

Jean Goldkette's Post-Bix Recordings: the Don Redman Arrangements - Part One

By Nick Dellow and Albert Haim

Introduction

Jazz discographies are replete with recordings that have caused controversy or confusion amongst record collectors and jazz enthusiasts, and in some instances the controversy has deepened with the passing of time. Such is the case with several recordings made in 1928 and 1929 by Jean Goldkette's band, namely *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You* (Victor 21590), *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* (Victor 21805), *Don't Be Like That* (Victor 21805) and *Birmingham Bertha* (Victor 22077). Over the years, a number of discographers, collectors and writers have suggested - or even categorically stated - that these recordings are actually by McKinney's Cotton Pickers or by a combination of Goldkette and McKinney sidemen, even though the original 78s are labelled "Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra" or "Jean Goldkette's Orchestra". However, apart from the fact that the sides were arranged by Don Redman, the musical director of McKinney's Cotton Pickers, the evidence for any direct involvement by McKinney men is highly contentious, as we shall see.

In investigating these "post-Bix" Goldkette recordings, the authors have collected and collated information from a range of sources, including newspapers, magazines, discographies and recording ledgers. A number of musicians were also consulted, and in this respect we wish to acknowledge, at the outset, the contribution of Frank van Nus, who has carefully considered all the technical aspects, musicologically speaking, of Jean Goldkette's Victor recordings of 1928 and 1929; his help has been of fundamental importance. Frank's skill in transcribing scores from the original Jean Goldkette recordings earned him the Jean Goldkette Foundation Award in 2003 "for musical excellence in the Goldkette tradition". We are also grateful to the noted musician, bandleader, collector and jazz historian Vince Giordano, whose considered opinion that *Birmingham Bertha* is a recording by Jean Goldkette's orchestra, and not one by McKinney's Cotton Pickers, provided the initial incentive to carry out further research. Vince Giordano and his Nighthawks have frequently performed numbers associated with Jean Goldkette's band, and these recreations have been widely praised for their authenticity.

Early theories and discographical listings

As far as the authors can ascertain, the suggestion that McKinney's Cotton Pickers may have been involved in Jean Goldkette recordings was first considered in print in the November 15, 1943 edition of *Down Beat* magazine. In George Hoefer Jr's *The Hot Box* column in this issue, the findings of one Frank Holland of Detroit are discussed.^[1] Hoefer reports that Goldkette's *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*, *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don't Be Like That* are likely to be by McKinney's Cotton Pickers, according to Holland's research. The close sequencing of the recording matrices is cited as evidence of collusion between the bands:

"The record Victor 21590 *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You* on master 46097 fits neatly into the McKinney Cotton Picker (sic) sides listed on page 93 of *Hot Discography*. Masters 46093, 4, 5,



6, 8, and 9 are listed and Victor advises they were made in Chicago July 11 and 12, 1928 with four saxes, two cornets, trombone, banjo, piano, tuba and drums, with Don Redman conducting*... Also, on November 23, 1928 McKinney waxed master numbers 48619 [*It's Tight Like That*] and 48620 [*There's A Rainbow Round My Shoulder*] in Chicago with the same instrumentation as above. These two sides were released on Victor 38013. Listed on the labels as Goldkette records are masters 48617 and 48618, also waxed on November 23rd in Chicago. The former master is *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and the latter is *Don't Be Like That*, both released as Goldkette on Victor 21805. Holland avers these two sides sound very much like the McKinney band."

(*Note: For further information on the allocation of matrix numbers for the recording sessions of July 12, 1928, see the Victor recording sheets reproduced elsewhere in this article – ND, AH)

Hoefer rounds off his column by stating:-

"The McKinney and Goldkette bands were closely associated in Detroit at the Greystone (sic) Ballroom and it is very likely that some of the Goldkette Victor 21000 series sides were actually made by McKinney's Cotton Pickers."

The reference to the bands playing in Detroit is true for McKinney's Cotton Pickers but not so for the post-Bix Goldkette

Victor recording band that made the sides under consideration here. This is a misconception that we shall return to later in the article.

The *Hot Discography* referred to in the *Down Beat* article is of course the well-known work compiled by Charles Delaunay, which was first published in Paris in 1936 as the *Hot Discographie*. This and subsequent editions of Delaunay's discography only list the Jean Goldkette records that feature Bix Beiderbecke, and although McKinney's Cotton Pickers' recordings are listed, no connection with the Goldkette band is made or inferred. A number of other early jazz discographies do address the theory of a connection though. One of the first of these was Orin Blackstone's *Index To Jazz*,^[2] which was published in four volumes by *Record Changer* magazine over the period 1945 to 1948. In the listings for McKinney's Cotton Pickers' recordings, Blackstone adds a note that the Goldkette recordings of *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*, *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don't Be Like That* "may be McKinney sides", quoting the *Down Beat* article referred to above.

In their *Jazz Directory*,^[3] published in the early 1950s, Dave Carey and Albert McCarthy also add a note in the listings for McKinney's Cotton Pickers' recordings:

"The possible interchange of members of the Goldkette band and the McKinney Cotton Pickers (sic) for recording purposes has long been a subject of controversy among collectors. This has undoubtedly been accentuated by the proximity, even intermingling, of matrix numbers but, as Victor did not apply a stringently logical system, this evidence on its own may be worthless. Nevertheless, the "white" sound of some of the solo work on the McKinneys, coupled with the McKinney ensemble sound on some of the relevant Goldkettes, makes this a subject for further research."

An article by John Davis and Gray Clarke, also published in the early 1950s, examines various Goldkette recordings, including several from 1928-1929. The authors state that *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You* "...bears an extraordinary resemblance to contemporary McKinney records."^[4]

A decade later, the indefatigable discographer Brian Rust published the first edition of his *Jazz Records*,^[5] which has, through subsequent revisions and expansions, become the standard discographical reference work for jazz recordings up to 1942. In early editions, Rust lists *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now*, *Don't Be Like That* and *Birmingham Bertha* under Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra, but the personnel given is essentially that of McKinney's Cotton Pickers:

My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now and Don't Be Like That:

John Nesbitt, Langston Curl and another, t; Claude Jones and another (? — Herring), tb; Don Redman, James Hoxley, cl/as; George Thomas, cl/ts; four unknown violins [*Don't Be Like That* only]; Todd Rhodes (?), p; Dave Wilborn (?), bj; Ralph Escudero (?), bb; Cuba Austin (?), d; Van Fleming, vcl; Harold Stokes, dir/vcl.

Birmingham Bertha:

John Nesbitt, Langston Curl, t; Claude Jones, tb; Don Redman, James Hoxley, cl/as; George Thomas, cl/ts; Cornell Smelser, acc; Todd Rhodes (?), p; Dave Wilborn (?), bj; Ralph Escudero (?), bb; Cuba Austin (?), d; Kay Palmer, vcl.

In the third edition of *Jazz Records*, published in 1969, both *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don't Be Like That* were relisted as being by the usual Jean Goldkette Orchestra, with no connection to McKinney's personnel save for Don Redman being the arranger of both sides. No explanation is provided for this reassessment, beyond a short note concerning Redman's role as arranger: "hence close similarity to the McKinney's Cotton Pickers sound". *Birmingham Bertha*, however, continued to be listed with a personnel predominately made up of McKinney's Cotton Pickers sidemen, with the following adjustments being made in the third edition: James Hoxley was removed, Harold Stokes was given as the piano-accordionist instead of Smelser; a second unknown trombonist was added along with two unknown violins; and the question marks concerning several of the musicians were removed. In the sixth edition - published in 2002 as *Jazz and Ragtime Records 1897-1942 - Birmingham Bertha* was removed altogether from the listings for Jean Goldkette recordings and placed with an unissued side recorded during the same session (*I'm Refer'n' Just To Her 'n' Me*) under the listings for McKinney's Cotton Pickers, with the comment: "Victor 22077 as Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra."

Several other jazz researchers, writers and discographers subsequently ascribed these post-Bix Goldkette recordings to McKinney's Cotton Pickers or a combination of Goldkette and McKinney men, though their findings have done little to solve the collective conundrums generated by their forebears. For instance, a discographical review of McKinney's Cotton Pickers' recordings conducted by John Chilton, John R.T. Davies and Laurie Wright in 1970^[6] includes *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don't Be Like That*, noting the possible presence of several McKinney sidemen (John Nesbitt, Don Redman, Dave Wilborn and Cuba Austin), but *Birmingham Bertha* is not listed. On the other hand, in the sleeve notes for Volume Two of the RCA "Black & White" LP series entitled *McKinney's Cotton Pickers*, which was issued in 1973, the French jazz critic and writer Daniel Nevers claims: "For *Birmingham Bertha*, the group [McKinney's Cotton Pickers] is almost complete...", a statement he reaffirmed in a later series of RCA "Jazz Tribune" double LPs of the band's recordings: "*Birmingham Bertha*, likewise issued under Goldkette's name, is in reality a McKinney's product." Nevers further states that *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don't Be Like That* were recorded by a combination of Goldkette and McKinney men, including John Nesbitt, Don Redman, Milton Senior, Dave Wilborn and Cuba Austin.

That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You is also listed as a hybrid Goldkette-McKinney side by Nevers, though while the earlier RCA LP series names several McKinney men as being on this recording (with Don Redman, Milton Senior and Dave Wilborn specifically mentioned) the later RCA LP series only lists Milton Senior. Brian Rust was actually the first to suggest that Milton Senior was responsible for the clarinet solo on this side, stating in early editions of *Jazz Records* that "John Nesbitt (tpt), Claude Jones (tbn), Milton Senior (clt) and possibly other members of McKinney's Cotton Pickers take soli on *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*". In later editions of *Jazz Records*, Rust seems less sure, simply suggesting that the clarinet solo "sounds" like a McKinney man, listing Milton Senior or Prince Robinson as possibilities; his suggestion that McKinney men were responsible for the other solos on this side does not appear after the second edition.

Tom Lord's discography - both CD and online versions - follows Rust's earlier attribution for *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*,

and adds to the general confusion by stating that *Just Imagine* - made at the same Goldkette recording session - also features John Nesbitt, Claude Jones and Milton Senior.

Finally, the discography for the Timeless CD *Jean Goldkette Bands 1924-1929* (CBC 1-084), which was released in 2003, gives personnel for *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*, *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now*, *Don't Be Like That* and *Birmingham Bertha* that are similar to those listed in Rust's *Jazz and Ragtime Records*.

Jean Goldkette, Don Redman and McKinney's Cotton Pickers

By 1927, Jean Goldkette and his business partner Charles Horvath had built up an impressive entertainments business that spanned the interlinking fields of dance bands, ballrooms and radio stations. Called N.A.C. (National Amusement Corporation), the business was based in Detroit but extended across the Midwest. Amongst the bands that N.A.C. controlled, either directly or through related organizations that Jean Goldkette headed, were Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, The Orange Blossoms (later to become the Casa Loma Orchestra), and Fred Bergin and the Vagabond Orchestra. Ballrooms and entertainment venues that N.A.C. either owned or leased included: the Graystone Ballroom in Detroit; the Blue Lantern at Lake Island in Michigan; the Casino at Hudson Lake, Indiana; the Sand Lake Pavilion near the Irish Hills in Michigan; and the Edgewater Park Ballroom, situated in the Edgewater Park, Detroit. N.A.C. also part-owned the WJR radio station in Detroit.

Ballroom, the cornerstone of the Goldkette-Horvath empire, situated at the intersection of Canfield Street with Woodward Avenue in midtown Detroit. Writers and discographers - both past and present - have sometimes incorrectly assumed that the band was based in Chicago or New York. For instance, in his book *My Kind Of Jazz*, published in 1990, Brian Rust writes: "After leaving Henderson in 1927, Redman took the active leadership of McKinney's Cotton Pickers in Chicago and afterwards in New York". In the sleeve notes for one of the RCA LPs referred to above, Daniel Nevers states that: "Don Redman then decided to branch out on his own, and he went to Chicago where he became an orchestra leader himself. It was thus that McKinney's Cotton Pickers were born", and in the sleeve notes for another LP he states: "The headquarters from which the band set out had up to then been Chicago. After 1929....McKinney's Cotton Pickers moved on to New York". Such incorrect assumptions are no doubt based on the fact that McKinney's Cotton Pickers initially recorded in Chicago (there being no recording studio in Detroit at the time) and later - during extensive East Coast tours - in New York.

William McKinney's association with the Goldkette organization began in the Autumn of 1926, when his band - named McKinney's Syncos (previously known as the Synco Jazz Band) - played a five month stint in Detroit at the Arcadia Ballroom, which was leased by Goldkette. This was followed in the Spring of 1927 by a two week try-out at the Graystone Ballroom, playing opposite the most famous and best remembered version of Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra, which included Bix Beiderbecke and Frank Trumbauer amongst its ranks. Known colloquially as "The Victor Recording Band", it recorded a total of 19

McKinney's Cotton Pickers were based at the famous Graystone



McKinney's Syncos (probably taken at the Arcadia Ballroom, Detroit, late 1926). Left to right: Front Row: Milton Senior, George Thomas, Wesley Stewart (saxes); Middle Row: Claude Jones (trombone), John Nesbitt, Gus McClung (trumpets), Dave Wilborn (banjo); Back Row: Cuba Austin (drums), June Cole (sousaphone), Todd Rhodes (piano), William McKinney (standing)

sides (not including alternate/rejected takes) in 1926 and 1927, several of which capture Bix at the peak of his creativity.

McKinney's outfit proved to be a good crowd puller during its fortnight at the Graystone, and it was obvious that it would make an excellent addition to the roster of bands controlled by Goldkette and Horvath. The band subsequently played a series of engagements in Dayton and Cleveland, booked through N.A.C., before returning to Detroit to open at the Graystone on September 27, 1927 under a new name – McKinney's Cotton Pickers – and, more significantly, under a new musical director, Don Redman.

The appointment of Don Redman in July 1927 was something of a coup. At that time, Fletcher Henderson's band played at the Graystone Ballroom on a fairly regular basis, and during one of these gigs William McKinney approached Redman with an offer to become the musical director of his band. Redman initially turned down the proposition, but McKinney, with the backing of Goldkette and Horvath, persisted until eventually Redman agreed to an offer of \$300 a week, significantly higher than the \$75 a week the rest of McKinney's Cotton Pickers were paid. Having been persuaded to leave Fletcher Henderson's Orchestra, where his exceptional abilities as an arranger had helped the band to become one of the finest in the world, Redman took on the task of turning McKinney's Cotton Pickers into a top-class unit of similar repute.

According to Frank 'Cork' O'Keefe, who worked for Goldkette and Horvath in the 1920s as a booking agent, McKinney's Cotton Pickers proved to be good value for money:

"McKinney's Cotton Pickers played an important part in the success of the Graystone Ballroom, perhaps even a vital one, because Goldkette's own all-star band invariably lost him money - the salary bills were so high. Eventually he had to disband his 'Number One' unit [the band featuring Bix and Trumbauer] in September 1927 because he was losing a thousand dollars a week on them."^[7]

As with Henderson's band, Redman's innovative arrangements were the key to McKinney's success, not just at the Graystone, but also via weekly broadcasts over Detroit's WJR radio station and far wider appreciation by way of the band's Victor recordings. Bandleader Andy Kirk recalled that:

"Back in the 1920s, everything was based on triads and dominant seventh chords. Then some bands, McKinney's Cotton Pickers among them, added a sixth note [the sixth note of the chord]. To get a full sound they added a fourth sax not doubling [anyone else's note], but filling out the chord."^[8]

The McKinney sidemen reacted positively to Redman's skill and enthusiasm, though his insistence that the band go 'back-to-basics' when learning arrangements sometimes resulted in rather chaotic rehearsals in the basement of the Graystone, as Cuba Austin recalled:

"Don had a blackboard and started right in teaching us fundamentals. He would put a note on the board and say: 'How many beats has this note?' Wilborn would shout out 'Two beats, Don': someone else would holler, 'Aw man, you know that ain't right - that's got three beats'; then all the rest would rise up a general hub-bub, all arguing and shouting and all the answers would be different until Don restored order."^[9]

Redman's tenacity paid off though, as the band's banjoist Dave Wilborn remembered: "Once Don drilled us to play his genius-inspired advanced arrangements it meant public acclaim, a Victor recording contract, and high pay for the next seven or eight years."^[7]

However, Redman was careful not to grind the musicians' enthusiasm down by a relentless need for perfection. He had a particularly *laissez faire* attitude towards solos, as Cuba Austin recalled: "Don believed in the solos not being too refined".^[9] Redman emphasised the point himself in an interview conducted by Frank Driggs in the late 1950s:

"The Cotton Pickers wasn't a solo band, but a unit. I was trying to get a style and a sound a little different than the other bands. Out in Detroit we really had that town sewed up and the people used to be wild over our stuff."^[10]

By the spring of 1928, Jean Goldkette felt the band was good enough to seek a recording contract with Victor. He threw a lavish party at the Edgewater Park Ballroom in Detroit for one of its managers, Leroy Shield, in a successful bid to persuade him to record the band. Goldkette recalled the event some years later:

"I took Mr Shield out to the Edgewater Park Ballroom, which I also owned and where Mac's [McKinney's] band was playing. Leroy was terrifically impressed and promised faithfully to use his influence to let the band record. Shortly afterward he kept his promise!"^[9]

Shield was an important recording manager at Victor in the 1920s and often oversaw Jean Goldkette and Paul Whiteman sessions. He was present at several of McKinney's Cotton Pickers' dates at Victor's studios in Chicago, as shown on the recording sheets that are reproduced in this article. These weren't the only recording sessions by a black band that Shield supervised; he was also responsible for a number of King Oliver's Victor sessions.

Right from their earliest recordings, which were made at Victor's Chicago studios on July 11, 1928, McKinney's Cotton Pickers' sidemen display a *joie de vivre* and an uplifting, swinging ensemble sound, one that is propelled by an exceptional rhythm section, with Cuba Austin displaying a masterful use of cymbals and "press rolls" (Zutty Singleton once told Dan Morgenstern that Austin had the "greatest press roll of them all"). Occasional pitching issues - John Nesbitt, in particular, has a tendency to play sharp - are outweighed by the band's sheer drive. Amongst the soloists, Prince Robinson on tenor sax and clarinet and Claude Jones on trombone are the most outstanding.

Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra after Bix

In the Autumn of 1927, Jean Goldkette organized a new band under the "Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra" banner, this time for an engagement at the newly established Pla-Mor Ballroom in Kansas City. The band comprised:

Myron Schulz, vn, v, dir: Nat Natoli, Andy Secrest, Sterling Bose, t / Lorin Schulz, tb / Red Ginsler, tb / Larry Tice, cl, as / Bob Hutsell, cl, as / Reggie Severin, cl, as, ts / Ray Porter, cl, as, ts / Harold Stokes, pac, a / Harry Bason, p / Hoagy Carmichael, p, v / Joe Galbraith, bj / Harold George, bb / Mel Miller, d, vib.^[11]

Several members of this band, including Secrest, Porter and Schulz, had previously played with the Royal Peacocks, a band

based in Indianapolis. By the Autumn of 1927, bookings for the Royal Peacocks were thin on the ground, and so when an opportunity came from Jean Goldkette to reform the band for the Pla-Mor job, they took it, as jazz historian Duncan Schiedt outlined:

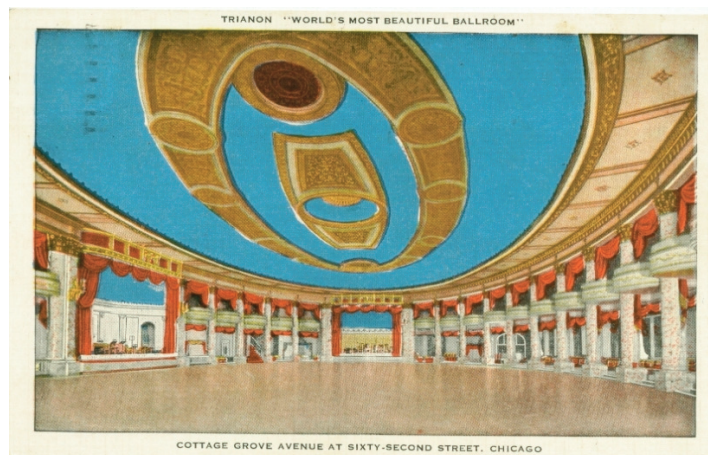
“.....an offer from Jean Goldkette lay on Myron’s desk. The celebrated band impresario, having lost his primary “hot” band [the one with Bix and Trumbauer], was anxious to reorganize for a booking at Kansas City’s Pla-Mor Ballroom. He had in mind the nucleus of the Royal Peacocks.”^[12]

The Pla-Mor Ballroom, located at 3124 Main Street in Kansas City, opened its doors on November 24, 1927. Built at a cost of over \$500,000, the ballroom featured a 14,000 square foot wooden dance floor that flexed up to one quarter of an inch thanks to underfloor springing. The Goldkette band played to a crowd of 4,100 dancers on the opening night, with Jean Goldkette himself conducting - one of the few occasions he appeared in public with the band.

The outfit also recorded as Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra on December 12 and December 14, 1927, in temporary recording facilities that Victor had set up in Kansas City (there being no permanent Victor studios in the city). The resultant records - *So Tired / Just A Little Kiss From A Little Miss* (Victor 21150) and *My Ohio Home / Here Comes The Show Boat* (Victor 21166) - show just what a fine band this was, with notable solos from members of both the brass and sax teams, and even Harold Stokes plays some pretty hot stuff on his piano-accordion. Hoagy Carmichael takes the vocals on *My Ohio Home* and *So Tired*, recorded on December 12, 1927 (he is not present on the December 14, 1927 session). The second violin that can be heard in the coda of *My Ohio Home* is almost certainly one of the musicians doubling. The Victor files show only three saxophones for the December 14 session, which tallies with what is heard.

Harold Stokes and the Trianon band

Mention of Harold Stokes brings us to the next chapter in the history of the post-Bix Goldkette band that recorded for Victor. In June 1928, Stokes directed a new Goldkette outfit based in Chicago, which included several members of the earlier Pla-Mor outfit, namely: Sterling Bose, Nat Natoli (despite what various discographers state, Natoli is audibly present on the earliest of the Chicago band’s recordings) and Larry Tice. The engagement was at the Trianon Ballroom, located at Cottage Grove Avenue



The Trianon Ballroom interior

at Sixty-Second Street. The ballroom could hold 5,000 dancers and had full air-conditioning. An advertisement announcing the new band appeared in a Chicago newspaper, the *Hyde Park Herald*, on June 15, 1928.

The Trianon and its sister ballroom the Aragon were owned and managed by the Karzas brothers (William and Andrew), who had diverged into the ballroom business in the mid-1920s using the profits they made running nickelodeons and movie houses in Chicago. The Trianon was promoted and run as a ‘respectable’ ballroom in order to attract a more middle class audience who might otherwise avoid dance halls: women were not allowed to smoke (men were of course!) and staff were strategically posted around the hall to make sure that there was no undesirable activity between the sexes. The Aragon’s resident band in the late 1920s was directed by Wayne King, who specialized in sweet music (and waltzes in particular). According to *Billboard* magazine of June 30, 1928, business at both of the Karzas brothers’ dance halls was very brisk and, as a result, the Goldkette and King bands would often alternate between the two venues to add variety.

The Trianon residency was a significant engagement for Goldkette. With the job secured, he set about arranging for the band to record for Victor. The multi-talented Don Redman was dispatched to the Trianon Ballroom to rehearse this latest version of “Jean Goldkette and His Orchestra”, in advance of its recording session of July 12, 1928, when his arrangement of *That’s Just My Way Of Forgetting You* was recorded. The June 9, 1928 edition of the *Chicago Defender* - an influential black weekly newspaper - reported Redman’s presence in Chicago:

“Donald Redmond (sic), the arranger and musician, is in Chicago this week, rehearsing a Goldkette band playing at the Trianon dance hall. He is located in Detroit with McKinney’s Cotton Pickers orchestra.”

John Chilton states that Redman was commissioned to write a number of arrangements for the Goldkette band,^[7] though Sterling Bose recalled that McKinney’s Cotton Pickers and the Goldkette band simply “traded” arrangements.^[9] However, Redman’s arrangements as recorded by the Goldkette band must at least have been adapted for its instrumentation, which differed in several important respects from McKinney’s Cotton Pickers’ line-up. McKinney’s had a four-strong sax section, while the Goldkette band had three, and McKinney’s had only one trombone whereas the Goldkette band had two. *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don’t Be Like That* also feature parts for two



Records by: JEAN GOLDKETTE AND HIS ORCHESTRA.

Marking	Letter	Pitch	Serial Number	Matrix Number	SELECTION, COMPOSER, PUBLISHER, ETC.	Wax	Rec.	F. Cur.	Amp. Set	Level	F. I.
Chicago, Lab. July, 12th, 1928 Instr. 3-Sax, 3-Cornets, 2-Trombones, Banjo, Piano, S. Bass					Stokes Dir.						
	BVE	96	46070	3	Just Imagine	Fox Trot	630-17	182	.9	2-2	#4 0
	BVE	96	46070	4	Comp. B.G. DeSylva-Lew Brown &		630-12	"	.9	3-3	#6 0
	BVE	96	46070	5	Ray Henderson.		630-12	"	.9	2-2	#4 0
			21565 A		Pub. & Copyr. DeSylva, Brown & Henderson Inc. 1927.						
					(Vocal Chorus Greta Woodson)						
	BVE	96	46097	1	That's just my way of FORGETTING YOU.		630-17"		.9	2-2	#4 0
	BVE	96	46097	2	Comp. B.G. DeSylva-Lew Brown &		630-12"		.9	3-3	#6 0
	BVE	96	46097	3	Ray Henderson.		630-12R"		.9	2-2	#4 0
			21590 B		Pub. & Copyr. DeSylva Brown & Henderson 1928						
					FOX TROT- Vocal Chorus by Jean Napier						
					Time 10:00 to 1:30 FE FL LS.						

flutes, and both *Don't Be Like That* and *Birmingham Bertha* have scoring for strings; none of these instruments were used in McKinney's Cotton Pickers' recordings.

As we have seen, suggestions that *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You* may have been made by a mixture of Goldkette and McKinney sidemen can be traced as far back as 1943,^[1] and theories concerning the involvement of McKinney men on this side persist to this day. For instance, Tom Lord's discography (both CD and online) states that several McKinney men are present, while in *Jazz and Ragtime Records*, Brian Rust notes: "Despite all assertions to the contrary, the clarinet solo on 46097-3 sounds very much like those heard on the McKinney's Cotton Pickers sides made on the same and the previous day in the same studio (? Milton Senior or Prince Robinson)".

In his liner notes for the Timeless CD *Jean Goldkette Bands 1924-1929* (CBC 1-084), jazz historian, writer and Adrian Rollini expert Ate van Delden also suggests that Milton Senior is possibly the clarinet soloist on *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*, stating that he is "...specifically mentioned on a Victor recording sheet". However, Milton Senior's name does not appear on the Victor recording sheet for this Goldkette session, which is reproduced here, nor is he listed in Victor's 'Recording Book', which gives the number of men that took part in each session, the name of the bandleader/director, and the date the band was paid. The source of the assertion that Senior's name is mentioned on the Victor recording sheet is Daniel Nevers, who provided Ate van Delden with information during the preparation of the Timeless CD.

That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You was made on the same day - July 12, 1928 - and in the same Victor studio as the second recording session by McKinney's Cotton Pickers, when Don Redman and his men recorded five numbers, including

Redman's own composition *Cherry*. Banjoist Dave Wilborn clearly recalled this session when he was interviewed in the mid-1970s; when asked about the possibility of collusion between the bands, he was adamant in his response: "No Goldkette man ever sat in on the *Cherry* session; it was all McKinney's men".^[7] We may also infer from Wilborn's comment that no sidemen from McKinney's Cotton Pickers sat in on Goldkette's morning session either, despite what Rust *et al* surmise.

In fact, there is no reason to assume that the clarinet solo on *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You* is by anyone other than Voltaire 'Volly' De Faut, a superb jazz clarinetist who joined the Harold Stokes-led Goldkette outfit in June 1928, at the start of



(Colored Orchestra Domestic)

*TPV-520 DON REDMAN - MASTER OF THE BIG BAND..JANUARY 1966 RELEASE

27 1139

"....After a while De Faut left [Ray] Miller in favour of Isham Jones, then he did a spell with the Alaban and Katz Theatre Band and finally joined Goldkette at the Trianon Ballroom in Chicago. Like Sterling Bose, a fellow member of this group, Volly pops up in occasional brief passages on some of Goldkette's Victors of this period....." [13]

During the 1920s, De Faut also recorded with Muggsy Spanier (The Bucktown Five and The Stomp Six) and with the bands of Merritt Brunies and Ray Miller.

In addition to Volly De Faut, Sterling Bose, Nat Natoli and Larry Tice, other members of the Trianon band included Pee Wee Hunt and Vernon Brown (trombones), Earl Baker (trumpet) and Steve Brown (string bass). Both Bose and Tice (on tenor sax) take short solos on *That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You*, and Steve Brown can clearly be heard plucking (and bowing) his bass in typical swinging fashion on this side.

July 12, 1928 wasn't the only occasion when McKinney's Cotton Pickers and the Jean Goldkette band took part in "back-to-back" recording sessions: *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and *Don't Be Like That* were recorded by the Goldkette band on November 23, 1928, on the same day that McKinney's Cotton Pickers made *It's Tight Like That* and *There's A Rainbow Round My Shoulder*, released on Victor V-38013.

These “back-to-back” sessions and the consequent close sequencing of the recording matrices have often been cited as evidence that McKinney and Goldkette men could have recorded together.^[1,2,3,4,5,6] However, the Victor recording sheets for July 12, 1928 and November 23, 1928, which are repro-

3304

6967 016 1162

Records by: **JEAN GOLDKETTE and his ORCHESTRA.**

Marking	Letter	Pitch	Serial Number	Matrix Number	SELECTION, COMPOSER, PUBLISHER, ETC.	Wax	Rec.	F. Cnt.	Amp. Set	Level	F. L.
Chicago-Lab. November 23rd-1928. Harold Stokes Dir. Shield Present.											
Instr: 4-Violins-3-Sax-3-Trumpets-2-Trombones-Banjo-Tuba-Piano-Trapman											
BVE	96		48616	1	Withered Roses — Fox Trot	650-98R	182	.9	2-1	42	0
BVE	96		48616	2	Comp. Charlie Garland- Haven Gillespie	650-95R	"	.9	2-2	44	0
BVE	96		48616	3	and Larry Shay	650-95R	"	.9	2-2	44	0
Pub. & Copyr. Harold Rosciter Music Company Chicago-1928.											
(Vocal Chorus Van Fleming)											
BVE	96		48617	1	My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now	650-98R	182	.9	2-1	42	0
BVE	96		48617	2	Comp. Irving Caesar & Cliff Friend	650-95R	"	.9	2-2	44	0
BVE	96		48617	3	Pub. & Copyr. Leo Feist 1928.	650-95R	"	.9	2-2	44	0
FOX TROT (Vocal Van Fleming)											
NOTE:- No Violins in this Selection											
BVE	96		48618	1	Don't Be Like That — Fox Trot	650-95R	"	.9	2-2	42	0
BVE	96		48618	2	Comp. Archie Cottler- Charles	650-82	"	.9	4-2	44	0
BVE	96		48618	3	Tobias and Maceo Pinkard.	650-82	"	.9	3-3	46	0
Pub. & Copyr. Shapiro, Bernstein & Co. 1928.											
(Vocal by Harold Stokes)											
Time 10:30 to 12:00 & 1:00 to 5:00 PM FL.											

Interestingly, the November 23, 1928 recording ledgers for both McKinney's Cotton Pickers and the Jean Goldkette Orchestra specifically state that "Mr Shield" was present. Leroy Shield oversaw many Goldkette sessions at Victor and also had a personal interest in McKinney's early sessions, since he was responsible for securing their recording contract, as noted earlier. His presence may indicate why the bands both recorded on the same day.

Incidentally, the fact that the matrix number for *Just Imagine* – recorded by the Goldkette band during their July 12, 1928 session – is out-of-sequence is simply due to it having been held over from the band's previous recording session of July 9, 1928, during which two takes of *Just Imagine* were made but rejected. Three takes of the re-allocated matrix were made, of which take 4 was released. The rejected takes 1 and 2 were eventually issued in 2003, when they both appeared on the Timeless Records CD *Jean Goldkette Bands 1924-1929* (CBC 1084). All issued takes feature an excellent trumpet obbligato by Sterling Bose, which was previously thought by some to be the work of Bix Beiderbecke.

(To be continued)

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Records by: **McKINNEY'S COTTON PICKERS. (COLORED ORCHESTRA)**

Marking	Letter	Pitch	Serial Number	Matrix Number	SELECTION, COMPOSER, PUBLISHER, ETC.	Wax	Rec.	F. Cnt.	Amp. Set	Level	F. L.
Chicago-Lab. November-23rd-1928. Mr. Shield & Redman Present.											
Instr: 3 Sax, 2-Cornets, Trombone, Banjo, Piano, Tuba, Trapman, (Don Redman Piano & Dir.)											
BVE	96		48619	1	It's Tight Like That. — Fox Trot	650-83R	182	.9	2-1	44	0
BVE	96		48619	2	Comp. Dorsey & Whittaker.	650-83R	"	.9	2-2	46	0
BVE	96		48619	3	Verbal Manuscript.	650-47	"	.9	2-1	44	0
(Vocal by George Thomas)											
BVE	96		48620	1	There's A Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder	650-51R	182	.9	2-1	42	0
BVE	96		48620	2	Comp. Al Jolson-Dave Dreyer &	650-15	"	.9	2-2	44	0
BVE	96		48620	3	Billy Rose.	650-50	"	.9	2-1	44	0
Pub. & Copyr. Irving Berlin Inc. 1928.											
FOX TROT (Vocal Chorus by Dave Wilborn)											
Time 6:00 to 9:00 P.M. PM FL.											

References

- [1] *The Hot Box*, George Hoefer Jr, Down Beat, November 15, 1943.
- [2] *Index To Jazz* (Vol. 3), Orin Blackstone, Record Changer, Fairfax, Virginia, USA, 1947.
- [3] *Jazz Directory* (Vol. 3), Dave Carey and Albert McCarthy, The Delphic Press, Fordingbridge, Hampshire, UK, 1951.
- [4] *Glimmerings On Goldkette*, John Davis and Gray Clarke, Jazz Music, London, UK, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1950.
- [5] *Jazz Records, A-Z, 1897-1931* (second edition), Brian A.L. Rust, self-published, Middlesex, UK, 1962.
- [6] *McKinney's*, John Chilton, John R.T. Davies and Laurie Wright, Storyville, London, UK, No. 32, December 1970.
- [7] *McKinney's Music*, John Chilton, Bloomsbury Bookshop, London, UK, 1978.
- [8] *Swing Out: Great Negro Dance Bands*, Gene Fennett, Pendell Publishing Co, Midland, Michigan, USA. 1970.
- [9] *McKinney's Cotton Pickers*, Thurman and Mary Grove, Record Changer, New York, USA, Vol. 10 No. 11, 1951.
- [10] *Don Redman – Jazz Composer-Arranger*, Frank Driggs, Jazz Review, New York, USA, Vol 2, No 2, November 1959.
- [11] *Jazz and Ragtime Records 1897-1942*, 6th Edition, Brian Rust (Malcolm Shaw, editor), Mainspring Press, Denver, Colorado, USA, 2002.
- [12] *The Jazz State of Indiana*, Duncan Schiedt, self-published, Pittsboro, Indiana, USA, 1977.
- [13] *Volly De Faut*, Ralph Venables, Jazz Music, London, UK, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1946.
- [14] *McKinney's Cotton Pickers 1928-1930: The Band That Don Redman Built*, Dan Morgenstern, Bluebird CD 2275-2-RB, BMG Music, New York, USA, 1990.

duced here, clearly show that the bands were recorded in separate sessions, with no indication of collaboration. On July 12, the Goldkette session took place between 10.00 am and 1.30 pm, with McKinney's allotted the afternoon slot, starting at 2.00 pm and finishing at 6.45 pm. On November 23, the Goldkette band recorded from 10.30 am until 5.00 pm, with a break for lunch, while McKinney's Cotton Pickers started at 6.00 pm and finished around 9.00 pm. As was usual for the time, all the recording sheets for McKinney's Cotton Pickers state "Colored Orchestra".

It has also been suggested that Don Redman directed the Goldkette band during their recording of his arrangement of *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now*.^[14] Again, the Victor recording sheet presented here indicates otherwise; all of the sides recorded by the Goldkette band during their session of November 23, 1928 - including *My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* - were directed by Harold Stokes. Don Redman is shown as director only on the recording sheets for McKinney's Cotton Pickers. (*My Blackbirds Are Bluebirds Now* and its session mate *Don't Be Like That* are considered in more depth in Part Two of this article).

