billie Holiday (vo-5/8).
 Broadcast from the Savoy Ballroom.

1	Moten Swing	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
2	Shout And Feel It	No solo.
3	Me And You That Used To Be	Soli 16 and 6 bars. (FM)
4	The Count Steps In	Solo 14 bars. (FM)
5	They Can't Take That Away From Me	No solo.
6	I'll Always Be In Love With You	Solo 8 bars. (M)
7	When My Dreamboat Comes Home	No solo.
8	Swing, Brother, Swing	No solo.
9	Bugle Blues	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
10	I Got Rhythm	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (F)
11	Moten Swing	Solo which fades out after approx. 10 bars. (FM)

Mainly good and interesting soli on a "live" recording from the Savoy Ballroom. The best ones are to be found in "I'll Always ..." , "Moten Swing" (last version) and foremost the eight-bar solo in "I Got Rhythm". A swinging session with a few, but important tenorsax contributions. Postscript: LSc suggests that the "Bugle ..." solo is extremely well constructed and contains some details which are unique, especially towards the end of the solo.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 7, 1937**
 Personnel as June 30, 1937. Billie Holiday out.
 Four titles were recorded for Decca, three have LY:

62332-A	One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. (M)
62333-A	Listen My Children	Solo 6 bars. (M)
62334-A	John's Idea	Solo 4 bars. (FM)

"... Jump" contains a good solo of the best Basie quality, and "Listen ..." is of about the same standard. "... Idea" is more ordinary.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 9, 1937**

Personnel as July 7, 1937 except Bennie Morton (tb) replaces Hunt, Eddie Durham (tb, g) added.

Four titles were recorded for Decca, one has LY:

62513-A Time Out Solo 24 bars. (FM)

Lester takes over elegantly after Herschal Evans who plays the first four bars. The solo is of top quality - one of his very best with the Basie orchestra - and quite representative as a whole.

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 13, 1937**

Buck Clayton (tp), Buster Bailey (cl), Lester Young (ts), Claude Thornhill (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

21686-1 Getting Some Fun Out Of Life Solo 8 bars. (SM)

21687-1 Who Wants Love? Intro 4 bars. Obligato 16 and 4 bars. (M)

21688-1 Travlin' All Alone Solo 16 bars. Obligato 16 and 4 bars. (M)

21689-1 He's Funny That Way Intro 4 bars. Obligato 16, 8 and 14 bars. (SM)

It should not really be possible to duplicate the outstanding standard found on the session of June 15, 1937 with Billie Holiday, but Lester does manage just that. The playing is versatile, from a beautiful solo in "... Life" and an unusually elegant intro in "... Love" and "... Way" to, finally, a lovely, juicy swinging attack on "Travlin' ...". The only reservation one could make would be that the general setup is not as tightly planned as on the last session, but Lester is not to be blamed for this.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 13, 1937**

Buck Clayton, Bobby Hicks, Ed Lewis (tp), Eddie Durham, Dan Minor, Bennie Morton (tb), Earl Warren (as), Jack Washington (as, bar), Herschel Evans, Lester Young (cl, ts), Count Basie (p, ldr), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, one has LY:

62683-A Out The Window Soli 8, 4 and 4 bars. (F)

Ordinary playing, nothing outstanding in any way.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Meadowbrook, NJ. Nov. 3, 1937**

Personnel probably as Oct. 13, 1937. Billie Holiday (vo-3).

Broadcast.

1 Moten Swing No solo.

2 One O'Clock Jump Solo 36 bars. (FM)

3 I Can't Get Started Obligato 6 and 6 bars (vo-BH). (SM)

4 Study In Brown No solo.

5 Rhythm In My Nursery Rhymes Soli 2 and 2 bars. (M)

6 John's Idea Solo 16+6 bars, orchestra on bridge. Solo 4 bars. (FM)

7 Good Moming Blues No solo.

8 Dinah Obligato 32 bars. (vo-JR). (FM)

"... Jump" is very convincing with a particularly well-played first chorus and an elegant utilisation of one of his "standard phrases" in the third chorus. His obligato on "Dinah" is at times remarkable, note for instance the end of the bridge, although not well recorded. "... Idea" is good, but slightly staccato. "I Can't ..." is rather straight and not too exciting although played in his usual pleasant fashion.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 3, 1938**

Personnel as Oct. 13, 1937 except Karl George (tp) replaces Hicks.

Two titles were recorded for Decca:

- 63122-A Georgianna Solo 10+6 bars, orchestra interrupting for 2 bars. (M)
- 63123-A Blues In The Dark Nearly inaudible obbligato 12 bars. (S)

"Georgianna" belongs among the best Lester did with Basie, whereas on "Blues ..." he is badly recorded and leaves no impression.

TEDDY WILSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 6, 1938**
 Buck Clayton (tp), Bennie Morton (tb), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).
 Four titles were recorded for Brunswick:

- 22192-3 My First Impression Of You Solo 8 bars. Very faint acc. (tp) 8 bars at the end. (SM)
- 22192-4 My First Impression Of You As above. (SM)
- 22193-3 When You're Smiling Solo 24 bars to 8 bars in ens. (M)
- 22193-4 When You're Smiling As above. (FM)
- 22194-3 I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me Solo 8 bars. (SM)
- 22194-4 I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me As above. (SM)
- 22255-1 If Dreams Come True Intro 4 bars, then straight acc. (p) for 32 bars. (M)
- 22255-2 If Dreams Come True As above. (M)

This session is more than usually interesting because of the opportunity to compare alternate takes of all four tunes. (Takes numbers -3/-4 are due to the fact that the first three tunes were recorded Dec. 17, 1937 with a different personnel (Chu Berry instead of Lester Young, Sally Gooding instead of Billie Holiday, a.o.). There you find takes number -1/-2). "... True" has a peculiar and charming intro, while the rest of Lester's contribution is straight background to Teddy Wilson's piano. The takes are close to identical except for the last four bars. They are not identical, mind you! Listen closely and be very pleased! The takes of "My First ..." are rather similar both in setup and quality, whereas those of "I Can't ..." are very different but equally good. However, "... Smiling" is the most significant tune, with enormous drive and inventive playing. I love both of them, but I find take 3 the better one. I must admit I cannot explain why, nor am I able to give a precise statement as to the differences in musical terms. I am therefore happy to let John R.T. Davies express it this way: "Take 3 (faster tempo) - First 16 bars: Construction is a series of four bar phrases oriented on the first beat in the same way as the original melody: - Last 8 bars: Two rhythmically identical pairs of phrases (falling to the first beat of the bar), the last of which becomes a lead-in to a mightily lyrical lead - out into the final ensemble. / Take 4 (slower tempo) - First 16 bars: Construction of four musical essays, the first and third of which consist of phrase, repeat and anti-phrase, all of which lead across the four bar division of the original melody. - Last 8 bars: A pair of identical phrases open the first half, the phrase is then repeated and run into a lyrical build-down to a repeat of the original phrase in the new key which then reappears in half tempo momentarily before the lead-out into the final ensemble. / The ability to treat a piece spontaneously in two such distinctly different ways without any change whatever of style is just one mark of the truly great musician".

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 12, 1938**
 Buck Clayton (tp), Bennie Morton (tb), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).
 Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, three have LY:

- 22281-1 Now They Call It Swing Solo 12 bars. (M)
- 22281-2 Now They Call It Swing As above. (M)
- 22283-1 Back In Your Own Backyard Solo 32 bars. (M)
- 22283-2 Back In Your Own Backyard As above. (M)
- 22284-2 When A Woman Loves A Man Intro 4 bars. (S)

One of Lester's best soli ever is to be found on take 1 of "... Backyard". It sounds methodical and in a way predetermined, but this is a mere illusion, based upon the fact that it is constructed with utmost logic and is perfect down to the smallest detail. It has more rhythmic accent than usual for his playing, this is emphasized by

Jo Jones' frequent punctuations, rather unusual with Lester. It must be held forth as a marvellous solo. However, one is in for the shock of the year when introduced to take 2. Having an unmistakably slower speed within the medium range, it presents a solo so completely different from the first one that it is almost unbelievable. It is far from perfect, on the contrary, definitely inferior and rather untidy. This, however, puts the spotlight on take 1's uniqueness, while at the same time making one feel a strange affection for "the ugly duckling", because it has its own beauty and contains several details which are not to be found elsewhere. If anyone has been in doubt whether it is a good policy to issue several takes of the same tune, this is the case where he will change his mind. Excellent are the soli on "... Swing", which are also truly gay versions. They are different in detail, and take 2 is slightly better. As for the remaining tunes from this session, it is unfair to Lester's genius to starve it out with an otherwise excellent introduction on "... Man" and let it be completely excluded on "On The Sentimental Side".

JAM SESSION**NYC. Jan. 16, 1938**

Buck Clayton, Harry James (tp), Vernon Brown (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Johnny Hodges (as), Lester Young (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Gene Krupa (dm).

Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall Concert.

Honeysuckle Rose

Soli 64 and 8 bars. (FM)

Even in these unusual surroundings Lester is creating a good image. Perhaps not so concentrated, but more relaxed than on ordinary recording sessions with the Basie band. The result does not belong among his most original works, but he swings easily and pleasantly and the final "lonely" bridge is formidable.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Feb. 16, 1938**

Personnel as Jan. 3, 1938 except Harry Edison (tp) replaces George.

Four titles were recorded for Decca, two have LY:

63287-A Every Tub

Intro 8 bars to solo 24 bars.
Part of coda 2 bars. (F)

63289-A Swingin' The Blues

Solo 12 bars. (FM)

"... Tub" is an up-tempo tune with an easy, moving solo, but not completely inspired. "... Blues is somewhat ordinary.

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. March 9, 1938**

Ziggy Elman, Gordon Griffin, Harry James (tp), Red Ballard, Vernon Brown (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Dave Matthews, Babe Russin, Hymie Schertzer, Lester Young (reeds), Jess Stacy (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Lionel Hampton (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Victor, one has LY:

021128-1 Ti-Pi-Tin

Solo 14 bars. (F)

A well executed and inspired solo played with a soft and pleasant tone on an otherwise ordinary record. However, no real jazz history was written during the only meeting between Lester Young and the Benny Goodman orchestra. Imagine a clarinet duet ...!

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA**Randall's Island, May 29, 1938**

Personnel probably as usual.

"Swing Carnival". WNEW broadcast from Randalls Island, Bill Savory collection, outdoors concert, four titles, no LY on "Boogie Woogie" but:

Farewell Blues

Solo 32 bars. (F)

Every Tub

Intro 8 bars to solo 64 bars. Coda. (F)

One O'Clock Jump

Solo 24 bars. (FM)

The sound on this legendary event is not of ordinary Savory quality, but who cares!? Particularly "Every Tub" is a thrill!

MEMBERS OF THE BASIE BAND**NYC. June 3, 1938**

Buck Clayton (tp), Lester Young (cl, ts), Count Basie (p), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Helen Humes (vo-"Blues With Helen").

Issued as belonging to "John Hammond's Carnegie Hall Concert No. 2" on Dec. 24, 1939. However, an article in Down Beat, March 4, 1971, states that it was recorded in a studio on 46th Street one and a-half year earlier.

Mortgage Stomp (?)	With ensemble 16+8 bars, solo 8 bars on bridge. Solo 32 bars. With ensemble 16+24+8 bars, solo on last bridge. (F)
Don't Be That Way	With ensemble 48+8 bars, solo 8 bars on bridge. Solo 24 bars to 8 bars with ensemble. (SM)
Blues with Helen (The Blues)	Clarinet solo 24 bars. Clarinet obbligato with (tp) 12 bars. (S)
Song Of The Wanderer	Clarinet obbligato 64 bars, last 32 with (tp). (M)
Allez Oop (?)	Soli 16, 16 and 16 bars. (F)

Note: The "Mortgage Stomp" known from the Vanguard album is named "Allez Oop" on the Nost 7639 issue. However, the "Mortgage Stomp" on Nost 7639 is a completely new tune, hitherto unknown. I assume that "Allez Oop" is the correct name for the new discovery, but that there has been a mixup in the production of the Nost record, or eventually that the error was made in the Vanguard album, now corrected on Nost 7639.

Lester is not quite up to expectations here; although there is some good music, the performances seem to lack inspiration. "Don't ..." is the better item, but even this one could have been far better. Even the clarinet solo on "Blues ..." sounds less inspired than usual. However, part of this impression may be due to the editing on the LP. Listening to the original acetates, one is inclined to rank the session somewhat higher. "Song ..." has a very nice obbligato, but it is not too easy to hear the details. "Allez Oop (?)" is the most rough and improvised of the items, and I can understand why it was not put out on the original Vanguard album. Prez is not quite sure of his entrance in the first chorus, but his deep honking intro in the third chorus is worth the whole LP! Postscript: LS says "I feel that LY's work on "... Stomp" is very different, with the phrases appearing at very unusual places, even by Lester's standard. His playing seems experimental to me". Judge for yourself in this matter!

Note new information: The "Spirituals to Swing" CD-box set makes some things clearer but not to perfection. Seven titles are supposed to have been recorded, "I Ain't Got Nobody" with rhythm only, the six remaining with Prez. However, there is no reference to "Song Of The Wanderer", issued on NOST 7639, listed in my 1935-1939 volume. It is also confirmed that "Allez-Oop" is the correct name for the so-called "Mortgage Stomp" on the original "Spirituals to Swing" album. The "real" "Mortgage Stomp" is a kind of rehearsal (for what?), with Prez soloing 3 x 16 bars and ending rather abruptly. Nevertheless, after all this, it is an enormous pleasure to present two new Prez items:

Lady Be Good	Soli 32, 4 and 4 bars. Duet with (tp) 32 bars. (FM)
I Never Knew	Clarinet duet with (tp) 32 bars. Clarinet solo 32 bars. Clarinet duet with (tp) 64 bars, except (p)/(b) on first bridge and (tp) on second. (F)

These are sensational discoveries and worth the whole box alone!! Particularly the fast "... Knew" is an invaluable addition to the meagre stock of Prez' clarinet performances, having almost two minutes soloing and coplaying with Buck. "Lady ..." we have heard many times before, but this is a delicious version, studio recorded with excellent sound, a great pleasure!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. June 6, 1938

Personnel as Feb. 16, 1938.

Three titles were recorded for Decca, two have LY:

63919-A	Blue And Sentimental	Clarinet solo 14 bars. (S)
63920-A	Doggin' Around	Solo 32 bars. (F)

For the first time we can listen to Lester playing the clarinet (this was originally written before the exact date of the "Spirituals to Swing" session was known to be June 3, but I decided not to change it, since it seemed very appropriate to connect the words to the famous "Blue ..." and not to the more ordinary "Blues With Helen"), and he has a quite exceptional recording debut on this instrument too. His ideas are transferred to the clarinet with great ease, and the style is unmistakably Lester. His tone is very personal, one of the reasons for this is probably the fact that

he was using a metal instrument. The solo here is very sensitive and well constructed, representing something radically new in comparison to conventional clarinet playing. "Doggin' ...", however, contains some quite disappointing tenorsax playing, uninspired and full of standard phrases. It is the first and one of the very few really inferior soli he made in the thirties. He is downright outplayed by Herschel Evans.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 9, 1938**

Personnel as Feb. 16, 1938, except Dicky Wells (tb) replaces Durham. Helen Humes (vo) added.

CBS broadcast "America Dances".

1	One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
2	Every Tub	Intro 8 bars to solo 24 bars. Part of coda 2 bars. (F)
3	Song Of The Wanderer	No solo.
4	Flat Foot Floogie	Solo 32 bars. (M)
5	Lady Be Good	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
6	Boogie Woogie Blues	No solo.
7	One O'Clock Jump	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
8	I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart	Solo 8 bars. (SM)

There are two top-tracks in this broadcast, first and foremost "... Floogie". Even if the performance is a little uneven, the opening is very effective and extremely well played, and the main impression is that the solo is one of his best with Basie. Of top quality is also "Lady ..." where he actually "shock"-introduces the solo, and continues on a very high level (not up to the Nov. 9, 1936 level, though - that would be too much to expect). "... Jump" is very good, but not outstanding, and "... Tub" is almost identical to the Decca recording. Finally a pretty but rather modest solo in "... Heart", unattentiveness makes it start too late.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 23, 1938**

Personnel as July 9, 1938, plus Harry James (tp-"King Porter Stomp").

Broadcast from the Famous Door.

Time Out	No solo.
If I Could Be With You	No solo.
(Jumpin' At The) Woodside	Break to solo 64 bars. (FM)
I Hadn't Anyone Till You	No solo.
King Porter Stomp	No solo.
Lady Be Good	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
Everybody Loves My Baby (NC)	Solo 4 bars, acetate terminating abruptly. (F)

Another interesting version of "Lady ..." that gives us insight into Lester's style and capabilities of originality. This solo is constructed more or less in the same way as the previous broadcast version, and is probably more coherent than any other preserved versions, with several original and surprising details. In addition, the opening is warming to a Lester fan's heart, daring and gay as it sounds. It is a shame that the solo is so brief, the orchestra steals the last eight bars of the chorus. "Jumpin' ..." is announced as "Woodside". Being the first preserved of uncountable versions of this tenorsax vehicle, it also seems to be the best! The tempo is more "normal" than in later days, very much to the benefit of improvisation. At last: The never-to-forget "... Baby", not recorded by the Basie band. Taken in a very fast tempo, it swings incredibly, and Prez enters the scene. A flashing break of the same breakneck kind as on TW's "I've Found A New Baby" and then oblivion! If NASA had lost contact with Skylab four seconds after takeoff, their faces would have looked like mine did when listening to "Everybody ..." for the very first time ...

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 9, 1938**

Personnel as July 9, 1938.

Broadcast from the Famous Door.

One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
------------------	----------

King Porter Stomp	No solo.
I've Got A Date With A Dream	No solo.
Lady Be Good	Part of intro 2 bars. (F)

Unfortunately the broadcast ends before Lester's solo in "Lady ..." gets on the air, from earlier experience any new version would be welcome!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 10, 1938**

Personnel probably as July 9, 1938.

Broadcast from the Famous Door, Bill Savory collection, one title, "Do You Wanna Jump Children", but no LY.

NYC. Aug. 12, 1938

I Haven't Changed A Thing	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (SM)
---------------------------	-------------------------

Lovely music in the very best slow medium tempo, just the kind of unpretentious small talk Lester enjoyed so much, as we do too.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **1938?**

Personnel unknown except for Buck Clayton (tp), Lester Young (ts). The item is not complete, therefore it is not known if Herschal Evans was present for his usual clarinet solo, this would have helped to date the item.

Jumpin' At The Woodside (NC)	Break to solo 64 bars. (FM)
------------------------------	-----------------------------

A very lousy sound on this broadcast but evidently there is a fine tenorsax solo, comparable to the one on July 23, 1938.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 18, 1938**

Personnel as July 9, 1938.

Broadcast from the Famous Door, three titles, no LY on "I Haven't Changed A Thing" but:

Every Tub	Intro 4 bars (NC) to solo 32 bars. (F)
Flat Foot Floogie	Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Fine uptempo soloing here!

same

Postscript of May 22, 2017: The following item appeared on iTunes, must have slipped through my attention when I went through the Bill Savory collection:

I Ain't Got Nobody	Soli 8 and 4 bars. (F)
--------------------	------------------------

Note this item, excellent playing here!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 22, 1938**

Personnel as July 9, 1938.

Four titles were recorded for Decca, three have LY:

64472-A	London Bridge Is Falling Down	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
64473-A	Texas Shuffle	Clarinet solo 32 bars. (F)
64474-A	Jumpin' At The Woodside	Solo 32 bars. (F)

Certainly it is the clarinet solo that is of greatest interest here. One might say that he is not playing clarinet the way it "should be played". He has a rather small, dry sound with a rather economical way of phrasing quite different from, for instance, the more outwardly directed style of Benny Goodman. Rhythmically the solo is clever and typical of Lester, actually one gets the impression that he really is playing tenorsax after all. It has been said that he was not very fond of the clarinet, if so, this certainly is marvellous "handicraft"! "London ..." and "... Woodside" contain good soli, for which many other tenorsax players would have been highly praised. However, compared with the Wilson/Holiday records they are more on the ordinary side.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 23, 1938**

Personnel possibly as July 9, 1938.

Broadcast from the Famous Door.

Yeah Man	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (F)
----------	-------------------------

John's Idea	Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (FM)
Melody In F	Solo 4 bars. (M)
Must We Just Be Friends	No solo.

"Yeah Man" is good enough, in conception a typical big band solo, but "John's Idea" is the sensation with a number of wonderful surprises, observe in particular the last eight bars before the bridge. Also note "... F", Young solos briefly when Evans quite naturally is expected for a second time. The contrast is striking and reminds the listener of the Decca version of "Time Out".

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 24, 1938**
 Personnel probably as July 9, 1938.
 Broadcast from the Famous Door.

Nagasaki	Solo 4 bars. (FM)
Doggin' Around	No solo.
One O'Clock Jump	No solo.

NYC. Aug. 28, 1938
 Same. Bill Savory collection, two titles, no LY on "Will You Remember Me Tonight" but:

Honeysuckle Rose	Solo 60 bars. (FM)
------------------	--------------------

NYC. Aug. 30, 1938
 Same. Bill Savory collection, one title, "Stop Beatin' Around The Mulberry Bush" but no LY.

NYC. Aug. 31, 1938
 Same. Bill Savory collection, five titles, no LY on "Alexander's Ragtime Band", "St. Louis Blues" and "One O'Clock Jump" but:

Roseland Shuffle	Solo 8 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (p). (FM)
Texas Shuffle	Clarinet solo 32 bars. Clarinet soli 16+24+8 bars, (p) and (tp) on bridges. (FM)

NYC. Sept. 6, 1938
 Personnel probably as July 9, 1938.
 Broadcast from the Famous Door.

Indiana	Clarinet solo with orchestra 32 bars. (M)
Out The Window	Soli 8, 4 and 4 bars. (F)

NYC. Sept. 11, 1938
 Same personnel. Bill Savory collection, four titles, no LY on "Now It Can Be Told" and "St. Louis Blues" but:

Sent For You Yesterday	Clarinet obbligato 24 bars. (M)
Texas Shuffle	As Aug. 31. (FM)

In a way it is unnecessary to write more about Lester's clarinet playing, having first become devoted to the reticent, but beautiful style, one never forgets it, and "Indiana" and the two "Texas ..."s fit nicely into the overall pattern. "Out ..." is good but not remarkable. When tenorsax is concerned, "... Rose" is a magnificent item, with a lovely opening phrase, and with good sound also!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 13, 1938**
 Personnel probably as July 9, 1938.
 Broadcast from the Famous Door.

Ta-Ta	Soli 32 and 4 bars. (FM)
Indiana (NC)	No solo.
Love Of My Life	Solo 10 bars. (M)
John's Idea (NC)	Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. (FM)

"Ta-Ta"; a solo which starts overwhelmingly, does not really manage to follow up, but still might be considered as one of his better ones. He does not quite succeed on an otherwise promising "Love ...", while the last eight bars of "... Idea" more than compensates.

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 15, 1938**

Buck Clayton (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Lester Young (cl, ts), Queenie Johnson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, all have LY:

23467-1	The Very Thought Of You	Clarinet solo 8 bars. (SM)
23468-1	I Can't Get Started	Tenor sax solo intro 4 bars. Tenor sax solo 16 bars. (SM)
23468-2	I Can't Get Started	As above. (SM)
23469-1	I've Got A Date With A Dream	Clarinet solo 8 bars. (SM)
23469-2	I've Got A Date With A Dream	As above. (SM)
23470-2	You Can't Be Mine	Tenor sax intro 4 bars. Tenorsax obligato 32 and 16 bars. (SM)

Note: 23467-2 and 23470-1 exist as test pressings, but they are dubbings and not alternate takes, unfortunately.

This session is yet another of the great Holiday/Young co-operations, containing beautiful singing and a lovely atmosphere. The top moment of the day is the wonderful clarinet solo in "... Thought ...", one of the best he ever made and equal to that on "I Want A Little Girl". Of "... Dream" two takes fortunately exist. They are similar except for a few details, take 2 is generally the better one, being more firmly executed. The two takes of "... Started" bring a great surprise. The beautiful and pensive tenorsax solo in take 1 has always seemed somewhat obvious, it had to be exactly that way. However, take 2 is completely different in every respect. Viewed without passion (if that were possible), it is more casual and untidy and definitely of lower quality. It is full of exciting detail, however, though not quite satisfactorily put together, but with a feeling perhaps surpassing take 1. Alternate takes are always surprising, particularly when Young is a soloist, but "... Started" is even more so than usual. Even the intros are very different. "... Mine" contains a very pleasant and humorous intro. The obligato is good, but tamer and of lesser intensity than on the best recordings with Billie Holiday, being more of a traditional accompaniment than the duet it could have been.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 24, 1938**

Personnel probably as July 9, 1938.

Unknown broadcast.

Margie	No solo.
This Time It's Real	No solo.

THE KANSAS CITY SIX **NYC. Sept. 27, 1938**

Buck Clayton (tp), Lester Young (cl, ts), Eddie Durham (el-g), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Five titles were recorded for Commodore:

23421-1	Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	Tenorsax solo 28 bars. Clarinet in duet with (tp) 28 bars. (FM)
23421-2	Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	As above. (FM)
23422-1	Countless Blues	Clarinet solo 24 bars. (FM)
23422-2	Countless Blues	As above. (FM)
23423-1	Them There Eyes	Clarinet in duet with (tp) 32 bars. Tenor sax solo 32 bars. Clarinet solo 24 bars. (FM)
23423-2	Them There Eyes	As above. (FM)
23424-1	I Want A Little Girl	Clarinet intro 4 bars. Clarinet solo 16 bars. (SM)
23424-2	I Want A Little Girl	As above. (SM)

One O'Clock Jump (NC)	Solo 12 bars. (M)
King Porter Stomp	No solo.
Sent For You Yesterday	No solo.

A fine version of "... Jump" but rather similar to the versions heard before. "Limehouse ..." is a more exciting title, never recorded by Basie, and Prez plays a good but too brief solo. Exciting as any new discovery by Basie from the Famous Door may be, this is in fact Herschal Evans' date!

TEDDY WILSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 31, 1938**

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

Two titles were recorded for Brunswick:

23642-1	Everybody's Laughing	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
23643-1	Here It Is Tomorrow Again	Solo 8 bars. (M)

"... Laughing" is beautiful and relaxed, but lacking in spontaneity, and "... Tomorrow ..." is good but not beyond the ordinary.

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 6, 1938**

Personnel as usual.

Postscript of May 22, 2017: Note that I presented earlier this broadcast as Nov. 6, but my notes may be wrong, as the issue on iTunes has Nov. 2.

Broadcast from the Famous Door, Bill Savory collection, six titles, no LY on "One O'Clock Jump", "I Never Knew", "While A Cigarette Was Burning" and "One O'Clock Jump" but:

Good Morning Blues	Clarinet obbligato 36 bars. (SM)
Limehouse Blues	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Nothing unexpected here.

TEDDY WILSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 9, 1938**

Personnel as Oct. 31, 1938.

Four titles were recorded, one has LY:

23687-1	Say It With A Kiss	Solo 8 bars. (M)
---------	--------------------	------------------

"Say It ..." , however, is a really top solo, brief but inspired.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 11, 1938**

Personnel as usual.

Broadcast from the Famous Door, Bill Savory collection, two titles, "Harlem Shout" and "One O'Clock Jump", but no LY.

NYC. no dates, 1938

Same. Bill Savory collection, three titles:

I Ain't Got Nobody	Soli with orch 8 and 4 bars. (F)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. (FM)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. (M)

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 15, 1938**

Buck Clayton (tp), Herschel Evans, Lester Young (ts), Count Basie (p), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm) and members of the Benny Goodman Orchestra without BG.

Broadcast CBS Radio Network.

Lady Be Good	Solo 64 bars. (F)
--------------	-------------------

A really cheerful solo, an example of the immense richness of ideas that Lester Young possessed. It is different from all the other preserved "Lady ..." versions, in a way more daring and dramatic, but in contrast more untidy and not 100% coherent. Several details pop up as charming, refreshing surprises.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 16, 1938**

Personnel as July 9, 1938.

Five titles were recorded for Decca, four have LY:

64746-A	Dark Rapture	Solo 18 bars. (M)
64747-A	Shorty George	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
64749-A	Do You Wanna Jump Children?	Very faint obbligato 8 bars. (vo-JR). (FM)
64750-A	Pannassie Stomp	Solo 8 bars. (F)

"Dark ..." is a formidable sensation and one of Lester's best soli with the Basie band. The arrangement seems to be written especially for him, and it is obvious that he is having a great time. The band is heavy, and Lester's tendency to lie back on the beat gives the solo a deliberate sluggishness, which nevertheless produces a highly memorable result. In my opinion Basie could have used Lester more in numbers like this one. "... Stomp" contains a brief but sparkling solo, whereas "... George" is rather ordinary.

JAM SESSION**NYC. Nov. 16, 1938**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Ben Heller (g), Sid Weiss (b), Jo Jones (dm).
Broadcast, Martin Block Make Believe Ballroom, Bill Savory collection, three titles:

I Know That You Know	Solo 64 bars. Very weakly in ensemble 32 bars. (F)
Tea For Two (NC)	Solo 12+64 bars (NC). (FM)
After You've Gone	Solo 3 choruses of 40 bars. (FM)

A fine solo on "... You Know", particularly when one considers the very high tempo. However, this item is only a faint introduction to what follows!! The first chorus of "Tea ..." is unfortunately destroyed, but the rest is just something I never imagined I would hear. And after digesting this, the "After You've Gone" brings you into nirvana, so elegant, natural flowing improvisation which could have gone forever!! When he has to close, his good-bye tag is just teasing us. This item puts some attention on the reports telling Pres had to have six-seven choruses to properly warm up, and then he started improvising. Here we get four ... oh what have we been missing, born to late, and in the wrong place!!!

KANSAS CITY SIX**NYC. Dec. 23, 1938**

Buck Clayton (tp), Lester Young (cl, ts), Count Basie (p), Leonard Ware (el-g), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm).
John Hammond's Carnegie Hall Concert No. 1.

After You've Gone	In ensemble 36 bars. Solo 80 bars. In ensemble 80 bars. (F)
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	Clarinet in ensemble 28 bars. Solo 28 bars. Solo with (tp) acc. 28 bars. (F)

The reason for its late public appearance of these items may be that Ware's guitar is overamplified, particularly disturbing during Lester's tenorsax chorus on "Way Down ...", and that the speed is rather uneven on "Way Down ...". Otherwise, the music sounds exactly like you would be inclined to believe.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Dec. 23, 1938**

Personnel as July 9, 1938 with Shad Collins, Hot Lips Page (tp) added.
John Hammond's Carnegie Hall Concert No. 1.

One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
Blues With Lips	No solo.
Rhythm Man	Solo 16 bars. (F)

A fresh and swinging solo, but not very remarkable.

same date

Note: new material from the Carnegie Hall Concert has appeared on the "Spirituals to Swing" CD-box set:

Swingin' The Blues	Solo with orch 36 bars. (F)
--------------------	-----------------------------

Every Tub

Intro 8 bars to solo 24 bars.
Part of coda 2 bars. (F)

Nice, faster versions of old Basie favourites, surprisingly to appear in public now 60 years after the concert! Prez gets more space on "... Blues" compared to the Decca recording, and he plays excellently on both titles without actually teaching us something we didn't already know.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Jan. 5, 1939**

Personnel as July 9, 1939 with Shad Collins (tp) added.

Two titles were recorded for Decca, but no LY.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Feb. 2/3/4, 1939**

Personnel as Jan. 5, 1939, except Chu Berry (ts) replaces Evans. 64978 with Shad Collins (tp), Lester Young (ts) and rhythm only.

Eight sides were recorded for Decca, five have LY:

64978-A	You Can Depend On Me	Solo 32 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (tp) and (p). (FM)
64979-A	Cherokee Part I	Solo 16 bars. (M)
64980-A	Cherokee Part II	Solo 16 bars. (F)
64982-A	Jive At Five	Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge. (FM)
64985-A	Lady Be Good	Solo 32 bars. (F)

No really outstanding solo here, but several passages of quality. Best is "Jive ...", which contains a controlled, restrained, nearly "underplayed" solo, an effect which succeeds well. "Cherokee" follows the "normal" patterns, but the result is meaningful and a good example of Lester's high qualities as a "mere" craftsman. "... Depend ..." has some good parts in the beginning, but is not original, and an uninspired, sleepy rhythm section gives him no support. Finally, "Lady ..." is remarkable, though not to Lester's advantage. Rarely does anything so uninspired come from his horn, and compared to the 1936 version, the result is a catastrophe, or let's say embarrassing. With Chu Berry's guest appearance, the record could have been a sensation, now it is best to forget the whole meeting. Postscript to the second edition: I have been flogged for this nasty comment, and I admit being too hard on Lester here: But he does not play very well, no!!!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Chi. Feb. 13, 1939**

Buck Clayton, Shad Collins (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Lester Young (cl, ts), Count Basie (p, org), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmie Rushing (vo-24511). Date erroneously given as April 26, 1939.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion:

24510-1	I Ain't Got Nobody	Clarinet solo 32 bars. Tenorsax solo 32 bars. Clarinet in ensemble 8 and 8 bars. (F)
24511-1	Goin' To Chicago	Clarinet obbligato 12 bars. Clarinet in ensemble 24 bars. (M)
24512-1	Live And Love Tonight	Tenorsax solo 32 bars. (M)
24513-1	Love Me Or Leave Me	Tenorsax solo 32 bars. Tenorsax solo 4 bars to 8 bars in ensemble. (FM)

This session never gets really hot. Bad recording balance is part of the reason, but in my opinion not the whole. It seems that the musicians do not quite communicate as on many similar small band sessions. There are several good contributions by Young, but none outstanding. Of course every new record with clarinet is wholly welcome, and here we find two. I prefer the obbligato on "... Chicago", the tempo on "... Nobody" is a little too fast. The tenorsax soli are all even and easy-flowing but never far from routine. The beginning of "... Nobody" and the beginning of the last eight bars of "... Tonight" are the most notable parts. Postscript: LSc asks me to include the following: "I think "... Nobody" has to be one of the best put-together soli Lester ever played - it is virtually a question and answer kind of affair, and his clarinet solo might be his best one ever - please reconsider!!! Also, "Love Me ..." captures a part of Prez's style that must come close to what he sounded like in an after-hours jam session. I think this session adds a great deal to our image of Prez in the Basie years". Maybe I was in a bad mood when I wrote my comments? ...

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 19, 1939**

Buck Clayton, Shad Collins, Harry Edison, Ed Lewis (tp), Dan Minor, Bennie Morton, Dicky Wells (tb), Buddy Tate, Earl Warren, Lester Young, Jack Washington (reeds), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing, Helen Humes (vo).

Five titles were recorded for Vocalion, two have LY:

24238-1	What Goes Up Must Come Down	Solo 4 bars. (M)
24238-2	What Goes Up Must Come Down	As above. (M)
24242-1	Taxi War Dance	Soli 32, 4, 4, 4 and 2 bars. (FM)
24242-2	Taxi War Dance	As above. (FM)

NYC. March 20, 1939

Personnel as March 19, 1939

Two titles were recorded, one has LY:

24243-1	Don't Worry About Me	Solo 8 bars. (M)
24243-2	Don't Worry About Me	As above. (M)

During the two years which had passed since Lester made his recording debut, there had been a noticeable development in his tone quality. Even from the beginning, his tone differed from the conventional, with its lack of vibrato, but it was still sometimes a little uneven, and obviously he was trying to make it perfect. On these sessions he seems to have succeeded and even if the achievement was not complete and permanent, it represents a milestone. This can best be heard on "Don't Worry ...", an excellent record with Lester at his most inspired and with a tone that is fully polished and soft, really a remarkable piece of music. "Taxi ..." is one of the most prominent Basie recordings of 1939, and Lester takes an important part in it. The original take is inspired and inventive, maybe the recording balance could have been better, but this is not a serious matter. Take 2 is very different and almost, but not quite, as good. The main solo competes successfully, but the brief parts are solved more successfully on take 1. A second take of "Don't Worry ..." turned up later. Lovely as it is, take 1 is superior.

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. April 2, 1939**

Personnel as usual.

Broadcast, Bill Savory collection, three titles, no LY on "Sent For You Yesterday" and "One O'Clock Jump" but:

Swinging The Blues	Solo with orch 36 bars. (F)
--------------------	-----------------------------

Nice solo this one!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. April 5, 1939**

Personnel as March 19, 1939.

Five sides were recorded for Vocalion, four have LY:

24337-A	And The Angels Sing	Soli 4 and 3 bars. (M)
24338-A	If I Didn't Care	Soli 8 and 4 bars. (M)
24339-A	Twelfth Street Rag	Soli 64 and 8 bars. (F)
24340-A	Miss Thing Part I	Solo 32 bars. (F)

The same soft and beautiful playing is presented here. His brief "insignificant" soli are the most charming, foremost "... Angles ..." and also "If ...". "Miss Thing" is well constructed and easy-flowing without being sensational, whereas "... Rag" is played in a fast tempo which obviously does not suit Lester too well. Although containing a few bright spots, it gives the impression of being routine work.

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA **Chi. May 19, 1939**

Personnel as usual.

NBC broadcast from the Panther Room, Bill Savory collection, eight titles, no LY on "Pannassie Stomp", "Shout And Feel It" and "Topsy" but:

Roseland Shuffle	64 bars 4/4 with (p). (FM)
Pound Cake	Solo with orch 24 bars. (M)
Lady Be Good	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Every Tub	Intro 8 bars to solo 32 bars. (F)

Jumpin' At The Woodside

Break to solo 64 bars. (F)

Lots of excellent Pres here, but for a highlight, dig his coplaying with Basie on "... Shuffle", great!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**Chi. May 19, 1939**

Personnel as March 19, 1939.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, three have LY:

2594-A	Lonesome Miss Pretty	Solo 13 bars. (M)
2595-B	Bolero At The Savoy	As below? ()
2595-C	Bolero At The Savoy	Solo 8 bars. (M)
2597-C	Pound Cake	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

Note: 2595 and 2597 also exist as tests with take number given as A, but the contents are identical to C.

"... Pretty" has a very beautiful solo, the opening in particular is excellent, and the whole setup reminds one of "Dark Rapture". "Bolero ..." is also an original little construction, while "... Cake" is ordinarily attractive without defects but not particularly exciting.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**Chi. June 4, 1939**

Personnel probably as March 19, 1939.

Broadcast from the Panther Room, Hotel Sherman.

	Southland Shuffle (Jump For Me)	No solo.
	One O'Clock Jump (NC)	No solo.

Chi. June 5, 1939

Personnel probably as March 19, 1939.

Broadcast from Hotel Sherman.

	Moten Swing	No solo.
	Darktown Strutters Ball	No solo.
	One O'Clock Jump	No solo.

Chi. June 10, 1939

Personnel probably as March 19, 1939.

Broadcast from Hotel Sherman.

	I Found A New Baby	Solo 32 bars. (F)
	Thinkin' Of You	No solo.

"... Baby" contains a remarkable and personal solo with a sparkling rhythm section lead by real stride-piano, there is something refreshingly informal about it. It swings with great ease.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**Chi. June 24, 1939**

Personnel as March 19, 1939.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, one has LY:

2632-A	You Can Count On Me	Solo 8 bars. (M)
2632-B	You Can Count On Me	As above. (M)

Beautiful and sensitive soloing of top quality, however, the two takes are almost identical.

GLENN HARDMANN AND HIS HAMMOND FIVE**Chi. June 26, 1939**

Lee Castle (tp), Lester Young (cl, ts), Glenn Hardmann (org), Freddie Green (g), Jo Jones (dm).

Six titles were recorded for Vocalion/Columbia:

2636-A	China Boy	Soli 32 and 8 bars. Duet with (tp) 32 bars at the beginning, 16 and 10 bars at the end. (F)
--------	-----------	---

2637-A	Exactly Like You	Solo 24 bars. Duet with (tp) 32 bars at the beginning and 8 bars at the end. (M)
2637-B	Exactly Like You	As above. (M)
2638-A	On The Sunny Side Of The Street	Tenor sax soli 8 and 24 bars. Clarinet solo 8 bars. Tenor sax in duet with (tp) 16 and 8 bars in the beginning and 8 bars at the end. (M)
2639-A	Upright Organ Blues	Solo 24 bars. Duet with (p) 24 bars. (SM)
2640-A	Who?	Tenor sax solo 32 bars. Clarinet solo 24 bars. Duet with (tp) 32 bars at the beginning, clarinet 8 bars at the end. (F)
2641-A	Jazz Me Blues	In ensemble, tenor sax 24 bars at the beginning, clarinet 44 bars at the end. (M)

In several aspects this is an extraordinary recording session. A strange atmosphere prevails, due to the fact that Mr. Hardmann lacks both feeling for, and ability to play jazz. However, this does not seem to affect Lester: On the contrary he seems to feel completely at home in these surroundings. The rest of the rhythm section is familiar to him, but most musicians would be discouraged by such a setup. Not so with Lester, he uses every opportunity to play his two instruments, and very convincingly. He treats the different tempi in a lazy manner, and one is given the heretical impression that he is enjoying himself more than in the Basie band. There are several very good soli here, the highlights may be found in two excellent choruses on "... Organ ...", the final chorus "... Sunny Side ..." and the fresh and swinging soli in "Exactly ..." whose opening is quite similar to the Basie version made two years earlier. The two takes of "Exactly ..." are rather similar with A as the better one. However, the tenorsax playing in the duet at the beginning is more prominent and charming on take B. Apart from this, there is some brilliant clarinet playing, medium tempo, in "... Sunny Side ..." and up-tempo on "Who?" which is treated, rhythmically, in a very elegant manner.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 14, 1939**
Personnel probably as March 19, 1939.
Broadcast "America Dances". Recorded at Columbia Studios.

One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
Swinging The Blues	Solo 36 bars. (FM)
Rockabye Basie	No solo.
Don't Worry About Me	Very weak obbligato (vo-HH) Solo 8 bars. (M)
Time Out	Soli 28 and 8 bars. Very weak coda. (FM)
Boogie Woogie Blues	No solo.
Roseland Shuffle	Solo 8 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (p). (F)
White Sails	Very weak obbligato (vo-HH) 8 bars. (M)
Clap Hands, Here Comes Charlie	Solo 66 bars. (F)
One O'Clock Jump	No solo.

One might as well admit it at once: Lester's playing on this session leaves one a little cool. The list of titles is very interesting, both "Swinging ...", "Time Out", "Roseland Shuffle" and "Clap Hands ..." are previously recorded by the Basie Orchestra. It is therefore disappointing to discover that in all cases the record is the better version. The soli are OK; but some inspiration is lacking and there are definite tendencies towards vulgarisms. Only in the last part of "Clap Hands ..." is this a prominent characteristic, though. "Time Out" is the best and most interesting of the titles mentioned above, and note particularly that Young here also plays the part Evans had in the original recording. The really enduring solo in this program is "Don't Worry"; this brief piece in medium tempo is the only item which shows the

sensitive musician I admire so much. Postscript: LSc adds the following interesting comment: "I find what you call "vulgarisms" very natural parts of Lester's bag of tricks, and a very tasteful way of showing some "soul". When one hears the tales older musicians tell of Lester in jam sessions, they refer to the strange and unique sounds he would make. These are just more of them, and I feel they are done with the utmost taste. And his solo on "Time Out" is fascinating - with the sound and motion of the solo being more important than the specific notes. This solo has intrigued me for years, and again, I feel it adds a great deal to our understanding of Prez's being so far ahead of his time".

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Aug. 4, 1939

Personnel as March 19, 1939.

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, two have LY:

24979-A	Song Of The Islands	Solo 14 bars. (M)
24981-A	Clap Hands, Here Comes Charlie	Solo 66 bars. (F)

"Song ..." is a masterpiece, executed with much feeling in the very best tempo, there are few of his records, not only among those with the Basie band, on which Lester plays a more majestic part. "... Charlie" on the other hand, shows that he is not a complete master of the very fast tempi. He is doing well technically, but the melodic touch is lacking and the result is only simple rhythmical figures of little importance. The record is better than most he has recorded in this tempo, especially after the war, but alas, that is small comfort.

COUNT BASIE'S KANSAS CITY SEVEN

NYC. Sept. 5, 1939

Buck Clayton (tp), Dicky Wells (tb), Lester Young (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Vocalion:

25296-1	Dickie's Dream	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
25296-2	Dickie's Dream	As above. (FM)
25296-3	Dickie's Dream	As above. (FM)
25297-1	Lester Leaps In	Solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (p). Soli 4 and 4 bars. (F)
25297-2	Lester Leaps In	Solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with ens and (p). Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (F)

Note: Of 25296, -2 was the first take cut, -3 the second and -1 the third. Take-numbers mean therefore first, second and third choice. "25296-4" appearing on CBS 88267 is in fact 25296-1 with better sound. How could you, gentlemen???

Note: A fourth, not complete take of 25296 exists, but it terminates before Prez's scheduled solo.

In my first edition of the solography I wrote that "this session is disappointing, lacking the necessary rhythmic intensity. The rhythm section sounds kind of lost, and this of course influences the overall atmosphere". I have been criticized for unreasonable negativness and I must partly apologize. I still stick to my statement that "Showcases like "Lester Leaps In" never impressed me much, mainly because the spontaneity and creativity are missing, everything seems to be of exaggerated importance". However, it still contains some good music, even if the recording balance is such that the rhythm section seems rather lost. The two takes are quite different, and the original Vocalion issue is the best one. But the real reason for my change of attitude was the two "new" takes of "Dickie's Dream". The perspective was deepened, and I see now that his work here is better reflected than I thought. The three takes are quite different. While still keeping within the fast medium limits, they vary quite a bit in tempi, being progressively faster (using Tax take notation). Take 2 seems to enjoy the best tempo and Lester's solo is definitely more biting here. Earlier I used the words "nice and pleasant, though a little too "well-combed" and tidy". Today I will say that there are several more interesting Young sessions from this period, but there still ought to be time left for listening to "Dickie's Dream" and "Lester Leaps In"!!

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA

Glendale, Ca., Nov. 3, 1939

Personnel as usual.

Broadcast from Glendale Civic Auditorium, three titles (note that "... Jump" in the previous issue was placed under unknown date):

What's New?	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (SM)
Swinging The Blues	Solo 36 bars. (F)

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

While "... Jump" is ok but presents nothing new, "... New?" really does, a title not heard with Basie before, and it has just the kind of few, delightful bars that document Prez' genius, dig these! Also three fine choruses on "... Blues" should be noted.

same date

Three additional titles have appeared (April 2015):

Pound Cake Solo 24 bars. (FM)
 Roses Of Picardy Obligato parts (vo-JR). (FM)
 Lady Be Good Solo 32 bars. (F)

A quite original solo on "Pound ..." is the highlight of the new discoveries! Also very interesting to hear "Roses ..." with the Count, and Prez can be heard clearly several places behind Rushing. Note also the unusually high tempo on "... Good".

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Nov. 6, 1939

Personnel as March 19, 1939.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh/Columbia, appearing with alternate takes in the Mosaic album, three have LY:

26276-A The Apple Jump Solo 8 bars. (M)
 26277-2 I Left My Baby Obligato (vo-JR) 24 bars. (S)
 26277-7 I Left My Baby As above. (S)
 26278-1 Riff Interlude Solo 24 bars. (FM)
 26278-2 Riff Interlude As above. (FM)
 26278-3 Riff Interlude (NC) Solo 20 bars (NC). (FM)
 26278-4 Riff Interlude As above. (FM)
 26278-5/A Riff Inyerlude As above. (FM)

NYC. Nov. 7, 1939

Personnel as March 19, 1939.

Four titles were recorded, three have LY:

26280-3 Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea As below. (M)
 26280-4 Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea Solo 8 bars. (M)
 26280-5 Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea As above. (M)
 26281-5 Ham'n Eggs (NC) Solo 3 bars (NC). (FM)
 26281-6 Ham'n Eggs As below. (FM)
 26281-7 Ham'n Eggs 16+24 bars 4/4 with orch,
 solo 8 bars in between. (FM)
 26282-1 Hollywood Jump As below. (FM)
 26282-2 Hollywood Jump Solo with orchestra 16+8 bars,
 (p) on bridge. (FM)

Note: There are breakdowns 26277-6 and 26280-1&2 without LY.

Note: The issued version 26277-A is now given as take -7, 26278-A as take 5, 26280-A as take -4, 26281-A as take -7 and 26282-A as take -2.

Comments to original 78 rpm. issues: The main attraction is concentrated around the three slowest tunes, both "... Apple ..." and "Devil ..." (note the elegant first 4 bars!) are representative, and "... Baby" offers some beautiful obligato although James Rushing is no Billie Holiday, and the tempo is a bit too slow to create any rhythmic impact. The three remaining tunes are of a rather routine kind, spotless but rather dull. Postscript after listening to Mosaic: Again one must marvel at the genius of Prez! And how easy it is to get fooled. "Riff ...", "... Eggs" and "... Jump" have never belonged to my favourites, finding them a bit constrained by the orchestra. However, getting them now in new, excellent sound, with alternate versions, the perspective changes, and one discovers details hitherto hidden or overheard. Adding to the pleasure is a new marvelous obligato on "... Baby" and two thrilling "... Devil ..."s. Order the Mosaic album immediately!

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 9, 1939

Personnel as usual.

"Man With A Band" broadcast, Bill Savory collection, one title:

The Apple Jump	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
----------------	-------------------

Postscript of Aug. 2018: This nice item appeared in the Savory box on Mosaic!

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 13, 1939

Buck Clayton, Harry Edison (tp), Earl Warren, Lester Young, Jack Washington (reeds), Joe Sullivan (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, three have LY:

26342-A The Man I Love	Solo 16 bars. (S)
26343-A You're Just A No Account	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
26344-A You're A Lucky Guy	Solo 18 bars. (M)

This is an arranged session for middle-size orchestra and vocalist, the setup is thus different from the immortal sessions with Billie Holiday as a performer on equal terms. However, Lester contributes some excellent soli: "... Love" is beautiful and full of emotion, and likewise "... Account" is inspired and well shaped in spite of a slight "miss". "... Guy" is more on the ordinary side.

JAM SESSION

NYC. Dec. 24, 1939

Vanguard album gives personnel as: "The Count Basie Orchestra, The Benny Goodman Sextet with Benny Goodman (cl), Fletcher Henderson (p), Charlie Christian (g), Artie Bernstein (b), Nick Fatool (dm), Lionel Hampton (vib) plus Pete Johnson, Albert Ammons, Meade Lux Lewis (p). However, Jazz Information, Dec. 29, 1939 by J.D. Smith says: "Joe Sullivan, Pete Johnson and Count Basie alternated at the piano but Hampton missed the train and his turn at the drums". John Hammond's Carnegie Hall Concert No. 2.

Lady Be Good	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
--------------	--------------------

Still another version of "Lady Be Good" and also a highly enjoyable one. Even if it cannot be compared to the famous Vocalion version, it is easy-swinging and clever, perhaps slightly extrovert. The first chorus is definitely better than the second.

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Dec. 24, 1939

Personnel as usual. Jimmy Rushing (vo).

One title from Carnegie Hall appearing on CD:

Stealin' Blues	No solo.
----------------	----------

Same except James P. Johnson (p) replaces the Count, and with Helen Humes (vo). Two titles:

Old Fashioned Love	No solo.
If I Could Be With You	Brief, almost inaudible obbligato parts. (SM)

Yes, he is there on "If I Could ...", just listen closely!

KANSAS CITY SIX

NYC. Dec. 24, 1939

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

John Hammond's Carnegie Hall Concert No. 2.

Pagin' The Devil	36 bars where first 12 are presentation, next 12 are "warming up" and last 12 are solo. Acc. (tp) 24 bars. (SM)
Good Moming Blues	Solo 24 bars. Acc. (tp) 16 and 24 bars. (SM)
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	Intro 4 bars. Solo with (tp) acc 32 bars. Solo 32 bars. Duet with (tp) 32 bars. (F)

The Kansas City Five had a very important addition at this concert in guitarist Charlie Christian, a musician up to Lester's standard, and also a pioneer in jazz. Their concept of rhythm and harmony was closely related, and Christian's participation obviously inspired Lester, even if they don't play any duets. Particularly on "... Blues" Lester plays inspiredly and beautifully, his horn actually sings and leaves an unforgettable impression. "... Devil" is not far behind, while "Way Down ..." is weakened by the fact that the musicians cannot agree upon the tempo and soloing sequence, the result is consequently rather loose and restless.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Boston, Feb. 20, 1940**

Buck Clayton, Al Killian, Harry Edison, Ed Lewis (tp), Vic Dickenson, Dan Minor, Dicky Wells (tb), Earle Warren (as), Buddy Tate, Lester Young (ts), Jack Washington (as, bar), Count Basie (p, ldr), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), Jo Jones (dm), Jimmy Rushing, Helen Humes (vo).
NBC broadcast from the Southland Cafe.

One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
Ebony Rhapsody	Soli 30 and 8 bars. (FM)
Riff Interlude	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
Dam That Dream	Weak obbligato. Solo 4 bars. (SM)
Take It Prez	Soli 32, 8 and 8 bars. (FM)
Baby Don't Tell On Me	In orchestra. (M)
(If I Could Be With You) One Hour	No solo.
I Got Rhythm	Soli 16, 68 and 34 bars. Solo 18 bars to rather long coda. (F)

This is a disappointing program, and it is quite obvious that Lester dislikes his surroundings. The playing is full of routine and standard phrases, and original ideas are very rare. One might say that this session shows the first signs of decadence, luckily they disappear on the following session, not to reappear until after the war. Postscript: Written several years ago, this seems much too negative! "I Got ..." is still not very exciting to me but overall acceptable, and "Take It Prez" is not at all that bad, particularly the brief soli.

COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA **Boston, Feb. 28, 1940**

Personnel as usual. Note that "Bugle ..." has been on the internet, dated March 8. Broadcast, Bill Savory collection, six titles, no LY on "I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me" and "One O'Clock Jump" but :

Bugle Call Rag	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
I Never Knew	Soli 16 and 4 bars. (FM)
The Apple Jump	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. (M)

Rather conventional playing on this Boston date, but note the playful opening of "... Rag"!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Boston, March 1, 1940**

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940.
WBZ broadcast from the Southland Cafe.

Indiana	Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)
Time Out	Solo 28 bars. Fade-in to solo 4 bars. Coda. (FM)
Twelfth Street Rag	Solo 64 bars. (F)

Boston, March 5, 1940

Two more items have appeared from Southland Café:

I Got Rhythm	Solo 2 choruses of 34 bars. (F)
I Left My Baby (NC)	Obbligato 12 bars (NC). (S)

Boston, March 7, 1940

Same. These items were previously believed to have been recorded in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and this is true, but from the air, Basie was still in Boston (ref. Sheridan). Postscript of Feb. 10, 2023: Acetate of "Louisiana" says March 8.

Louisiana	Soli 14 and 4 bars. (M)
Green Bay	No solo.

Boston, March 8, 1940

Same. One title on acetate (James Accardi collection):

I Never Knew	Soli 16 and 4 bars. (FM)
--------------	--------------------------

Boston, March 9, 1940

Same.

St. Louis Blues (NC)	Obbligato ca. 18 bars. (FM)
One O'Clock Jump (NC)	No solo.
Basin Street Blues	No solo.
Topsy	Solo 8 bars. (FM)

Boston, March 12, 1940

Same.

I Left My Baby	Obbligato 24 bars. (S)
Doggin' Around	Soli 64 and 8 bars. (F)
Tickle Toe	Solo 32 bars. Coda. (FM)

Boston, March 13, 1940

Same.

Rockin' In Rhythm	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
-------------------	--------------------

The change from February to March is incredible! These broadcasts have the most inspired Basie band and Prez shines like a sun all the way through. Where to begin? I will choose "Twelfth Street Rag", recorded by the band eleven months before without remarkable success. Suddenly this corny tune ignites the band, and Prez pours forth one of his most tricky, inventive, up-tempo soli ever. Particularly the bridges are sensations in a masterly musical maneuvering, how it is possible to "survive" the acrobatics in rhythm of the first bridge is incredible! Then the slow "I Left My Baby", the unearthly kind of obbligato unequalled in jazz ever. "Tickle Toe" is an interesting practice before the famous recording one week later; this version is fine, with a "new" pair of tricks in bars 9-10, but with a slight fluff in the 18th. Other highlights are "Time Out" (note the bridge!), a "Doggin'..." better than before, and the thrill of having a Prez solo in the middle of Duke's "Rockin' In Rhythm". In all, a marvelous bunch of treasures here! Note also an interesting early "honking" "... Rhythm", and a beautiful background on "... Baby", unfortunately cut short in the middle.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 19, 1940**

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940.

Four titles were recorded for Columbia, all have LY:

26655-A	I Never Knew	Solo 16+4 bars, interrupted by orch 4 bars. (F)
26656-A	Tickle Toe	Solo 32 bars. "Coda". (FM)
26657-A	Let's Make Hey! While The Moon Shines	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
26657-B	Let's Make Hey! While The Moon Shines	As above. (FM)
26658-A	Louisiana	Solo with orch 14 bars. Solo 4 bars. (FM)
26658-B	Louisiana	As above. (FM)

NYC. March 20, 1940

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940. LY not present on 26661-A "Blues" and 26662-A "Somebody Stole My Gal". Two titles:

26659-A	Easy Does It	Solo 28 bars. (M)
---------	--------------	-------------------

- 26660-A Let Me See Solo 32 bars. (F)
 26660-B Let Me See As above. (F)

Here the playing is, on the whole, inspired and with great elegance. The highlight, containing an unusually melodic and characteristic solo, is the delightful "Tickle Toe" which, by the way, has been honored with lyrics and was sung by Lambert, Hendricks and Ross for several years. Furthermore, "Easy ..." has a relaxed and significant solo with an extraordinary and original opening in the lower register of the instrument. Three items have two takes, and the details are always bringing surprise. "Let Me See" is more than usually good and well constructed without standard phrasing in a fast tempo, take 1 slightly ahead of take 2.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. May 31, 1940

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940 with Tab Smith (sop, as) added.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, one has LY:

- 26870-A Blow Top 16+8 bars 4/4 with orch,
 solo 8 bars in between. (FM)
 26870-B Blow Top As above. (FM)

Two very successful takes whose soli flow easily and unforcedly. They are of equal quality, having the same setup, but differ in a number of original details. Absolutely one of the better items with the Basie band.

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA NYC. June 7, 1940

Roy Eldridge (tp), Billy Bowen, Joe Eldridge (as), Kermit Scott, Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Freddie Green (g), Walter Page (b), J. C. Heard (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, three have LY:

- 26900-A I'm Pulling Through Solo 8 bars. (S)
 26902-A Laughin' At Life Obligato 16 bars. Solo 16 bars. (FM)
 26902-B Laughin' At Life As above. (FM)
 26903-A Time On My Hands Obligato 16 bars.
 Obligato with (tp) 16 bars. (S)

A very remarkable session with extremely beautiful music. Both in the very sensitive solo in "... Through" and in the obligato in "Time ..." one notices a silky-soft, almost feline kind of playing, different from the comparatively more aggressive style characterizing the earlier Holiday/Young sessions, but no less engaging. "...Life" is not quite up to the same standard as the other two, though of good quality. Take B is the more inspired, especially as regards the obligato.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA Chi. Aug. 8, 1940

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940.

Six titles were recorded for Okeh, three have LY:

- WC-3254-A Evenin' Solo 8 bars. (M)
 WC-3255-A The World Is Mad, Part I Solo 24 bars which fades out. (FM)
 WC-3256-A The World Is Mad, Part II Soli 12 and 24 bars. (FM)

Not very exciting soli on this session, mostly routine work. "Evenin'" is the better one.

**BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET -
 "REHEARSAL SESSION"**

NYC. Oct. 28, 1940

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

- Ad-Lib Blues Heard behind CC at the end of his solo.
 Solo 24 bars. In ens 24 bars. (M)
 I Never Knew Solo 32 bars. (FM)
 Charlie's Dream Solo 32 bars. (FM)
 Wholly Cats Solo 24 bars. (FM)
 Lester's Dream Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Note: Contrary to what is stated in "BG on the Record", the personnel listed above is correct. Also there are no remaining unissued titles. "Charlie's Dream" and "Lester's Dream" are in fact two takes of the well known "Dickie's Dream", but in a different key. This is a lovely day! I must admit that the years of wishful thinking about what the combination Young/Christian might have created did influence me so much that when the dreams at last came true, first in "Spirituals to Swing" and recently, on this date, I cannot be objective. It is easy to understand why the sides were not released, they have a "loose jacket" atmosphere to them which to us, now, is heaven, but which understandably wasn't in 1940. However, the contributions of memorable jazz music is great from all participants. Lester's most memorable contribution is the two relaxed choruses on "... Blues", this is the kind of tenor playing one just has to love. His playing on the fast medium tracks is all first-rate, though it is not possible to single out one in particular. The soli are not as such extraordinary, but the overall tension is nearly unbearable. Don't skip this session!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Oct. 30, 1940**

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, one has LY:

29008-1	What's Your Number?	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
29008-2	What's Your Number?	As above. (FM)
29008-3	What's Your Number?	As above. (FM)

Three takes of "... Number?", all lovely, different, well constructed and swinging! His tone is by now at its softest. Note that take 3 is slightly faster than the others.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Nov. 19, 1940**

Personnel as Feb. 20, 1940.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, two have LY:

29087-1	Five O'Clock Whistle	Solo 16+8 bars, orch on bridge. Solo 6 bars. (FM)
29087-2	Five O'Clock Whistle (NC)	As above. (FM)
29087-3	Five O'Clock Whistle	As above. (FM)
29090-1	Broadway	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
29090-2	Broadway	Takes off too early, stops and then enters correctly with a solo 32 bars. (FM)

This is Lester's final session with the Basie band after more than four years, and despite his later appearances, it might be considered a sortie. And it certainly is a worthy one! First and foremost there is "Broadway", where he surpasses himself with an overwhelming flow of original ideas, swinging to the limit all the time, and being even more melodic than usual. The rejected take is interesting inasmuch as it offers a Lester Young who makes a mistake! He does not know the arrangement properly, takes off two bars too early, stops after a bar or so, rests and then takes off again. And this time magnificently, his solo here is at least as good as the issued one. As if this was not enough, we get three takes of "... Whistle", all completely different and presenting us with excellent, easy-flowing and inventive soli. He never played better with this band!

Prez left Count Basie on Dec. 13, 1941.

BILLIE HOLIDAY **NYC. Dec. 19, 1940**

Personnel probably includes Hot Lips Page (tp), Charlie Barnet, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young (ts), Teddy Wilson (p).
Broadcast WNEW.

The Man I Love	Obbligato 48 bars. (S)
Jam Session Blues	

Played in an extremely slow tempo, the long melodic lines which made Lester famous nearly disappear, and the experience of a real duet is less moving than usual. The recording is far from good, and it does not belong among Young's most important works.

HOT LIPS PAGE **NYC. Dec. 29, 1940**

Personnel includes Hot Lips Page (tp, vo), Charlie Barnet, Lester Young (ts), probably Hilton Jefferson (as) plus unknown soloists on (cl), (p).
Broadcast WNEW: Bundles for Britain.

Another group on same date features Hot Lips Page and Coleman Hawkins.

Theme	In ensemble during a total of 48 bars. Prominently only on bridge 8 bars. Announcer talks all the time. (M)
Lady Be Good	Solo approx. 48 bars, the change of recording disc takes place during the beginning of Young's solo and the recording continues just before the bridge (of the first chorus?). (FM)
Theme	In ens during a total of 32 bars. Prominently only on bridge 8 bars together with Page. No announcer here. (M)
Wham	Solo probably 64 bars where bars 5-12 are missing due to change of recording disc. (A whole chorus may be missing). (M)

By a trick of fate, the change of recording equipment had to take place in the middle of Young's solo on "Wham". This is very unfortunate, because he plays magnificently in a soft but firm style rather similar to that on the Una Mae Carlisle records. "Lady Be Good" is fine without being comparable to many Basie versions, while the two "Theme"s only let us feel his presence.

MATINEE JAM SESSION

NYC. Dec. 29, 1940

Shad Collins (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Lester Young (ts), Joe Sullivan, Art Hodes, Sammy Price (p), Harold West (dm) and possibly others like Marty Marsala, Max Kaminsky (tp), Rod Cless (cl), Lester Brown (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Pete Johnson (p), Teddy Bunn (g).

Recorded by Ralph Berton at Village Vanguard (2-8 pm), possibly later broadcast on WNYC. Fate of 16" transcriptions not known (ref. Franz Hoffmann).

Postscript: Appearing one title on Internet in 2007, thought to be lost, now we are waiting for the rest of the program!!!

Blues	Incomplete start with 20 bars destroyed by announcer to solo 24 bars. (M)
-------	--

Prez plays "as usual" but of course with some new tricks also.

MATINEE JAM SESSION

NYC. Jan. 12, 1941

Dolly Jones Arminra, Frankie Newton (tp), J. C. Higginbotham (tb), Joe "Flip" Phillips (cl), Lester Young (ts), Stan Facey, Marlowe Morris (p), Eddie Dougherty, Tom Candell (g), Alan Warner (b), Hal West, Lou Fromm (dm) and possibly others.

Recorded as above. Fate unknown.

From 27th February until 18th March 1941 led own band at Kelly's Stables in New York:

LESTER YOUNG

QUINTET

NYC. prob. between Feb. 27 and March 17, 1941

Shad Collins (tp), Lester Young (ts), John Collins (g), Nick Fenton (b), Doc West (dm).

WNYC broadcast. Master of ceremonies: Ralph Berton. Broadcast from Manhattan Center.

Tickle Toe	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
Willow Weep For Me	Soli 64 and 8 bars. (M)

This is probably the greatest acetate discovery in the history of jazz (Postscript: This was written before the Bill Savory collection was discovered, but the statement still is valid, although with heavy competition!!!) In this period Lester recorded very little, which is a very sad fact, because his artistic peak probably is just 1941 plus/minus one year. His quintet here is the same as the group accompanying Una Mae Carlisle some months later but, for some reason, without Clyde Hart. The nevertheless expert rhythm backing, propelled by a very active John Collins who also solos superbly, sends Prez off on two of his most important journeys. One might believe that the soli were just some new collections of well-known and beloved phrases, but no, there are several new tricks never heard before!! "Tickle Toe" starts out with two choruses each by Shad and John Collins, and then Prez enters with the good old opening phrase, to continue, however, with the most unbelievable logic and beauty. "Willow ...", which doesn't sound familiar to me (the

AABA pattern is there, but the As sound like 8-bar blues), has Prez tappin' it out, and wow!, it's nothing like you ever heard before!!! Sometimes I must admit that the presence of a broadcast with a lousy sound gives more academic than emotional interest. Not so here! A very good sound gives the two titles the opportunity to tell us how a Prez LP in 1941, without the 3-minute limit, would have sounded ...

UNA MAE CARLISLE WITH ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 10, 1941**

Shad Collins (tp), Lester Young (ts), Clyde Hart (p), John Collins (g), Nick Fenton (b), Hal West (dm), Una Mae Carlisle (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird:

062747-1	Blitzkrieg Baby	Solo 16 bars. Very faint obligato with (tp) 32 bars at the end. (M)
062748-1	Beautiful Eyes	Solo 16 bars. Obligato to all singing 24, 24 and 8 bars. (SM)
062749-1	There'll Be Some Changes Made	Obligato to all singing 34 and 18 bars. (SM)
062750-1	It's Sad But True	Obligato to all singing 40 and 16 bars. (SM)

This very remarkable session clearly demonstrates Lester Young's personality and attitude to jazz music. The surroundings are not the very best, Una Mae Carlisle never had the depth of Billie Holiday, and does not seem to be inspired by Lester in the same way Billie was. But she functions perfectly as a vocal base upon which Lester builds his improvisations. And on this session they are so unbelievably beautiful, lyrical and moving wherever he is admitted to the stand. It is as if this was, to Lester, a casual recording session of no importance, nothing matters very much and just then he is capable of a wealth of expressions. Apart from this obligato playing, which might have been better recorded, he has two brief soli of monumental strength and importance. Postscript: I believe I have underestimated Una Mae. After listening to Astrud Gilberto with Stan Getz twenty years later, the perspective changes!

BILLIE HOLIDAY AND HER ORCHESTRA **NYC. March 21, 1941**

Shad Collins (tp), Eddie Barefield, Leslie Johnkins (as), Lester Young (ts), Eddie Heywood (p), John Collins (g), Ted Sturgis (b), Kenny Clarke (dm), Billie Holiday (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, two have LY:

29987-1	Let's Do It	Solo 8 bars. (M)
29987-2	Let's Do It	As above. (M)
29990-1	All Of Me	Soli 10 and 2 bars. (SM)
29990-2	All Of Me	Solo 18+8 bars, (p) on bridge. Solo 2 bars. (SM)
29990-3	All Of Me	Soli 10 and 2 bars. (SM)

"All Of Me" attracts our attention for one reason in particular, it presents Prez in three takes of the same tune, which had happened only once before. Again, one marvels at the variations, each take has its own personality. Take 2 is particularly attractive, being of a longer duration and giving him the opportunity to really stretch out. While takes 1 and 3 seem somewhat cool, take 2 is warmer, and it is definitely my own favorite. "Let's ..." also has two beautiful and well constructed soli with significant differences.

SAM PRICE AND HIS TEXAS BLUESICIANS **NYC. April 3, 1941**

Shad Collins, Buddy Johnson (tp), Don Stovall (as), Lester Young (ts), Sam Price (p), Doug Jones (b), Hal West (dm), Yank Taylor, probably Sam Theard (vo).

Four titles were recorded for Decca, three have tenorsax:

68920-A	The Goon Drag	Solo 8 bars. (M)
68921-A	Things 'Bout Coming My Way	Solo 9 bars. (S)
68923-A	Just Jivin' Around	Intro 8 bars. Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Overall excellent solo work, soft, elegant and easy-swinging, almost sad, considering that it concludes the most important epoch of Lester Young's musical career. The next session, more than a year later, belongs in my opinion to another time and style. This is the last opportunity to hear Lester contributing to the music

of the swing era. Postscript: This was written before the California airshots appeared. Still it is almost true.

Moved to California in May 1941 and formed band co-led with his brother Lee, which made debut at Billy Berg's Club, Los Angeles.

LEE AND LESTER YOUNG's BAND **Hollywood, Dec. 2, 1941**
Paul Campbell (tp), Bumps Myers, Lester Young (ts), Jimmy Rowles (p), Louis Gonzales (g), Red Callender (b), Lee Young (dm).
KHJ broadcast from Billy Berg's Club Capri.

Untitled (Benny's Bugle)	Soli 8, 32, 8, 32 and 8 bars. (FM)
Sign Off (Skyline)	Behind announcer: In ens 12 bars, then two choruses of 12 bars, to be cut short after 4 bars of third chorus. (FM)

This is a historic event! From a period where Lester was on his very top, and where he was very much under-recorded, suddenly comes a shocking broadcast. "... Bugle", an otherwise ordinary riff tune, is offering 88 bars of beautiful Lester with his typical "Una Mae" sound. He blows and he blows, the band enters and you think "this is the end" and it isn't but goes on an on for three minutes. They played like this on the air twice a week, so there must be more yet to be discovered. Even the "Sign Off", 3/4 minute, is a very important piece of music, it seems that Lester really felt free when the announcers took over, noticed also in Basie broadcasts.

LEE AND LESTER YOUNG's BAND **Prob. Hollywood, Feb.-July 1942**
"Red" Mack Morris (tp, vo), Bumps Myers, Lester Young (ts, vo), Jimmy Rowles (p), Louis Gonzales (g), Red Callender (b), Lee Young (dm, vo).
Acetate probably made by a fan in a club, probably Club Capri.

A Little Bit South Of North Carolina	Vocal 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. Vocal 16 bars. (M)
--------------------------------------	---

That Lester sang has been confirmed by Lee Young. The sound is very, very bad, and only on a few occasions do we perceive the vocalist clearly enough to understand the words. The voice is light and warm, and seems to fit Lester's instrumental style. The tenorsax solo is unmistakably Lester's, and in a tempo of almost slow medium the result is a sure success. After a dozen repeated listenings one does not hear the noise anymore, but I doubt that anyone will dare to issue this rare item on record!

After regular work on the West Coast the band temporarily teamed up with Slim Gaillard and Slam Stewart, then reverted to its former billing "Lee and Lester Young's Band".

LEE AND LESTER YOUNG's BAND **LA. May 6, 1942**
Personnel as above.

Broadcast from Trouville Club, Hollywood. One surviving item (at the end):

Frolic Sam	Brief break. Soli 32 and 8 bars. (F)
------------	--------------------------------------

LA. ca. June 1, 1942
Same, with Billie Holiday (vo-"I Hear Music", "Solitude").
Two broadcasts from Trouville Club.

Broadway (NC-beginning)	Solo 24 bars. (F)
I Hear Music	Very faint obbligato and ensemble. (FM)
Bo-Go-Joe (NC)	No solo. (FM)
Benny's Bugle	No solo. (M)
Benny's Bugle (NC-beginning)	Start of solo missing but two choruses each of 32 bars are preserved. (FM)
Solitude (NC)	No solo. (S)
Broadway	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
Lady Be Good (NC-beginning)	No solo. (F)

These broadcasts show that Lester's transition period has begun. In the winter of 1942 he seemed to change his style, and the general comments to be found on the

succeeding pages are really applicable already at this time. The band is tough and unpolished, not really an environment one would be inclined to believe Prez preferred. For instance, the versions of "Broadway" are taken in quite rough tempi, and the broadcasts have no examples of the sensitive Lester. Comparisons of this version of "Benny's Bugle", the best item here, with the one of Dec. 2, 1941 seem to support the observation that Prez is searching for something new.

PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA **LA. June 12, 1942**

Monty Kelly, Lary Neill, Don Waddilove (tp), Skip Layton, Murray McEachern, Trummy Young (tb), Alvy West, Danny d'Andrea, Lenny Hartman, Lester Young (ts), strings, Buddy Weed (p), Mike Dignitore (g, bjo), Art Shapiro (b), Willie Rodriguez (dm), Paul Whiteman (ldr), Billie Holiday (vo-30), Jack Teagarden, Johnny Mercer (vo-31).

One titles was recorded for Capitol:

30 Travelin' Light No solo.

Note: LY did not participate on the remaining three items from this session: "The Old Music Master", "I'm Old Fashioned" and "You Were Never Lovelier".

LESTER YOUNG - KING COLE TRIO **LA. prob. July 15, 1942**

Lester Young (ts), Nat King Cole (p), Red Callender (b).

Four titles were recorded for Philco:

Van 1000	Indiana	Solo 64 bars. Accompanies (b) 32 bars with following solo 64 bars. (FM)
Van 1001	I Can't Get Started	Soli 32 and 32 bars. (S)
Van 1002	Tea For Two	Solo 64 bars. Accompanies (b) 32 bars with following collective improvisation 32 bars. (M)
Van 1003	Body And Soul	Soli 32, 16 and 8 bars, last one concludes the record. (S)

In the first edition of the Lester Young Solography 1936-1942 I simply forgot this session! Forgivable? In a way yes, because, somehow, it does not seem to fit in. If it had been undated, I doubt that the experts would have suggested 1942, more probably 1944. I would personally like to call it Young's first post-war session, it is difficult to comment upon it within the framework of his 1936-1942 production. The trio format, of course, creates an unusual atmosphere, but it seems that the easy swing of the thirties is now a thing of the past. The two faster items sound somewhat strained, although they contain good music; however, the two slow ballads are definitely most enjoyable, and there is really nothing which should lead to a low rating. When I cannot praise them here as much as many readers probably would like me to, the reason has to do with the whole idea of the Solography. By definition the scope has to be rather narrow and a lifetime is not. It seems too that the evaluation of Lester Young's music over his whole recording career of 20 years is one of the most argued and unsettled points in jazz criticism. Some people simply stop at 1942, others feel that some of his last recordings have a kind of tragedy about them which gives them a depth his early works only strive for but do not attain.

The band moved to New York in August 1942 for a residency at Cafe Society (Downtown), played various venues before disbanding early in 1943.

LEE AND LESTER YOUNG'S BAND **NYC. prob. between Sept. 1 and Oct. 31, 1942**

Paul Campbell (tp), Bumps Myers, Lester Young (ts), Sir Charles Thompson (p), Louis Gonzales (g), Red Callender (b), Lee Young (dm).

Private recording from Cafe Society Downtown.

Several titles, not available, including:

The Great Lie
Untitled (Rhythm Changes)

In the spring of 1943 Lester worked with Al Sears' Big Band at the Renaissance Casino in New York, subsequently did a U.S.O tour with Al Sears.

When I planned the first edition of the Lester Young Solography I decided to stop at 1942. My reason will be obvious to those readers who cared to study my original introduction to the Jazz Solography Series, describing its "philosophy". The method of comparing the artist's works as a whole, without reference to other artists and

events, is rather merciless. I choose the artist for his very top immortal performances, and if he is an uneven performer, substandard recordings will sometimes get a rather rough treatment. Particular difficulties arise when the method is used over a large number of years, where the artist's whole personality may change, along with his technique, embouchure, choice of musical material, even the total style. In this case, it is almost like comparing different artists, which is exactly what I do not want to do!

Lester Young, of course, creates a big problem, since he changed more than most of the jazz greats. Why and how he changed can be studied abundantly in jazz literature. I will not treat this sensitive subject here. However, jazz fans evaluate the change differently. One extreme viewpoint is that Prez continued to develop, and that the lack of technique was more than compensated for by the emotional contents of his music. The other extreme is that his first recording session in 1936 represented the peak of his career, from then on Prez slid downhill, more or less fast!

Now it is obvious that if you hold one viewpoint and I the other, my comments will be rather worthless to you. You will hear elaborate variations where I hear mere repetitions. It is therefore important that I explain my general attitude to Prez' music after 1942. I perceive a downward trend in his inspiration in 1944, before he was drafted. This is generally not notable in slower tempi, but gets more prominent in fast tempi. In 1945 when Lester left the Army, he started working with different modern groups. To me this seems a grave mistake, a musical blind alley, JATP shows him to greater advantage than Aladdin. The broadcast period of the late forties is to me a period of generally unsuccessful experimentation. Later he tried to get back to his roots, but by then he had lost too much of his soul. Lester Young created masterpieces up to his untimely death, but he was uneven, unhappy and erratic. In the period 1936-1942 there is beauty and perfection only, from then on even Lester must bear negative comments from time to time.

To be continued in late 1943.

...ooo...