

**PRAISE THE LORD AND  
PASS THE AMMUNITION:  
Songs of World Wars I & II**

**New World Records 80222**

Historians measure time by the occurrence of wars, and individuals, too, describe the stages of their lives in terms of these awesome mileposts. Since music is such a basic element of life, the music of war retains a special meaning. War's songs are not easily forgotten, and the endurance of some strains is remarkable.

While "Yankee Doodle" is indelibly associated with the American Revolution, its obscure ancestor may have been a jingle intoned before the eighteenth century. The fife tune "The Girl I Left Behind Me" survives from Colonial days. The War of 1812 provided our national anthem's poem. A host of familiar songs still casts audible shadows from the Civil War: "Dixie," "Aura Lee," "Darling Nellie Gray," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." (See New World Records 80202-2, *Songs of the Civil War*.)

In addition to these, many marches became venerable favorites through the years, with Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" perhaps heading the list. "The Field Artillery Song" (also known as the "Caisson Song" and the "Infantry Song"), "Anchors Aweigh," and the "Marines' Hymn" (based on a duet from Offenbach's comic opera *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein*) are permanent fixtures in American life.

The songs of World War I and World War II, some of which compose this program, also retain their special meanings. The cliché that wars no longer inspire worthwhile popular music can be ignored. Jerome Kern's "Till the Clouds Roll By" cannot be disassociated from the year 1917. Irving Berlin's "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" (see New World Records NW 238, *The Vintage Irving Berlin*) now seems as familiar as a folk song. The songs of World War II are often felt to be inferior to those of World War I, but wartime loneliness, romantic fantasy, and even forced optimism can be clearly heard in Jerry Gray's "A String of Pearls," the Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer hits "One for My Baby" and "Accent-tchu-ate the Positive," Ralph Blane and Hugh Martin's "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," and Duke Ellington and Bob Russell's "Do Noth-in' till You Hear from Me." Writers finally realized that martial spirit is by no means a vital ingredient for a good wartime song.

The public indifference to the Korean War was mirrored by the indifference of commercial songwriters. Wartime songs were no longer war songs. A minor but curious exception was inspired by the controversial Douglas MacArthur, who ended his nationally televised farewell address to Congress after his dismissal from command with lines from an old army song: "Old soldiers never die; they just fade away." Record companies rushed out versions of the song, which were enthusiastically plugged by disc jockeys. Otherwise, many veterans returned humming the Korean national anthem, but it was not given commercial notice in the States. The Vietnam War was a different matter. For the most part, well-established commercial writers did not risk professional security by producing songs either in support of or in opposition to the conflict. But other writers—like Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, and Bob Dylan—did create songs of protest, and prolifically.

Apart from the wars themselves, changing technology stimulated profound change in the musical environment. Technology made musical innovations instantaneously known and commonplace and had the capacity to expand the market and simultaneously to introduce “fresh” material to supplant the “recent.” This may have been bad commercial policy, but phonograph records, radio, sound motion pictures, and television created contradictions as well as change.

After World War I, the music from that conflict remained readily available, preserved on phonograph records and in sheet music in thousands of homes, for a generation.

The staying power of some World War II songs might have been better had the phonograph industry not revolutionized records and home playback equipment by making 78 rpm discs obsolete less than half a decade after the war. The new mobility in postwar America also made heavy stacks of fragile shellac discs impractical. Moreover, the disappearance of sheet music and pianos from postwar living rooms made it even more difficult for the old songs to be heard.

Another result of technology in World War II is worth mentioning. Popular American wartime songs were regularly broadcast to the men in the Pacific by Tokyo Rose from Japan. Her record program was among the most listened-to in the world at the time. There was no program from Germany with comparable impact, but the radio’s influence can nevertheless be noted in one instance. The popular German song “Lilli Marlene” was picked up by G.I.s and was soon introduced to a receptive American audience. Some have claimed that “Lilli Marlene” was the most popular of all songs from World War II.

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## THE RECORDINGS

Side One  
Band 1

### ***When the Lusitania Went Down***

*(Charles McCarron and Nat Vincent)*

Herbert Stuart (Albert Wiederhold), vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded summer, 1915, in New York. Originally issued on Columbia A-1772.*

On May 7, 1915, the *Lusitania* was torpedoed, a tragic event effectively exploited by American pro-war interests. Although the *Lusitania* was a British ship carrying arms and ammunition through waters known to be patrolled by hostile submarines in search of such targets, the loss of 124 American passengers caused genuine anger in the United States.

The American debate on the question of war or peace increased its tempo. William Jennings Bryan, a staunch advocate of strict neutrality, resigned as Secretary of State because he refused to support Wilson's strong protest, which the President expressed to Germany in a series of "*Lusitania* Notes." Bryan knew that Wilson was by that time in the British camp.

Despite pro-British propaganda, many Americans were still reluctant to enter the European war. Tin Pan Alley, however, started lining up behind the Allies. During 1915 the music industry successfully plugged two British war tunes into such prominence that they are still sung: "Keep the Home Fires Burning" and a truly rousing number that tells us war is fun, "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag and Smile, Smile, Smile." Sigmund Spaeth termed the latter "perhaps the most optimistic song ever written." Though timely, American counterparts such as "In Time of Peace Prepare for War" or this song about the *Lusitania* lacked lasting appeal. Otherwise, 1915 still saw the production of a large body of popular music without any war or peace orientation whatever; the better, more durable numbers include "Ragging the Scale," "Hello, Frisco!," and "The Perfect Song." The last was from the score for D. W. Griffith's silent movie *The Birth of a Nation* and survived for many years as the theme of the *Amos 'n' Andy* radio series.

The tune here offers a surprisingly jolly contrast for the tragic events described, and the lyrics, too, are jarring in their casual inconsequentiality. The fourth verse incorporates a quote from "Asleep in the Deep," a nineteenth-century chestnut that was a perennial favorite of uncountable amateur basses. Note the singer's rendering of "Lusitania," which he pronounces with a rather affected broad "a."

Herbert Stuart, who did not record widely, changed his name from Albert Wiederhold, no doubt to avoid the handicap that many artists of German stock experienced during World War I. Walter Van Brunt, the recording star, changed his name to Scanlon. Victor Herbert—born in Ireland and reared in Germany—became the butt of unkind remarks. The famous, and beloved, Metropolitan Opera contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink, who lived in America, lost her eldest son, August, who fought on the side of Austria; her four other sons served with the Allies. John J. Kimmel sang under the name of Kimble, and Adolph J. Hahl, who enjoyed considerable attention as a singer of traditional and popular German songs until the war began, permanently changed his name to Arthur Hall. Hall's German accent can be detected on some of his vocals for dance bands in the twenties.

The nation is sad as can be,  
A message came over the sea.  
A thousand or more, who sailed from our shore,  
Have gone to eternity.

The Statue of Liberty high,  
Must now have a tear in her eye.  
I think it's a shame; no one is to blame,  
But all we can do is just sigh.

Some of us lost a true sweetheart,  
Some of us lost a dear dad,  
Some lost their mothers, sisters and brothers  
Some lost the best friends they had.

It's time they were stopping this warfare,  
If women and children must cry.  
Many brave hearts went to sleep in the deep,  
When the Lusitania went down.

Oh, listen to all these good deeds.  
When we feel like crossing the sea,  
American ships that sail from our slips,  
Are safer for you and me.

A Yankee can go anywhere  
As long as Old Glory is there.  
Although they were warned, the warning they  
scorned,  
And now we must cry in despair.  
(Repeat third and fourth verses)

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Band 2

***I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier***

*(Al Piantadosi and Alfred Bryan)*

Morton Harvey, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded fall, 1916, in New York. Originally issued on Victor 17716.*

With the coming of war in Europe in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson publicly adopted a stance of neutrality. Sentiments among the American people, however, were divided from the beginning. Irish- and German-Americans were essentially anti-British; other segments of the population were either uninterested or pro-British, the latter outlook fostered by ties of language, legal and political institutions, and other elements of a common heritage. Many people were simply fearful of war's terrible consequences.

In early 1915 America's future was still uncertain. Many, even in Europe, felt that the war would be over by Christmas. Henry Ford financed and headed a pathetic peace delegation to Europe that year. His pacifist hopes were shared by many other Americans. "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" was popular as soon as it was published and recorded. The tune had the added advantage of lending itself to ragtime interpretations by competent pianists.

Morton Harvey's recording was released in March 1915, shortly before the sinking of the *Lusitania* (May 7). Despite a rising tide of pro-Allies propaganda that gathered momentum that spring, Harvey's record sold well until the United States entered the war in early April 1917. Victor then removed the number from sale to avoid official pressure and bad publicity. Harvey's recording was coupled with Irving Berlin's equally pacifist tune "Stay Down Here Where You Belong." Curiously, Harvey's 1915 Edison disc of "In the Hills of Old Kentucky" was backed by Helen Clark's recording of "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier."

Morton Harvey's first recordings were released in December, 1914, and included "I Want to Go Back to Michigan," a good seller composed by Irving Berlin. Harvey's biggest success was W. C. Handy's "Memphis Blues," released in January, 1915, the first vocal recording of a blues.

Harvey had started as a saloon singer in Chicago and had appeared professionally on the Chicago stage with Al Field's Minstrels before Billy Murray discovered him. Murray, comic and pop recording star, got him an audition with Victor. Harvey's last Victor record was released in September 1917, and it has been suggested that his antiwar hit ended his usefulness to recording firms. However he remained active in vaudeville—as a song-and-patter man with Jimmy Alman, as a single ("The Rolling Stone"), and then as a double with his wife Betty—until the advent of talking pictures. He and Betty then managed a radio station in Oklahoma.

During World War II Harvey patriotically joined the War Manpower Commission in California.

Ten million soldiers to the war have gone  
Who may never return again;  
Ten million mothers' hearts must break  
For the ones who died in vain—  
Head bowed down in sorrow, in her lonely years,  
I heard a mother murmur thro' her tears:

*Chorus*

"I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier,  
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.  
Who dares to place a musket on his shoulder,  
To shoot some other mother's darling boy?"  
Let nations arbitrate their future trouble,  
It's time to lay the sword and gun away.  
There'd be no war today  
If mothers all would say,  
"I didn't raise my boy to be a soldier."

What victory can cheer a mother's heart,  
When she looks at her blighted home?  
What victory can bring her back  
All she cares to call her own?  
Let each mother's answer in the years to be,  
"Remember that my boy belongs to me."

*(Chorus)*

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Band 3

***Let's All Be Americans Now***

*(Irving Berlin, Edgar Leslie, and George W. Meyer)*

American Quartet, vocals; studio orchestra.

*Recorded spring, 1917, in New York. Originally issued on Victor 18256.*

By late March, 1917, America's entry into World War I was only a matter of days, especially after President Wilson on March 21 issued a call for a special session of Congress. He signed a joint resolution declaring war on Germany on April 6 and a second declaration against Austria-Hungary the next day. The American Quartet's recording of "Let's All Be Americans Now" was released virtually at the same time these actions of state occurred and fully expressed the wish of many to heal the emotional divisions among the American people that had festered since 1914.

Despite the continuing split among Americans of immigrant stock, the government had steadily moved toward military and industrial preparedness since the passage of the National Defense Act in mid-1916. That legislation enlarged the size of the army and implemented an officers' training program on college campuses. The Council of National Defense was created, and the navy was greatly enlarged. Tin Pan Alley responded to these new themes with "I've Got the Army Blues" and "My Country, I Hear You Calling Me."

When war finally came, songwriters rushed to flood the market with war tunes, exploiting a new spirit of patriotism that galvanized America. The tunes generally looked on the brighter side, like "Goodbye, Broadway, Hello, France!" from the *Passing Show of 1917*. There were many other songs from 1917 of a carefree nature but uneven quality, including "I Don't Know Where I'm Going but I'm on My Way," "I May Be Gone for a Long, Long Time," "Where Do We Go from Here?," and "We're Going Over." There were more substantial numbers in "Smiles" (almost two million copies were bought in less than a year) and "Oh, Johnny, Oh, Johnny, Oh" (whose lyric was happily hanged from "how you can fight" to "how you can love" before publication).

"Let's All Be Americans Now" was a direct appeal to the European-Americans and their children who could not entirely forget the old loyalties and the friends and relatives now regarded as enemies.

The American Quartet, formed in 1909, bore no connection with the earlier group of the same name that had appeared on records from 1901 to 1904. The Victor Company had decided to create a new quartet around its youthful star, Billy Murray, a prolific and energetic tenor. Murray sang lead and second tenor, John Young (who replaced the well-known John Bieling in 1914) first tenor, Steve Porter baritone, and William F. Hooley bass. The American's popularity was immediate. Its biggest hit, "Casey Jones," came in 1910 with a sale of two million discs. The American Quartet had almost as big a hit in their recording of "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." This British song hit, originally released in November 1914, remained a good seller throughout the war. The group continued to record until 1925, by which time it was obvious that the vogue for vocal quartets was waning. The new electrical recording techniques rapidly fostered the low-volume crooner style of singing, and by 1932 Billy Murray himself was forced to retire from recording. The irrepressible Murray, however, enjoyed a brief comeback in 1940 and 1941 with Victor and on the National Barn Dance radio program.

*The lyrics to this song are available from the publisher.*

Band 4

***Over There***

*(George M. Cohan)*

Nora Bayes, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded July 13, 1917, in New York. Originally issued on Victor 45130.*

“Over There” appeared shortly after General John Pershing and an advance contingent of American troops had arrived in France in June 1917. By fall, many inductees had completed stateside training. Convoys were regularly leaving with soldiers and huge stores of munitions and other military supplies. The war, which had remained relatively remote for most Americans, suddenly took on an immediacy that was new in their experience. In October, troops of the First Division took up frontline positions in the Toul sector.

True to his self-crafted image as the country’s foremost combination of the Irish-American and the Yankee Doodle Boy, George M. Cohan used his fine talents to shore the high tide of patriotism. “Over There” was not his only patriotic song. For his musical *Little Johnny Jones* (1904) Cohan had written the memorable “Yankee Doodle Boy,” followed by “You’re a Grand Old Flag” for *George Washington, Jr.* (1906), and “There’s Something About a Uniform” for *The Man Who Owns Broadway* (1908).

A great deal has been written about the merits of “Over There,” for which Cohan received a special congressional medal in 1940. The main melodic strain was frankly based on a simple bugle call, and the clever and stirring verse used the title and an only slightly varied melody from Monroe H. Rosenfeld’s “Johnny, Get Your Gun,” an extremely popular song of 1886 that many citizens easily recalled thirty years later. Surprisingly, Cohan did not make a commercial recording of “Over There,” even though it was one of his most effective songs. (Cohan’s method of putting over one of his red-white and-blue ditties can be heard on a 1911 Victor record, “I Want to Hear a Yankee Doodle Tune.”)

A number of other artists were called on to record Cohan’s new hit. These included the American Quartet, Prince’s Orchestra, and even Enrico Caruso, who sang the second chorus in French. The earliest Broadway performance was supposedly given at the Hippodrome by Charles King, the popular musical star, during a Red Cross benefit.

Nora Bayes, whose recording is the best-remembered version, gave the tune the benefit of her extremely professional and emotional style. Among the early singers of the popular stage, Bayes compares best with her male counterparts, Al Jolson and Bert Williams, in having made many well-sung and good-selling records of numbers associated with their Broadway careers. Unlike Cohan and other popular performers, Bayes did not have to be seen to be appreciated as a musical star. Her voice recorded well in the acoustical period (before 1925), and her nuances of feeling—especially in less-spirited songs—were easily captured and reproduced by the pre-electrical phonograph equipment.

Although Bayes’s “Over There” was a Victor hit, she signed with Columbia in early 1918. For that firm she recorded other war tunes, including “Someday They’re Coming Home Again” and “The Man Who Put the Germ in Germany,” the latter a novelty that she helped to write. (For another

performance by Bayes see New World Records NW 233, *Come Josephine in My Flying Machine: Inventions and Topics in Popular Song, 1910-1929.*)

Johnnie, get your gun,  
Get your gun, get your gun,  
Take it on the run,  
On the run, on the run.  
Hear them calling you and me,  
Every son of liberty.  
Hurry right away,  
No delay, no delay,  
Make your daddy glad  
To have had such a lad.  
Tell your sweetheart not to pine,  
To be proud her boy's in line.

*Chorus*

Over there, over there,  
Send the word, send the word over there—  
That the Yanks are coming,  
The Yanks are coming,  
The drums rum-tumming  
Ev'rywhere.  
So prepare, say a pray'r,  
Send the word, send the word to beware.  
We'll be over, we're coming over,  
And we won't come back till it's over  
Over there.

Johnnie, get your gun,  
Get your gun, get your gun,  
Johnnie show the Hun  
Who's a son of a gun.  
Hoist the flag and let her fly,  
Yankee Doodle do or die.  
Pack your little kit,  
Show your grit, do your bit.  
Yankee Doodle fill the ranks,  
From the towns and the tanks.  
Make your mother proud of you,  
And the old Red, White, and Blue.

*(Repeat chorus twice)*

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Band 5

***Hello, Central! Give Me No Man's Land***

*(Jean Schwartz, Sam M. Lewis, and Joe Young)*

Al Jolson, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded April 3, 1918, in New York. Originally issued on Columbia A-2542.*

The spirited lyric of “Over There” reflected the nation’s early optimism. Wilson and his fellow citizens viewed the war as a Great Crusade against tyrannical forces bent on destroying democracy. What did it matter that the buckles of German soldiers bore the legend “*Gott mit uns*” (“God is with us”)? God was on the side of the Americans and would help them punish the Huns for the sinkings on the high seas, the alleged atrocities in the Low Countries, and the terrible artillery fire they had rained on the French at Verdun, bringing that venerable Ally to a state of stupefaction and her armies to the brink of mutiny. Every month more Americans embarked for France and the front.

But in March 1918, the German spring offensive (the Picardy Offensive) penetrated thirty-five miles into Allied territory and threatened the city of Amiens. More than two thousand Americans were there. Others were near Armentières, stemming a new German advance in April. Next the Germans drove to the Marne, and Americans were more heavily committed to help stop the third wave of this flood. Exotic place names entered the daily language—Noyon, the Lys Valley, Soissons, Château-Thierry. The wounded wrote home on Y.M.C.A. stationery; others never wrote again. Songs like “Till We Meet Again” of that year and the imported “Roses of Picardy” of two years before assumed a deeper poignancy.

Al Jolson, who performed at Liberty Loan rallies and other benefits, had introduced and recorded “Sister Susie’s Sewing Shirts for Soldiers,” the tongue-twisting British fun song of the war, as early as 1914. His other war-oriented specialties were “On the Road to Calais” and the cocky “Tell That to the Marines.” “Hello, Central! Give Me No Man’s Land” and “Don’t Forget the Boys” were from *Sinbad*, Jolson’s current Broadway success. Both numbers mirrored a newer, more sober view of the war in an America that was rapidly realizing that no man’s land—the stretch of shell-pocked ground between the lines—was taking its grim toll.

Jolson had not been inducted into service because the authorities highly valued his morale-building work at training camps and Liberty Loan drives. But he insisted on being called up and was scheduled for induction in December. The war ended in November.

Musically this “hello” song does not rank with the earlier “Hello, Ma Baby” (see New World Records NW 272 ...*And Then We Wrote...American Com-posers and Lyricists Sing, Play, and Conduct Their Own Songs*) or “Hello, Frisco!” (see New World Records NW 233, *Come Josephine In My Flying Machine: Inventions and Topics in Popular Song, 1910-1929*), but the sentiment was right for the spring and summer of 1918. While Jolson used every trick to heighten the bathos of the lyric, his rendition was not without tenderness. (For other Jolson performances see New World Records NW 233; NW 238, *The Vintage Irving Berlin*; and NW 279, *Yes Sir, That’s My Baby: The Golden Years of Tin Pan Alley, 1920-1929*.) The recording compares well with the other child-misses-father songs of the war, “Just a Baby’s Prayer at Twilight” and “Oh! How I Wish I Could Sleep Until My Daddy Comes Home,” both recorded very well by Henry Burr, the great ballad singer of the day.

When the gray shadows creep  
And the world is asleep,  
In the still of the night  
Baby climbs down a flight.  
First she looks all around  
Without making a sound;  
Then baby toddles up to the telephone  
And whispers in a baby tone:

*Chorus*

“Hello, Central! Give me No Man’s Land,  
My daddy’s there, my mamma told me;  
She tip-toed off to bed  
After my prayers were said;  
Don’t ring when you get the number,  
Or you’ll disturb mamma’s slumber.  
I’m afraid to stand here at the ’phone  
‘Cause I’m alone,  
So won’t you hurry;  
I want to know why mamma starts to weep  
When I say, ‘Now I lay me down to sleep’;  
Hello, Central! Give me No Man’s Land.”  
*(repeat chorus)*

Band 6

***There’s a Vacant Chair in Every Home Tonight***

*(Ernest Breuer and Alfred Bryan)*

The Shannon Four, vocals; studio orchestra.

*Recorded spring, 1918, in New York. Originally issued on Victor 18428.*

The title of this selection may seem to represent unjustified poetic license, because an illusion persists that America’s effort in World War I was small. Comments on the extent of America’s contribution by embittered Europeans—especially the French, who lost heavily—have undoubtedly encouraged this view. But our participation in the Great War was not small by any standard.

Altogether, almost five million men were in service, with two million in France. Almost fifty thousand Americans were killed in battle; more lost their lives to influenza and pneumonia, which swept the training camps, bringing the total deaths to over a hundred thousand. Wounded numbered well over two hundred thousand (a very high figure), and, because of innovations such as poison gas and saturation bombardments, many never recovered from their injuries and the terror etched deep in their minds. For years, every neighborhood seemed to have a veteran with a crippling limp, another who lost an eye or limb, and others who coughed because their lungs had been permanently seared and blistered by phosgene and mustard gas.

This song, from late 1917, therefore made its point well. Other tunes, too, reinforced the uncertain, lonely, and tragic moods of the war. Recordings by Lewis James and Charles Hart of “Till the

Clouds Roll By” remained popular; James’s solo of “I Can’t See the Good in Goodbye” was frankly depressing; and Henry Burr had three superbly sung recordings that were almost antiwar in spirit: “If I’m Not at Roll Call,” “Somebody’s Waiting for Someone,” and “The Boys Who Won’t Come Home.” While such types did not outnumber the unabashedly patriotic tunes, like “Indianola,” they were not only tolerated but sold well.

Naturally, though, the rah-rah variety were plugged vigorously, boosting morale during the summer and fall that saw the Second Marne, the Aisne-Marne drive, St.-Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne. Musical cheer abounded in “Would You Rather Be a Colonel with an Eagle on Your Shoulder or a Private with a Chicken on Your Knee?,” “They Were All Out of Step but Jim,” “Good Morning, Mr. Zip, Zip, Zip,” and “K-K-K-Katy.” “Ja-Da,” a big hit of 1918-1919, was such delightful nonsense that it is still sung.

The Shannon Four was formed by Victor in 1917. Charles Hart was the lead tenor, Harvey Hindermeyer was second tenor, Elliott Shaw sang baritone, and Wilfred Glenn, the group’s organizer, sang bass. Lewis James replaced Hindermeyer within a year and is probably on this recording.

Charles Hart was a Chicago-born son of German immigrants. His youth was impoverished, but he found success after studying at the Chicago Musical College (run by Florenz Ziegfeld, Sr.). His early professional work included operatic roles, many church engagements, a stint as an illustrated song singer (a type of sing-along in which the performer sang in front of a screen on which were projected illustrated lantern slides that incorporated the lyrics so that the audience could participate), and numerous recordings with firms like Columbia, Edison, Victor, Okeh, and Aeolian Vocalion. On records he was a featured soloist, a duet and trio partner with Lewis James and Charles Harrison, as well as lead in the Shannon Four. Hart’s abilities and ambitions are reflected in his serious roles with the St. Louis Municipal Opera and other operatic and concert work in Berlin, Mannheim, and New York. Later he appeared as a singer and actor in *Sing Out, Sweet Land*; *The Iceman Cometh*; *Oklahoma!*; and *Witness for the Prosecution*. Many other Broadway roles rounded out a most impressive career.

In every mansion, every cottage, all throughout the  
land,  
There’s a mother-heart that’s feeling blue.  
Her darling boy is missing; near her soul;  
with sword in hand  
To make our country safe for me and you.  
In every mother’s eye there is a tear,  
And on her lips a prayer, could you but hear.

*Chorus*

There’s a vacant chair that’s waiting there in every  
home tonight,  
And the look from mother’s dreaming. By the fireside  
burning bright,  
She is thinking of her gallant boy who is fighting for  
the right;

There's a vacant chair in every home, in every home  
tonight.

*(repeat last line)*

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Band 7

***I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now***

*(Irving Berlin)*

Al Jolson, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded September 15, 1919, in New York. Originally issued on Columbia A-2794.*

While many Americans remained on duty as part of the forces occupying Germany and in more hazardous areas in Russia, most of the troops were discharged when the war ended. Parties, speeches, and ticker-tape parades marked the end of the ordeal.

The lighter side of the troops' recent experiences in France was evident in a spate of topical songs like "Don't Cry, Frenchie," "And He'd Say Oo-la-la Wee-wee," and "Wait Till You Get Them Up in the Air, Boys." Equally good-natured but more socially prophetic was "How Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm (After They've Seen Poree)?" The passing of a great burden of uncertainty and fear was aptly expressed in "Let the Rest of the World Go By," with a fine melody by Ernest R. Ball and a good lyric by J. Keirn Brennan. Reflectively, John McCormack recorded the staple "Roses of Picardy" in 1919. The impact of Prohibition on the returning troops was mirrored in songs like "The Alcoholic Blues" and "The Moon Shines on the Moon Shine," the latter a droll number exquisitely sung by Bert Williams in the *Ziegfeld Follies of 1919* (see New World Records NW 215, *Follies, Scandals, and Other Diversions: From Ziegfeld to the Shuberts*).

In the same Follies the interpolated "I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now" was sung by Eddie Cantor. He and Al Jolson shared several other tunes of the time. Jolson was the more established entertainer, having recorded since 1911, whereas Cantor was fresher, with recordings dating only from 1917.

Although it was the year of Jolson's divorce from Henrietta Keller, in 1919 he was at the zenith of his Broadway career. While his long-running Winter Garden production of *Sinbad* was nearing its close, Jolson appeared in a fund-raising show at the Metropolitan Opera House for the benefit of returning veterans. On the bill he followed Caruso, who had just finished "Vesti la Giubba." With applause still ringing for the great opera star, Jolson ran out on the stage and brashly shouted: "You ain't heard nothin' yet!" Columnists wrote that the gesture was a tasteless affront, but Caruso enjoyed the gag. (The line was the title for a Jolson song, recorded in September 1919.) Jolson's appearance at the Met was followed by his recital at the Boston Opera House—reportedly the first time a Broadway star was booked in such a place for a solo concert—where he sang seventeen of his hits.

“I’ve Got My Captain Working for Me Now” is a typically well-crafted Irving Berlin piece in a rather jazzy, mock-military style. The words are exceedingly clever and express the infinite joy in revenge for long-harbored resentments felt by millions of draftees who had been caught in a topsy-turvy wartime discipline. The song was surprisingly durable and was revived after World War II in the score of *Blue Skies* (1946). Bing Crosby sang it delightfully in that film and on record.

*The lyrics to this song are available from the publisher.*

Band 8

### ***My Dream of the Big Parade***

*(Jimmy McHugh and Al Dubin)*

Peerless Quartet, vocals; studio orchestra.

With the end of the war, emotional relief and a thirst for noninvolvement rapidly settled over America. President Wilson’s efforts to implement his design for a lasting European peace were repeatedly frustrated by the harsh demands for territory and reparations by other Allies. His work on the Covenant of the League of Nations was compromised abroad and effectively turned aside by the Senate at home. Wilson’s health started to break as the wrangling continued and the tide did not shift in favor of his hopes. Although awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in December, 1919, Wilson already must have known that he had lost the peace after leading so many Americans into a bitter war.

While the twenties were a period of general prosperity and technological progress, the decade got off to a bad start, in which inflation was followed by depression. Moreover, the great wound of Prohibition lasted throughout the decade and was over-lapped by the more painful wound of the Great Depression, when many of the old soldiers would march once more, but now in a pathetic attempt to claim their veterans’ bonus. During the twenties the war was certainly not forgotten. A sprinkling of popular tunes continued to play on the memory. They often hinted at a lost comrade or lover. One of the first and most lasting was the Walter Donaldson-Gus Kahn hit of 1922, “My Buddy,” which did not directly refer to the war but which had such evocative power that most people thought of it as a war song.

“My Dream of the Big Parade” (1926) echoes the mood of the silent motion picture *The Big Parade*, director King Vidor’s sensitive and successful condemnation of war. The film starred Utah-born John Gilbert as an average American lad caught up in the crushing events of a senseless conflict. Other songs such as “Charmaine” (1927— see New World Records 80227-2 *The Mighty Wurlitzer: Music for Movie Palace Organs*) and “Memories of France” (1928) played on the romantic recollections of the veterans. Victor alone made four recordings of “Roses of Picardy” after 1925, the last in 1933. The only issued version was made by Jesse Crawford, the organist, in 1926. The song was revived by Perry Como, when it gained meaning for World War II veterans.

The Peerless Quartet consisted of Carl Mathieu, first tenor, who had also worked as a comedian; Henry Burr, a superb lead and second tenor, who for many years served as the group’s leader; Stanley Baughman, baritone; and James Stanley, bass, who had won recognition for his Pathé recordings. The Peerless Quartet was extremely popular with pre-war record buyers. To the regret of many old fans, Burr had changed the group’s personnel only six months before this recording. The

quartet had been recording since 1907 and from 1914 had consisted of Burr (second tenor and lead), Albert Campbell (first tenor), Arthur Collins (baritone), and John Meyer (bass). Although it had numerous hits, by the mid-twenties the Peerless and similar groups were becoming dated. While the reason for Burr's reorganization was never adequately explained, perhaps he wanted to infuse new life into the group. Some years later Billy Murray suggested that the bass did not record well when the new electrical equipment was introduced in 1925—that his sound was too “grating.” Burr's attempt to improve the group failed to generate a large following among the new jazz-oriented listeners, and the Peerless Quartet made its last recording in 1928.

Last night I was dreaming of days that are gone,  
Of days that you might recall,  
And just like a photoplay upon my wall,  
Once more I saw it all;  
It was just a dream you see,  
But how real it seemed to be.

*Chorus*

I saw buddies true,  
Marching two by two,  
    In my dream of the Big Parade,  
I saw angels fair  
With the Red Cross there,  
    In my dream of the Big Parade.  
I saw Gold Star Mothers, sisters and brothers,  
    What a sacrifice they made;  
I saw one-legged pals coming home to their gals,  
    In my dream of the Big Parade.

I saw Château-Thierry all filled with marines,  
I strolled by the river Seine,  
I saw all the villages 'mid fields of green,  
In old Alsace Lorraine;  
And the mem'ry lingers yet,  
They were scenes I can't forget.

*(Chorus)*

*Spoken:*

Millions of soldiers, millions of men  
All going over—I see them again.  
Oceans of water, submarines, too:  
Millions of sailors helping them through.  
Millions of doughboys landing in Brest,  
Marching, marching, never a rest.  
Millions of bullets thundering past.  
Millions of bodies, wounded and gashed.  
Valleys of ruins, mountains of mud,  
Beautiful rivers and rivers of blood.

Airplanes flying, bombs coming down.  
Millions of cooties crawling around.  
Pieces of shrapnel, pieces of shell,  
Many a cross where somebody fell.  
Fighting and fighting a horrible war,  
And God only knows what you're fighting it for.  
Then came November, that Armistice Day;  
Out of a trench, into a café,  
Patty, Abie, Jimmy, and Jack,  
Over their bottles of wine and cognac,  
Telling their love tales to Jeanne and Georgette,  
Little French girls they had to forget.  
Ah, then came the journey over the foam,  
But all that went over didn't come home.  
*(repeat last three lines of chorus)*

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Side Two

Band 1

***Der Fuehrer's Face***

*(Oliver Wallace)*

Spike Jones and His City Slickers.

*Recorded July 28, 1942, in Hollywood. Originally issued on Bluebird B-11586.*

This was a very successful funny novelty tune of 1942 about a very unfunny man. Although a great deal was already known about Hitler's character, methods, and beliefs, the prewar tendency in the popular media to depict Hitler in comic caricatures persisted throughout most of the war. The cut of his hair and mustache, his mannerisms of speech and gesture, and his exaggerated boastfulness made the German leader a favorite model for humorists and impressionists for years. Charlie Chaplin's portrayal of Hitler in *The Great Dictator* (1940), though finely honed to reveal Hitler's unwholesome side, was essentially weighted with comedy.

The enormity of Nazi inhumanity was hidden from fullest view until the Allied troops overran the interior of Europe and discovered the camps in which millions had been brutally starved, tortured, and killed. Knowledge of such things makes it impossible for Americans to fully recapture the humor originally conveyed by "Der Fuehrer's Face."

The song's melody was a parody of the "Horst Wessell Lied," a Nazi anthem. The American parody was used in the animated cartoon *Donald Duck in Nutzi Land*, which won Walt Disney a special Academy Award. The tune was immediately picked up by many entertainers, but the most successful recording and live performances were by the group that introduced the number, Spike Jones and His City Slickers.

Lindley Armstrong “Spike” Jones, a native of Long Beach, California, had led a small combo on the West Coast in the thirties before working as a drummer in the bands of Ray West, Everett Hoagland, and Earl Burnnett and with studio bands on a number of radio programs, including those of Burns and Allen, Bing Crosby, and Fibber McGee and Molly. Spike formed and first recorded with his deliberately cornball group in 1941. When war broke out, he recorded “Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag” (a revival) and “Little Bo-Peep Has Lost Her Jeep.” “Der Fuehrer’s Face” assured his reputation. His group became a top attraction on the B. F. Keith vaudeville circuit and easily maintained a good following in early television. Watching the band create its zany performances was a fascinating experience.

Jones’s Slickers used novel sound effects, split-second timing, and splendid imagination in their burlesques. Their extensive body of work included parodies of serious songs like “Chloe,” “You Always Hurt the One You Love,” and “The Blue Danube.” In the present recording, Jones is heard on drums, Carl Grayson is the vocalist and violinist, and Willie Spicer furnishes many of the special sound effects. The Donald Duck-like raspberry after “Heil!” is a clear link with the film.

Ven der Fuehrer says, “Ve iss der Master Race!”  
Ve heil! heil! right in der Fuehrer’s face.  
Not to love der Fuehrer iss a great disgrace,  
So ve heil! heil! right in der Fuehrer’s face.

Ven Herr Goebbels says, “Ve own der vorltd und  
space!”  
Ve heil! heil! right in Herr Goebbels’ face.  
Ven Herr Goering says, “Dey nefer bomb dis place!”  
Ve heil! heil! right in Herr Goering’s face.

Are ve not der Super Men? Aryan-pure Super Men?  
“Ja! Ve iss der Super Men, Super-doooper-super men.  
Iss der Nazi land so goot—would you leave it iff you  
could?  
“Ja! Dis Nazi land iss goot—ve would leave it iff ve  
could.”

Ve bring der vorltd New Order—Heil Hitler’s vorltd  
New Order!  
Efry one off foreign race,  
Ve love der Fuehrer’s face,  
Ven ve bring to der vorltd dis(-)order.  
*(repeat first verse twice)*

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Band 2

***He's 1-A in the Army and He's A-1 in My Heart***

*(Redd Evans)*

Betty Bonney, vocal; Les Brown and His Orchestra.

*Recorded October 15, 1941, in Chicago. Originally issued on Okeh 6500.*

As in the period immediately preceding America's entry into World War I, the coming of the second great war in Europe prompted Americans to think in terms of preparedness. Suddenly the memories of World War I were again vivid. Japanese military activities in the Far East heightened the sense of danger. France collapsed rapidly, and Britain was under siege. The Burke-Wadsworth Selective Service Act of 1940 was, ominously, the first peacetime draft in American history.

Forty thousand local civilian-run Selective Service boards were established, and men from the ages of twenty-one to thirty-five (at first) were registered and classified. One's draft status became the topic of daily conversation and radio comedians' jokes. A variety of classifications indicated one's eligibility for military duty, with 4-F denoting a severe disability and 1-A denoting good physical fitness and no disqualifying considerations. There were many with 1-A classifications, and the government trained over a million draftees and eight hundred thousand reservists.

Although antiwar actions and isolationists flourished in 1940 and 1941, there was always an edge in favor of those who leaned toward military readiness and open support for Great Britain. There was no song comparable to the earlier "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier." Instead, the few pop tunes that related to the hostilities were frankly pro-Allies, with "The White Cliffs of Dover" (see New World Records NW 270, *Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?: American Song During the Great Depression*) and "The Last Time I Saw Paris" dominating such fare. The aggressive patriotism of Irving Berlin's "God Bless America" of 1939 vigorously persisted, also, as that song fast became a much-loved standard.

This recording was made with the bombing of Pearl Harbor still seven weeks in the future. But the Selective Service Act had just been extended, German submarines had already fired on ships of the United States Navy, and the Philippine armed forces were being nationalized under General Douglas MacArthur. Within a few weeks of its release, "1-A in the Army" would enjoy added meaning in the new wave of romantic patriotism that followed Pearl Harbor.

Les Brown, who formed his own big band in 1938, had led previous groups and had worked as an arranger for bands led by Ruby Newman, Isham Jones, Larry Clinton, Jimmy Dorsey, and Red Nichols. His first hit, also from 1941, was "Joltin' Joe DiMaggio." Later outstanding recordings included his own 1944 composition "Sentimental Journey" and the 1948 hit "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm." Brown was one of the most successful and durable leaders in the big-band field.

*Verse*

From coast to coast in this great nation,  
Each man has got a classification.  
I've got a guy who's really something  
This man of mine, he ain't missin' nothin',  
No wonder I'm happy to say:

*Chorus*

He's 1-A in the army and he's A-1 in my heart,  
He's gone to help the country that helped him get a  
start.

I love him so because I know he wants to do his part,  
For he's 1-A in the army and he's A-1 in my heart.  
And just in case you're quizzical,  
I'm gonna tell you now,  
He passed the toughest physical—  
He passed it, folks, and how!  
For I know why he rates so high on Uncle Sammy's  
chart,  
'Cause he's 1-A in the army and he's A-1 in my heart.

From coast to coast in this great nation,  
Each man has got a classification.  
Now I've got a guy who never liked to fight,  
But for Uncle Sam he'll fight all right.

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Band 3

***Stalin Wasn't Stallin' (A Modern Spiritual)***

*(Willie Johnson)*

Golden Gate Quartet, vocals.

*Recorded c. January 1942, in New York. Originally issued on Okeh 6712.*

World War II was strikingly different from all previous wars in its quality of totality. It was total in geographic extent; in its impact on economies and people everywhere; in its range of participating nations, with only a few escaping directly; in the extent of its weapons and destructive force.

Unlikely alliances were formed, with the leading anti-capitalist nation joining with the leading capitalist countries. The Soviet Union endured great military setbacks in the face of a bold invasion by the German armies. Hardships and defeats were offered as reasons Russia did not join in the early effort against Japan. A German summer offensive in 1942 saw the fall of Rostov and the start of the siege of Stalingrad. There was real fear that Russia would collapse—as it had in World War I—and that hoards of Germans would be released for duty in the West. There was genuine sympathy in America for the hard-pressed Soviets, and the gradual but sure turning of the tide by successful Russian campaigns in 1943 was greeted with enthusiasm. By January 1944, the Germans had been pushed out of the Moscow-Leningrad area and the Ukraine. The names of Russian generals became American household words.

The change in sentiment had been rapid for the United States. If military leaders were less than enthusiastic about this newfound friendship, popular acceptance was spirited. Earl Browder, the American Communist party's leader, who was serving time for a passport violation, was even

pardoned by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942. The Red Scare of 1919 and Stalin's Reign of Terror were conveniently forgotten.

"Stalin Wasn't Stallin" (1943) reflects the wartime friendship with the Soviets. It did not enjoy the success of Irving Berlin's "That Russian Winter" (1942), from *This Is the Army*, but was a modest success for the Golden Gate Quartet, a group that had recorded with blues singer Huddie Ledbetter, the fabled Leadbelly. The musicians' union imposed a recording ban on instrumental music from mid-1942 to 1944, hastening the decline of big bands but boosting the popularity of vocalists like Dick Haymes, Dinah Shore, and Frank Sinatra and vocal groups like the Golden Gate Quartet—such performances were accompanied by vocal ensembles, ranging from quartets to choruses, which took the place of instrumental back-ups. This was a *faute de mieux* situation that was employed only for the biggest hits during the ban. While now rather obscure, the Golden Gate Quartet recorded steadily during the period and appeared in the motion-picture musicals *Hit Parade of 1943* and *Hollywood Canteen*, the latter a 1944 vehicle for Jack Benny, the Andrews Sisters, Joe E. Brown, Eddie Cantor, Roy Rogers, Jimmy Dorsey's Orchestra, and many other stars.

#### *Chorus*

Well now, Stalin wasn't stallin'  
When he told the beast of Berlin  
That they'd never rest contented  
Till they had driven him from the land.  
So we called the Yanks and English,  
And proceeded to extinguish  
Der Fuehrer and his vermin,  
This is how it all began.

Now the devil was a-readin' in the good book one day,  
How the Lord created Adam to walk the righteous  
way.  
It made the devil jealous,  
He turned green up to his horns,  
And he swore by things unholy,  
That he'd make one of his own.

So he packed his two suitcases full of grief and misery,  
And he caught the midnight special going down to  
Germany.  
Then he mixed his lies and hatred with fire and brim-  
stone,  
Then the devil sat upon it,  
That's how Adolf was born.

Now Adolf got the notion that he was the master race,  
And he swore to bring new honor and put mankind in  
its place.  
So he set his plans in motion and was winning ev'ry-  
where,

'Til he up and got the notion,  
For to kick that Russian Bear.  
(Chorus)

Yes, he kicked that noble Russian, but it wasn't very  
long,  
Before Adolf got suspicious that he had done some-  
thing wrong.  
'Cause that Bear grabbed the Fuehrer and gave him an  
awful fight,  
Seventeen months he scrapped the Fuehrer,  
Tooth and claw, day and night.

Then that Bear smacked the Fuehrer with a mighty  
armored paw,  
And Adolf broke all records running backwards to  
Kharkov.  
Then Goebbels sent a message to the people ev'ry-  
where,  
That if they couldn't help the Fuehrer,  
God don't help that Russian Bear.  
(Chorus)

Then this Bear called on his buddy the noble fighting  
Yank,  
And they sent the Fuehrer running with his ships and  
planes and tanks.  
Now the Fuehrer's having nightmares 'cause Der  
Fuehrer knows darned well,  
That the devil's done wrote "Welcome" on his resi-  
dence in [Hell].  
(Chorus)

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Band 4

***We Did It Before and We Can Do It Again***

*(Cliff Friend and Charles Tobias)*

Dick Robertson, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded December 16, 1941, in New York. Originally issued on Decca 4117.*

The copyright of this song was assigned on December 23, 1941, just sixteen days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Although Cliff Friend and Charles Tobias wrote much better tunes in their long careers, this upbeat song displays a grand, if forced, self-assurance. It accurately reflects the surge of patriotism experienced during that electrifying December. Quickly recovering their public poise after

initial catastrophes in the Pacific, Americans assumed that the war would not only go well for them but that the end would be reached rapidly. As things turned out, the fighting was extremely costly and protracted.

The lyric of this simple song is a positive plea for a strong united domestic front against the Axis powers. The opposition of the isolationists was a fresh memory, even in early 1942. Resistance to Roosevelt's pro-British partisanship had been well based, with origins dating from the Harding and Coolidge administrations. Recent and prominent critics had included Charles A. Lindbergh, Senators Burton K. Wheeler, Robert A. Taft, and Gerald P. Nye, and Representative Hamilton Fish. But the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, dissolved this opposition, and fears of a populace divided in sentiment were groundless as of December 8, when the United States declared war on Japan. This is sensed in the song's verse.

Eddie Cantor immediately picked up the song and interpolated it into *Banjo Eyes*, his Broadway musical that opened on Christmas Day, 1941. As during World War I, performers avidly supported the war effort. In fact, Hollywood had enlisted enthusiastically during the preparedness period and before Pearl Harbor had produced such films as *Buck Privates* (1941), with Abbott and Costello. That film included the catchy "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," an Andrews Sisters staple. The same comedy team and vocal group had joined forces for *In the Navy* (1941).

War-related movie musicals were ground out in 1942, including *The Fleet's In*, with Dorothy Lamour and Betty Hutton; *Iceland*, with its hit, "There Will Never Be Another You"; and *My Favorite Spy*, featuring Kay Kyser's Orchestra in the engaging "Got the Moon in My Pocket." Among the very best was *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, with Jimmy Cagney's magical portrait of George M. Cohan. The film revived a flock of Cohan's patriotic songs and offered fresh interpretations of "You're a Grand Old Flag," "Yankee Doodle Boy," and "Give My Regards to Broadway."

Dick Robertson, a veteran vocalist who had wide experience on records and radio, was used by Decca during 1942 to render other hastily written wartime ditties (like "Goodbye, Mama"—Side Two, Band 6—which was reportedly dished up ten days after Pearl Harbor): "Remember Pearl Harbor," "I Paid My Income Tax Today" (which was a patriotic duty), "Keep 'Em Flying" (one of the war's great slogans), "Wings over the Navy," and "Hats Off to Mac-Arthur" (who made certain to leave the Philippines before the Japanese takeover was completed). Robertson's better recordings of the year included "One Dozen Roses" and "Walking the Floor over You," neither of which was about war.

#### *Verse*

December seventh, nineteen hundred and forty-one,  
Our land of freedom was defied;  
December eighth, nineteen hundred and forty-one,  
Uncle Sam replied.

#### *Chorus*

We did it before and we can do it again—and we will  
do it again.  
We've got a heck of a job to do,  
But you can bet that we'll see it thru.

We did it before and we can do it again—and we will  
do it again.

We're one for all and we're all for one,

They'll get a lickin' before we're done.

Millions of voices are ringing, singing as we march  
along.

We did it before and we can do it again—and we will  
do it again.

We'll knock them over, and then

We'll get the guy in back of them.

We did it before, we'll do it again.

*(repeat chorus)*

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Band 5

### ***I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen***

*(Irving Berlin)*

Kenny Baker, vocal, with orchestra.

*Recorded June 26, 1942, in New York. Originally issued on Decca 18442.*

In 1942 the Japanese grip on the Pacific tightened and the United States lost heavily with the fall of the Philippines. Jimmy Doolittle's daring raid on Tokyo in April, the naval battles of the Coral Sea and Midway, and the landing of United States Marines in Guadalcanal, however, hinted at a turnabout. Incredibly severe battles in Russia and North Africa raged throughout the year, and air raids on Germany, with fleets of up to a thousand bombers each, were launched from England during the summer.

On the home front, the draft age was lowered to eighteen in November and the War Manpower Commission took over not only the Selective Service system but the Employment Service as well. Strategic materials were strictly controlled. The civilian rationing program began with tires in December 1941, and was steadily expanded to include gasoline and sugar, meat, and other staples by early 1943.

Once again, entertainers appeared at bond and charity rallies and gave free performances or the troops at home and overseas. The United Service Organizations shows provided live entertainment in camps all over the globe. Armed Forces Radio kept the airwaves in all theaters of war filled with disc-jockey programs and specially prepared V-Disc transcriptions. The all-out effort of the entertainment industry was one of the striking features of World War II.

*This Is the Army* opened on Broadway on July 4, 1942. It featured Ezra Stone (known to millions of radio fans as Henry Aldrich), Irving Berlin (the show's creator), and an all-Army supporting cast. Berlin revived and performed his World War I standard "Oh! How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" and added new numbers like "This Is the Army, Mr. Jones," "I'm Getting Tired So I Can Sleep," "That Russian Winter," "That's What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear" (which

was well recorded by Fats Waller), and “I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen.” The last built an image of a fleeting wartime romance at the famous Stage Door Canteen near Times Square. *This Is the Army* was made into a motion picture in 1943.

The American Theatre Wing’s Stage Door Canteen was located in the basement of the 44th Street Theatre (formerly the home of the Little Club), which was provided rent-free by the Shuberts. Although the capacity was limited to about five hundred, servicemen of every rank and branch mingled with other Allied servicemen to get free food and coffee while conversing with the stars of stage, radio, and motion pictures. Signalmen at sea praised the Canteen, flashing “No liquor, but damned good.” Its popularity was proved by men lining the sidewalk to get in and by the fact that two hundred gallons of coffee and five thousand cigarettes were consumed there each evening between 5 P.M. and midnight. Celebrity volunteers checked hats, waited on tables, and worked in the kitchen while others chatted or performed. The boys forgot their homesickness while dancing with a young star like Dorothy McGuire. They could get a cup of coffee from Katharine Cornell or quip with the busboy, Broadway producer Brock Pemberton. Hazel Scott, Jerry Wald, Larry Adler, and Charlie Spivak would drop in for spontaneous musical sessions, or the chorus line from *Let’s Face It* would do its routine. Ray Bolger clowned and danced. And Canteen mainstays like Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt, Gypsy Rose Lee, and Vera Zorina were parodied in *This Is the Army*. Canteen branches soon opened in Philadelphia, Washington, Hollywood, and San Francisco. The good-spirited fun and romance were projected in the 1943 motion picture *Stage Door Canteen*, which featured not only spots for Cornell, Bolger, Ethel Waters, and Ethel Merman but six major dance bands. The 1944 sequel, *Hollywood Canteen*, enlisted the Andrews Sisters, Joe E. Brown, Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor, and Roy Rogers. On radio, the *Stage Door Canteen* program was hosted by Rudy Vallee. The actual Canteen remained undiminished in importance. Eleanor Roosevelt, in fact, once said that it was the best of all contributions for building wartime morale.

Kenny Baker had reached national prominence in 1935 when he joined the Jack Benny radio program as replacement for another tenor, Frank Parker. Baker had studied music at Long Beach Junior College and achieved local recognition through an engagement at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles. His popularity on the Jack Benny Show was phenomenal, and his leaving in the 1939-40 season brought protests from fans and predictions from some critics that Benny’s popularity would wane. But Benny survived handsomely, and Baker’s following remained warm during his years on the *Fred Allen Show* and his own radio and television series. Baker had a prominent spot in *Stage Door Canteen* and appeared in fifteen motion pictures between 1936 and 1947. His biggest movie hit song was probably Gershwin’s “Love Walked In,” from *Goldwyn Follies* (1938). Baker also enjoyed considerable success playing opposite Mary Martin in *One Touch of Venus*, a Broadway musical that opened in 1943 and ran for 567 performances.

*The lyrics to this song are available from the publisher.*

Band 6

***Goodbye, Mama (I’m Off to Yokohama)***

*(J. Fred Coots)*

Dick Robertson, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded December 16, 1941, in New York. Originally issued on Decca 4116.*

This is yet another release of 1942. It is a simple ditty that sounds as though it could be a counter-melody to “Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet.” The lyric lacks sophistication, but there is charm in the song’s innocent exuberance. The year 1942 also produced “Always in My Heart,” “Daybreak,” “That Old Black Magic,” “Tangerine,” “Moonlight Cocktail,” and many other hits. Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” from the Bing Crosby-Fred Astaire film *Holiday Inn*, won the year’s Academy Award for best song. Americans stationed in North Africa, the South Pacific, and countless other winterless locations responded to the tune with great feeling.

As these titles suggest, relatively few of the top hits of that year were martial. Dreamily romantic songs like “Sleepy Lagoon” (revived from 1930) or flashy, humorous numbers like “Mr. Five by Five”—songs that carried no reference to war—were preferred by those directly affected by the conflict. Most war-related tunes were essentially love songs, among them “I Threw a Kiss in the Ocean,” “Don’t Sit Under the Apple Tree,” and “I’m Getting Tired So I Can Sleep.” The best specifically war songs were “When the Lights Go On Again” and “There’s a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere.”

“Goodbye, Mama,” a novelty song, focused on an enemy who was obscure and inscrutable to most Americans in 1942. By tradition, Americans were primarily oriented to a transatlantic world. Historical experiences in the Far East had been generally troublesome, and the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor confirmed the worst popular notions about the Japanese character. The tragic events of Bataan and Corregidor added to the belief that the Japanese were not only treacherous but inferior. For some, the defeats stimulated dreams of revenge and glory, and “Goodbye, Mama” aptly sloganized the attitudes of blue-eyed civilians and green recruits.

*The lyrics to this song are available from the publisher.*

Band 7

### ***No Love, No Nothin’***

*(Harry Warren and Leo Robin)*

Johnny Long and His Orchestra; Patti Dugan, vocal.

*Recorded spring, 1943, in New York. Originally issued on Decca 4427.*

By the end of the 1930s many Americans had all but put the Depression behind them. Automobiles, radios, refrigerators, and other consumer goods had become more plentiful and more affordable; here was the promise of a better, fuller diet. Then came the war. The flow of new goods virtually stopped, and rationing made it difficult to round out the family meal.

There were fuel shortages early in the war. Gasoline was rationed, with “A,” “B,” and “C” stickers and coupons determining the amount of gas most civilians would receive. A public uproar was heard when congressmen voted themselves the rare “X” coupons, which entitled them to unlimited quantities of gas. People could not get new bicycles because the factories had converted to war production. Manufacture of new tires was strictly controlled. Truck delivery service was drastically reduced, and milkmen were ordered to cut their schedules in half. Civilian automobiles were not manufactured—the last ones came off the line in 1942 and had no chrome trim. Razor blades were among the scarcest commodities.



Silk hose practically disappeared, and nylon stockings were hardly plentiful. Women painted their legs with a new cosmetic, a heavily pigmented liquid that became streaked or blotchy when improperly applied. Men suffered a little too when clothing manufacturers eliminated vests from new suits. Even children felt the pressure of shortages when diapers and safety pins became hard to obtain because cotton was on priority for uniforms and spring steel was needed for weapons production. The manufacture of toys was cut to seven percent of the prewar level.

The recording ban imposed by the musicians' union remained in effect for Victor and Columbia until November 1944, but Decca and a few other companies began releasing new instrumental recordings late in 1943. The industry, however, could not fully regain its prewar stature because new radios and phonographs were not being made for the civilian market. This recording of "No Love, No Nothin'" was among the first to reach record buyers in 1943.

It was a typical wartime product. The shellac was poor, and the message of the lyrics was moralistic. Contrasting with the declaration of this stoic lover was a different way of looking at life during war, wistfully expressed in another song title, "There'll Be No Shortage of Love." Engagements between separated couples were broken easily and often, and the expression "Dear John letter" entered the daily language. More serious was the divorce rate, which began climbing in 1944 and reached a new high of thirty-one percent—over half a million marriages—in 1945.

The faithful, however, could take comfort in Johnny Long's recording. He had been a favorite with young people since his days at Duke University and enjoyed national recognition through his recordings, which began to appear in 1937. Long's biggest success was his version of the 1932 song "In a Shanty in Old Shanty Town," recorded for Decca in 1940. The band's parody of the lyric in a catchy semi-scat manner has become the standard for vocal versions of the number, even by those who probably had not heard the original recording. While never achieving the heights of Benny Goodman or Glenn Miller, Long remained in steady demand in the East and Midwest. The orchestra was a favorite with dancers who preferred sweet to hot or up-tempo music. Johnny Long fronted a band until the sixties and then retired to teach English. He died in 1972.

No love, no nothin',  
    Until my baby comes home.  
No fun with no one,  
    As long as baby must roam.

I promised him I'd wait for him  
    Till even Hades froze.  
I'm lonesome, heaven knows,  
    But what I said still goes.

No love, no nothin'  
    And that's a promise I'll keep.  
No sir, no nothin',  
    I'm getting plenty of sleep.

My heart's on strike,  
And tho' it's like

An empty honeycomb,  
No love, no sir, no nothin',  
Till my baby comes home.

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Band 8

***Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition***

*(Frank Loesser)*

Glee Club, vocals; Kay Kyser and His Orchestra.

*Recorded July 31, 1942, in Hollywood. Originally issued on Columbia 36640.*

This was the first outright war song of 1942 to achieve top ratings. Its well-paced beat and its assumption that God is on America's side formed a large part of its appeal.

Frank Loesser was well established long before 1942 and had written or collaborated on numerous motion-picture scores. As lyricist, in 1937-38 alone he had hits in "The Moon of Manakoor," from *The Hurricane*; "Small Fry," from *Sing, You Sinners*; and "Two Sleepy People," from *Thanks for the Memory*. His "Bubbles in the Wine" of 1939 became Lawrence Welk's theme. Loesser contributed to wartime scores for *Sweater Girl* (1942); *Seven Days' Leave* (1943); *Thank Your Lucky Stars* (1943), which included "They're Either Too Young or Too Old," a lament about the wartime man short-age and *Christmas Holiday* (1944). He wrote the scores for *Neptune's Daughter*, *Where's Charley?*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Most Happy Fella*, and other postwar movie and stage musicals. His "On a Slow Boat to China" (1948) and "Baby, It's Cold Outside" (1949) were sensations.

The idea for "Praise the Lord and Pass the ammunition" was reportedly inspired by an exclamation of navy chaplain William Maguire at Pearl Harbor, but the story has been denied. Some clergymen denounced the song from the pulpit, but that did not impair the tune's great popularity.

Another story about the song is that Kay Kyser recorded it on one day's notice as a result of a telephone call from Loesser, who sang it long distance. Kyser liked it and put an arranger on the phone to write down the words and melody as Loesser sang. The band rehearsed and recorded it in Hollywood the next day—July 31, 1942 (the same date they recorded the equally popular and irreverent "Strip Polka")—at the last Kyser recording session before the musicians' union prohibition against instrumental recordings took effect. The story seems plausible, as the Library of Congress did not receive Loesser's music until August 21.

Kay Kyser's dance band had risen to national prominence after first appearing at Chicago's Blackhawk Hotel in 1934. His musical quiz show, the *College of Musical Knowledge*, remained topflight radio entertainment for years. In addition, his band included highly competent musicians and vocalists who were steady favorites: Sully Mason, Harry Babbitt, Ginny Sims, and the comic Ishkabibble (Merwyn Bogue). Kyser's recordings of "Three Little Fishies" (1939) and "Who Wouldn't Love You?" (194) rivaled "Praise the Lord" and "Strip Polka" in popularity.

Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!  
Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!  
Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition,  
    And we'll all stay free!  
Praise the Lord, and swing into position,  
Can't afford to be a politician.  
Praise the Lord, we're all between perdition  
    And the deep blue sea!  
Yes, the sky pilot said it,  
You've got to give him credit,  
    For a son-of-a-gun of a gunner was he,  
    Shouting:  
Praise the Lord, we're on a mighty mission!  
All aboard! We ain't a-goin' fishin'.  
Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition,  
    And we'll all stay free!  
*(repeat first four lines)*

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Band 9

### ***My Guy's Come Back***

*(Mel Powell and Ray McKinley)*

Helen Forrest, vocal; studio orchestra.

*Recorded February 1946, in Los Angeles. Originally issued on Decca 18723.*

The song's composer, New York-born Mel Powell, had studied piano with Nadia Reisenberg and composition with Bernard Wagenaar and Joseph Schillinger before the war. In addition to writing a number of better than average popular songs, Powell's early professional work involved playing piano and arranging for Benny Goodman (while Mel was still a teenager) and the Glenn Miller Air Force Band during World War II. Although he also continued to work in popular music, after the war Powell pursued his more serious musical interests. After studying composition with Ernst Toch in Los Angeles, he entered the Yale School of Music and studied under Hindemith. Powell taught at Mannes Music School and Queens College before receiving an appointment as instructor at Yale, where in 1960 he established one of the first electronic-music studios. In 1969 he became dean of music at the California Institute of the Arts. Powell's works include music for documentary films, a string quartet, a harpsichord sonata, two piano sonatas, a divertimento for violin and harp, *Events* for tape, and *Immobile 5* for tape and orchestra. He is also the author of many articles, some of which have appeared in the *Journal of Music Theory*, *Saturday Review*, and *American Scholar*.

This 1945 song marks the joyous close of the war. Most of the previous recordings on Side Two date from the early period of the conflict and sketch the main topical themes that remained current until 1945.

Militarily the war had progressed slowly, with terrible hardships and losses. The army and air force suffered over three hundred thousand dead. Naval fatalities numbered almost ninety thousand. Nearly two hundred and fifty thousand servicemen sustained wounds.

As the war continued, there was a succession of good songs that enjoyed popularity despite the recording ban on instrumental music. Topical numbers included “Comin’ In on a Wing and a Prayer,” “Shoo Shoo, Baby,” “Vict’ry Polka,” and “In My Arms” in 1943; “I Dream of You,” “I’ll Be Seeing You” (a revival from 1938), “I’ll Walk Alone,” and “Bell Bottom Trousers” in 1944. “Seems Like Old Times” reflected the country’s feeling as the war ended.

Other songs deserve special mention. “Milkman, Keep Those Bottles Quiet,” recorded by Ella Mae Morse in 1944, echoed the plea of women who worked the factory night shifts; “Rosie the Riveter” from 1943 was another home-front song. Johnny Mercer’s “G.I. Jive” of 1944 received good interpretations by the Mills Brothers’ and by Louis Jordan and His Tympany Five. Savannah Churchill, singing with Benny Carter’s group, did “Hurry, Hurry,” a 1943 blues about a missing soldier. And the Mills Brothers’ 1944 recording of “Till Then” enjoyed a long popularity with servicemen and civilians alike.

Helen Forrest rose to popularity when she joined Artie Shaw’s dance band in 1938. She signed with Benny Goodman late in 1939 and then switched to the Harry James band in 1941. Her wartime hits with James included “I Don’t Want to Walk Without You,” “I Had the Craziest Dream,” and “I’ve Heard That Song Before.” In 1943, Forrest decided to work as a single—as did many band vocalists, since instrumental music was not being recorded. Her popularity continued on radio, on records, and in motion pictures. Her 1944 movies were *Two Girls and a Sailor* and *Shine On, Harvest Moon*. In the latter she scored another hit with “Time Waits for No One,” a typical wartime ballad expressing the need to make the most of every moment during those uncertain times.

Somethin’s cookin’  
that rates an ovation,  
Note that I’m in  
a state of elation,  
Call the press in,  
I’ve got a quotation,  
Tell the nation  
my guys come back.

No more blues for me,  
No, no more,  
No more.  
Just good news for me,  
Just good news in store.  
So roll the car out,  
we gotta get movin’,  
Hang a star out,  
my guy is approvin’.  
When we are out  
we really get groovin’,

Life's improvin',  
my guy's come back.

Tell that preacher man  
today is the day,  
Got my feature man  
And we're on our way.  
Hallelujah!  
my guy's come back.

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Only a few long-playing records of reissued popular material are programmed to provide a strict review of wartime music. Recordings by singers and dance bands during World War II are numerous, but many LPs contain recordings made before or after—as well as during—the war. Those listed, however, will provide the listener with an ample selection of wartime titles.

## **World War I**

*It's a Long Way to Tipperary*. (Various artists.) Pelican 101.

Jolson, Al. *Broadway Al*. Totem 1010.

*Son of Tipperary*. (Various artists.) Pelican 119.

## **World War II**

*All the Cats Join In*. (Various artists.) Fontana TFL-5067. 1939-46.

Andrews Sisters. *Near You*. Vocalion VL-3611.

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*Dance Parade*. (Woody Herman, Kay Kyser, and others.) Columbia CL-6061.

*Tommy Dorsey*. 2-LP set. Victor 6038.

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Ellington, Duke. *Johnny Come Lately*. Victor LPV-541. 1942-45.

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*Benny Goodman Sextet*. Columbia CL-500. 1939-45.

Gray, Glen. *Musical Smoke Rings*. Decca DL-5089.

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*Herman, Woody. The Turning Point.* Decca DL-9229.  
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*Gene Krupa.* Fontana TFE-17087. 1938-1946.  
*Kay Kyser.* Harmony HL-7041.  
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*Artie Shaw.* 2-LP set. Victor LPT-6062.  
*Artie Shaw and Roy Eldridge.* Victor LPV-582. 1944-45.

**Side One** (Total time 24:36)

1. WHEN THE LUSITANIA WENT DOWN  
 (Charles McCarron and Nat Vincent) .....3:00  
 (*publ. Leo Feist, Inc.*)  
 Herbert Stuart, with studio orchestra
  
2. I DIDN'T RAISE MY BOY TO BE A SOLDIER  
 (Al Piantadosi and Alfred Bryan) ..... 2:58  
 (*publ. Leo Feist, Inc.*)  
 Morton Harvey, with studio orchestra
  
3. LET'S ALL BE AMERICANS NOW  
 (Irving Berlin, Edgar Leslie, and George W. Meyer) .....2:58  
 (*publ. Irving Berlin Music Corp.*)  
 American Quartet, with studio orchestra
  
4. OVER THERE  
 (George M. Cohan) .....2:54  
 (*publ. Leo Feist, Inc.*)  
 Nora Bayes, with studio orchestra
  
5. HELLO, CENTRAL! GIVE ME NO MAN'S LAND  
 (Jean Schwartz, Sam M. Lewis, and Joe Young) ..... 3:18  
 (*publ. Mills Music, Inc.*)  
 Al Jolson, with studio orchestra
  
6. THERE'S A VACANT CHAIR IN EVERY HOME TONIGHT  
 (Ernest Breuer and Alfred Bryan) .....2:52  
 (*publ. Shawnee Press, Inc.*)  
 The Shannon Four, with studio orchestra

7. I'VE GOT MY CAPTAIN WORKING FOR ME NOW  
(Irving Berlin) .....2:41  
(*publ. Irving Berlin Music Corp.*)  
Al Jolson, with studio orchestra

8. MY DREAM OF THE BIG PARADE  
(Jimmy McHugh and Al Dubin) .....3:25  
(*publ. Mills Music, Inc.*)  
Peerless Quartet, with studio orchestra

**Side Two** (Total time 25:29)

1. DER FUEHRER'S FACE  
(Oliver Wallace) .....2:37  
(*publ. Southern Music Publishing Co., Inc.*)  
Spike Jones and His City Slickers

2. HE'S 1-A IN THE ARMY AND HE'S A-1 IN MY HEART  
(Redd Evans) ..... 3:04  
(*publ. Redd Evans Music Co.*)  
Betty Bonney, with Les Brown and His Orchestra

3. STALIN WASN'T STALLIN' (A MODERN SPIRITUAL)  
(Willie Johnson) .....3:07  
(*publ. MCA Music, a Division of MCA Inc.*)  
Golden Gate Quartet

4. WE DID IT BEFORE AND WE CAN DO IT AGAIN  
(Cliff Friend and Charles Tobias) .....2:24  
(*publ. Warner Bros. Music*)  
Dick Robertson, with studio orchestra

5. I LEFT MY HEART AT THE STAGE DOOR CANTEEN  
(Irving Berlin) ..... 2:38  
(*publ. Irving Berlin Music Corp.*)  
Kenny Baker, with orchestra

6. GOODBYE, MAMA (I'M OFF TO YOKOHAMA)  
(J. Fred Coots) .....2:36  
(*publ. Chappell Music Co.*)  
Dick Robertson, with studio orchestra

7. NO LOVE, NO NOTHIN'  
(Harry Warren and Leo Robin) .....2:57  
(*publ. Bregman, Vocco & Conn, Inc.*)  
Johnny Long and His Orchestra; Patti Dugan, vocal



8. PRAISE THE LORD AND PASS THE AMMUNITION  
(Frank Loesser) . . . . . 2:31  
*(publ. Famous Music Corp.)*  
Kay Kyser and His Orchestra; Glee Club, vocals

9. MY GUY'S COME BACK  
(Mel Powell and RayMcKinley) . . . . . 3:00  
*(publ. Shapiro, Bernstein & Co., Inc.)*  
Helen Forrest, with studio orchestra

*Full discographic information for each selection may be found within the individual discussions of the works in the liner notes.*

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to CBS Records for “When the Lusitania Went Down”; “Hello, Central! Give Me No Man’s Land”; “I’ve Got My Captain Working for Me Now”; “He’s 1-A in the Army and He’s A-1 in My Heart”; “Stalin Wasn’t Stallin’” and “Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition”: to RCA Records for “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier”; “Let’s All Be Americans Now”; “Over There”; “There’s a Vacant Chair in Every Home Tonight”; “My Dream of the Big Parade”; and “Der Fuehrer’s Face”: and to MCA Records for “We Did It Before and We Can Do It Again”; “I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen”; “Goodbye, Mama (I’m Off to Yoko-hama)”; “No Love, No Nothin’”; and “My Guy’s Come Back.”

Our thanks to Robert Altshuler for making his record collection available to us, and to Sam Parkins for his invaluable help.

Program consultant: Michael Brooks  
Rerecording engineer: Art Shifrin  
Mastering: Lee Hulko, Sterling Sound  
Cover art: Samuel Greenburg. “For Freedom.” Woodcut.  
Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress; Washington, D.C.  
Cover design: Elaine Sherer Cox  
Library of Congress Card No.77-750897

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