

FRANK CRUMIT

Returns

Original 1920-1938
Recordings

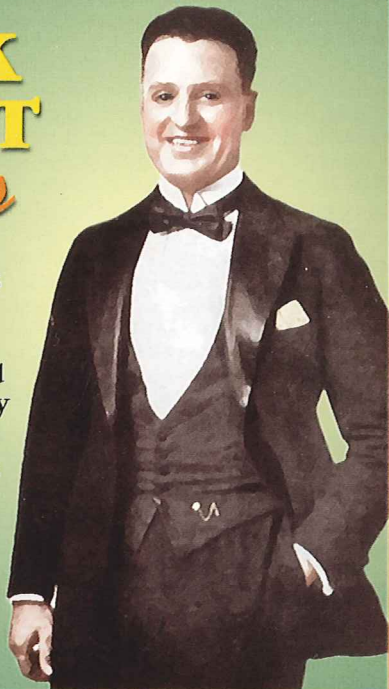
Including

The Pig Got Up And
Slowly Walked Away

The Three Trees

And Then He Took
Up Golf

Down By The
Railroad Track



FRANK CRUMIT RETURNS

Original 1920-1938 Recordings

Six decades after his death, close to eighty years since some of these recordings were new, Frank Crumit is still one of the best-remembered names from the early days of radio, as well as Broadway and records. Request programmes are still asked for the songs about “Abdul Abulbul Amir”, the terrible golfer, or the pig with good taste; listeners with long memories often call for the one about the fortune hidden in the arm chair, or the monologue about the Three Trees. Here are twenty more of Frank Crumit's best.

Crumit was born 26th September, 1889 in Jackson, Ohio, the son of a banker. He attended Culver Military Academy and the University of Ohio, distinguishing himself in football and baseball, and composing Ohio State University's *Buckeye Battle Cry*. Turning to engineering after his graduation in 1910, Frank soon found himself drawn towards show business: as part of a vaudeville act “The 3 Comedians”, as a single act “The One-Man Glee Club”, then as a singer with Paul Biese's dance band in Chicago and New York. Like his contemporaries Cliff Edwards and Wendell Hall, Crumit was attracted to the ukulele, which formed the perfect accompaniment to his warm, charming voice. By 1918 he had reached Broadway, with roles in *Betty Be Good* and the *Greenwich Village Follies*.

In 1921, Frank was engaged to contribute songs and to perform in *Tangerine*, which starred an established performer, Julia Sanderson. Born Julia Sackett in 1887, she had appeared in stock companies from age 13, joined a Broadway chorus three years later, and enjoyed starring roles through the 1910s in *The Sunshine Girl* and *The Girl from Utab*. She had also been married twice before, but Sanderson and Crumit were a magic combination. After *Tangerine*, they worked together whenever possible; finally, in 1927, Frank Crumit and Julia Sanderson married and retired from show business, Frank emerging only to make some of his best records.

When the Crumits went back to work in 1929, it was in radio. *The Blackstone Plantation* was heard Tuesday nights on CBS, sponsored by Blackstone Cigars; in 1930 it moved to NBC, where it stayed three years. A Sunday afternoon series for Bond Bread followed, from

1933 to 1936, succeeded by the immensely popular *Battle of the Sexes* beginning in 1938 and *The Crumit and Sanderson Quiz* in 1942. Known as the "Singing Sweethearts", the Crumits were among radio's most popular stars, often travelling daily from their home in Springfield, Massachusetts to the studios in New York to present a variety show in the morning and a quiz game in the evening. Somehow in 1935, Frank found time to be elected President of the Lambs Club, such was his esteem among his fellow performers.

As a recording artist, Frank Crumit paid his first visit to a studio late in 1919. Over the next four years he recorded more than a hundred sides for Columbia and Little Wonder, usually singing the standard novelty songs of the day. Late in 1923, Crumit moved over to Victor, where he stayed ten years and enjoyed his biggest successes. But by 1934 even best-selling artists were having trouble in the record stores, and Frank's last two years' of Victor sessions were issued only in England, when they were issued at all. The newly-formed Decca label enticed Crumit to re-record some of his biggest hits and a few new titles, but even this slowed down to a trickle in 1935. A few more sides followed in 1938, and in 1941 Frank and Julia recorded some nostalgic memories. But they were never far from a radio microphone, up until Frank's sudden death on 7th September, 1943, just short of his 54th birthday. Julia continued on the air for another year, then spent the next three decades in retirement. She died on 27th January, 1975.

The previous Crumit collection on Naxos Nostalgia ('A Gay Caballero', 8.120502) included some of Frank's best-remembered recordings, made between 1925 and 1935. This volume covers a longer

**Julia Sanderson
and Frank Crumit**



period, beginning in 1920 and ending in 1938, and also allows us to hear the charming Julia Sanderson in one of their few recorded duets, **Would You Like To Take A Walk**. One record from the earliest years is included, the 1920 novelty song **Palesteena**, showing Frank in his musical comedy style, with a full orchestra, something not often present in the later recordings. Another song of Broadway origin is the rarely heard **My Lady**, which Frank co-wrote with Ben Jerome, and which was interpolated into the musical *Queen High* when Crumit joined the cast of the touring company in 1927.

Among other favourites are the first of three sequels Frank recorded to the Abdul-Ivan saga, another song dedicated to the ever-valiant amateurs of the golf links, and the monologue **The Three Trees**. Like its companion "No News" in the previous volume, this was a re-recording of a popular sketch from the phonograph's early years, in this case originally the work of Tom McNaughton, who'd featured it in the 1910 stage show *The Spring Maid*. Popular 1920s tunes are here as well, such as **Ukulele Lady** and **Sonya**. And more traditional and folk tunes are here, such as **Little Brown Jug**, **Riding Down from Bangor**, and what may be Crumit's rarest record, **Gum Tree Canoe**. **Granny's Old Arm Chair** is another variation on the story that has been filmed several times (*Keep Your Seats Please*, *Love Thy Neighbour*, *The Twelve Chairs*), **Jack is Every Inch a Sailor** is a variant on one of the most popular Newfoundland folk songs, and **Pretty Little Dear** explores both sides of romance with its interpolation of "I Had But Fifty Cents".

In the 1930s, Frank Crumit's repertoire was based less on folk and rural favourites, and included the popular do-it-yourself **Rhymes**, borrowed from English bandleader Jack Hylton. **The Pig Got Up and Slowly Walked Away** was popularized by another British band, led by American-born Bert Ambrose and imported to the States by Rudy Vallee, but it's actually by American songwriter Benjamin Hapgood Burt, and Crumit recorded it first. **Down By the Railroad Track**, **The Dashing Marine** and **I Can't Stand Sittin' in a Cell** are three more typical examples of the kind of song only Frank Crumit could bring us. He had no equals then, and he remains irreplaceable.

David Lennick, 2002

Transfers & Production: David Lennick. Digital Noise Reduction: Graham Newton.
Photos of Frank Crumit and Frank Crumit & Julia Sanderson from private collections.

1. DOWN BY THE RAILROAD TRACK (Frank Crumit-Billy Curtis)
With orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 22423; mx BVE 62104-2) Recorded 22nd April, 1930, New York 3:13
2. UKULELE LADY (Gus Kahn-Richard Whiting)
With violin, guitar & ukulele
(Victor 19701; mx BVE 32885-5) Recorded 10th June, 1925, Camden, N.J. 2:44
3. SONYA (YUP ALAY YUP!) (Fred Fisher-Bob Schafer)
With Frank Banta, piano
(Victor 19774; mx BVE 33199-3) Recorded 3rd September, 1925, Camden, N.J. 2:55
4. PALESTEENA (Con Conrad-J. Russell Robinson)
With studio orchestra
(Columbia A3324; mx 79444-1) Recorded 1st October, 1920, New York 3:04
5. PRETTY LITTLE DEAR (Traditional)
With Frank Banta, piano
(Victor 20137; mx BVE 36026-2) Recorded 6th August, 1926, New York 2:50
6. LITTLE BROWN JUG (Traditional, adapted Frank Crumit)
With orchestra conducted by Jack Shilkret
(Victor 24092; mx BVE 57979-3) Recorded 7th January, 1930, New York 3:16
7. JACK IS EVERY INCH A SAILOR (Traditional, adapted Frank Crumit)
With small orchestra
(Victor 21668; mx BVE 46318-4) Recorded 31st August, 1928, New York 3:17
8. THE THREE TREES (Tom McNaughton)
With small orchestra
(Victor 21466; mx BVE 45007-4) Recorded 4th June, 1928, Camden, N.J. 2:03
9. MY LADY (Ben Jerome-Frank Crumit, from *Queen High*)
With Frank Banta, piano
(Victor 20486; mx BVE 37509-4) Recorded 4th January, 1927, New York 3:05
10. THE RETURN OF ABDUL ABULBUL AMIR (Frank Crumit)
With orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 22482; mx BVE 62281-2) Recorded 24th June, 1930, New York 3:22

11. AND THEN HE TOOK UP GOLF (Grantland Rice-Frank Crumit)
With orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 22323; mx BVE 58567-5) Recorded 19th February, 1930, New York 2:28
12. GRANNY'S OLD ARM CHAIR (Traditional, adapted Frank Crumit)
With orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 24091; mx BVE 57184-3) Recorded 2nd December, 1929, New York 3:15
13. RIDING DOWN FROM BANGOR (Traditional, adapted Farwell)
With Tony Colicchio & Frank Crumit, guitars
(HMV B 8075; mx BS 76126-1) Recorded 15th May, 1933, New York 2:20
14. GUM TREE CANOE (Traditional, adapted Frank Crumit)
With orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 24091; mx BVE 57185-3) Recorded 2nd December, 1929, New York 3:28
15. I DON'T WORK FOR A LIVING (Edward Lee-James Mullen)
With violin, guitar & mandolin
(Victor V-40214; mx BVE 59106-3) Recorded 21st January, 1930, New York 3:12
16. I CAN'T STAND SITTING IN A CELL (Charles McCarthy-Clarke Van Ness)
With the Al Duffy Four
(Decca 1708; mx BVE 63293-A) Recorded 17th February, 1938, New York 2:51
17. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A WALK (Mort Dixon-Billy Rose-Harry Warren)
With Julia Sanderson; orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 22630; mx BVE 67441-2) Recorded 11th February, 1931, New York 2:44
18. RHYMES (Leslie Sarony)
With orchestra conducted by Leonard Joy
(Victor 22943; mx BS 71864-1) Recorded 17th February, 1932, New York 2:52
19. THE PIG GOT UP AND SLOWLY WALKED AWAY (Benjamin Hapgood Burt)
With studio orchestra
(Decca 313; mx 38857-A) Recorded 18th October, 1934, New York 2:57
20. THE DASHING MARINE (Frank Crumit)
With studio orchestra
(Decca 313; mx 38856-A) Recorded 18th October, 1934, New York 2:57

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David Lennick

As a producer of CD reissues, David Lennick's work in this field grew directly from his own needs as a broadcaster specializing in vintage material and the need to make it listenable while being transmitted through equalizers, compressors and the inherent limitations of A.M. radio. Equally at home in classical, pop, jazz and nostalgia, Lennick describes himself as exercising as much control as possible on the final product, in conjunction with CEDAR noise reduction applied by Graham Newton in Toronto. As both broadcaster and re-issue producer, he relies on his own extensive collection as well as those made available to him by private collectors, the University of Toronto, Syracuse University and others.

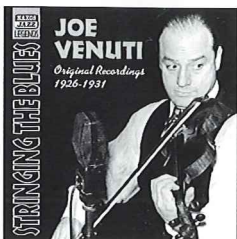
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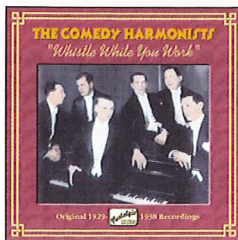
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FRANK CRUMIT RETURNS

NAXOS Nostalgia

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Original 1920-1938 Recordings

1. Down By The Railroad Track 3:13
2. Ukulele Lady 2:44
3. Sonya (Yup Alay Yup!) 2:55
4. Palesteenaa 3:04
5. Pretty Little Dear 2:50
6. Little Brown Jug 3:16
7. Jack Is Every Inch A Sailor 3:17
8. The Three Trees 2:03
9. My Lady 3:05
10. The Return Of Abdul Abulbul Amir 3:22
11. And Then He Took Up Golf 2:28
12. Granny's Old Arm Chair 3:15
13. Riding Down From Bangor 2:20
14. Gum Tree Canoe 3:28
15. I Don't Work For A Living 3:12
16. I Can't Stand Sittin' In A Cell 2:51
17. Would You Like To Take A Walk 2:44
(with Julia Sanderson)
18. Rhymes 2:52
19. The Pig Got Up And Slowly Walked Away 2:57
20. The Dashing Marine 2:57

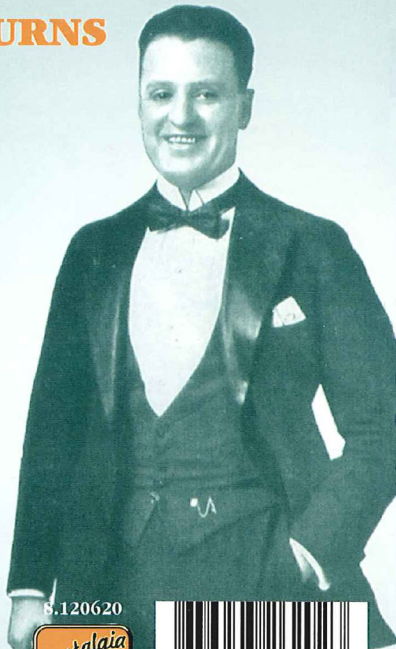
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