James, Harry (1916-1983) Encyclopedia Article

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Reared in a circus atmosphere by parents who toured with the Big Top, Harry James studied trumpet with his father and won the Texas State Championship with a solo at age 14. One of the star trumpet players of the swing era, 20-year-old James made his recording debut with the Ben Pollack Band in September 1936. Three months later he was a featured sideman with the Benny Goodman Band, a springboard to forming his own swinging, Basie-style band in January 1939. Ironically, James's biggest hits with his own band were *not* the upbeat numbers like "Two O'clock Jump," but the dulcet-tone, non-jazz solos like "You Made Me Love You." James continued to play in the style of his favorite horn men, Louis Armstrong and Muggsy Spanier, and the band remained widely popular into the late 1950s.

Further Reading:

Balliett, Whitney. *American Musician.* New York, Oxford Press, 1986.

Collier, James Lincoln. *Benny Goodman and the Swing Era.* New York, Oxford Press, 1989.

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