II was not discovered until Jimmy Blanton joined up. Those resources were epitomized in the members of the organization who were almost as new as Blanton: Ben Webster, who joined just before Jimmy did; and Billy Strayhorn, who preceded Ben by a few months.

Duke knew the work of Ben Webster pretty well by the time he hired him. He knew that Ben had a violent temper which exhibited itself on rare occasions, and to go with it a sweetness of disposition which exhibited itself far more often. He knew that Ben was perhaps the best of all the tenor saxophonists in the Coleman Hawkins tradition—with the exception of Hawk himself—and that he had developed on the Hawkins theme a variation of singular loveliness, articulated in husky tones, occasionally kicked over for a summary blast or two—even as his temperament changed on occasion from a soft affability to erupting ire. Benny, as he was called by his friends, was born in Kansas City in 1909, educated in a local high school and by private music teachers who taught him the violin and piano. Before he went to Wilberforce University he had turned to the tenor, an instrument on which he had received almost no formal instruction. His first professional job was with an Oklahoma band, playing the piano; thereafter he played both the piano and the alto before switching permanently to the tenor in 1929 when he was with the Dean Coy band. Before joining Duke he played with Cab Calloway's sister, Blanche; with the Kansas City bands of Bennie Moten and Andy Kirk; with Fletcher Henderson in 1934; and for almost two years, in 1937 and 1938, with Benny Carter, Willie Bryant, and Cab Calloway, as well as the small bands of Stuff Smith and Roy Eldridge. Although his conception of the jazz phrase and sound was entirely different from Lester Young's, nonetheless his playing with Ellington from 1939 to 1942 had more than a suggestion, in its restraint and careful adjustment of solo lines to orchestral patterns, of the music that was to come in the following decade. In Jimmy Blanton's reorganization of the Ellington band's beat and abrupt modernization of its rhythmic feel, Benny

found a sturdy support for his own modern ideas. Their mutual compatibility and dual contribution to the Ellington band in its modern period can be heard in "Conga Brava" and "Cottontail," in "Bojangles," and in most of the other sides they made together from their entry into the band in 1939 and their first recording in February 1940, through the sides made in Hollywood in September 1941.

Billy Strayhorn auditioned for Duke in December 1938 in Pittsburgh, to which his family had moved a few years after his birth in Dayton, Ohio. He played a song called "Lush Life," for which he had written both the words and music. It did not find a large audience until more than ten years later when Nat Cole made it into a big hit with the aid of a lush string orchestra and the musical life that arranger Pete Rugolo was able to give it; but Duke was impressed back in 1938 by this and the other songs Strayhorn played for him backstage at the Stanley Theatre. He told Billy that he liked his songs, said he was sorry Strayhorn couldn't leave copies with him—because they were the only ones Strayhorn had—and suggested Billy look him up when he came to New York. Billy did, the following February; Duke bid for his services, and Strayhorn became a member of the organization. The band recorded Billy's lovely song, "Something to Live For," in which Jean Eldridge—no relation to Roy—made her single but sumptuous singing entry with the band on records. Then Billy was employed as arranger for the small recording units, demonstrated his several scoring talents as arranger and composer, and was welcomed into a position second only to Duke's with the Ellingtonians. It was with Jimmy Blanton playing bass in the rhythm section of the big band and of the small units that Billy's most impressive contributions to jazz were made: the enormously successful middle-tempo tribute to subway life in New York, "Take the A Train," was engineered rhythmically by Jimmy; so were Strayhorn's lovely impressionist pastiches, "After All" and "Chelsea Bridge"; so were his extravagantly lush but wholly successful settings for Johnny

Hodges' alto, the small-band "Daydream" and "Passion Flower." The last-named was in a sense an apt description of Strayhorn's sensuous nature, which led him early in his professional career to lead a hedonistic life. Perhaps it would be too much to say that Jimmy Blanton acted as a brake upon Billy Strayhorn's sentimental musical excesses; nonetheless it is true that after Blanton's death Strayhorn wrote very little that had the quality of the compositions and arrangements he scripted when Jimmy was alive and kicking. The whole band suffered as a result of Jimmy's death, not only in its loss of an incomparable rhythmic complement and bass soloist, but also in the consequent sagging in spirits. It was after Blanton died that Duke composed his monumental "tone parallel to the history of the American Negro," "Black, Brown, and Beige." It was after Blanton's death that Duke had his several Carnegie Hall concert triumphs; and after Jimmy died there were many fine compositions still to come and still some of the imaginative solos of such musicians as Ray Nance, Jimmy Hamilton, Taft Jordan, Carney, Hodges, Brown, Tizol, and Tricky Sam. Nonetheless when Jimmy died the last great solo phase of the Ellington band was over. Thereafter, however fresh and facile the work of the Ellington soloists, it was Duke's and Strayhorn's writing for which one listened to the band; everything else was essentially ornamental. As the writing of extended works in more or less new forms changed the Ellington tradition, so Jimmy transformed the way and the power of the musicians' playing. His death made performances that came after necessarily less coordinated and cogent; after him, one had to look to a whole new generation of jazzmen to find anything comparable in rhythmic brilliance and melodic ingenuity.

Charlie Christian was just a year older than Jimmy but was as formidable a solo and rhythmic influence, and a sad parallel in his succumbing to tuberculosis the same year the brilliant bassist did. Like Blanton, he joined an important band—Benny Goodman's—in 1939; like Blanton, he brought his rhythm instrument, the guitar, from

background anonymity to solo splendor; like Blanton, he played a hitherto restricted instrument well within the melodic frame of jazz, raising the guitar line almost to obbligato importance in the Goodman sextet. Unlike Hampton, Eldridge, or Young, Charlie Christian has a real connection with bebop. He played up at Minton's in Harlem in those first experimental sessions which evolved in the early forties, the altered chords, the fresher melodic lines, the rows of even beats and contrasting dynamic accents of bop. Some of the participants in the long after-hours affairs credit Charlie with the name "bebop," citing his humming of phrases as the onomatopoetic origin of the term. All of the musicians who played with him then, as all of us who heard him, insist on his great creative contribution to the music later associated with Parker and Gillespie.

Charlie was born in Texas, bred in Oklahoma; he played in the Southwest and Midwest before joining Goodman. His bigtime experience brought him attention and great development of style, but according to all who heard and played with him in his early years, the lines, the ideas, and the legato rhythmic feeling were always there. He was a natural musician, whose naturalness presaged the inevitable change in jazz from roar to restraint, from splash blast to mature speculation. Limited by the clatter of riffs in the Goodman groove, his imagination soars free in at least some of his solos on the records made by Benny's sextet; in "Solo Flight" it has most of a record side in which to make its impressive point, and there are other Christian moments on sides made with Lionel Hampton, Edmond Hall, Eddy Howard, and the Metronome All Star bands of 1940 and 1941.

If one listens to the two sides of the long-playing record that Jerry Newman issued on his Esoteric label, one hears Charlie Christian in all his glory. These sides were originally tape recordings made by Jerry at jam sessions in Minton's Playhouse, the dining room and club run by Henry Minton, ex-saxophonist and musicians' union delegate, made out of part of the Hotel Cecil on One

Hundred and Eighteenth Street in Harlem. The record was made in May 1941; it was made because Jerry, like every one of the rest of us who heard Charlie with Benny Goodman or in such sessions, knew he was a musician whose every moment counted. Here, playing with some of the first musicians to make the move from swing to bebop, Charlie plays rhapsodic chorus after chorus, threading his way through such familiar chords and melodic lines as those of "Stompin' at the Savoy" to give shape to a whole new conception of music. The beat never stops; its steady pulsation is elaborated, complicated, simplified. The sound never loses beauty or flourish; the harpsichord-like texture of Charlie's guitar is produced in arpeggios, trills, cascades, clusters, in phrases sometimes of tumultuous power, sometimes of elegant restraint. The record shows clearly what Charlie did for the electric guitar which before him was played on jazz records only by Floyd Smith with Andy Kirk's band, in a manner that was engaging but not much beyond the formulations of the blues. Charlie changed the playing technique of the guitar and structured for it a dramatic role in jazz which for all their imagination and resourcefulness, Eddie Lang, Carl Kress, and Dick McDonough had never dreamed of. He made it possible for guitarists such as Barney Kessel, Chuck Wayne, and Billy Bauer to think and speak musically on a level with trombonists, trumpeters, and saxophonists. So effectively did he transform the guitar from a rhythmic servant into an eloquent master that today very few bands, big or small, can find guitarists good enough for their needs—and after Christian a bad one would be unthinkable.

These are the large figures of transition. Their pioneering is evidence of the inventive brilliance of jazz musicians; without them present-day jazz would not be the provocative music it is, the reflective music, the music of idea and developed statement. Without Charlie Christian and Jimmy Blanton jazz not only misses two vital voices, it lacks any development of the guitar and the bass. Roy Eldridge is still with us, playing with the

genius and the cogency of a vigorous jazzman, but composers are insufficiently aware of him. Lester Young is very much a part of modern jazz, but while the cool-ness he contributed is unmistakable in his disciples, his lyricism in most instances seems to elude him. The spirit the Basie band possessed when Billy Strayhorn, Ben Webster, and Jimmy Blanton were together in it did have a flowering or two after Jimmy's death, but not of equal brilliance. As in the times of migration and depression, the continuity with the past has to be established with each development in jazz. Modern jazz knows where it comes from, but not why. A fresh examination of these men might prove again as suggestive and as stimulating as the first contact with them did, if it digs beneath the surface superficialities of their influence to discover how rich, how rich, how inevitable it was that these should have been the men who made modern jazz.

Chapter 20

SINGERS

Singing came in when swinging went out. Off and on a band would do well; regularly a Frank Sinatra or a Perry Como or a Dinah Shore would lead stampedes to the box office, draw screams from an audience and nickels from jukebox patrons, sell millions of their records. A singer, after all, offered not only a voice but a visual manner, not only a face but a calculated grimace. The day of the swooner—for many, more accurately, the return of the seven-year locust—was in many ways a dismal one; it was also a sharp change of focus. The Second World War had as serious an impact upon the American people as the depression of twelve years earlier, although its effect upon their economy was quite the opposite. A kind of papier-mâché romance was used to fabricate the fantasies of the forties.

Earlier the pleasure of the mob, running feverishly to cover from the onslaughts of drought and despair and no work, had elected Russ Columbo, Rudy Vallee, Will Osborne, and Bing Crosby entertainers inordinary. Then, when death had taken one, a change of taste had diminished the stature of two others, and by popular election the last had become a maker and keeper of the American Dream, the public had turned to bands. Bands in turn turned to singers. The leaders of swing had always liked singers; those who had worked with Paul Whiteman had played alongside Bing Crosby and the Rhythm Boys and Mildred Bailey, the first important singer with a band;

others, both leaders and sidemen, had accompanied innumerable singers on records, from the royal families of the blues to the passing fancies of the men in charge. When Benny took his band out on the road in 1935 he took Helen Ward with him. Helen was a better singer than most of those who took up valuable time when the swing bands were on the stands and made serious jazz lovers nervous and irritable. Sometimes Helen had a nervous vibrato, which she later conquered in a brief return to music with Hal MacIntyre's band; usually she was capable of tasteful interpretations and an attractive sound. Peg La Centra, who sang with Artie Shaw's first band in 1936, was, like Helen and like Jeanne Burns, who sang with Adrian Rollini's Taproom Gang in 1935, essentially in the Mildred Bailey tradition—warm, languorous in her phrasing, and as delicate as her native gifts permitted. Jeanne, a good musician with an intuitive grasp of the singing line, had a style perhaps a bit more personalized, one which she turned in later years into a considerable songwriting ability. Tommy Dorsey started with Edith Wright and Jack Leonard, the first a showwoman, the second a gentle-voiced crooner who paved the way for Frank Sinatra. Later Tommy featured, along with Frank Sinatra, the Pied Pipers, a well-disciplined vocal group whose proudest boast was Jo Stafford; she became the best jazz singer Tommy ever had, skilled in most of the rhythmic bypaths, but she changed into a straightforward commercial singer when she left the band. Brother Jimmy more than doubled his income as a result of the gimmick he worked out with his two singers, Bob Eberle, to whom was entrusted the first, slow baritone chorus of a tune, and Helen O'Connell, who was given the second, double-time chorus to plunge through. But able as some of these singers were, successful as half of them became, theirs were not the jazz voices; they were with other bands. For a while Artie Shaw had Billie Holiday; Chick Webb had Ella Fitzgerald; Red Norvo had his wife, Mildred Bailey.

Back in 1936 they used to call Mildred Bailey and

Red Norvo Mr. and Mrs. Swing. The labels were de-
served. Red was the epitome of swing, Mildred the epi-
tome of good swinging and good singing.

Mildred could be counted on to bring the house or th
night club or the concert hall down, with songs such a
her favorites, "Lover," "Honeysuckle Rose," "Squeez
Me," "More Than You Know," "Don't Take Your Lov
from Me," and "There'll Be some Changes Made." Re
hearing her old concerts and personal performances o
records confirms the original impression she used to make
Mildred was an audience spellbinder, with her exquisit
phrasing, the intrinsic loveliness of her voice, and her fin
rocking beat. The song most closely and permanentl
identified with her, of course, was "Rockin' Chair." Th
and other pieces written especially for her, like the witt
Sonny Burke—Bill Engvick—Hughie Prince "Scrap You
Fat," and other beautiful Baileyana such as "From th
Land of the Sky-blue Water," the familiar Indian plain
in swing tempo, Mildred sang warmly, wonderfully, sing
ing her heart out, singing with delicacy and grace. Sh
was a feelingful and affecting singer and, when necessary
a funny one. She was almost a tradition in herself.

Mildred Bailey was born in Tekoa, Washington, i
1903. Her mother, who was part Indian, used to re
through Indian songs and rites with her and, when th
family moved to Spokane, often took her over to th
near-by Coeur d'Alene Reservation. Mildred said of h
Indian repertory, "I don't know whether this music com
pares with jazz or the classics, but I do know that it offe
a young singer a remarkable background and trainin
It takes a squeaky soprano and straightens out the clinke
that make it squeak; it removes the bass boom from th
contralto's voice, this Indian singing does, because yo
have to sing a lot of notes to get by, and you've got t
cover an awful range." As a child, the one girl in th
Rinker family, Mildred covered many musical ranges—
with her three brothers, all of whom ended up in th
music business; with Bing Crosby, who was a neighbo
and with all the other jazz fans in their part of town wh

sang or hummed or played. Mildred was married at an
early age and moved to Los Angeles. There she was
divorced; there she sang some and listened more—to men
who were making "the West Coast kick in the late
twenties." In late 1929 Paul Whiteman was in California
and looking hard for a girl singer. Until that time no
girl had sung regularly with a jazz band, and Paul wanted
to be the first in this, as he had been in so many other
things. Musing one night at a party about his troubles in
finding a girl, Whiteman ran into the family patriotism
of Mildred's brother Al and Bing Crosby, two-thirds of
his own Rhythm Boys, whose high praise of Mildred
sparked Paul's interest. They called Mildred, and she ran
right over to audition for him—and that, of course, was
enough; she was hired on the spot. She didn't record with
Paul Whiteman, but she made many sides with musicians
from his orchestra: with Eddie Lang she sang Hoagy
Carmichael's arrangement of "What Kind o' Man Is You";
with Mattie Malneck and many of the Whiteman
musicians she made Carmichael's "Georgia on My Mind"
and, among nine other sides, "Rockin' Chair." Mildred
became inseparably associated with the ditty of pity for
dear old Aunt Harriet. The year she made her first sides
with Malneck—1931—she met and fell in love with Red
Norvo, who joined Whiteman in Chicago at the end of
the year. Just after she and Red left Whiteman, in the
winter of 1933, they were married. Mildred recorded
with pick-up bands led by Benny Goodman and the
Dorsey Brothers, with the Casa Loma band, and with
several of her own date outfits; Red did some gigging
around town and some recording too, but the two years
after Whiteman were lean. The leanness left them when
Kenneth, as Mildred always called Red, turned his little
band into a big one and made Mildred his co-leader.
While that band was abuilding the Norvos threw a party
that had a lasting effect of which they hadn't dreamed.
Benny Goodman and Teddy Wilson were guests at the
party, and so was a young cousin of Mildred's who
played a little drums. As musicians like to do, they or-

ganized an informal session, following Mildred's suggestion that Benny and Teddy should play with her drummer-cousin. The musicians liked the combination of instruments so much that soon after they substituted Gene Krupa for Mildred's cousin and became the Benny Goodman trio.

There was, unfortunately, much more to bandleading, even when the duties could be split in half, than the pleasures of parties and pleased and pleasing audiences. With all the good music, Mildred said, there were plenty of headaches. "It's no fun to have to worry about making trains on time and whether this or that booking is better for the band, shall Mr. Eddie or Mr. Charlie do the arrangement on this new pop, and will I take one or three choruses on this old standard. Many's the morning we stumbled into a town, half dead from sleeplessness and worried over a missing trunk or make-up kit, only to find that we had a record date, band or me, for that early afternoon. Sometimes that meant hunting up good musicians for an improvised date, sometimes that meant taking our band and rehearsing them in a new number they'd never seen before—all in one or two or three hours. It was these headaches that finally drove me out of the band business."

Mildred never did really get out of the band business; she always found the musicians she needed for her record dates, usually the best musicians available in jazz. She recorded with Benny Berigan, Johnny Hodges, and Teddy Wilson in one memorable date; with Ziggy Elman, Artie Shaw, Teddy, Dave Barbour, John Kirby, and Cozy Cole in another. With the band she and Red led, she made several dozen sides; with Mary Lou Williams in charge of a band, she made half a dozen of her loveliest recordings; with Alec Wilder providing manuscript fit for her voice and an intriguing combination of woodwinds, rhythm, Roy Eldridge, and Teddy Wilson, she made eleven of the really great vocal records of jazz. A fair sampling of her various backgrounds, technical efficiencies, and inspired transformations of good songs can be heard in

her long-playing record, *A Mildred Bailey Serenade*, issued in 1950 when she was first hospitalized with her fatal illness. There, in eight performances, as in every one of her other sides, sound her sumptuous middle register, her exquisite upper register, her subtle nuances. Jazz was well provided with its first band singer until December 1951, when Mildred died.

One winter night at the end of 1935 Mildred Bailey journeyed up to the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem to sing her bit in a Scottsboro Boys benefit. In a long night of superb performances by the foremost musicians and singers of jazz, Mildred's singing stood out. So did Bessie Smith's and that of Chick Webb's vocalist, Ella Fitzgerald. Ella had joined Chick only a few months before. Just a seventeen-year-old girl from Virginia, she moved simply to a microphone, opened her lips, and sang—sang with a natural ease and a musicianship which, though untutored, needed very little assistance from Chick or his musicians. Ella was and is the prime example of an intuitive singer in jazz. From her first recording with Chick, "Sing Me a Swing Song," to one of her latest solo albums, devoted to songs by George and Ira Gershwin, she has always found the right tempo, and right interpretive nuance, the right melodic variation. She was an added soloist for the Chick Webb band, the most distinguished of a group of distinguished musicians; it was undoubtedly her presence with the band, in person and on records after the spring of 1936, that catapulted it to sudden, unexpected but thoroughly deserved success. In November of the same year Ella became a recording name in her own right, when she made four sides for Chick's home label, Decca, with her "Savoy Eight," made up of Chick's best musicians, including Chick himself, of course. The next year she did a date with the Mills Brothers and two others with the Savoy Eight. She continued to record under her own name, and with Chick she made one of the best-selling records of all time, "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," later followed by a fairly successful sequel, "I Found My Yellow Basket." Her great skill in these years and in

those to come, after Chick's death, was a versatility that permitted her to sing material that was nothing less than nauseating in other performances, but something more than tolerable in hers. There were not only the contrived nursery rhymes and the clumsy novelties—songs of short duration in people's memories—but also soft and insinuating ballads, such as "My Last Affair," or driving instrumentals to which words were added because Ella's voice made her vocals valid parts of improvised band performances.

When Chick died Ella was his logical successor. She led the band—which was renamed, with some justification, Ella Fitzgerald and Her Famous Orchestra—until early 1942, when the same strain which had told on Mildred began to wreak havoc in her personal life and her singing. Then came her felicitous collaborations with such likely associates as Louis Armstrong, the Delta Rhythm Boys, and Eddie Heywood and with such unlikely ones as the Ink Spots. With all of them her sinuous imagination was given full play. No matter the arch mannerisms and distorted falsetto sounds of the Ink Spots; Ella felt the glow of Duke Ellington's song "I'm Beginning to See the Light" and transformed it into exquisite sound; no matter the unfamiliar calypso inflections of "Stone Cold Dead in the Market" and the raucous personality of Louis Jordan, Ella turned both song and singer into rich duo comedy. In 1946 and the next year, with able studio bands led by Vic Schoen and Bob Haggart, she pressed the full impact of her scat-singing personality into record grooves; through "Flying Home" and "Lady Be Good" Ella effused, singing bebop figures and swing phrases, finding the verbal equivalents for trumpet, trombone, and saxophone sounds. In 1939, in her recording of "'Tain't What You Do, It's the Way that You Do It," she scatted around the engaging tune and ended one of her phrases with the word "rebop," undoubtedly the first appearance of the first accredited name for Dizzy Gillespie's and Charlie Parker's music. In 1946 she coined the whole new scatting vocabulary. Three years later she exhibited

another of the facets of her singing personality when she did a perfect imitation of Louis Armstrong's guttural style in her recording of "Basin Street Blues." Here, and in her duets with Louis, she demonstrated that catholicity of taste and talent which has always been her hallmark. She says of both Louis and Dizzy, "I like him just the way he is." She says of Les Brown's band that it is among her pets "because it plays a variety and sounds like bands used to sound." Her attempts at songwriting, usually successful both musically and commercially, show the same breadth of interest: they range from the swingy phrases of "You Showed Me the Way" and "Oh, But I Do" to the handsomely coordinated lyrics she wrote for "Robbins' Nest." At times in recent years her versatility has betrayed her: her phrases and intonation never falter, but they do sometimes take on a mechanical edge. She works hard, she works often; she is or has been the favorite singer of most of America's favorite singers, drawing such plaudits as Bing Crosby's enthusiastic summation of her position: "Man, woman, or child, the greatest singer of them all is Ella Fitzgerald." The penalty of so much singing may be a hard sound and a cold inflection; it can never be so severe, however, that jazz, jazz musicians, and jazz singers will forget the size of her contribution and the electricity her name has always carried.

For six weeks in the worst heat of July and August in 1948 another jazz singer who has contributed greatly to modern jazz acknowledged the applause of large audiences at the Strand Theatre in New York City—the largest audiences that theater had seen in many years. The movie, *Key Largo*, pulled in a large part of the audience; Count Basie and his orchestra drew some of it; but there had been big movies before, and Count Basie had appeared at New York theaters before. The main draw was Billie Holiday.

Like very few singers in our time, like no other uncompromising jazz singer in our time, Billie was a big box-office attraction. She had her own bitter explanation of

her popularity. "They come to see me get all fouled up. They're just waiting for that moment. Just waiting. But they're not going to get it. I'm not going to get all fouled up. I'm not! I'm not. . . ."

Billie had—and has—many friends and admirers, many fans. Some of the enormous number of people who came to see her came because of her voice. Most of them, Billie felt sure, came to see the great "Lady Day" fall flat on her beautiful face.

"I'm tired of fighting," Billie said. "All my life it's been fighting. I'm tired of fighting."

It had been hard to have to quit school in the fifth grade. She had had to quit, to help with the groceries and the rent. There were no child-labor laws in Baltimore when Billie was eleven. And even if there had been, the Holidays needed groceries and, once a month, the rent. So, at the age of eleven, Billie went to work, washing down Baltimore's famous white stoops.

At fifteen she was singing at Jerry Preston's in Harlem. Life came fast uptown, with no holds barred, no experiences withheld. If Billie had talent to begin with, she had maturity almost as soon—maturity of a sort. When most girls were just emerging from their stiff organdy party dresses and just beginning to worry about dates and kisses, Billie was singing for all-night parties in after-hours joints. Before she was out of her teens she was on the road with bands, and she reached her majority plunking two bass notes with her left hand for Artie Shaw, while the intellectual clarinetist wove the melody of "Nightmare" out of the early morning hours and called for more of her exquisite singing.

Her singing won plaudits and received all sorts of audience and critical appreciation. Then came a Paul Whiteman recording session for Capitol in 1944, in which she sang "Travelin' Light"; and with that notable side Billie was really recognized as a uniquely distinguished jazz singer, as a uniquely fascinating personality whose private perceptions were articulated in original and delicate vocal patterns.

In 1947 Lady Day was sent to prison. Although there was this record—and there were other records to remind us of her great talent—and many newspaper stories to apprise us of her wrongdoing, and many, many friends to echo her suffering and her sorrow, only Billie herself could sing Billie's blues. It was not until she returned from jail that we could understand exactly what she had been through, what she looked forward to and what not, and why it was and is so important to her to affirm the true, the real, and undeniable, and the unanswerable.

"Easy Living." "Travelin' Light." If you want to be corny you can tell Lady Day's story through the songs on her records, making sure that you interrupt the narrative of light life and debauchery with the tender "God Bless the Child" and the angry sorrow of "Strange Fruit." Anybody who has watched Billie sing "Strange Fruit" knows what the singing of that song does to her; anybody who really knows her knows that her tears over the victims of lynch mobs stop only when she wrenches herself violently away from the facts of Negro life. Even the casual listener to her most poignant record, "Porgy," knows how real a struggle against temptation and weakness hers has been.

They threw her into a cell, and a nightgown and a mattress and a bed after her, and she was on her own. No coddling, no cozening, no letdown, no matter how difficult; and the descent from the illusory heights of dope is generally acknowledged to be of the nature of the journey from the first circle to the icy center of the ninth of Dante's Hell. Billie gritted her teeth and held on to her mind and came out many months older, cleaner, closer to herself and the truth.

"When I was on it," she says, "I was *on* it! I wouldn't stop for anybody, anywhere, ever. Now I'm off it and I don't want it and I won't have it, and that's the end of it."

She went to her doctor's to get a very careful general check-up, which showed her supremely well, healthier than she had been in years. But she knew she was frantically tired and uncertain of herself. She also knew she would

sing, and while in those bad years before she had buoyed her sagging spirits and propped her weary body with narcotics, now she was on her own. She went on singing, of course. She sang, of course, as beautifully as ever, perhaps more beautifully. And then she wasn't entirely on her own. There were friends and admirers, friends like Bobby Tucker and his wife and his father and mother, who had kept their Christmas tree going until March 16, when she got out, and admirers like the concert audiences and Broadway theatergoers who went to her first appearances in March and April and cheered themselves into late winter colds, welcoming her home.

In March 1949 Billie Holiday once more stood accused. Once more the sights of a million scandalmongers' guns were trained at her not insignificant figure. As before, she was accused of breaking the strict laws of the land, which specifically forbid the indulgence of those peculiar appetites that call for a drug here, a charged cigarette there, a dose of opium or hemp or any of the other short ways around to an illusory Nirvana. Billie said she was framed. She was tried and found innocent and released.

It makes big newspaper headlines to catch a movie star or a jazz singer redhanded and heavyhanded with the hot stuff; but their guilt is small compared with that of the gangsters who run the dope and the rope into the country and peddle it from dressing-room to dressing-room, from night-club entrance to night-club exit, from alley to alley. Government agents are busy trying to run down the gangsters and the middlemen called "connections," but these efforts never seem to make the headlines or even the small print of the back-page continuations of the page-one stories. The only way to end the terror and threat of drugs is to stop the flow at its source, to start directing the publicity as well as the undercover activity toward that end, and to turn our healthy indignation on the promoters rather than the victims of the racket. The opposite procedure is too much like putting a beer-drinker in jail for Al Capone's crimes.

All of this left Billie with a gnawing fear. She continues to sing well, but she is never sure that she is received by audiences as a singer. Is she stared at as a scarlet lady? As an ex-convict? Or simply as a magnificently constructed woman? The inner disturbance is dreadful, but the outer calm remains, and along with it perhaps the most brilliant and inspired singing in jazz.

Most women wouldn't worry about being too pretty, but Lena Horne worried long and hard about it. She worried that people liked her for her looks and not for her singing, much as Billie Holiday worries; she worried so much about it that, in the beginning of her career, her singing suffered as a result.

After a brilliant debut at Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall concert in 1942, Lena skyrocketed to fame. She made a much-appreciated appearance at Cafe Society Downtown, and then was grabbed by the movies. For almost five years she was a motion-picture singer, making occasional sorties into the recording studios to relieve the monotony of specialty bits in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer musicals, and winning two starring roles in the ill-starred all-Negro movies, *Cabin in the Sky* and *Stormy Weather*. She continued to command attention because of her astonishing loveliness, and a considerable coterie of Horne fans continued to clamor for more of her voice; when Lena's faith in her singing wavered, theirs didn't budge. One of the most firm and unyielding in his admiration for her singing was Lennie Hayton, arranger and musical director for MGM, whom she later married. He badgered her; he worked with her; he read her lessons out of the musical copybooks which he himself had long ago mastered. The result, if I may borrow a limp line from the collected works of the press agents of our time, was a new and greater Lena Horne. Her musical tastes did not merely advance; she became part of what can properly be called the vital vanguard, those hardy souls who have clearly formulated ideas in the generally abstruse field of music, who can articulate their ideas and do. She studied Stravinsky's *Sacre de Printemps*—"It took me two years to connect with that." She resisted Stravinsky's disso-

nances at first, but under the insistent tutelage of Billy Strayhorn she came to understand and enjoy what had at first seemed like nebulous noises. And under Lennie Hayton's tutelage she studied Hindemith. She began to approach modern music in general with urgency and expectancy.

The true scope of Lena's talents has been only suggested, I think. She can portray anguish and terror in a song. She feels what she sings and articulates her feeling with just enough restraint to keep it within the bounds of good taste, with just enough dramatic impact to reach below her listeners' heads and above their glands for their hearts. In addition, she has that neccessary incidental, a fine natural voice, a husky organ of great conviction.

There are some people who think that all instrumental music is written or played in imitation of the human voice. When you listen to a singer like Mary Ann McCall you can understand such thinking. For, without the range and volume of Kirsten Flagstad, with only a modicum of the musicianship of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, she has much of what they have and something else besides. Her voice is at once that of a voluptuary and a vestal; simultaneously she crosses herself and opens up her arms wide. She expresses the extraordinary paradoxes contained in all the successful sounds of jazzmen; in her music Mary is at the same time wonderfully naïve and sophisiticated. And here, in this voice, is what jazz is all about.

Mary Ann McCall sang with Woody Herman off and on for a decade, with Charlie Barnet, with Teddy Powell, for a couple of weeks with Tommy Dorsey, and, in San Diego between 1942 and 1946, with numerous small bands. She always demonstrated more than a passing skill in rhythmic novelties and had a pleasant ease in burning ballads, but not until she rejoined Woody in 1946 did anyone realize that she was a really outstanding singer. During her early years with Woody there wasn't much opportunity to hear her curl herself around a song, but in "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams"and "Romance in the Dark" there was no mistaking the dimensions of her talents. When she joined the reorganized Herman

band in late 1947, her singing hit some musicians and other discerning people with an impact that isolated her. They listened to those intriguing conflicts again, to passion unabashed and unashamed, and to something like schoolgirl wonder at the order and disorder of the world, all articulated with an uncommon skill. Can you really hear all of this in the voice of a girl singer with a jazz band? Passion is not rare in girl singers, but this sort of sensuousness is. Schoolgirl wonder is not rare in schoolgirls; it is to be found in only one other girl's singing, however—Ella Fitzgerald's of course.

It doesn't come as any surprise, then, to hear Mary Ann McCall say, "Ella is my idol, always has been." Mary's skill is like Ella's; she attacks her notes with that forthrightness, with that rhythmic precision we expect only in the most finished musicians. Mary's understanding is like Ella's; she wraps herself around songs, enlarging and diminishing her volume to fit the demands first of the melody and then of the lyric, setting up her own variations on the melody when it lacks continuity, her beat always right, never stopping. She is rhythmically knowing and melodically secure; her performances have continuity. And they have sound. She is blessed with that husky voice that is best adapted to the rigors of improvisation in jazz, with three, ten, or twenty men whispering or blasting behind her.

If one knows or believes these things to be true of Mary's voice, it is strange to learn that she didn't start out to be a singer but a dancer. She never had any music lessons, "just dancing school." Why dancing school? "I had rickets. Not just rickets—I was crippled. They wanted to break my legs. Try to reset them. We wouldn't let the doctor do that, so massages were prescribed, acrobatics, and dancing school." She got a job as a dancer at Frank Palumbo's in her native Philadelphia—sixteen-year-old Marie Miller, who had beaten the bow in her legs. It's unfortunate that so many bad movie musicals have made such a remarkable story as Mary-Marie's commonplace, filtering out of the narrative all its real

heroism and suspense. The next step in her life was in the movie tradition—but remember that it can happen this way, and forget for the moment Joan Crawford and Dorothy Lamour and Doris Day who have been reduced so often in their time to fleshless, bloodless heroines reliving what happened to them in much the same way as Mary's career happened to her. Sure enough, the girl singer at Palumbo's got sick; Mary sang with the band, and that was it. She worked with Tommy Dorsey very briefly, with Charlie Barnet for quite a while, with the Band that Played the Blues ("we struggled—fifteen dollars a week, they told me, and room and board"), with Charlie again, and with Teddy Powell. Then she got married. She had a baby boy and stayed home for a year, and then worked around San Diego for four years as well as with Freddy Slack before going back with Woody and a very different sort of music from that which she first sang with his band.

It's fun to listen to Mary's old records with Barnet, to hear the seeds of her later style, but it is much more than casual entertainment to hear her several sides with Woody after 1946. "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams" was recorded without rehearsal, its arrangement sketched between band numbers by arranger Ralph Burns. "Romance in the Dark" had to be cleaned up, sixteen bars of blue lyrics rewritten at the last moment on the date. "P.S. I Love You," "I Got it Bad and That Ain't Good," and "Detour Ahead" went off without a hitch, and other dates for the Discovery and Roost labels were untroubled. But Mary had trouble in the next few years, trying to find the large audience that her talents deserve. She has worked all sorts of night clubs, especially those that work a performer until far, far into the morning; she has always elicited an enthusiastic response in these clubs. She has also made some pleasant record sides for Jack Hook's Roost label. But she is not by any means the great success that Dinah Shore continues to be, that Peggy Lee, Jo Stafford, Margaret Whiting, Kay Starr, and Doris Day, Fran Warren, and Toni Arden are. It is as if the converse

of the Tolstoyan aesthetic, in its perverse way almost a fixed law in jazz, has worked steadily against her: if your quality as a jazz performer is high, the quantity of your supporters must be small.

Lee Wiley has been praised in the public prints as often as any of her more famous singing sisters; her picture has appeared along with rapturous critical comment in the fashion magazines and in *Time* and *The New Yorker*. She has made her sumptuous sound known in recordings with the best of the Dixieland musicians of the thirties, forties, and fifties. She has revitalized lovely but forgotten Gershwin, Porter, Harold Arlen, and Rodgers-and-Hart songs. But her style, barrelhouse and torchy as it is, has been too high for mass appeal; her records become collectors' items within months of appearance and her plaintive vibrato has even more cause to be.

Dinah, Jo, Maggie Whiting, and their associates at the top of the best-seller lists have never lacked for an audience. Each was almost an immediate success when she reached records; none of them, except for an occasional collaboration with large or small jazz bands, is to be found in the Hot Discographies. But let it be said that all these singers were molded by the disciplines of jazz, and each has to some extent preserved her original musical influence. Dinah, in her first radio programs and early Bluebird records, showed jazz feeling and a softness of voice and Southern accent that fitted naturally into the settings provided by her accompanying orchestras, usually made up of able jazzmen. Peggy Lee sang a blues with Benny Goodman in imitation of a jukebox favorite, Lil Green ("Why Don't You Do Right?"), became a fair stylized singer when she left Benny ("You Was Right, Baby"), turned a husky voice and whispered inflections into a caricature of herself when she became famous ("Don't Smoke in Bed"). Jo not only sang some viable jazz with Tommy Dorsey but also continued from time to time to get the all-important beat in her voice and to turn a phrase with jazz accent. Fran's passionate outpourings with Claude Thornhill raised her from a fair vocalist

with Charlie Barnet to a touching sentimentalist; unfortunately, when she stepped out on her own, the passion became purple and, with few exceptions, the sentiment excessive. Maggie, musicianly daughter of a musicianly songwriter, Richard Whiting, has always avoided the unctuous and concentrated on the song at hand; with a better than average vocal organ and excellent taste, she has always been pleasant to listen to, but the amount of jazz in her voice depends entirely on the amount of jazz played behind her, and that often isn't very much. Toni Arden is closer to Fran in her conceptions than anybody else—the old Fran, moved and moving, but only rarely maudlin. Kay Starr, like Anita O'Day and June Christy, is a natural jazz singer, with rhythmic imagination and a larynx that is at least a second cousin to Bessie Smith's. But Kay has had to yield to the importunities of recording executives and a mass audience, and she doesn't often achieve the contagious power of such of her performances with the Charlie Barnet band as "Sharecropping Blues." In the same way, Pearl Bailey's once expressive hands and amusing laconic delivery have hardened into the facets of a commercial rather than a jazz style.

Anita O'Day is an example of the minor intuitive singer who might have been major. Essentially self-instructed, she broke in with Max Miller's small band in Chicago, joined Gene Krupa there in 1941, and then, three years later, after a brief retirement, put in a year with Stan Kenton. She has always been, as one of her musician admirers put it, "a blowing chick." Her singing with Krupa, alone and in duet with Roy Eldridge, had a brashness about it and an inventiveness that always brought to mind a first-rate jazz soloist. There was some of the same jazz quality about her work with Kenton. The sameness, however, was after a while a considerable deterrent, and although her singing has not often been less than able, the constant hoarseness of voice and hotness of phrase have not worn too well. One would have to say the same for most of June Christy's work with Stan Kenton; she replaced Anita and followed carefully, too carefully, in Anita's vocal steps. But June later emerged as a more technically controlled and more broadly imaginative singer, to become a part of the most recent expansion of jazz style and idea. Doris Day was for a while, in her second and longer stay with the Les Brown band, identifiable by the elements of O'Day in her style. Her voice was never as husky or as voluminous as Anita's; she always managed some injection of personalized interpretation. Like Bing Crosby, when she became a movie star (in 1949) she retained her ability to inject jazz feeling where it belonged, whether on a film sound track or a recording disk. Her charm made a movie contract and accompanying success inevitable; her continued taste and talent for and support of jazz were not so easily to be foreseen. In her present glamorous career jazz plays an uncommonly salutary role.

In the swooning and crooning and baritone bellows of the leading male singers of our time, jazz has also been very important, if not always so obvious as in the case of the girls. Dick Haymes sang some with Tommy Dorsey before he became a movie star, and continues to make records suggestive of Tommy's commercial concerns. In 1940 and 1941, however, singing with Harry James, Dick was more than a conventional romantic baritone. For one thing, he exploited the luxurious lower reaches of his voice far more than he has since. For another, he sang with a delicacy and deftness that came only from jazz, the brisk jazz the James band was playing in those years. He made lovely records of "I'll Get By," "Minka," "You've Changed," and "You Don't Know What Love Is," giving good songs additional distinction by the strength of his feeling and the uninterrupted length of his phrases. "Ol' Man River" was lifted above its basically lugubrious caricature of Negro plaints by Dick's delightful understatement and Harry's fresh conversion of the tune into an up-tempo jazz piece. A similar authority and wit distinguished Perry Como's singing with the Ted Weems band before and during the swing era. Many of us found it possible to sustain an evening of ordinary dance music and novelties in order to hear Perry with that band. When

he struck out on his own in the early forties, he retained those qualities and added to them a canny appraisal of audience tastes, which has served him well in radio and television, in both of which he has become a major figure. The jazz in Perry's singing has always been a skillful compound of the Crosby-Columbo style and the later ministrations of band singers. That compound has made his hundreds of record sides devoted to second- and third- and fourth-rate songs endurable, and made his broadcasts and telecasts and theater appearances musically interesting. Perry's sunny disposition and gentle visual and verbal wit have also been sizable adjuncts of his singing personality. He is an outstanding family man, one of the few in his profession, who never forgets his beginnings as a barber and never lets his audiences forget that he is one of them. Unfortunately none of this can altogether offset the tawdry substance of the songs to which he gives his almost undivided attention. One must wait wearily for that rare spark, the sudden catching fire of singer and song which makes Perry Como still a part of jazz.

The most popular of these popular singers with jazzmen is Frank Sinatra. His 1939 appearances and recordings with Harry James caught the attention not only of his colleagues but of most band musicians around the United States. When, in 1940, he made such sides with Tommy Dorsey as "I'll Be Seeing You," "I'll Never Smile Again," and "Trade Winds," he was followed almost as avidly by jazzmen as by bobbysoxers. Through the next few years with Tommy, and through most of the remaining forties as a recording artist and movie and theater singer, Frankie was everybody's idea of the perfect juggler, who could manage at one and the same time to bring the kids to their saddle-shoed feet and maintain a meaningful vocal musicianship. In the woeful days of the musicians' union ban on recording activity, from the fall of 1942 to the fall of 1944, such recording activity as there was in the United States was confined to singers accompanied by singers, soloists with choral backgrounds. Frank made his Columbia debut

after having made a few sides with real live musicians for Victor—with such a choral background. Singing the songs so insistently popular in and out of the Rodgers and Hammerstein operetta *Oklahoma,* Frank showed the same firmness of tone and freshness of phrase that had made his records with James and Dorsey successful among musicians. Through the middle of 1948 Frank remained on his unique pedestal, lovingly erected by press agents and children, lastingly maintained by musicians. Then the years of bad publicity—publicity that his indefatigable press agent and manager, the late George Evans, did his best to balance—had their effect. He had appeared at the "wrong" political rallies in Hollywood, making speeches in ballrooms and ballparks, collecting funds for people unable to help themselves. Unknown to him, in some of these activities, seemingly so worthy, the fine Russian hand of the Communist party was present. With the best motives in the world, Frank found himself tricked by the Communists, then by the Hearst papers, which made lurid headlines of his political speeches and later turned his words into a public confession of wrongdoing. In 1947 Robert Ruark, a Scripps-Howard columnist who had replaced Westbrook Pegler as the star of the syndicate, reported that he had watched Frank shake hands with Lucky Luciano in Havana. Thus started a one-week newspaper sensation that boosted some newspaper circulation sky-high but did nothing to boost Frank's reputation. What had earlier been good-natured humor about Frank's slight figure and swooning stance became heavy-handed disparagement of the "caverns in his cheeks," of his "English droop figure," of his "dying swan deportment." The coup de grâce was administered when newspapermen found a romantic scandal with which to sock the Voice. Not one such headline, but several, and finally the divorce of his wife, Nancy, made Frank, a scandalous newspaper figure. In 1947 there was Lana Turner; in 1950 there was Ava Gardner —and a Spanish bullfighter competing with Frank for her affections. On top of all this, the musicians' union instituted another record ban, beginning the first of January,

1948. In preparation for months of inactivity, Frank [illegible] one record after another, day and night, until his [illegible] began to crack. Although he continued to sing ball[illegible] continued to make some records requiring long sustain[illegible] notes and the delicate scoops of pitch that had made [illegible] liant moments on some of his earlier sides, he doubled [illegible] number of middle-tempo and up-tempo songs he [illegible] Frank became much more of a jazz singer; rhythm[illegible] twists of phrase became much more a part of his [illegible] As he had in the past, he continued to use such [illegible] soloists as Bobby Hackett behind him and between [illegible] choruses, and his accompaniments perked up a bit [illegible] match the change in singing style.

It is not certain that Frank will make as much [illegible] mark in jazz with his more jazzlike singing of late as [illegible] did with his lovely transformations of ballads in the [illegible] years of his career. It is clear that such singing as can be found in his first album (now on long-playing record) will remain an important part of that popular music which achieved its distinction through the employment of jazz devices. Singing with woodwinds, a string quartet, a rhythm section, Frank made perhaps the definitive recordings of "Try a Little Tenderness," "Why Shouldn't I?" "Paradise," and did as much for Cole Porter's "I Concentrate on You" in his second album. For his delicacy of accent and phrase and for his articulate appreciation of the musical possibilities of the romantic ballad, Frank Sinatra's singing will remain a standard for vocal style and achievement. Whatever his faults, he is already a tradition, a maker of popular singing patterns based upon jazz procedures.

For too long Herb Jeffries has suffered under the cheerfully meant but cheerlessly understood appellation of "singers' singer." The well-meaning friends, critics, press agents, and singers who have so called him haven't realized, perhaps, that there are few more forbidding designations than "musicians' musician" or writers' writer" or "singers' singer." The public, for whom all musicians play music, writers write, and singers sing, immediately thinks of a technician when such terms are employed, some[illegible]

[illegible] extraordinary polish or finish but very little of the [illegible] they can understand. And though no artist in any [illegible] can produce anything of distinction so long as his [illegible] goal is public acceptance, neither can he entirely [illegible] that amorphous collection of heads and hearts and [illegible]. It has been particularly unfortunate to suggest that [illegible] Jeffries sings without concern for the man in the [illegible] at the other end of the loudspeaker, or in the [illegible] seat, for if ever there was a singer for the masses, [illegible] this "singers' singer."

Everything about Herb Jeffries' life springs from the [illegible] soil in which the common man grows. His father [illegible] part Negro, his mother white. As a kid, Herb literally [illegible] around Detroit (where he was born), New York, and Chicago. It was in the last of these cities that he made [illegible] important appearances, with Erskine Tate's huge [illegible] in 1930. Earl Hines heard him, signed him for [illegible] Grand Terrace revue, and later took him on as regular [illegible] with his band. Herb sang with Earl for three years [illegible] then had a short term with Blanche Calloway's band, [illegible] left Cab's sister in Hollywood to do a few amusing [illegible] as a cowboy star in all-Negro Western films. Duke [illegible]ington, who remembered Herb from his Grand Terrace [illegible], insisted that he drop the boots and saddle for the [illegible] collar and cummerbund of a boy singer again, and [illegible] 1940 Herb moved into his most important job, as [illegible] with Duke Ellington.

With Duke, Herb fastened his mellifluous tones for-[illegible] to Ted Grouya's and Edmund Anderson's "Fla-[illegible]," making that song his from the opening bass [illegible] to the falsetto coda. With Duke he demonstrated an [illegible] with slight pops ("You, You Darlin' ") and serious [illegible] ("I Don't Know What Kind of Blues I've Got") alike. [illegible] Duke he made a striking appearance, all six feet [illegible] inches of him, in the revue *Jump for Joy,* sauntering [illegible]ough the delicate sentiments of "A Brownskin Gal in a [illegible] Gown," jumping through the defiant lines of the [illegible] tune, afterward as indissolubly associated with his [illegible] as the saga of the tropical bird, "Flamingo."

After leaving Ellington, Herb settled in Los Angeles. He made a successful foray into the night-club business with an after-hours spot called the Black Flamingo, moved around LA's other clubs, East Side, West Side, all around town, and finally wound up, in 1945, with a contract with Exclusive Records, very much to the mutual advantage of record company and recording artist. Songwriter Leon René's independent company was as rugged and honest in its race relations as Herb; its Negro ownership consistently practiced fair employment. For Exclusive, Herb recorded the memorable six sides that make up the *Magenta Moods* album, and such singles as "Body and Soul," "What's the Score," and "My Blue Heaven," in all of them joining lush voice to Buddy Baker's choice Impressionist scoring.

Herb's career as a singer has been a little uncertain commercially. He has always had an audience of singers, musicians, critics, and that body of fans who are not frightened by his technical prowess or the swooping and whooping sound effects fashioned for him by conductor Mitch Miller in Herb's brief sojourn with him at Columbia. Herb has shifted now to Coral, the subsidiary of Decca records, and has been promised treatment more sympathetic to his basic qualities. However, he is recording songs already in the hit classification or being groomed and plugged for it, and that means he is subject not only to the whims and fancies of song publishers and recording executives in this dubious enterprise, but also to the fickle fancies of the mass audience. His may be one more depressing example of the talent ripened by jazz and spoiled by too much contact with the world of commerce. He has not had—and may never have—the luck of Billy Eckstine, who found his huge audience as a direct result of his jazz singing. He may not have the fortitude of Sarah Vaughan, who refused to compromise her musicianship and nonetheless was given popular support after a long struggle. The masses may never discover how much their kind of singer Herb Jeffries is; their loss will not be small.

Chapter 21

BOP

It wasn't so many years ago that Billy Eckstine was just an eccentric band vocalist, a gravel-throated young man who used to shuffle on stage or floor toward the end of an Earl Hines set, walking with deliberate relaxation, very, very slowly, toward the microphone, his hands in as often as out of his jacket pockets, his jacket as far off his body as it could be and still hang from his shoulders. His voice? It was the sound of caverns in which somebody had let loose the bloodcurdling cry, "Jelly, jelly!"—sexual euphemism and title of Billy's most successful blues—to echo endlessly through the stalagmites and stalactites. It was a series of tremulous hotblasts, often capped by metallic bursts from a suddenly animated trumpet section, designed to make the second balcony jump.

Billy still walks out on a stage slowly, but the pace is less contrived. Now his relaxation doesn't seem so planned. His hands are still in his pockets as often as not, but they belong there; they're not so much part of an organized effort to impress an audience. His clothes fit him today, either because his figure has filled out or because he has a better tailor or because the fashionable drape is a little closer to a man's shape. His voice? It still suggests echoes, but they have come up for air and sunlight; the jelly has been preserved and bottled as a historical oddity, and the blasts are much cooler and tremble far less.

Mr. B., as the erstwhile eccentric is best known to his ardent fans, has come all the way from subterranean

depths to box-office heights, and while he has lost some of his bottom notes and almost all the gravel en route, the trip has been a good one. Billy Eckstine is not just a good singer; he is enough better than that so that one is tempted to call him great—and would administer the adjective gladly if it were not necessary to remember earlier disappointments and to keep firmly in mind the limitations under which any singer who gains large approval must work.

His voice is almost always a thing of beauty, if not with any certainty a joy forever. Because of its masculine strength, it moves from note to note with vigor and never falls into the whispering faint that makes listening to the swooners and crooners so disturbing. Because its master, Mr. B., is a natural musician, whose barely tutored trumpet and trombone performances were as provocative as they were unlettered, the voice is in tune and makes its cadences with musicianly effect, occasionally lengthening a melodic line beyond its written limits into a statement that has the quality as well as the quantity of a first-rate instrumental jazz solo.

As a matter of fact, Billy's only teacher was Maurice Grupp, a columnist in *Metronome* of an earlier epoch, who gave him a few trumpet lessons and more than a few pointers about breath control. Billy's testimonial to Grupp is warm—and well it might be, judging from the change in his breathing since his jelly days, all for the better. There have been other changes made too, however, and these have not been so salubrious. Perhaps it isn't fair to blame Billy for them, but they exist. I am speaking about the material with which MGM has loaded him and the changes in phrasing and sound this material has wrought.

When MGM awoke to the size of its new singing star early in 1949, it awoke with more than a casual ringing of the alarm. It made a momentous announcement: hereafter, said the record company, Billy Eckstine would be assigned number-one plug tunes. This was flattering recognition of Billy's achievement; it was exceedingly pleasant to note such appreciation of a singer who was distinctly in the jazz tradition; it was gratifying to watch the color

line break before a powerful voice. The change was all that, but it was more. It produced such unpleasant exhibits as "Roses" and "Baby, Won't You Say You Love Me" songs so feeble that not all Mr. B.'s considerable equipment could redeem them. It produced a lessening of Eckstine's tension, which can most readily be identified by the gravelly sounds that liven much of the otherwise unimpressive singing on the earlier National records. It produced a new smoothness that doesn't sit well with the Eckstine voice, a softening of fiber and sweetening of texture, which may suit the color and fragrance of rose blossoms and the nature of wheedling love plaints, but which certainly do not fit the quality of Mr. B.'s voice.

Billy reached his peak in 1950. The public was even more generous in its recognition and appreciation than MGM. He was crowded, getting on and off a night-club stage, by hordes of bobby-soxers, as resolute in their attentions as the screaming kids who surrounded the other Voice in its most palmy days; he attracted a secondary flock of older fans, who were devoted and intelligent listeners without the clangor and clamor of their youthful associates. He was the subject of stirring racial controversy in the letter pages of *Life* magazine as the result of a picture story which, without calling specific attention to the size of his white audience, made the proper point that Billy was not simply a successful Negro entertainer but the country's biggest male popular singer.

It is possible that Billy Eckstine's most lasting achievement will turn out to be his short-lived band rather than his enormous success as a singer. His band sprang from the Earl Hines orchestra, with which he was in 1943 the major attraction. In the Hines band Little Benny Harris was the musical sparkplug; his skill on the trumpet was second, actually, to his shrewd musical taste. Charlie Parker was in the Hines band in early 1943, and Little Benny was much aware of his presence. He was intrigued with everything Charlie had ever done and went so far as to copy out Charlie's alto solo on the Jay McShann band recording of "Sepian Bounce." When he played it

on his trumpet one night, Dizzy Gillespie, who had just joined the band, looked up with interest. Benny identified the source, and Dizzy was on the spot on his way into Parker's pastures. The Hines band, featuring Little Benny, Dizzy, Parker, Eckstine, and Sarah Vaughan, was not only the incubator of bebop but a formidable musical organization in its own right. Then Billy left the band to work as a solo singer, and the great days of the Hines organization were over. Earl added a string section to his band, with girls plying the bows; he mixed the sounds of his musicians and the quality and quantity of his jazz with lush and somewhat soupy arrangements.

The first of the bop bands did not have Charlie Parker in it. In early 1944 Oscar Pettiford, a brilliant technician on the bass and an affable front man, combined with Dizzy to organize a jumping little outfit with Don Byas on tenor, George Wallington on piano, and Max Roach on drums. It was with this band that Dizzy sang his octave-jump phrase, "Salt Peanuts! Salt Peanuts!" a triplet in which the first and third notes were an octave below the second. It was with this band that the same sort of triplet became famous for its last two notes, articulated with staccato emphasis that could be verbalized, as it sometimes was, "Bu-dee-daht!" This just as often became "Bu-re-bop!" Because the emphasis was on the last two notes of the triplet, the tag was best remembered, for humming or other descriptive purposes, as "rebop." And because man's taste for the poetic, whether he so identifies it or not, leads him again and again to alliteration, "rebop" became "bebop." Enthusiasts for the new music began to describe it as rebop or bebop. One of these enthusiasts was Coleman Hawkins, then leading a little band at Kelly's Stable on the second and lesser of the two blocks that made Fifty-second Street Swing Street—between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. Dizzy organized the music for a two-night session that Hawk led for Apollo. Dizzy's lovely melody, "Woodyn' You," was recorded, along with several other sides, including a blues instrumental, "Disorder at the Border," "Rainbow Mist," which was a set of variations

on Hawk's variations on "Body and Soul," his phenomenally successful 1939 record for Bluebird, and "Bu-dee-daht," Budd Johnson's tribute to the new music.

Budd joined Oscar and Dizzy at the Onyx Club when Don Byas left for a job with Duke Ellington that never panned out. Intrigued by the sound of Dizzy's music, Budd had Dizzy write out some of his ideas so that they could play them in unision, and the resultant tenor and trumpet lines became the base for many instrumentals, big band and small, acknowledging Dizzy as their source or not. Then Oscar and Dizzy split up, Dizzy going into the Yacht Club with Budd and Max Roach, Oscar remaining at the Onyx for four more months, with Joe Guy on trumpet, Johnny Hartzfield on tenor, Joe Springer on piano, and Hal West on drums—the style remaining with him too. It was clearly a new era in jazz; the musicians knew it, the habitues of the Street knew it; Billy Eckstine, organizing a band with which he hoped to snare larger and more understanding audiences than he had found on the Street, knew it.

Billy's band had to be a bop band; he himself played just enough trumpet and trombone to have a feeling for the lines the new musicians were putting down, and he had enough idealism as a leader to feel that only the freshest and most significant jazz had a place in his band. As a result he convinced his manager, Billy Shaw, that Dizzy was the only logical musical director for him; that Charlie Parker, then playing with Carroll Dickerson's band at the Rhumboogie in Chicago, was the inevitable lead alto man for him; that he had to get other bop musicians to fill out his personnel. The personnel did not stay the same during the band's several years of chaotic but money-making existence. It was recorded so badly that not one of its DeLuxe sides can be pointed to as more than an indication of the way it sounded on a stage or in a club. But in person, in spite of the raggedness of section performance that was inevitable with such constant changes of personnel, such soloists as Dizzy or Fats Navarro, Leo Parker on baritone or Lucky Thompson on tenor, J. J.

Johnson or even Billy himself on trombone, gave the developing art a structure that the many Fifty-second-Street outfits playing the music did not have, and made for Billy Eckstine a permanent niche in jazz history.

The best of the many Fifty-second-Street bands that played bop at one time or another was, of course, the outfit Dizzy led in early 1945 at the Three Deuces, with Charlie Parker, Al Haig on piano, Curly Russell on bass, and Stan Levey on drums. With Sid Catlett replacing Stan, this outfit recorded four of the classics of bebop for Guild, in May 1945—"Shaw 'Nuff," in tribute to Dizzy's new manager, Billy Shaw; "Salt Peanuts"; "Hot House," which was Tadd Dameron's bop revitalization of Cole Porter's "What Is This Thing Called Love?"; and "Lover Man," which featured Dizzy's old Earl Hines colleague, Sarah Vaughan, as singer. A few months earlier Dizzy had recorded "Blue 'n' Boogie" with Dexter Gordon on tenor saxophone and a curious rhythm section, made up of Frank Paparelli on piano, Chuck Wayne on guitar, Murray Shipinsky on bass, and Shelly Manne on drums. Then he had done three sides with Charlie Parker, Clyde Hart on piano, Remo Palmieri, one of Red Norvo's fine discoveries, on guitar, Slam Stewart on bass, and Cozy Cole on drums—"Groovin' High," a translation of the venerable favorite, "Whispering," into bop language; "Dizzy Atmosphere," and "All the Things You Are," these last two not issued until a year later when Musicraft took over the Guild sides. There were in all of these transformations, as in the work of the Gillespie-Parker band on the Street, an entrancing set of new ideas and the conviction of the performers that the ideas were right. In another two years bebop, or bop, as it came to be called among musicians and followers, would be making newspaper headlines, usually derogatory in nature, filling out space in *Time* and *Life,* and frightening jazz veterans who either couldn't or wouldn't understand bop and saw no reason to make the intense effort necessary to understand it and then to play it.

Louis Armstrong, who at first had blessed the new

music, then decided he didn't like it and dismissed bop this way: "I play what I feel, what's inside of me. I don't expect to please everybody. You know a lot of the new cats say, 'Armstrong, he plays too many long notes.' They want me to change, but why should I go ahead and change just to please a lot o' cats who are way ahead of themselves anyway? I listen to what I play, and if it pleases me it's good. That's the only way to judge what you're doin'. I'm my own best audience. I'd never play this bebop because I don't like it. Don't get me wrong; I think some of them cats who play it play real good, like Dizzy, especially. But bebop is the easy way out. Instead of holding notes the way they should be held, they just play a lot of little notes. They sorta fake out of it. You won't find many of them cats who can blow a straight lead. They never learned right. It's all just flash. It doesn't come from the heart the way real music should."

Certainly much that wasn't bop was masquerading as the new music. "Bebop" and "bop" were catchy terms; they were used, as "swing" had been, to describe everything from eccentric singers and dancers to the real thing. But there were better headlines to be made if the false music was called bebop and damned as such for something else entirely. In March 1946 radio station KMPC in Los Angeles banned bebop. The week after bebop was banned *Time* explained: "What bebop amounts to is hot jazz overheated, with overdone lyrics full of bawdiness, references to narcotics, and doubletalk." They might just as well have banned the diatonic scale or the Dorian mode as ban an eight-note rhythmic pattern, which is all that bebop is. As for its "overdone lyrics, full of bawdiness, references to narcotics," etc., the only lyrics Dizzy, Charlie, or any of the other genuine beboppers ever sang were "suggestive" odes such as "Salt Peanuts." The words? "Salt Peanuts, Salt Peanuts." That's all. Read what you will into that phrase—bawdiness, a reference to marijuana, or maybe sinister doubletalk instead of just three syllables with the right meter for the phrase it verbalizes.

KMPC and *Time* both confused the frantic antics of

Harry the Tipster Gibson and Slim Gaillard with the intense but very different blowing of Gillespie, Parker, and their cohorts. Gibson and Gaillard were not merely double-talk experts; their songs were thick with reefer smoke and bedroom innuendo. Their mixture of this with jazz lingo did all jazz musicians a disservice. Radio has long functioned by a prude's code in which words stronger than "darn" and the mere suggestion of an antipode to Heaven in somebody's theology are sufficient to assure banning from the pure air.

It wasn't easy to take bop out of the category of flagpole sitting, marathon dancing, and pyramid clubs into which it was so carefully put by the magazine and newspaper editors of America. Bebop is not and was not a game, a schoolboy passion, or a neurosis in rhythm, but a serious form of music. The music editor of *Time* so little understood bebop that he managed, over some one thousand words, to convince himself that it was made up chiefly of bawdy lyrics; but the lyrics of bop, like the associated goatees, hornrimmed glasses, and berets, were simply surface symptoms of a difficult operation that had been performed upon jazz. Such singing syllables as "Oo-pappa-da" or "Oolya-koo" or "Oo-bop-sh-bam" were simply convenient ways of turning the singer's function from the relaying of synthetic passion into the improvising of musical ideas. In a picture story the editors of *Life* reduced bebop to a way of greeting people that seems to have come from some old and unsuccessful vaudeville act and a curious perversion of the Mohammedan religion, as well as a way of wearing eyeglasses and goatees. But we can cut through such nonsense to get at the meat of bop, which upon careful examination turns out to be a very tasty viand.

It has been the fortune of jazz to elude any and all attempts to tie it down, even to words. For better or for worse, in sickness and in health, the very name of this music has resisted any really satisfactory explanation. Often, when the whole cannot be defined, it is possible to make some sense out of it by summing up its parts. But

when a part grows so big that it almost eclipses the whole —as bebop spurted beyond the confines of jazz—simple definition becomes utterly impossible, and complex description must take its place. In reporting the effect of the bop musicians, one must reflect upon the accidental nature of jazz, wondering whether or not the ultimate arrival of bebop would have been merely delayed without Lester Young's and Charlie Christian's lines or swept altogether aside for an even louder, more raw effusion of blues riffs and pseudo-classical productions than we suffered in the years just after swing. The really staggering fact is that jazz did escape from two-bar statement and the swinging void. Whatever its limitations, Young and Christian more or less unconsciously, and Dizzy and Parker more deliberately, took the old beat and refurbished it and set it to new tunes, and the new tunes took over.

Technically one must first point to the weakening of the riff under the impact of bop, and the broad invention with which bop musicians have treated the twelve-bar form, departing from the constricting tonic-subdominant-dominant roundelay which has worn so many ears to a frazzle, carrying the melody from the first through the last bar, punctuating both the melody and its harmonic underpinning with bright and fresh interjections. The same sort of imagination has been at work upon those most venerable of chordal undergrounds, "I Got Rhythm," "Back Home in Indiana," "How High the Moon," and a half-dozen other tunes notable for their key changes. Next in order are the up-beat accents of bop, the double-time penchant of such soloists as Dizzy, and the vigorous change that has overtaken drumming under the ministrations of Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, and their followers, the bass drum replaced by the top cymbal as custodian of the beat, and a multitude of irregular accents and sounds introduced on the remaining paraphernalia of the drummer. Finally, in the key section of any analysis of bop, one comes to the use of unusual intervals, of passing notes and passing chords in the construction of bop lines and their supports, ending with that celebrated identifying

note of the medium, the flatted fifth, with which almost every bop performance comes to a close, which salts and peppers almost all solos from that of the most sensitive gourmet of this music to that of the mealiest feeder on crumbs.

This new way of thinking shaped musicians, pushed crude entertainment aside for imaginative ideas, and at least suggested the disciplined creative potential of the young music. Lennie Tristano pointed out some of the limitations of the new school when it was at the zenith of its popularity, in 1947. In an article entitled "What's Wrong with the Beboppers" in *Metronome* magazine, Lennie suggested limitations:

> Artistically the situation is . . . deplorable. These little monkey-men of music steal note for note the phrases of the master of the new idiom, John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie. Their endless repetition of these phrases makes living in their midst like fighting one's way through a nightmare in which bebop pours out of the walls, the heavens and the coffeepot. Most boppers contribute nothing to the idiom. Whether they play drums, saxophone, piano, trombone, or glockenspiel, it still comes out Gillespie. Dizzy probably thinks he's in a house of mirrors; but, in spite of this barrage of dead echoes, he still sounds great. They manage to steal some of his notes, but his soul stays on the record.

Lennie also pointed out some of the achievements of bebop, in this article and in a sequel to it called "What's Right with the Beboppers." In doing so, he also indicated some of his own concerns, the concerns that were shaping and were going to shape his own music:

> It must be understood that bebop is diametrically opposed to the jazz that preceded it (swing as applied to large groups, and Dixieland as applied to small ones). Swing was hot, heavy, and loud. Bebop is cool, light, and soft. The former bumped and chugged along like a beat locomotive; this was known in some quarters as drive. The latter has a more subtle beat which becomes more pronounced by implication. At this low volume level many interesting and complex accents may be introduced effectively. The phraseology is next in importance because every note is governed by the underlying beat. This was not true of swing; for example, the long arpeggios which were executed with no sense of time, the prolonged tremolos, and the sustained scream notes. . . .
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> Though Dixieland presents a single and crude form of counterpoint, its contrapuntal development ends in a blind alley. Each line is governed by the end result, which is collective improvisation. Collective improvisation is limited by a small number of chords, perhaps six or seven. A good melodic line is sacrificed completely. . . .
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> The boppers discarded collective improvisation and placed all emphasis on the single line. This is not unfortunate, since the highest development of both would probably not occur simultaneously. Perhaps the next step after bebop will be collective improvisation on a much higher plane because the individual lines will be more complex.
>
> Bebop has made several contributions to the evolution of the single line. The arpeggio has ceased to be important; the line is primarily diatonic. The procedure is not up one chord and down another, nor is it up one scale and down another; the use of skips of more than a third precludes this seesaw motion. The skillful use of scales fosters the evolution of many more ideas than does the use of arpeggios, since an arpeggio merely restates the chord. Instead of a rhythm section pounding out each chord, four beats to a bar, so that three or four soloists can blow the same chord in arpeggio form in a blast of excremental vibrations, the bebop rhythm section uses a system of chordal punctuation. By this means, the soloist is able to hear the chord without having it shoved down his throat. He can think as he plays. A chorus of bebop may consist of any number of phrases which vary in length. A phrase may consist of two bars or twelve bars. It may contain one or several ideas. The music is thoughtful as opposed to the kind of music which is no more than an endless series of notes, sometimes bent.

Trumpeters did it, tenormen did it, trombonists and pianists did it, alto-men of course—they all imitated Bird; even Dizzy did. As bebop made its intricate way among the jazz bands of America, the ideas of Charlie Parker circulated among the soloists.

The musician they call Yardbird has had a long jour-

ney, starting on the road at seventeen, winning some recognition with Jay McShann, some more in jam sessions around Chicago and New York in the early forties, fighting illness, despair, and wavering audience interest, but always, invariably, gathering larger and larger support among musicians. Finally his ideas obtained; his following increased to the point where youngsters coming up were imitating imitations of imitations of Charlie; his reputation catapulted him to the top of the alto heap.

Bird was born in Kansas City on August 29, 1920. Before joining Jay, the boogie-woogie pianist with the jumping Kansas City band, Bird flew through school, stopping halfway through the secondary grades, blew some baritone horn with the school band, gigged around and played with Lawrence Keyes and Harlan Leonard, two local bands—the second of which gained some national attention, though not when Bird was in it. McShann showed up in Kansas City in 1937, and Charlie moved in. With Jay he came to New York in 1942 and moved a few people to superlatives. The band had a good beat, a good blues singer (Walter Brown), a good balladeer (Al Hibbler), and a brilliant alto saxophonist. Bird stayed with the band until Detroit, then picked up horn and reeds and flew back to New York. There he became an uptown mainstay, sitting in at the Minton's sessions, helping to evolve the new ideas, those which became bebop when formalized. He was part of the fine little band at the Uptown House, associated with drummer Kenny Clarke, and put in a nine-month stretch with Noble Sissle, doubling on clarinet; then, in 1943, he joined Earl Hines. With the Father, Charlie played tenor, Budd Johnson's chair being the only vacancy. There was a year with Hines, then brief stints with Cootie Williams and Andy Kirk before Bird joined the Billy Eckstine band of 1944. Thereafter Bird was a small bandsman; he joined Ben Webster on Fifty-second Street; then Dizzy; then he took out his own band—Miles Davis made his first auspicious appearance with Bird at the Three Deuces. Shortly after, in late 1945, Bird rejoined Dizzy for the ill-fated California jaunt which left

Bird a sick man in a sanitarium near Los Angeles. In early 1947 there was sad talk about Charlie. The word from California was that he was through; he was recovering from a series of bad breaks there. A short story published in a major magazine made bitter fun of those who tried to capture Bird's last notes before he succumbed to sickness and melancholy; the central character was thinly disguised as "Sparrow." But Charlie Parker wasn't through. He came back to New York and played better than ever. He elicited more enthusiasm and more imitation than before. He took over as the major influence in jazz.

Perhaps the greatest compliment that can be paid this imposing musician is an accurate description of his talent. Where other purveyors of bop stick closely to the cadences, changes, and rhythmic devices that identify their formularized expression, Charlie goes further and further afield. If any man can be said to have matured bop, Charlie Parker did it. If any bebopper could break away from the strictures of his style, utilizing its advances and advancing beyond them, Charlie Parker could do it.

Another musician who helped expand the resources and mature the performances of bop was the man called the Disciple. Maybe "the Mentor" would be a better name for Tadd Dameron, since so many of the young beboppers crowded around him, demanding and getting opinions and advice. He had no formal musical education; he wrote music before he could read it. He regarded bop as just a steppingstone to a larger musical expression. Yet no one who gives bebop serious consideration can omit Tadd from the list of prime exponents and wise deponents of this modern jazz expression.

You know his work if you have heard Dizzy Gillespie's "Hot House," Tadd's own construction based on the chords of "What Is This Thing Called Love?" Perhaps you have heard Dizzy's "Good Bait," "I Can't Get Started," or "Our Delight." Or Georgie Auld's "Air Mail Special," "Just You, Just Me," or "A Hundred Years from Today." Or Billy Eckstine's "Don't Take Your Love from Me." Or Sarah Vaughan's exquisite "If You

Could See Me Now," "You're Not the Kind," and the two other sides made at that same memorable date, using strings, Freddy Webster on trumpet, Leo Parker on baritone, and a fine rhythm section built around Kenny Clarke on drums. They are all Tadd Dameron's and all of more than casual interest, but not for Tadd. "All turkeys!" he insists. "I've never been well represented on records."

Tadd has never been well satisfied with anything he's done. He was all set to become a doctor, had finished some years of his medical education when the sight of an arm severed from the body of a man decided him firmly against that profession. "There's enough ugliness in the world," Tadd decided. "I'm interested in beauty." He had listened to his mother and father play piano, had picked up the rudiments of the instrument by himself and learned something of jazz from his brother Caesar, a well-known alto saxist around their home town, Cleveland, Ohio. It remained for Freddy Webster, the brilliant trumpeter who died in early 1947, to get Tadd really interested in music. Freddy never found much of an audience for his huge tone and moving ideas; he was heard most in his brief sojourn with Lucky Millinder. But the boppers heard him at Minton's—and he heard Tadd and persuaded him to join his band. In 1938, when Tadd had just attained his majority, he left medicine well behind him for the happiness and misery of life in the clinics of jazz.

After a year with Freddy and a couple more with Zack White and Blanche Calloway, Tadd emerged at the surgical end of jazz, learning about the morphology of band arrangements, appreciating—with the help of a Cleveland friend, Louis Bolton—the devious devices employed in altering chords, especially fascinated with stretching the wretched notes. By 1940, after some time in Chicago, he was a recognized arranger; he left town with Vido Musso. Vido's short-lived band folded at Brooklyn's Roseland and sent Tadd to Kansas City with Harlan Leonard. A year of the latter, and he went to

work in a defense plant. A year of that, and he was free to arrange for Lunceford and Basie and Eckstine and Auld; this work carried him from 1942 to 1945 and Dizzy's waiting arms.

With Dizzy, Tadd found himself. His arrangements for Dizzy's big band went beyond the formulations of the bebop pioneers, though he retained their most vigorous advances—the long phrases, the powerful upbeat rhythms, the chord changes. As long as Dizzy had a big band to write for, Tadd had work. But Tadd began to write for other bands and to lead his own bands at the Royal Roost on Broadway, where bop was ensconced in 1948 and 1949, finally to become a full-time arranger with only occasional sorties into the recording studio as pianist and leader.

Until almost half of 1947 was over Dizzy Gillespie was a man without a regular band. He had bands, many of them, large and small, good and bad, important and frighteningly unimportant. From his earliest collaborations with Charlie Parker, Slam Stewart, and Oscar Pettiford, he had indicated his ability to lead a fine musical organization. But never until the summer of 1947 did he show that he could whip a band into shape, hold on to it, fight with it, win with it, lose with it.

The way of a colored band is never easy. That axiom has been too often demonstrated to need detailing here. In Dizzy's case the difficulties were doubled. He was trying to sell a new music, one that seemed patently uncommercial, beyond the ears of the people who would have to pay to see and hear it, who would ultimately have to underwrite it. But a lot of people had faith in Dizzy as a musician and leader, as a showman and trumpeter, as a composer, arranger, and musical personality. He would, they insisted, demonstrate such unmistakable individuality that he would have to be accepted. For as soon as more than a passing technical competence is achieved, the major hurdle for a jazz musician in the race for public acceptance is the establishment of his individual sound. In this problem he is no different from the

strictly commercial musician, who must create such an undeniable identity that a million record buyers, several million more radio listeners and theatergoers, all who go to hear and see bands, will know it's he as soon as they hear a couple of choruses of his outfit. This Dizzy had done for himself as a soloist. Could he do it for his band? He could. He did.

Dizzy sought his individuality in manifold ways. He didn't stop at the forms and formulas of bebop, clear as they were, associated with him as they were. He went on to develop a visual personality—little bowing motions and big, characteristic wearing apparel, such as his visored beret, characteristic heavy eyeglasses, characteristic goatee. All over America young boppers who had never worn hats donned the Dizzy cap; young boppers who had never been able to raise sufficient hirsute covering to prove their age struggled with chin fuzz in an attempt to build the Gillespie goatee; young boppers with their own little bands began to lead from the waist and the rump; some, with perfectly good eyesight, affected the heavy spectacles. Dizzy was a character; he had a personality to go with his music; he was well on his way to national importance, although more saluted for the accessories of his music than for the music itelf.

All of this was impressive. The interest in Gillespie was large, but the box-office returns the young boppers could contribute were not sufficient to make Diz a major draw. Something more was indicated. The time was, as the fruitgrowers call it, ripe. In came a professional bandgrower.

Billy Shaw was once a musician, a working musician. He had booked all kinds of bands in his successful managerial career at MCA and William Morris, but the bands he really enjoyed booking and building were the musical bands. He was one of the group with faith in Dizzy. He went out and worked. He negotiated a contract with Victor records, placing Dizzy's product within reach of the squarest disk jockey, the most rectangular jukebox, the dimmest listener. He helped organize a Carnegie Hall

concert under Leonard Feather's eager auspices. And when Dizzy drew standees at Carnegie, Billy seized the opportunity. He laid out a concert series around the country for the Gillespie band. That wasn't enough. There were offers from Europe, where bebop was proving a postwar sensation. Billy signed Dizzy, at a handsome figure, for a month's tour of Scandinavia, the Low Countries, and France. He augmented this strong chain of paying dates with steady publicity. From the Gale office, where Shaw vice-presides, streamed reprints of articles about Diz, a steady diet of Gillespie food for editors, columnists, and jockeys. Stones were not to be left unturned; they were to be bulldozed out of the way. By the end of 1947 Dizzy and Billy and the men who played Dizzy's music could breathe more easily, could smile expectantly, could look forward to more folding money. Maybe Dizzy wasn't a threat to Sammy Kaye or Stan Kenton, but he was moving ahead, he was beginning to crowd the top men, he was proving that a colored band with a difficult music could make enough sense to enough people to pay off.

Certainly the Gillespie band did not prove in 1947 that it was the musical equal of the handful of top bands of the past. It was too young; it was too rough; its personnel shifted too often. But it did show astonishing progress. Trace the band's sound from its first Musicraft records to the two sides which marked its Victor debut, "Ow!" and "Oopapada." By the last of these it had achieved smoothness, playing ease, the beginnings, at least, of the polish that is necessary for top rank in the band business.

The smoothness and ease and beginnings of polish did not last for Dizzy. Some of the chaos and uncertainty that afflicted the Billy Eckstine band began to disrupt performances of Dizzy's large outfit. There were personnel changes and changes of musical policy. Eventually Dizzy's clowning proclivities obtained; by conscious reasoning process or by intuition, audiences of all kinds, general and indifferent to jazz or particular and sympathetic to bop, took an aversion to Dizzy and his music. There were several editions of the big band, then several little,

bands of short life. Dizzy's recordings and public performances with small bands in 1951 were of a higher order, however; although not yet back at the extraordinary level of the Guild records of the Fifty-second-Street bands of 1945, he seemed at last, perhaps because there was no commercial alternative, to be concerned again with the making of music. What had been a long reign, as jazz dynasties go, had been over for several years. Fats Navarro, who in the last years of his life had interested serious musicians and followers of jazz more than Dizzy, was dead, but Miles Davis and the music associated with him were still very much alive.

In the short history of jazz there have been two substantial musicians nicknamed Fats, men of substance both physically and musically: first Fats Waller, then Fats Navarro. Theodore Fats Navarro, a behemoth of a man, was not as large physically as his famous nomenclative predecessor; musically he gave promise of becoming as large a man—but he died before he could fulfill his promise.

Fats was a trumpeter of size all right. His tone was more compelling than that of anyone since Roy Eldridge —warm, supple, pulsating. He had a drive like Little Jazz too, with the style and imagination of Dizzy Gillespie, whom he replaced in the Billy Eckstine band in 1945. He was the most consistent of the so-called beboppers in his rides down the chords, making his notes, phrasing them consciously rather than capriciously, an astonishing technician.

Fats didn't like the name "bebop." "It's just modern music," he said. "It just needs to be explained right. What they call bebop is really a series of chord progressions." He protested further. "None of us play this so-called bebop the way we want to yet. I'd like to just play a perfect melody of my own, all the chord progressions right, the melody original and fresh—my own." In 1947 he thought he knew the major limitation of musicians, young or old, beboppers or not. "They don't know the chord progressions. When they know them a lot better, when they become really familiar with them—then maybe we'll have a real modern jazz."

Fats was indefatigable in his work, spending hours at home during the day practicing his horn, and half his spare evenings blowing with the boys. He was what his bop colleagues called a "serious musician" and had been for half of his twenty-seven years. He had been attached to music ever since he began to study the trumpet at thirteen in his native Key West, Florida. He had taken some piano lessons when he was six, but, as is so much the way with piano lessons at six, he "didn't learn anything." Well-schooled in jazz fundamentals, Fats left Key West in 1941, after high school. "I didn't like Key West at all," he said firmly. He joined Sol Allbright's band in Orlando, Florida, came up to Cincinnati with it, and soon after left to join Snookum Russell in Indianapolis—but not until he had had a chance to work with another teacher in the Ohio town. He was with Russell for two years and then, in 1943, joined Andy Kirk for a two-and-a-half-year tour of duty, a most vital one in Fats's development. Howard McGhee was one of his sectionmates. "He was the influence," Fats said. "I used to go and jam with him all the time. And through McGhee, Fats made the acquaintance of Dizzy Gillespie's ideas and of their originator. When, in 1945, Dizzy left Billy Eckstine's band, the organization he had helped stock and stylize, whose musical director he had been, he recommended Fats as his logical successor. Dizzy has never shown better judgment.

After leaving Eckstine himself, in June of 1946, Fats gigged around, played short jobs in and out of New York, made a few records, and caught fire with those musicians and aficionados fortunate enough to have heard him at Minton's in Harlem, at various cafes on the Street, or in his brief but noteworthy appearance on WNEW's Swing Sessions in 1946. On records he teamed up with Coleman Hawkins for Sonora, making "Bean and the Bop" and "I Mean You" with the man he regarded as "one of the peaks of jazz" because of an ability to keep

up with changes in jazz. "Whatever happens, he knows." While he was with Eckstine, Fats made two sides on which he can be heard between National's surface scratches—"Tell Me, Pretty Baby" and "Long, Long Journey." With Eddie Davis on Savoy he did "Hollerin' and Screamin'," "Maternity," and "Stealin' Trash." Under his own name, on the same label, he made "Eb-Pob" (bebop spelled backwards) and he appeared on eight sides of Savoy's bebop album as trumpet soloist with the Bebop Boys.

Fats intended to make more and more progress. He listened to and enjoyed Bach and Beethoven, expanded his knowledge of chord progressions, made his lip more limber, his fingers more flexible. He seemed to be broadening his resources beyond the bounds of bebop. Fats was, however, a split personality, whether or not a psychiatrist would so have diagnosed him. On his instrument he was almost always calm, cool, reserved, collected, and controlled. Away from his instrument, he didn't increase the volume of his voice or the pace of his step, but he did raise the temperature of his living to a point at which human beings cannot survive. In spite of the warm reception accorded bop by musicians and camp followers, and despite all the publicity it received in the newspapers —more bad than good, but very much of it—work was infrequent for bop musicians, even for so pre-eminent a one as Fats. Practice could occupy only so much of his time. What was left? When the world seemingly rejected his gifts, he turned to drugs to narcotize the hurt. In July 1950, wasted away to one-fourth of his normal size, Fats Navarro died of tuberculosis. The tributes at his funeral were beautiful, the shaking of heads intense, the tears genuine. But Fats was dead, and so was bop.

Bop musicians continued to play, some better than others, a few with continuing distinction, one or two with the individuality of idea and the structured development which go beyond the limitations of school and formula. Charlie Parker is the outstanding example of the latter kind of musical personality. Momentarily capitivated by

the siren sweetness of violins, violas, and cellos, he has been able in a recording session with strings to emerge above their conventional inflections in his most cogent solo on records, "Just Friends"; listening to him at a night club, one feels that, like its bodily housing, his creative spirit is indestructible and that he still has far to go. As much may be said for Miles Davis, under whose aegis one of the significant developments of cool jazz was made.

Miles, born in Alton, Illinois, in 1926, played the trumpet in his high school band in East St. Louis, worked with a St. Louis band, studied briefly at the Juilliard School of Music in 1945, and then put in several years on Fifty-second Street, in sessions at Minton's, and five months with the Eckstine band, before fronting his own outfit at the Royal Roost in the fall of 1948. He and Fats and Howard McGhee were the trumpet stalwarts of bop, following Dizzy's pioneering. McGhee, the oldest of the group, is a Tulsa, Oklahoma, boy, born in 1918, who grew up in Detroit, played clarinet in his high school band there, switched to trumpet while still in his teens, and led a twelve-piece band at the Club Congo in Detroit before joining Lionel Hampton in 1941. He made his reputation with Andy Kirk, Charlie Barnet, and a couple of small bands led by Coleman Hawkins. Always a forthright, well-organized trumpeter in the middle register, he extended his thinking range when Dizzy's conception became his in 1944. His chief variation on bop themes is a slowing down of the rapid-fire figures of bop so that the augmented chords and whole-tone melodies reveal their Debussyan source more clearly. While only rarely successful in his Impressionist meanderings, he is still capable of a fresh twist or turn of phrase, especially if playing in the register he has made his own, the middle.

The best of bop trombonists was J. J. Johnson, an Indianapolis youngster who graduated to the big jazz time with Benny Carter, with whom he made an indelible impression from 1942 to 1945, demonstrating an almost incomparable knowledge of his instrument's re-

sources and a fresh set of ideas. These ideas moved handily into bop when Johnson made the transition to small Fifty-second-Street bands with the Count Basie orchestra in late 1945 and '46, when there were other exponents of the new music with Count too. There are few more exhilarating moments in jazz than J. J.'s spectacular maneuverings of his trombone's slide at the fastest of playing tempos. Beside his best work, that of other modern jazz trombonists—even of such skillful musicians as Kai Winding—seems of little significance. His limitations are those of bop—inconsistency of performance and a weakening dependence upon formula.

These are also the limitations of bop's tenor saxophonists. Gene Ammons, son of the famous boogie-woogie pianist Albert Ammons, promised much when he was with the Eckstine band, delivered some, but also lost some along the way in his battles of music with, first, Dexter Gordon, then Sonny Stitt. Dexter Gordon lost most of the reputation he made in his several years with Lionel Hampton when, in the late forties, he began to rely either upon the stereotyped patterns of the Lester Young imitators or on musical honkings and ascents and descents of scales. Sonny Stitt was just one more imitator of Charlie Parker's alto until 1949, when his switch to tenor showed him more resourceful than most boppers on this instrument, and closer to the formulations of the cool jazz musicians than to the boppers. The best of Bird's imitators on his own instrument, the alto, was Sonny Criss, a Memphis musician who progressed from Los Angeles bands, through outfits led by Howard McGhee and Al Killian, to the Billy Eckstine band when it was in California; he ended up as a sufficient star on his instrument to be made, at least temporarily, a part of Norman Granz's touring "Jazz at the Philharmonic" troupe.

Bop has also had its baritone saxophonists, its pianists, bass players, and drummers. Leo Parker, a Washington baritone saxist who broke in with Eckstine, played with Benny Carter and various outfits in Harlem, including some in Minton's, and corrupted his fresh style to match

the honkings and caterwauls of Illinois Jacquet when he joined that high-flying, financially successful but musically disastrous little band. Serge Chaloff offends some people with the large and sometimes raucous tone he developed in the Georgie Auld and 1947 Woody Herman bands; others, recognizing Chaloff's pioneering as a baritone bopper and his considerable control of his instrument, admire the facility with which he gets around his horn, the fluency of phrase that, before him, was unknown on the baritone saxophone.

The piano was used in bop chiefly as an accompanying instrument; it had little place in a music that was essentially a one-line form of expression, played by a single-line instrument or by several in unison. Tadd Dameron, John Lewis, and George Wallington play what musicians call "arrangers' piano." The pleasure one receives in listening to them is chiefly from the introduction of a deft variation here, a dextrous departure there; they are fitted by neither technique nor interest for much more than that. Al Haig, however, has always been capable of something more; though chiefly employed by the boppers as rhythm-section accompanist, he made enough of his occasional solos to warrant serious consideration as a pianist, and made enough more of them when he joined forces with Stan Getz to show himself a fleet-fingered performer with delicacy of taste and of expression. The late Clyde Hart gave bop piano a start, but he was more distinguished as a creator of melodic lines for the new music than as a piano adapter of them. Bud Powell made the piano an integral part of bop. Born in New York in 1924, Bud comes from a musical family and has devoted most of his life to music. He left school at fifteen to begin a gigging life that has taken him all over Greater New York, from Coney Island to the upper reaches of the Bronx. He was to be found either playing or listening at Minton's during the famous formative sessions. He played some dazzling piano with Cootie Williams' band in 1944 and 1945, piano which sprang almost entirely from bop ideas—long lines impeccably articulated by the right hand,

with rhythmic accents and chordal elaborations contributed by the left. Bud's piano wanderings sometimes suggest his own career—the large number of his short-lived appearances with Fifty-second-Street, Minton's, Royal Roost, and Birdland bands; his 1948 nervous breakdown; his aimless approaches to the bandstand and departures therefrom. He will set up an intriguing pattern of ideas, aptly constructed, brightly developed, and then suddenly will break the structure and the development to repeat one or two of his phrases in seemingly endless and senseless reiteration. His solos sometimes have a nagging, fragmentary quality, like a series of boxes piled precariously on top of one another, without point or purpose. But then there are the solos that swing furiously from the first to the last bar, that add lines in a constant enrichment of ideas, that give bop its only real piano voice.

Erroll Garner has often been called a bop pianist because he has been linked with bop musicians in most of his recording and public performances. Actually, his Impressionist meanderings in and around middle-tempo jazz and very slow ballads are only incidentally modern. An unlettered pianist who grew up in Pittsburgh (where he was born in 1921) and matured in New York (where he settled in 1944), Erroll has an intuitive gift for the music that charms, whether it is ragtime, Waller, Debussy, or bop in origin. His cheerful bounces proceed from the first two, his languid ballads from the second pair. The pleasure he gives can be measured against one's taste for lushness for lushness's sake. His playing, adored by bop musicians, serves also as a measure of the taste of the men who played bop and of the sound they would have had if they had been slowed down from a gallop to a walk and had been more concerned with sound and less with idea.

If Oscar Pettiford can be called a bop bassist, because of his early association with the music, then bebop has had a distinguished bass player; but Oscar is closer to Jimmy Blanton and to the tradition in which solos are assigned his instrument than he is to bop, in which solos are not given the bass. No Blanton, but a superb technician, Oscar recasts Jimmy's ideas with ease and a huge tone, both of which served him well when he shifted bow and fingers to the cello. For the rest, there are Ella Fitzgerald's husband, Ray Brown, veteran of Dizzy's bands, able but hardly inspired; Al McKibbon, a well-schooled musician, probably the best of the big-band bop bass players; Curly Russell, another jazz and bop veteran, another able bass player; and Tommy Potter, probably the best of the small-band bop bass players.

Kenny Clarke was one of the founding fathers of bop and, at his best, its incomparable drummer. Born in Pittsburgh in 1914, into a musical family—his father played the trombone, his brothers the drums and bass—he himself played piano, trombone, drums, and vibraphone and studied musical theory in high school. He played with Roy Eldridge in 1935, then with one of the several unacknowledged territory bands of jazz, the swinging Jeter-Pilar orchestra in St. Louis, before joining the pianist Edgar Hayes for a tour of Scandinavian countries in 1937 and 1938. When he got back he played with Claude Hopkins and was Teddy Hill's regular drummer until Teddy disbanded. Kenny was with Teddy when Dizzy was part of the band, and he took several of the Hill musicians into Minton's where Teddy himself was manager. There, at varoius times between jobs with Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Carter, Red Allen, and Coleman Hawkins, he played a formidable part in the rhythmic structuring of bop. Teddy Hill reports that when Kenny was playing "those offbeats and little rhythmic tricks on the bass drums," he used to ask, "what is that kloop-mop stuff?" "That's what it sounded like, kloop-mop! And that's what we called the music they were playing. Later on we called it bebop." Kenny's nickname is Kloop or Klook, celebrating the part he played in the building of bebop. He was in Europe with the Army for three years, from 1943 to 1946, and he returned to the United States to play with Dizzy and Tadd Dameron. He went back to Europe with Dizzy in 1948, to stay, to become one of the

highly respected American jazzmen in France, where American jazz is so highly respected.

The great change wrought by bop drummers was in their organization of a one-one-one-one-one-one-one-one beat, as against the syncopations of swing and Dixieland drummers; they reserved the bass drum for accenting—accenting beats as individually as they could, and deliberately divorcing them from regular patterns. They kept the basic beat going on the top cymbal, annoying many listeners and some musicians with the clatter they thus set up, but giving boppers a rhythmic push like none they had ever felt before. The most popular of bop's pushers was Max Roach. Ten years younger than Kenny, he learned from him most of what he knew when he first broke into the business. He was with Dizzy from the beginning, the rhythmic bulwark of Benny Carter's fine 1944 West Coast band, and the solid support of dozens of Fifty-second-Street bands and recordings made by such units. As he demonstrated in his performance with the 1951 Metronome All Stars on record, dueting with Kai Winding, Max is a rhythmic thinker; his solos are not like swing drummers', not dependent upon sheer noise and intensity to make their point; his interest is in setting up drumming phrases that, without melody or harmony to buttress them, have nonetheless the shape and structure and integrated meaning of a solo by Charlie Parker. His solos and his work behind soloists sometimes have such quality, when the men he is working with are boppers or can adjust themselves to bop accenting; with others, more or less modern but different in jazz conception, Max's drumming, even as other boppers' trumpeting or saxophoning, just doesn't fit. With the exception of Bird and Miles, bop conditioned its musicians too well.

Bop is and isn't dead. Its decay as a formularized expression set in long before its reign was officially over. Its impact as the inevitable development of jazz that it was will always be felt. Bop lengthened melodic lines, weakened the grip of the two- and four-bar riff, gave jazz a rhythmic lift and fresh melodic and harmonic inspiration. Freshness was the key element in bop; when bop musicians could no longer recognize staleness and themselves became susceptible to stereotypes and clichés, they were finished as a cohesive group. The music itself, however, was not finished: its influence on cool jazz was indirect; on two important singing voices, Billy Eckstine's and Sarah Vaughan's, unmistakably direct. And it was these singers, after all, who brought bop to the millions and made them like it. Although the millions didn't know that there was any bop in what they liked of Billy's and Sarah's singing, they were aware that this was a different, a fresher, a more experimental kind of singing than any they had heard before, and they were perfectly content to accept it as such.

When Sarah Vaughan made her first records for Musicraft in 1946, an impatient man stood on the sidelines. He was one of the vice-presidents of that executive-heavy organization. Lifting his head angrily, he looked in the direction of the singer and turned to the recording director.

"Good God," he said, "she can't do that. Tell her to sing it straight. That stuff will never get anywhere. We'll lose our shirt."

Musicraft subsequently lost its shirt, but not on Sarah. She could do "that"; she did do "that"; "that stuff" got very far. In its last moments the record company represented by the impatient vice-president stuck grimly to its business; the glue was provided by Sarah, whose records were among the few large assets Musicraft had at the end.

Actually, outside of those few combative moments with the V.P. and a couple of periods of deep freeze from the bookers and the club owners of the music industry, Sarah Vaughan has not had a notably difficult career. Not without hardship, but certainly without hysteria or dramatic highlight of any sort, her story is pitched in a middle key, the comfortable tonality recognized by most of us as human. It's a simple story, and one has to look hard to find the ingredients not so much

of Sarah's success but of her very large musical accomplishment. She was born in Newark, New Jersey, that somewhat faded carbon copy of New York, in 1924, and she still lives there. For eight years, from the age of seven until she was fifteen, she studied the piano, and then she moved to the organ for a couple of years. She pulled stops and ranged the manuals in school and at church, and sang in the Mount Zion Baptist choir alongside her mother, who still sings Sunday service with the group. There is music in her father, too; a carpenter, he finds rest and relaxation on the guitar. But Mamma was the moving musical force; she wanted Sarah to become a concert pianist and continued to look hopefully at Carnegie after her daughter stepped into the jazz world, never dreaming for a moment that Sarah would make the great concert hall on the strength of her voice and not of her fingers.

In October 1942 Sarah made the step. She walked onto the stage of the Apollo Theatre in Harlem a little after midnight on a Wednesday, to appear in one of those amateur hours that have uncovered a high percentage of talent. The headliner on the regular bill was Ella Fitzgerald. Like Ella, Sarah fractured the audience. Like Ella years before, she won that night's competition. Like Ella, she got a handsome career under way as the Apollo Amateur Hour winner. She did a week at the theater as a reward for winning and was heard by Billy Eckstine. Billy, then singing with Earl Hines' band, told Earl about her, and a few weeks later she joined the band for a one-nighter at the Manhattan Center.

"There it was," she says, "my first job. Period."

Sarah stayed with Earl for a year, part of a mammoth organization which featured, in addition to Billy and herself, Madeleine Green and a variety of girl instrumentalists. In those days she sounded much like Ella, although without any conscious imitative effort. Her voice was warm, supple, under control.

In November 1943 Sarah cut out. In the summer of 1944 she joined Billy's brilliant bop band. In between?

"Nothing. Just starving." With Billy, with food regular again, she sang her head off, but again with little permanent effect. She made just one record with that band, "I'll Wait and Pray." It is still pleasant to listen to, but something less than an accurate index of the growing musicianship she was demonstrating. Sarah stayed with Billy a little more than a half-year, then began the curious shuttling back and forth which is basic to all building singers: records for H.R.S., Guild, Crown; a few weeks at the Copacabana Lounge with John Kirby, stretching from the end of 1945 just past the New Year's celebration that ushered in 1946; six months or so at cafe Society Downtown; records with Teddy Wilson for Musicraft—a good omen, since it was with Teddy on Brunswick that Billie Holiday made her significant early appearances. The big break was Fifty-second Street, appearing at the Onyx and Downbeat. She was paid seventy-five dollars for her Street debut at the first-named; when she returned a year later her weekly ante was nine hundred dollars; when she came back to New York a year after that no such club could pay the money she was worth.

She was maried on September 17, 1946, to trumpeter George Treadwell, and her life seemed balanced, burgeoning, brightly burdened. The seeming wasn't dreaming; from then on Sarah moved. She moved from coast to coast, from the Street to the Blue Angel to the Rhumboogie and Sherman in Chicago to the Bocage in Hollywood. Musicraft recorded her with Georgie Auld ("You're Blasé") and Tadd Dameron ("If You Could See Me Now"), and musicians lifted their ears. She did another trip around the country's night-club and theater wheel. Musicraft recorded her with her husband and studio combinations ("Body and Soul," "Don't Blame Me," "Ghost of a Chance," "Tenderly," "I Cover the Waterfront," "Everything I Have Is Yours"), and the public lifted its ears. Disk-jockey-concert-promoters like Dave Garroway made her singing their special concern, and she made something special of "It's Magic," a record that got just as big as the rapidly failing Musicraft con-

cern permitted it to get. When she returned to Los Angeles late in 1949, to do three weeks at Ciro's and four at the Casbah, she had reached the $3250-a-week class and was still soaring. When she made her first Columbia records, in January 1949, after suing the defunct Musicraft company and thus emerging from contracted inactivity, she reached the musical heights that "If You Could See Me Now" and some of the early records had suggested.

Those are the facts. A pleasant history with few downs, more ups, and an almost straight line to the top billing, following a pattern that almost seems lifted from her singing. As all of listening America knows by now, Sarah's style is compounded of a few downs, more ups, and a great drive to the top of a bar, a phrase, a song. Her filling of intervals, her breaking of half-notes into eighths, of quarters into sixteenths, her careening melodic variations, have been imitated since 1946 by every singer of consequence with ears to hear and voice to sing. Sarah says she's had only one influence—"Eckstine, of course." The smile that accompanies this admission betrays as much of her retiring personality as she generally permits non-singing expression. Of course the influence was mutual. Of course Billy bursts explaining the strength of Sarah Vaughan's influence upon his singing. Whichever way you cut it, she is certainly Billy's running-mate, one-half of a pair of singers who have broken every commercial tradition, every bigoted bar, as they have made America accept musicianship, a degree of detachment, and a governing jazz sound that springs from bop and courses beyond.

Chapter 22

THE PROGRESSIVES

After years of struggling, some better than others but none filled with fame or fortune, Woody Herman finally emerged as the major band-leader of his time in 1945. The particular pleasure afforded his friends then was the realization that he had "made it," as the ambiguous colloquialism goes, with the best band he had ever had and one of the very best ever. Only once before had a band of such unequivocal stardards and evenness of musicianship been organized. It looked in 1945 as if at least one promise of the millennium had been fulfilled: good jazz was making money. Then came the end of the war; a much greater promise was fulfilled. The cessation of hostilities also brought the close of another great battle, the one waged to make jazz acceptable to the multitude. Both victories were, of course, short lived. Because jazz was without an UNRRA or a Marshall Plan, its conquests were quickly dissipated. With postwar inflation, bands became too expensive for their leaders, the public shifted its taste just enough to make the shakier leaders quicken a bit and then give way more; heads fell, bands broke up.

The demise of the great Herman band in late 1946 was not altogether unexpected. There had been dissension and corollary difficulties in the band. Woody was a remarkable leader who had had several significant bands, though none as good as this one, but he was also a human being. The taut and precarious tightrope he had had to walk

with this greatest of his bands eventually gave way. Family problems piled up, and Woody was devoted to his wife and child; band problems accrued, and Woody was devoted to music and to his musicians. He was no longer able to assuage with the pride of achievement the feelings of frustration and incompleteness that attack such a man so far away from home so much of the time. He could no longer convince himself that the enormous success of his band would ultimately give his personal life a perfect balance. He quit, and the best band that jazz had ever known—apart from Ellington's—broke up. During 1947, Woody's year away from bandleading, many tears, salt and crocodile and very real also, were shed over the loss of the band, and a certain perspective about it was achieved. Looked at, even from that short distance, the real contribution of his band could be assayed, and for the first time, perhaps, Woody's leading and defining role in its performances could be properly seen.

It was not until the advent of the band that seemed in 1947 to be Woody's glorious farewell to his profession that he was overshadowed by his musicians. Until 1944, at least, Woody Herman was always the star. He was a singer and dancer who stopped shows before he was nine, working with his father, a onetime member of a vocal quartet known as the White City Four. When he was nine he bought a saxophone out of his own earnings, and after three months introduced it into his act. For two years he studied the saxophone with a teacher in Milwaukee his home town; when he was eleven he picked up the clarinet; when he was fourteen he left the stage to join the Myron Stewart band at the Blue Heaven, a road house just outside Milwaukee. Featured as a singer and instrumentalist, he played with Stewart for six months and then began to work around town with a series of local outfits. He was heard and hired by Joe Lichter, a Milwaukee violinist with a good jazz ear and some Chicago musicians to implement it. With Lichter, Woody was brought close to the central jazz tradition, both as a record listener and performer. That did it for him, and

thereafter he was fully committed to the music in which he became in time a formidable name.

After working on the road with Lichter, Woody finished up his high school work in Milwaukee, studied music for one term at Marquette University there, and gigged around town. Tom Gerun, leader of a dance band of large reputation and some musical quality, brought his musicians into the Schroeder Hotel to play and to look for a few new men, if they were available in Milwaukee. Hearing about Woody, he sent for him, auditioned him, and hired him. Woody had arrived in the big time; he was featured vocalist alongside Al Morris—who played tenor and baritone sax and sang so well he was able later, under the name of Tony Martin, to make himself a major figure in American show business—and an attractive young girl named Virginia Simms, later to become Kay Kyser's great attraction. Woody stayed with Gerun for four years, singing and playing tenor saxophone solos, on which he sounded, he says with his usual self-deprecating air, "like Bud Freeman with his hands chopped off." He left Gerun to join Harry Sosnik's band at the Palomar Ballroom in Hollywood. He remained eight months with Sosnik, who had a fair band—made easier to look at by the face and figure of Adele Girard, who sang and played the harp, easier to listen to by the jazz arranger for the band, Dave Rose. After eight months with Sosnik and two singing but not playing in theaters with Gus Arnheim, Woody met three old friends of his who were all playing with the Isham Jones band—Walt Yoder, Pee Wee Erwin, and Jack Jenny. This, the old friends decided, was their man. They talked Isham into hiring Woody and having him join them early in 1934 in Denver.

The Jones band was distinguished for the original tunes of its leader, one of the more gifted popular songwriters of his time, and for the occasional solos of its jazz musicians. It was a fairly important band for the new recording company, Decca, and it wasn't difficult to persuade Jack Kapp, whose child Decca was, to record the small band the jazz musicians had formed within the larger

organization. The Isham Jones Juniors, as they called themselves, made two dates for Decca in March 1936—six sides, the only one of which to feature Woody as a singer was "Fan It," the only side to endure. The musicians who worked with Woody here were to become the nucleus of the Herman band. That band, a cooperative organization, was formed by the Jones musicians when Isham gave them notice early in 1936 that he had tired of the profession and would break up a month later in Tennessee.

Walt Yoder went to New York and convinced some of the executives at the important Rockwell-O'Keefe booking agency that the Jones jazzmen were ripe for success in swing-crazy America. Woody got some arrangers together, gathered his musicians at the Capitol Hotel in New York, and started rehearsing them in the free space the hotel gave them. Six weeks later the band made its debut at Brooklyn's Roseland Ballroom and after a short stay there moved into the Manhattan Roseland, the most important ballroom in New York. Working the arduous routine of waltzes, rhumbas, and its own brand of music—jazz—the band managed to satisfy Roseland patrons—sailors, shopgirls, and the rest of that hard-dancing fraternity—and also to expand its repertory beyond a meager twelve scores, including its theme, "Blue Prelude." There were some impressive Dixieland soloists in the cooperative group: Joe Bishop played a pretty ballad with overtones of Beiderbecke on his fluegelhorn; Neal Reid doubled as road manager and barrelhouse trombonist; Walt Yoder and Frankie Carlson, on bass and drums respectively, kept the two-beat judiciously syncopated. Woody's taste and that of his musicians was best expressed by the blues, and the blues the band played, even when bookers, ballroom and night-club managers, and recording executives explained that a steady radio, record, and bandstand diet of the blues would be too heady for the average audience. One night when they were playing at a major hotel in Houston, Texas, Woody received a note from the manager: "You will kindly stop

singing and playing those nigger blues." They received short shrift at the hands of a hotel manager whose taste ran to Viennese waltzes, and shorter at other places which expected the band to work under union scale and the music to be as simple as the C-major scale. In April 1939 Woody recorded an instrumental named after the small band within the band, "Woodchoppers' Ball," and almost overnight the years of scuffling for food and with managers were over. An album of the band's better blues sides, *Blues on Parade*, was a success and, with Mary Ann McCall singing well and the band playing better, Woody was a success in the cubbyhole called a night club, the Famous Door, on Fifty-second Street.

The draft removed most of the members of the cooperative corporation and, with the help of its new managers, lawyers Chubby Goldfarb and Mike Vallon, its form was reorganized along more conventional lines with Woody as the proprietor of a gradually improving band. Cappy Lewis joined at the end of 1939 and gave the trumpet section a sizable growling soloist. Hy White, who came in at about the same time, added a significant guitar voice. Such soloists as trumpeters Ray Lynn and Chuck Peterson, tenor saxophonists Pete Mondello and Dave Matthews, played with the band from time to time and considerably modernized its outlook, Dave adding manuscript with an Ellington flavor as well as solos similarly constructed. At the end of 1943 the personnel was almost completely changed. Chubby Jackson became the band's official bass player and unofficial cheerleader, Ralph Burns its pianist and arranger, and Frances Wayne its featured vocalist. It seemed reasonable to ask such a musician as Ben Webster to record with the band, and he did in November 1943. It seemed fair to ask the best trumpeters and saxophonists and trombonists around to join up, and they did in 1943 and 1944, until at the end of the second year a more or less fixed personnel had greatness thrust upon it.

The first records the band made for Columbia in February 1945 caught its quality, and every side it made until December 1946, just before it broke up, had the same

exultant collective spirit and endless individual inspiration. The first sides issued were "Laura" and "I Wonder," and they were, as they should have been, Woody's—exhibitions of his sensitivity and warmth as a singer, of an individual style best in ballads, as its progenitor's, Red McKenzie's, had been. Then came "Caledonia," a transformation of a Louis Jordan jazz novelty, with jubilant Herman singing and an extraordinary five-trumpet unison chorus built on bop lines but unplayable by any bop trumpet section before Woody's. Coupled with it was Frances Wayne's exquisite "Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe," in which her controlled anguish was given jazz emphasis by her own phrasing and the almost violent eruptions of the band behind her. Then came the driving instrumentals—"Apple Honey," "Northwest Passage," "The Good Earth," "Your Father's Mustache," "Wild Root," "Blowin' up a Storm"—driving but, like Frances's anguish, controlled; powerful in their brass flourishes but also subdued and delicate in individual solos. In between the blasts and the bellows there was time not only for a solo or two, but also for whole numbers of a different volume, mood, and musical intensity. "Bijou," Ralph Burns' "rhumba à la jazz," was the side that caught Igor Stravinsky's attention and moved him to write his "Ebony Concerto" for the band's Carnegie Hall concert in 1946. Its rhythmic accents and organization of brass and reed sounds were at least suggestive of his own work; its infectious figures were played by the band as a whole and by Bill Harris as trombone soloist with a finish and a freedom at the same time that were like nothing else that Stravinsky, or anybody else, had ever heard. A group of able musicians were so fired by each other and by the collective sound they managed together that an entirely new kind of jazz eloquence and playing decorum was instituted. The Herman musicians were individually impressive; as a band, they were incomparable.

Chubby Jackson was responsible more than any other single musician with Woody for the quality of the band. It was not only his playing and talking enthusiasm; he was also, as the Jones jazzmen had been earlier, the

indefatigable supporter of the talents of musicians he thought belonged with the Herman band. He was a searcher, and just as his searches had never succeeded in the days before Woody, they struck fire every time he went looking for musicians after he joined the band. Show business was an integral part of his life; his mother, the former Dorothy Wahl, had been a vaudeville and musical-comedy singer. Known to all of Chubby's friends as "Mom," she has long presided over the house in Freeport, Long Island, that Chubby bought, providing meals and roaring enthusiasm for a group of sometimes stray but always talented musicians. Chubby switched to the bass in high school, inspired by Arnold Fishkin, who sold him his first bass for three dollars. Chubby played it some while he was in high school and some more at Ohio State University, where he completed his freshman year and broke seriously into the dance business with small bands around Columbus. Back in New York the next year, he played with Mike Riley at Nick's, studied his instrument with a member of the New York Philharmonic Symphony, and became a notable of the swing era as an entertainer and personality. He played with Johnny Messner, Raymond Scott, Jan Savitt, Terry Shand, and Henry Busse before he found the opportunity to demonstrate his enlarged musicianship and diminished dimension. With Charlie Barnet for almost two years, he participated in the stimulating performances that musicians like the trumpeters Al Killian, Howard McGhee, and Peanuts Holland, the clarinetist Buddy DeFranco, the guitarist Turk Van Lake, and the trombonist Eddie Burke provided. When Chubby joined Woody, in late 1943, he brought with him Jimmy Blanton's bass conceptions and his own brand of enthusiasm. His effervescent personality bounced through the rhythm section, inspiring comparative youngsters in the band, and reinspiring such veterans as Dave Tough. His loudly encouraging "Go! Go! Go!" sailed over the band, moving both musicians and audiences. His constant experimentation involved, first, the hiring of new men, and second, a variety of rhythmic tricks, the most exciting

of which, replete with doublings of doubled tempos and halvings of halved times, can be found in the Woodchopper album made in 1946, on the side called, in description of the beat and the number of musicians attacking it, "Four Men on a Horse."

Dave Tough had played all the Dixieland he wanted to when he joined Woody in 1944. He was proud of his pivotal position in the growth of jazz in Chicago, as the steadiest, the most gifted, and the most inspiring of the drummers who kept time for Frank Teschemacher, the McPartlands, and their various and sundry associates. He had enjoyed himself in his two outings with the Tommy Dorsey bands, with Bunny Berigan, Benny Goodman, Jack Teagarden, Artie Shaw, and in an earlier, brief appearance with Woody in 1942. But two events stayed with him always in his short life: his two and a half years with Danny Polo and other musicians in Europe from 1928 to 1931, and his year and a half with the Artie Shaw Rangers, the Navy band with which he played from 1942 to 1944. The one introduced his eager and receptive mind to the vast delights of European culture; he never tired of describing the titillating pleasures of such appeals to mind and body as he found in reading Baudelaire on the beach at Deauville. The other confirmed his low opinion of the human species; he came back from the war bitter and discouraged and certain that the affront to his and others' dignity was of the nature of things and that no amount of struggling against it would avail. The sense of humor he had displayed in his drum articles for *Metronome* changed; he was no longer capable of such charming explorations of drum styles as the passage from a 1937 column in which he explained that George Simon "is working out a formula of musical criticism. . . . Postulating that:

$$\frac{(6\ \text{saxophones}^2 \times \text{Ray Bauduc}^6)}{(\text{Pi plus Ray McKinley}^4)} = \frac{(2\ \text{tom toms} \times \text{Chick Webb}^3)}{(\text{Big Sidney plus Zutty})}$$

he has a tentative three-dimensional equation that will set the musical cognoscenti back on its heels."

The new Tough justified his surname. His gentle nature, notwithstanding the postwar discouragement, did take over for a while. With Woody for almost a year, from late 1944 to late 1945, he took authoritative charge of the rhythm section, complementing Chubby's rhythmic fancies with his unyielding beat and inspiring variations thereon. He didn't last; his body was not up to the anodynes with which he attempted to prop his failing spirits. He left Woody to spend almost five years in sulking, sodden deterioration, which came to a tragic close in Newark in December 1948, where he died of complete exhaustion.

Dave was replaced by Don Lamond, son of an Oklahoma City lawyer, who had moved with his father to Washington, D.C., when Don was very young. Don was one of the Washington School, a group of District of Columbia musicians who found a meeting of minds and styles in each other and kept both intact in bands around Washington from 1940 to '42 or '43, then with Boyd Raeburn's band from '43 to '44, then back in Washington again when Don led a group of them at the Kavakos Club. When Dave Tough became too ill to play Don was sent for on the recommendation of Sonny Berman. Sonny was enthusiastic—but not enthusiastic enough. Not since Dave himself had come up in Chicago had so facile and shrewdly intuitive a big-band drummer emerged. He took up where Dave left off, maintaining the steady beat, driving the rhythm section and the rest of the band, putting down that difficult row of even beats which the bop formulations of these musicians required. Although few musicians afterward, including, perhaps, Don himself, were able to keep such a demanding and subtle conception of rhythm going with such contagious lightness, he did set a pattern which jazz drummers will be shooting at for decades to come.

Billy Bauer had had an ordinary playing career when he joined Woody—keeping the beat steady with Carl Hoff, Dick Stabile, Abe Lyman, Louis Prima, and numerous little bands around New York. Chubby brought him into the Herman band, and the band perked up that much

more when Billy's guitar artistry was made a part of it. His solidity of performance was such that by comparison no other rhythm-section guitarist after him seemed quite professional; but his full impact was not felt until he joined Lennie Tristano in 1946. Tommy Aless, who replaced Ralph Burns on piano after the Herman band took a layoff in Detroit in June 1945, was essentially a rhythm pianist with Woody; his major duty was to combine with Don, Chubby, and Billy, to keep feeding the saxophone and brass sections the necessary beat, which he did very well.

Ralph Burns was clearly the best pianist and the best arranger Woody ever had. He was essentially a band pianist, who could, like his Herman confreres, manage a very good beat, and a soloist who, with an arranger's mind, always made his solos a part of the larger texture of the performance. As an arranger, he always had Duke Ellington's kind of ear; he always adapted his arranging and composing ideas to the sounds and conceptions of the musicians making up the bands for which he was writing. Ralph came by his several skills at an early age. He sums up his first years in one breathless statement: "We always had a piano in the house and my sister and I took lessons for about five years with private teachers and then I went to the New England Conservatory of Music for four months and then I went to work at a little beer and pizza joint at Revere Beach and that's where I started arranging and wrote 'Goodmania' and that's how I became a musician." Ralph comes from a big Boston Irish family; he was born on June 9, 1922, one of what was eventually to be a family of twelve. He played around his native Newton, a Boston suburb, with Bob Adams' orchestra before joining the band led by Frances Wayne's brother, Nick Jerrett. His arranging began with "Goodmania," which, he says, "was a lot of 'Sing, Sing, Sing' and 'Don't Be That Way.' I copied the records. Oh, it was horrible too. I loved the Goodman band. And Bunny Berigan's band—loved it. Boston's Bunny Berigan, Cushing Bean, was in the Bob Adams band. He was so blind

he couldn't read music, even with special glasses—but how he blew!"

Curiously, for an arranger whose thinking has been so much like Duke's, Ralph didn't like Ellington's work when he first started arranging. "But he came into Boston to play the Ritz roof in 1939 and I went in there all the time to hear him, and tried to understand why I didn't like him. And I got to know and love his music. Sure was great." Ralph came to New York with the Jerrett band in 1941, to play at Kelly's Stable on Fifty-second Street, with Frances Wayne singing with the band. Charlie Barnet came in often to hear Frances, and heard Ralph as well and hired him. Ralph did some arranging for Charlie, Duke's "Cottontail" and "Caravan" as a kind of penance for his original attitude toward Ellington, and also "Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe," which he brought with him when he joined Woody at Christmas time in 1943. Before joining Woody, he played with Red Norvo's overseas band in the spring of '43—the band, as Ralph says, "that never got across the East River. But what a wonderful ball that was!" It was also the first time Ralph's keyboard facility and felicity of phrase became audible on records, in the excellent series of V-disks Red made with that band for the Army.

When Ralph Burns joined Woody Herman it was almost certain that after a year or two he would leave the piano to spend full time with pen and score. At the age of twenty-one he had reached the maturity as arranger and composer that no other scripters with bands except possibly Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn could match. With a taste and ear for both the orchestral formulations of Stravinsky and the jazz ideas of Ellington, he was able to mass sections in three-minute tone poems that had some of the eloquence of both his major influences, and to balance the mass of sound of his ensemble writing with solo passages of notably restrained and soft invention. In the Herman band he found sections and soloists to give that balance proper articulation.

The Herman saxes achieved their quality not so much

from the work of their most famous member, the tenor saxophonist Flip Phillips, as from the team sound they achieved under the leadership of Sam Marowitz. Sam, talented member of a Middletown, New York, musical family, started his career on the C-melody saxophone when he was ten; by the time he was twelve he had started jobbing with local bands, playing in Catskill resort places. When he was nineteen his family moved to New York; he started auditioning and got his first name-band job shortly afterward, with Harry James, when he was just twenty. He stayed with James almost four years, playing on many of the band's records, but with no solos except for a few odd bars on "Trumpet Blues" and a few others and on a transcription of, "Let's Go Home." With Woody, his main concern was to keep the section in order, leading it with a tone suggestive of his own alto favorites, Benny Carter and Johnny Hodges. He was also lucky to have under him so facile a musician as John LaPorta, a fine arranger who did a couple of originals for the Bob Chester band, with whom he played before Woody, and for Woody too. Mickey Folus, like Sam an upstate New Yorker, played with Woody several times in 1937, 1938, 1941, and 1942, and rejoined him in 1945 after being discharged from the Coast Guard; he had little opportunity to solo in the great Herman outfit, but his warm and large tenor tone was a considerable asset in the saxophone section. The same can be said for the baritone playing of another prewar Herman saxophonist, Sammy Rubinwitch; molding his work on that of Harry Carney, Sammy managed to sustain the anchor end of the section with a friendly bleat. Joseph Edward Phillips, best known as Flip and a soloist, also upheld his section end very well, having developed from a jumping Fifty-second-Street tenor saxophonist who would take on all comers (whence his name, Flip, from one of the synonyms for going wild, or snapping one's cap, blowing one's top, or flipping one's lid) and could not read music very well, into an able teammate. Most of the saxophone solos with Woody were his, and he was capable of playing them with softness of tone, celerity of fingering,

and subtlety of phrase. His ballad meanderings were always more impressive than his self-conscious frantic jazz, but it is the latter facet of his playing style that has made him a big name in recent years, as a soloist in "Jazz at the Philharmonic" concerts.

Solos for a while were almost evenly distributed between Flip and Bill Harris. Bill, who was born in Philadelphia in 1916, started as a versatile musician, playing trumpet, tenor, drums, almost anything he could get his hands on, when he was a youngster. "I found it didn't pay too well to be a musician, and that I had to take a lot of other jobs. What kind of jobs? Well, let's see—I was a truck driver awhile; I worked in a warehouse; I read electric meters. All kinds of things, playing club dates on the side." On those dates he played with two other distinguished Philadelphia musicians, Charlie Ventura and Buddy DeFranco. Charlie kept them working at Italian weddings. Then Bill's father sent him out as an able-bodied seaman in the Merchant Marine. He was nineteen when that happened; when he got back, two years later, he married and settled down in Philadelphia. In 1938 Charlie Ventura sent for him to join Gene Krupa's band. But Bill couldn't read nearly fast enough in those days and, in his own words, he "laid an egg." The job lasted one week. Back home again, operating a machine in a defense plant, Bill "got real mad" about the Krupa incident and studied hard to overcome his handicap of poor reading. Nonetheless, he laid another egg with Ray McKinley, trying to play first trombone parts; "so I went back in the cellar and studied some more." He was more successful with Buddy Williams' band and still more successful with Bob Chester's. When Benny Goodman heard the Chester outfit over the air he sent for Bill. Bill was a great success with Benny, only suggesting the kind of imaginative modern reworking of Dixieland procedures which he made into the most popular trombone style of his time after he joined Woody. After Benny disbanded Bill put in some time on the Coast, and then with his own little band at Cafe Society

in New York. He joined Woody in August 1944, in Detroit, after playing with Chester again for a few weeks. "Bijou," if it is anybody's achievement besides Ralph Burns', is Bill Harris's: the slight burr in his tone, the long extension of his trombone slide across acres of skipping notes, his identifying vibrato—all these things made an impression upon jazz in general and jazz trombonists in particular unequaled since the early days of Jack Teagarden. The contagion of Bill's style extended through all the bands that played or pretended to play jazz in the late forties, not excepting Woody's. Ed Kiefer and Ralph Pfiffner played almost as much in the Harris idiom as Bill, when they were joined to him in section performance. Both skilled and broadly experienced, both quiet and unassuming, they were keenly aware of their individual responsibilities, which they discharged with distinction.

No trumpet section in jazz was more distinguished than Woody's. At its 1945 peak it scaled the heights of human sonorities in the playing of Pete Candoli, whose physical prowess as a trumpeter was matched by his swimming and weight-lifting attainments; he could always be counted upon to bring a playing performance to an exultant climax with his altissimo notes, or a stage show to a hilarious ending with his impersonation of Superman at the end of the driving, screaming "Apple Honey." Neal Hefti composed two of the band's finest instrumentals, "Wild Root" and "The Good Earth," and contributed to the band a refinement of bop trumpet-style that reflected his experience with Bobby Byrne, Charlie Barnet, and Charlie Spivak, as well as an unusually imaginative mind, essentially restless on the trumpet, but beautifully grounded on manuscript paper. Irv Lewis was one of the leading actors in the band's troupe of Jewish comedians, fitting neatly into histrionic place beside Chubby Jackson, Sam Marowitz, and Sonny Berman. He was also a splendidly versatile trumpeter, veteran of Detroit club dates and radio work, of the Henry Busse band when Chubby Jackson was with it, and of innumerable recording dates. He was replaced by the most brilliantly

gifted lead trumpeter in jazz, Conrad Gozzo, at the same time that another of the able musicians of the Washington school, Irving Markowitz, replaced Neal Hefti. Goz and Marky carried on the Herman trumpet tradition with all the skill and addiction to playing duties which marked their new associates. The same was true of Shorty Rogers, born Milton, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts—a difficult nativity to believe when one hears his musician's Southern accent. Shorty, when he joined the band in 1945, brought into it a delicacy of style and subtlety of idea that had been tutored by Red Norvo when Shorty played with his small band in 1942. A product of Fiorello La Guardia's pride and joy, the New York City High School of Music and Art, Shorty was well trained in the classical tradition and, as a result, never at a loss in composing and arranging, first for the Herman band and later for Stan Kenton.

All of these men contributed to the band its extraordinary flash and power and contrasting accents; none of them was quite the equal, as a soloist, of Sonny Berman. Sonny played with seven bands in his six years in the jazz business, but not until he joined Woody Herman in late 1944 did his unusual skill and taste become widely apparent. At first, with Woody, he was end man in the trumpet section, a funny kid whose square countenance looked so much like the front of a subway car that it earned him the extraordinary sobriquet of "BMT-face." Then came the famous vitalization of Woody's band, and Berman became to Herman what Chubby Jackson and Bill Harris and Flip Phillips and later Red Norvo did—a sparkplug in the band's celebrated drive to the top of jazz. He was never too well featured with the band on records—you can hear him at his best on "Sidewalks of Cuba"—and it remained for a set of Woodchopper disks, a couple of V-disks, and one side in Dial's bebop album ("Curbstone Shuffle") to carve his groove in eternity. But anyone who heard the Herman band in person will remember Sonny's solos, those long cadences and flattened notes piercing the wildest up-tempo jazz with such lovely

poignancy. There was always something poignant about Sonny, no matter what he was playing or saying, in his role as Yiddish dialectician and storyteller or as a slapstick comedian knocking everything down before him in his determined pratfalls. Sonny was funny with a touch of sadness—sad with a meaning, sorrowful on his horn, touching as a person when you got to know him and got beyond the frantic exterior. This boy was well on his way to a mark in jazz beside the handful of titans on his instrument, until the ways of the jazz world caught up with him. His was one of the few fresh new trumpet sounds after Dizzy's, Fats's, and Miles'; he was a musician potentially of the stature of Louis Armstrong, Cootie Williams, and Roy Eldridge. But the grim fact is that, at the age of twenty-one, Sonny Berman died of a heart attack, brought on by events at a wild party.

In 1942 a Charlie Barnet record started people talking about a singer with overtones of Billie Holiday in her voice and style—Frances Wayne. That record was "Black Magic." In 1945 a Woody Herman record started the same people and a lot of others talking about Frances Wayne all over again. That record was "Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe."

Frances was a good singer when she made "Black Magic." She was an excellent singer throngh her three years with Woody. But "Happiness" struck the right chord —a brilliant ensemble chord scored by Ralph Burns—and tempo—slow—for her voice and temperament. She is essentially a moody, torchy singer, a more modern, handkerchiefless Ethel Waters. She sings with Italian operatic intensity of feeling in a jazz frame. The intensity reminiscent of Verdi and Puccini and Donizetti comes from her Italian family background. The jazz feeling springs from similar sources: her brother, clarinetist Nick Jerrett, led one of the good little jump bands around Boston and New York and Syracuse until 1943. Frances sang with Nick off and on, between single turns, stretches with Sam Donahue and Charlie Barnet, and a layoff to recover from the ravages of a strep throat.

Frances was born Chiarina Francesca Bertocci. She spoke better Italian than English until she was eight years old. A native Bostonian with a father from Tuscany and mother from Naples, she spent three years of her childhood in their native land, went to a convent school in Naples, and visited the opera house in Rome on weekend jaunts with her father. Frances finished her schooling in Boston, didn't sing until she was twenty, only had four months' formal teaching. She had always had musical-comedy ambitions, but her family didn't approve of them. She starred at the Hi-Hat in Boston for nine months with a small band of which Hy White was also a member, and then worked in other night clubs before joining her brother, Nick, who was studying at the New England Conservatory, where he formed his small band with Ralph Burns. Later they all came to New York and played at Kelly's Stable. Eventually the whole band except Nick and Ralph was drafted. Frances took a job with Charlie Barnet, stayed eight months, and waxed the above-mentioned "Black Magic" for Decca. For eight months after that she was ill and didn't sing a note. Then she worked locally as a single again. One night Woody Herman heard her, and she joined him two days later.

Frances Wayne was welcomed to the inner circle of jazz singers, that very small number of distinguished men and women who sense the great heart and soul of popular singing at its best, who are aware of its philosophical tractability, and are able to communicate all of these things with a beat.

Besides his own and Frances's singing and the soloists on the conventional jazz instruments, Woody offered first Marjorie Hyams and then Red Norvo on vibraphone, flavoring the sound of the band with a seasoning only a handful of musicians have been able to manage. Marjorie's alternation of bland countenance and electric smile paralleled her playing with Woody. Sometimes she was only a plunk or a series of amplified sounds to sharpen the texture of the band's performance; occasionally, granted a solo, she expanded the melodic fragment handed

her by the previous soloist or the band as a whole into soft, simple, and beguiling elaborations. Red, of course, had invented and defined most of the possibilities of xylophone or vibraphone mallets before he joined Woody at the beginning of 1946. With the Herman band his was not so much technical practice as a demonstration of the breadth and depth of vibes in modern jazz. Most of the musicians with whom he played were old friends, personally and musically, and he played beside them as if he had been with them from the band's beginnings. Such alterations as were required Red accomplished with a minimum of show and a maximum of taste. The size and value of his adjustment can be heard in his performance of one of his most famous solos, "I Surrender, Dear" in the Woodchoppers' album.

Red's contribution to the Carnegie Hall concert of the band was on his own high level, which was matched, note for note, bar for bar, inspiration for inspiration, by all the musicians in the band that evening. With the addition of French horns and harp, the slightly changed personnel of the Herman band moved through Stravinsky's "Ebony Concerto" as if his dry accents and fragmentary phrases were ancient conquests. They played their ragtimey work, with its wry overtones of a German band, with a finish and polish that Virgil Thomson, who did not like the band's jazz, admitted was without equal as a performance of Stravinsky. "Ebony Concerto" was the *succès d' estime* of the evening; Ralph Burns' "Summer Sequence" was the major musical achievement. In its four parts, evocative but not programmatic distillations of four summers spent in different parts of the country, the power of the band ensemble, the sweetness of such soloists as Bill Harris and Flip Phillips, and the pianistic imagination of Ralph were given full display. One of its most felicitous phrases, in repetition and variation, was built out of Beethoven's familiar piano-practice piece, "Für Elise," and assigned to piano (Ralph), guitar (Chuck Wayne), bass (Chubby). A similar invention was to be heard in "Lady MacGowan's Dream," one of the last

of the band's recordings, not issued until after it had long broken up—as was true of "Summer Sequence" too.

Woody's success was contagious. Following the spectacular changes effected in jazz by the boppers, it suggested to many that a new era had begun, one in which the technical inefficiencies and the clichés of Dixieland and swing would be replaced by a more skillful and imaginative organization of jazz resources. Suggestion became conviction, and conviction became cult. With startling rapidity lines were drawn, barricades built, and war declared. It was an old war in jazz; it had not been declared by the swingsters or the boppers. With the rise of swing, a generation of early jazz enthusiasts took root and found newspapers and magazines and beer parlors across the country in which to blossom. Assuming a false parallel between successful swing bands and successful tinsel—movies, magazines, the writings of such as Faith Baldwin and Kathleen Norris and Kathleen Winsor—these enthusiasts pummeled Benny Goodman and Art Tatum and even found Duke Ellington wanting—he had succeeded commercially, ergo he had failed musically. When bop came along the tools were sharpened, the adjectives were bared, and adherents of the new music were damned as specious entries in a sacred tradition, which, it was said, delayed a little more with each of their ministrations. Besides, it was a complicated music, and nobody understood it, and wasn't it that most noxious of qualities, intellectual?

If these arguments had come only from one obvious source, the philistine newspaper columnist, it is unlikely that the battle would have raged so furiously. But these were the attacks of generally sensitive and knowing people, those who had grown up with jazz in the twenties and those who were growing up with it in the thirties and forties. On college campuses around the country the vote was better than two to one for the old jazz; it was infradig to support modern jazz at any of the Ivy League colleges, and maybe a little subversive too. A whole network of little magazines devoted to the "art" of Dixieland, New

Orleans and Chicago versions, in contradistinction to the "commerce" of swing and bop, took shape and called names. One of the favorite debating points of this cult, both in conversation and in print, was the argument from analogy: the failure to recognize the incomparable size of the unique contribution of the Dixielanders was akin to calling Bach and Handel, or perhaps (if the arguer was better equipped and knew his musical history better) di Lasso and Palestrina, corny. When the cudgels of the Communists were joined to the battering rams of the Dixieland lovers in support of "the people's music," the modernists saw blood. Infuriated, frustrated by the non sequiturs and nimble evasions of their opponents, admirers of the new jazz reduced themselves to the level of name-calling and the construction of questionable analogy.

In 1945 *Metronome* published an article which, employing the coinage of a sailor, Sam Platt, who had written a letter to *Esquire*, made a label for the bigoted Dixieland devotee stick. Platt's letter was a protest against what he called the "Moldy Fig" genre of jazz lovers. The article pointed out that the musicians who were beloved of the Moldy Fig pointedly disagreed with the bigoted view, and quoted several of them side by side with Fig detractions to prove it. In a magazine called *The Jazz Session*, representative of the Fig position, Benny Goodman was summed up as "without doubt, probably the poorest musician in America. An uncreative riffster trying desperately to copy even the poorest of Negro musicians, and failing miserably." In answer, Edmond Hall, a New Orleans clarinetist in high favor with the Figs, was quoted: "They don't come any better than Benny. . . . Benny's always been my favorite jazz musician. I've never heard a bad performance by him. If I buy a Goodman record, big band or small band, I always know it's going to be great." Another of these magazines, *Jazz Quarterly*, disposed of Art Tatum by comparing him to a hillbilly bandleader and singer who had had fantastic success with one record, "Pistol-packin' Mama." Art,

the *Quarterly* opined, "knows about as much about jazz as Al Dexter." But Mary Lou Williams, enormously popular among Figs because of her occasional forays into the venerable precincts of boogie woogie, could be quoted too; for her, "Tatum is the greatest jazz musician I have ever heard."

If the Modernists had remained content with musical analysis and the comparison of fanatic fans' views with measured musicians' judgments, the controvery would clearly have been one-sided, and a degree of dignity could have been maintaind. The challenge was incendiary, however, and intelligence was affronted. Into the fray went critics and amateur crusaders. Dixielanders were labeled "reactionaries" when the air was cool and the offense mild, "musical fascists" when the temperature and the blood rose to a serious occasion. As the Figs refused to listen with any attention—if at all—to any jazz later than 1929 in style and idea, so the Modernists turned from jazz earlier than 1935 in origin—except perhaps for an occasional Duke Ellington record. The full fury of political differences between Right and Left was vented upon these arguments. Finally, as "commercial" carried all the calumniatory opprobrium of the Fig with it, "progressive" was weighed down with all the venerating approbation of the Modernist.

Woody Herman's 1944-1946 band was the first vehicle of "progress" for the outspoken supporters of such in jazz, and with it bebop and singers like Billy Eckstine and Sarah Vaughan. The second recipient of the honors of progress, first class, was Boyd Raeburn. Boyd, who had made money and something of a name for himself as leader of a commercial band in Chicago, did his best to carry the torch. In 1944 he brought a band into the Lincoln Hotel in New York that featured Johnny Bothwell and supported that alto saxophonist's Hodges-like musings and wanderings with the Washington School of Jazz musicians—Earl Swope on trombone, Emmett Carls on tenor, Mert Oliver on bass, and Don Lamond on drums. The next year Boyd's books carried a

heavy load of bebop, and the band recorded with such significant boppers as Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Harris, Serge Chaloff, and Oscar Pettiford. These sides and four others featuring Trummy Young were recorded for Guild, bop's home label in 1945. The real force of Boyd's band was not felt until it settled down to starve and fight as best it could on an empty stomach in California in 1945 and the next year.

The band Boyd led at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco in August 1946 was distinguished by any jazz standards. It was well rehearsed; its ensemble sound was handsome and its own. It had a fresh alto soloist in Hal McKusick and a tenorman with a provocative set of new ideas in Frankie Socolow. Johnny Mandell played his own set of trombone variations on Bill Harris's ideas and wrote arrangements that were fresher still. George Handy played piano and wrote scores that showed an astonishing growth beyond what he had been doing for the band in New York a year earlier. He had begun to write in earnest, utilizing his playing experience in his native city, New York, and his intensive pursuit of modern musical ideologies at New York University, the Juilliard School of Music, and in private lessons with Aaron Copland. The ideologies were omnipresent: there were echoes of Bartok and Stravinsky, rolled into captivating hollers, in his arrangements of "There's No You" and "Out of This World"; there were obvious traces of the same influences in his collaborations with McKusick, "Yerxa" (the name of a Los Angeles columnist that intrigued George) and "Tonsilectomy" (sic); they were unabashed in "Boyd Meets Stravinsky." Nonetheless, in such original compositions as "Dalvatore Sally" and "Bloos," which he wrote for Norman Granz's experimental album, *The Jazz Scene*, he was emerging as a jazz thinker of striking originality. There was more than a play on the name of a Surrealist painter in "Dalvatore Sally"; there were too a nimble handling of changes of tempo, polytonality, and a lovely overlying melody. The "Bloos" reached entertainingly after twelve-bar chorus clichés and the combined resources

of strings, woodwinds, and jazz sections. "Stocking Horse," the musical story of a horse born with silver stockings on its hoofs, which George wrote for Alvino Rey, changed time piquantly, as its subject demanded, shuttling back and forth between four/four and five/four time and other multiples of the quarter-note that permitted the rhythm section to maintain its basic beat.

After 1946 George disappeared from the jazz scene, and so did the Raeburn band, with the exception of a few well-managed record performances of Johnny Richards' excursions into Debussyan and Ravelian pasture, and occasional theater and club appearances with personnels very different from the California organization. George succumbed finally, although not forever, one hopes, to his calculated unorthodoxies. As others suit deed to word, George's actions followed his music. His noncomformist practices ranged from the mild eccentricity of lapel-less jackets to the more out-of-the-way habit of wearing a beard (before and after the boppers made the hirsute adornment de rigeur) to the highly irregular procedure of dyeing his hair red, in which he was imitated by many adoring young musicians. Such behavior patterns and their enlargement into a life dominated by the lust for gratuitous pleasures have taken their toll of many more jazzmen than George and his aping attendants; they have rarely debilitated a better musician.

Stan Kenton tried hard a few years later to fit George Handy into his concert plans. At one time or another he has tried to make every serious jazz musician a part of his plans. He has been called "the savior of American music" and "an empty noise." He has accomplished things with strings that no symphony orchestra in the world can equal, and he has also produced some of the most revolting sound ever to come from a group of musicians ostensibly playing together. He, more than any other, gave meaning to the term "progressive jazz"; more than any other he helped make the term ridiculous. But up or down, good or bad, he has been a force of very real importance in music. In 1949 and 1950, almost single-

handedly, he made audiences listen to, learn about, and even enjoy the avant-garde formulations of jazz and classical music. Without the jazz splendor, either of band or soloists, of the Woody Herman organization of 1944 to 1946, he has polished an orchestral instrument to the disciplined point at which nothing fazes it. If only because he has made the playing potentialities of jazz musicians into actualities, Stan Kenton has made a significant contribution to jazz.

Stan comes from Wichita, Kansas, where he was born on February 19, 1912, but his six and a half feet and rugged countenance have always convinced people that he was a Texan or a Californian. He did grow up in California, in the Los Angeles suburb of Bell. His mother tried to make him into a pianist when his major interest was playing baseball. When two cousins of his, both musicians, stayed at his family's house for a few weeks and began to play jazz, Stan was convinced. He studied some with his mother and some more with an organist. He used to play jobs at Bell High School and increase his income some by working in a hamburger joint. In 1930 he was earning thirty dollars a week in San Diego on a summer job. "But I got homesick and I kept hoping the job would blow up so I could go back home. It did. I went home." In 1934 Stan played the piano and wrote arrangements for Everett Hoagland, then "a big man at the Rendezvous Ballroom at Balboa Beach." At the same ballroom, a few years later, Stan led his own band, the first of many editions of an organization that was changed again and again and usually for the better. In 1942 Stan brought the band East, to play ballrooms and theaters and hope for the best and almost always got the worst.

The band that Stan brought East was essentially on a Lunceford two-beat kick; if anything, it hit those syncopations with a blasting insistence that was stronger and more obvious than the playing of the originators of the style. Stan knew what was wrong, knew it with the kind of electrifying intuition he has always depended upon. "I realized that my style had become antiquated. There

was nothing really new, no new sounds, just a lot of rhythmic accenting. Today all styles that are concentrated on accenting beats are through. Now it's the manner in which you phrase. Every tone must have a pulse. Anything stiff has got to go today. That's what was wrong with my band; it was much too stiff. I have learned, I have felt, that music today is a natural, human, pulsating sound. It's no longer mechanical."

Stan's realization of the limitations of his first style has been packed away in recording after recording since 1944, when the first important changes in his style were effected. Those changes, to begin with, were in the direction of a looser, more modern jazz, with Anita O'Day and then June Christy to give the jazz vocal articulation, and such arrangements as "Just A-Sittin' and A-Rockin' " and "Painted Rhythm" to demonstrate the instrumental capacity of the band. In 1946, with the band's first album, came some of the first successful experiments, of which the presentations of drummer Shelly Manne in "Artistry in Percussion" and of bassist Eddie Safranski in the piece named after his last name were the most successful. In 1947 the band went through its Cuban period, from which it has never fully recovered, but which it has relaxed some, following the general decline of bongos and Latin American accents, which threatened for a while to engulf jazz. As Stan said, "All styles that concentrate on accenting beats are through."

Later albums emphasized the experimental nature of Stan's ideas. Again there were pieces built around soloists, this time some better soloists, such as the constantly improving alto saxophonist Art Pepper. For the first time, in his *1950 Innovations* album, recorded to demonstrate the music played across the country by his first concert orchestra, Stan gave Pete Rugolo a satisfactory opportunity as a composer. Basically a composer in the modern classical idiom, Pete showed himself more at home in occasional quarter-tone flights than in the deft but undistinguished jazz instrumentals he has spent most of his professional time in writing. In his next album Stan

presented Bob Graettinger's "House of Strings," a work steeped in the adventurous patterns of atonality, with reminiscences of Schoenberg and Alban Berg, but reminiscences more in the listener's head than in the composer's, since Bob has never knowingly heard their music. The writing is unusually skillful; the playing is impeccable, a definitive example of the fluency, precision, and masterful attack of which musicians—even violinists, violists, and cellists trained in a foreign idiom—are capable when they have been disciplined by their work in jazz and under a leader of Stan's caliber.

Soloists have never meant as much in the Kenton band as they have in other jazz orchestras. Rather the section work of such trumpeters as Buddy Childers and Ray Wetzel, of such trombonists as Bart Varsalona, of such a drummer as Shelly Manne has been important. Vido Musso was once a featured soloist, but he was more successful because of his earlier performances with Benny Goodman than because of his playing with Stan. Eddie Safranski built a reputation as a bass player with Stan that only Oscar Pettiford has challenged in recent years; essentially a technician with a catholicity of musical interests that includes both jazz and classical music, he has found proper recognition as an NBC studio musician, playing in jazz trios with Billy Bauer and in the NBC Symphony under Arturo Toscanini. In 1951 the band had some able saxophone soloists in the altoist Art Pepper and the tenorman Bob Cooper, both close to the cool sound of Lee Konitz and Stan Getz. It had, in Shorty Rogers, the best of the trumpeters influenced by Miles Davis; in Milt Bernhart, a trombonist who has lifted the Harris style far beyond its Dixieland base. Most of all, the band still had Stan Kenton, and Stan makes more sense today than he did in 1940, 1945, or 1948—more musical sense, though he has had to divide his audience in two. For one part of his audience Stan plays jazz, occasionally lets loose the atomic blasts that first won him his reputation, and just as often softens them with the languid movie music that helped him keep it. For the other half he plays his concert music. For both halves he has more measured and more meaningful words. Until about 1949 Stan ran for election every time he opened his mouth to engulf a microphone in a disk jockey's studio or on stage. He made sense, but a sense that was often garbled by his intensity. In 1946 he talked about progressive music in this fashion:

> Jazz is progressing rapidly; much faster than most people think. Soon there'll be no more "in the middle" bands, no more of those that try to play something new for a few minutes and then settle back into the old way because it's more commercial. The pace is much too fast for that sort of thing. Duke and Woody are putting themselves in a class by themselves. That's the kind of music that's going to be *it* from now on. The rest of the bands will have to make up their minds whether they want to be plain, commercial dance bands or whether they want to be progressive, musical bands. Quite frankly, I think that if the commercial bands try to compete with the more modern type of bands, they'll wind up making asses of themselves.
>
> What are we trying to do? We are trying to present a progressive form of jazz. We've got that common pulse now, we know what we want, we know what we are going to do and we know how to do it. We want to make our contribution to real music and we want to make it a really worth while contribution. So, my friends, this is it, and you can take it or leave it, because from now on in we're not going to change, we're not going to listen to anybody else. We've found what we've wanted, what we believe in. For we've found that common pulse at last!

In 1950 he recognized that his was not the only jazz and that the music his band played, like all jazz, had roots:

> I'm clear beyond the stage where I start arguing the merits of progressive jazz against swing and swing against Dixieland. We just have to accept all the different phases and let the thing go. I think Dixieland is the basis for all of our jazz. And these fellows got brave and ran out in front, but oops! they got afraid; they had learned a little bit about music, so it was pretty hard for them to be basic and simple as they used to be.

He hesitated a bit about 1950 jazz:

> In modern and progressive jazz and bebop there is such an urge today for new harmonic sounds—everyone is in the throes of creating new harmonic excitement—that the music has suffered greatly by the lack of rhythmic assertion and the lack of real emotional character. Charlie Parker is about the only example today of someone who has progressed harmonically while at the same time maintaining a jazz character. The young jazz player should listen to Charlie not just for the technical and harmonic part of his creativeness—but to see how honest and free his projection is.

But Stan wasn't going to turn his back on jazz as he had done twice before, when he had disbanded for short periods, under the impression that he was finished with jazz and that jazz was finished with him—when "I felt I didn't have it, musically speaking, to reach the top. Our music seemed out of tune with the people; we just had no common pulse. I guess I just had the wrong goddamned feel for music. Yes, some people with lots of nervous energy could feel what we were doing, but nobody else could." In 1951, with full respect for what had gone before him, he summed up the past and confronted the future:

> The thirty-five or forty years of jazz are finished as an era. We might as well close the door on it. Maybe it should have been closed three or four years ago. Maybe we're going to go back to the minuet or the Viennese waltz. Wherever we go, we're certainly not going to jitterbug again. The future is broad and inspiring. Modern musicians will use every conceivable method, no matter what it is. My band has gone beyond my own technical knowledge in its use of the complexities of modern orchestration.

The tribute he pays his musicians is not false modesty on Stan's part. The compliment works both ways: in jazz, as in the other arts in which collective performance is involved, there is no clearer sign of maturity or strength of leadership than this one. In acknowledging the high achievement of his musicians, Stan indicates his own.

Chapter 23

COOL JAZZ

The making of the modern tenor saxophonist in the image of Stanley Getz was accomplished by one record—maybe two. The one record is "Early Autumn"; the "maybe" is occasioned by the last side of Ralph Burns' other seasonal salute, "Summer Sequence." For there is little doubt among devotees of modern jazz that the tenor is properly sounded by Stan and those who follow in his tonal tradition.

"Cool" is the adjective that best describes that sound —"cool," inevitably overworked because it seems such a precise description of the almost indescribable. One of the great changes effected in jazz in the late forties was a revolution in thermodynamics, a new conception of the relation between heat and the mechanics of making music. The change, the new conception, the revolution, all are best illustrated by the playing of Stan Getz.

When we were first confronted with the look as well as the sound of cool jazz, some of us were dubious about its qualities. The component parts of the look were a relaxation of the body to accompany the restraint of tone, and an indifferent facial expression amounting to apathy. The phlegmatic personalities of the Woody Herman band of 1948 suggested that the coolness would soon become frigidity, so blasé did these musicians seem as they moved, or rather mooched, about the completion of their appointed tasks. But from the icy stare and the immobile mien something good and positive and musicianly did emerge. A four-tenor voicing that Stan suggested, and he and

three of his associates developed, relieved the monotony of saxophone writing and playing in big bands; with a baritone substituted for one of the tenors, it was immediately compelling as heard in Woody's "Four Brothers" and "Early Autumn." A tenor voice of substance and size leaped forward, developed from the suggestive performances of several musicians, notably Herbie Steward. Stan's polished authority on his instrument became the highly attractive center of cool jazz.

At twenty-four, Stan could look back on nearly a decade of big and small band blowing of all kinds, with every variety of music and musician in jazz—playing experience that had to make him either a hopeless eclectic, with a little of everybody's sound and none of his own, or a distinct personality immediately identifiable as himself. He was born in Philadelphia and grew up in the Bronx. He played the bass fiddle in his junior high school orchestra and switched to bassoon in high school in order to get into the main school orchestra. He played with the All City Orchestra, made up of New York's best high school musicians; picked up the harmonica when Borrah Minnevitch's advertising promotion brought the mouth-organ to the attention of his school orchestra; and then, when he was fifteen, dropped out of school to join Dick Rogers' band. A truant officer dropped him right back in school, and he dropped out again quickly to join Jack Teagarden. The school authorities pursued Teagarden all over the country because of Stan, until Jack signed guardianship papers to keep the kid with him. Stan stayed with Jack for nine months, a period that he remembers affectionately. "I can appreciate all Dixielanders," he says, recalling the period with Big Gate. "Not their jazz ideas—that's out of the question, of course. But I've never heard any modern trombone player get the sound Jack gets. His way of playing a sweet solo is crazy. A friend of mine and I got our union cards in New York the same day; I thought he was getting the better break—he went right out with a four-beat band, Hal McIntyre's; I went out with Teagarden. Now

I think I got the better break. Dixie is a foundation. It's simple enough; you know what you're doing all the time. It's a good way to get started, or at least it was good for me."

The job with Teagarden spanned the country, leaving Stan finally in Los Angeles. He took a job there in a men's clothing store, while he worked out his union card, which, in Los Angeles as in other big cities, couldn't be his until he'd played a prescribed number of short-term jobs for a prescribed number of months. Then he joined Bob Chester for a month at the Trianon Ballroom. After an uneventful thirty days, he became part of a six-piece Dixie group led by Dale Jones, who had written "Between Eighteenth and Nineteenth on Chestnut Street" with Stan's first employer, Dick Rogers. "I was happy, though I didn't realize it then. I didn't know anything and wasn't aware of it—that's when you're happiest, maybe."

After six months with Jones, he played the last fifteen broadcasts of the Bob Hope show with Stan Kenton, joined Jimmy Dorsey for a month, and then Benny Goodman for six. "With Benny I had to push, to get that hard sound he likes from his saxes, but I was beginning to dig Lester." His digging is only barely evident in his recorded solos with Benny on "Swing Angel, "Give Me the Simple Life," and "Rattle and Roll"; it's much more apparent on the small-band sides he made with Kai Winding at the same time—notably, "Always."

Singer Buddy Stewart's sister, Beverly Byrne, was working with Randy Brooks then, and Stan and Beverly were close. She got him into the band; he married her. There followed short engagements with Buddy Morrow's motley of sounds and styles, with Herbie Fields, and then Hollywood again, where he worked with Butch Stone in a remarkable group made up of Herb Steward, Shorty Rogers, Butch, Arnold Fishkin, Don Lamond, and himself. Then the original Four Brothers—Stan, Herb, Jimmy Giuffres, and Zoot Sims—worked a Spanish ballroom, Pontrelli's, in Los Angeles, with Beverly singing. The