

1942



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC



Glenn Miller

Nineteen forty-two was a year of abrupt change in America. After the initial shock of Pearl Harbor had worn off, the nation adapted quickly to a war footing. American troops in the Philippines surrendered to the Japanese as General Douglas MacArthur left the islands for Australia, making his famous pledge, "I shall return." War-bond rallies became common across America; while on a war-bond tour, actress Carole Lombard, wife of Clark Gable, was killed in a plane crash. Rents were frozen nationwide, and in October gasoline rationing became a way of life.

However, America and its Allies were beginning to take their toll on Germany and Japan. In the Pacific, Americans fought ferociously on Guadalcanal; General Jimmy Doolittle led his famous bombing raid on Tokyo, and the U.S. Navy, in a dramatic comeback after Pearl Harbor, defeated the Japanese in battles at Midway and the Coral Sea. In North Africa, German general Erwin Rommel, "the desert fox," was forced to retreat after defeats by Allied forces.

Factories across the nation switched their production from civilian needs to military requirements, and out of wartime necessity American technology made major leaps forward. For instance, the first primitive computers and experimental jet aircraft appeared. And industrialist Henry Kaiser developed a way to mass-produce one complete 10,000-ton "liberty ship" in just four days.

Hollywood did its part by churning out war films, many produced by movie-industry veterans who had joined the service. A different type of war film was the acclaimed *Mrs. Miniver*. The movie lauded the courage of British civilians in the face of German air raids and the 1940 British defeat at Dunkirk. This was also the year that Walt Disney

produced his classic animated film *Bambi*.

Travel restrictions, gasoline rationing and the draft cut deeply into the still-popular big bands. And on August 1, 1942, American Federation of Musicians President James C. Petrillo, unhappy over the fact that musicians received none of the money from jukebox play, ordered his members to stop recording until the matter was settled. As a result, only "V-Discs," which were produced specifically for distribution to the armed forces, could be recorded. Yet despite these restrictions, a number of songs destined to be standards emerged from top orchestras.

The Glenn Miller Orchestra dominated the hit parade throughout 1942, Miller's final year as a civilian bandleader before joining the Army Air Force. Some of his most memorable numbers emerged at this time. **Moonlight Cocktail**, arranged by Jerry Gray, had vocals by Ray Eberle and the Modernaires. Later in the year, Miller fired Eberle, which generated considerable publicity.

Miller's instrumental recording of the Jerry Gray composition **A String of Pearls** became one of his best-known melodies. And although many jazz musicians of the day mocked Miller's musical conservatism and commerciality, the record included a memorable cornet solo from Miller's friend, jazz virtuoso Bobby Hackett. Hackett originally improvised his solo; impressed, Miller made the improvisation a permanent part of the arrangement.

Don't Sit under the Apple Tree featured popular Miller saxophonist-vocalist Tex Beneke along with Marion Hutton and the Modernaires. An upbeat plea for fidelity from both soldiers away from home and the sweethearts they left behind, it captured the tone of the time. Beneke

later recalled Miller's insistence on proper enunciation from the singers: "We had to sing 'Don't Sit under the Apple Tree,' not 'Don't Sit under the *Yapple* Tree.'" The second of Miller's two feature films, *Orchestra Wives*, was made in 1942 and starred George Montgomery and Ann Rutherford. It also produced another Miller classic: **(I've Got a Gal in) Kalamazoo**.

The film *The Fleet's In*, with Dorothy Lamour, William Holden and Betty Hutton, made use of the song **Tangerine**, a No. 1 hit for Jimmy Dorsey's Orchestra featuring the team of Bob Eberly and Helen O'Connell. Another standard was used in another musical film that year. **For Me and My Gal**, from the film of the same title directed by Busby Berkeley, is a duet between Judy Garland and a 29-year-old actor-dancer named Gene Kelly. The backing is by David Rose's Orchestra.

Trumpeter Harry James, riding a wave of popularity with his lushly orchestrated, sentimental sound, continued with that formula throughout 1942. **Sleepy Lagoon** characterized the James instrumental ballad style. Two vocal ballads also rose on the charts. **I Don't Want to Walk without You**, written by legendary composers Frank Loesser and Jule Styne for the musical *Sweater Girl*, spotlighted vocalist Helen Forrest. And Jimmy Saunders was the featured vocalist on **One Dozen Roses**.

When Helen Forrest quit Benny Goodman's Orchestra in 1941 to join Harry James, Goodman hired Peggy Lee, whom he had first heard singing in a Chicago cocktail lounge. **Somebody Else Is Taking My Place** was her biggest hit with Goodman in 1942. Goodman continued to employ some extraordinary musicians, including 19-year-old pianist Mel Powell, who arranged Goodman's recording of **Jersey Bounce**. Following Powell's piano introduction, there are solos from trombonist Lou McGarity, Goodman and tenor saxophonist Vido Musso.

By 1942, electric steel guitarist Al McBurney, better known as Alvin Rey, had become one of the first such instru-

he was working with Benny Goodman. In flight he began humming a melody. Goodman asked him the title, and Hampton replied, "**Flying Home**." He recorded it first with Goodman and again in 1940 with his own orchestra. However, Hamp's second version, made in 1942, is the definitive one. Its rocking sound pointed the way to the rhythm and blues and rock 'n' roll of the future. Illinois Jacquet's "honking" tenor saxophone solo made him a star as well.

Kay Kyser's Orchestra was far more commercial than Goodman's or Hampton's, and by 1942 Kyser had earned 47 charted records, 24 of them top 10s. Among his four chart toppers in 1942 was **Who Wouldn't Love You**, a duet



mentalist to be a fan favorite. Key, whose trademark was his use of full-bodied, sliding chords, had his only No. 1 hit as a bandleader that year with **Deep in the Heart of Texas**, featuring vocalists Bill Schallen and Skeets Herfurt.

The 1941 musical film **Blues in the Night**, with Priscilla Lane, Richard Whorf and Lloyd Nolan, chronicled the ups and downs of a struggling jazz band. Singer-lyricist Johnny Mercer and composer Harold Arlen wrote songs for the picture, including the title tune, which became an American standard. Originally, the memorable opening line, "My mama done told me," was elsewhere in the song. Arlen suggested Mercer move the phrase to the beginning. *Blues in the Night* was Dinah Shore's first million seller.

Nineteen forty-two was the year that Mercer, producer-composer Buddy DeSylva and Los Angeles music store owner Glenn Wallichs founded Capitol Records. The first artist signed to Capitol, boogie-woogie pianist Freddie Slack, gave them their first success with **Cow-Cow Boogie**. Written by composer Don Raye, bandleader-arranger Benny Carter and Gene de Paul, the song was used in the Abbott and Costello comedy *Ride 'Em Cowboy*. The record helped launch the career of vocalist Ella Mae Morse. Mercer himself provided another hit for Capitol. His rakish **Strip Polka**, lauding the talents of "Queenie, cutie of the burlesque show," was risqué for the time—but appreciated by many soldiers.

Mercer, a former vocalist with Paul Whiteman's Orchestra, enticed his former boss back into the studio for **Trav'lin' Light**. Whiteman, who'd had his first hit in 1920, had ceased recording in 1939, upset with the fact that radio stations could play records without paying the artists. *Trav'lin' Light* was written by arranger Jimmy Mundy and trombonist Trummy Young. Johnny Mercer's lyrics were sung by jazz legend Billie Holiday under the name "Lady Day."

The classic Christmas musical film *Holiday Inn* spawned two Irving Berlin hits for Bing Crosby: the venerable *White Christmas* and the ballad **Be Careful It's My Heart**, with John Scott Trotter and His Orchestra.

When vibraphonist-drummer Lionel Hampton took his first plane ride from Los Angeles to Atlantic City in 1939,



teaming longtime Kyser vocalist Harry Babbitt with Trudy Erwin. The Fred MacMurray-Susan Hayward film *The Forest Rangers* accounted for another of the four: **Jingle Jangle Jingle**, written by Frank Loesser and Joseph Lilley. Like many of Kyser's recordings, this tune featured vocals from Babbitt, Julie Conway and other band members.

One of America's most popular radio personalities, Kate Smith, had her first hit in 1927. It was, however, her 1939 rendition of Irving Berlin's *God Bless America* that made her a national icon. In 1942 she sang a number that had special wartime significance, particularly for the beleaguered British: the hopeful **(There'll Be Bluebirds over) The White Cliffs of Dover**.

—Rich Kienzel



DISCOGRAPHY

- 1. Don't Sit under the Apple Tree (With Anyone Else but Me)** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra • *Music and lyrics by Lew Brown, Charlie Tobias and Sam H. Stept. Vocals by Marion Hutton, Tex Beneke and the Modernaires. Bluebird 11474. Courtesy of BMG Music.*
- 2. Somebody Else Is Taking My Place** Benny Goodman and His Orchestra • *Music and lyrics by Dick Howard, Bob Ellsworth and Russ Morgan. Vocal by Peggy Lee. OKeh 6497. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.*
- 3. Who Wouldn't Love You** Kay Kyser and His Orchestra • *Music by Carl Fischer, lyrics by Bill Carey. Vocals by Trudy Erwin and Harry Babbitt. Columbia 36526. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.*
- 4. My Devotion** Vaughn Monroe and His Orchestra • *Music and lyrics by Roc Hillman and Johnny Napton. Victor 27925. Courtesy of BMG Music.*
- 5. Sleepy Lagoon** Harry James and His Orchestra • *Music by Eric Coates. Columbia 36549. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.*
- 6. Tangerine** Jimmy Dorsey and His Orchestra • *Music by Victor Schertzinger, lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Vocals by Bob Eberly and Helen O'Connell. Decca 4123. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc.*
- 7. Strip Polka** Johnny Mercer • *Music and lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Capitol 103. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets.*
- 8. Blues in the Night** Dinah Shore • *Music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Bluebird 11436. Courtesy of BMG Music.*
- 9. Jersey Bounce** Benny Goodman and His Orchestra • *Music by Bobby Plater, Tiny Bradshaw and Edward Johnson. OKeh 6590. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.*
- 10. Trav'lin' Light** Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra • *Music by Jimmy Mundy and Trummy Young, lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Vocal by Lady Day (Billie Holiday). Capitol 116. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets.*
- 11. (I've Got a Gal in) Kalamazoo** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra • *Music by Harry Warren, lyrics by Mack Gordon. Vocals by Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires. Victor 27934. Courtesy of BMG Music.*
- 12. I Don't Want to Walk without You** Harry James and His



- 12. I Don't Want to Walk without You** Harry James and His Orchestra • Music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Frank Loesser. Vocal by Helen Forrest. Columbia 36478. Courtesy of CBS Special Products
- 13. Jingle Jangle Jingle** Kay Kyser and His Orchestra • Music by Joseph J. Lilley, lyrics by Frank Loesser. Vocals by Harry Babbitt, Julie Conway and the Group. Columbia 36604. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.
- 14. Deep in the Heart of Texas** Alvino Rey and His Orchestra • Music by Don Swander, lyrics by June Hershey. Vocals by Bill Schellen and Skeets Herfurt. Bluebird 11391. Courtesy of BMG Music.
- 15. Cow-Cow Boogie** Freddie Slack and His Orchestra • Music and lyrics by Don Raye, Gene de Paul and Berry Carter. Vocal by Ella Mae Morse. Capitol 102. Courtesy of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets.
- 16. A String of Pearls** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra • Music by Jerry Gray. Bluebird 11382. Courtesy of BMG Music.
- 17. I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen** Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye • Music and lyrics by Irving Berlin. Vocal by Don Cornell. Victor 27932. Courtesy of BMG Music.
- 18. (There'll Be Bluebirds over) The White Cliffs of Dover** Kate Smith • Music by Walter Kent, lyrics by Nat Burton. Columbia 36448. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.
- 19. Flying Home** Lionel Hampton and His Orchestra • Music by Benny Goodman and Lionel Hampton. Decca 18394. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc.
- 20. One Dozen Roses** Harry James and His Orchestra • Music by Dick Jurgens and Walter Donovan, lyrics by Roger Lewis and Country Washburn. Vocal by Jimmy Saunders. Columbia 36566. Courtesy of CBS Special Products.
- 21. Be Careful It's My Heart** Bing Crosby
• Music and lyrics by Irving Berlin. Decca 18424. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc.
- 22. Moonlight Cocktail** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra • Music by Lucky Roberts, lyrics by Kim Gannon. Vocals by Ray Eberle and the Modernaires. Bluebird 11401. Courtesy of BMG Music.
- 23. For Me and My Gal** Judy Garland and Gene Kelly
• Music and lyrics by Edgar Leslie, Ray Goetz and George Meyer. Decca 18480. Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc.
- 24. There Are Such Things** Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra
• Music and lyrics by Stanley Adams, Abel Baer and George W. Meyer. Vocals by Frank Sinatra and the Pied Pipers. Victor 27974. Courtesy of BMG Music.

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- 1 **Don't Sit under the Apple Tree (With Anyone Else but Me)** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra
- 2 **Somebody Else Is Taking My Place** Benny Goodman and His Orchestra
- 3 **Who Wouldn't Love You** Kay Kyser and His Orchestra
- 4 **My Devotion** Vaughn Monroe and His Orchestra
- 5 **Sleepy Lagoon** Harry James and His Orchestra
- 6 **Tangerine** Jimmy Dorsey and His Orchestra
- 7 **Strip Polka** Johnny Mercer
- 8 **Blues in the Night** Dinah Shore
- 9 **Jersey Bounce** Benny Goodman and His Orchestra
- 10 **Trav'lin' Light** Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra
- 11 **(I've Got a Gal in) Kalamazoo** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra
- 12 **I Don't Want to Walk without You** Harry James and His Orchestra
- 13 **Jingle Jangle Jingle** Kay Kyser and His Orchestra
- 14 **Deep in the Heart of Texas** Alvino Rey and His Orchestra
- 15 **Cow-Cow Boogie** Freddie Slack and His Orchestra
- 16 **A String of Pearls** Glenn Miller and His Orchestra
- 17 **I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen** Swing and Sway with Sammy Kaye
- 18 **(There'll Be Bluebirds over) The White Cliffs of Dover** Kate Smith
- 19 **Flying Home** Lionel Hampton and His Orchestra
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- 23 **For Me and My Gal** Judy Garland and Gene Kelly
- 24 **There Are Such Things** Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra



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