

THE NON-WEBB RECORDINGS OF CHICK WEBB

An Annotated Personello-Discography

WEBB, 'Chick' William Henry, drums

Born: Baltimore, Maryland, 10th February 1909

Died: Baltimore, Maryland, June 16th, 1939

Overcame physical deformity caused by tuberculosis of the spine. Bought first set of drums from his earnings as a newspaper boy. Joined local boys' band at the age of 11, later (together with John Trueheart) worked in the Jazzola Orchestra, playing mainly on pleasure steamers. Moved to New York (c. 1925), subsequently worked briefly in Edgar Dowell's Orchestra. In 1926 led own five-piece band at the Paddock Bottom Club, New York, for five-month residency. Later led own eight-piece at the Paddock Club before leading own Harlem Stompers at Savoy Ballroom from January 1927. Added three more musicians for stint at Rose Danceland (from December 1927). Worked mainly in New York during the late 1920s – several periods of inactivity – but during 1928 and 1929 played various venues including Strand Roof, Roseland, Cotto Club (July 1929), etc.. During the early 1930s played the Roseland, Savoy Ballroom, and toured with the 'Hot Chocolates' revue. From late 1931 the band began playing long regular seasons at the Savoy Ballroom (later fronted by Bardu Ali). They continued to play theatre dates and tour and also did a season at the Casino de Paris, New York, in 1934 (in late 1932 the band did a series of theatre dates accompanying Louis Armstrong). By the mid-1930s Chick Webb's name was virtually synonymous with the Savoy ballroom, in 1935 he introduced his new vocaliste, Ella Fitzgerald. The band also did far-ranging tours. During the summer of 1938 they broke several all-time attendance records at ballrooms and theatres, by then Chick's health had begun to fail. He left hospital in November 1938 and began a tour of Texas, he was stricken by pleurisy and again entered hospital until January 1939. He continued to appear regularly with the band until shortly before his death, playing his last engagement on a big riverboat sailing out of Washington. He died in the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, shortly after undergoing a major urological operation. The personnel of the band remained together to work for a while under Ella Fitzgerald's leadership. In 1947 a memorial recreation centre, dedicated to the memory of Chick Webb, was opened in Baltimore. Showman Bardu Ali (from Wavesland, Mississippi) was for several years employed by Chick Webb to front the band and act as master of ceremonies.

(J. Chilton, Who's Who of Jazz)

STYLE:

Chick Webb's style of drumming was decidedly contemporaneous or even old-fashioned, in that he mostly played the ground beat for his band on the bass-drum in four-beat rhythm and on snare-drum with sticks – press-rolls or single strokes, but very soft and retained – or with brushes, mainly four-four single-strokes beat, but very seldom also the "chaa ba-da" rhythm developed in the mid-thirties. In his seldom and short drum solos – mainly breaks, only - he prefers eighth-notes phrases on snare-drum, tom-toms, cow-bell and woodblock, with changing accents and eventual double strokes and triplets, and sometimes using the temple-blocks. There are very few instances where he plays fast sixteenth-strokes on snare-drum for a solo, but he does.

He mostly plays simple single-stroke quarter-beat on his low-pitched snare drum with sticks or brushes, but also on the half-closed high-hat behind the band. Surprisingly, he likes to accompany his pianist Fulford on wood-block in his solos most of the time, what I thought to have been a matter of the past in Webb's time.

Although he was a very powerful and swinging drummer, he sometimes had weak times in keeping tempo and swing. But the few instances kept on record may have been caused by his physical fragility and his state of health.

It seems that he was not inclined to show off in solos, and many of his recordings have him in a very restricted mode of accompanying, throughout.

This personello-discography is based on RUST, JAZZ AND RAGTIME RECORDS 1897 - 1942.

Personnels are taken from this source, but modified in the light of earlier or subsequent research or on the strength of my own listening, discussed with our listening group or other interested collectors.

- Documented, most certain and aurally absolutely obvious identifications are listed thus: Chick Webb
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Chick Webb*
- Not attributable identifications – although the musician in question might be an otherwise well-known person – are listed thus: unknown
- If a possible identification for an otherwise unknown musician is suggested by the author without the possibility to prove the factual evidence, it is listed thus: (*Chick Webb*)

When feeling certain without a musician's documented presence, I have not refrained from altering Rust's statements without using italics. In any case, my statements are open to discussion and I would appreciate any contribution - pro or contra!

As always in my discographies on this website I have written recording sessions with their headings, dates, titles and names of musicians in italics, whenever I am convinced that the eponymous musician of this discography is not part of the accompanying group of this session!

This discography still is - and will certainly be - a work in progress for a long time, if not eternally. Yet, on the way to a definite discography of all jazz recordings before 1942 - which certainly will never be possible - it is intended to fill some gaps that have not been treated before.

This list 'The Non-Webb Recordings of Chick Webb' is aimed as a supplement to my list 'The Recordings of 'Chick Webb and his Orchestra' elsewhere at this web-site (see under 'Bands'). It features Chick Webb, the drummer and musician, and less the work of his fantastic band, in that it also presents Chick's work with bands outside of the big band world of Harlem and his recordings with 'Ella Fitzgerald and her Savoy Eight', an off-shoot of Chick's own orchestra to feature Ella with a diminished accompanying band for recording purposes only. Yet, he is still the drummer. And it shall give some hints as to find him in his drummer's performances in relation to his activity as bandleader and namesake.

This list is not determined to say anything on Webb as a human person and/or bandleader. But I have knowledge of a literal work on this side of Chick Webb by Meisha Rosenberg, that is in preparation and will let us know. I am very much looking forward to it!

For the sake of saving space, I have not inserted the recordings under the name of 'Chick Webb and his Orchestra' with all their details. They may be checked at this web-site 'Harlem Fuss' under 'Bands'. Instead, I have collected all sessions having Chick Webb on drums playing under other band names, here. Yet, to reconstruct and relate a steady succession of Webb's recordings, I still have quoted all 'Chick Webb and his Orchestra' sides without their consecutive numbering and without bold face as in 'Chick Webb and his Orchestra', but adding short remarks on possibly existent drum features or solos by Chick Webb.

CHICK WEBB

CHICK WEBB'S HARLEM STOMPERS New York, Aug. 25, 1927
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

<p>001 CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA Ward Pinkett, Edwin Swayze – tpt; Bennie Morton – tbn; Hilton Jefferson, Bobby Holmes – alt, clt; Elmer Williams – ten, clt; Don Kirkpatrick – pno; John Trueheart – bjo, gtr; unknown – bbs; Chick Webb – dms; James Barton – voc (2); George "Shorty" Snowden, unknown – dancers</p>	<p>New York, c. late 1928 Paramount film 'After Seben'</p>
<p>I Ain't Got Nobody (fragment) Waitin' For The Evenin' Mail Sweet Sue (3 fragments) Tiger Rag (incomplete) I Ain't Got Nobody (fragment)</p>	<p>not on LP/CD, www.youtube.com not on LP/CD, www.youtube.com Ristic Special SAC (LP) not on CD Ristic Special SAC (LP) not on CD Ristic Special SAC (LP) not on CD</p>

These unfortunately very short musical examples of an early Chick Webb band accompany a dance-contest in a Harlem night club on film. What this fantastic band might have sounded like if recorded with adequate equipment! First issued by John R.T. Davies on his Ristic label, later also on Harlequin HQ 2038 'Black Bands on Film 1928 – 1935'.

- The 'I Ain't Got Nobody' eight-bars fragment at the beginning certainly has the Webb band playing (and not a studio band as I have found stated somewhere!), with syncopated muted-trumpet by Edwin Swayze. And Chick Webb can clearly be recognised playing press-rolls in ragtime-derived style and a final cymbal stroke to end the number. Another eight-bars fragment of this tune is played at the end of the film, but the drummer is less audible, there. This first fragment of 'I Ain't Got Nobody' then has to be seen as the first documented appearance of Chick Webb playing drums.

- Two of the three 'Sweet Sue' fragments each comprise a three-quarter chorus by the band with dancing by different couples of dancers, the third fragment comprising a whole chorus. The first chorus has a muted-trumpet solo by very probably Ward Pinkett, the second chorus a muted-trombone solo by Bennie Morton, and the third chorus a muted-trumpet solo by Ward Pinkett, again.

- The clarinet solo on the 'Tiger Rag' part is played by Bobby Holmes, who, by the way, is shown with his clarinet at hand in the entire band-part of the film, his alto lying on the floor besides his feet. In this title he shows a fast multi-toned and straight-ahead clarinet performance with little harmonic and rhythmic finesse, but swinging and giving a lift to the band.

- It is very interesting to note that no written arrangements are used, and the band play entirely ad-lib for the whole duration of the band parts. The saxophones noodle along ad-lib, creating a thick harmonic background, yet un-structured – for the brass soloists. This, I presume, was the usual way Harlem big bands played for dancing when they were assembled lately and for short duration only, and lacked a sufficiently large band-book of arrangements.

Notes:

- not listed in the discographies

Solos ad-lib:

<p>IAGN: WFTEM: SS: TR: IAGN:</p>	<p>ES m-tpt + CW dms + ens 12 DK pno 2; JB voc + DK pno obl 12+24+28 WP m-tpt + ens 24; BM o-tbn + ens 24; WP m-tpt + ens 32 BH clt + ens 14; WP m-tpt + ens 2; BH clt + ens 14; WP m-tpt + ens 2; BH clt + ens 16 ES o-tpt + ens 8</p>
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<p>002 THE JUNGLE BAND Ward Pinkett, Edwin Swayze – tpt; (Benny Morton?) or Robert 'Mack' Horton – tbn; Hilton Jefferson, Joe Garland – alt, clt; Elmer Williams – ten, clt;</p>	<p>New York, Jun. 14, 1929</p>
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Don Kirkpatrick – pno; John Trueheart – bjo; Elmer James – bbs; Chick Webb – dms;
 Ward Pinkett – voc; *Benny Carter* – arr
 E-30039-A Dog Bottom Br 4450, Chronological Classics 502
Composer credits: E-30039 (Webb)

This is absolute first-class Harlem big band music. Chick Webb soloing on the Ludwig hand-cymbal. I firmly believe that this is a Benny Carter arrangement. Solos by Horton (or Benny Morton? see below!), Kirkpatrick, Jefferson, Williams, probably Swayze on trumpet and Pinkett doing his typical erratic vocal – just like his trumpet playing.

Joe Garland's presence is affirmed by Johnny Simmen of Zurich, Switzerland, from Garland's own recollections.

But I found myself unable to decide the identity of the trombonist!

Although this is the earliest disc recording of the Chick Webb band, we have the astonishing feature of a row of short "drum" solos in Chick Webb using the Zildjian hand cymbal – a kind of a hi-hat, but operated by the left hand and struck with a drum-stick by the right – in hearing the young bandleader accompanying his band all through this number, at a time when drum solos were not in fashion in the jazz scene of New York or elsewhere.

Notes:

- *Charles Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948/1963: Featuring Ward Pinkett (tp & vo); Chick Webb (dm & leader)*
 - *Storyville 14, Richard Rains, 'Conversations with Doc' (Cheatham and Benny Morton! - KBR): "We first played the Jungle Band's 'Dog Bottom' because we suspected that Benny (Morton – KBR) was on it. He recognised the arrangement at once but could not remember the session. He felt, however, that he must have been there, after having said that the trombone was not Jimmy Harrison, Robert Horton, or Sandy Williams. He said that both trumpet solos were taken by Ward Pinkett (who, incidentally, passed for white on occasion). ... Chick Webb must have an Ellington sound in mind, more by design than accident, on both this date and thirteen days later when 'Jungle Mama' was made with a slightly different personnel. Benny said that the trombone was definitely not himself (! – KBR) but was more like Joe Nanton than Harrison or Horton, one of whom might be deliberately imitating the style of Nanton, however."*

- *Rust*2: Ward Pinkett (tpt, vcl); Edwin Swayzee (tpt); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Albert Nicholas (clt); Louis Jordan (alt); Elmer Williams (ten); Don Kirkpatrick (pno); John Trueheart (bjo, gtr); John Kirby (bbs); Chick Webb (dms)*

- *Rust*3: Ward Pinkett -t -v; Edwin Swayzee -t; Robert Horton -tb; Hilton Jefferson -cl -as; Louis Jordan -as; Elmer Williams -ts; Don Kirkpatrick -p; John Trueheart -bj -g; Elmer James -bb; Chick Webb -d*

- *Rust*4,*6: Ward Pinkett -t -v; Edwin Swayzee -t; Robert Horton -tb; Hilton Jefferson, Louis Jordan -cl -as; Elmer Williams -cl -ts; Don Kirkpatrick -p; John Trueheart -bj -g; Elmer James -bb; Chick Webb -d*

Tunes structures:

E-30039-A Dog Bottom Key of Ab / Db / Ab Brunswick
 (Intro 8 bars ens)(Vamp 4 bars ens)(Strain A1 14 bars AA' saxes)(Interlude 6 bars brass+CW cymb)(Strain B 8 bars RMH o-tbn)
 (Strain C1 8 bars brass)(Strain C2 8 bars DK pno 6 – ens 2)(Tag 2 bars ens 2)(Strain D 16 bars JG alt)(1/2 Strain D 8 bars saxes
 br 4 – ens 4)(Bridge 4 bars brass+CW cymb)(1/2 Strain A 8 bars ens)(Strain A2 16 bars EW ten)(Strain A3 16 bars ES o-tpt)(Strain
 A 4 16 bars WP scat-voc)(1/2 Strain A 8 bars ens)(Coda 6 bars ens)

003 THE JUNGLE BAND

New York, Jun. 27, 1929

Ward Pinkett, Edwin Swayze – tpt; Robert "Mack" Horton – tbn;
 Hilton Jefferson, Joe Garland – alt, clt; Elmer Williams – ten, clt;
 Don Kirkpatrick – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; Elmer James – bbs; Chick Webb – dms
 E-30091-A Jungle Mama Br 4450, Chronological Classics 502
Composer credits: E-30091 (Webb)

And another first-class big band blues by this early Chick Webb band. Solos by probably Pinkett muted, Garland or rather Jefferson clarinet, Horton muted, probably Swayze. Chick Webb can clearly be heard using his Ludwig hand-cymbal at the very end of this title. He is thus not omitted from proceedings as listed in the discographies.

Joe Garland's presence is affirmed by Johnny Simmen of Zurich, Switzerland, from Garland's own recollections.

Notes:

- *Charles Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948/1963: Featuring Ward Pinkett (tp & vo); Chick Webb (dm & leader)*

- *Storyville 14, Richard Rains, Conversations with Doc: "We first played the Jungle Band's 'Dog Bottom' because we suspected that Benny (Morton – KBR) was on it. He recognised the arrangement at once but could not remember the session. He felt, however, that he must have been there, after having said that the trombone was not Jimmy Harrison, Robert Horton, or Sandy Williams. He said that both trumpet solos were taken by Ward Pinkett (who, incidentally, passed for white on occasion). ... Chick Webb must have an Ellington sound in mind, more by design than accident, on both this date and thirteen days later when 'Jungle Mama' was made with a slightly different personnel. Benny said that the trombone was definitely not himself but was more like Joe Nanton than Harrison or Horton, one of whom might be deliberately imitating the style of Nanton, however."*

- *Rust*2: Ward Pinkett (tpt, vcl); Edwin Swayzee (tpt); Robert Horton (tbn); Albert Nicholas (clt); Louis Jordan (alt); Elmer Williams (ten); Don Kirkpatrick (pno); John Trueheart (bjo, gtr); John Kirby (bbs); Chick Webb (dms)*

- *Rust*3: Ward Pinkett -t -v; Edwin Swayzee -t; Robert Horton -tb; Hilton Jefferson -cl -as; Louis Jordan -as; Elmer Williams -ts; Don Kirkpatrick -p; John Trueheart -bj -g; Elmer James -bb. Webb omitted.*

- *Rust*4,*6: Ward Pinkett -t -v; Edwin Swayzee -t; Robert Horton -tb; Hilton Jefferson, Louis Jordan -cl -as; Elmer Williams -cl -ts; Don Kirkpatrick -p; John Trueheart -bj -g; Elmer James -bb. Webb omitted.*

Tunes structures:

E-30091-A Jungle Mama Key of Eb Brunswick
 (Intro 6 bars ens)(Chorus 1 12 bars WP m-tpt)(Chorus 2 12 bars WP m-tpt)(Chorus 3 12 bars ?HJ clt)(Chorus 4 12 bars ?HJ
 clt)(Chorus 5 12 bars RMH m-tbn 10 – ES o-tpt 2)(Chorus 6 12 bars ES o-tpt)(Chorus 7 12 bars ens)

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Mar. 30, 1931

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

004 BILLY BANKS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, May 10, 1932

Billy Banks – voc, ldr;
 Ed Anderson – tpt;
 Crawford Wethington – alt; Gene Mikell – alt, clt; Elmer Williams – ten;

<i>Edgar Hayes</i> – pno; <i>Benny James</i> – gtr; <i>Hayes Alvis</i> – sbs; <i>Chick Webb</i> or <i>O'Neil Spencer?</i> – dms		
72560-1	The Scat Song	Vic 24027, Classics 969
72561-1	Mighty Sweet	Vic 23399, Classics 969
72562-1	Minnie The Moocher's Weddin' Day	Vic 24027, Classics 969
72562-2	Minnie The Moocher's Weddin' Day	Vic uniss., but test exists not on LP/CD

Given, that Crawford Wethington's confirmation in Storyville 109 is correct – which seems to be without doubt for the first session, at least – a probable small-band personnel for this session would be: *Ed Anderson* – tpt; *Crawford Wethington*, *Charlie Holmes* – alt, clt; *Joe Garland* – ten, clt; *Edgar Hayes* – pno, arr; *Benny James* – bjo, gtr; *Hayes Alvis* – sbs; *O'Neil Spencer* – dms, according to the contemporaneous personnel of the MBRB. So, let's see what we can hear and recognize:

- The trumpet player plays a distinct southern trumpet style in Louis Armstrong's footsteps, and could very well be and should therefore be identified as Ed Anderson, during this period the hot trumpet soloist with the MBRB.

- Unfortunately, we do not have any solo performance by either of the two alto saxophonists on this session which could give us a hint as to his person. According to the known personnel of the MBRB of the day we have to assume the alto players to be Wethington and Charlie Holmes.

- On 'Mighty Sweet' we find a strong and urgent 16-bars solo of "dirty" clarinet which is not the work of one of the assumed reed players. Although Garland was responsible for most of the MBRB's clarinet work, this dirty tone soloing was not his – and neither that of the alto saxophonists listed. Yet, we read that Gene Mikell – Holmes' successor with the MBRB – remarks in his interview in Storyville 1998/99: "See, in all those cassettes of the Blue Rhythm Band you sent me, I'm playing baritone and alto, but most of the clarinet work was done by Joe Garland." As we know that Mikell did not join the MBRB before August 1932, his presence on this session would seem to be unlikely. Charlie Holmes was the band's alto soloist until c. August 1932, and certainly, he played clarinet as well – it was generally required from a qualified reed player in a big band. He is identified by himself in soloing on clarinet on the MBRB session of 28 April 1932 in 'Cabin In The Cotton'. But this solo does not contain any 'dirty' playing. Quite in the contrary, Holmes plays with warmth and beauty, and even more so, he is not known for dirty notes on his alto saxophone either. But from Mikell's own statement in Storyville 1998/99, p.105 we know that he was one of the few clarinetists at the time playing "growl" clarinet, the other players being Edmond Hall with the Claude Hopkins Band, and William Thornton Blue who had disappeared from the musical scene by early 1931. Another clarinetist playing "growl" solos would be Rudy Powell, but he – by his own firm statement – did not learn to play the clarinet earlier than 1932. To strengthen this statement, I'd like to cite Gene Mikell via the late Johnny Simmen of Switzerland: "Before I joined the MBRB, all clarinet solos were played by Joe Garland. When I came in the band, Joe and I got the clarinet solos about 50/50. After Buster Bailey came in the band, it was 80% for Buster and 10/10 for Joe and me" (Coda Nov. 1975, p. 25). So, we cannot but assume that this is Mikell here, having had earlier relations to the MBRB/Irving Mills circle and having been asked by Billy Banks to participate in this recording session. Compare Mikell's growl solos in the MBRB's 'Let's Have A Jubilee' of October 04, 1934!

- Wethington also played clarinet, but he is not known as a hot soloist – neither on alto sax nor on clarinet – and can thus be excluded from the clarinet solo work. Instead, he is responsible for the beautiful silken lead-parts of the reed section.

- ADDITION August 2025: In a recent letter to the author, Norwegian jazz collector and aficionado – and legitimate musician! – Ola Rønnow stated that my identification of the tenor sax player on these sides must be doubted, and that he should be named Elmer Williams, instead. After a short (!) and intensive listening I must admit that Ola is distinctly right in his assumption, and I gladly – and a bit ashamed – follow him in this respect. I also must admit that I received a letter from Phil Mellick, of Charleston, WV, about a year ago, that I carelessly missed to check out. In this letter, Phil stated: "The Billy Banks session of May 10, 1932, plainly includes Elmer Williams, the cheap little guitar sounds like the one used by Trueheart, and the strict tempo may be noticeable, something that Garvin Bushell noted about Webb. Dan Morgenstern (RIP) endorsed my suggestion that this was the Webb band at the Canadian Collectors Congress (RIP as well) years ago. (And I believe it's the Mills Blue Rhythm Band on the other Banks Victor session.)" There is reason to think it all over, I believe.

- The pianist definitely can be identified as Edgar Hayes on this session, recognizable by his very strong and mighty modified stride-piano style. And – of course – he was the musical leader of the MBRB.

- According to these recognitions we can be quite certain of the presence of Benny James on his light and swinging four-string guitar, the powerful and unjustly under-recognised bass playing of Hayes Alvis (Duke Ellington with his distinct liking for capable bass players certainly knew why he hired Alvis in early 1935) and the young O'Neil Spencer on drums. In contrast to his contemporaneous recordings with the full MBRB he does not use his hi-hat rhythm nor press-rolls played with sticks, but he restricts himself to brushes. This might cause some irritation as to the person's identity, but the few audible cymbal sounds heard – hi-hat and crash-cymbals – are compatible with those heard on the MBRB sides, and would thus ascertain Spencer's presence.

- ADDITION August 2025: Re Phil Mellick's letter as cited above, I must agree that the drummer heard on these Banks sides and his restriction to brushes – and without any use of cymbals and bass-drum – might well be a reason to assume Chick Webb (compare with the Mezz Mezzrow sides of May 7, 1934!) Spencer mainly uses sticks on cymbals on contemporaneous MBRB recordings.

- Thus, we might in fact have a band with mixed personnel from the MBRB and Chick Webb's Orchestra, here. Any other – and better – suggestions, somebody?

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*

- *Rust*2, *3, *4, *6: unknown tpt; unknown, unknown alt; unknown alt; unknown ten; unknown pno; unknown gtr; unknown sbs; unknown dms; Billy Banks vcl*

- *B. Rust, The Victor Master Book Vol. 2: t / 3s / p / g / b / d; vocalist: Billie Banks.*

- *RCA Jazz Tribune No 58: Shelton Hemphill (tp); Charlie Holmes (cl, as); Crawford Wethington (as); Joe Garland (ts, bar sax); Edgar Hayes (p); Benny James (g); Hayes Alvis (b); O'Neil Spencer (dm); Baron Lee (ldr)*

- *Tom Lord, Discography: unknown tp, 2 as, ts, p, g, b, d*

- *Storyville 1998/99, L. Wright, Did You Know: "Two entries in the same column in the Defender (16/7/32 6/2) pose a small problem: The first notes Baron Lee and his Blue Rhythm band back at the Cotton Club in New York and the second reports Billy Banks leading his own orchestra at Connie's Inn. It goes on to say that his first phonograph record for the Victor company has just been released. It is 'Cabin In The Cotton' and 'The Scat Song' on the Reverse. This coupling is not known to me and it has been assumed that the Blue Rhythm band accompanied Banks on recordings from this time. This is most likely a piece of misreporting and refers to Victor 24027, but who was in Banks's orchestra at Connie's Inn?"*

- *Storyville 1998/99, Afterthoughts No 742: "Billy Banks, late of Baron Lee's orchestra, is now heading his own band at Club Madrid, Cleveland." (PC 15/10/32 7/4) Is this a clue to the accompanying band on Victor of 18 August 1932?"*

Tunes:

72560 *The Scat Song* Key of Eb Victor
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars BB voc + ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA BB voc + ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA BB scat-voc + ens 16 – EA m-tpt 16)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA EW ten 4 – ens 4 – EW ten 4 – ens 4 – EH pno 8 – EW ten 4 – ens 4)(Chorus 4 32 bars AABA BB voc – ens)(tag 2 ens)

72561 *Mighty Sweet* Key of F Victor

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Vamp 4 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA BB voc + ens)(Vamp 4 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA GM clt 16 - EA o-tpt 8 - EW ten 8)(Vamp 4 bars BJ gtr)(Verse 16 bars AB BB voc + ens)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA BB voc + ens)(Coda 4 bars BB voc + ens)

72562 Minnie The Moocher's Weddin' Day Key of Ab

Victor

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars BB voc + ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA BB voc + ens 16 - BB voc + choir 8 - BB voc + ens 8)
(Interlude A 18 bars ens 1 - EW ten 1 - EA o-tpt 2 - ens 2 - EA o-tpt 2 - ens 10)(Interlude B 20 bars BB voc + ens)(1/2 Chorus 2 16 bars BA BB voc + choir 8 - BB voc + ens 8)(Tag 4 bars BB voc + ens)

005 LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 08, 1932

Louis Armstrong - tpt, voc, ldr;
Louis Hunt, Billy Hicks, Louis Bacon - tpt; Charlie Green - tbn;
Pete Clark, Edgar Sampson - alt, clt; Elmer Williams - ten;
Don Kirkpatrick - pno; John Trueheart - gtr; Elmer James - bbs; Chick Webb - dms;
Mezz Mezzrow - bells (3,4), unknown - train effects (3,4)

74820-1	That's My Home	Vic 24200,	Chronological Classics 536
74820-2	That's My Home	BB B-10236,	BMG 09026 68682 2 II
74821-1	Hobo, You Can't Ride This Train	Vic 24200,	Chronological Classics 536
74821-2	Hobo, You Can't Ride This Train	Vic uniss 78,	BMG 09026 68682 2 II
74822-1	I Hate To Leave You Now	Vic 24204,	Chronological Classics 536
74822-2	I Hate To Leave You Now	Vic 1A-2016,	BMG 09026 68682 2 II
74823-1	You'll Wish You'd Never Been Born	Vic 40-0102,	BMG 09026 68682 2 II
74823-2	You'll Wish You'd Never Been Born	Vic 24204,	Chronological Classics 536

Composer credits: 74820 (Leon & Otis Rene - Ben Ellison); 72821 (Louis Armstrong); 74822 (Dorothy Dick - Harry Link - Fats Waller); 74823 (Louis Armstrong)

This recording session is played by the early Chick Webb band under Armstrong's name, when Louis did not have a band of his own. As almost always in later years, these titles are feature-numbers for Armstrong, and nothing will be said here in praise of Louis as so much has been said before, and certainly more appropriate than I would be able to.

In consequence, there is little solo performance of band members on these sides. But the following should be mentioned:

- 'That's My Home': Louis shares a too-short chase part in the verse with Elmer Williams on tenor. Otherwise, it's Armstrong throughout in this tune, except, perhaps, for two possibly ad-lib bars by probably Louis Bacon on the trumpet.

- 'Hobo, ...': there is beautiful 4/4 tuba by Elmer James all over here, a tenor sax chorus by Williams, and a rather modern muted swing/bluesy trombone chorus - a bit shaky, perhaps. (Charlie Green had obviously listened to the younger trombonists of his time.)

- 'I Hate To Leave You, Now': Louis Bacon - probably - plays a nice muted obligato behind Louis' vocal. Then it is all Louis again.

- 'You'll Wish ... Born': obviously is an early setting of his 'You Rascal, You'. There are fine solo outings by Elmer Williams, by Green with a solo in early swing fashion and nice Pete Clark on clarinet.

I believe not to have heard Elmer James on string-bass here, but entirely on tuba throughout this session.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Louis Armstrong (tp & vo); Louis Bacon, Louis Hunt, Billy Hicks (tp); Charlie Green (tb); Pete Clark, Edgar Sampson, Elmer Williams (s); Don Kirkpatrick (p); John Trueheart (g); Elmer James (b); Chick Webb (dm)*

- B. Rust, *The Victor Master Book, Vol. 2: LA-t-v; 3t; tb; 3s; vn; p; g; b-bb; d.*

- Rust*2: Louis Armstrong (tpt, vcl); Louis Bacon, Louis Hunt, Billy Hicks (tpt); Charlie Green (tbn); Pete Clark, Edgar Sampson (alt); Elmer Williams (ten); Don Kirkpatrick (pno); John Trueheart (gtr); Elmer James (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Mezz Mezzrow (bells)

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Louis Armstrong -t -v; Louis Bacon -Louis Hunt -Billy Hicks -t; Charlie Green -tb; Pete Clark -cl -as; Edgar Sampson -as -vn; Elmer Williams -ts; Don Kirkpatrick -p; John Trueheart -g; Elmer James -bb -sb; Chick Webb -d; Mezz Mezzrow -bells

- J. Willems, *All Of Me, The complete discography of Louis Armstrong: Louis Armstrong (tp, voc); Louis Bacon, Louis Hunt, Billy Hicks (tp); Charlie Green, (tb); Pete Clark (cl, as); Edgar Sampson (as); Elmer Williams (ts); Don Kirkpatrick (p); John Trueheart (g); Elmer James (tu); Chick Webb (d)*

- Louis Armstrong, *The complete RCA Victor Recordings, booklet: Armstrong, trumpet and vocals; Louis Bacon, Louis Hunt, Billy Hicks, trumpets; Charlie Green, trombone; Pete Clark, clarinet and alto sax; Edgar Sampson alto sax and violin; Elmer Williams tenor sax; Don Kirkpatrick, piano; John Trueheart, guitar; Elmer James, tuba and bass; Chick Webb, drums; Mezz Mezzrow, bells.*

Solos ad-lib:

74820: LA voc 32; LA o-tpt 4; EW ten 3; LA o-tpt 4; EW ten 3; LA o-tpt 1+32

74821: LA voc 16 + 8; EW ten 16; LA voc 16; CG o-tbn 16; LA o-tpt 16 + 8

74822: LB m-tpt 1+31; DK pno 4; LA voc + LB m-tpt obl 31; DK pno 2+4; LA o-tpt 16

74823: LA o-tpt without time; EW ten 10 obl; LA voc 16 + 16; EW ten 1+16; LA voc 16; CG o-tbn 16; LA voc 16; PC clt 16; LA o-tpt 16 + 16

Notable differences of takes:

74820-1: Introduction: single chimes-strokes in bars 1, 2 and 3 (prob by Webb), rhythm-section starting on measure 3 of bar 6

74820-2: Introduction: one single chimes-stroke at the end of bar 4, rhythm-section starting with measure 1 of bar 6

74821-1: Train-effects at start of tune: 2 bell-strokes, then steam-effects and train-whistle; LA beginning with "My, my, my, ..."

74821-2: Train-effects at start of tune: train-whistle, then 2 bell-strokes, then steam-effects; LA beginning vocal with "Boy, ..."

74822-1: Introduction bar 4: LA starts with eighth-notes c-d-e-f-f then quarter-note e (upbeat to melody)

74822-2: Introduction bar 4: LA starts with eighth-note c and quarter note c (syncopated), then 2 eighth-notes c (upbeat to melody)

74823-1: LA begins introduction with: half-note a, 6 eighth-notes bb-a-ab-a-c-c

74823-2: LA begins introduction with: half-note a, 2 eighth-notes c-b, quarter-note bb

CHICK WEBB'S SAVOY ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 20, 1933

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB'S SAVOY ORCHESTRA

New York,

Jan. 15, 1934

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

006 MEZZ MEZZROW AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 07, 1934

Max Kaminsky, Chelsea Quealey, Reunald Jones – tpt; Floyd O'Brien – tbn;
 Mezz Mezzrow – clt, alt, ldr; Benny Carter – alt; Bud Freeman – ten;
 Willie 'The Lion' Smith – pbo; John Kirby – sbs; Chick Webb – dms;
 Alex Hill – arr (1); Mezz Mezzrow – arr (2,3); Floyd O'Brien – arr (4)

82392-1	Old Fashioned Love	Vic 25202,	Chronological Classics 713
82393-1	Apologies	Vic 25019,	Chronological Classics 713
82394-1	Sendin' The Vipers	Vic 25019,	Chronological Classics 713
82395-1	35 th And Calumet	Vic 25202,	Chronological Classics 713

Composer credits: 82392 (Mack – Johnson); 82393 (Mezzrow); 82394 (Mezzrow); 82395 (O'Brien – Mezzrow)

This is a studio band for recording only, led by the questionable clarinetist Mezz Mezzrow, a man that became noted for his below-par clarinet playing, but also for supplying drugs for other musicians, in particular Louis Armstrong.

Although I am not one of Mezzrow's greatest friends, I hear this session with much of amusement and surprise. Alex Hill's arrangement of the first title is much in advance of Mezzrow's own other arrangements. But that's OK. What I am delighted of most is Benny Carter's "growl" chorus in 'Apologies'! I'd make a bet if this is the only one of this kind in Carter's whole life! And then all other Carter solos on these sides make them jewels of early swing music. And there are some real surprises in Reunald Jones' trumpet solos (he was a cousin of Roy Eldridge, by the way) as well as in Floyd O'Brien's wonderful and very musical trombone outings. I think, he is one of the most under-rated musicians of classic jazz! Of Max Kaminsky I hear one solo chorus only in 'Sendin' The Vipers', whereas Willie 'The Lion' is busy both-handed and very poetically in all four recorded titles. One 12-bar chorus only is conceded to John Kirby on string-bass in the second title, and there are 8 bars only (!) left over for Chick Webb. What a great pity! But listen to him doing the press-rolls very delicately in the middle part of 'Sendin' The Vipers', while he uses the brushes all along in simple four-beat to-the-bar in all other titles. This is classic jazz drumming!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Max Kaminsky, Renald Jones, Chelsea Quealey (tp); Floyd O'Brien (tb & arr); Mezz Mezzrow (cl, as & arr); Benny Carter (as); Bud Freeman (ts); Willie "The Lion" Smith (p); John Kirby (b); Chick Webb (dm); Alex Hill (arr)*

- *Rust*2: Max Kaminsky, Reunald Jones, Chelsea Quealey (tpt); Floyd O'Brien (tbn /arr); Mezz Mezzrow (clt); Benny Carter (alt); Bud Freeman (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); John Kirby (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Alex Hill (arr)*

- *Rust*3, *4, *6: Max Kaminsky -Reunald Jones -Chelsea Quealey -t; Floyd O'Brien -tb -a; Mezz Mezzrow -cl -as -a; Benny Carter -as; Bud Freeman -ts; Willie "The Lion" Smith -p; John Kirby -sb; Chick Webb -d; Alex Hill -a*

Solos ad-lib:

82392:	<i>FOB o-tbn 30; WTLS pno 2+2; RJ m-tpt 1+16; BF ten 8 + 8; RJ o-tpt 4; BF ten 4; RJ o-tpt 4; BF ten 4</i>
82393:	<i>WTLS pno 4; MM clt 12 + 12 + 12; BF ten 12 + 12; FOB m-tbn 12 + 12; BC alt 12 + 12; MM clt 12; WTLS pno 12; JK sbs 12; CW dms 8</i>
82394:	<i>MM clt 4 + 20; RJ m-tpt 16; BF ten 16; FOB o-tbn 16; BC alt; MK o-tpt 16; WTLS pno 16; MM clt 16 + 8</i>
82395:	<i>MM clt 12 + 12 + 12; BF ten 12; WTLS pno 12; FOB o-tbn 12; BC alt 12 + 12; MM clt obl 12</i>

CHICK WEBB'S SAVOY ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 09, 1934

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB'S SAVOY ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 18, 1934

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB'S SAVOY ORCHESTRA

New York,

Jul. 06, 1934

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

007 ETHEL WATERS

New York,

Sep. 05, 1934

Ethel Waters – voc;

Bobby Stark – tpt; Fernando Arbello – tbn;

Edgar Sampson – alt, vln; Elmer Williams – ten, clt;

Joe Steele – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; John Kirby – sbs; Chick Webb – cymbal (2,3)

38548-A	Give Me A Heart To Sing To	Dec 141,	Chronological Classics 735
38549-A	I Ain't Gonna Sin No More	Dec 141,	Chronological Classics 735
38549-B	I Ain't Gonna Sin No More	Dec 141,	Swingtime ST 1031 (LP)
38550-A	Trade Mark	Br 02045,	Chronological Classics 735
38551-A	You're Going To Leave The Old Home, Jim	Dec 234,	Chronological Classics 735

Composer credits are: 38548 (Young – Judell - Washington); 38549 (Conrad – Magidson); 28550 (Easton); 38551 (trad.)

No need to say something on Ethel Waters.

Now, that's some crazy combination: part of the Chick Webb Band cum strings! But where are these? There is only one fiddle audible, and the player would be Sampson. Chordal backgrounds are played by wind-instruments plus one violin. But we find one of the great un-sung pianists of the 1920/30s here: Joe Steele. And the fiddle soloist is Edgar Sampson. Beautiful. And listen to muted Bobby Stark in the second title. And the rhythm! But, please, tell me: who plays the final cymbal-stroke at the end of 'I Ain't Gonna Sin No More'?! The accompanying band is sufficiently identifiable as members of the Chick Webb band. But, as what can be heard from the trumpet player, this clearly is Bobby Stark with his fast vertical phrasing in some short instances, and his growl technique which we know from his Fletcher Henderson period (Jordan plays horizontally in an Armstrong manner). But there are only a few moments when a trombone may be heard in the background, and from his soft tone and playing I would favour Fernando Arbello instead of Sandy Williams. (I think that Williams would have interjected some of his boisterous marks.) In 'Trade Mark' we also have – together with the trumpeter - a tenor saxophonist, presumably Elmer Williams – it is his tone and phrasing.

The most featured musician is the violinist. He is listed in the discos together with a viola-player and a cello-player. Of the latter two I do not hear anything in these titles, but the violinist – when playing – is accompanied by the horn men. It would therefore be most feasible that Edgar Sampson is the sole violinist. It has to be reminded that he was ascertained enough and liked to play violin solos on records from 1927

on, whenever he was in a studio. Yet, he does not show any characteristics identifiable as Sampson's here.

There is expert ad-lib piano accompaniment in the middle-eight of the first chorus of the first title by Joe Steele.

'I Ain't Gonna Sin No More' then has very nice jazz accompaniment with great driving string bass from John Kirby and a decent growl trumpeter, most probably Bobby Stark, and some Elmer Williams, Sampson fiddling intro and extro.

The first and last titles have Ethel Waters at her most commercial.

Swingtime ST 1031 (LP) claims to have take -B of 'I Ain't Gonna Sin No More', but close listening and comparing did not unearth any diversities and are – in my opinion – identical.

Notes:

- BGR*2, *3, *4: not listed

- Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Edgar Sampson (alt, vln); Elmer Williams (ten); unknown strings, Joe Steele? (pno); John Trueheart (gtr); John Kirby (sbs)

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Taft Jordan -; Sandy Williams -tb; Edgar Sampson -as -vn; Elmer Williams -ts; unknown -vn; unknown -vl; unknown -vc; Joe Steele? (pno); John Trueheart (gtr); John Kirby (sbs); Sampson and the three rhythm only (4)

Discernible differences of takes:

38549-A As above, I have been unable to find any differing spots in the two assumed double-takes on Swingtime ST 1031! Both takes seem to be identical and accord with take -A on Chronological Classics. I'd be interested in other listener's opinions!

38549-B (see take -A above)

CHICK WEBB'S SAVOY ORCHESTRA

New York,

Sep. 10, 1934

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Nov. 19, 1934

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Jun. 12, 1935

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 12, 1935

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

It's Chick on his temple-blocks for two bars at the end of the ast title.

008 CHUCK WARNER AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Feb. 19, 1936

Mario Bauza, Bobby Stark, unknown – tpt;

Nat Story, Sandy Williams – tbn;

Pete Clark – alt, clt; Edgar Sampson – alt, clt, bar; Teddy McRae – ten, clt; Wayman Carver – ten, clt;

Joe Steele – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; Bill Thomas – sbs; Chick Webb – dms, ldr;

Ella Fitzgerald – voc (2,5,7, 12); Charles Linton – voc;

Edgar Sampson – arr (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,11,12); Van Alexander - arr (8); Charlie Dixon – arr (10)

W-1249	Big John Special	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1250	You Hit The Spot	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1251	Stompin' At The Savoy	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1252	Don't Be That Way	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1265	Shine	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1266	Go Harlem	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1267	Darktown Strutters' Ball	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1268	Keepin' Out Of Mischief Now	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1269	Nit Wit Serenade	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1270	King Porter Stomp	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1271	If Dreams Come True	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72
W-1272	Rhythm And Romance	World Transcriptions,	Circle CCD-72

Thanks to George H. Buck, Jr's immensely fertile efforts to reissue hundreds of performances of the jazz and Swing eras out of the scope of the big record companies, we find these wonderful transcriptions on his Circle label. These transcriptions were not made for commercial sale, but for radio broadcasts. "Due to contractual agreements, the transcriptions credited the artists as Chuck Warner and his Orchestra with vocals by Evelyn Fields and Carl Landon" (Frank Diggs, booklet to Circle CCD 72). According to this same booklet, Taft Jordans presence is doubtful. A possible replacement is named as Wallace Jones of Ellington fame, but lacking any solos nothing substantial can be said. And there is pianist Joe Steele with a whole solo chorus in 'Big John Special'. His style is clearly recognisable.

Arrangers V. Alexander and C. Dixon are designated in the Circle-CD booklet, only. I – KBR – have attributed all other arrangements to Edgar Sampson, to the best of my knowledge.

The interested reader/listener is advised to listen to Chick's eight-bar solo in the last chorus of 'Don't Be That Way', where he plays an almost un-changing and even sequence of sixteenth-strokes on snare-drum. Accompaniments for the band are mainly played on the almost closed high-hat cymbal in "chaa ba-da" manner or on snare-drum that same way.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*

- Rust*2: not listed

- Rust*3, *4: Mario Bauza, Bobby Stark (tpt); Taft Jordan (tpt, vcl); Sandy Williams, Claude Jones (tbn); Pete Clark (alt); Edgar Sampson (alt, arr); Elmer Williams (ten); Wayman Carver (ten, flt); Joe Steele (pno); John Trueheart (bjo, gtr); Bill Thomas (sbs); Chick Webb (dms, ldr); Ella Fitzgerald, Charles Linton (vcl)

- Rust*6: Chick Webb, d, dir; Mario Bauza, Bobby Stark, Taft Jordan, t; Sandy Williams, Claude Jones, tb; Pete Clark, cl, as; Edgar Sampson, as, a; Ted McRae, cl, ts; Wayman Carver, ts, f; Don Kirkpatrick, p; John Trueheart, g; Bill Thomas, sb; Ella Fitzgerald, Charles Linton, v

Solos ad-lib:

W-1249 BS o-tpt 16; ES alt 8; BS o-tpt 7; JS pno 16 + 8; BS o-tpt 16

W-1250: JS pno 4; EF voc 31; EF voc 10

W-1251: SW o-tbn 16; TMR ten 8; SW o-tbn 8; BS o-tpt 16; PC clt 8; BS o-tpt 6; ES alt 1+8

W-1252: PC clt 7+7 + 7; SW o-tbn 16; BS o-tpt 8; SW o-tbn 7; CW dms 8

W-1265: TMR ten 7; EF voc 32 + 4

W-1266: TMR ten 8; PC clt 1+6; SW o-tbn 1+4

W-1267: EF voc 19; EF voc 19

W-1268: ES alt 2; PC clt 1+21; BS m-tpt 1+21; TMR ten 4; JS pno 4; TMR ten 4; JS pno 4

W-1269: TMR ten 12; BS m-tpt 12; SW m-tbn 12

W-1270: BS o-tpt 22; TMR ten 2+16; SW o-tbn 4 + 4; TMR ten 16; SW o-tbn 16 + 16; ES alt 16; BS o-tpt 16; TMR ten 16 + 1+1 + 2

W-1271: JS pno 4; ES alt 2+16; SW m-tbn 15; JS pno 32; CL voc 30

W-1272: EF voc 32 + 16

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 07, 1936

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

A little special are Chick Webb's two soft drum breaks on the "traps" at the end of the last title, very melodic and with feeling.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Jun. 02, 1936

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

The improved recording technique makes us hear very clearly Chick Webb's drumming in bridges and breaks, and his use of the high-hat cymbal in driving the band. To be heard in 'A Little Bit Later On' and in 'Love, You're Just A Laugh'.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 29, 1936

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

009 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT

New York,

Nov. 18, 1936

Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;

Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;

Pete Clark – alt, clt; Teddy McRae – ten;

Tommy Fulford – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms;

Van Alexander – arr

16419-A My Last Affair

Dec 1061,

Chronological Classics 500

16420-A Organ Grinder's Swing

Dec 1062,

Chronological Classics 500

Composer credits: 16419 (Johnson); 16420 (Hudson – Parish – Mills)

'My Last Affair' has a very fine trumpet solo by Jordan, but mainly is a straight rendition of this title by Ella. 'Organ Grinder's Swing' obviously is a reference to a children's song and – in my view – an un-suitable theme for jazz performance. Ella certainly is a much more developed jazz singer here than on her early recordings with the Chick Webb band, but still, there is not so much jazz here to enjoy. I have to admit, that Chick and his companions who foresaw her potentials when hearing her in early 1935 must have an enormous grade of hope and trust in future when hiring her as band singer. But the subsequent years certainly confirmed their anticipations. The band and their drummer only perform as accompanists, but there are fine solos by Taft Jordan in both titles and fine Sandy Williams in the second.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Pete Clark (cl &bs); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); John Trueheart (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)*

- Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Pete Clark (clt /bar); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); John Trueheart (gtr); Beverley Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Pete Clark -cl; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; John Trueheart -g; Beverley Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v

Solos ad-lib:

16419: TMR ten 2; TF pno 2; EF voc 31; TJ o-tpt 16; EF voc + TF pno obl 8; EF voc 8

16420: TMR ten 7; EF voc 32; SW o-tbn 1+8; EF voc 8; EF voc + PC clt 8; EF voc 8; EF voc + TJ o-tpt 8; EF voc + PC clt 16

010 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT

New York,

Nov. 19, 1936

Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;

Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;

Pete Clark – alt, clt; Teddy McRae – ten, bar;

Tommy Fulford – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms

16421-A Shine

Dec 1062,

Chronological Classics 500

16422-B Darktown Strutters' Ball

Dec 1061,

Chronological Classics 500

Composer credits: 16421 (Mack – Brown – Dant); 16422 (Brooks)

'Shine', which later became one of Louis Armstrong's favourite tunes, is performed here in medium tempo and has nice solo spots by Teddy McRae.

'Darktown Strutters' Ball' is played as a romping traditional number in Chicago – New Orleans style, with Chick on his woodblock and cowbell in triplets behind the piano solo, and otherwise driving the band with very soft press-rolls on his snare-drum. And listen to that great boisterous trombone playing by Sandy Williams. And McRae is on baritone sax.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Pete Clark (cl & bs); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); John Trueheart (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)*

- *Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Pete Clark (cl /bar); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); John Trueheart (gtr); Beverley Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)*

- *Rust*3,*4,*6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Pete Clark -cl; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; John Trueheart -g; Beverley Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v*

Solos ad-lib:

16421: TF pno 16; PC clt 8; TF pno 8; EF voc + TJ m-tpt 30; TMR ten 2+14; EF voc 16

16422: TJ o-tpt + SW o-tbn + PC clt 8; EF voc 20; TMR bar 20; PC clt 18; TF pno 18; TJ o-tpt + SW o-tbn + PC clt + TMR ten 2+20; EF voc 18; TJ o-tpt + SW o-tbn + PC clt + TMR ten 8

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Jan. 14, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Jan. 15, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Feb. 08, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!
There is a great and driving 'That's A Plenty' with plenty of room for soloists and Mr. Webb personally on drums. That's the jazz side of the band. 'Vote For Mr. Rhythm' has Ella and Chick, the "King of the Savoy", in exchange of song and drums. Very nice. This is the Webb band in a hot and loose form, and nice to listen to and appreciate.

011 JIMMY MUNDY AND HIS SWING CLUB SEVEN New York, Mar. 03, 1937
Walter Fuller – tpt, voc; Trummy Young – tbn;
Omer Simeon – alt, clt; Jimmy Mundy – ten, ldr;
Billy Kyle – pno; Richard Dick Palmer – gtr; Quinn Wilson – sbs; Chick Webb – dms;
Jimmy Mundy – arr
M-159-1 I Surrender, Dear Vri 598, Chronological Classics 1200
M-160-1 Ain't Misbehavin' Vri 598, Chronological Classics 1200
Composer credits: M-159 (Clifford - Barris); M-160 (Razaf – Waller – Brooks - Harper)

This recording group under Jimmy Mundy's name is compiled of members of the Earl Hines Orchestra, with the addition of Billy Kyle, pianist of Mills Blue Rhythm Band at this time, an otherwise unknown guitarist Dick Palmer, and Chick Webb on the drums. Webb is very restrained in this band of the cream of Chicago musicians. Only in the second half of the last chorus of 'I Surrender, Dear' he comes to the fore, ironically dragging a lot! 'Ain't Misbehavin'' starts with a swinging rhythm commanded by the driving bass of Quinn Wilson, Webb on his high-hat cymbal joining him, and playing a nice drum break at the end of the tune in his common manner of eighth-notes almost throughout. This title starts with a half chorus in free-wheeling ad-lib ensemble.

There are nice vocals by trumpet player Walter Fuller and good solos by Kyle, Trummy Young, Omer Simeon, and Mundy. Great session!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Walter Fuller (tp & vo); James Young (tb); Omer Simeon (as & cl); Jimmy Mundy (ts); Billy Kyle (p); Dick Palmer (g); Quinn Wilson (b); Chick Webb (dm)*

- *Rust*2: Walter Fuller (tpt /vcl); Trummy Young (tbn); Omer Simeon (clt /alt); Jimmy Mundy (ten); Billy Kyle (pno); Dick Palmer (gtr); Quinn Wilson (sbs); Chick Webb (dms)*

- *Rust*3,*4,*6: Walter Fuller -t -v; Trummy Young -tb; Omer Simeon -cl -as; Jimmy Mundy -ts -a; Billy Kyle -p; Dick Palmer -g; Quinn Wilson sb; Chick Webb -d*

Solos ad-lib:

M-159: BK pno 4; JM ten 16; OS clt 16; WF voc + TY m-tbn obl 32; BK pno 4; WF o-tpt 16

M-160: BK pno 4; ad-lib ens 16; JM ten 16; WF voc + OMS clt obl 30; TY m-tbn 2+16; BK pno 16; WF m-tpt 30; CW dms 4

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Mar. 24, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

'Clap Hands, Here Comes Charlie' is in a fast Sampson arrangement with some Webb drum-breaks and the reed-soloists as given. And the last chorus of 'That Naughty Waltz' juggles with the beat.

012 THE GOTHAM STOMPERS New York, Mar. 25, 1937
Cootie Williams – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Barney Bigard – clt, ten; Johnny Hodges – alt; Harry Carney – bar;
Tommy Fulford – pno; Bernard Addison – gtr; Billy Taylor – sbs; Chick Webb – dms;
Ivie Anderson – voc;
Wayman Carver – arr
M-301-1 My Honey's Lovin' Arms Vri 629, Mosaic MD7-235 II
M-302-1 Did Anyone Ever Tell You? Vri 541, Mosaic MD7-235 II
M-302-2 Did Anyone Ever Tell You? Vri uniss. in 78 Mosaic MD7-235 II

M-303-1 Alabamy Home Vri 629, Mosaic MD7-235 II
 M-304-1 Where Are You? Vri 541, Mosaic MD7-235 II
Composer credits: M-301 (J. Meyer – H. Ruby); M-302 (H. Adamson – J. McHugh); M-303 (D. Ellington – D. Ringle); M-304 (H. Adamson – J. McHugh)

Of all the fantastic “small” band sessions recorded by Ellington men under their own name – or other’s – of the 1930s, this is my most favoured and loved.

The band has the cream of the Ellington soloists of the day, intermingled with Chick Webb’s trombonist Sandy Williams and pianist Tommy Fulford, Bernard Addison of the Mills Brothers on guitar, Webb himself on the drums, and Ivie Anderson singing. They play a number of wonderful fitting arrangements by Webb’s flutist/baritone saxist Wayman Carver, giving the whole enterprise a form well-rounded and delightful.

There are so many gems and high-spots on these sides that must be noted:

- Sandy Williams’ sharp and biting trombone, Ivie Anderson’s vocal with Bigard’s obligato, then Hodges’ clear and urgent alto solo and Cootie’s growl part, and at the end Bigard’s New Orleans clarinet below the ensemble in the first title. And Chick’s typical percussion breaks.

- Second title: Ivie’s great vocal – for me much more advanced and jazzier than Ella - followed by Cootie’s soft and reflective open trumpet, very different in the alternate takes, poetic Hodges again, and nice silvery Fulford on piano, and then Bigard with long-**bound** sustained notes in his inimitable way.

- Third: No vocal here, but superb guitar by Addison, Cootie then with his preaching growl, very fluent and pensive Johnny Hodges, and Bigard with sixteen bars, divided in three phrases and two extensive pauses - genial, and then Carney on his majestic baritone.

- Last: Cootie presenting the melody with fat tone, and again Ivie Anderson accompanied softly by Addison and Bigard. It’s Barney Bigard varying the melody and adding some high-virtuoso breaks. And, at the end, Chick’s drum breaks in his very own personal way.

And let’s not forget Wayman Carver’s exceptional arrangements, which hold everything together and add a compositional unity.

Listening, analysing and relishing these sides will make me drunk for some days!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Cootie Williams (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Barney Bigard (cl); Johnny Hodges (as); Harry Carney (bs); Tommy Fulford (p); Bernard Addison (g); Billy Taylor (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ivey Anderson (vo); Weyman Carver (arranger)*
 - *Rust*2, *3, *4, *6: Cootie Williams (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Barney Bigard (clt); Johnny Hodges (alt); Harry Carney (bar); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bernard Addison (gtr); Billy Taylor (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ivie Anderson (vcl); Wayman Carver (arr)*

Solos ad-lib:

M-301: *CW o-tpt 2; SW o-tbn 8; BA gtr 2; IA voc + BB clt obl 31; JH alt 16; CW m-tpt 1+8; HC bar 6; CW dms 2; BB clt 3+12; CW dms 4*

M-302: *IA voc + BA gtr obl 32; CW o-tpt 16; JH alt 8; TF pno 8; BB clt 4 + 4*

M-303: *BA gtr 4; BA gtr 32; CW m-tpt 32; JH alt 32; BB clt 16; HC bar 16*

M-304: *CW o-tpt 16; JH alt 8; BA gtr 1; IA voc + BA gtr obl + BB clt obl; BB clt 8 + 1 + 1; CW dms 4*

Notable differences of takes:

M-302-1: *Cootie Williams starts his solo in the second chorus with a downward phrase of 12 eighth-triplets*

M-302-2: *Cootie Williams starts his solo in the second chorus on the third beat of the first bar with 2 quarter-notes b-c, 1 half-note e, 2 quarter-notes b-b, 1 half-note a*

013 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT

New York,

May 24, 1937

Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;

Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;

Louis Jordan – alt, clt; Teddy McRae – ten;

Tommy Fulford – pno; Bobby Johnson – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms

62213-A All Over Nothing At All

Dec 1339,

Chronological Classics 506

62214-B If You Ever Should Leave

Dec 1302,

Mosaic MD8-252 III

62214-C If You Ever Should Leave

Dec 1302,

Chronological Classics 506

62215-A Everyone’s Wrong But Me

Dec 1302,

Chronological Classics 506

62216-A Deep In The Heart Of The South

Dec 1339,

Chronological Classics 506

Composer credits: 62213 (Tinturin - Lawrence); 62214 (Cahn – Chaplin); 62215 (Cahn - Chaplin); 62216 (Tinturin – Lawrence)

This recording session is a beautiful and swinging feature for Ella, growing in feeling and performance. The band uses very nice and swinging arrangements – by whom? The band swings, and what a fantastic trombonist Williams is! And there is great Chick Webb drumming without strict arranged instructions. Very tasteful and musical, using all his drum-set with snare-drum, tom-toms, cymbals, and the “traps”. These sides are a delight.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Louis Jordan (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); Bobby Johnson (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)*

- *Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Louis Jordan (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr); Beverly Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)*

- *Rust*3, *4, *6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Louis Jordan -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; Bobby Johnson -g; Beverly Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v*

Solos ad-lib:

62213: *EF voc 32; SW o-tbn 6; TJ o-tpt 2+8; EF voc 16+2*

62214: *TMR ten 4; EF voc 31; TF pno 1+31; TMR ten 1+7; EF voc 1+15+2*

62215: *TMR ten 8; EF voc 30 + 4 + 4; SW o-tbn 8; EF voc 8+4*

62216: *EF voc 1+31; LJ clt 4 + 3; TJ o-tpt 1+8; TF pno 8; EF voc 32+8*

Notable differences of takes:

62214-B: *Break in bars 15/16 of last chorus: string-bass starts half-a-beat before drums in bar 17*

62214-C: *Break in bars 15/16 of last chorus: string-bass and drums start bar 17 together*

CHICK WEBB AND HIS LITTLE CHICKS

New York,

Sep. 21, 1937

An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” at this same web-site!

These are the first recordings of Chick Webb and his Little Chicks, the band within the band.

This is nice and swinging chamber jazz, arranged by flutist Wayman Carver. And it shows a remarkably potent clarinet soloist in Chauncey Houghton, of whom little can be heard in solo in the big band. Flutist Carver is a bit too intellectual for my taste, but very good, and Tommy Fulford shows his great abilities as a band pianist when not just soloing. And Chick fools around with his temple-blocks and high-hat.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Oct. 27, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” under “Bands” at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS LITTLE CHICKS New York, Nov. 01, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” at this same web-site!
The leader’s ‘Little Chicks’ with a very fast ‘Sweet Sue, Just You’, arranged obviously by Wayman Carver again, referring to the rhythmic and harmonic work-out as known from the former ‘Little Chicks’ session. Webb gives a permanent very fast rhythm base with his brushes to the band, soloing in the three A-parts of the fourth chorus.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Nov. 01, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” under “Bands” at this same web-site!
‘Harlem Congo’, a composition by early swing trombonist/arranger Harry White of ‘Mills Blue Rhythm Band’ fame – here arranged by Charlie Dixon again, and carrying hot solos by trumpet, trombone and clarinet, and finally by Chick Webb’s drums taking 24 bars. Wow!
This title is played with an astounding pace of c. 290 beats per minute.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Nov. 02, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” at this same web-site!
The band starts with ‘Tea For Two’ featuring Bobby Stark’s typical technical trumpet and Tommy Fulford’s piano cum Chick’s wood-block. The most interesting title for me is Fletcher Henderson’s ‘Grand Terrace Rhythm’ – developed out of Henderson’s earlier ‘D Natural Blues’ (and it still is played in the very un-common key of D major). Chick Webb is heard playing great drums accompaniment to the band tutti, and at the end we hear tenor sax and baritone sax coupled for un-common sounds of the band, while early on the sax section is led by a clarinet. ‘Sugar Foot Stomp’ also has great solos and fantastic rhythm by the rhythm section and its drummer. It is Fletcher Henderson’s arrangement again. And hear Chick’s wood-block behind the piano solos! Fantastic music!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Dec. 10, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” under “Bands” at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Dec. 17, 1937
An evaluation of this session can be found in “Chick Webb and his Orchestra” under “Bands” at this same web-site!
Chick has a few one-bar drum breaks in the last chorus of ‘I Want To Be Happy’.

014 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT New York, Dec. 21, 1937
Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;
Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Louis Jordan – alt, clt; Teddy McRae – ten;
Tommy Fulford – pno; Bobby Johnson – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms
62896-A Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen Dec 1596, Chronological Classics 506
62897-A It’s My Turn Now Dec 1596, Chronological Classics 506
Composer credits: 62896 (Secunda – Jacobs – Cahn – Chaplin); 62897 (Cahn – Chaplin)

With ‘Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen’, an all-time hit of the phono world, Ella starts her sixth own recording session. And in the second chorus she starts to sing scat-vocals. This certainly is one of the very first recordings of this title, although not mentioned thus at all by ‘Wikipedia’! The arrangement is un-eventful, and the whole title lives from Ella’s great verbal and non-verbal singing. ‘It’s My Turn Now’ has a very musical duet by Taft Jordan and Tommy Fulford, while Webb plays remarkably restricted, no licks and accents.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Louis Jordan (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); Bobby Johnson (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)

- Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Louis Jordan (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr); Beverley Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Louis Jordan -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; Bobby Johnson -g; Beverley Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v

Solos ad-lib:

62896: EF voc 16 + 31 + scat 16 + verbal 8 + scat 8 + 32+4

62897: EF voc 32; TJ m-tpt + TF pno obl 16; EF voc 16+4

015 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT New York, Jan. 25, 1938
Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;
Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Louis Jordan - alt; Teddy McRae – ten;
Tommy Fulford – pno; Bobby Johnson – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms;
Van Alexander – arr (2)

63225-A	It's Wonderful	Dec 1669,	Chronological Classics 506
63226-A	I Was Doing All Right	Dec 1669,	Chronological Classics 506

Composer credits: 63225 (Wells – Parish - Smith); 63226 (Gershwin - Gershwin)

Apart from Ella's now fantastic singing there are two musicians that have to be noted for their remarkably great playing. Pianist Tommy Fulford who spent most of his musical life in the Chick Webb band. He solos in a light, pearly and very fluent style all his own. And second guitarist Bobby Johnson, who took over John Trueheart's place after the former's severe illness which kept him out of the band for more than a year. Johnson, who always is part of the rhythm section but almost drowned by his colleagues, can be heard here clearly with his exact and steady pulse and his voluminous guitar chords. Chick Webb – again - is very much in the background.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Louis Jordan (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); Bobby Johnson (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)

- Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Louis Jordan (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr); Beverly Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Louis Jordan -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; Bobby Johnson -g; Beverly Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v

Solos ad-lib:

63225: TF pno 4; EF voc 30; TMR ten + TF pno obl 16; EF voc 1+16+4

63226: TMR ten 4; EF voc 32; TF pno 16; EF voc 16

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, May 02, 1938

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!
'I'm Just A Jitterbug' has nice four bars of drum solo in Chick's custom manner.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, May 03, 1938

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!
'Spinnin' The Webb' has a beautiful solo by Webb's longest serving trumpeter Bobby Stark with his intricate style. He shares his chorus with Sandy Williams on trombone. And the drummer uses a large ride cymbal - unchoked - throughout the last chorus. I have never heard that before in a Webb recording!
'Liza' is a phenomenal concertino for jazz drums with orchestra, and it shows the physically disabled drummer/bandleader at the top of his capacities and taste, playing with a band of Harlem's top musicians, using traditional drum technique on the "traps" – utterly thrilling!

016 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT New York, May 03, 1938

Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;
Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Louis Jordan - alt; Teddy McRae – ten;
Tommy Fulford – pno; Bobby Johnson – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms

63703-A	This Time It's Real	Dec 1806,	Chronological Classics 518
63704-A	What Do You Know About Love?	Dec 1967,	Chronological Classics 518
63705-A	You Can't Be Mine (And Someone Else's Too)	Dec 1806,	Chronological Classics 518
63705-B	You Can't Be Mine (And Someone Else's Too)	Dec 1806,	Mosaic MD8-252 IV
63706-A	We Can't Go On This Way	Dec 1846,	Chronological Classics 518
63709-B	Saving Myself For You	Dec 1846,	Chronological Classics 518
63710-C	If You Only Knew	Dec 1967,	Chronological Classics 518

Composer credits: 63703 (Shivers – Bernier - Emmerich); 63704 (Livingstone - David); 63705 (Johnson – Webb); 63706 (LaFreniere – Butterfield – Post – Bishop); 63709 (Kahn – Chaplin); 63710 (Beal – Webb)

This session is entirely in the singer-cum-band-plus-a-little-hot-ad-lib solo mode. The subjects are entirely "the most important matter on earth" – you know them! Ella sings beautifully, the few instrumental solos are not bad, and Chick restricts to using the brushes, except for one piano chorus in 'Saving Myself For You', where he accompanies Tommy Fulford on his wood-block, as he often did. The tunes' paces are about 90 – 92 bpm all over. Very little jazz here.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Louis Jordan (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); Bobby Johnson (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)

- Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Louis Jordan (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr); Beverly Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Louis Jordan -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; Bobby Johnson -g; Beverly Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v

Solos ad-lib:

63703: EF voc 31; TJ o-tpt 8, SW o-tbn 1+7; EF voc 16+2

63704: EF voc 31; TF pno 16; EF voc 16+4

63704: EF voc 31; TMR ten 7; TJ o-tpt 1+7; EF voc 1+15 + 4

63706: EF voc 32; TMR ten 16; EF voc 16+2

63709: TMR ten 4; EF voc 31; TF pno 15; EF voc 1+15

63710: EF voc 1+31; TF pno 1+16; EF voc 15+2

Notable differences of takes:

63705-A: last phrase of trumpet solo: 1 eighth note f, 3 quarter-notes syncopated a-a-a, 2 eighth-notes g-f

63705-B: last phrase of trumpet solo: 1 quarter note f, 2 eighth-notes a-a, 1 half-note g, 1 eighth-note f, 1 quarter-note f

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Jun. 09, 1938

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

017 SATURDAY NIGHT SWING CLUB HOUSE BAND

New York, Aug. 13, 1938
broadcast Saturday Night Swing Club

'Saturday Night Swing Club' house band, or - probably:
Dick Vance, Bobby Stark, Taft Jordan – tp;
Nat Story, George Matthews, Sandy Williams – tbn;
Garvin Bushell, Hilton Jefferson – alt, clt; Ted McRae – ten; Wayman Carver – ten, clt;
Tommy Fulford – pno; Bobby Johnson – gtr; Beverly Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms, ldr;
Ella Fitzgerald – voc (1,2); Roy Eldridge – tpt (3);
Van Alexander – arr (3)

A-Ticket, A-Tasket	air-check	held
I've Been Saving Myself For You	air-check	Fanfare Records LP 17-117 (LP)
Liza (All The Clouds'll Roll Away)		Jazz Archives JA-33 (LP)

There's beautiful singing by Ella on these sides, accompanied probably by the Webb band – or at least part of them - and with very sensitive and light piano by Tommy Fulford and one solo spot for tenor sax. That's a bit sparse for a jazz lover, yet pleasant listening. But 'A-Ticket, A-Tasket' has decidedly more punch than the Decca version.

And then it's Chick Webb on drums and trumpet star Roy Eldridge featured playing 'Liza (All The Clouds Roll Away)' on this air-check side, using the Webb band's arrangement of this title. The band possibly is not the Chick Webb Orchestra, their personnel probably unknown, as yet, but certainly including some of Webb's men. Chick Webb is un-sensitive and pounding here, and probably in tension, and thus in a hurry.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*

- Rust*2,*3,*4: not listed

- Rust*6: Title 3: Chick Webb, d, with the Saturday Night Swing Club house band, featuring Roy Eldridge, t. Titles 1,2 not listed

Solos ad-lib:

ATAT: EF voc 32 + 8; EF + choir 32 + 8 + 2

IBSMFY: TMR ten 3; EF voc + TF pno obl 32; TF pno 16; EF voc + TF pno obl 32

L (ATCRA): CW dms 8+16; RE o-tpt 1+8; CW dms 1+10; RE o-tpt 16; SW o-tbn 8; RE o-tpt 8; CW dms 4 + 16 + 4 + 8

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Aug. 17, 1938

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

018 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT

New York, Aug. 18, 1938

Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;
Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Hilton Jefferson – alt; Teddy McRae – ten;
Tommy Fulford – pno; Bobby Johnson – gtr; Beverley Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms

64462-A Strictly From Dixie

Dec 2202, Chronological Classics 518

64663-A Woe Is Me

Dec 2202, Chronological Classics 518

Composer credits: 64462 (Cavanaugh – Webb - Pierce); 64463 (Daniel - Lawrence)

'Strictly From Dixie' has a rather un-common form of chorus, in that it has the B-part of the AABA chorus prolonged by two bars to become a 34-bars chorus. Very fine alto solos here by newcomer Hilton Jefferson in his poetic style. And Webb with the essentials, only.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Hilton Jefferson (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); Bobby Johnson (g); Beverly Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)*

- Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Hilton Jefferson (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr);

Beverley Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Hilton Jefferson -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; Bobby Johnson -g;

Beverley Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v

Solos ad-lib:

64462: EF voc 33; HJ alt 15; SW o-tbn 1+9; HJ alt 7; EF voc 34+6

64463: EF voc + TF pno obl 32; TMR ten 1+4; TJ o-tpt 4; TMR 1+4; TJ o-tpt 4; EF voc + TF pno obl 16

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Aug. 18, 1938

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

'Who Ya Hunchin'' being a Webb – Fitzgerald original, the band handle it with fire and drive, the drummer all over his drum-kit. He plays a four-bar break in a break-neck sixteenth-beat, only to drag heavily when falling in a one – three bass-drum rhythm with cymbal strokes on two – four at the very end of the title. At this same session, the above two titles were recorded under Ella's name with the diminished personnel (session 016 above).

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Oct. 06, 1938

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

'F.D.R. Jones' presents Chick Webb beautifully playing press-rolls on his snare-drum, as well as much more to be studied of Webb's drumming on these sides. But still, this again is a collection of the 'vocal – band' formula with some silly childish songs, but played

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Jan. 09, 1939

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

None of these titles – with two exceptions only - had been recorded before by Decca, and obviously show part of the band's jazz repertoire, whereas the Decca records brought the commercial stuff. But sorry to say, they did not record Ella here. A real pity! There is so much great music on these sides! Did anyone care in the past to preserve them on CD? I feel very lucky to own all these transcriptions and live recordings of the Chick Webb band listed on LP.

And these sides mediate a much better feature of the band as it would have been witnessed by the public in the Savoy Ballroom than on the Decca sides. Just listen! A lot of Webb drums soloistic in titles 2,4,7,8!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS LITTLE CHICKS New York, Jan. 21, 1939
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" at this same web-site!
This is a very nice version of 'Stompin' At The Savoy', very fast and different from any other recording of this title. Chick Webb has a whole chorus on his snare-drum, and a couple of additional spots, somewhat obtrusive, yet.

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Jan. 21, 1939
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Feb. 10, 1939
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!
We hear Chick's bass-drum all the way through on these titles recorded live from New York's Coconut Grove Ballroom at the Hotel Park Central. And we hear the guitar, probably still Bobby Johnson who quit the band with John Trueheart's return shortly thereafter. And Beverley Peer can be heard slapping the bass. That's how it really sounded!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Feb. 17, 1939
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" at this same web-site!

019 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT New York, Mar. 02, 1939
Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;
Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Hilton Jefferson - alt; Teddy McRae – ten;
Tommy Fulford – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; Beverley Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms
65092-A Once Is Enough For Me Dec 2451, Chronological Classics 525
65093-A I Had To Live And Learn Dec 2581, Chronological Classics 525
Composer credits: 65092 (Fitzgerald - Webb); 65093 (Johnson – May - Webb)

Ella with accompaniment plus inserted tenor sax solo spot. Nice, but non-enthusiastic. They even left out the occasional trumpet or alto solo for the sake of un-inspired tenor sax parts.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Hilton Jefferson (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); John Trueheart (g); Beverley Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)*
- *Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Hilton Jefferson (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr); Beverley Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)*
- *Rust*3,*4,*6: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Hilton Jefferson -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; John Trueheart -g; Beverley Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v*

Solos ad-lib:

65092: EF voc 32; TMR ten 8; EF voc 16+4
65093: EF voc 31; TMR ten 14; EF voc 15+4

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Mar. 02, 1939
An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

020 ELLA FITZGERALD AND HER SAVOY EIGHT New York, Apr. 21, 1939
Ella Fitzgerald – voc, ldr;
Taft Jordan – tpt; Sandy Williams – tbn;
Hilton Jefferson - alt; Teddy McRae – ten;
Tommy Fulford – pno; John Trueheart – gtr; Beverley Peer – sbs; Chick Webb – dms
65441-A Don't Worry 'Bout Me Dec 2451, Chronological Classics 525
65442-A If Anything Happened To You Dec 2481, Chronological Classics 525
65443-A If That's What You're Thinking Dec 2581, Chronological Classics 525
65444-A If You Ever Change Your Mind Dec 2481, Chronological Classics 525
Composer credits: 65441 (Koehler - Bloom); 65442 (Van Heusen); 65443 (Lawrence – Gans); 65444 (Watts – Green – Sigler)

All these Decca sides under Ella's name certainly were aimed at the commercial market. And they are nice but un-eventful recordings from a jazz point of view. The great musicians involved with these recordings would have merited more room to engage. For them, it must have been a matter of "loot".

Yet, we hear some delicate Fulford on piano on these sides, and it is a great pity that he was not featured more on all the Webb-directed record sides he was on. And, there is one big surprise here in 'If Anything Happened To You': John Trueheart, Chick's boyhood friend and musical companion for all his life, and back in the band after a year-long illness, can be relished as guitar soloist for eight bars in single-string and chordal soloistic! Why didn't they let him show off earlier and more? He plays a thoughtful and well-constructed solo with taste. And Chick Webb, the master on the skins, is limited to a mere keeper of rhythm.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Taft Jordan (tp); Sandy Williams (tb); Hilton Jefferson (as); Teddy McRae (ts); Tommy Fulford (p); John Trueheart (g); Beverley Peer (b); Chick Webb (dm); Ella Fitzgerald (vo)*
- *Rust*2: Taft Jordan (tpt); Sandy Williams (tbn); Hilton Jefferson (alt); Teddy McRae (ten); Tommy Fulford (pno); Bobby Johnson (gtr); Beverley Peer (sbs); Chick Webb (dms); Ella Fitzgerald (vcl)*

- Rust*3,*4,*4: Taft Jordan -t; Sandy Williams -tb; Hilton Jefferson -as; Teddy McRae -ts -bar; Tommy Fulford -p; John Trueheart -g;
Beverly Peer -sb; Chick Webb -d; Ella Fitzgerald -v

Solos ad-lib:

65441: EF voc 31; TMR ten 15; EF voc +TF pno obl 15+4
65442: EF voc 32; TF pno 1+16; JT gtr 8; EF voc 16+8
65443: EF voc 32; TF pno 1+15; EF voc 1+16+2
65444: TF pno 4; EF voc 32+2; TF pno 1+16; EF voc 16+2+2

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 21, 1939

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Boston,

May 04, 1939

An evaluation of this session can be found in "Chick Webb and his Orchestra" under "Bands" at this same web-site!

These are the last sound images known of Chick Webb and his Orchestra. They were made in the Southland Café in Boston a few weeks before Chick's early death.

And they give us an amazing sound experience of the band playing, where we can hear Beverly Peer's slap-bass and Trueheart's guitar almost drowning the drums out. And the band really swings like hell.

K. – B. Rau
30-09-2024
09-10-2025