

VOL. 16

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA
THE TREASURY SHOWS



D.E.T.S.

2
CD SET

INTRODUCTION

Duke Ellington's weekly Treasury Shows began in April 1945, when the US Treasury had engaged him to promote its War Bonds, a series of loans designed to help pay off the huge debts incurred by the conflict, and effectively a form of National Savings. In Europe the war itself was over almost at once, after the battle for Berlin and the suicide of Hitler and some of his chief henchmen. The Treasury had launched its 'mighty seventh war loan' a few days later, on 14 May. Backed by poster advertising centred on the famous photo of troops raising the flag on Iwo Jima, it was a great success, raising \$26 billion, almost double Secretary Morgenthau's target. The war in the Pacific ended in August, hastened by the terrible destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But maimed soldiers were still in care in military hospitals, and reconstruction and armies of occupation cost money too. The eighth loan, renamed Victory Bonds, had been launched by the time of these two broadcasts, and the plugs seem more relentless than ever. Perhaps they were becoming a harder sell, to a nation eager to put the world crisis behind it, and enjoy the fruits of victory rather than save. It would be understandable. Enlightened self-interest in the form of fear of inflation is now as much the theme of the advertising as patriotic fervour and the sufferings of the injured. As Joya Sherrill sings in **Victory Drive**, her short vocal plug for the bonds on both broadcasts, for each \$18.75 paid the investor received \$25 when cashing them in after the required number of years.

Duke had originally prepared his hour-long broadcasts almost as if they were concert presentations. The first Show of all, on 7 April, had been modelled closely on his Carnegie Hall programme the previous December, including the complete **Perfume Suite**. By the autumn the emphasis had changed somewhat, with fewer extended compositions and more of the songs of the day, ephemera, current pieces and revivals. In November, the time of the two shows on this set, another complicating factor on Saturdays was the coming of the football season, which brought interruptions to programming on participating stations as matches were reported. This may explain the abrupt endings and foreshortenings which accompany some pieces on this set, including the strange 'double start' to the 10 November Show.

Soon after the second of these two Shows the winter radio schedules were introduced, and transmissions from the Metropolitan Opera House in New York occupied the slot which had been the Treasury Shows' since the spring. Was La Bohème also at risk from a breathless reporter's news from the touchline? Duke's broadcasts would be suspended until 1946. These are the last but one from 1945, and the thirtieth and thirty-first in the weekly series.

There had been two interruptions to the sequence. On 14 April the funeral of President Roosevelt had led to the suspension of all regular radio schedules in favour of solemn music suitable for a nation in mourning, including an extraordinary example of instant creative programming, Duke's memorial broadcast, heard on the first CD in this series, DETS 903 9001. We have no broadcast at all from 29 September. These two weeks apart, the Treasury series gives us a week-by-week insight into what the band was playing. No other year in the Ellington Orchestra's career is as well served in this regard as 1945. It is one of the most richly rewarding years in the Ellington recorded legacy.

In spring and early summer the Ellington Orchestra had been on the road, and the broadcasts had originated in many venues in the Middle West and New England. Since early September the band had been based in New York, playing an extended residency at the Club Zanzibar, a venue on Broadway at 49th Street, where they shared the billing with, among others, Louis Jordan and his Tympany Five. This highly popular jump band gave Ellington a daily reminder, if he needed it, about the ways in which tastes in popular music were changing with the coming of peace. In November he was still at the Zanzibar, though he would leave at the end of the month to go back on the road. As was usual when the band was in or near the city, both broadcasts originated in the studios of Radio City in Manhattan.

An important advantage to a band of a residency like the Zanzibar was access to radio. Broadcasts directly from the venue supplement the weekly Treasury Shows throughout the period of the residency, and Duke, who had first enjoyed coast-to-coast radio coverage from the Cotton Club back in the late 1920s, well knew the advantages such broadcasts afforded, in gaining and sustaining publicity around the country. Usually only the most popular white bands enjoyed these advantages, through their residencies at fashionable venues like the Pennsylvania Hotel. Ellington had first shared in this good fortune in 1943, at the Hurricane Club, where he had played from April to September. His season had been so successful that the Club had signed him up again for the following summer, though the 1944 booking was cut short in late June, when rising entertainment tax and changing social habits brought on by the war had eroded the club's profitability.

Like the Zanzibar, the Hurricane was located at 49th and Broadway. Some say it was across the street, others that it was the same venue, rebranded. It doesn't matter. The essential point is that, whether one and the same location or two closely neighbouring ones, the Hurricane and the Zanzibar were a large, plush, prestigious venue in the heart of the Broadway theatre district, near Times Square.

The balance of the music on these two CDs originates in broadcasts from the Hurricane in the spring and late summer of 1943. In the days when the record companies' issues were the only recorded legacy of the Ellington Orchestra generally available, late July 1942 to November 1944 were, and for years remained, a time of silence for all apart from those fortunate enough to remember hearing it in person; the Petrillo Ban kept the band out of the Victor studios. It is ironic that James C Petrillo is regularly acknowledged at the start of the Treasury Shows, since his name is synonymous with this ban which deprived us of many Ellington recordings in 1943 and 1944. But the blessing of the Musicians' Union he headed was necessary, to allow the band to record the Shows on location. Technically the Bonds plugs were advertising, but in the national emergency an exception was made to the usual rule that musicians performing in this situation should receive extra fees.

Jazz journalists were quick to link the lack of recordings in 1943 and 1944 to the mixed response **Black Brown and Beige** had received at Carnegie Hall early in 1943, in order to construct a theory of incipient decline in Duke's creativity and his band's performance which could be neither proved nor disproved in the absence of recordings. It is a theory which was peddled for years, but happily the evidence of the Treasury Shows in 1945 and the Hurricane broadcasts in 1943 do not support it. These two CDs reveal that in both years the Ellington Orchestra was in great shape, performing lots of fine music for us to enjoy.

DETS 16

CD 1

Treasury Broadcast No. 30 – ABC Studio 6-B, Radio City NYC, November 10, 1945

- 01 **Take The A Train & broadcast intro 0:43**
(Billy Strayhorn)
- 02 **Just A-Sittin' And A-Rockin' 2:51**
(Duke Ellington-Billy Strayhorn-L.Gaines)
- 03 **(Theme) Take The A Train 0:55**
(Billy Strayhorn)
- 04 **9:20 Special 4:04**
(Warren)
- 05 **Frustration 4:03**
(Duke Ellington)
- 06 **Ellington Bond Promo 1:06**
- 07 **Jennie 2:28**
(Harry Carney)
- 08 **Dancing In The Dark – vocal Kay Davis 3:57**
(A.Schwartz-H.Dietz)
- 09 **Crosstown 3:01**
(Johnny Hodges)
- 10 **Passion Flower 3:33**
(Billy Strayhorn)
- 11 **Bond Promo 1:42**
- 12 **Victory Drive – vocal Joya Sherrill 1:14**
(Duke Ellington)

- 13 **Get On Board Little Children –**
vocal The Mellotones 3:32
(G. DePaul-D. Raye)
- 14 **(Theme) Take The A Train and broadcast return 0:50**
(Billy Strayhorn)
- 15 **Black, Brown & Beige: Come Sunday, Light 12:14**
(Duke Ellington)
- 16 **Ellington Bond Promo 1:22**
- 17 **11:60 PM – Vocal Joya Sherrill 2:04**
(James-Ellis-George)
- 18 **Tell It To A Star 2:13**
(S. Botwin)
- 19 **I Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues –**
vocal Al Hibbler, Kay Davis 3:12
(Duke Ellington)
- 20 **Cotton Tail 3:16**
(Duke Ellington)
- 21 **Waiting For The Train To Come In 2:02**
(Sonny Skylar-Martin Block)
- 22 **Star Spangled Banner and broadcast closing 2:03**
(Francis Scott Key-John Stafford Smith)

Personnel: Taft Jordan, Shelton Hemphill, Cat Anderson (tp) Rex Stewart (co)
Joe Nanton, Lawrence Brown, Claude Jones (tb) Al Sears (ts) Jimmy Hamilton
(ts & cl) Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick (as) Harry Carney (bs, b-cl, cl)
Duke Ellington (p) Fred Guy (g) Nelson "Lloyd" Trotman (b) Sonny Greer (dr)
Kay Davis, Joya Sherrill, Al Hibbler, The Mellotones (vo)

**MPS broadcast "Pastel Period" from The Hurricane Restaurant,
NYC, June 7, 1943**

- 23 **Subtle Slough 3:01**
(Duke Ellington)
- 24 **Main Stem 1:57**
(Duke Ellington)

NYC June?, 1943

- 25 **Bakiff 4:29**
(Juan Tizol)

Personnel: Wallace Jones, Harold Baker, Taft Jordan, Ray Nance (tp) Sandy
Williams, Joe Nanton, Juan Tizol (tb) Jimmy Hamilton (ts & cl) Johnny Hodges,
Nat Jones (as) Ben Webster (ts) Harry Carney (bs) Duke Ellington (p)
Fred Guy (g) Junior Raglin (b) Sonny Greer (dr)

Total time: 72:01

CD 2

Treasury Broadcast 31, ABC Studio 6-B Radio City, NYC,
November 17, 1945

- 01 (Theme) Take The A Train and broadcast intro 0:50
(Billy Strayhorn)
- 02 Walking With My Honey 1:50
(D. Manning)
- 03 Jack The Bear 3:40
(Duke Ellington)
- 04 Autumn Serenade – vocal Joya Sherrill 3:57
(P.DeRose-S.Gallop)
- 05 Ellington Bond Promo 0:50
- 06 Tell It To A Star 2:16
(S. Botwin)
- 07 Hey Diddle Diddle – vocal The Mellotones 2:04
(trad)
- 08 I Can't Begin To Tell You 3:16
(J. Monaco-M. Gordon)
- 09 How Deep Is The Ocean
(Irving Berlin)
- 10 The Wonder Of You - vocal Joya Sherrill 2:39
(Duke Ellington - Johnny Hodges - Don George)
- 11 Victory Drive – vocal Joya Sherrill 1:18
(Duke Ellington)
- 12 As Long As I Live and broadcast closing 3:32
(Max Steiner-Charlie Tobias)

Personnel: Taft Jordan, Shelton Hemphill, Cat Anderson (tp)
Rex Stewart (co) Wilbur De Paris, Lawrence Brown, Claude Jones (tb)
Al Sears (ts) Jimmy Hamilton (ts & cl) Johnny Hodges, Otto Hardwick (as)
Harry Carney (bs,b-cl,cl) Duke Ellington (p) Fred Guy (g) Oscar Pettiford (b)
Sonny Greer (dr) Joya Sherrill The Mellotones (vo)

The Fitch Bandwagon broadcast from Radio City NYC,
May 30, 1943

- 13 Take The A Train 0:26
(Billy Strayhorn)
- 14 Interview with Duke Ellington 0:35
- 15 The Canteen Bounce 1:51
(Fortis)
- 16 Perdido 0:14
(Juan Tizol)
- 17 Interview with Duke Ellington 1:42
- 18 Hayfoot, Strawfoot 2:03
(Lenk-Drake-McGrane)
- 19 Don't Get Around Much Anymore 4:30
(Duke Ellington)
- 20 Interview with Duke Ellington 1:32
- 21 A Slip Of The Lip 2:44
(Mercer Ellington, Luther Henderson Jr)
- 22 Things Ain't What They Used To Be 0:14
(Duke Ellington, Bob Russell)
- 23 Interview with Duke Ellington 1:39

24 Ring Dem Bells 3:53
(Duke Ellington, Irving Mills)

Personnel: Wallace Jones, Harold Baker, Taft Jordan, Ray Nance (tp)
Lawrence Brown, Joe Nanton, Juan Tizol (tb) Jimmy Hamilton (ts & cl)
Johnny Hodges, Nat Jones (as, cl) Ben Webster (ts) Harry Carney (bs)
Duke Ellington (p) Fred Guy (g) Junior Raglin (b) Sonny Greer (dr)

**MBS broadcast "Pastel Period" from The Hurricane Restaurant,
September 5, 1943**

25 Moon Mist 0:28
(Mercer Ellington)

26 C Jam Blues 2:30
(Duke Ellington, Irving Mills)

27 It Don't Mean A Thing 2:40
(Duke Ellington)

28 Tonight I Shall Sleep 2:10
(Duke Ellington - Mercer Ellington - I. Gordon)

29 Ring Dem Bells 3:21
(Duke Ellington)

30 Don't Get Around Much Anymore 2:21
(Duke Ellington, Bob Russell)

31 Things Ain't What They Used To Be 0:21
(Mercer Ellington)

Total time 65:04

Personnel: Wallace Jones, Harold Baker, Taft Jordan, Ray Nance (tp)
Lawrence Brown, Joe Nanton, Bernard Archer (tb) Jimmy Hamilton (ts & cl)
Johnny Hodges, Nat Jones (as, cl) Skippy Williams (ts) Harry Carney (bs)
Duke Ellington (p) Fred Guy (g) Junior Raglin (b) Sonny Greer (dr)

CD1

In Memoriam: Kay Davis 1920-2012

On the 10 November broadcast Lloyd Trotman is the bass player. Junior Raglin had recently left the band to join Ray Nance's group. Ray himself had left during September, to avoid the long Club Zanzibar residency which was still continuing in November. These were the Ellington Orchestra's first personnel changes for well over a year. 1945 had been a very stable year for the Ellington Orchestra, as well as a very productive one.

Just A-Settin' And A-Rockin', dating from 1941, follows the usual brief **Take The 'A' Train** introduction. Trotman is heard right at the start, Al Sears impresses in the role originally created for his illustrious predecessor Ben Webster, and Cat Anderson tops the ensemble effortlessly in the release. Al continues through the second chorus, still sailing close to the melody; then Duke intervenes to wrap things up before a return to the **'A' Train** theme and what appears to be a second start to the show. Al seems to anticipate this rude interruption with a closing yelp of protest: 'you can't stop us now, we're having fun'.

Earle Warren's **9.20 Special**, also from 1941, was a feature for Coleman Hawkins with the Count Basie Orchestra. I have a special affection for the original, as I acquired it as a boy, on a 78 pressed at EMI's factory in Dum Dum, Calcutta. Also, 9.20 was when the evening express, nearing the end of its journey from Glasgow to Leeds, was timed to pass through my Yorkshire town. This arrangement is one of a handful Duke commissioned in 1945 from Count's star trumpeter, Buck Clayton. After Duke's piano introduction and the opening ensemble, a forthright Taft Jordan and a throaty Al Sears split a chorus. Johnny Hodges and Lawrence Brown split another, and the closing chorus has a window for Trotman, before the final bars, in which Cat Anderson once again caps the ebullient band with a flourish.

Frustration is one of the earliest and finest of a series of superior showcases Duke wrote over the years for Harry Carney. Premiered at the December 1944 Carnegie Hall concert, this is the last of no fewer than nine performances which survive from 1945. Duke recorded it for Capitol Transcriptions in 1947, and in 1949 Harry played it with strings on Norman Granz's groundbreaking limited-edition album *The Jazz Scene*. The Ellington Orchestra's version finally appeared

in 1956, on a Bethlehem LP. As always, Harry plays it superbly here. His own composition **Jennie**, dedicated to his mother, is premiered next, after a Bonds plug. It spotlights Rex Stewart's crackling trumpet, with quirky anticipations of Clark Terry's work in the 1950s, then Harry himself and Jimmy Hamilton, plus Al Sears, briefly and still more throatily. Lloyd Trotman is heard fleetingly in the introduction. It was never recorded commercially, but there's a Capitol Transcriptions version from 1946, on which Cat Anderson replaces Rex, who by then had left the band.

Kay Davis sings **Dancing In The Dark**, Arthur Schwartz's distinguished 1931 song from the show *The Band Wagon*. Nowadays we are used to hearing the great American standards sung by opera singers. This was not so in the pigeon-holed musical world of 1945; as so often Duke, and Kay, were years ahead of a trend. Kay's years with Duke no doubt also prepared him well for his crucial collaborations with Alice Babs in later years, particularly on the Sacred Concerts. Her straight soprano suits the song's dramatic contours and Howard Dietz's poetic lyric admirably, as does Billy Strayhorn's arrangement. Three known recordings survive, and Al Sears solos on them all. This is the last, and the only one on which Kay sings, but Billy's score is clearly tailored to the needs of a singer. There was no commercial recording; Billy's wonderful score heard on the classic 1957 *Ellington Indigos* LP is quite different.

Johnny Hodges' **Crosstown** is another premiere performance. A jump number with a very Manhattan title, it features the composer himself, then short contributions from Stewart, Brown and Sears. Strayhorn's 1939 **Passion Flower** had originally been a small-group number on a 1941 Victor date under Hodges' name. In 1945 Billy re-scored it for the full band, and it remained a fixture from then on, one of the best of all Hodges romantic ballads; as always, he plays it peerlessly. Carney is prominent in the ensemble. The full band version retains from the 1941 original a fleet Jimmie Blanton contribution. Here Trotman takes it over convincingly from Junior Raglin, and after the bass returns into the ensemble the motif re-echoes again and again in Sonny Greer's dramatic drumming. Don't overlook Billy's work at the piano, from the initial set-up right through to the dying fade.

After another lengthy Bonds plug, underpinned by more rhapsodic piano fills and followed by Joya Sherrill singing **Victory Drive**, The Mellotones step up for their regular slot on the November shows. **Get On Board Little Children**, somewhat removed from the world of Ellingtonia, is a reminder that by 1945 popular taste was shifting away from the bands of the Swing Era, to the solo singers, and also to the vocal groups who would come into their inheritance in a later era. Don't overlook Deacon Brown's quiet background responses throughout the song.

Following a break in continuity and a further **A Train** theme, we hear two excerpts from **Black, Brown And Beige**, which Duke wrote for his first Carnegie Hall appearance in 1943. At the time it was much misunderstood (the radio announcer introduces it here as a 'suite'), but it is the work which, more than any other, encapsulates Ellington's artistic purposes. We hear the two concluding movements of **Black**, the spiritual theme **Come Sunday** and **Light**. This reading of **Come Sunday** has a special interest. In the absence of Ray Nance, now leading his own band, who would Duke call upon to take the violin passages, *arco* against an **East St Louis Toodle-Oo** reference, and pizzicato against the valve-trombone? The rather surprising answer is Cat Anderson, plunger muted, which points up the Todalo reference quite decidedly. **Light**, also called **Montage**, is particularly valuable, as it had not been included in the excerpts recorded for Victor in late 1944. Its function is to bring **Black** to a satisfactory conclusion, by pulling together motifs from **Work Song** and **Come Sunday**. And as several of the former come in the written-out bass solo, Trotman's role here is crucial. Two later performances of **Light** survive from 1946; after that Duke mothballed it, along with most of the rest of the work, until 1958 when he re-recorded **Black**, in expanded form, for Columbia.

Following the 32-bar spiritual Hodges solo **Come Sunday** segues into **Light** through a trumpet cadenza, originally created for Shorty Baker, and here taken by the ever versatile Cat Anderson. **Work Song** motifs come in as the music moves into swing tempo, though the next section is increasingly dominated by echoes from **Ridin' On A Blue Note** (1938). Trotman's solo follows, then more ensemble playing, out of which **Come Sunday** references eventually emerge, at first via spacially scored saxes and clarinet (very light), then via Lawrence Brown's trombone. With **Work Song** and **Come Sunday** references now coming together, the ensemble moves into the brisk closing passages, throughout which they surface repeatedly, in many rhythmic transformations.

11.60pm follows a further Victory Bonds plug. It is an undistinguished novelty number with which Joya copes manfully and to which Harry Carney, dependable as ever, contributes briefly. If you feel you hear echoes of a children's counting-out rhyme, you may well be right. Joya was very comfortable in that territory, and she had elaborated two playground rhymes earlier in 1945 in her own songs, **Blue Jay** and **Kissing Bug**. In the 1970s she presented a very successful children's TV show, *Time For Joya*, on New York's station WPIX. Harry also plays an eight-bar introduction to **Tell It To A Star**, and his sheet-anchor sound is again prominent in the subsequent ensemble; the soloist is Rex Stewart. This is the earliest Ellington version of the song, which was dropped when Rex left the band in December. The eponymous film tells the story of a cigarette girl who aspires to be a vocalist. *Halliwel's Film Guide* comments: 'The plot sets the level: minor musical'.

I Ain't Got Nothing But The Blues features Kay Davis again, in her more familiar wordless obligato role, on this occasion to Al Hibbler's vocal. One of four songs recorded in December 1944 at Duke's first Victor session following the end of the Petrillo ban, it achieved success in *Billboard's* Harlem Hit Parade (later to become the magazine's r'n'b chart). Ellington, Sears and Trotman all have a hand in setting up the bluesy atmosphere, and Sears returns after the vocal chorus for a soulful passage before Hibbler returns.

On the ebullient **Cottontail** the featured soloist Al Sears is a very convincing successor to Ben Webster, and Carney and Ellington make their usual brief appearances just before Webster's scored saxes *sol*i chorus, Duke with a fleet and sparkling linear contribution. Cat Anderson inherits from Ray Nance the short trumpet solo which concludes the elided first chorus, and which had once been Cootie Williams'. Woody Herman's wasn't the only band delivering tear-em-up flagwavers in 1945. Though not heard on the original 1940 Victor recording, the extended coda for the main soloist had been a part of the routine from the start; it is heard on a version recorded in New York in June 1940 for the BBC.

Waiting For The Train To Come In, a song strongly associated with Peggy Lee, didn't last long in the Ellington book. It is another feature for Hodges, this time in bluesy vein. Johnny is splendid, pitted against shouting brass figures, and it is a shame that this version, decidedly raunchier than an earlier one on an October Show, is abruptly cut short, especially as the cut is in favour of a final Bonds plug, this time in the form of the National Anthem - patriotically inspiring maybe, but with little to inspire the Ellington enthusiast.

Three tracks from June 1943 broadcasts during Duke's extended Hurricane residency conclude CD1. **Just Squeeze Me** was still **Subtle Slough** in 1943, since the Lee Gaines lyric which would confer on it the familiar title by which we know it now was not added until 1946. Originally a small-band score from 1941 recorded under Rex Stewart's name, this is one of the earliest recordings in its full-band form. It is brisker than the small-band original. Harold Baker's trumpet briefly concludes the introductory passage, heard twice, Ray Nance and Tricky Sam Nanton state the theme in tandem, with scored reeds in the release, and Johnny Hodges has an eloquent chorus before the introduction and the theme statement return.

Main Stem begins *in medias res*, with the second band chorus, with trumpet responses. In the absence of Rex Stewart, who was away on his sabbatical (see note for **Canteen Bounce**, CD2), the trumpeter, here and in the extended solo following Johnny Hodges, is Ray Nance. Newcomer

Jimmy Hamilton takes the clarinet chorus which had been Barney Bigard's originally, and Chauncey Haughton's more recently. Joe Nanton and Ben Webster come next in the sequence, but the concluding solo chorus for trombone is dropped altogether, in the absence of Lawrence Brown, who had returned home to California in anticipation of having to follow Haughton into the armed forces.

The exotic **Bakiff** features the trombone of its composer Juan Tizol, and the violin of Ray Nance, with Ellington directing the traffic from the piano. The sound quality of these tracks is inferior to that of the Treasury Show, but the interest is compelling, since they date from 1943, for so long a year of silence because of the Petrillo ban. Even better, the rather short Treasury Broadcast on CD2 leaves space for another two substantial segments of music from this intriguing year.

CD2

In the week between the Treasury Show on CD1 and this one on 17 November, the Ellington Orchestra sustained two major personnel changes, one a significant gain, the other a grievous and in the end permanent loss. Lloyd Trotman's playing on 10 November shows he was a very capable replacement for Junior Raglin, but by the following week Duke had hired Oscar Pettiford. A rising young star who was already winning accolades, Oscar would become, along with Ray Brown and Charles Mingus, the major force on the instrument in the rest of the 1940s and the 1950s. Duke had found the true successor to the tragically short-lived Jimmie Blanton, and he immediately gave the youngster the opportunity to parade his gifts.

The loss resulted from Joe 'Tricky Sam' Nanton's stroke, suffered during the intervening week. Tricky slowly recovered, and in the spring he rejoined the band in which he had played such a defining part. But his return was short-lived and he never regained the full power of his eloquence, dying of heart failure in a California hotel room in July 1946. His replacement on 17 November was Wilbur De Paris, a fine trombonist with wide experience, but as we shall hear, not the player to assume Tricky's unique mantle.

Walking With My Honey is a rather anonymous song of the day from a short film featuring Cab Calloway. Whatever the intrinsic merits of the material to which they directed their attention, Ellington and Strayhorn always treated it with care and respect, and here the interesting, richly variegated introduction out of which the lovely sound of Harry Carney's bass clarinet emerges proves the point. Though short, the performance is a pleasure to listen to, even if it does seem an odd, somewhat perfunctory start to the Show.

There is nothing perfunctory about **Jack The Bear**, and it is tempting to speculate that this is the true opener, placed second on the playlist against a possible repeat of the previous week's false start. The newcomer is introduced as 'the 1945 Award Winner on bass', and Oscar launches into the famous 1940 showcase for his illustrious predecessor with such authority, one might think it had rocked him to sleep in his cradle on a nightly basis. It is an astonishing performance.

Jack The Bear also reveals Duke's difficulty in replacing Tricky Sam. When his chorus comes up in the sequence, De Paris plays on open horn, and the absent Tricky prowls behind every note, not least because Pettiford's Blanton is achieved with such success. Jimmy Hamilton and Cat

Anderson take over with conviction the roles which in 1940 had been assigned to Barney Bigard and Cootie Williams, and Harry Carney is dependable as ever. But it is Pettiford who dominates, along with the terrific swing generated in the ensemble. By 1945 there were complaints that the Ellington band was no longer what it had been; this reading of the 1940 classic completely refutes such carping.

Ellington had plugged **Autumn Serenade** since October, though Harry James and not he scored in the hit parade with it. He was handicapped by the fact that Victor didn't record his version, beautifully arranged by Billy Strayhorn, with another richly arresting introduction. Once again, Carney supplies the gem in Billy's gorgeous setting, this time on baritone, against clarinet topped reeds. While Duke's relationship with Victor was pretty dysfunctional by late 1945, Joya Sherrill vocals were a category of his music the company was still keen to record; so it seems odd that Victor ignored this, which is one of her finest. Perhaps they already had a version by another singer. Johnny Hodges solos in the closing half chorus, framing Joya's brief return in a setting of great beauty. The song will be familiar to younger jazz enthusiasts through John Coltrane's version with Johnny Hartman. Billy's rhapsodic piano segues into the Bonds plug and ripples on beneath it.

The lightly bouncing **Tell It To A Star** appears, for the second successive week, and this time Billy, and not Duke leads from the piano into Carney's introduction. The comparison adds interest, and Rex's forthright solo, against varied background riffs, is still exhilarating. For their weekly November slot The Mellotones turn to **Hey Diddle Diddle**, an elaboration of the familiar nursery rhyme, for which written records go back a long way, with certainty to the eighteenth century and arguably to the sixteenth. Ellington's most thorough discographers list the song as **The Cat And The Fiddle**, which they attribute to J Kern. It seems an unlikely offering from Jerome Kern, who coincidentally had died on 11 November.

On 17 November Carney and bass clarinet enthusiasts were well catered for. Harry has a further outing on the instrument on **I Can't Begin To Tell You**, which was about to become a big hit. Bing Crosby's version entered the *Billboard* charts on 15 November, where it would stay for 17 weeks, reaching no.1. A version by Harry James, on which Betty Grable sings, joined it on the charts a little later; its flipside was **Waiting For The Train To Come In**. Two further Ellington performances survive from the coming few days, but Duke had discarded **I Can't Begin To Tell You** by the time the Treasury Shows were resumed in the spring. Yet another interesting introduction prepares for Harry's initial entry, and at the end there's a lovely coda to complement it. Perfect romantic

ballroom fare, **I Can't Begin To Tell You** is a prime example of neglected Ellingtonia of great merit and charm.

Irving Berlin's **How Deep Is The Ocean** (1932, but about to be revived in a 1946 film, *Blue Skies*) is a song in an altogether different class. This is the third Treasury Show in a month on which Duke played it, and the last; there is no known later recording. Jimmy Hamilton, who states the theme and later recapitulates it, combines with elements in the scoring to evoke a decidedly Goodman feel, refracted through an Ellington prism. In the second chorus scored reeds elaborate the theme, with responses from Lawrence Brown and, just before the change of key into the closing half chorus, Taft Jordan. Joya Sherrill had taken over **The Wonder Of You** from her predecessor Wini Johnson. Victor recorded it on 26 November, issuing it early in the New Year, coupled with Al Hibbler's **Long Strong And Consecutive**. *Metronome's* review was unenthusiastic: 'Two more pops by Duke, better than another man's average but far short of thrilling by Ellington standards'. A Johnny Hodges line and a Don George list song, it was arranged by Strayhorn with his usual care, imagination and respect. Lawrence Brown solos briefly, Joya stays on mike for **Victory Drive**, her vocal Bonds plug, and then a short introduction leads into **As Long As I Live**, another Strayhorn arrangement and another pop song (though not the fine 1934 Arlen-Koehler song with the same title). Lawrence Brown solos in the first chorus, with Cat Anderson taking over for the second half. The second chorus belongs to Al Sears, and all three soloists sing beautifully. The versatility of Cat Anderson's playing in 1945 was quite remarkable. He could be reliably called on to assume with complete authority any role in the Ellington trumpet section. Lawrence returns briefly, and Al also reappears, in a short coda.

The broadcast now ends, about half an hour after it had started. Football seems to have drastically eroded the air time available, and it is perhaps as well that after one more week, the Treasury Shows would be suspended for the winter. When they resumed in the spring, Joya had left to embark on marriage and family life; her autumn serenade would be heard no more.

NBC's Fitch Bandwagon broadcast of 30 May 1943 from Radio City in New York is here issued commercially for the first time. Duke's published diarists, Klaus Stratemann and Ken Vail, describe it as a half-hour broadcast. On the evidence here it lasts just over twenty minutes. Though designed to give the impression that the Ellington Orchestra was in the studio, to perform between the various stages of a conversation between Duke and an unidentified interviewer, all the music originates in existing recordings available to the broadcaster. Duke's discographers in *New DESOR* mention three, though their information is not wholly accurate. My hunch is that all

the music is from late May airchecks, and that everything was then put together, and transmitted on 30 May.

After the '**A**' Train theme and a spoken introduction we hear **The Canteen Bounce**, a straightforward 32-bar number in which a fine Taft Jordan solo follows a band chorus. Taft was a very recent recruit to the band in May 1943, replacing Rex Stewart who had embarked on a sabbatical which would take him to New Mexico, Mexico City, and finally California where his wife and baby daughter lived, before returning later in the year. Jimmy Hamilton also solos briefly. The Canteen of the title alludes to the Stage Door Canteen, an entertainment centre which opened in 1942 in New York (others followed later) for the use of service personnel posted to the city.

The start of **Perdido** fades after a few seconds, and the interview with Duke gets properly under way. It covers his career in various stages, from Washington (the scholarship to art college, the soda jerk days and early piano studies, bandleading and publicizing), to the present time.

Betty Roché sings **Hayfoot Strawfoot**, which Duke had recorded for Victor the previous July, just before the Petrillo ban. The record, with Ivie Anderson's vocal, had entered *Billboard's* newly launched Harlem Hit Parade chart late in 1942, and the song had obvious topicality at a time when US troops were being trained up for the campaigns in Italy, the Pacific, and eventually Western Europe. The title alludes to a practice, probably originating in the British army, when teaching marching drill. Recruits from rural districts, who were confused by the terms left and right, had no difficulty distinguishing between hay and straw. So a quantity of each would be attached to the left and right marching boot, and the commands modified accordingly, to speed up the training process. It is interesting to compare Betty's approach with Ivie's and valuable to have her on record from 1943 at all; by the time the recording ban was over and Ellington was back in the Victor studios, she had left. We know her much better from her second spell with Duke and her definitive **Take The 'A' Train**. Ben Webster solos briefly.

Don't Get Around Much Anymore was a huge hit in 1943, though for the Ink Spots not for Duke. Eventually the song would be associated with Al Hibbler, a newcomer to the band at this point. Ellington pushed it relentlessly during the Hurricane residency, especially as a sign-off number, but always as the instrumental it had originally been in 1940, titled **Never No Lament**. Al sings it on a July 1945 Treasury Show, but his vocal version was not recorded commercially until late 1947, for Columbia. The soloists are Johnny Hodges, who felt very proprietorial about the melody, Ray Nance and Lawrence Brown.

Like **Hayfoot Strawfoot**, **A Slip Of The Lip (Can Sink A Ship)** dates from the last Victor session before the ban, and it too had wartime topicality. It follows an interesting segment of the interview in which Duke talks about his relationship with his son Mercer. Unlike **Hayfoot Strawfoot**, Duke could promote **A Slip Of The Lip** with the singer who originally recorded it, Ray Nance. Ray's confiding admonitions appealed to audiences, and after Victor released it in the late summer it rose to No.1 on *Billboard's* Harlem Hit Parade. The trumpet solo appears to be an exchange, now of four bars, now of two, in which a second trumpeter (Harold Baker?) follows Ray; Baker, if it is he, has the Campbells-are-coming quote). If Ray is soloing alone, it's a very convincing impression of a two-trumpeter conversation.

After a fleeting snatch of **Things Ain't What They Used To Be**, the interview considers the Cotton Club, the two trips to Europe, and Duke's first, very recent Carnegie Hall concert with **Black, Brown And Beige**. His 'tone parallel to the history of the American negro' was a 'hot' issue at the time of the Fitch broadcast, and there was much talk of the Ellington band not being what it used to be, and of Duke over-reaching himself to pursue ambitions beyond his station. He was acutely aware of this, and the explanatory book he mentions was an idea to counter his incomprehending critics. The book never materialized, but from this time on the tendency to compare Ellington with his own past became established: 'I have one rival', he would say, 'some old cat name Ellington'. The interviewer's closing remarks may not have pleased him too much. He received them in courteous silence though, and his real answer was a blistering revival of **Ring Dem Bells** from 1930, with no trace of nostalgia for times gone, even in the scored tailgate trombones. Soloists are a florid Nat Jones on very Bigard-sounding clarinet, Hodges, Carney, Nanton and Nance, and Hodges echoes Nance in the vocal slot which had once been Cootie Williams'.

The final tracks on CD2 originate in an MBS broadcast from the Hurricane a few months later, in early September. By then Skippy Williams had replaced the irascible Ben Webster, fired by an exasperated Duke after a series of confrontations; and Bernard Archer was in Juan Tizol's chair while the trombonist was on a month's leave in California. As his replacement, Archer takes over Tizol's solo responsibility on the introduction to **Tonight I Shall Sleep**.

After a snatch of **Moon Mist** accompanying the spoken introduction, we hear a **C Jam Blues** in which Johnny Hodges occupies Webster's slot in the routine (a temporary arrangement – by November Skippy Williams had reclaimed the solo for the tenor sax. The other soloists are Duke, initially, Ray Nance on violin, Taft Jordan covering for the absent Rex Stewart, Joe Nanton, and Nat Jones on clarinet.

It Don't Mean A Thing is equally interesting, in spite of being beheaded. Nance and Jordan share the opening vocal, trading fours. After Nanton's wa-wa trombone solo, they return to share the third chorus, this time on violin and trumpet. Skippy Williams then takes a half chorus before the closing ensemble. **Tonight I Shall Sleep** is also noteworthy. Billy Strayhorn's arrangement was clearly intended for a vocalist, but on the first surviving performances Ben Webster is the balladeer. Now the song has found its singer, and this is one of the earliest versions on which Al Hibbler tackles the song, following Billy's seven-bar introduction (a fascinating feature in itself, and not just for its unusual length and Archer's audible presence).

Another **Ring Dem Bells** shares the same contours as the one on the Fitch broadcast, with perhaps an extra ounce of looseness and exuberance. Then we hear **Don't Get Around Much Anymore** as a sign-off number, with the announcer's closing remarks spoken as usual over the return of Hodges after the half-chorus with Lawrence Brown's solo. Strangely, and after an obvious cut in continuity, we hear a snatch of **Things Ain't What They Used To Be**, another of Duke's broadcast closers at this time.

Roger Boyes

© Roger Boyes 2012

DETS 16

Acknowledgements and References

I am grateful for the help of the following, in preparing these notes:

Luciano Massagli and Giovanni M Volonté, compilers of
The New DESOR, Duke Ellington's Story on Records 1924-1974
Sjef Hoefsmit, editor of *DEMS Bulletin*, the *Duke Ellington Music Society*,
available on-line at www.depanorama.net/dems.

The writers of the notes for the fifteen earlier issues in this series
Graham Colomé for his contributions on trumpet solo attributions, to
DEMS Bulletin, and to *Blue Light*, the *Newsletter of the Duke Ellington Society (UK)*

For specific points I have consulted the following (listed in no particular order):

Walter van de Leur: *Something To Live For – The Music of Billy Strayhorn*
ed. Mark Tucker: *The Duke Ellington Reader*
Eddie Lambert: *Duke Ellington – A Listener's Guide*
John Howland: *Ellington Uptown*
ed. Mark Tucker: *Black Music Research Journal* 13:2 (Fall 1993)
Iona and Peter Opie: *The Oxford Book Of Nursery Rhymes*
Ed. John Walker: *Halliwel's Film and Video Guide*
Andrew Homzy (notes for the Bluebird 3CD issue *Black, Brown And Beige*)
Steven Lasker (notes for Victor's 'red box' *The Duke Ellington Centennial Edition*)
Alec Wilder: *American Popular Song – The Great Innovators 1900-1950*
Google (for points of information about obscure songs)

Jerry Valburn and Benny Aaslund spent years
unearthing the original sources of the recordings.
Jack Towers applied his genius to their restoration.
Storyville Records are now issuing them on these double-CDs,
with rare supplementary material like these precious 1943 recordings.
We are indebted to them all.

RB

About The Treasury Shows

In April 1945 the war was ending in Europe but a large expensive operation lay ahead to complete the victory in the Pacific. Along with the Mighty Seventh War Loan[®] the United States Treasury Department contracted Duke Ellington and His Famous Orchestra to perform a series of public service broadcasts over the Blue Network on Saturdays. These 55 minute programs would give Ellington a wide choice of material to perform including his older work; new instrumentals and pop tunes and his extended works as well. The series was launched on April 7th, 1945 while the band was performing at the 400 Restaurant in New York City. These wonderful broadcasts ran through November 1945 and picked up again in April 1946 through early October. It is something of a miracle that these precious broadcasts survived all these years and are in such good quality as well. We've also included some interesting broadcasts from 1943 through 1954 where Duke performed for the Treasury Department, radio remotes from New York's New Zanzibar & Birdland and those broadcast from Meadowbrook Gardens in Culver City, California and the Blue Note in Chicago.

So sit back and enjoy these Ducal highlights from over fifty years ago.

Jerry Valburn

D.E.T.S.
903 9016

ALL RIGHTS OF THE PRODUCER AND THE OWNER OF THE WORK REPRODUCED RESERVED UNAUTHORISED COPYING, PUBLIC PERFORMANCE AND BROADCASTING OF RECORD PROHIBITED

Duke Ellington's Treasury Shows



VOL. 16



BIEM/n**cb**
© 2012
Made in the EU
903 9016

Duke Ellington And His Orchestra

1

ALL RIGHTS OF THE PRODUCER AND THE OWNER OF THE WORK REPRODUCED RESERVED UNAUTHORISED COPYING, PUBLIC PERFORMANCE AND BROADCASTING OF RECORD PROHIBITED

Duke Ellington's Treasury Shows



VOL. 16



BIEM/n**cb**
© 2012
Made in the EU
903 9016

Duke Ellington And His Orchestra

2

DUKE ELLINGTON

THE TREASURY SHOWS VOLUME. 16

D.E.T.S

DUKE ELLINGTON THE TREASURY SHOWS

903 9016

CD 1

1. (Theme) Take The "A" Train & broadcast intro 0:43
2. Just A-Sittin' And A-Rockin' 2:51
3. (Theme) Take The "A" Train 0:55
4. 9:20 Special 4:04
5. Frustration (1) 4:03
6. Ellington Bond Promo 1:06
7. Jenny 2:28
8. Dancing In The Dark – vocal Kay Davis 3:57
9. Crosstown 3:01
10. Passion Flower 3:33
11. Bond Promo 1:42
12. Victory Drive – vocal Joya Sherrill 1:14
13. Get On Board Little Children – vocal The Mellotones 3:32
14. (Theme) Take The "A" Train and broadcast return 0:50
15. Black, Brown & Beige: Come Sunday, Light 12:14
16. Ellington Bond Promo 1:22
17. 11:60 PM – vocal Joya Sherrill 2:04
18. Tell It To A Star 2:13
19. I Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues – vocal Al Hibbler, Kay Davis 3:12
20. Cotton Tail 3:16
21. Waiting For The Train To Come In 2:02
22. Star Spangled Banner & broadcast closing 2:03
23. Subtle Slough 3:01
24. Main Stem 1:57
25. Bakiff 4:29

Total Time 72:01



Producer: Jerry Valburn
Liner Notes: Roger Boyes

© 2012 Storyville Records
Made in the EU.
Visit us on:

www.storyville-records.com

CD 2

1. (Theme) Take The "A" Train & broadcast intro 0:50
2. Walking With My Honey 1:50
3. Jack The Bear 3:40
4. Autumn Serenade – vocal Joya Sherrill 3:57
5. Ellington Bond Promo 0:50
6. Tell It To A Star 2:16
7. Hey Diddle Diddle – vocal The Mellotones 2:04
8. I Can't Begin To Tell You 3:16
9. How Deep Is The Ocean 3:29
10. The Wonder Of You – vocal Joya Sherrill 2:39
11. Victory Drive – vocal Joya Sherrill 1:18
12. As Long As I Live & broadcast closing 3:32
13. Take The "A" Train 0:26
14. Interview with Duke Ellington 0:35
15. The Canteen Bounce 1:51
16. Perdido 0:14
17. Interview with Duke Ellington 1:42
18. Hayfoot, Strawfoot 2:03
19. Don't Get Around Much Anymore 4:30
20. Interview with Duke Ellington 1:32
21. A Slip Of The Lip 2:44
22. Things Ain't What They Used To Be 0:14
23. Interview with Duke Ellington 1:39
24. Ring Dem Bells 3:53
25. Moon Mist 0:28
26. C Jam Blues 2:30
27. It Don't Mean A Thing 2:40
28. Tonight I Shall Sleep 2:10
29. Ring Dem Bells 3:21
30. Don't Get Around Much Anymore 2:21
31. Things Ain't What They Used To Be 0:21

Total Time 65:04

D.E.T.S.
903 9016

D.E.T.S

DUKE ELLINGTON THE TREASURY SHOWS

903 9016