

The
TENORSAX
of
WARDELL GRAY

Solographers: Jan Evensmo & James Accardi
Last update: June 8, 2014

Born: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Feb. 13, 1921
Died: Las Vegas, Nevada, May 25, 1955

Introduction:

Wardell Gray was the natural candidate to transfer Lester Young's tenorsax playing to the bebop era. His elegant artistry lasted only a few years, but he was one of the greatest!

History:

First musical studies on clarinet in Detroit where he attended Cass Tech. First engagements with Jimmy Raschel and Benny Carew. Joined Earl Hines in 1943 and stayed over two years with the band before settling on the West Coast. Came into prominence through his performances and recordings with the concert promoter Gene Norman and his playing in jam sessions with Dexter Gordon.; his famous recording with Gordon, "The Chase" (1947), resulted from these sessions as did an opportunity to record with Charlie Parker (1947). As a member of Benny Goodman's small group WG was an important figure in Goodman's first experiments with bop (1948). He moved to New York with Goodman and in 1948 worked at the Royal Roost, first with Count Basie, then with the resident band led by Tadd Dameron; he made recordings with both leaders. After playing with Goodman's bigband (1948-49) and recording in Basie's small group (1950-51), WG returned to freelance work on the West Coast and Las Vegas. He took part in many recorded jam sessions and also recorded with Louie Bellson in 1952-53). The circumstances around his untimely death (1955) is unclear (ref. particularly "The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz").

Message:

The Wardell Gray solography has now undergone a lot of corrections and additions, due to the impressing current work done by James Accardi and his friends on the wardellgray.org website, including a thorough discography. We have tried to make the update so as to have no discrepancies between us with regard to information common to both concepts.

WARDELL GRAY SOLOGRAPHY

BILLY ECKSTINE

WITH DELUXE ALL STAR BAND

NYC. April 13, 1944

Dizzy Gillespie, Freddie Webster, Shorty McConnell, Al Killian (tp), Trummy Young, Howard Scott, Claude Jones (tp), Budd Johnson, Jimmy Powell (as), Wardell Gray, Thomas Crump (ts), Rudy Rutherford (bar), Clyde Hart (p), Connie Wainwright (g), Oscar Pettiford (b), Rossiere "Shadow" Wilson (dm), Billy Eckstine (vo, ldr).

Three titles were recorded for DeLuxe:

107	I Got A Date With Rhythm	No solo.
108	I Stay In The Mood For You	No solo.
109	Good Jelly Blues	No solo.

Although a no-solo session, WG's importance as one of the all-time greatest of modern jazz tenorsax merits a complete listing of his recording activities.

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Hollywood Oct. 23 or 30, 1944

Personnel not exactly known, but probably similar to that of the recording session of Jan. 12, 1945: Willie Cook, Palmer Davis, Billy Douglas, Arthur Walker (tp), Druie Bess, Walter Harris, Gus Chappell (tb), Rene Hall (tb, g), George "Scoops" Carry (cl, as), Lloyd Smith (as), Kermit Scott, Wardell Gray (ts), John Williams (bar), Earl Hines (p, ldr), Gene Thomas (b), David "Chick" Booth (dm), Betty Roche (vo).

Eight titles were made for AFRS Jubilee No. 105 (items 2, 3, 4, 6, 8) and 106 (items 1, 5, 7).

HIN-1	Boogie Woogie On St. Louis Blues	No solo.
HIN-2	The Father's Idea	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
HIN-3	Go Away Blues	No solo.
HIN-4	I Know That You Know	Solo with orch 28 bars. (F)
HIN-5	Keep On Jumpin'	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
HIN-6	One O'Clock Jump (NC)	No solo.
HIN-7	Rockin' The Blues	No solo.
HIN-8	Scoops Carry's Merry	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

The first appearance of WG as a tenorsax soloist and with excellent results! A brief and not too well-recorded solo on "Keep On ...", but unmistakably WG in his light, dancing style. On "I Know ..." in uptempo, he shows his remarkable technique, also here not too well recorded. And on "Scoops ..." he offers a lovely opening phrase, just the kind of surprise he often made!

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Jan. 10, 1945

Personnel probably similar to below.

Broadcast from the Apollo Theatre.

Tales Of The Vienna Woods	Solo with orch 16 bars. (F)
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"... Woods" is very badly recorded, also a terrible tune, and the solo has slight interest.

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Jan. 12, 1945

Willie Cook, Palmer Davis, Billy Douglas, Arthur Walker (tp), Druie Bess, Walter Harris, Gus Chappell (tb), Rene Hall (tb, g), George "Scoops" Carry (cl, as), Lloyd Smith (as), Kermit Scott, Wardell Gray (ts), John Williams (bar), Earl Hines (p, ldr), Gene Thomas (b), David "Chick" Booth (dm), Betty Roche (vo-"Love Is Lost"?), The Mello-Tones (vo-ens-35)

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird, "Love Is Lost" is unissued, probably lost, but:

34-1	Scoop Carry's Merry	Solo 16+8 bars, (tp) on bridge. (FM)
35-1	Satchelmouth Baby	No solo.
36-1	Furlough Blues	No solo.

Earl Hines' final recording session for Bluebird was rejected, thus for many years WG's first solo in a recording studio was hidden. "... Merry" features him in the style so typical of his early period; a light, dancing style based on Prez but within the modern concepts of jazz now in rapid development. His opening statement is humorous and full of confidence, although he struggles with the abrupt arrangements of the Hines orchestra, working more against than for the tenorsax solo. After the trumpet bridge, he returns with a final eight but has some trouble in the middle. In retrospect, this solo does not belong to his most prominent ones but still shows that his talents are far developed, and that WG already in early 1945 must have been a recognized and respected musician.

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Chi. March 29, 1945

Personnel probably as above.

Recorded at El Grotto, Pershing Hotel, not available.

OK For Baby
Unknown Title
Cottage For Sale (NC)

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Chi. prob. May 1945

Probable personnel: John "Willie" Cook, William "Bill" Douglas, Fats Palmer, Arthur Walker (tp), Gus Chappel, Walter "Woogie" Harris Harris, Clifton Smalls, Druie Bess (tb), George "Scoops" Carry (cl, as), Lloyd Smith (as), Wardell Gray, Kermit Scott (ts), John Williams (bar), Earl Hines (p), Bill Thompson (vib), Rene Hall (g), Gene Rhomas (b), David Booth (dm), Essex Scott (vo). Place/date falsely given as LA. ca. Sept. 1945.

Four titles were recorded for ARA, three issued:

1061	Nonchalant Man	Solo 8 bars. (S)
1063	At The El Grotto	Solo 16 bars (1 st (ts)-solo). (M)
1064	Spooks Ball	No solo.

The ARA 127 78 rpm. was the very first to present WG to the record public, and for many years it was a most wanted collector's item. However, he plays surprisingly timidly in "... El Grotto", not at all with the confidence which later was so prominent. "... Man" is quite straight and almost without interest. So this is a disappointing session, really.

EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. prob. June 27, 1945

Personnel same/similar to above.

Broadcast from Apollo Theatre, one title:

	Blue Skies	Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)
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First rate solo on this broadcast item!

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Chi. mid-Feb. 1946

Personnel probably similar to prob. May 1945. Dolores Parker, Arthur Walker (vo). Date and place has been given as Hollywood, April 1946.

Four titles were recorded for ARA:

1179	Rosetta	No solo.
1180-2	Now That You're Mine	No solo.
1181-1	Straight Life	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
1181-?	Straight Life	As above. (FM)
1182	Margie	No solo.

WG's soli on "Straight Life" are very good, possibly his best with Hines in upper tempo. Two blues choruses on each take, one delicious and smooth, the second a fine interplay with the orchestra.

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Hollywood, prob. May 6, 1946

Personnel probably same as ca. April 1946 with Bill Thompson (vib), The Town Criers (vo-group-TOW) added.

AFRS Jubilee No. 194 (HIN-11-13, TOW 6-7), 195 (HIN-9-10, 14-16).

HIN-9	The Honeydripper	No solo.
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HIN-10	Just A-Sittin' And A-Rockin'	No solo.
HIN-11	One O'Clock Jump (Theme) (NC)	No solo.
HIN-12	Rosetta	No solo.
HIN-13	Stompin' At The Savoy	No solo.
HIN-14	Straight Life	Solo 24 bars. (M)
HIN-15	Symphony	No solo.
HIN-16	Why Was I Born?	No solo.
TOW-6	Easy Street	No solo.
TOW-7	Kiss Me, Hello	No solo.

Look at the list above, only one WG item out of ten! Then it does not help much that "Straight Life" has a very good solo. Note the honking on the beginning of the second chorus.

EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA **LA. early July 1946**
 Personnel similar to Sept. 1945, but possibly Vernon "Geechie" Smith (tp), Joe McLewis (tb), replace Douglas and Chappel, possibly Bennie Green (tb) added.
 Three titles were recorded for ARA, unissued in the U.S. but issued in France:

1220	I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None OMJR	No solo.
1221	Oh My Aching Back	No solo.
1222	Let's Get Started	Solo 34 bars. (FM)

Hollywood, July 1946

Same/similar. Four titles:

1250	Throwin' The Switch	No solo.
1251	Trick-A-Track	No solo.
1251-?	Trick-A-Track	No solo?
1252	Bamby	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
1253	Blue Keys	Solo 8 bars. (S)

Three soli of very different character showing WG's artistic range. "Blue Keys" is played in a lovely slow tempo, and WG has a charismatic solo not easily forgotten! In "Bamby" he plays around with the chords with sovereign craftsmanship, who else could do this thing in 1946? A few, yes, but WG plays with an elegance like nobody else, including Dexter and Jug. The long chorus in "Let's Get ..." also has its moments, but again the Hines band is a difficult opponent, working against its soloists. The results of two years of WG with Hines are, honestly, disappointing. His soli are good enough but too few. And I feel that they are made more in spite of than because of the band. Hines' 1944-46 band is an interesting episode in the development of modern big band jazz, but to judge from the few records, it must have been difficult and frustrating to play in it for a capacity like WG. It is easy to understand that he left with the ambition to present himself as a tenorsax star, one of the most brilliant in the whole era of jazz.

EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA **Hollywood, probably 1946**
 Personnel probably as July 1946, probably Bennie Green (tb), now returned from Army..

AFRS Jubilee No. 268. All other titles on this program are ARA recordings. JA's theory is that, since the RCA-Victor version went unissued, Hines re-recorded this number for ARA, and a new arrangement was written. But again it went unissued, along with the other titles, until they were issued by Jazz Selection, with the exception of the item below:

HIN-19	Scoops Carry's Merry (wrongly announced as "Father's Idea")	Solo 16 bars (1st (ts)-solo). (FM)
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Nice solo on this one!

WG has been reported to be present under the pseudonym of "Hunter Gray" on the LEONA GRAY ACCOMPANIED BY QUEDELLYS MARTYN AND HIS ORCHESTRA session in San Francisco, ca. 1946, four titles for Trilon. However, from Dieter Salemann comes the info that there really exists a tenorsax player

named Hunter Gray! The few traces of tenorsax on Trilon 120 do not indicate WG either. The session is listed under QM.

VERNON ALLEY AND HIS ORCHESTRA

SF. ca. 1946

Ernie Royal (tp), Jerome Richardson (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Bob Skinner (p), Vernon Alley (b), Dick Saltzmann (dm), Brad Curtis (arr).

Four titles were recorded for Trilon:

L01-1	T-Zone	Solo 16 bars. (M)
L03-3	For You	Solo 16 bars. (M)
L04-2	Out Of Nowhere	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
L05-3	Benzadreams	No solo. (S)

Appearing at last this rare modern West Coast session, it turns out to be a fine one with good arrangements and excellent WG. "For You" is exciting, note particularly the flashing runs in bars 13-14, and "T-Zone" is also a notable piece of music, good contributions also by the other participants. Slight disappointment only with "... Nowhere", where WG is featured much too sparsely.

A session with ERNIE LEWIS ALL STARS in SF. Summer 1946 has erroneously been believed to have WG, but the tenorsax is in fact Eddie Taylor.

WARDELL GRAY QUARTET

Hollywood, Nov. 23, 1946

Wardell Gray (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Red Callender (b), Harold 'Doc' West (dm ÷ 166), Chuck Thompsom (dm-166).

Five titles were recorded for Eddie Laguna's Sunset label, never issued there, but appeared on European 78s:

162-1	Dell's Bells	Ensemble to solo 64 bars. Duet with (p) 16 bars. (FM)
162-2	Dell's Bells (NC)	Ensemble to solo 48 bars breakdown. (FM)
162-3	Dell's Bells	Ensemble to solo 64 bars. Duet with (p) 8 bars. (FM)
162-4	Dell's Bells	As take 1. (FM)
162-5	Dell's Bells	As take 1. (F)
162-9	Dell's Bells (NC)	Ens to solo 10 bars breakdown. (FM)
163-1	One For Prez	Ensemble to solo 64 bars. Solo 32 bars. Ensemble. (F)
163-2	One For Prez	Ensemble to solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars. Ensemble. (F)
163-3	One For Prez	Ensemble to solo 64 bars. Solo 16 bars to ensemble. (F)
163-4	One For Prez	As take 3. (F)
163-5	One For Prez	As take 3. (F)
164-1	The Man I Love	Straight intro with (p) to solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (S)
164-2	The Man I Love	As take 1. (S)
164-3	The Man I Love	As take 1. (S)
165-1	Easy Swing	Ensemble to solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars. (M)
165-2	Easy Swing	As take 1. (M)
166-1	The Great Lie	Intro 4 bars to solo 96 bars. 64 bars of 4/4 with (p) (solo 8 bars on last eight). (FM)

Wardell Gray's first session under his own name and what a session!! Not only the five 'originals', treasured on old Vogue 78s, but now with excellent sound, straight from the vaults and with lots of alternate takes. There are really no disasters except take 2 of "Dell's Bells", which is really "What's This Thing Called Love", only the

search for perfection, most of the alternates might easily have been selected as "first choice". The session has a fine variation of tempi and songs. "Some of the most memorable ballad tenor you will ever hear", states Alun Morgan on "... Love" and true. And brilliant piano too. They seem to be dissatisfied with take 1, because the end of WG's solo is consciously marred, although they take it to the end. The other two takes are just incredibly beautiful. Note that this is only 1946 and yet WG makes the new jazz concept sound so obvious that they seem to have been around forever. The quartet format is "dangerous", everything is very transparent, mistakes are not easily hidden. But there are very few. A very relevant comment is to point out that Dodo Marmarosa competes very heavily for leadership on this date. His brilliant piano certainly makes him qualified but sometimes, particularly on the fast titles, the music sounds more like a continuous tenorsax/piano duet than tenorsax with rhythm. Nothing wrong with that really, but at times one might wish Wardell had a more humble backing! Postscript of Dec. 21, 2013: An incomplete take of "... Bells" has appeared!

JUST JAZZ ALL STARS**Hollywood, Jan. 30, 1947**

Howard McGhee (tp), Jack Teagarden (tb, vo-"Juba Blues"), Woody Herman (cl, vo-"Juba Blues"), Wardell Gray, Ted Nash, Herbie Steward (ts), Tommy Todd (p), Charlie Drayton (b), Jackie Mills (dm), Joe Preston (dm-"Cottontail").
KFWB outdoor broadcast "Dancing On A Dime" from Joseph Le Conte Junior High School. AFRS Jubilee No. 228.

Theme/One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
The Juba Blues	No solo.
The Blues (Another Blues) (NC)	Solo 48 bars. (M)
Cottontail	Solo 8 bars
(falsely as How High The Moon)	(last (ts)-solo). (FM)

"... Blues" has one of the nicest WG soli I have found from this period! Four groovy blues choruses of the kind that could only be played by this maestro. Only too bad the program closes before Herbie Steward's solo and the tenorsax chase ... Note also that WG solos at the end of "Cottontail", with Ted Nash taking the main solo, not in the previous solography. Postscript: There are two additional nice tenorsax soli: "The Great Lie" Solo 32 bars. (F) and "Rose Room" Solo 32 bars. (M), but they are believed to be by Herbie Steward.

IVORY JOE HUNTER**SF. Feb. 1947**

Ernie Royal (tp), Wardell Gray (ts), Ivory Joe Hunter (p, vo), Chuck Walker (dm) plus unknown (tps), (tbs), (reeds), (g), (b).
Two titles were recorded for Pacific ("I'm Sorry" belongs to a previous session without WG):

150	We're Gonna Boogie	Solo 20 bars. (M)
151	Why Did You Lie?	No solo. (S)

WG plays almost two blues choruses on "... Boogie" in perfect shape as usual. "Why Did ..." is a sweet, commercial title with no trace of WG.

CHARLIE PARKER ALL STARS**Hollywood, Feb. 26, 1947**

Howard McGhee (tp), Charlie Parker (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Barney Kessel (g), Red Callender (b), Don Lamond (dm).
Four titles were recorded for Dial:

D1071-A	Relaxin' At Camarillo	Solo 24 bars. (FM)
D1071-C	Relaxin' At Camarillo	As above. (FM)
D1071-D	Relaxin' At Camarillo	As above. (FM)
D1071-E	Relaxin' At Camarillo	As above. (FM)
D1072-A	Cheers	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
D1072-B	Cheers	As above. (FM)
D1072-C	Cheers	As above. (FM)
D1072-D	Cheers	As above. (FM)
D1073-A	Carvin' The Bird	Soli 12 and 14 bars. (FM)
D1073-B	Carvin' The Bird	As above. (FM)

D1074-A Stupendous Solo 16 bars. (FM)
 D1074-B Stupendous As above. (FM)

The session is the only opportunity WG had to record with Charlie Parker. Although he is a sideman and has half the solo space of Bird, he shows that he is Bird's equal. Liner notes on Spotlight says that "the reason for rejecting earlier takes more than not lay in defects of performances by sidemen"! However, this is certainly not relevant in relation to WG. He fluffs the opening on take E of "... Camarillo", where also take D is somewhat out of shape, but overall he plays excellently. The tempi of the session are all in an uninventive fast medium. Two titles are the blues, while "Stupendous" is "'s Wonderful" and "Cheers" is closely related to "I Got Rhythm". My favorite is take B of "Carvin' ...".

BILLY ECKSTINE**LA. April 21, 1947**

Ray Linn (tp), Billy Eckstine (vtb, vo), possibly Gerald Valentine (tb), Sonny Criss (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Warren Bracken (p), unknown (g), Shifty Henry (b), Tim Kennedy (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for National, no tenorsax on "All Of Me", "Where Are You?", "Prelude To A Kiss", "What's New?", "Serenade In Blue", "Solitude" and "Sophisticated Lady", however:

260 She's Got Blues For Sale Solo 12 bars. (M)
 260-alt. She's Got Blues For Sale As above. (M)

One would swear WG was not present, and suddenly he is there with a beautiful chorus, which opens with a quote from "All God's Children ...", really a remarkable solo! And there is an alternate take, where it seems that he also goes for a quote but then changes his mind, into an equally great solo!

GENE NORMAN'S JUST JAZZ**Pasadena, Ca. April 29, 1947**

Wardell Gray (ts), Erroll Garner (p), Irving Ashby (g), Red Callender (b), Jackie Mills (dm).

Gene Norman concert at Civic Auditorium.

Blue Lou (warm-up version) Solo 2 ½ chorus of 32 bars. (M)
 Blue Lou Soli 4 and 4 choruses of 32 bars. (M)

same date

Personnel as "Blue Lou" plus Howard McGhee (tp), Vic Dickenson (tb), Benny Carter (as).

One O'Clock Jump Solo 18 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)

same date

Howard McGhee (tp), Sonny Criss (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Red Callender (b), Jackie Mills (dm).

AFRS Jubilee No. 261 (item 1 only, announced falsely as "Groovin' High").

Be Bop Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars.
 2 choruses of 4/4 with (as). (F)
 Groovin' High Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
 Hot House Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

Today the organization called JATP is known to all jazz lovers, but Just Jazz, created by Gene Norman, is almost forgotten. Still the JJ concerts contain music at a comparable level and sometimes above that of JATP. Probably the April 29, 1947 is the most memorable one, due to the presence of Wardell Gray! Up to this point he has with one exception been contained within the 3 minutes' limit, now he has all the time in the world to develop his ideas. The results belong to the greatest treasures of jazz tenorsax. First, the incomparable "Blue Lou"! The combination of WG and Erroll Garner is unlikely and not at all appropriate really. Garner is magnificent in accompanying himself but heavyhanded in a larger group, and WG's light dancing style fits him badly. Still, it doesn't matter really! The piano soloing is very nice and WG is in the shape of his life! From the very first bar of "Blue Lou" he pours forth beautifully, relaxed but tense and exciting improvisations on this well-known standard. A favorite item of ours when we played the 78 as kids, later we learned that the performance really was twice as long! Close listening reveals small impurities here and there but it really doesn't matter at all. The warm-up version, with a trio without guitar and bass, is as might be expected not of similar quality. WG enters cautiously when Garner is about to quit, and he never soars to

great heights except in the flashing second eights of the second chorus. "One O'Clock ..." has the same rhythm section and works better in the higher tempo with Ashby's guitar as a propel. WG shows why he is considered today as one of the most important tenorsax performers in the greatest perspective. His inventiveness is without limits, his inspiration is given from above! For many years I have never managed to decide my favorite WG item in upper tempi, now I believe I have decided: "One O'Clock Jump"! His debt to Lester Young is very strong but his own personality is stronger than his debt. Dig everyone of the eighteen choruses! And pay some extra attention to the opening of the third and tenth choruses. If all this praise is not enough, there are three more legendary items, all featuring WG at length, and to comment each and every detail is really not necessary, the performances are so strong that they indeed explain themselves. I have only one wistful remark; imagine a ballad with three or four choruses!!

DEXTER GORDON - WARDELL GRAY **Hollywood, June 12, 1947**
Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray (ts), Jimmy Bunn (p), Red Callender (b), Chuck Thompson (dm).

Two sides recorded for Dial (three more without WG):

D1083-C	The Chase Pt 1 (NC)	No solo.
D1083-D&	The Chase Pt 1 & 2	Solo pattern: DG 32, WG 32,
D1084-D		DG 32, WG 32. After (p) solo: Three choruses with 16/16, 8/8 and 4/4 respectively, WG first. Then one chorus: Ens 4, DG 4, Ens 4, WG 4, DG 4, WG 4, Ens 4, DG 4. (FM)

This encounter is described in detail in the Dexter Gordon solography, let me just mention that WG certainly has no problems in matching his great contemporary in this competition, whether he wins or loses has to be your personal judgment! But you will certainly be delighted with the opening of his second chorus!!

L. OLES BAND **L.A. ca. 1947(?)**
Louis or Lewis Oles (tp), Teddy Edwards (ts, arr), Wardell Gray (ts), 3 unknown (reeds), unknown (p), unknown (b), unknown (dm).
Recording session for Dick Bock, not available:

Before Dawn	Solo. ()
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HOLLYWOOD JAZZ CONCERT /
BOPLAND BOYS / HOWARD MCGHEE ORCHESTRA **L.A. July 6, 1947**
Howard McGhee (tp), Trummy Young (tb), Sonny Criss (as), Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray (ts), Teddy Edwards (ts-"Jeronimo/Cherrykoke"), Hampton Hawes (p), Barney Kessel (g), Harry Babasin or possibly Leroy Gray (b-"The Hunt", "Bopera"), Red Callender (b-"Bopland", "Jeronimo"), Tim Kennedy and/or Connie Kay and/or Roy Porter (dm).
Concert at the Elks Auditorium.

Bopera/Disorder At The Border	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars (1 st (ts)-solo). (M)
Bopland/Byas-A-Drink	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars (last (ts)-solo). (M)
The Hunt/Rock 'N' Shoals	Three soli of 32 bars, preceding DG, to two choruses of 8/8 and 9 choruses of 4/4, again preceding DG. (FM)
Jeronimo/Cherrykoke	Solo 2 choruses of 64 bars (2 nd (ts)-solo). (F)

A jazz concert famous for its Dexter Gordon / Wardell Gray interaction. However, upon close listening, it is Dexter's date and Wardell is not at all as inspired as on the April 29 session. He seems to be caught up in the sluggishness of the rhythm section; "Disorder ..." is a good example, and he rarely tears himself loose from the trivialities. In "Cherrykoke" he follows a magnificent DG solo with a more ordinary performance. Only on the sole really competitive title does he really come alive; when he battles DG on "The Hunt" he seems to thrive, and particularly when they go into the final nine choruses of 4/4, things happen! This is a rough occasion with mediocre recording circumstances, piano out of tune, heavy drumming, and WG's elegance and creativity do not really get necessary breathing space. Postscript: Following info from Dave Bailey/James Accardi, it turns out that WG only plays

two choruses on "Cherrykoke", letting a third tenorsax player take one chorus to terminate the proceedings. This player has been confirmed to be Teddy Edwards.

**AL KILLIAN SEXTET/
WARDELL GRAY ALL-STARS**

L.A. July 6, 1947

Al Killian (tp), Sonny Criss (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Russ Freeman (p), Barney Kessel (g-"Riff tide"), Harry Babasin (b), Tim Kennedy (dm).

Concert at the Elks Auditorium (same as above, these items are from 'inside' the concert, with "Jeronimo" terminating the date).

Blow, Blow, Blow	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. Riffs behind (tp) and (as). 2 choruses 4/4 with (as). (M)
Riff tide/Back Breaker	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. (M)

same date

Same with Earl Coleman (vo) added.

Body And Soul (NC)	Weak obligato parts 22 bars. (S)
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possibly Hollywood, Summer 1947

Personnel as July 6, 1947 except Charlie Fox (p) replaces Freeman and Shifty Henry or Ernie Shepard replaces Babasin.

AFRS Jubilee No. 242 and 243.

Sonny's Bop / Semi-Quiet	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Blue Lou	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
Out Of Nowhere	Soli 8 and 16 bars. (FM)
The Creep	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Blue'n Boogie	Solo 36 bars. (FM)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars, last destroyed by announcer. Appr. 6 1/2 choruses of chase/ interplay with (as). (M)

The Al Killian sextet was an interesting unit because it added the most underrated alto saxophonist Sonny Criss to a musical team with Wardell Gray as the 'spiritual' leader. The result was several very interesting performances, although the soli are mainly rather limited in length. Therefore the July items "Blow ..." and "Back Breaker" should be particularly noted, here WG stretches out and plays magnificently. If you ever was in doubt about the origin of "Riff tide", you will not be after this version, WG obviously is quite familiar with "Lady Be Good", and the first 12 bars are quoted with slight variations from Prez' famous 1936 version. The solo as a whole is however not of his best, he seems to struggle somewhat.

AL KILLIAN SEXTET

Portland, Oregon, Oct. 8 or 17, 1947

Al Killian (tp), Sonny Criss (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Fletcher Smith (p), Ernie Shepard (b), Tim Kennedy (dm):

Four titles recorded privately, possibly at the Savoy Club:

Lover Come Back To Me	Solo 64 bars. (M)
Blue 'N' Boogie	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Blow, Blow, Blow	Solo 64 bars. (M)
Unknown Title	Solo 96 bars. (M)

The sound quality on these items is below par, but not worse than one can with concentration have great pleasure from them. WG's playing is comparable to the sessions above, that is, magnificently!

INTERNATIONAL ALL STARS

Pasadena, Ca., Nov. 11, 1947

Åke Hasselgård (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Dodo Marmarosa (p), Al Hendrickson (g), probably Harry Babasin or possibly Clyde Lombardi (b), Frank Bode (dm), Frances Wayne (vo - "I Never ...", "Who's Sorry ...").

AFRS Jubilee No. 278 ("What Is ..." not included). Just Jazz concert from the Civic Auditorium. Date given as Feb. 9, 1948 is mastering date of the Jubilee transcription.

One O'Clock Jump (Theme)	No solo.
How High The Moon - Jam Session At Jubilee	Soli 64 and 8 bars. (FM)
C Jam Blues	Solo 36 bars. In ens. (FM)
What Is This Thing Called Love (NC)	In ensemble. (FM)
I Never Loved Anyone	Intro. Obbligato. (S)
Who's Sorry Now?	Obbligato. (M)
One O'Clock Jump (Theme)	In ensemble. (FM)

A historical event, WG meets "Stan Hasselgard". WG is still recognized as one of the greatest tenorsax players in jazz, ÅH may be forgotten by the majority of jazz enthusiasts, he was only 26 years when he was killed in a car crash. But ÅH was not only an extraordinarily talented swing clarinetist in the Benny Goodman tradition, he was also in 1948 one of the most important bebop soloists by any standard and certainly the most important on his instrument. His liquid sound may tend to camouflage that he had assimilated the modern harmonic structures, and he fitted WG like hand in glove. In fact, jazz might have developed slightly differently, with clarinet not dropping out and being limited to trad jazz, if ÅH had lived. This is their first encounter, later they played together in the Benny Goodman Septet with several extremely important broadcast performances. From a purely WG analyzing point of view, he plays competently but not especially memorably. Postscript: Note the Frances Wayne items with the same group backing. Particularly in "... Sorry Now?" the tenorsax is recorded quite clearly, and believe it or not, it sounds closer to a Billie Holiday - Lester Young duet than you would believe!!

GENE NORMAN's "JUST JAZZ"

LA. Dec. 27, 1947

Howard McGhee (tp), Wardell Gray, Vido Musso (ts), Arnold Ross (p), Barney Kessel (g), Harry Babasin (b), Don Lamond (dm).

Concert at Shrine Auditorium, supervised by Gene Norman. Date falsely given as Feb. 27.

AFRS Jubilee No. 271 (titles 2 and 3 only). Three titles issued on 78 rpm.:

Sweet Georgia Brown	Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars. 3 choruses 4/4 chase with (tp) and (ts-VM). (F)
Just Bop (Just You, Just Me)	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses 4/4 chase with (ts-VM). (FM)
C Jam Blues	Solo 24 bars. (FM)

To beat the April 29, 1947 Just Jazz is impossible, but the boys certainly try! "Just You ..." is by far the most interesting item with beautiful Wardell, note for instance how he enters the second chorus or closes the bridge of the same chorus! In "Sweet Georgia ..." he needs two choruses to warm up, but then the heat is on. "C Jam ..." is good enough but just two choruses won't do. Vido Musso is no real match but still plays quite well, particularly on "Just You ...". The chase lets us know the difference however, VM pushes forward in his strong, rough style, but WG just twists in the air with the utmost elegance. The Just Jazz concerts really represent something special in the WG solography with their extended and heavenly inspired soli, may Gene Norman be eternally blessed!

GENE NORMAN's "JUST JAZZ"

LA. Dec. 27, 1947

Ernie Royal (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Wardell Gray, Vido Musso (ts), Red Norvo (vib), Mel Powell (p), Red Callender (b), Lee Young (dm).

AFRS H-83 from the Shrine Auditorium.

I Never Knew (NC)	In ens. Solo 76 bars to fade-out. (FM)
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I quote Alun Morgan's liner notes: "In a way, this is history in the making for after hearing Wardell at this concert Benny Goodman offered him a job in his later big band, elevating Gray to the position of deputy leader as a mark of respect for his matchless musicianship". On the recording only Musso and Royal are preserved in toto, the announcer talks over the first eight of WG's solo which also is cut in the middle of the third chorus, and Goodman ended in oblivion. It is very easy to understand Goodman's decision, because WG plays up to his very best.

WG is not present on the April 1948 recording session by BUDDY STEWART for Sittin' In With, titles "If Love Is Trouble", "Hee Haw" and "Laughing Boy".

BENNY CARTER AND HIS ORCHESTRA **Pasadena, Ca., early 1948**

Possible personnel: Lew Obergh (tp), Henry Coker (tb), Benny Carter (as), Wardell Gray, Bumps Myers (ts), Cyril Haynes (p), Jack Marshall (g), Dallas Bartley (b), Henry Tucker (dm) and others.

AFRS Jubilee No. 276 and 284 from McCormack General Hospital.

The following titles seem to have WG:

CAR-116 Bop Bounce/Harlequin Bounce Solo with orch 16 bars. (M)

CAR-121 One O'Clock Jump Solo 48 bars. (M)

A good solo on "Bop ..." is certainly not Bumps Myers, and as the program runs out with "... Jump", an excellent modern tenorsax solo with good sound makes us jump! Cut short in the beginning of the third chorus, it is nevertheless a great pleasure. Although Lotz suggests Hubert Maxwell as second tenorsax, the phrasing is so similar to that of WG, that I am prepared to accept his presence. Postscript: Appearing on CD, full four choruses of "... Jump" are presented, however, attributed to Dexter Gordon, which is terribly wrong. WG's presence is fully confirmed.

WG left the West Coast and followed Benny Goodman to New York in March 1948. He is known to be part of the Benny Goodman Sextet on Just Jazz Concerts March 26&27.

WARDELL GRAY QUARTET **NYC. ca. April 1948**

Wardell Gray (ts), Al Haig (p), Clyde Lombardi (b), Tiny Kahn (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Sittin' In With:

C 126-1 Light Gray (Dumpy) Solo 96 bars. Solo 32 bars to coda. (F)

C 127-1 Stoned (Finsterness) Soli 48 and 12 bars. (M)

C 127-2 Stoned (Baldy) As above. (M)

C 128-1 Matter And Mind (Nothing) Solo 96 bars. 24 bars 4/4 with (p) to close 8 bars. (F)

C 129-1 The Toup Soli 48 and 12 bars. (M)

One of the greatest WG recording sessions! To quote Max Harrison on the Spotlight LP: "Too much has been made, perhaps, of Haig's elegance and lightness, and not enough of the sheer fire of his best early work". So true, he plays like hell here, igniting WG to play his absolutely very best. In the fast "Light Gray", which is "Fine and Dandy" and "Matter ...", which is "Idaho", he plays with a fluency, inspiration and drive rarely heard (although Sonny Stitt's "Fine And Dandy" comes to my mind) - he is not bothered by tempo at all. And the two other titles which are the brisk blues of the same structure: incredible! Particularly "Stoned" is unforgettable, theme, tenorsax soli, piano, everything!! Note that on the "Baldy" version he plans to terminate his solo after three choruses but is kicked off to a final fourth by Al Haig. The only negative thing about this magnificent session is the sound quality, the LP seems to have been produced by rather "hazy" 78s; I presume the master tapes are lost, and SIW was not a label of good technical quality. But it does not matter, after you have played the items half a dozen times and know them well!!

J. C. HEARD AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. May 1948**

Joe Newman (tp), Bennie Green (tb), Wardell Gray (ts), Tate Houston (bar), Al Haig (p), Al McKibbin (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Four titles were recorded for, or sold to, Apollo:

R1317 Ollopa Break to solo 24 bars. (FM)

R1318 This Is It Solo 8 bars. (M)

R1319 Sugar Hips Solo 8 bars. (SM)

R1320 Coastin' With J. C. Soli 8 and 28 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (bar). (FM)

A very nice but brief solo on "This Is It" is the highlight. The very surprising opening phrase sounds like a combination of cynicism and "blue-eyed-ness" if you know what I mean! Better play it ... Also a nice brief solo on "... Hips". Two good but not remarkable blues choruses on "Ollopa", and neither is the solo on "... With

J. C." more than ordinary with a rather noisy backing. In the chase with Houston he heats up, however, and his first four is great!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**Philadelphia, May 24, 1948**

Benny Goodman, Åke Hasselgård (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Teddy Wilson (p), Billy Bauer (g), Arnold Fishkind (b), Mel Zelnick (dm), Patti Page (vo).

NBC broadcast from Frank Palumbo's "Click" restaurant.

Stompin' At The Savoy (Theme)	No solo.
Limehouse Blues	Solo 32 bars. (M)
On The Sunny Side Of The Street	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
Cookin' One Up (NC)	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
After You've Gone	In ensemble. (F)
Goodbye (Theme)	No solo.

Philadelphia, May 27, 1948

Same. CBS broadcast.

Swedish Pastry	Solo 36 bars. (M)
All The Things You Are	No solo.
You Turned The Tables On Me	No solo.
The Man I Love	Weak obligato. (S)
Mary's Idea	Solo 36 bars. (M)
Don't Blame Me	Weak obligato. (S)
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

Philadelphia, May 28, 1948

Same. CBS broadcast.

Swedish Pastry	Solo 36 bars. (M)
On The Sunny Side Of The Street	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
It Had To Be You	Weak obligato. (S)
After You've Gone	Solo 80 bars. In ens. (F)
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

Philadelphia, May 29, 1948

Same. NBC broadcast (matinee performance).

Bye, Bye Pretty Baby	Solo 72 bars. (FM)
He's Funny That Way	Weak obligato. (S)
Mary's Idea	Solo 36 bars. (M)
I'm In The Mood For Love	No solo.
Mel's Idea	Solo 44 bars. (FM)

Philadelphia, May 29, 1948

Same. CBS broadcast (evening performance).

Bye, Bye Pretty Baby	Solo 72 bars. (FM)
I'm In The Mood For Love	No solo.
Mary's Idea	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Mel's Idea	Soli 88 and 8 bars. (FM)

Philadelphia, June 1, 1948

Same. NBC broadcast.

Mary's Idea	Solo 36 bars. (M)
Indiana	Solo 96 bars. (FM)

Don't Blame Me	No solo.
Bye Bye Blues	Solo 64 bars. (M)

Philadelphia, June 3, 1948

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1722 from the Click.

Limehouse Blues	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
The Man I Love	No solo.
Donna Lee (Indiana)	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
Confess	No solo.
Bye Bye Blues	Solo 32 bars. (M)
Little White Lies	No solo.
Mel's Idea	Solo 44 bars. (FM)

Philadelphia, June 5, 1948

Same, plus Pearl Bailey (vo-"Tired"). CBS broadcast (matinee performance).

Donna Lee (Indiana)	Solo 96 bars. (FM)
Confess	No solo.
Tired	Weak obligato. (S)
You Turned The Tables On Me	Weak obligato at the end. (SM)
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

Philadelphia, June 5, 1948

Same. NBC broadcast (evening performance).

Swedish Pastry	Solo 36 bars. (M)
You Go To My Head	Weak obligato. (S). Solo 12 bars (M) to 2 bars. (S)
Lullaby In Rhythm	Soli 8 and 32 bars. (M)

This septet is one of the most exciting small band groups of the late forties! That it ever existed is in itself an enigma; how could Goodman bring himself to hire another clarinet player, let be one of Hasselgård's class!?! Maybe he had a sixth sense, because in my opinion Hasselgård and Gray were two of a kind, and had they lived, jazz might have developed differently. Certainly the status of the clarinet in modern jazz would have been higher, we might have had a modern clarinet school. Wardell seems to thrive excellently in the group, and the "Click" recordings during two early summer weeks of 1948 contain some of the most exquisite tenorsax playing of the late forties! Since there are 9 different broadcasts, most titles appear in several versions. I have tried to select highlights but found it impossible and useless, Wardell is just great whenever he takes his horn and blows!!!

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **White Plains, NY., June 26, 1948**

Possibly Ronny Rommel (not Red Rodney) (tp-"Indiana"), Benny Goodman, Åke Hasselgård (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Mary Lou Williams (p), Billy Bauer (g), Clyde Lombardi (b), Mel Zelnick (dm), Jackie Searle (vo - "S'pos'n"), Dolly Huston (vo - "... Tables ...").

WNEW broadcast from the Westchester County Center.

Stompin' At The Savoy (Theme)	No solo.
Mary's Idea	Solo 36 bars. (M)
S'pos'n	No solo.
Benny's Bop (Limehouse Blues)	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
You Turned The Tables On Me	No solo.
Swedish Pastry	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Indiana	Solo 96 bars. (F)
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

White Plains, NY., July 3, 1948

Same. Jackie Searle (vo - "Wrap ...", "... Blame Me"), Dolly Houston (vo - "... Town").

Stompin' At The Savoy (Theme)	No solo.
Bye Bye Blues	Solo 64 bars. (M)
Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams	No solo.
Blue Views	Solo 36 bars. (M)
It's The Talk Of The Town	Weak obbligato. Solo 8 bars. (S)
Mel's Idea	Soli 44 and 8 bars. (FM)
Don't Blame Me	No solo.
After You've Gone	No solo.
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

A change of personnel has taken place with regard to piano and bass, and particularly the change from Teddy to Mary Lou seems to have given the septet a more solemn image, nevertheless the septet's main attractions are the same. We know with a few exceptions all WG items from before, and we are pleased to have some very fine variations.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET**NYC. Aug. 20, 1948**

Benny Goodman (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Billy Bauer (g), Mary Lou Williams (p), Clyde Lombardi (b), Mel Zelnick (dm), Jackie Searle (vo-"... Love").

Recording session for VDisc:

-1	Mary's Idea	Solo 24 bars. (M)
-2	Mary's Idea (NC)	No solo.
-3	Mary's Idea	As take 1. (M)
-1	Bye Bye Blues Bop	Soli 32 and 2 bars. (FM)
-2	Bye Bye Blues Bop	As take 1. (FM)
	Blue Views	Solo 20 bars. (FM)
	I Can't Give You Anything But Love	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
	Benny's Bop (Wardell's Riff)	Solo 32 bars. (F)

The Septet without Hasselgård, can you imagine! But it still works nicely, certainly more formal in the ensembles compared to the airshots, "Mary's Idea" is very much different when played by Mary Lou and not by Teddy, but WG's soloing is nice. My favourite item is "I Can't Give You ..." with a few magnificent bars. "Benny's Bop", which is in fact "Limehouse Blues", is the only item originally issued on VDisc, the rest appeared on LP only a few years ago. I presume all items belong to the same session.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET**NYC. Sept. 9, 1948**

Fats Navarro (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Gene DiNovi (p), Mundell Lowe (g), Clyde Lombardi (b), Mel Zelnick (dm).

One title was recorded for Capitol:

2974-3	Stealin' Apples	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
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"Although the recording ban is still in effect, Benny does make a recording in Capitol's studios September 9 - Mr. Petrillo granted special dispensation, because all proceeds from the sale of the record, included in Capitol album CC106, went to a charity, the Damon Runyon Cancer Fund", says Russ Connor. We are most happy for a unique treasure, not only featuring WG in his prime but also the one and only Fats Navarro with his muted trumpet. The rhythm laid down by Zelnick is swing, and Benny could not sever his roots, but the rest is all bebop concepts in an unusual, attractive package. A lovely record, fine arrangement, the best of old and new together, a record to be selected for that desolate island. Maybe a couple of alternates still are dormant in the Capitol archives?

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. Sept. 11, 1948**

Emmett Berry, Harry Edison, Jimmy Nottingham, Clark Terry (tp), Ted Donnelly, Bill Johnson, George Matthews, Dicky Wells (tb), Bernie Peacock (as), Earl

Warner (as, vo), Paul Gonsalves, Wardell Gray (ts), Ronald 'Jack' Washington (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Singleton Palmer (b), Shadow Wilson (dm), Jimmy Rushing, Dinah Washington (vo).
WMCA broadcast from the Royal Roost.

X-1	Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)
Futile Frustration	No solo.
Am I Asking Too Much?	No solo.
Evil Gal Blues	No solo.
Good Bait	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
Moon Nocturne (NC)	No solo.
Paradise Squat	No solo.
I Want To Cry	No solo.
Blue Skies	No solo.
The King	Break to 5 choruses of 32 bars, last 3 with orchestra. (F)

To quote Chris Sheridan: "The addition of Wardell Gray brought in one of the two or three most articulate tenor players in the band's history". Daring remark, Lester Young, Herschal Evans, Illinois Jacquet, Lucky Thompson, Wardell Gray are but a few ... Still, any appraisal of WG is most appreciated by this author! He shows his strength as a big-band tenor of "The King", five choruses in a row. Starting out rather reticently, he develops his solo with more confidence, until he is subdued by the orchestra at the end. On "X-1" WG is badly recorded.

TADD DAMERON SEPTET

NYC. Sept. 13, 1948

Fats Navarro (tp), Allen Eager, Wardell Gray (ts), Tadd Dameron (p), Curley Russell (b), Kenny Clarke (dm), Francisco "Chino" Pozo (bgo - 332), Kenneth Hagood (vo-335).

Five titles were recorded for Blue Note, 336 "52nd Street Theme" rejected but:

BN 332-1	Jahbero	Solo 12 bars. (M)
BN 332-4	Jahbero	As above. (M)
BN 333-1	Lady Bird	Solo 16 bars. (M)
BN 333-2	Lady Bird	As above. (M)
BN 334-1	Symphonette	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
BN 334-2	Symphonette	As above. (FM)
BN 335-1	I Think I'll Go Away	No solo.

One of the most famous bebop sessions led by the great Dameron and with the additional attractions of Navarro and Eager, maybe the most important black trumpeter and white tenorsaxophonist at that time (protests are welcomed!) There is not much blowing space for each, but it does not matter much, the completeness of these performances is what matters. WG is for once 'only' one among equals, and he plays beautifully. My favorite item is the first take of "Symphonette".

TADD DAMERON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. possibly Sept. 1948

Allen Eager, Wardell Gray (ts), Tadd Dameron (p), Curley Russell (b), Kenny Clarke (dm).

Broadcast from the Royal Roost. Date also suggested to be July/August.

Just You, Just Me	Solo 64 bars. 32 bars 4/4 with (ts-AE). (FM)
Now's The Time	Solo 36 bars. (M)
Riff tide (Lady Be Good)	Soli 64, 8, 4 and 4 bars. (F)

An almost "forgotten" session, I cannot remember anybody talking about it, although issued on Spotlight. This is quite strange, because it is absolutely first rate in all respects. The personnel is the same as on the Blue Note session, with the exception of Navarro, and the soli are magnificent by everybody!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 14, 1948**

Personnel as Sept. 11. WOR broadcast from the Royal Roost.

Spasmodic	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Robbins' Nest	No solo.
Blue Skies	No solo.
X-1	Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)
Moon Nocture	No solo.
Far Cry	No solo.
I Want To Cry	No solo.
The King	Break to 5 choruses of 32 bars, last 3 with orchestra. (F)
Good Bait	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)

The highlight is an interesting variation over the "... King" theme from three days earlier, cast in the same format. Also a good solo on "Spasmodic" while "X-1" is more ordinary.

BENNY GOODMAN SEXTET **NYC. Sept. 17, 1948**

Benny Goodman (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Count Basie (p- "... Jump"), Gene DiNovi (p- "... Apples"), Billy Bauer (g), Clyde Lombardi (b), Mel Zelnick (dm).
WMGM "Ted Husing Show" broadcast.

WMGM Jump	Solo 36 bars. 2 choruses of 4/4 and 3 choruses of duet with (cl). (FM)
Stealin' Apples	Solo 32 bars. (F)

Eight days after the Capitol session, another "... Apples" but in a perceptibly higher tempo (and without Navarro, alas), perhaps not as remarkable but still a fine solo. In "... Jump", which is a blues, same as "Bedlam", he has three fine choruses and later some remarkable interplay with the maestro himself.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 18, 1948**

Personnel as Sept. 11. Broadcast from the Royal Roost.

One O'Clock Jump (Theme)	No solo.
The Peacock	No solo.
Swedish Pastry	Break to solo with orch 36 bars. (M)
Maybe You'll Be There	No solo.
X-1	Solo with orch 32 bars. (FM)
Jimmy's Blues	No solo.
San Jose	No solo.
The King	Solo . ()
One O'Clock Jump (Theme)	No solo.

NYC. Sept. 25, 1948

Same. Anita O'Day (vo). Items 1-6 broadcast at 0100 hrs; items 7-13 at 0300 hours.

Good Bait	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
Little Dog	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
Moon Nocturne	No solo.
Ain't It The Truth	
Lazy Lady Blues	
Far Cry	No solo.
Spasmodic	Solo 32 bars. (F)
Robbins' Nest	No solo.

High Tide	Solo 10 and 4 bars spliced together. (M)
San Jose	No solo.
Boot Whip	No solo.
That's That	No solo.
The King	Break to solo 5 choruses of 32 bars, last 3 with orchestra. (F)

NYC. Sept. 28, 1948

Personnel probably as above. George "Butch" Ballard (dm) has been suggested to replace Wilson, but this seems to be incorrect.
AFRS Jubilee No. 310/329.

One O'Clock Jump	No solo.
It Serves Me Right	Solo 64 bars, last half with orch. Stoptime 16 bars to solo with orch 16 bars. (FM)
Little Dog	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars to coda. (F)
Sent For You Yesterday	No solo.
San Jose (as Hey, Pretty Baby)	No solo.
One O'Clock Jump (Theme)	No solo.

Much of this Royal Roost material has not been available, but some highlights are identified; "It Serves Me ..." with some exciting stoptime, and "Little Dog (Pony?)" with good playing in uptempo. It seems that these are WG's last recordings with the Count until he reappears in the early fifties. For awhile it seems WG has ridden two horses, "Count and Benny", and I feel compelled to say that I believe WG preferred the latter as more suited to his personal expression. Colours put aside, this Basie band is rather rough and one-dimensional, and better flexibility but not necessarily more blowing space could be found with Benny.

BUDDY STEWART QUINTET**NYC. Nov. 12, 1948**

Eddie Bert (tb), Wardell Gray (ts), Buddy Greco (p), Clyde Lombardi (b), Sonny Igoe (dm), Buddy Stewart (vo).

Two titles were recorded for Sittin' In With, "Greatly" was rejected, but:

C 161	Shawn	Solo 16 bars. (M)
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Yeah! One of the greatest WG soli, brief but extremely colorful, flashing technique and a lovely quote in the opening. Dig this one!

AL HAIG QUINTET**NYC. possibly Nov. 1948**

Wardell Gray (ts), Al Haig (p), Jimmy Raney (g), Tommy Potter (b), Charlie Perry (dm), Terry Swope (vo-1381, 82).

Four titles were recorded for Seeco:

SR 1381	Five Star	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
SR 1382	Sugar Hill Bop	Solo 48 bars. (F)
SR 1383	In A Pinch	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars (with (g) on 3 rd fourth). Solo 12+10 bars to close (g on 3 rd fourth). (F)
SR 1384	It's The Talk Of The Town	Solo 32 bars. Solo 4 bars to coda. (S)

With Al Haig in command, the Seeco session is bound to produce a lot of excellent music, and there are piano, guitar and tenorsax soli of great value. I have a particular weakness for the slow "... Town"; for once the use of echo adds to the majestic beauty of WG's ballad conception. Note his very personal, sore, almost unhappy sound, particularly in bars 5-6, something we never heard some years earlier. Does it mean that his personality changed or is it rather due to a slight change of style, from Prez to Bird as his main inspiration? Of the remaining items I prefer the fine blues playing on "Sugar Hill ..." and the funny opening of "Five Star", while "... Pinch" at times seems to have a lack of concentration, although the main impression of the three choruses is quite good. In general, an interesting session, but not as memorable as the SIW session of the year before.

**BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS
ORCHESTRA/SEXTET****Syracuse, NY. Dec. 1, 1948**

Orchestra: Howard Reich, Doug Mettome, Al Stewart, Nick Travis (tp), Milt Bernhart, Eddie Bert, George Monte (tb), Benny Goodman (cl), Mitch Goldberg, Angelo Cicalese (as), Wardell Gray, Eddie Wasserman (ts), Larry Molinelli (bar), Buddy Greco (p), Francis Beecher (g), Clyde Lombardi (b), Sonny Igoe (dm).
Sextet: Benny Goodman (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Buddy Greco (p), Frances Beecher (g), Clyde Lombardi (b), Sonny Igoe (dm). Sextet items noted with *.
NBC broadcast from the Persian Terrace Room, Hotel Syracuse:

Clarinet A La King	No solo.
You Turned The Tables On Me	No solo.

Syracuse, NY. Dec. 2, 1948

Same.

Clarinet A La King	No solo.
Don't Worry 'Bout Me	No solo.
* Indiana	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (FM)
You Turned The Tables On Me	No solo.
Chico's Bop	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
They Didn't Believe Me	No solo.
Undercurrent Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)

Syracuse, NY. Dec. 5, 1948

Same.

Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams	No solo.
Don't Be That Way	No solo.
Guilty	No solo.
* Bedlam	Solo 24 bars. In ens. (FM)
Rebecca	Faint obbligato. (S)
I'll See You In My Dreams	Solo 4 bars. (SM)
Air Mail Special	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

NYC. Dec. 15, 1948

Same personnel, plus Dick Katz (p - "... Dreams", "... Me").
Recorded at Columbia studios for the "March of Dimes" campaign.

Let's Dance (Theme)	No solo.
A String Of Pearls	Solo 12 bars. (M)
I'll See You In My Dreams	Solo 4 bars. (SM)
I'll See You In My Dreams (alt.)	Possibly solo 4 bars. (SM)
Undercurrent Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Don't Worry 'Bout Me	No solo.
Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

Whenever WG appears, he puts colour to his surroundings. Mark Gardner puts it elegantly in his liner notes to "... Dreams" Dec. 15: "briefly enlivened by eight bars from Wardell who rises majestically from the glutinous arrangements like a momentary shaft of sunlight piercing the leaden sky". And he adds for "Undercurrent ...": "Wardell's two choruses are the epitome of fluency". Postscript: We are not quite sure about "I'll See You In My Dreams" – is it WG or Eddie Wasserman? JA goes for WG, and may be right.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Dec. 27, 1948**

Personnel given as Nov. 1948, except possibly Eugene Wright (b) replaces Palmer. WPIX "Eddie Condon Floor Show" television broadcast with guests. However, the tenorsax solo on "The King" is not Wardell Gray, as given in Sheridan, nor Paul Gonsalves, but probably William Parker.

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS SEXTET **Unknown loc., Dec. 1948**

Possibly same personnel. Broadcast, possibly from the Stork Club.

- * Indiana In ens to solo 64 bars. (FM)
- * Limehouse Blues Solo 32 bars. (FM)

NYC. Jan. 7, 1949

Same. Crosley Radio Network broadcast from the Stork Club.

- * How High The Moon (NC) In ens. (F)

Fine WG here, particularly "Indiana" is noteworthy.

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS SEXTET/ORCHESTRA**Washington, Jan. 20, 1949**

Personnel as Dec. 1, 1948.

NBC broadcast from the Truman Inaugural Ball in the National Guard Armory:

- Let's Dance (Theme) No solo.
- Jersey Bounce Solo 16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. (M)
- Don't Worry 'Bout Me No solo.
- Buckle Down, Winssocki No solo.
- * Rose Room Acc. (cl) 32 bars to solo 32 bars. (SM)

Two very exciting items here! "Jersey ..." has the misfortune of having two ladies having an important conversation all through the performance, but with some effort one can easily hear WG wailing. And "Rose Room", a delightful discovery, starting with Benny's introduction with WG lying like an alligator in the water behind him to snap forward with a moving solo, dig this (if you ever get to the IJS...).

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS SEPTET/ORCHESTRA**Hollywood, Feb. 10, 1949**

Orchestra: Personnel as Dec. 1, 1948, but Arnold Ross (p-3959). Septet: Personnel as Dec. 1, 1948 plus Doug Mettome (tp). Septet items marked with *.

Two titles were recorded for Capitol:

- 3958 Undercurrent Blues No solo.
- 3959 Ma Belle Marguerite No solo.

Hollywood, March 4, 1949

Orchestra personnel as Dec. 1, 1948.

CBS broadcast from the Hollywood Palladium.

- Let's Dance (Theme) No solo.
- A String Of Pearls Solo 12 bars. (M)
- My Darling, My Darling No solo.
- Trees No solo.
- Am I Blue? No solo.
- * Flying Home Soli 64 and 2 bars. (FM)
- Buckle Down, Winssocki No solo.
- Ma Belle Marguerite No solo.
- Undercurrent Blues No solo.
- Good-Bye (Theme) No solo.

Hollywood, March 6, 1949

Same.

- Bugle Call Rag 32 bars 4/4 with (ts-EW). (F)

	Don't Worry 'Bout Me	No solo.
	Star Dust	Solo 32 bars to long coda. (S)
	Once In Love With Amy (NC)	No solo.
	Trees	No solo.
*	Indiana (NC)	In ens. Solo 64 bars. (FM)
	Undercurrent Blues	No solo.

Hollywood, March 8, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1901.

	Let's Dance (Theme)	No solo.
	Chico's Bop	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
	It Takes A Woman To Take A Man	Solo 6 bars. (SM)
	It Isn't Fair	No solo.
	Trees	No solo.
*	After You've Gone	In ensemble 36 bars. Solo 80 bars. In ensemble 40 bars. (F)
	Am I Blue?	No solo.
	Undercurrent Blues	Solo 36 bars. (FM)
	Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

Hollywood, March 11, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1911 from the Hollywood Palladium.

	Let's Dance (Theme)	No solo.
	I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm	Solo 16 bars. (M)
	Someone Like You	No solo.
	I'll See You In My Dreams	Solo 8 bars. (M)
	Intermezzo	Solo 16 bars. (S)
*	Sweet Georgia Brown	In ens. Solo 96 bars. (FM)
	It Takes A Woman To Take A Man	Solo 6 bars. (SM)
	Undercurrent Blues	Repeat from ONS 1901.

Hollywood, March 15, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1931.

	Don't Be That Way	No solo.
	Do, Do, Do	No solo.
	Shiskabop	No solo.
	Am I Blue?	No solo.
*	Bedlam	Solo 60 bars. (F)
	Lover Man	No solo.
	Undercurrent Blues	Solo 36 bars. (FM)
	Intermezzo (NC)	No solo.

Hollywood, March 19, 1949

Same.

*	After You've Gone (NC)	In ens 36 bars. Solo 80 bars. (F)
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Hollywood, March 22, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1946.

	I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm	Solo 16 bars. (M)
	It Isn't Fair	No solo.
	Undercurrent Blues	No solo.
	So In Love	No solo.
*	Blue Lou	Solo 64 bars. In ens. (F)
	Don't Worry 'Bout Me	No solo.
	El Greco	No solo.

Hollywood, March 24, 1949

Same, except Bud Hermann (p-4115,16,17).
Four titles were recorded for Capitol:

4114-3	Shishkabop	No solo.
4115-2	Having A Wonderful Wish	Solo 6 bars. (S)
4116-4	That Wonderful Girl Of Mine	No solo.
4117-2	It Isn't Fair	No solo.

Hollywood, March 26, 1949

Same. Broadcast from the Hollywood Palladium.

*	Bedlam (NC)	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
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Hollywood, March 29, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1957.

	Undercurrent Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
	So In Love	No solo.
	Shishkabop	No solo.
	Fresh Fish	No solo.
	Someone Like You	No solo.
	Clarinade	No solo.
	If I Could Be With You	Solo 6 bars. (SM)
	Intermezzo (NC) (repeat from ONS 1911)	Solo 14 bars. (S)

Hollywood, March 30, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1974. Date is questionable (ref. Connor).

	Let's Dance (Theme)	No solo.
	Undercurrent Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
	Do, Do, Do	No solo.
	Trees	No solo.
	Jersey Bounce	Solo 16+8 bars, (cl) on bridge. (M)
	El Greco	No solo.
	Lover Man	No solo.
	King Porter Stomp	Solo 40 bars. (FM)
	Clarinade (NC)	No solo.

Hollywood, March 31, 1949

Personnel as March 4 except Billy Byers (tp) replaces Bernhart and Martinez out.
Four titles were recorded for Capitol:

4126	Fresh Fish	No solo.
4127	The Huckle-Buck	Solo 12 bars. (SM)
4128	Trees	No solo.

4129 Don't Worry 'Bout Me No solo.

Hollywood, prob. April 1, 1949

Same. AFRS ONS No. 1994.

	Let's Dance (Theme)	No solo.
	Chico's Bop	Solo 16 bars. (FM)
	That Wonderful Gal Of Mine	No solo.
*	Sweet Georgia Brown	In ens. Solo 32 bars. (FM)
	If I Could Be With You	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
	El Greco	No solo.
	Undercurrent Blues	Solo 36 bars. (M)
	It Takes A Woman To Take A Man	Solo 6 bars. (SM)
	Trees	No solo.
	Clarinade	No solo.
	Good-Bye (Theme)	No solo.

Hollywood, April 2, 1949

CBS broadcast from the Hollywood Palladium.

*	Blue Lou	Solo 64 bars. In ens. (F)
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Hollywood, April 12, 1949

Five titles were recorded for Capitol, 4197 "Lover Man" and 4199 "Stardust" are unissued but:

4195-2	Bop Hop	Solo 8 bars. (M)
4196	Trees	No solo.
4198	Dreazag	No solo.

It is very interesting to hear WG on "Flying Home", for once there is somebody who is not copying Illinois, on the contrary, it is as if he never heard that famous version, instead he quotes Prez (second eight in second chorus). "Hucklebuck" is one of the few bigband examples, starting sluggishly, but when WG enters, that is something else! Also a fine version of "Blue Lou" should be noted.

BENNY GOODMAN SEPTET **Hollywood, April 14, 1949**

Doug Mettome (tp), Benny Goodman (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Buddy Greco (p, vo), Francis Beecher (g), Clyde Lombardi (b), Sonny Igoe (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Capitol:

4203-5	Bedlam	Solo 24 bars. In ens 12 bars. (FM)
4205-3	Oo-Bla-Dee	Solo 12 bars. (FM)
4206-2	Blue Lou	Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Since most of WG's playing with Goodman is captured from the air, one should note this very best one of the few studio sessions. Here the septet gets a chance to perform without the orchestra getting into the way, and the tenorsax playing is excellent on all three titles. "Blue Lou" is an old WG favourite with a fine opening, "Bedlam" is another example of the flawless perfection of the great WG, who also pushes his mates to their utmost limits; a very important record, as well as "Oo-Bla-Dee" where the vocal almost overshadows the instrumentals! A lovely session!!

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS SEPTET / ORCHESTRA **Hershey, Pa., June 18, 1949**

Orchestra: Personnel as March 31. Septet: Personnel as April 14.

Broadcast from the Hershey Park Ballroom.

	Undercurrent Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
*	Bedlam	Solo 48 bars. (F)
	Chico's Bop	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

A terrific tenorsax solo on "Bedlam", four choruses of uptempo blues, more exciting than the Capitol recording above! Note how he introduces the solo by quoting the first 14 bars of Prez' immortal "Shoe Shine Swing". Note also two fine choruses on "... Blues", the opening is gorgeous!

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. July 5, 1949**

Bigband personnel including Eddie Wassermann, Wardell Gray (ts).

Four titles were recorded for Capitol, one issued:

4255 Fiesta Time Break to solo 32 bars. (F)

This solo as been attributed to EW, but we do not agree on this, sounds very much like WG!

PHIL HILL QUARTET **Detroit, July 20, 1949**

Wardell Gray (ts), Phil Hill (p), James "Bean" Richardson (b), Art Mardigan (dm), probably Jack Tiant (bgo).

Private recordings at Blue Bird Inn, not available:

Lester Leaps In (NC) Solo. ()

What Is This Thing Called Love? (NC) Solo. ()

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS SEPTET / ORCHESTRA

Virginia Beach, Vi., Aug. 27, 1949

Personnel as March 31, except John Wilson, Ziggy Schatz (tp), Mario Daone (tb) added, Joe Casalaro (bar), Bob Carter (b) replace Molinelli and Lombardi. Buddy Greco, Emily Long, The Clarinaders (vo).

Broadcast from the Surf Beach Club.

Let's Dance (Theme) No solo.

The Huckle-Buck Solo 12 bars. (M)

Don't Worry 'Bout Me No solo.

Clarinet A La King No solo.

Some Enchanted Evening No solo.

A String Of Pearls Solo 12 bars. (M)

* Blue Lou Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Fiesta Time 64 bars 4/4 chase with another tenorsax. (F)

Good-Bye (Theme) No solo.

Virginia Beach, Va., Sept. 3, 1949

Same except Emily Long omitted.

Let's Dance (Theme) No solo.

Six Flats Unfurnished Solo 8 bars. (M)

I Didn't Know What Time It Was No solo.

* Blue Lou Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Lover, Come Back To Me No solo.

Clarinet A La King No solo.

Good-Bye No solo.

Undercurrent Blues (NC) No solo.

Note some new exciting variations on "Blue Lou!"

BENNY GOODMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Sept. 18, 1949**

Personnel as Aug. 27. Four titles were recorded for Capitol, 4291 "Spin A Record" is rejected but tape exists, but:

4288-6 Egg Head Soli 12 and 4 bars. (M)

4289 Little Girl, Don't Cry No solo.

4290 Why Don't We Do This More Often Solo 4 bars. (SM)

WG's association with Goodman ends with this session, having a nice blues chorus on "Egg ...". During one and a half year this partnership created some of the most important music of the late forties and numerous tenorsax soli belonging to the most important in jazz. Benny may not have liked bebop very much, only tried to cash in on a popular trend for a few years. If this is correct, he has to be praised for the results, not for the motive. Without Benny, our knowledge of Wardell Gray's superb artistry had been much less substantial. The sextet/septet items, mostly from the air, are all gems, and many full orchestra items also feature WG as the band's most important soloist. I believe WG enjoyed himself very much in the professional Goodman organization, he plays almost always with great inspiration. We can only hope for more broadcasts to turn up, along with alternate takes from the best studio sessions!

WG left Benny Goodman in late September 1949.

**AL HAIG QUARTET
FEATURING WARDELL GRAY** **NYC. Nov. 11, 1949**

Wardell Gray (ts), Al Haig (p), Tommy Potter (b), Roy Haynes (dm).

Four titles were recorded for New Jazz/Prestige:

46 A	Twisted	Straight 24 bars to solo 36 bars. Solo 12 bars to straight 24 bars. (M)
46 B	Twisted	As take A. (M)
46 C	Twisted (NC)	Straight 24 bars to solo 36 bars. Solo 12 bars. (M)
46 D	Twisted	Straight 12 bars to solo 36 bars. Solo 12 bars to straight 24 bars. (M)
46 E	Twisted	As take D. (M)
47 A	Southside	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Straight 32 bars. (FM)
47 B	Southside	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 32 bars to straight 32 bars. (F)
47 C	Southside	As take B. (F)
47 D	Southside	As take A. (F)
47 E	Southside	As take B. (F)
47 F	Southside (NC)	As take B but breakdown after 8 bars of final straight. (F)
47 G	Southside (NC)	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. (F)
48 A	Easy Living	Solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (S)
48 B	Easy Living	As above. (S)
49 A	Sweet Lorraine	Solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars to coda. (S)

Yet another Wardell Gray/Al Haig session belonging to the most precious treasures of modern jazz. A perfect rhythm section lays a firm foundation for a tenorsax player of bottomless improvisational capabilities and inspiration. The most "famous" title is "Twisted", a medium blues, and on the five takes WG has a total of 20 improvised choruses, not one similar to the others, every solo with a surprising opening phrase to make you come to immediate attention. Wardell does not any longer have the smooth Lesterish tone of a few years ago but a more penetrating sound probably inspired by Bird, and with a sore feeling most prominent in the ballads, of which there are two beautiful examples on this session, "Easy Living" and "Sweet Lorraine", with Al Haig's masterly piano to take a great share of the honour. Music like this tends to overshadow numerous artists of high status; only a few can ever hope to attain the level and depth of WG (and AH's) creations. Finally the fast "Southside" with seven more or less complete versions, they seem to have problems in finding a proper ending, but with WG soloing well although with some problems in take A and B. To sum up, this is a magnificent sortie from the forties for one of the decade's most important tenorsax performers. Sadly enough the next decade, although having many excellent soli, shows WG in decline, ending so tragically in 1955. Therefore we should treasure this session deeply, having almost a symbolic value.

WARDELL GRAY QUARTET**Detroit, April 25, 1950**

Wardell Gray (ts), Phil Hill (p), probably James "Beans" Richardson (b), Art Mardigan (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

79A	A Sinner Kissed An Angel	Solo 32 bars. Solo 8 bars to coda. (S)
80A	Blue Gray	Straight 32 bars to solo 32 bars. Solo 16 bars. (M)
80B	Blue Gray	As above. (M)
80C	Blue Gray	As above. (M)
81A	Grayhound	Straight 24 bars to solo 48 bars. Solo 12 bars to straight 12 bars. (FM)
81B	Grayhound	Straight 24 bars to solo 60 bars. Solo 12 bars to straight 24 bars. (FM)
81C	Grayhound (NC)	Solo 24 bars to straight 24 bars. (FM)
82A	Treadin' With Treadwell	Straight 24 bars to solo 72 bars. Soli 4 and 4 bars to solo 12 bars to straight 24 bars. (FM)
82A/B	Treadin' With Treadwell	Straight 24 bars to solo 72 bars. Soli 4 and 4 bars to straight 24 bars. (FM)
82C	Treadin' With Treadwell	Straight 24 bars to solo 84 bars. Soli 4 and 4 bars to solo 12 bars to straight 24 bars. (FM)

One of jazz tenorsax all-time-greats, Wardell Gray, enters a new (and his last) decade. The late forties was a continuous triumph for this genius, although there were tendencies of physical wear and change of style from an unworried Prez' inspiration to that of a more worried Bird. There is however no doubt that WG still is one of the top performers on his instrument with no buts. This Prestige sessions succeeds the magnificent almost one half year earlier, with Al Haig on piano, and that one just cannot be surpassed. However, this is a session with a lot of excellent music and particularly important for the many alternate takes. You may or you may not enjoy the echoed "... Angel", I personally find it beautiful but not quite comparable to WG's best ballads. "Blue Gray" is a fine standard with three comparable versions. "Grayhound" is a blues not unlike "Twisted" from the previous session in 1949, and WG plays with inspiration. The takes are differently structured, and -C seems to be a warm-up, not a serious attempt as evidenced by the conclusion, possibly the last part of a take only. My favourite title is however "Treadin' ...", another blues of similar kind, here there are so many fascinating details that one just has to marvel. Note for instance the fourth chorus of -A/B, the third chorus and the opening of the fourth one on -A and the third chorus on -C among so much creativeness in abundance!

WARDELL GRAY's LOS ANGELES ALL STARS**LA. Aug. 27, 1950**

Clark Terry (tp), Sonny Criss (as), Dexter Gordon (ts-except "Kiddo"), Wardell Gray (ts), Jimmy Bunn (p), Billy Hadnott (b), Chuck Thompson (dm), Damita Jo (vo-"I Can't Give You ...").

Recorded at the Hula Hut, Sunset Boulevard. Three titles:

1231/32	Jazz On Sunset Pt 1 – 4	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars (1 st (ts)-solo). (F)
1233/34	Kiddo Pt 1 – 4	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars Solo 4 bars. (M)
	I Can't Give You Anything But Love	Weak obligato. (M)

Note: "Jazz On Sunset" is better known as "Move" and later issued as such, while the chord changes are all "I Got Rhythm". "Kiddo" is presented later as "Scrapple From The Apple", which is "Honeysuckle Rose" with an "I Got Rhythm" bridge, but in fact they are playing "... Rose" all the way through. Note also a fourth title "Pyson Trot", possibly no loner in existence.

An excellent live recording again teaming WG up with his old friend and contestor Dexter Gordon. They play together in an orderly fashion on one title only, "Move",

and the 8/8, 4/4 and 2/2 bars exchanges are omitted this time. Nevertheless WG plays magnificently on this item. His contribution on "Kiddo 'suckle Rose" is perhaps a notch less colourful but also quite noteworthy. "... Love" is very badly recorded, and only Criss "survives" properly. Dexter is not audible or not present. WG however is clearly present behind Damita Jo, but it is not possible to get any clear conception of what he is really doing.

COUNT BASIE COMBO **NYC. Aug. 29 or 30, 1950**

Clark Terry (tp), Buddy DeFranco (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm), Helen Humes (vo-"... You", "... You").

Snader Telescriptions, movie shorts, five items:

1101	One O'Clock Jump	Solo 24 bars. In ens. (FM)
1102	Bass Conversation	Duet with (b) 12 bars. In ens. (M)
1103	Basie Boogie	Solo 24 bars. In ens. (FM)
1104	If I Could Be With You	Weak obbligato. (S)
1105	I Cried For You	Solo 40 bars. (M)

In my opinion some of the best filmshorts to exist! Apart from lovely music by everybody, it is the only opportunity to see WG in action. He looks and moves like he plays; gentle and friendly, probably the thinnest man in jazz! And the music is excellent, even without picture stimulation, our ears note that he has a good day. Note in particular the lovely interplay with bass player Lewis on "... Conversation".

**BILLIE HOLIDAY WITH
COUNT BASIE AND HIS SEXTET** **Hollywood, Aug. 31, 1950**

Clark Terry (tp), Buddy DeFranco (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm), Billie Holiday (vo-"... Child", "... Never").

Universal Film Short (one film), four items:

Phalanges	32 bars 4/4 with (tp). (F)
God Bless The Child	No solo.
Now, Baby, Or Never	No solo.
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. (FM)

"Phalanges" is a great and pleasant surprise with a lively chase between WG and Clark Terry, dig this! Also a fine tenorsax chorus on "... Jump".

COUNT BASIE OCTET **NYC. Nov. 2, 1950**

Clark Terry (tp), Buddy DeFranco (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Elman "Rudy" Rutherford (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

44594-1	Song Of The Islands	Solo 36 bars. (F)
44595-1	These Foolish Things	No solo.
44596-1	I'm Confessin'	Solo 8 bars. (SM)
44597-1	One O'Clock Jump	Solo 12 bars. In ens. (FM)

NYC. Nov. 3, 1950

Same. Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

44606-1	I Ain't Got Nobody	No solo.
44607-1	Little White Lies	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
44607-2	Little White Lies	As above. (SM)
44608-1	I'll Remember April	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
44609-1	Tootsie	Solo 48 bars, last 24 with ens. (FM)

This pleasant small group has already appeared in various film shorts, now it's the time for a recording session. I have a feeling the ambitions are not set very high, there is more than a touch of commercialism here, but there are many fine tenorsax

events. "... Islands" is played in a surprisingly high tempo, but WG's solo is excellent as on all upper-tempo items, note for instance his four blues choruses on "Tootsie" (or "Tootie", spelling varies, can anyone explain?)! Nevertheless, he is particularly impressive in the slow medium tempo, "... Confessin'" and "... April", to be topped by two gorgeous versions of "... White Lies", dig these!!

COUNT BASIE COMBO**NYC. poss. Nov./Dec. 1950**

Possibly Thad Jones or Art Farmer (tp), Marshall Royal (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm).

Unknown broadcast, four titles:

3:15 A. M. Blues (NC)	Break. Solo 28 bars (NC). (M)
Donna Lee	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
C Jam Blues	Solo 4 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Robbins' Nest	Solo 32 bars. (M)

This was a very interesting and valuable discovery! A most thrilling "Donna Lee" in uptempo features WG in top shape, swinging like only he can! A brilliant laidback solo on "... Nest" equally brings the listener out of equilibrium, dig the opening as well as the full solo, wow!! With a lot of good blues choruses on the other two items, this is a thrilling WG session!!

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**NYC. April 10, 1951**

Bob Mitchell, Al Porcino, Clark Terry, Lammar Wright (tp), Leon Comegys, Matthew Gee, Booty Wood (tb), Reuben Phillips, Marshall Royal (as), Wardell Gray, Lucky Thompson (ts), Charlie Fowlkes (bar), Count Basie (p, cel-45656), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Columbia:

45656-1	Howzit	No solo.
45657-1	Nails	Solo with orch 24 bars. (M)
45658-1	Little Pony	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars, last 2 with orch, to 16 bars and coda. (F)
45659-1	Beaver Junction	No solo.

Although WG was one of the Count's most brilliant soloists for several years, unfortunate recording circumstances resulted in this session being his only appearance with the full orchestra among the numerous broadcasts. This is a great loss to us all, and we have to treasure carefully the only two solo items. "Nails" has two fine blues choruses in a lovely tempo, but of course, it is "Little Pony"'s day! This item is one of jazz' most famous tenorsax soli, ranking among Prez' "Lady Be Good" and Hawkins' "Body And Soul" and having been honoured with lyrics. One may just bow and be silent when listening again for uncountable times to this magnificent up-tempo tenorsax vehicle by WG, the great performer!!

CHARLIE PARKER QUINTET**Framingham, Mass., April 12, 1951**

Charlie Parker (as), Wardell Gray, Bill Wellington (ts), Nat Pierce (p), Jack Lawlor (b), Joe McDonald (dm). (Rhythm previously given as Walter Bishop (p), Teddy Kotick (b), Roy Haynes (dm)).

Broadcast from Christy's Restaurant, two titles have WG:

Scrapple From The Apple	Solo 7 choruses of 32 bars. 12 choruses 4/4 with(as/dm). (FM)
Lullaby In Rhythm	Soli 8 and 7 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

WG's second and final session with Bird, four years after the famous Dial recordings. Certainly this is a historical occasion with excellent playing by both of them at times, but WG seems somewhat uneven. Particularly troublesome is the start of "... Apple". The audience shouts 'go Wardell', and the last solo on "... Wrong" is quite satisfying. Maybe I am too critical, but the yardstick set by the Gene Norman concert performances is not easy to match. But by all means, there are a lot of details to appreciate here!

COUNT BASIE COMBO**NYC. April 20, 1951**

Clark Terry (tp), Marshal Royall (cl), Wardell Gray (ts), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm).

WNEW broadcast "Stars on Parade" 589. Date falsely given as Nov. 7 and Nov. 25.

One O'Clock Jump (Theme)	No solo.
Move	Solo 64 bars. (F)
Basie Boogie	No solo.
The Golden Bullet	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
One O'Clock Jump	No solo.

Two fine uptempo items here!

NYC. April 28, 1951

Same personnel plus Buck Clayton (tp).
WNEW broadcast from Birdland.

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	No solo.
Jumpin' At The Woodside	Break to solo 5 choruses of 32 bars, last 2 with orch. (F)
How High The Moon	Solo 64 bars. (M)
Lady Be Good	No solo.
Bluebeard's Blues (The Golden Bullet)	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
One O'Clock Jump	Solo 48 bars. (M)
Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	No solo.

COUNT BASIE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. May 6, 1951

Paul Campbell, Clark Terry, Lammar Wright (tp), Bennie Green, Jimmy Wilkins, Booty Wood (tb), Marshal Royal (cl, as), Ernie Wilkins (as), Wardell Gray, Paul Quinichette (ts), Charlie Fowlkes (bar), Count Basie (p), Freddie Green (g), Jimmy Lewis (b), Gus Johnson (dm), Thelma Carpenter (vo).
WNEW "Make Believe Ballroom" broadcast.

Cheek To Cheek	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
Every Tub	Intro with orch 8 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars, partly with orch, to long coda. (F)
Perdido	Solo 64 bars. (M)
Beaver Junction	No solo.
Who Cares?	No solo.
Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me	No solo.
Ain't It The Truth?	Solo with orch 32 bars. (M)
Nails	Solo with orch 24 bars. (M)
Bluebeard's Blues	Solo 5 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)

NYC. May 24, 1951

Same personnel. CBS "Kate Smith Show" TV programme.

Howzit (Basie Boogie)	No solo.
Every Tub	Intro with orch 8 bars. Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars, partly with orch, to long coda. (F)

Magnificent versions of "... Tub" in uptempo!! Albeit not too good sound, the four choruses, two of which are with orchestra backing, have dynamics comparable to the famous Columbia recording of "Little Pony" recorded a few weeks earlier. The last version is to be preferred. Also "Nails" and particularly "... Truth" have lovely laidback soloing. And if this is not enough, there is an octet version of "Perdido" with some magnificent tenorsax playing, yeah!

JOE SWANSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA Hollywood, prob. Sept./Oct. 1951

Unknown personnel but including John Anderson, Jimmy Cheatham (tp), John Ewing (tb), William Green (as, woodwinds), Buddy Collette (as, ts, woodwinds), Wardell Gray, Joe Swanson (ts), Gerald Wiggins (p), Irving Ashby (g), David Bryant (b), Bill Douglass (dm), Paul Villepique (arr).

Four (or more) titles were recorded for Recorded in Hollywood:

JD-0175	O Blues	Soli 12 and 4 bars. (FM)
JD-0176	Thrust	Soli with orch 7 and 5 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
JD-0178	East Of The Sun	Solo with orch 20 bars. (SM)
JD-0180	Forgive Me	No solo.

A great surprise! WG is the main soloist. "Thrust" features him in a faster tempo than ever before, in a kind of blues, and he plays with fine drive. "... Sun" has a nice chorus without being particularly noteworthy.

**DINAH WASHINGTON WITH
JIMMY COBB'S ORCHESTRA**

LA. Jan. 18, 1952

Wardell Gray, Ben Webster (ts), Wynton Kelly (p), Jimmy Cobb (dm), Dinah Washington (vo) and others.

Four titles were recorded for Mercury:

4731-A	Wheel Of Fortune	No solo.
4731-B	Wheel Of Fortune	No solo.
4732	Tell Me Why	Solo 6 bars. (S)
4733	Trouble In Mind	No solo.
4734	When The Sun Goes Down	Solo 12 bars. (S)

I am somewhat disappointed at these performances, WG seems to lack necessary inspiration to create something memorable and appropriate to this great singer (BW is more successful), neither does he get much opportunity. The best item is "Tell Me Why".

Note: The Design DLP183 has been "discographed" as being from 1952 with bigband personnel including Frank Motley (tp), possibly Charlie Parker (as), Wardell Gray (ts). I have heard (but not seen) this LP, and it is a mess! I have identified Stan Getz on Savoy, Charlie Parker/Dizzy Gillespie on Guild, Dexter Gordon on Dial, and also Gene Ammons and James Moody. However, no trace of Wardell Gray!

WARDELL GRAY

LA. Jan. 21, 1952

Art Farmer (tp-except 316), Wardell Gray (ts), Hampton Hawes (p), Harper Crosby (b), Larry Marable (dm), Robert Collier (cga).

Six titles were recorded for Prestige:

312	April Skies	Solo 16 bars. (M)
313	Bright Boy	Solo 34 bars. (FM)
314	Jackie	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
315	Farmer's Market	Break 2 bars to solo 3 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
316	Sweet And Lovely	Intro 4 bars to solo 48 bars to coda. (S)
317	Lover Man	Solo 32 bars to coda. (S)

This is a fine little group, although the presence of a conga drummer is somewhat misplaced to my taste. The soli are brief, since this is a 78 rpm. session, but it does not really matter. Notable is the excellent trumpet of the young Farmer, his first recording session and featured on three titles. WG plays consistently with flying colours on this session, whether the fast blues as on "Jackie" and "... Market" or the standards as on "Bright Boy". The pensive solo on "April ..." is also highly noteworthy. Nevertheless, the slow tempo is probably the one WG enjoys the most here, and in spite of the rather annoying conga background the lovely "... Lovely" and "Lover Man" must be considered two of his major works. This is a session where alternate takes would be heartily welcomed!!

GENE NORMAN

Pasadena, Feb. 2, 1952

Conte Candoli (tp-"The Steeplechase"), Wardell Gray, Dexter Gordon (ts), Bobby Tucker (p), Don Bagley (b), Chico Hamilton (dm).

Concert from Pasadena Circus Auditorium. Two titles:

The Chase	Solo structure: DG 3x32, WG 3x32 bars, DG 2x32 bars, WG 2x32 bars, DG 32 bars, WG 32 bars, DG 16 bars, WG 16 bars, (DG 4, WG 4)x4, (DG 8, WG 8)x2, DG 4, WG 4)x16, Duet/ens 32 bars. (F)
The Steeplechase	Solo 8 bars. Solo 6 choruses of 32 bars (last (ts)-solo). Soli 4, 4 and 4 bars. (FM)

A wonderful cutting contest and who's the winner, you tell me!! There are so many interesting details in both WG's and DG's playing here, that they are impossible to point out clearly in writing. You should sit down late at night with a drink and play "The Chase" and "The Steeplechase" repeatedly, as I have done, and this "ugly" music gets more and more wonderful each time!! Both titles are magnificent, but perhaps "The Chase" with its numerous chase combinations is the number one item. This is the primary basis for modern tenorsax development. Tragically WG died only three years later, while Dexter was largely inactive for the rest of the decade. What a loss to modern music!!

LES THOMPSON**same date**

Conte Candoli (tp), Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray (ts), Les Thompson (hca), Bobby Tucker (p), Don Bagley (b), Chico Hamilton (dm).

Three titles:

Take The "A" Train	No solo.
Robbins Nest	No solo.
Stardust	No solo.

These items are really of no interest whatsoever to tenorsax freaks, believe me!

JAM SESSION**Hollywood, Feb. 24, 1952**

Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray (ts), Russ Freeman (p), Clarence Jones (b), Lawrence Marable (dm).

One title recorded in concert at the Clef Club:

The Savoy Jump (NC)	Solo 16 bars (NC).
(Stompin' At The Savoy)	3 ½ choruses of 4/4 with (ts-DG). (F)

The opening of this exciting item is missing, so we got only half-a-chorus of WG's solo, but the full 7 choruses of Dexter. By the way, the tempo on the issued item seems too high to be natural. However, we get a juicy, long chase between those two tenorsax giants at the end! WG goes first, but there is no winner here!!

JAM SESSION**Inglewood, Ca., March 24, 1952**

Chet Baker (tp), Sonny Criss (as), Wardell Gray, Dave Pell (ts), Jerry Mandell (p), Bob Whitlock (b), Harry Babasin (cel), Lawrence Marable (dm).

Recorded at the Trade Winds:

Out Of Nowhere	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
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This session is badly recorded, the sound is distorted, and we have problems recognizing WG, also because his phrasing seems unusual with impressive but unexpected double tempo. He also is somewhat unconcentrated in the second chorus. However, JA has found a phrase nailing the solo to WG! JE regards this as an oddity but not an important item.

same date

Sonny Criss (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Marty Paitch (p), Bob Whitlock (b), Lawrence Marable (dm).

Private recording, one title, not available:

Jumpin' With Symphony Sid	Solo? ()
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LOUIS BELLSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA**LA. May 23, 1952**

Clark Terry (tp), Juan Tizol (vtb), John Graas (frh), Willie Smith (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Harry Carney (bar), Billy Strayhorn (p), Wendell Marshall (b), Louis Bellson (dm).

Eight titles were recorded for Capitol:

9939	The Jeep Is Jumpin'	Solo 96 bars. (F)
9940	Passion Flower	No solo.

9941	Johnny Come Lately	Solo 32 bars. (M)
9942	Sticks	No solo.
9943	Punkin'	Break 8 bars to solo 16 bars. (FM)
9944	Eyes	In ens 4 bars. (M)
9945	Rainbow	No solo.
9946	Shadows	No solo.

Here "The Jeep ..." is the most prominent item with three juicy choruses. The solo on "... Lately" is also played in style, but the background arrangement sounds very strange and disturbing, while "Punkin'" is rather ordinary.

DEXTER GORDON AND HIS ORCHESTRA Hollywood, June 9, 1952

Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray (ts), Gerald Wiggins (p, org, cel), Red Callender (b), Chuck Thompson (dm), Gladys Bentley (vo-4123).

Three titles were recorded for Swingtime (a fourth title without WG):

4120-2	Th' Rubayait	As below. (M)
4120-4	Th' Rubayait	Solo 24 bars (last (ts)-solo). 24 bars 4/4 (last tenorsax). (M)
4123-1	Jingle Jangle Jump	Solo 8 bars (last (ts)-solo). Break. (FM)
4124-1	Citizen Bop	Soli 32 and 16 bars (last (ts)-soli). (FM)

An excellent session bringing Dexter and Wardell together again for the last time on record. These two great personalities, contributing so much to the development not only of the jazz tenor saxophone but of modern jazz in general, cooperate nicely on the blues "Th' Rubayait" with a lot of colourful details by both men, and there are two quite different takes. "Citizen ..." is a fine bebop performance, while the raucous "Jingle Jangle ..." surprises with brief but notable soli.

JAM SESSION LA. Sept. 9, 1952

Art Farmer (tp), Wardell Gray (ts), Amos Trice (p-items 1,2), Hampton Hawes (p-items 3-10), Howard Roberts (g), Joe Mondragon (b), Shelly Manne (dm).

Recorded at the Haig Club on Wilshire Boulevard:

Lady Bird	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses 8/8 with (tp/g/p). (FM)
Out Of Nowhere	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (M)
The Squirrel	Solo 13 choruses of 12 bars. 12 choruses 4/4 with (tp). (F)
Taking A Chance On Love	Straight 1 to solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 choruses to straight 1 chorus and coda. (FM)
Jackie	Solo 9 choruses of 12 bars. (FM)
Donna Lee	Solo 7 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
Pennies From Heaven	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. Solo 2 choruses to coda. (M)
Get Happy	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. 2 choruses of 8/8 and 1 chorus of 4/4 with (tp). (FM)
Bernie's Tune	Solo 2 choruses of 32 bars. 64 bars 4/4 with (dm/tp). (FM)
Keen And Peachy	Solo 4 choruses of 32 bars. 3 choruses of 8/8 with (tp/g/p). (F)

This club session presents appr. 80 minutes of mostly inspired tenorsax soloing, thus adding a substantial amount of music to the WG memorial. With a young upcoming Art Farmer on trumpet to supplement him, the session is bound to be an important one for early modern jazz. Whether the music reaches the upper sky is a debatable question, I feel that something undefinable is missing. WG has some reed trouble, and while he plays very nicely all over, I have a feeling of distraction, of wistfulness, of premonition of things to come, a life never to be fulfilled. But by all

means, he proves once again that he is one of the major tenorsax players of the early fifties. To select titles of special interest is quite difficult, they all have their merits, but possibly you should give "Get Happy" special attention.

SHORTY ROGERS & HIS GIANTS

LA. Sept. 27, 1952

Milton "Shorty" Rogers, Chet Baker (tp), Bob Enevoldsen (vtb), Art Pepper (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Gerry Mulligan (bar), Les Thompson (hca), Hampton Hawes (p), Joe Monragon (b), Lawrence Marable (dm), June Christie (vo).

Broadcast, twentyone titles from Rendezvous Ballroom, Balboa Beach, nine have WG:

Ide's Side	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
Perdido	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Sometimes I'm Happy	Soli 8 and 8 bars. (M)
September Song	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
I Can't Get Started	Solo 16 bars. (S)
I May Be Wrong	Solo 32 bars. (M)
Didi	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)
Short Snort	Solo 64 bars. (M)
Popo	Solo 11 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)

These are valuable historical discoveries, documenting important developments in jazz on the West Coast . Whether the combination of Rogers' complex musical worldand arrangements, and the collection of some of the most important improvisers in jazz, is optimal, may be up for discussion but does not belong here, where the focus is on Wardell Gray. He takes his share of the soloing, but I have a feeling his heart is not really fully filled by the music. He is close to his best in "... Started" and also "September ...", but seems to lack energy and inspiration when the tempo goes up. As always, WG has much to offer, but our expectations are consequently also very high. "... Side" and "Perdido" are slightly disappointing, but at the end of the date, he seems to come to life with a swinging "... Snort", and on "Popo" he plays the blues in his own copyrighted way, exciting!

SHORTY ROGERS & HIS GIANTS

LA. Oct. 10, 1952

Milton "Shorty" Rogers, Chet Baker (tp), John Graas (frh), Art Pepper (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Gerry Mulligan (bar), Hampton Hawes (p), Joe Monragon (b), Lawrence Marable (dm).

Thirteen titles were recorded at the 5-4 Ballroom, Balboa Beach, seven have WG:

Ide's Side (as "Mulligan's Mule")	Soli 64 and 8 bars. (FM)
Short Snort (as "Shorty Talks")	Solo 32 bars. (M)
Wardell Walks/Roundhouse	Break to solo 64 bars. (FM)
Mulligan's Mood	Solo 64 bars. (FM)
Perdido	Soli 8 and 64 bars. (FM)
Now's The Time (NC)	Solo 7 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
Billie's Bounce	Solo 15 choruses of 12 bars. Some unstructured 4/4. (M)
Godchild	Solo 16 bars. (M)

LA. Autumn 1952

Same except Bob Enevoldsen (vtb) replaces Graas.

Six titles were possibly recorded at the Rendezvous Ballroom, Balboa Beach, two have WG:

Short Snort	Solo 56 bars (NC). (FM)
Apropos	Solo 16 bars. (F)

The sound quality of these programs is slightly below that of Sept. 27, which was not particularly great either. WG seems to be hit particularly badly, and evaluations are therefore not always easy. Also here he seems to have a lack of energy and precision, and when lost among heavily recorded piano and drums, the pleasure is not what it might have been. Take "... Time" as an example, almost impossible to

hear what he is playing. Most interesting seems to be "... Bounce", also here the sound quality is bad, but not worse than we can hear some quite exciting tenorsax blues choruses by our hero!

TEDDY CHARLES' WEST COASTERS

LA. Feb. 20, 1953

Frank Morgan (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Sonny Clark (p), Teddy Charles (vib), Dick Nivison (b), Lawrence Marable (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Prestige:

467	The Man I Love	Solo 6 bars (S) to break and solo with ens 42 bars. (M). Break to solo with ens 28 bars and coda. (F)
468	Lavonne	Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
469	So Long Broadway	With ens. Solo with ens 32 bars. (FM)
470	Paul's Cause	With ens. Solo with ens 32 bars. (M)

This session does not belong to my favourite ones, it sounds artificial to me, the arrangements are not interesting enough by themselves, and the soloists are just restricted in their freedom. WG is in good shape, as is also Frank Morgan, but the solo contributions are suffering from the "messy" surroundings. His only "pure" solo is on "Lavonne", and this is WG playing the up-tempo blues as only he knows it. "The Man ..." has two tempo shifts, again a quite artificial construction, although WG makes the most of it, and particularly the fast tempo at the end is impressive. "... Broadway" and "... Cause" are more ordinary.

LOUIE BELLSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. July 1953

Harry Edison, Maynard Ferguson, Conrad Gozzo, Ray Linn (tp), Hoyt Bohannon, Herb Harper, Tommy Pedersen (tb), Benny Carter, Willie Smith (as), Wardell Gray, Bumps Myers (ts), Bob Lawson (bar), Jimmy Rowles (p), Barney Kessel (g), John Simmons (b), Louie Bellson (dm, arr-1250), Tadd Dameron (arr-1251).

Four titles were recorded for Verve:

1250-3	Caxton Hall Swing	Solo 14 bars. (FM)
1251	For Europeans Only	Break. Solo 3 choruses of 32 bars, last 2 with orch. (F)
1252-4	Phalanges	No solo.
1253	Skin Deep	No solo.

This time Louis Bellson has a real big band to work with, and he swings it almost like Chick Webb used to do some years before. WG is in good shape and solos very satisfactory. "... Only" is the most interesting item, being almost a feature number for tenorsax, like "Little Pony", not quite as unforgettable but yet a very important WG item, almost forgotten by most collectors I would guess. But also "Caxton ..." has a thrilling little solo!

JAM SESSION

Hollywood, Aug. 18, 1953

Harry Edison (tp), Buddy DeFranco (cl), Benny Carter, Willie Smith (as), Stan Getz, Wardell Gray (ts), Arnold Ross (p-1261,62), Count Basie (p-1259,60, org-1261), Freddie Green (g-1259,60,61), John Simmons (b), Buddy Rich (dm), Norman Granz (supervisor).

Four titles were recorded for Clef/Verve (each one side of an LP):

1259	Apple Jam	Solo 8 choruses of 12 bars. (F)
1260	Oh Lady Be Good	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. (F)
1261	Blues For The Count And Oscar	Solo 6 choruses of 12 bars. (M)
1264	Ballad Medley: Ghost Of A Chance	Solo 32 bars. (S)

An interesting jam session but with weaknesses; the excellent Basie rhythm section does not function optimally with Rich on drums, and only Stan Getz can match the artistry of WG. I wish several of the altosax choruses, particularly those of Smith had been exchanged with some tenorsax exchanges by the two all-time-greats! Nevertheless, WG plays the blues in up-tempo nicely on "Apple Jam", but note how he misses the entrance. On "Lady Be Good" it is particularly evident how far WG has moved from his Prez heritage, his sound and phrasing is now much more influenced by Bird. The quality of his playing is good, but once in awhile one notes small flaws, something unheard of in the previous decade. The same can be heard

on the otherwise pleasant "Blues ... Oscar". A nice version of "Gost ..." concludes this nice but not unforgettable occasion.

LITTLE WILLIE LITTLEFIELD

LA. Oct. 30, 1953

Wardell Gray (ts), Little Willie Littlefield (p, vo), Jesse Irvin (g), Mario Delagarde (b), Bill Douglas (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Federal:

F379-1	(Please Don't Go) O-o-o-oh	No solo.
F380	Falling Tears	No solo.
F381	Goofy Dust Blues	Intro 4 bars. Obligato 48 bars. Solo 12 bars. Obligato 16 bars to fade out. (SM)
F382	Don't Take My Heart Little Girl	No solo.

A strange session, I wonder how WG got into this!? On three titles he is only heard as faint backing personnel, no identity at all, you do not need to look for these items, they have absolutely no interest. However, on "Goofy ..." he is heavily featured and of course our ears stick up. Although Littlefield and his group's heavy blues is absolutely incompatible with WG's musical world, nevertheless there are many interesting details, since he is playing more or less continually for three minutes. His single solo chorus is beautiful.

BILLY ECKSTINE ACC. BY

LOU BRING & HIS ORCHESTRA

LA. Dec. 23, 1953

Bigband personnel including Harry Edison (tp), Wardell Gray (ts), Billy Eckstine (vo), (violins).

Four titles were recorded for MGM, no WG on 3136 "Solitude" but:

3135	I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart	Intro 4 bars. Obligato 2 bars. Solo 4 bars. Coda 4 bars. (S)
3137	Prelude To A Kiss	Solo 8 bars. Coda. (S)
3138	Mood Indigo	Obligato 8 and 4 bars. Coda. (S)

LA. Dec. 29, 1953

Same/similar. Four titles, no WG on 3147 "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" and 3148 "Do Nothin' 'Till You Hear From Me" but:

3149	I Got It Bad	Obligato parts. Solo with orch 8 bars. (S)
3150	Sophisticated Lady	Brief coda. (S)

Comes a surprise but WG has an important role on these sessions, adding to the warm atmosphere of this vocal session. Possibly the highlight is the beautiful tenorsax solo on "... Kiss", but dig how he starts his background playing on "... Indigo", and with a fine conclusion.

WARDELL GRAY QUARTET

San Francisco, Feb. 8, 1954

Wardell Gray (ts), Gerald Wiggins (p), possibly Red Callender (b), possibly Lee Young (dm).

Recorded live at San Francisco's Veterans Memorial (earlier listed as 1950), two titles:

Nice Work If You Can Get It	Solo 5 choruses of 32 bars. (FM)
Indiana	Solo 8 choruses of 32 bars. (F)

Life is full of surprises! Never expected anything like this to turn up!! Two swinging quartet sides are both exciting; on "Nice Work ..." there is some hesitation in the beginning of the fourth chorus but otherwise fine playing, but "Indiana" is even more exciting in uptempo, also here minor problems in the fifth and sixth chorus, but they really don't matter, we are lucky to have some more WG!

GERALD WILSON & HIS ORCHESTRA

same date

Personnel including Ernie Royal, Walter Williams (tp), Melba Liston, Henry Coker, Robert Wagner, Trummy Young (tb), Sonny Criss (as), Gerald Wiggins (p), Red Callender (b), Lee Young (dm), Gerald Wilson (tp, arr, cnd) plus guest stars: Stan Getz, Wardell Gray, Zoot Sims (ts).

One title:

Hollywood Freeway

Solo 12 choruses of 12 bars.
14 choruses tenorsax chase. (FM)

And then the climax of the day, "... Freeway", this is something you rarely have heard before!!! The tune is really an AABA with A=12, B=8, but the guys blow the blues only; first 11 choruses by Stan Getz, then 12 choruses by WG and 13 choruses by Zoot Sims, spending almost 8 minutes. Then a bit more Getz and then they go into a tenorsax chase appr. 14 choruses (I suspect a splice) with backing from a brilliant bigband. If it had not been for an unbalanced recording giving the drum cymbals much too great place in the sun, this would have been **the** tenorsax item, now it is still a great pleasure, because the blowing is so inspired by all of them. What a night!!!

WARDELL GRAY QUARTET**Chi. July 1954**

Wardell Gray (ts), Gene Esposito (p), Victor Sproles (b), Nils-Bertil Dahlander (dm).

Private recordings from the Bee Hive Lounge, seven titles, "Farmer's Market", "Bernie's Tune", "September In The Rain", "These Foolish Things", "Three Little Words", "I May Be Wrong", "Theme", not available.

UNKNOWN BAND**probably late 1954**

Unknown personnel including possibly Wardell Gray (ts).
Film soundtrack "Marty":

Unknown Title

Possibly solo 12 bars. (M)

This sounds so much like WG, must be him! Postscript: This seems to be a pure speculation with no firm basis in facts.

WARDELL GRAY SEXTET**Chi. Jan. 19, 1955**

Gene Phipps (tp), Wardell Gray (ts), Tate Houston (bar), Norman Simmons (p), Victor Sproles (b), Vernell Fourier (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Vee-Jay:

55-232	Sweet Mouth	Soli 32 and 8 bars. (M)
55-233	Blues In The Closet (Oscar's Blues)	Solo 36 bars. (FM)
55-233-alt.	Blues In The Closet (Oscar's Blues)	As above. (FM)
55-234	Dat's It	Solo 32 bars. (M)
55-235	Hey There	Solo with ens 56 bars to coda. (S)
55-235-alt.	Hey There	As above. (S)

WG is back after more than a year since his last recording session. He seems to be in reasonable good shape and plays quite well on all items. His sextet and the arrangements are not very interesting as such though, and he never really breaks through, but one should certainly not be negative towards his solo contributions. I prefer "Sweet Mouth" slightly to the blues choruses in "... Closet". "Dat's It" is very uneven, he seems to sleep during the first half of his solo but awakens and plays far better in the latter half. "Hey There" is pretty but not very exciting. To sum up; not too bad but not the WG session you choose to play among so many others. Postscript: Aftersome confusion, two alternate takes turned out! Particularly "... Closet" has some new fine variations.

WARDELL GRAY QUINTET**Chi. March 1955**

Possibly John Jenkins (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Norman Simmons (p), Victor Sproles (b), Nils-Bertil Dahlander (dm).

Private recordings from the Bee Hive Lounge, seven titles, not available.

FRANK MORGAN SEPTET**LA. early 1955**

Conte Candoli (tp), Frank Morgan (as), Wardell Gray (ts), Carl Perkins (p), Howard Roberts (g), Leroy Vinnegar (b), Lawrence Marable (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Gene Norman (two more without Candoli and Gray):

The Champ	Solo 36 bars. (F)
Milt's Tune	Solo 32 bars. (FM)
Neil's Blues	Solo 24 bars. (M)
Get Happy	No solo.

The final session of one of jazz tenorsaxophone's true great personalities, within a few months WG was found dead under mysterious circumstances. His drug addiction through several years and his teaming up with musicians sharing his problem, had in retrospective only one and tragic conclusion. However, his playing here does not seem to indicate any deterioration of his musical powers, on the contrary he plays with technique and inspiration. Although the session focuses on the talented altosax of the young Frank Morgan, there are three very fine tenorsax soli to be noticed; the blues in "The Champ" and "Neil's ...", while "... Tune" is a standard. With WG's death, jazz tenorsaxophone loses its first major modern performer, joining the great swingers Herschel Evans, Chu Berry and Dick Wilson in the eternal jam sessions.

WG was found dead in a ditch outside Las Vegas with a broken neck. The circumstances are now clear (ref. Han Schulte interviewing Teddy Edwards in the late 80s): Teddy was on the spot, May 1955 in Las Vegas, when WG died in his hotelroom after an overdose. His friends, working with the group of Benny Carter in LA, wanted no police trouble, so they put his body in a car and brought it to the desert. By unloading, the body fell on the ground and his neck was broken. That's it.

... 000 ...