



Albert Wynn Band, The Dreamland Cafe, Chicago, 1926. Front row left to right: 'Doc' Cheatham, Al Wynn, 'Brownie.' Top row left to right: unknown, Silas White, Ben Thigpen, Gerald Hobson, Jimmy Flowers.

ADOLPHUS "DOC" CHEATHAM

Nat Hentoff in his article "If Recording Jazz Were Up To Me—," which appeared in the April 11, 1973 edition of The New York Times, stated "I would also set up sessions for trumpeteers "Doc" Cheatham and Joe Thomas—."

I must, in all truthfulness, credit Mr. Hentoff with thinking of this idea first, but Jezebel Records has been thinking along these same lines for quite some time. We believe, as Mr. Hentoff does, that many great jazz musicians have been shamelessly neglected by the major recording companies and we are, in our own small way, trying to remedy this situation.

This album is "Doc" Cheatham's baby. He called all of the shots, from what songs would be played, down to the order in which they would appear. This is way it should be!! After all, "Doc" has been playing for better than fifty years now, and we think he deserves such considerations.

Getting to know "Doc" has been a wonderful experience for me. I could set down a never-ending string of adjectives to describe "Doc," the player, and "Doc," the man. But to state it simply, "Doc" is a great trumpet player and a wonderful human being.

The following is a brief biographical sketch of "Doc," taken from John Chilton's great book "Who's Who Of Jazz."

Adolphus Anthony "Doc" Cheatham was born on June 13, 1905 in Nashville, Tennessee. He acquired his nickname through having several relatives in the medical profession. He was originally taught by Professor N. C. Davis in Nashville. During a career that has spanned a half century, "Doc" has played with the following bands: Marion Hardy's Band (first professional job), John "Bearcat" Williams' Synco Jazzers

(c. 1924), Albert Wynn (1926), Bobby Lee (c. 1926), Wilbur De Paris (1927-1928), Chick Webb (1928), Sam Wooding (1928-1930), Marion Hardy's Alabamians (1930), McKinney's Cottonpickers (1931-1932), Cab Calloway (1933-1939), Teddy Wilson's Big Band (1939), Benny Carter (1940), Fletcher Henderson (1941), Eddie Haywood Sextet (1943-1945), Claude Hopkins (1946), Marcelino Guerra (1948-1950), Perez Prado (1951-1952), Vic Dickenson (1952-1955), led own band in New York City (1960-1965) and Benny Goodman (1966-1967). In addition, during the 1950's and the 1960's "Doc" toured with Cab Calloway (summer 1951), Wilbur De Paris (Africa in 1957 and Europe in 1960), Sammy Price (Europe in 1960), Herbie Mann (Africa in 1960), Benny Goodman (Belgium in 1967) and with the "Top Brass" aggregation (Europe in 1967). "Doc" has participated in many recording sessions with: Ma Rainey, Count Basie, Max Kaminsky, Pee Wee Russell, Cap'n John Handy, Wilbur De Paris, Juanita Hall and many other artists.

From this point on "Doc" takes over, and what "Doc" has to say should be both interesting and informative to the jazz fan.

"This church where all of us kids first started was called Phillips Chapel. The Dean, a little fellow named Meredith, got all of the kids in the neighborhood together and had us meet at Phillips Chapel, which wasn't too far from where I lived. He decided that we should have a juvenile band and he called it the BFS Band, which stood for Bright Future Stars. At the first meeting we met the teacher he brought along. This was Professor N.C. Davis, who was a player and teacher. Naturally the kids grabbed any instrument and I grabbed the drums, but Professor Davis said I should try the cornet. We had practice once a week and we had to pay twenty-five cents for each practice.