



American Music Research Center
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

GLENN MILLER

1942

“HERE WE GO AGAIN”



Dedicated to the Glenn Miller Birthplace Society

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Glenn Miller Collections



Glenn Miller at WNEW, New York, January 1942

A Pivotal Year

1942 was the most pivotal year of Glenn Miller's career, including unprecedented success and a dramatic career transition, which was not foreseen by anyone. During what became his most accomplished and artistically interesting period, his band enjoyed unparalleled musical and commercial achievement. Yet what ultimately set 1942 apart from Miller's accomplishments was his ultimate integrity. For on the fateful Sunday morning of December 7, 1941, his nation was plunged into a global war. That grim reality provoked Glenn Miller to make the most important decision of his life other than marrying Helen Dorothy Burger. It turned out that America's most popular bandleader was also a genuine patriot. He deeply cared for the young Americans, now defending their nation, who had bought his records, listened to his radio programs and danced to his music at ballrooms coast-to-coast. And during 1942, Glenn Miller made a decision to walk away from his unprecedented acclaim and join them in uniform and service to America. But as the year started, despite the new wartime reality, Glenn Miller and his Orchestra were America's number one band with the nation's number-one tune, *Chattanooga Choo Choo*.

America's Number One Band

Miller started 1942 with his band appearing at the handsome Café Rouge of New York's Hotel Pennsylvania. The room was known to radio listeners nationwide, with Glenn's late-night sustaining broadcasts over NBC's Red and Blue networks and his *Sunset Serenade* Saturday afternoon matinee broadcasts over NBC-Blue. The Miller band has become synonymous with the Café Rouge, where this was their third season. Glenn was already booked to return in October 1942. Meanwhile, three nights every week, the busy band made their way from 701 Seventh Avenue (between 32nd and 33rd Streets) to the CBS Radio Playhouse No. 2 at 251 West 45th Street for their *Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade* broadcasts.

Meanwhile, they remained very busy making hit records for RCA Bluebird at the Victor recording studios at 155 West 24th Street. Their first post-Pearl Harbor session on December 8, 1941 produced *Moonlight Cocktail*, a number one hit to succeed *Chattanooga Choo Choo*. Likewise, their November 3, 1941 session produced *A String of Pearls*, which would also chart at number one between the two. This meant that from November 1941 to March 1942, the number one tune in America was a Glenn Miller record. Moreover, many of Miller's other records populated the top ten as they consistently had done since 1939. But the sound and style of the band had moved forward. The 1939 "clarinet lead" had given way to a deeper, resonant style that incorporated the "Miller sound" in rich and sophisticated arrangements. During the first week of 1942, the band recorded Hoagy Carmichael and Johnny Mercer's evergreen *Skylark*; Ernesto Lecouana's *Always in My Heart* and the evocative *When the Roses Bloom Again*. All three ballads struck a receptive tone with an understandably worried public and they all charted in the Billboard Top 10. Glenn gave all three considerable air time on his weeknight CBS broadcasts. Billy May arranged *Always in My Heart* and Bill Finegan arranged the others.

On January 1, by order of the Federal Communications Commission, NBC divested its Blue Network into a holding company, pending a sale to a new owner. The longstanding anti-trust case against NBC meant that the Blue Network would operate in a quasi-independent manner, although still tied to NBC for facilities, staff, technology and materials. Until the Blue Network was sold and became the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) in 1945, and beyond, all Blue Network programs and production remained at NBC.



Glenn Miller autographs "At The President's Birthday Ball" for President Franklin D. Roosevelt

By January 1942, Glenn Miller was frustrated with the clearances the Blue Network offered to his *Sunset Serenade* series. After considerable publicity from NBC, Glenn's Saturday afternoon U. S. O. Matinee broadcasts were not getting consistently on the air at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, or at all. The preceding programs on the Blue Network all fall and into the winter were college football games or the *Metropolitan Opera* broadcasts. The games could run late and push back the Opera and Miller. Then in December, war bulletins also intervened. As much as Glenn had appreciated NBC's assistance with the programs for the armed forces that he paid for out of his own pocket, he had had enough. He moved *Sunset Serenade* to Mutual, starting on the first weekend after the band had left the Café Rouge. Therefore, the first *Sunset Serenade* on Mutual originated from Cleveland, Ohio, on January 10, 1942. But Glenn would eventually have difficulties with Mutual as well.

Patriotic Sentiment

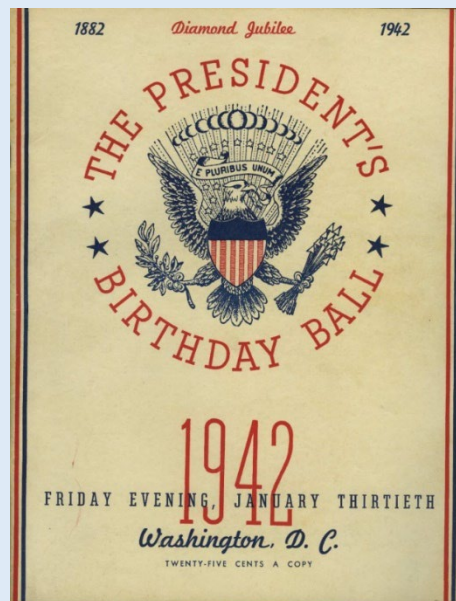
In addition to the emotional ballads, patriotic sentiment now appeared in a variety of new or revived wartime songs. Eventually, the ballads would mostly prevail in popularity polls, record sales and jukebox plays. But the wartime spirit was nonetheless evident on radio and records. Glenn Miller was certainly among the bandleaders caught up in this understandable atmosphere. In early January, he had also recorded the sure-hit tearjerker *Dear Mom*, about a soldier writing his mother from camp. But on a livelier note, he saluted civilian war workers and the public at large with the post-Pearl Harbor *On The Old Assembly Line*. Both were Jerry Gray arrangements. Interestingly, RCA paired this with Glenn's revival of Irving Berlin's 1932 tune *Let's Have Another Cup O' Coffee*. Now freed from the ASCAP-BMI feud, the hopeful depression-era lyrics were revived in this Jerry Gray chart to the reality of 1942.

But it was another Irving Berlin effort, this one a new song, that put the spotlight on Glenn Miller's view of public service. The music and entertainment industry staged annual national charity celebrations leading toward the January 30 birthday of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, now a fully-engaged wartime leader. In 1921, at the age of 39, the future president contracted polio and lost the use of his legs. Although his condition was concealed from then public, FDR developed great empathy for the handicapped. In 1926, he founded the non-profit Georgia Warm Springs Foundation on the site of the springs he visited to partake of the waters' therapeutic effects. In 1938, he reinvented the charity as the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. The non-partisan association of health scientists and volunteers helped fund research for a polio vaccine and assisted victims on the long path through physical rehabilitation. Funded originally through the generosity of wealthy celebrities at yearly President's Birthday Balls, the foundation could not raise money fast enough to keep pace with polio's continued toll on America's children and, during the Depression, the polio epidemic worsened. In 1938, FDR decided to appeal to the general public for help. At one fundraiser, Eddie Cantor jokingly urged the public to send dimes to the president, coining the term *March of Dimes*. The public took his appeal seriously, flooding the White House with 2,680,000 dimes and thousands of dollars in donations.

Glenn Miller was the national chairman of the dance band leaders division for the 1942 Birthday Balls, which would be held in cities around America. In New York, the event was held at the Starlight Roof of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. It was broadcast nationally by several networks and locally by WNEW, home of the *Make Believe Ballroom* and influential host Martin Block. Miller approached Irving Berlin about a new tune dedicated to the president and the *March of Dimes* cause.



*January 30, 1942
Starlight Ballroom
Waldorf Astoria Hotel
with host Martin Block*



Not only could Mr. Berlin not refuse, but he also created *At The President's Birthday Ball* happily, quickly and efficiently. The Miller band recorded the new tune for Bluebird and Glenn autographed a pressing for FDR, which was delivered to the White House. The Miller band recorded the new tune for Bluebird and Glenn autographed a pressing for FDR, which was delivered to the White House. On FDR's birthday, January 30, Glenn Miller and his Orchestra appeared on network and local radio broadcasts to celebrate the anniversary, promote the March of Dimes and broadcast *At the President's Birthday Ball*. Glenn Miller and His Orchestra were supposed to play at the ball in Washington, but due to his Paramount Theater theater commitment in New York (see following), he had to cancel. Johnny Long and His Orchestra substituted for the Miller band at the ball. All royalties from the sale of "The President's Birthday Ball" went to the Infantile Paralysis Fund.

On January 7, 1942, the band completed their engagement at the Café Rouge. Charlie Spivak and his Orchestra opened on January 8, followed by Jimmy Dorsey. The Hotel Pennsylvania booked Glenn to return in October 1942.



Waving the "fanhats" for 6,000 fans in Toronto

Oh! Canada

Following the January 8 Bluebird recording session in New York, the band traveled to Cleveland, Ohio, for an engagement at the RKO Palace Theater, where, on January 10 they broadcast their first *Sunset Serenade* over the Mutual network. From Cleveland, the band traveled to Detroit for a week at the Fox Michigan Theater. And the January 17 *Sunset Serenade* originated from Detroit. There, Miller learned that the band has again won the *Down Beat* annual popularity poll as Best Sweet Band. After closing in Detroit, the band crossed the Ambassador Bridge into Ontario for appearances in Toronto and London. The Mutual Street Arena in Toronto was first, where a crowd of 6,000 packed the hall to hear their favorite band, since they crowded the bandstand so tightly that no one could dance. Moving on to London, they broadcast the January 24 *Sunset Serenade* from the London Arena. CBC announcer Elwood Glover hosted the program, which Mutual and CBC simulcast. Returning to New York following a one-night engagement in Washington, D. C., the band opened at the Paramount Theater on January 27.

Paramount Theater

Beginning with a September-October 1939 engagement, the Miller band had appeared three times at New York's famous Paramount Theater before returning in 1942. Their first appearance was spectacular and historic, in that the band appeared with the Four Ink Sports in a racially integrated program. Historians have little noticed or reported Glenn Miller's faith in the vocal group, or his determination to take a risk. In addition to the Ink Spots, Glenn also employed African-American arrangers Eddie Durham and later Fred Norman. In the spring of 1940, the Andrews Sisters appeared with the band at the Paramount, while they were also broadcasting with the band for Chesterfield. When Glenn became ill during the engagement, Tommy Dorsey and other bandleaders notably substituted for him. Then in early 1941, the band returned with Glenn featuring his new vocal group, the Modernaires, and short-lived female singer Dorothy Claire.

Paramount impresario Bob Weitman was one of the entertainment industry moguls who had great faith in Glenn Miller's band. He also personally respected Miller greatly. And it did not hurt that when Miller's band appeared on the elevated Paramount stage, where they came up from below, the house packed with teenage fans went wild. It was also important to Weitman that Miller filled the seats for every matinee and evening performance, setting attendance and revenue records along the way.

At the Paramount, the band played four shows per day, an extra show on Saturday afternoon, and additional shows to meet demand. The accompanying acts were Jeanne Lorraine and Roy Rognan, a comedy-dance team, and Trixie, a female juggler. The movie was "Sullivan's Travels" with Joel McCrea and Veronica Lake. Sadly, Lorraine & Rognan were among the U. S. O. entertainers aboard a Pan American Boeing 314 Clipper that crashed into the Tagus River at Lisbon, Portugal on February 22, 1943. Roy lost his life and Lorraine was seriously injured in the tragic accident.

The 1942 engagement would be the final appearance by Miller at the Paramount, although this was unforeseen at the time. When the band closed on February 17, Weitman immediately booked Miller for 1943. Unfortunately, Miller never returned. A grateful Weitman would later stage a spectacular Glenn Miller Tribute in 1945. On February 18 the band made what would be their final recording session for the Bluebird label. The tunes included the wartime-themed *Shh! It's A Military Secret* and the iconic best-seller *Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree (With Anyone Else But Me)*. They also brought back the old standard *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* in the form of a powerful Bill Finegan arrangement,



*Paramount Theater
New York*

The First Gold Record

Glenn Miller recorded *Chattanooga Choo Choo* for RCA Bluebird on May 7, 1941 in Hollywood. 20th Century Fox featured it in *Sun Valley Serenade*, along with other Mack Gordon-Harry Warren tunes. The Miller band performed an extended version of the novelty in the film, along with a superb dance sequence featuring Dorothy Dandridge and the Nicholas Brothers. Among the Gordon-Warren tunes written for *Sun Valley Serenade* was the lovely ballad *I Know Why and So Do You*, which was featured as the showpiece tune. The producers and all concerned had every expectation that *I Know Why* would be the hit tune from the movie. Indeed, Miller recorded it, too, on May 7, and *Chattanooga Choo Choo* was the flip side of the same record.



*February 10, 1942
The First Gold Record*

As it turned out, the radio broadcasting industry was involved in a rights battle with music-licensing giant ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Artists and Publishers). This resulted in all ASCAP-licensed music being prohibited from the airwaves, effective on January 1, 1941. The broadcasters promoted their own, new licensing competitor, Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI). Therefore, during 1941, new BMI-licensed tunes jumped to the top of the music popularity polls. A surge in Latin American music ensued. Glenn's good friend and competitor Jimmy Dorsey cashed in with enormously popular renditions of tunes including *Amapola*, *Green Eyes* and *Yours*. *Chattanooga Choo Choo* was an ASCAP-licensed work. Although the movie premiered in late August of 1941, *Choo Choo* could not be broadcast until the licensing dispute was settled on October 31. Despite the radio blackout, the Bluebird record was already selling at a brisk pace since fans had been able to see and hear it in theaters. When Glenn could feature *Chattanooga Choo Choo* on the air, record sales skyrocketed. From November 1941 to February 1942, and as America went to war, *Choo Choo* sat atop the Billboard charts as #1 for an unprecedented nine weeks. It was in the top ten for thirteen weeks.

On February 10, 1942, W. Wallace Early of RCA Victor-Bluebird records joined announcer Paul Douglas and Glenn Miller on the Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade. Mr. Early presented Glenn with a trophy in recognition of what then was one-million, two hundred thousand pressings of the record (the total would continue to grow). The trophy was a gold-painted copy of a Choo Choo pressing, mounted in a framed and linen-lined case. This was the first "Gold Record" in music industry history and is so recognized by the RIAA (Record Industry Association of America). The gold record itself is today displayed at the Glenn Miller Gallery of the University of Colorado Boulder's Heritage Center, along with Glenn Miller's subsequent RCA gold-records. Between 1938 and 1942, Glenn Miller would record more top ten tunes than anyone in history, which was a tremendous achievement in only four years. The history of Miller's top ten achievements is documented in our study Glenn Miller Top Ten Hits, which is available online.

On to California

In early March, the band appeared for a week at the Loew's Capitol Theater in Washington, D. C., where they broke all house attendance records. During their week in the nation's capital, the band appeared on the steps of the U. S. Treasury Building to help the drive for the sale of Defense Bonds and Stamps. The band played in overcoats. But their leader also took the opportunity to quietly and privately visit the War Department to explore ways that he might be of more service to the military and the war effort. Glenn met first with future colleague and advocate Col. Edward Kirby at the Bureau of Public Relations. Kirby was in charge of Army radio broadcasting and media activities. Several other key Army officials met with Glenn, including Col. Charles Young and Maj. Howard Bronson of Special Services. The Army had formed a Service Corps to accommodate high-profile entertainment and sports figures, in an effort to meet a growing need for morale and recreational activities. Importantly, Glenn also met Maj. Howard Nussbaum of the Army Air Forces public relations office. Nussbaum, Capt. Sy Bartlett, a recent Hollywood executive, and Maj. Howard Bronson, were creating aggressive film and musical initiatives. They felt that Miller fit their objectives perfectly and promised to keep him in mind. From then on, the AAF kept a close eye on Glenn as he moved closer to potentially entering the armed forces.

From Washington, the band paused in Chicago for two CBS broadcasts at the Civic Opera House before boarding a Chicago & Northwestern train to Los Angeles, where they arrived on Tuesday, March 17, to begin work on their new movie at Fox, broadcast from CBS and make more records for RCA.



*Don Wilson and Glenn Miller
CBS Vine Street Radio Theater
Hollywood*

Hollywood

Effective March 4, Liggett & Myers Tobacco Company and their New York advertising agency Newell-Emmett made arrangements with CBS to shift the Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade from Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 10:00 p.m. (Eastern) to Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at the same time. The goal was to move Miller away from head-to-head competition with the Bob Hope Show over NBC on Tuesdays. Larry Bruff of Newell-Emmett handled the broadcasts when the band was away from New York, and Paul Douglas had been the home-base announcer from the beginning of the series. For their 1942 Hollywood stay, the band learned that popular announcer Don Wilson of the NBC Jack Benny Show would handle their series. Wilson and Miller were students at the University of Colorado Boulder at the same time during the 1920s. As they had in 1941, the band's broadcasts came from the CBS Vine Street Radio Theater, which was around the corner of Sunset & Vine from CBS Columbia Square on Sunset Boulevard. The Vine Street Theater was known for its superb acoustics and seating capacity, which better suited the Miller band.

Orchestra Wives

Orchestra Wife was the original title for *Orchestra Wives*, which 20th Century-Fox changed on June 23. George Montgomery and Ann Rutherford played the lead roles, supported by Cesar Romero, Lynn Bari, Carole Landis, Mary Beth Hughes, Virginia Gilmore, Jackie Gleason and the Nicholas Brothers. Harry Warren and Mack Gordon again supplied the band with a number of hit music and lyrics for the film, including (*I've Got a Gal in*) *Kalamazoo*, *Serenade in Blue*, *People Like You and Me* and, brought forward from *Sun Valley Serenade*, *At Last*. The film allowed Miller to offer the screenwriters ideas about how life in a road dance band really was, with liberal Hollywood embellishment added. But there was no doubt about the selling power of the music. In March, when the band was in Washington, DC, Glenn added George "The Fox" Williams to his already remarkable arranging team of Bill Finegan, Jerry Gray and Billy May, any one of which would have been chief arranger for any other band. As was Williams, for Sonny Dunham. After allowing Williams to observe the band and learn the Miller music library, his first score for the Miller band, an original composition, was *Boom Shot*, which Fox featured in *Orchestra Wives*. For the film, George Montgomery appeared at trumpet, replacing Steve Lipkins; Cesar Romero at piano for Chummy MacGregor and Jackie Gleason at string bass for Doc Goldberg. Fox star John Payne had portrayed both MacGregor and vocalist Ray Eberle in *Sun Valley Serenade*.



On the Orchestra Wives Set



People Like You and Me - Opening Scene



(I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo) - Closing Scene

GEORGE
MONTGOMERY
ANN
RUTHERFORD
with **GLENN**
MILLER
AND HIS BAND

in
Orchestra Wives

with Lynn **BARI** ★ *with* Carole **LANDIS**
Cesar **ROMERO** **20th**
CENTURY-FOX
PICTURE

Directed by **ARCHIE MAYO** ★ Produced by **WILLIAM LE BARON**

★★ Screen Play by **KARL TUNBERG & DARRELL WARE**

When they arrived in California, Helen and Glenn Miller rented actor Leslie Howard's home before moving into their 55-acre ranch with orange orchards that they had purchased in 1941. The ranch, which Glenn named *Tuxedo Junction*, was located off Fish Canyon Road between Monrovia and present-day Duarte.



Tuxedo Junction

Winds of Change

Bandleaders were faced with new wartime challenges. Fuel was rationed, and transportation became encumbered by priorities. Bus and rail travel was costlier and less available. It was difficult for bands to maintain one-night appearances and longer engagements crisscrossing the country. The draft depleted the bands of musicians. In spite of the wartime emergency, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), led by outspoken president James Cesar Petrillo played hardball in negotiations with the recording and transcription industry regarding the musicians' fees. Travel, the draft and a looming AFM recording strike all weighed on Glenn Miller as he considered his options "for the duration" of the war. Meanwhile, the wars news was grim. Bataan and Corregidor fell in the Philippines. An ascendant Imperial Japan appeared invincible. Australia and India were in peril. Likewise, The German Afrika Korps led by the legendary "Desert Fox" Gen. Erwin Rommel was closing in on Cairo and the Nile, threatening to cut the British Empire in half. Moreover, German forces advanced again toward Moscow and, to the southeast, into the Caucasus and its sprawling oil fields.

On April 2, the band went into the Victor Studios at 1016 North Sycamore Avenue in Hollywood for their first recording session on the Victor label. The price of Glenn Miller records therefore increased from thirty-five cents on Bluebird to fifty-cents on Victor. By this time, Miller's record sales had surpassed 6 million, or 12 million individual sides (tunes). Among the tunes Miller recorded were a traditional but modernized *American Patrol*, *Sweet Eloise*, *Sleep Song* and *Soldier, Let Me Read Your Letter*. The latter was written by soldiers from Fort Meade, Maryland, where Glenn would soon become more familiar with.

Liggett & Myers had long wanted to move Glenn Miller's *Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade* to an earlier time. On May 5, the program finally moved to a 7:15 p.m. (Eastern) time slot, following the perennially popular *Amos 'n' Andy*. Miller also returned to a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday schedule. The new setup required the band to do two programs per evening, an early feed for the Eastern and Central time zones and a later feed at 11:15 p.m. (Eastern) for the Mountain and Pacific time zones. At the time, neither CBS or NBC had yet to allow recorded programs. On another broadcasting front, the final program in the Mutual *Sunset Serenade* series aired on May 30. Key affiliates WGN in Chicago and WOR in New York needed the time slot. Therefore, starting on May 26, Glenn incorporated a modified version of his radio-phonograph contest for military installations into the *Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade*. Each week, three military bases submitted a popular tune, Glenn featured the tunes on his broadcasts, and the audience voted by postcard for their favorite, similar to the *Sunset Serenade* contest. Miller announced the previous week's winner the following Thursday evening.

Wrapping up their stay on the west coast, Glenn and the band arrived in Chicago on May 25 and broadcast their early program from the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, where musician Cmdr. Eddie Peabody was stationed. Miller and Peabody privately discussed Miller's potential future plans, and Peabody promised to help Miller obtain a commission in the Navy. On June 20, Glenn applied for an appointment as a lieutenant in the Naval Reserve (the equivalent of an Army Captain). The Navy received letters of recommendation for Miller from, among others, Bing Crosby.



Great Lakes Naval Training Station

From Chicago, the band continued east with numerous one-night stops and then home to New York. Meanwhile, announcer Paul Douglas had moved on to other duties and eventually Hollywood, where he became a fixture as a leading man in Fox movies. Therefore, first Gil Newsome and then Mel Allen became Miller's New York announcers, with Larry Bruff continuing to handle the duties from on the road. The band had made more records for Victor on May 20 in Hollywood, including (*I've Got a Gal in*) *Kalamazoo*, *Serenade in Blue* and *At Last* from *Orchestra Wives*. There was a bit of a controversy when the tunes were broadcast before the rights attorneys at Fox were allowing them to be, but the matter was quickly cleared up. On June 17 in New York, the band waxed *That's Sabotage*, a Marion Hutton effort that Fox filmed but cut from *Orchestra Wives*. The effusive Ernie Caceres from the reed section joined Marion, Tex Beneke and the Modernaires with the irreverent show tune *Conchita, Marcheta, Lolita, Pepita, Rosita, Juanita Lopez*. No one knew it yet, but the session also produced what was Ray Eberle's final recording for Glenn Miller, *Yesterday's Gardenias*, with the Modernaires.

For some time, Ray had been angry that he had been excluded from *Sun Valley Serenade* and not paid for the film work, whereas pianist Chummy MacGregor was excluded but paid because he made the musical recordings for the film per union rules. Then, with *Orchestra Wives*, the three musicians excluded from the film but who made the recordings for the film, were also paid. Ray saw this as a double standard. He complained publicly in the trade press about this and what he said was frustration with a "cheapskate" Miller, as well as Miller's disciplinary attitude. Something was going to blow when the boss read the comments, and it would, on July 12 when the band had returned to Chicago for an engagement at the Hotel Sherman's Panther Room, opening on July 7.



Ray Eberle

Ray was late for a Chicago rehearsal because the bridges on the Chicago River were up. When he arrived, Miller abruptly dismissed him. In a terse press statement, Miller mentioned “Acts of misconduct on his (Eberle’s) part over an extended period of time.” Miller went on to state that Eberle’s personal habits were deteriorating, and he was often physically unfit for work. In response, Ray repeated his published comments and stated emphatically that he actually quit. He was quoted by the press as saying he was “tired of listening to Miller’s sermons about Money not being anything.” Whatever the reasons, it was uncharacteristic for the deliberate Miller to abruptly fire Eberle for being late for rehearsal. Therefore there was certainly more to the story and other provocation. However, Miller acted immediately to replace Eberle with Skip Nelson (Scipione Mirabella) from the Chico Marx band. Within 24 hours, Nelson was on an airliner from New York to Chicago.

Three days before Ray Eberle’s departure, 20th Century-Fox signed Glenn Miller to a new contract calling for an unspecified number of motion pictures per year, a minimum of three new films, and that the band’s film work would have precedence over their personal appearances. In fact, in 1942, the Fox schedule for *Orchestra Wives* caused Miller to postpone or cancel several theater dates, including the Passaic Theater in New Jersey, which moved to late September.



Skip Nelson

Sense of Duty

The AFM recording strike was set for August 1. Capitol, Columbia, Decca and RCA accordingly rushed their artists into the studios to wax as many records as possible before the deadline. Glenn Miller was no exception. Over three days in Chicago, Tuesday through Thursday, July 14-16, the band made a marathon thirteen sides for RCA Victor. It was also Skip Nelson's first three days with the band and on the *Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade*. These turned out to be the final recording sessions for Glenn Miller and his Orchestra. However, his RCA contract continued, presumably with recordings resuming following the musician's union strike. As it turned out, Capitol and Decca settled in 1943, and Columbia and RCA settled in November 1944. Miller's quite lucrative contract resumed in 1946 with Tex Beneke and the Glenn Miller Orchestra. The RCA contract was one important reason why a postwar band led by Tex was not only feasible but potentially profitable. Some of the thirteen sides Miller made on July 14-16 were stockpiled and released as late as 1944 because of the strike. Regardless, those immediately issued became immediate hits. Johnny Mercer's classic *That Old Black Magic* charted #1 in Billboard. *Moonlight Becomes You* also charted. There was little wonder why Johnny Mercer was Glenn's favorite lyricist, with both *Black Magic* and *Skylark* hitting it big in the same year. The Modernaires accompanied Skip Nelson on both tunes, along with *Moonlight Mood*, and Nelson confidently and competently voiced *Dearly Beloved*, *I'm Old Fashioned* and *A Pink Cocktail for a Blue Lady*. Also in the vocal department, Tex, Marion and the Modernaires voiced *Juke Box Saturday Night*. RCA almost decided not to release it because of potential offense to valuable coin machine operators. Ralph Brewster sang the deep-pitched voice of Deek Watson on the Ink Spots imitation and Hal Dickinson sang the high-pitched falsetto voice of Bill Kenny. Instrumentals included the Jerry Gray compositions *Caribbean Clipper* and *Here We Go Again*, in addition to George Williams' *It Must Be Jelly* ('Cause Jam Don't Shake Like That). All three would soon feature prominently with Miller's Army Air Forces Orchestra. *Caribbean Clipper* was Helen Miller's favorite instrumental effort by the band. *Here We Go Again* is the title of this study. And *It Must be Jelly* was almost banned by the BBC in England during 1944 because of the alleged implications of its briefly chanted lyric. *Sleepy Town Train* was also featured by the forthcoming Miller AAF organization. Benny Carter's *Rainbow Rhapsody* is considered by critics to be an exceptional and sensitive arrangement by Bill Finegan. Likewise, George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, as interpreted by Finegan, is the superb finale recording by Glenn Miller and his Orchestra. The band had been featuring the American classic on the *Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade* since the spring. Ira Gershwin had given Glenn permission to interpret the part of the work that would fit into a three minute record or could be performed on stage and radio for a longer play. In its review, *The Metronome* stated, "Despite the Gershwin original, because of Bill Finegan's arrangement, Bobby Hackett's horn and an all around excellent performance, this is the Miller side of the year." Moreover, Miller's decision to prominently feature Bobby Hackett on cornet during 1941 and 1942, among other key personnel decisions, had strengthened the band's performances and character. By August 1942, this was arguably not only the best sounding of the white bands in the United States. It was also performing exquisite arrangements and compositions by a remarkable arranging team. The addition of Skip Martin at tenor sax and moving Tex Beneke to alto sax had deepened the reed sound, along with the baritone sax of Ernie Caceres. The instrumentals were powerful and rich. The ballads were smooth and much slower paced than the 1939 pace of the band. And the original Miller "clarinet lead" sound had yielded to a more resonant and provocative sound. Glenn Miller had evolved. Where he would take his music and himself was about to profoundly change. Given his patriotism, sense of duty and business acumen, Glenn was preparing to make his move in service to the United States of America.

On August 1, the Navy rejected Miller's application for a commission. Miller's sense of timing did not align with issues then facing the Navy over applications for commission from the entertainment industry. Congress had forced the Navy to investigate allegations of recruiting officers accepting bribes from persons in the entertainment industry to avoid the draft. Nor had the Navy yet developed a coordinated effort to address public relations through radio and film, or how to best employ someone with Glenn Miller's unique skill set, beyond being a bandleader. The Navy had to clean up some things, and Cmdr. Peabody assured Glenn that their rejection was no reflection upon him, his qualifications, or that the situation might not soon change. But Miller was impatient.

Among bandleaders, Artie Shaw was already in the Navy with the noncommissioned rank of chief petty officer. Claude Thornhill soon joined Shaw and later led his own band in the Pacific. Sam Donahue enlisted, ultimately took over Shaw's band following a grueling tour of the South Pacific, and later took the band to England. Ray Anthony, a member of Miller's 1940-41 trumpet section, also led a Navy band, as did Clyde McCoy and Glenn's superstar Tex Beneke. The media soon reported that Glenn was not joining the Navy as had been rumored. But what they did not know was that Glenn had other plans.

On August 12, Glenn sent a three-page letter to Gen. Charles Young of the Army Services of Supply, which included Army Special Services, who he had met in March. In part, he emphasized:

"In your recent letter to me, you mentioned the desirability of streamlining our present-day military music. This touches upon a subject close to my heart and about which I think I can speak with some authority. The interest of our boys lies definitely in modern, popular music, as played by an orchestra such as ours, rather than in the music to which their fathers listened twenty-five years ago, most of which is still being played by Army bands just as it was in world war days. By appropriate planning, programs could be regularly broadcast to the men in the service, and I have an idea such programs might put a little more spring into the feet of our marching men and a little more joy into their heart. I should like to go into the army if I could be placed in charge of a modernized Army band. I feel I could really do a job for the Army in the field of modern music. I am thirty-eight years of age and am in excellent physical condition. I have, of course, registered for the draft but have not been classified. I have been married for twelve years. I would suppose under present regulations I shall ultimately be placed in class 3-A. I mention this only because I want you to know my suggestion stems from a sincere desire to do a real job for the army and that desire is not actuated by any personal draft problem. I hope you will feel there is a job I can do for the Army. If so, I shall be grateful if you will have the proper person contact me and instruct me as to further procedure."

Young replied on August 15 that he would follow up with Gen. Breton Somervell, commanding general of Services of Supply, and further, that the Army was indeed quite interested in Glenn's services. To seal the deal, Glenn made a confidential trip to Washington following his late Chesterfield broadcast of August 18. There, he completed an application for commission, and returned to New York in time for his August 19 broadcast. On August 20, he reported to the Army Medical Board at 39 Whitehall Street in Manhattan to complete, and pass, his physical examination. Miller's Bergen County, New Jersey draft board sent the War Department a statement verifying his draft status was undetermined but most likely to be 3-A. It was important to the Army that Glenn was not enlisting to avoid the draft. Also on August 20, Glenn sent a follow-up letter to Gen. Young, reporting his progress through the system and that he needed thirty days to wrap up his business matters with band personnel, bookings Chesterfield, RCA and the Café Rouge. In Washington, Gen. Young shared all of this with Gen. Somervell, who approved Glenn's application and requirements. Meanwhile, the Army Air Forces also noted Glenn's progress.



*At the premiere of Orchestra Wives
Glenn's agent Don Haynes, Glenn Miller, Marion Hutton and Tex Beneke*

On August 26, Army Service of Supply formally filed approval for the commission of Glenn Miller and the adjutant general approved the request on September 7. Meanwhile, the trade press reported that discussions within the Navy about Miller had resumed. Perhaps they got wind of the Army initiative, or Glenn was hedging his bet and playing the Army and Navy against each other. Meanwhile, on September 4, 20th Century-Fox released *Orchestra Wives*, as the band traveled to Atlantic City for a weekend appearance at Hamid's Million Dollar Pier.

On September 8, the War Department announced Miller's appointment as a Captain in the Army Specialist Corps. His orders were to report for duty with the Seventh Service Command (Special Service) at Omaha, Nebraska, on October 7. Glenn received a formal notification letter from the adjutant general on September 10. He promptly returned to 29 Whitehall Street to take his Oath of Office and sign the document at the Army Recruiting and Induction Office, with the paparazzi eagerly snapping photos of the popular bandleader leaving the building as word had leaked out about his arrival to enlist. Now Glenn had to come clean with the band, who already suspected that something was up. He returned to midtown and CBS, ordered everyone but the band out of the studio and told the band that he had enlisted in the Army. No amount of preparation could have prepared them for his announcement. Following the evening broadcasts, the band traveled to Boston for a week of engagements and broadcasts at the RKO Keith's Theater, as everyone now had to decide what they would do and where they would soon go following the break up of America's number one band.



*Glenn Miller Enlists
September 10, 1942*

But Glenn had numerous business entanglements to square away before entering the armed forces. Liggett & Myers had just renewed his Chesterfield program. Fox had signed him for at least three new movies, and he was opening at the Café Rouge on October 6. He employed three dozen people and affected many more lives in the entertainment industry. All of their lives would now change based upon his decision. The media estimated that Miller's decision would cost his booking agency, General Amusements, over \$100,000 per year. Miller's personal loss was almost \$1 million per year in income. Miller's Chesterfield renewal was scheduled to begin September 29. After confirming his military appointment, Glenn held a conference call with Benjamin F. Few, vice president of advertising with Liggett & Myers. Although he could have recommended any of the bands in which he held a financial interest, including Hal McIntyre, Charlie Spivak or Claude Thornhill, Glenn recommended Harry James as his successor, and Chesterfield concurred.

On Thursday, September 24, 1942, Glenn Miller broadcast his final Chesterfield programs from the stage of the Central Theater in Passaic, New Jersey. Harry James made a cameo appearance on the early broadcast during the closing tune, Juke Box Saturday Night and Glenn introduced his talented successor to the nationwide audience. The friendly competitors had warm comments for each other and, with a promise to return after the war, Glenn Miller signed off. Harry James later remembered that Glenn Miller's consideration of him was perhaps the best break of his musical career.



Sammy Kaye, Harry James and Glenn Miller

Morale and Recreation

With the end of the Chesterfield series, Glenn was free to appear on *Coca Cola Spotlight Bands*. On Saturday, September 26, he made his final broadcast as a civilian on the Blue Network series. Glenn Miller and his Orchestra passed into history on Sunday, September 27 at their emotional final stage appearance at the Central Theater in Passaic. Accompanied by confidante Chummy MacGregor, Glenn and Helen traveled to California and Colorado for personal business and to visit family before Glenn reported for duty.

On October 7, Capt. Miller reported for duty to Maj. Gen. Frederick Uhl, commanding officer, Seventh Service Command (Seventh Corps), Omaha, Nebraska. On October 12 he received orders to report for the Special Services' Officer Training Course at Fort Meade, Maryland. Miller entered the seventh and final course. The program was considerably shorter than the 12-week curriculum at standard Army and Army Air Forces officer candidate schools.

Formed in February 1942, the Army Specialist Corps (ASC) created a pool of civilian professionals for noncombat services. The War Department Bureau of Public Relations and Special Services Division coordinated the recruitment of entertainers, musicians and sports celebrities. High profile candidates were "fast-tracked" into the Army, and Col. Ed Kirby of the BPR believed this was the fastest way to get Miller into uniform. The Army Air Forces agreed. However, regular Army officers were unimpressed by the ASC and the program had come under congressional scrutiny, not unlike the Navy situation, with accusations of favoritism and draft avoidance. Congress came to insist that the War Department discontinue the ASC. Meanwhile, Miller's class would be the last. Moreover, when he arrived at Fort Meade, Miller realized that the ASC curriculum did not address his vision of how the Army might best employ him. Men trained at Fort Meade became liaison officers for U. S. O. camp shows, organize entertainment and recreational activities at Army bases and recruit soldiers to perform in amateur plays and musical revues.



Capt. Glenn Miller, Army Service Corps

What Glenn did not yet realize was that the AAF public relations team of Nussbaum and Bartlett had their eye on him, believed he perfectly fit their radio broadcasting plans and were preparing to take advantage of the murky ASC situation. From their perspective, Glenn would finish at Fort Meade in under six weeks and be available sooner than the three months he would have had to do at the AAF Officer Candidate School in Miami Beach. However, at Fort Meade, Glenn fell ill and was hospitalized, diagnosed with pneumonia. His chronic respiratory issued would crop up again in December 1943 and September 1944. The press caught wind of Miller's hospitalization and suggested that he would be released from service. Meanwhile, due to the political pressure, the Army discontinued the ASC. Glenn's class ended November 16, and the graduates signed letters of resignation from the ASC. They then took a new oath of office as officers in the regular Army. In Glenn's case, he became a regular and not reserve officer, and on November 23, he was ordered to return to Omaha on November 27 for unspecified duties, The Army Special Services Division did not yet know what to do with him.

The AAF made their move and promptly took ownership of Capt. Miller. On November 25, at the request of the commanding General of the AAF, H. H. "Hap" Arnold, Gen. Somervell of Army Service of Supply approved Miller's transfer to the Army Air Forces. Glenn was to proceed to Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama, for orientation. Capt. Miller was heading to the Southeastern Flying Training Command Headquarters. The AAF cut a priority requisition and Glenn received his new set of orders November 27. His immediate duties were to acquaint himself with the AAF Flying and Technical Training Commands prior to service as Director of Bands, Training, modernizing AAF music, recruiting and channeling musicians to AAF bases and an radio broadcasting production unit and orchestra.

Unlike the perennially repeated fable that Glenn ended up in the AAF due to a clerical error about his first name being Alton, the AAF knew exactly who he was and took calculated action to claim him, because they had a job that perfectly fit his resume and objectives. The AAF was impressed with Glenn's entertainment industry experience, contacts, high profile and influence with the public. On December 2, he took his new oath of office and he reported at Maxwell Field on December 4.



Capt. Glenn Miller, Army Air Forces



NBC "Army Hour" Broadcast from Maxwell Field

From Maxwell Field, during December 1942, Glenn traveled by air to other AAF bases to acquaint himself with the Flying and Technical Training Commands. If he was averse to flying, as has been reported, he would have been quite uncomfortable with his busy itinerary. But after all he *was* now in the *Air Force*. However, Glenn also participated in activities at Maxwell Field. On December 24, Christmas Eve, he joined the Rhythmaires, a fifteen-piece dance orchestra, for an Aviation Cadet Dance, including a broadcast by WAPI, Birmingham. The group included members of the 304th and 305th AAF Bands stationed at Maxwell Field, and was formed by AAF musician Jerry Yelverton, formerly a member of Glenn's civilian band. Miller played with and led the group during the event, which was his first musical appearance in uniform. On December 27, Capt. Miller appeared on NBC's popular *Army Hour* broadcast, which was produced by Col Ed Kirby and the BPR. The Maxwell Field segment was written and produced by Pvt. Elmo Israel Ellis. Glenn was impressed with the recent University of Alabama graduate and pulled strings to send Ellis to Officer Candidate School in Miami Beach. Ellis became an administrative officer with the AAF Training Command Band and radio production unit led by Capt. Robert Jennings and musical director M/Sgt. Harry Bluestone, which eventually succeeded the AAF Training Command Band and radio production unit led by Capt. Miller, when the Miller unit went to England. Ellis, who became a radio executive and general manager of WSB, Atlanta, always believed that Glenn Miller had played the key role in launching and encouraging his career.

Amidst media speculation about Capt. Miller forming "the" official band of the AAF, on January 1, 1944, Glenn was assigned to the Army Air Forces Technical Training Command headquarters at Knollwood Field, Southern Pines, North Carolina, and detached to Atlantic City, New Jersey, to begin his now legendary service with the Army Air Forces. What "was to be" was about to begin.



With the Rhythmaires, December 24, 1942

Glenn Miller – 1942 Recordings

RCA Bluebird

January 5, 1942, Victor Studio #2, 155 East 24th Street, New York

BS-068833-1	Bluebird B-11429	<i>At The President's Birthday Ball</i> Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-068834-1	Bluebird B-11429	<i>Angels of Mercy</i> Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-068836-1	Bluebird B-11480	<i>On the Old Assembly Line</i> Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-068837-1	Bluebird B-11450	<i>Let's Have Another Cup O' Coffee</i> Marion Hutton, Ernie Caceres and the Modernaires, vocal

January 8, 1942, Victor Studio #1, 155 East 24th Street, New York

BS-068789-1	Bluebird B-11462	<i>Skylark</i> Ray Eberle, vocal
BS-068835-1	Bluebird B-11413	<i>Dear Mom</i> Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-068790-2	Bluebird B-11438	<i>When the Roses Bloom Again</i> Ray Eberle, vocal
BS-068791-1	Bluebird B-11438	<i>Always in My Heart</i> Ray Eberle, vocal

February 18, 1942, Victor Studio #1, 155 East 24th Street, New York

BS-071860-1	Bluebird B-11493	<i>Shh! It's a Military Secret</i> Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-071861-1	Bluebird B-11474	<i>Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree (With Anyone Else But Me)</i> Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-071862-1	Bluebird B-11493	<i>She'll Always Remember</i> Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-071863-1	Bluebird B-11474	<i>The Lamplighter's Serenade</i> Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-071864-1	Bluebird B-11480	<i>When Johnny Comes Marching Home</i> Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal



RCA Victor

April 2, 1942, Victor Studios, 1016 North Sycamore Avenue, Hollywood

PBS-072230-1 Victor 27873 *American Patrol*
PBS-072231-1 Victor 27873 *Soldier, Let Me Read Your Letter*
Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
PBS-072232-1 Victor 27879 *Sleep Song*
Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
PBS-072233-1 Victor 27879 *Sweet Eloise*
Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal

May 20, 1942, Victor Studios, 1016 North Sycamore Avenue, Hollywood

PBS-072283-1 Victor 27934 *(I've Got a Gal in) Kalamazoo*
Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
PBS-072284-1 Victor 27935 *Serenade in Blue*
Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
PBS-072285-1 Victor 27934 *At Last*
Ray Eberle, vocal
PBS-072286-1 Victor 27894 *Lullaby of the Rain*
Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal
PBS-072287-1 Victor 27894 *Knit One, Purl Two*
Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal

June 17, 1942, Victor Studio #1, 155 East 24th Street, New York

BS-075090-1 Victor 27935 *That's Sabotage*
Marion Hutton, vocal
BS-075091-1 Victor 27943 *Conchita, Marcheta, Lolita, Pepita, Rosita, Juanita Lopez*
Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton, Ernie Caceres,
and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-075092-1 Victor 27933 *The Humming-Bird*
Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-075093-1 Victor 27933 *Yesterday's Gardenias*
Ray Eberle, vocal



July 14, 1942, Victor Studio A, 222 West North Bank Street, Chicago

BS-074736-1	Victor 27953	<i>Dearly Beloved</i> Skip Nelson and the band, vocal
BS-074737-1	Victor 20-1520	<i>Moonlight Mood</i> Skip Nelson and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-074738-1	Victor 20-1536	<i>Caribbean Clipper</i>
BS-074739-1	Victor 20-1563	<i>Here We Go Again</i>

July 15, 1942, Victor Studio A, 222 West North Bank Street, Chicago

BS-074740-2	Victor 20-1523	<i>That Old Black Magic</i> Skip Nelson and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-074741-1	Victor 20-1520	<i>Moonlight Becomes You</i> Skip Nelson and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-074742-1	Victor 20-1509	<i>Juke Box Saturday Night</i> Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal
BS-074743-1	Victor 20-1546	<i>It Must Be Jelly ('Cause Jam Don't Shake Like That)</i>

July 16, 1942, Victor Studio A, 222 West North Bank Street, Chicago

BS-074744-1	Victor 27953	<i>I'm Old Fashioned</i> Skip Nelson, vocal
BS-074745-1	Victor 20-1523	<i>A Pink Cocktail for a Blue Lady</i> Skip Nelson, vocal
BS-074746-1	Victor 20-1546	<i>Rainbow Rhapsody</i>
BS-074747-1	Victor 20-1509	<i>Sleepy Town Train</i>
BS-074748-1	Victor 20-1529	<i>Rhapsody in Blue</i>

Glenn Miller -1942 Soundtrack Recordings

March-April 1942, 20th Century Fox, Hollywood

Moonlight Serenade

Moonlight Serenade – alternate take

Chattanooga Choo Choo (instrumental)

People Like You and Me

Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton, Ray Eberle and the Modernaires, vocal

Boom Shot

At Last

Ray Eberle and Pat Friday (for Lynn Bari), vocal

American Patrol

Bugle Call Rag

Serenade in Blue

Ray Eberle, Pat Friday (for Lynn Bari) and the Modernaires, vocal

Serenade in Blue – alternate take

Ray Eberle, Pat Friday (for Lynn Bari) and the Modernaires, vocal

Montage

(I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo)

Tex Beneke, Marion Hutton and the Modernaires, vocal

(I've Got a Gal in) Kalamazoo – dance sequence

The Nicholas Brothers, vocal

(I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo) (instrumental) – closing sequence

(I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo) (instrumental) – alternate closing sequence

That's Sabotage – cut from release

Marion Hutton, vocal

You Say The Sweetest Things, Baby – small group - unused

The Man in the Moon (instrumental) - unused

Glenn Miller – 1942 Broadcasts

Café Rouge, Hotel Pennsylvania, New York – NBC Red and Blue

January 1 – January 6, 1942

President's Birthday Celebration – Various network and local

January 30, 1942

Sunset Serenade – NBC-Blue

January 3, 1942

Sunset Serenade – Mutual

January 10 – May 30, 1942

Army Hour -NBC and local broadcast

Maxwell Field, Montgomery Alabama

December 24, 1942

December 27, 1942

Chesterfield Moonlight Serenade - CBS

Programs #323 through #426

January 6-September 24, 1942

Examples of previously unreleased 1942 Chesterfield programs appear in the 2022 Glenn Miller Collections presentation of "Here We Go Again, Glenn Miller, 1942," Saturday, June 11, 2022, at the Glenn Miller Birthplace Festival.

Dennis M. Spragg of the Glenn Miller Collections, American Music Research Center, University of Colorado Boulder, is historian of the Glenn Miller Birthplace Society, Glenn Miller's biographer and author of *Glenn Miller Declassified*.

For further reading:

Keep 'Em Flying – Glenn Miller, 1941

Juke Box Saturday Night – Glenn Miller, 1940

The Year He Found The Sound – Glenn Miller, 1939

Discover online Glenn Miller resources and history at:

<https://www.colorado.edu/amrc/glenn-miller-collections>

<https://www.dennismspragg.com>