Brown, Les (1912-) Encyclopedia Article

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A band leader for nearly 60 years, Les Brown and his "Band of Renown" were best known as a first-class swing band operating primarily in the pop-music field. Brown was a student at Duke University from 1932-35, where he formed his first dance band, the Duke Blue Devils. After that band folded in September, 1937, Brown worked as a freelance arranger for Larry Clinton and Isham Jones. He formed a new band in 1938, and throughout the 1940s became increasingly well-known, featured on television touring with Bob Hope to entertain service men at Christmas. The band reached its peak when Doris Day was featured as vocalist in 1940 and again from 1943-46. The orchestra's best-remembered arrangements were written by Ben Homer, who also composed the band's theme song, "Sentimental Journey."

Further Reading:

Balliett, Whitney. *American Musicians.* New York, Oxford, 1986.

Simon, George T. *The Big Bands.* New York, MacMillan, 1974.