

# THE RECORDINGS OF VIOLA McCOY

## An Annotated Tentative Name-Discography

### VIOLA McCOY

001	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	New York,	c. Mar. 07, 1923
	Viola McCoy – voc;		
	<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno		
8267	Whoa, Tillie! Take Your Time	Gnt unissued	not on LP/CD
8268	If You Want To Keep Your Daddy Home	Gnt 5108,	Document DOCD-5416
8268-A	If You Want To Keep Your Daddy Home	Gnt 5108	not on LP/CD
8269	Laughin' Cryin' Blues	Gnt 5108,	Document DOCD-5416
8269-A	Laughin' Cryin' Blues	Gnt 5108,	Document DOCD-5602

This piano accompanist is documented on the record label and thus reliably Porter Grainger. He plays in a piano style derived from ragtime and belonging to the Harlem stride variety. Very expert and pleasing to the ear.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Porter Grainger, p.

- Rust\*6: Porter Grainger, p.

Discernible differences of takes:

Because of the unavailability of takes 8268 and 8268-A of this session comparison was impossible!

8269: piano introduction bars 6 and 8: upward phrases, enclosing two eighth triplets each

8269-A: piano introduction bar 6: simple horizontal melodic phrase, bar 8: upward phrase enclosing two eighth triplets

002	<b>AMANDA BROWN</b>	New York,	Mar. 27, 1923
	Viola McCoy – voc;		
	<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno		
80912-3	Laughin' Cryin' Blues	Col A3867,	Document DOCD-5416
80913-1	Strut Long Papa	Col A3867,	Document DOCD-5416

Again the accompanist is documented on the record label and thus certainly Porter Grainger.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Porter Grainger, p.

- Rust\*6: Porter Grainger, p.

003	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	New York,	Apr. 11, 1923
	Viola McCoy – voc;		
	<b>Porter Grainger</b> - pno		
8328	Midnight Blues (A Wee Hour Chant)	Gnt 5128,	Document DOCD-5416
8328-A	Midnight Blues (A Wee Hour Chant)	Gnt 5128,	Document DOCD-5627
8329	Triflin' Blues (Daddy Don't You Trifle On Me)	Gnt 5128,	Document DOCD-5602
8329-B	Triflin' Blues (Daddy Don't You Trifle On Me)	Gnt 5128,	Document DOCD-5416

Again we have the beautiful piano accompaniment by Porter Grainger as before.

But very much against the notification in Rust\*6 and BGR\*3 and \*4 there is no band accompaniment whatsoever on the –A and –B takes, just plain Porter Grainger on piano! It is interesting to note how easily an obviously wrong information can find its way into publicly distributed discographical works (see also Storyville 22-160 and Storyville 24-240, very interesting)!

Notes:

- Rust\*3,\*4: Porter Grainger- p

- BGR\*2: Porter Grainger, pno.

- BGR\*3: unknown, c; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; unknown, ts; unknown, p; unknown, bj; unknown, bb; unknown, perc.

- BGR\*4: unknown, c (2,4); unknown, tb (2,4); unknown, cl (2,4); unknown, ts (2,4); Porter Grainger, p; unknown, bj (2,4); unknown, bb (2,4); unknown, perc (2,4). The presence of the band has been previously reported, but the plain takes are accompanied as shown and it has not been possible to confirm the instrumentation of the higher takes.

- Rust\*6: acc by c / tb/ cl / ts / p /bj / bb / d.

Discernible differences of takes:

8328: two bass-notes piano upbeat at the beginning of four-bar introduction and four-bar piano coda at the end of tune

8328-A: *four-bar piano introduction without upbeat and no coda*  
 8329 - 8329-B: *differences could not be detected. They might be just minimal – or the two Document issues might contain identical takes, though listed otherwise. Grainger’s accompaniment might also have been played from music.*

004 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	Bob Ricketts Band	New York,	Apr. 26, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;			
unknown ( <i>June Clark</i> ) – cnt; unknown – tbn;			
unknown ( <i>Ernest Elliott</i> ) – clt; unknown – alt;			
Bob Ricketts – pno; <i>Buddy Christian</i> – bjo; unknown - dms			
8355	Tired O’ Waitin’ Blues	Gnt 5151	not on LP/CD
8355-A	Tired O’ Waitin’ Blues	Gnt 5151,	Document DOCD-5416
8356	Gulf Coast Blues	Gnt 5151	not on LP/CD
8356-A	Gulf Coast Blues	Gnt 5151,	Document DOCD-5416

Personnels as given by Rust or BGR are far off the mark in my opinion. Ricketts on piano is certainly there and Buddy Christian on banjo might be correct. But Morris and Irvis certainly are not present.

The trumpeter/cornetist could be a youthful June Clark (this is my personal assumption or even guess!). This player’s style cannot be attributed to any other early Harlem trumpet player of that quality. Judging from the similarity of this player’s characteristics and June Clark’s playing characteristics as recorded with the Blue Rhythm Orchestra and the Gulf Coast Seven of 1925 (see under ‘Stylistics’ elsewhere in this website!) this man here could well be a youthful and developing June Clark. He certainly is not Thomas Morris! Just the same the trombone player is not Irvis. The little clarinet playing heard is compatible to that known of Ernest Elliott. Tone, vibrato, phrasing and time could be by Elliott, and so I list him as possible, but I am not convinced of his presence. But may this be George Scott, reed player with the early Cotton Club Orchestra, as he recalled in Storyville 95-200? What can be heard from the alto sax player is unattributable. As Bob Rickett is listed as band leader it must be him on piano. He strongly leads the band from the piano. The banjo could be Buddy Christian here as listed, but certainly not Elmer Snowden. And there seems to be drummer as can be heard from the strong rhythm and a well-placed cymbal crash in the middle of ‘Tired O’ Waitin’ Blues’.

Notes:

- BGR\*2,\*3,\*4: *poss Tom Morris, c; poss Charlie Irvis, tb; poss Ernest Elliott, cl; unknown, as; Bob Ricketts, p; Buddy Christian or Elmer Snowden, bj.*

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: *poss Tom Morris, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Ernest Elliott, cl; Bob Fuller, as; Bob Ricketts, p; Buddy Christian or Elmer Snowden, bj.*

- Storyville 1998/99, p. 187: *“The Defender (12/5723 7/2) reported her recording for Gennett in New York (probably this one – KBR).*

*Resting at Saratoga Springs after season of recording for Ge (CD 19/5/23 7/3).” (May this be a hint as to the trumpet player’s identity? See Storyville 1996/97, p.212! – KBR)*

Discernible differences of takes:

*Because of the unavailability of the ‘plain’ takes of this session comparison was impossible!*

005 <b>AMANDA BROWN</b>		New York,	Apr. 27, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;			
<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno			
80990-3	Triflin’ Blues	Col A3901,	Document DOCD-5416
80991-3	Chirpin’ The Blues	Col A3901,	Document DOCD-5416

Again we have the beautiful piano accompaniment in stride style by Porter Grainger as noted on the label. Great kazoo by Miss McCoy.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: *Porter Grainger, p.*

- Rust\*6: *Porter Grainger, p.*

006 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b>		New York,	May 16, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
8370-A	Just Thinkin’ (A Blues)	Gnt 5162,	Document DOCD-5416
8371-B	Chirpin’ The Blues	Gnt 5162,	Document DOCD-5416

No original 78 recording was at hand to check the accompanist’s name on the label if present. But what can be heard as accompaniment definitely is what we know of Porter Grainger’s way of playing, and his presence can safely be confirmed.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: *own kazoo (2);Porter Grainger, p.*

- Rust\*6: *Porter Grainger, p.*

007 <b>AMANDA BROWN</b>		New York,	May 24, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc, kazoo;			
<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno			
81033-3	Tired O’ Waitin’ Blues	Col A3921,	Document DOCD-5416
81034-3	Michigan Water Blues	Col A3921,	Document DOCD-5416

Documented Porter Grainger again on these sides. It is interesting to compare his handling the theme of ‘Michigan Water Blues’ as compared to Jelly Roll Morton or Clarence Williams!

Notes:

- BGR\*4: *own kazoo (2);Porter Grainger, p.*

- Rust\*6: *own kazoo (2,; Porter Grainger, p.*

008 VIOLA McCOY	New York,	Jun. 05, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;		
<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno		
8389-A Long Lost Mama	Gnt 5175,	Document DOCD-5416
8390 Wish I Had You (And I'm Gonna Get You Blues)	Gnt 5175,	Document DOCD-5416

Documented Porter Grainger on these sides as before. Very nice, swinging and competent.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Porter Grainger, p.

- Rust\*6: Porter Grainger, p.

009 VIOLA McCOY	New York,	Jun. 27, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;		
<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno		
11655 Sad And Lonely Blues	Voc 14632,	Document DOCD-5416
11656 Just Thinkin' (Blues)	Voc 14632,	Document DOCD-5416
11657 Just Thinkin' (Blues)	Voc 14632,	Document DOCD-5602
11659 Bleeding Hearted Blues	Voc 14633,	Document DOCD-5416
11661 If You Want To Keep Your Daddy Home	Voc 14633,	Document DOCD-5416

Beautiful Porter Grainger here again. A very underrated pianist by all means!

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Porter Grainger, p. It is not known which take(s) of „Just Thinkin'“ appear on which issue(s), except that 11656 is confirmed on Vocalion 14632.

- Rust\*6: Porter Grainger, p.

Discernible differences of takes: (courtesy Jörg Kuhfuss)

First four bars of last chorus: 11656: first three bars piano playing melody, fourth bar playing diatonic downward phrase

11657: first three bars piano playing melody, fourth bar playing diatonic upward phrase

010 VIOLA McCOY	New York,	Aug. 07, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;		
<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno; unknown – train effects (4,5)		
11802 Bama Bound Blues	Voc 14653	not on LP/CD
11804 'Tain't No Tellin' What The Blues Will Make You Do	Voc 14653	not on LP/CD
11805 'Tain't No Tellin' What The Blues Will Make You Do	Voc 14653,	Document DOCD-5416
11806 Bama Bound Blues	Voc 14653,	Document DOCD-5416
11807 Bama Bound Blues	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD

And again Porter Grainger on piano, strong and convincing.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Porter Grainger, p; unknown train effects (1,4).

- Storyville 1998-9, p. 187: Couplings are 02/04; 05/06. The content of matrix 11803 is unknown, but is probably an unissued version of the first title.

- Rust\*6: Porter Grainger, p.

- Storyville 1998/99, p.187: matrixes/takes as above

Discernible differences of takes:

Because of the unavailability of takes 11802, 11804 and 11807 of this session comparison was impossible!

011 VIOLA McCOY	New York,	Sep. 27, 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;		
<b>Porter Grainger</b> – pno		
12029 Mistreatin' Daddy	Voc 14689,	Document DOCD-5416
12030 Mistreatin' Daddy	Voc 14689,	Document DOCD-5602
12032 Wish I Had You (And I'm Gonna Det You Blues)	Voc 14689,	Document DOCD-5416

This is Porter Grainger's last session accompanying Viola McCoy. He certainly delivered a strong and convincing display.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Porter Grainger, p.

- Rust\*6: Porter Grainger, p.

Discernible differences of takes:

12029 – 12030: differences could not be detected. They might be just minimal – or the two Document issues might contain identical takes, though listed otherwise. Grainger's accompaniment might also have been played from music.

012 VIOLET McCOY	New York,	c. Sep. 1923
Viola McCoy – voc;		
<b>Fletcher Henderson</b> – pno		
Don't Mean You No Good Blues	Ajax 17010,	Document DOCD-5612
Lonesome Daddy Blues	Ajax 17010,	Document DOCD-5612

Here now, for Ajax records, Fletcher Henderson has taken over accompaniment. He did not work much for this label.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust\*6: Fletcher Henderson, p.

013	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>		New York,	Nov. 08, 1923
	Viola McCoy – voc;			
	<b>Fletcher Henderson</b> – pno			
28290	It Won't Be Long Now		Vic unissued	not on LP/CD
28291	Ev'ry Day Blues		Vic unissued	not on LP/CD

As these titles are unissued and no tests seem to have been found nothing can be said about musical content.

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 79: „Personnel is from Victor files.“

- BGR\*4: Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust\*6: Fletcher Henderson, p.

014	<b>AMANDA BROWN</b>		New York,	c. Feb. 01, 1924
	Viola McCoy – voc;			
	Fletcher Henderson – pno			
105114	I've Got The World In A Jug		PA 032035,	Document DOCD-5417
105115	Do Right Blues		PA 032035,	Document DOCD-1005

Piano accompaniment certainly sounds as by Fletcher Henderson, and although his presence is not documented it yet seems to be quite clear.

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.98: “ Fletcher Henderson and Viola McCoy have just finished some records for Pathe, a distinction for an artist of any race ...’ (from J. A. Jackson’s page, *Billboard*, Feb. 22, 1924.) The Columbia files list ‘Amanda Brown’ as a pseudonym for Viola McCoy. This is the only known McCoy date for Pathe from this period, and seems to fit the above quotation.”

- BGR\*4: prob Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust\*6: Fletcher Henderson, p.

015	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	Fletcher Henderson’s Jazz Five	New York,	Feb. 13, 1924
	Viola McCoy – voc;			
	Elmer Chambers – tpt; Teddy Nixon – tbn; Don Redman – clt;			
	Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo			
12516/17	Do Right Blues		Br unissued	not on LP/CD
12518/19	Ev'ry Day Blues		Br unissued	not on LP/CD

As these titles are unissued and no tests seem to have been found nothing substantial can be said about musical contents or personnel.

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.99: “Information on this session is from the Decca files, courtesy of Stanley Dance. During this period, matrix numbers did not appear on Brunswick pressings, so that on the succeeding and other Brunswick issues there is no way of telling which take was pressed. No alternates are so far known, however.”

- BGR\*4: instrumentation and personnel unknown.

- Rust\*6: Fletcher Henderson’s Jazz Five: Elmer Chambers, c; Teddy Nixon, tb; Don Redman, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon, bj. Rust\*6 erroneously names the 78 issues of the preceding session!

016	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	Fletcher Henderson’s Jazz Five	New York,	Mar. 11, 1924
	Viola McCoy – voc;			
	Elmer Chambers – tpt; Teddy Nixon – tbn; Don Redman – clt;			
	Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo			
12689	I Ain't Gonna Marry, Ain't Gonna Settle Down		Br 2591	not on LP/CD
12690	I Ain't Gonna Marry, Ain't Gonna Settle Down		Br 2591	not on LP/CD
12691	I Ain't Gonna Marry, Ain't Gonna Settle Down		Br 2591,	Document DOCD-5417
12692	If Your Good Man Quits You, Don't Wear No Black		Br 2591,	Document DOCD-5417
12693	If Your Good Man Quits You, Don't Wear No Black		Br 2591	not on LP/CD

There is a little problem with these sides: Rust in all his issues lists these sides and titles with exchanged matrices against those shown above. BGR\*2 does the same. But from BGR\*3 on the authors exchange the two titles to the appropriate matrices so that -89/90/91 have ‘I Ain't Gonna Marry’ and -92/93 have ‘If Your Good Man ...’. This correlation obviously comes from W.C. Allen’s ‘Hendersonia’, and has not been observed by Rust. I have preferred to follow the W.C. Allen version.

In contrast to Viola McCoy’s session of April 22, 1924 this trumpeter here is much more restrained, and he plays in this ubiquitous 6/8 rhythm, which certainly is a sign to Elmer Chambers playing. All other participants are as listed. Nice Fletcher Henderson piano on the second title.

Notes:

- Delaunay: ElmerChambers (tp);Charlie Green (tb); Don Redman (as);Coleman Hawkins (ts); Fletcher Henderson (p); Kaiser Marshall (dm)

- Rust\*3: Elmer Chambers or Howard Scott –c; Teddy Nixon –tb; Don Redman -cl; Fletcher Henderson – p; Charlie Dixon -bj

- BGR\*2: Elmer Chambers or Howard Scott, cnt; Teddy Nixon, tbn; Don Redman, clt; Fletcher Henderson, pno; Charlie Dixon, bjo

- BGR\*3,\*4: Elmer Chambers, c; Teddy Nixon, tb; Don Redman, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon, bj

- WCAllen p100: Elmer Chambers, cornet; Teddy Nixon, trombone; Don Redman, clarinet; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo

- Rust\*4,\*6: Elmer Chambers –c; Teddy Nixon –tb; Don Redman -cl; Fletcher Henderson – p; Charlie Dixon -bj

- Storyville 1998/99: “Frank Dutton claims all five takes were issued.”

Discernible differences of takes:

Because of the unavailability of takes 12689, 12690, 12693, comparison was impossible!

017 **VIOLA McCOY** New York, Apr. 14, 1924  
 Viola McCoy – voc;  
**Edgar Dowell** – pno; *Robert Cooksey* – har (1); Elmer Snowden – bjo (1)  
 13007 West Indies Blues Voc 14801, Document DOCD-5417  
 13012 It Makes No Difference Now Voc 14801, Document DOCD-5417

We hear a different pianist here, Edgar Dowell, a second rank pianist of the Harlem school, but again a convincing musician. The harmonica player sounds very primitive in his playing. It may be Elmer Snowden on banjo regarding his style and the sound of the banjo, but he is not identified and thus documented on the record label.

This probably is Elmer Snowden's first record ever (see Storyville 18, p.6).

Notes:

- BGR\*4: *unknown, h (1); Edgar Dowell, p; Elmer Snowden, bj (1)*
- Rust\*6: *Edgar Dowell – pno; ? Robert Cooksey – har (1); Elmer Snowden – bjo (1)*

018 **VIOLA McCOY** New York, c. Apr. 17, 1924  
 Viola McCoy – voc;  
**Fletcher Henderson** – pno (4,5); **Charlie Dixon** – gtr (1,2,3)  
 5482-2 Mama's Gone, Goodbye Ban 1357, Document DOCD-5417  
 5483-1 You Don't Know My Mind Re 9667, Document DOCD-5654  
 5483-2 You Don't Know My Mind Ban 1371, Document DOCD-5417  
 5484-1 Buzzin' Round Ban, Dom, Or, Re not on LP/CD  
 5484-2 Buzzin' Round Ban 1357, Document DOCD-5417

Charlie Dixon's – Fletcher Henderson's banjo player of the time - guitar accompaniment really is not very rewarding, but it has to be seen that was a band musician, and not an articulate soloist. On 'Buzzin' Round' we hear nice and very light Fletcher Henderson on piano.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: *Charles Dixon, g (1,2,3); Fletcher Henderson, p (4,5). (BGR\*4 lists these titles under two separate sessions, both dated 'early May 1924', accompaniment by Dixon for first three items and Henderson for fourth and fifth item, and couples the last two items with the following session. I have followed the matrix succession and thus kept the Rust\*6 dating! – KBR)*
- Rust\*6: *Charlie Dixon – gtr (1,2,3); Fletcher Henderson, p (4,5).*

Discernible differences of takes:

- 5483-1: *last chorus: "You don't know, you don't know, you don't know my mind, doggone you, you don't know, you don't know my mind"*
- 5483-2: *last chorus: "You don't know, you don't know, you don't know my mind, Lawd, you don't know, you don't know my mind"*

*Because of the unavailability of take 5484-1, comparison was impossible!*

019 **VIOLA McCOY** New York, c. Apr. 18, 1924  
 Viola McCoy – voc;  
 Fletcher Henderson – pno  
 5490-1 I Don't Know And I Don't Care Blues Dom 364, Document DOCD-1005

The piano accompaniment on this Domino issue (as by Bessie Williams) is given on the record label as by Emmett Taylor, but is ascribed to Fletcher Henderson by each discography. Most interesting is the piano accompaniment in double tempo all through.

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 106: *Fletcher Henderson, piano. (Allen lists this tune as belonging to the foregoing session, despite the gap in matrix numbers!)*
- BGR\*4: *prob Fletcher Henderson, p. (See notes to session above)*
- Rust\*6: *Fletcher Henderson, p.*

020 **VIOLA McCOY** Fletcher Henderson's Jazz Five New York, Apr. 22, 1924  
 Viola McCoy – voc;  
*Howard Scott* – cnt; *Teddy Nixon* – tbn; *Don Redman* – clt;  
 Fletcher Henderson – pno; *Charlie Dixon* – bjo; *Rafael Escudero* – bbs  
 12946 I Don't Want Nobody That Don't Want Me Br 2625, Document DOCD-5417  
 12948 It Makes No Difference Now Br 2625, Document DOCD-5417

Walter C. Allen, p. 104: *"Viola McCoy, vocal, acc. by similar unit as with Rosa Henderson, April 10 date. Brunswick, never issued."*

But it has been issued on Brunswick 2625 and is included in the above listed Document CD.

The personnel might be the same as for Rosa Henderson of March 11, 1924, but I think that it is Howard Scott here on trumpet. This player here is much looser and jazzier than Chambers, he does not show Chambers' ubiquitous 6/8 rhythm, not even when playing ad-lib. Instead influences of Johnny Dunn are discernible. The other players are as given. I believe to hear a tuba in some instances, but am not sure whether this might not be Henderson's left hand on piano. But at c. 2:30 min in 'It Makes No Difference Now' the bass notes certainly are played by a tuba, so that I have to include Escudero into the personnel.

As to the history of this recording see Storyville 133-40!

Notes:

- *Delaunay: not listed*
- Rust\*3: *not listed*
- BGR\*2: *not listed*
- BGR\*3: *Instrumentation and personnel unknown*
- BGR\*4: *Elmer Chambers, c; Teddy Nixon, tb; Don Redman, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon, bj*
- WCAAllen p104: *acc. probably by similar unit as with Rosa Henderson, April 10, 1924 date."*
- Rust\*4,\*6: *probably: Elmer Chambers, c; Teddy Nixon, tb; Don Redman, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon, bj*

- Storyville 1998/99, p.187: "Only a single copy of Br 2625 is known and it may be a sample pressing, or possibly withdrawn before issue."

021	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	New York,	May 02, 1924
	Viola McCoy – voc, kazoo;		
	<b>Edgar Dowell</b> – pno; <i>Elmer Snowden</i> – bjo (3)		
13147	I Don't Want Nobody That Don't Want Me	Voc 14818,	Document DOCD-5417
13150	Mamma, Mamma (Don't Love Her Papa No More)	Voc 14818,	Document DOCD-5417
	Stop It, Joe	Br unissued	not on LP/CD

Good and convincing piano here by Edgar Dowell again. The first two titles are not listed in Rust. The third title is unissued and could thus not be checked.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: own kazoo; Edgar Dowell, p; prob Elmer Snowden, bj.

- Rust\*6: Vocalion 14818 not listed. Own kazoo(3); Edgar Dowell, p (3); Elmer Snowden, bj (3).

022	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	New York,	c. May 20, 1924
	Viola McCoy – voc;		
	<b>Fletcher Henderson</b> – pno		
5509-1	How Come You Do Me Like Do	Ban 1371,	not on LP/CD
5509-2	How Come You Do Me Like Do	Or 265,	Document DOCD-5417

The piano accompaniment on this Domino issue (as by Bessie Williams) is given on the record label as by Emmett Taylor, but the Banner label names Fletcher Henderson.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust\*6: Fletcher Henderson, p.

Discernible differences of takes:

Because of the unavailability of take5509-1 comparison was impossible!

023	<b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	New York,	c. Jun. 30, 1924
	Viola McCoy – voc;		
	<b>Fletcher Henderson</b> – pno		
5544-1	Clearing House Blues	Or 263,	Document DOCD-5654
5544-2	Clearing House Blues	Ban 1394,	Document DOCD-5417

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 111: "Despite the take numeral '1' on the Domino issue, it plays identically to take -2, and I must conclude that it is falsely numbered."

The piano accompaniment on the Oriole issue (as by Clara White) is given on the label as by Sam Hill, but the Banner label names Fletcher Henderson. Stylistically there is no doubt.

Document records issued both takes as listed and do thus prove the existence of take -1 on Oriole. W.C. Allen lists take -2 for the Oriole issue and thus seems not to have checked and recognized the distinct differences of the two takes as given below.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust\*6: Fletcher Henderson, p.

Discernible differences of takes:

5544-1: piano acc. in bars 8 and 12 of second verse (after second piano vamp) consisting of distinct and corresponding treble figures

5544-2: piano acc. in second verse (after second piano vamp) is consistently played in middle register with little melodic variation

Storyville 1996/97, p. 212: "A note in the *Defender* (19/7/24 6/3) announced that Viola McCoy was heading the show at Jack's Cabaret, Saratoga Springs, New York for the summer. A letter from her in the *Defender* (2/8/24 6/4) named her fellow artists and added that the orchestra "known as Smith's Five Harmony Kings is putting up some wicked music." Not surprising as she names them as: June Clark, c; James Harrison, tb; Bennett Carter, sax; Charles Smith, p; and James Carson, d, and adds that they will be in residence until 1 September." If we only had some recorded sides of them !!! (see June Clark under 'Soloists' !)

024	<b>VIOLA McCOY AND BILLY HIGGINS</b> the Choo Choo Jazzers	New York,	Sep. 18-22, 1924
	Viola McCoy, Billy Higgins – voc;		
	<b>Bob Fuller</b> – clt; <i>Charles Smitty Smith</i> or <i>Louis Hooper</i> – pno		
31696	I Don't Want Nobody (That Don't Want Me)	Ajax 17069,	Document DOCD-5660
31699	Keep On Going	Ajax 17066,	Document DOCD-5417

No individual playing of any of the participants can be distinguished on the first title. The clarinetist can be heard playing a certain arpeggio at different places of the tune. This certainly is too little to identify Bob Fuller. The pianist almost is exclusively heard playing four/four rhythm with both hands with very little alteration. On the second title there are some more recognizable bits, but both musicians are very restrained. Yet, Fuller and Hooper might be responsible and present, yet, it has to be noted that the pianist's style as displayed here is totally untypical of Louis Hooper's playing. As shown below Miss McCoy had just finished an engagement accompanied by 'Smith's Five Harmony Kings', the forerunner of 'June Clark's Creole Stompers', led by pianist Charles 'Smitty' Smith, whose simple and effective playing has been characterized by nobody less than Count Basie as a 'lot of great comping' and accompanying, without much ambition to soloing. This pianist might be a serious alternative to Louis Hooper on these sides!

Notes:

- RR 77-6, 86-6: not listed

- W. Bryant, Ajax Records: no personnel per Hooper
- BGR\*4: Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p
- Rust\*6: Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p
- Storyville 1998/99, p.188: "In June she was recording in New York City, but by early July the Defender (19/7/24 6/3) showed her at Jack's Cabaret, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.. She appears to have played a lengthy season, for the same paper (2/8/24 5/2) noted that she would be at Jack's Cabaret acc. Smith's Five Harmony Kings: June Clark, c; James Harrison, tb; Bennet Carter, sax; Charles Smith, p; & James Carson, d. until 1 September."
- Bob Hitchens, Choo Choo Jazzers, VJM 175: Bob Fuller (cl) Louis Hooper (p)

025 **VIOLA McCOY** New York, c. Oct. 07, 1924  
 Viola McCoy – voc;  
 unknown acc.  
 unknown title(s) Ed uniss. trial recording(s) not on LP/CD

This session is only noted in BGR\*4 (see below).

Notes:

- BGR\*4: These are described in the Edison files as a 'Voice Test' and it is not certain that any recordings were made.
- Rust\*6: not listed
- Storyville 1998/99, p.188: "At Lafayette Th. (NYA 4/10/24) and again later in the month, this time teamed with Billy Higgins in the Billy King Co. (BAA 17/10/24 5/2). In between, or possibly during the first engagement she made some trial recordings for Edison and made a coupling with Billy Higgins for Vocalion."

026 **VIOLA McCOY AND BILLY HIGGINS** New York, Oct. 1924  
 Viola McCoy and Billy Higgins – voc duet;  
 Bubber Miley – tpt; Arthur Ray – pno  
 13805 Keep On Going Voc 14912, Document DOCD-5417  
 13806 Get Yourself A Monkey Man And Make Him Strut His Stuff Voc 14912, Document DOCD-5417

Bubber Miley seems feasible on trumpet and the pianist certainly is a stronger player than Hooper, more in a stride derived piano style.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: poss Bubber Miley, c; poss Arthur Ray, p.
- Rust\*6: ? Bubber Miley, c; ? Arthur Ray, p.

027 **VIOLA McCOY** Kansas City Five New York, Nov. 21, 1924  
 Viola McCoy – voc, kazoo;  
 unknown – tpt; unknown – tbn; unknown – clt;  
 unknown – pno; unknown – bjo  
 9860-A Memphis Bound Ed 51478, Document DOCD-5417  
 9860-B Memphis Bound Ed 51478 not on LP/CD  
 9860-C Memphis Bound Ed 51478, IAJRC 49 (LP)

This is a very difficult record to determine. The trumpet player is much too reticent and owns too little tension to be Miley. He may possibly be Thomas Morris, but my listening companions have denied this, and I agree. Of the trombonist much too little can be heard to determine his style and identity. Accepted that he is the same player as on the following Edison sessions of that very day (with Rosa Henderson and Josie Miles, respectively), this is not Frazier, but a legato player, yet not Charlie Irvis. The clarinet player has nothing of Fuller's style, melodically and per vibrato, and plays in a slow arpeggiated legato style with a wooden tone and slow vibrato. He may be found in Western circles. The pianist cannot be determined as he permanently plays rhythm in accordance with the banjo play, so, that his style is impossible to recognize. The banjo player's sound is much less brilliant than that of Snowden, lacks Snowden's embellishments, and plays a single-string accompaniment to the kazoo solo totally unaccustomed from Elmer Snowden. This accompanying band might possibly be searched for in another surrounding. There seems to be no connection to the Ajax recording personnel of the time!

(Bob Hitchens' "Choo Choo Jazzers" research in VJM 175-3 still maintains the usually listed personnel as given below, against my own contribution and statement: "KBR hears a completely new set of musicians here. If that is wrong the regular musicians must all have been "under the weather". I myself doubt a recording session – particularly with Edison – with all musicians "under the weather"! Comparison of the issued takes on DOCD-5417 and IAJRC 49 (LP) do not show any differences. Their destination of takes must therefore be doubted and taken with care.

Notes:

- BGR\*2,\*3: prob personnel Tom Morris or Bubber Miley, cnt; Jake Frazier, tbn; Bob Fuller, clt; Louis Hooper or Arthur Ray, pno; Elmer Snowden, bjo; own kazoo
- BGR\*4: prob Thomas Morris, c; prob Jake Frazier, tb; prob Bob Fuller, cl; prob Louis Hooper or Arthur Ray, p; prob Elmer Snowden, bj.
- Rust\*3: Tom Morris or Bubber Miley –c, Jake Frazier –tb; Bob Fuller –cl; Arthur Ray or Louis Hooper –p; Elmer Snowden –bj; own kazoo
- Rust\*4,\*6: ? Bubber Miley, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Arthur Ray or Louis Hooper, p; Elmer Snowden, bj.
- Bob Hitchens, Choo Choo Jazzers, VJM 175: prob Bubber Miley (t) poss Jake Frazier (tb) poss Bob Fuller (cl) Louis Hooper (p) Elmer Snowden (bj)

Discernible differences of takes:

9860-A DOCD-5417 claims take –A and IAJRC 49 claims take –C, but close listening and comparing do not indicate any differences. Takes issued on Document DOCD-5417 and IAJRC 49 (LP) seem to be identical.  
 9860-B not reissued, comparison impossible  
 9860-C see 9860-A

028 **VIOLA McCOY** Dixie Trio New York, Jan. 06, 1926  
 Viola McCoy – voc;  
 Rex Stewart – cnt; unknown – vln;

unknown ( <i>Louis Hooper</i> ) – pno			
E-2043/5	Stomp Your Blues Away	Voc 15245,	Document DOCD-5417
E-2046/8	Shake That Thing	Voc 15245,	Document DOCD-5417

The record label lists 'piano, violin, cello' as accompaniment.

Rex Stewart certainly is the trumpet/cornet player. The violinist is not to identify as he plays straight melody throughout. We hear a strong pianist in a modest stride style here who might possibly be a further developed Louis Hooper (compare session Monette Moore October 19, 1925).

Notes:

- *Record Research #77-8: not listed.*

- *BGR\*4: Rex Stewart, c; unknown vn; unknown, p.*

- *Rust\*6: Rex Stewart, c; unknown vn; unknown, p; (not: unknown vn; unknown vc; unknown p as labelled).*

029 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b> Dixie Trio		New York,	Feb. 15, 1926
Viola McCoy – voc;			
Bob Fuller – clt; unknown – vln;			
unknown ( <i>Louis Hooper</i> ) – pno			
E-2440	South Street Blues	Voc 1002,	Document DOCD-5417
E-2442	Charleston Blues	Voc 1002,	Document DOCD-5417

The record label lists 'piano, violin, cornet' as accompaniment.

This is Bob Fuller on clarinet again, and again the same legitimate violin player, and possibly Louis Hooper on piano as on session 028.

Notes:

- *Record Research #77-8: not listed.*

- *BGR\*4: Bob Fuller, cl; unknown vn; unknown, p; unknown percussion (2).*

- *Rust\*6: Bob Fuller, cl; unknown vn; ? Louis Hooper, p.*

030 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b>		New York,	c. Nov. 29, 1926
Viola McCoy – voc;			
Bubber Miley – tpt; Cliff Jackson – pno			
2219-C	I'm Saving It All For You	Cam 1066,	Document DOCD-5417
2220-B	Papa, If You Can't Do Better (I'll Let A Better Man Move In)	Cam 1066,	Document DOCD-5417

I do not think that this is Metcalf. This trumpet player plays simple rhythm straight on the beat and does not squeeze and bend his notes: so not Metcalf. Instead he sounds like Miley on a very bad day (late but strong Johnny Dunn influences, yet no growls), but might also be some Miley imitator as we had one on some sessions above. But with reference to the following Martha Copeland session where Miley is documented I name Miley with distinct certainty. As a comparison to Metcalf's playing, listen to session of December 28, 1926 (031) below. Bubber Miley in decline. The pianist certainly is not Hooper as claimed by himself in RR 77. This is distinct stride style playing and fits perfectly into Cliff Jackson's style (shifts of meter or "broken rhythm").

Notes:

- *RR 77-8: poss Louis Metcalf, Louis Hooper.*

- *BGR\*4: Louis Metcalf, c; Cliff Jackson, p.*

- *Rust\*6: Louis Metcalf, c; Cliff Jackson, p.*

031 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b>		New York,	c. Dec. 28, 1926
Viola McCoy – voc;			
Louis Metcalf – tpt; Cliff Jackson – pno			
2261-A	"Git" Goin'	Cam 1097,	Document DOCD-5602
2261-C	"Git" Goin'	Cam 1097,	Document DOCD-5418
2262-A	Someday You'll Come Back To Me	Cam 1097,	Document DOCD-5602
2262-B	Someday You'll Come Back To Me	Cam 1097,	Document DOCD-5418

These are beautiful examples of Metcalf's and Jackson's styles. This is great and mature individual jazz/blues accompaniment.

Notes:

- *RR 77-8: not listed.*

- *BGR\*4: Louis Metcalf, c; Cliff Jackson, p.*

- *Rust\*6: Louis Metcalf, c; Cliff Jackson, p.*

Discernible differences of takes:

2261-A	trumpet ends the 4-bar introduction with a sustained high half-note (F) on a piano dominant chord (Bb7).
2261-C	trumpet ends the 4-bar introduction with a descending phrase – ending on Bb, leading to the tune's basic key (Eb).
2262-A	end of tune: final trumpet phrase consists of 3-toned downward jump (middle Bb – low Bb – low Bb)
2262-B	end of tune: final trumpet phrase consists of 4-toned upward phrase (Bb – Gb – G – Bb)

032 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b>		New York,	Mar. 01, 1927
Viola McCoy – voc;			
Horace Holmes – cnt; Louis Hooper – pno			
2364-A	Slow Up Papa	Cam 1144,	Document DOCD-5418
2364-C	Slow Up Papa	Cam 1144,	Document DOCD-5654
2365-A	Fortune Teller Blues	Cam 1144,	Document DOCD-5418
2365-B	Fortune Teller Blues	Cam 1144,	Document DOCD-5654

Trumpet tone, vibrato and style do probably not show Rex Stewart as given in the discos, although he might have been in a somewhat very restrained mood - if not too restrained. This is not Louis Metcalf. But this player positively corresponds to what can be heard on Ethel

Water's session of July 28, 1925, where the trumpet played is documented as Horace Holmes. And this man very probably is the trumpeter heard on session 033 below and named there tentatively as Horace Holmes. Please, listen and compare! (But this is beautiful trumpet blues playing!)

And beautiful Louis Hooper. It would certainly be most interesting to get to know the personnel of the stage band at the Lafayette, as we might find our trumpet player for this session among their personnel (see note below)!

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Rex Stewart, c; Louis Hooper, p.

- Rust\*6: Rex Stewart, c; Louis Hooper, p.

- Storyville 1998/99, p. 188: "The advert for the Lafayette Th. In the Age (26/2/27 p.6) shows her in the show 'Rarin' To Go' for the week of 28 Feb., but a report in column 5 on the same page has the show at Park Th. Bridgeport Conn., so this was presumably the previous week. By March the show, apparently renamed 'Shake, Rattle And Roll' was at the Royal Th., Baltimore for the week of 14 March (BAA 12/3/27, p.10 Ad), but the following week transferred to the Palace Th. Baltimore and resumed the 'Rarin' To Go' name (PC 19/3/27 2/5). It follows that the Cam session which produced 2364/65 was either recorded during the week at the Lafayette or later in the month." (It would certainly be most interesting to get to know the personnel of the stage band at the Lafayette, as we might find our trumpet player for this session among their personnel!)

Discernible differences of takes:

2364-A first four bars of introduction played by pno only, tpt starting in bar 5 and 6 (vamp).

2364-C first four bars of introduction played by trumpet and pno.

2365-A 4-bar introduction consists of 2 identical two-bars trumpet phrases

2365-B introduction consists of 1 half-note, then 3 short identical triplet phrases followed by an Armstrong-like ascending and then descending melodic phrase.

033 **VIOLA McCOY**

New York,

c. May 02, 1927

Viola McCoy – voc;

Horace Holmes – tpt; George Scott – clt;

Louis Hooper – pno;

unknown – grinding noises

2447-C Black Snake Blues

Cam 1158,

Document DOCD-5418

2448-B Soul And Body (He Belongs To Me)

Cam 1158,

Document DOCD-5418

These are very interesting assumptions as to the participating musicians. Horace Holmes we possibly know – in case it is not Eugene Bud Aiken on trumpet there - from Mamie Smith's recording with Elmer Snowden's band in August 1924. But on this session he only played lead trumpet. There are no solos to remember or identify him by. He – if it really is Holmes here - seems to be a rather limited player with an antiquated vibrato at this time. What can be heard may positively be attributed to him, although we lack any documented example of his style and playing.

George Scott is assumed here because a note appeared in Storyville 95-200 that George Scott had made issued records with a couple of well known singers and musicians in the 20s, none of which had been connected earlier with Scott. Among these people also was Viola McCoy. Obviously Rust and his contributors thought this recording a fitting one to the note. But – as with Horace Holmes – we are unaware of Scott's distinct style. Nevertheless, we would like to list him here on clarinet. (This matter certainly rewards some research! See also session 004 above.)

On piano I certainly do hear Mr. Louis Hooper in his modern form as recognized in the sessions from 153 on. And certainly not Cliff Jackson!

Notes:

- BGR\*4: prob Horace Holmes, c; unknown, cl; Cliff Jackson, p.

- Rust\*6: ? Horace Holmes, c; ? George Scott, cl; Cliff Jackson, p.

034 **VIOLA McCOY**

New York,

c. Jun. 07, 1927

Viola McCoy – voc;

Louis Metcalf – tpt; Louis Hooper – pno

2495-B Back Water Blues

Cam 1189,

Document DOCD-5418

2496-A Mama Is Waitin' For You

Cam 1189,

Document DOCD-5418

This trumpet player is a first class player and shows those squeezed tones we are accustomed from Louis Metcalf. He is in another class than the assumed Horace Holmes in BGR and Rust. As for me he is definitely Metcalf. The pianist is very probably Louis Hooper.

Notes:

- Record Research #77-8: unknown cornet, Louis Hooper.

- BGR\*4: prob Horace Holmes, c; Louis Hooper, p.

- Rust\*6: ? Horace Holmes, c; Louis Hooper, p.

035 **VIOLA McCOY**

New York,

c. Aug. 26, 1927

Viola McCoy – voc;

Bob Fuller – clt; Louis Hooper – pno

2584-C Dyin' Crap Shooter's Blues

Cam 1225,

Document DOCD-5418

2585-A Gay-Catin' Daddy

Cam 1225,

Document DOCD-5418

Unmistakably Bob Fuller and Louis Hooper. The latter can even be heard playing stride in a short passage in the first title – and not that bad. Fuller has become soft and melodious, but he still has his trashy phrases. It won't be long until his resignation. He would certainly have realized that he belonged into a past musical period and that he could not keep in step with new fashions. Out of my knowledge of Porter Grainger's pianistic abilities and style I cannot follow his assumed presence as pianist.

Notes:

- Record Research #77-8: Bob Fuller, Louis Hooper, unknown.

- BGR\*4: Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p.

- Rust\*6: Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p.

036 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b> the California Ramblers	New York,	Nov. 03, 1927
Viola McCoy – voc;		
Chelsea Quealey – tpt; Al Philburn – tbn;		
Pete Pumiglio – clt; Sam Ruby – ten;		
Jack Russin – pno; Tommy Felling – bjo; Spencer Clark – bsx; Herb Weil – dms		
I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate	Cam unissued	not on LP/CD
A Good Man Is Hard To Find	Cam unissued	not on LP/CD
I Ain't Got Nobody	Cam unissued	not on LP/CD

As these titles are unissued and no tests seem to have been found nothing substantial can be said about musical contents or personnel.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: Chelsea Quealey, t; Al Philburn, tb; Pete Pumiglio, cl; Sam Ruby, ts; Jack Russin, p; Tommy Felling, bj; Spencer Clark, bsx; Herb Weil, d. According to the diaries of Ed Kirkeby, manager of the California Ramblers, a white jazz and dance band, these three titles were scheduled for recording, but only two were actually recorded; which two is not known.

Notes:

- Rust\*6: Chelsea Quealey, t; Al Philburn, tb; Pete Pumiglio, cl; Sam Ruby, ts; Jack Russin, p; Tommy Felling, bj; Spencer Clark, bsx; Herb Weil, d. Only two of these scheduled titles were actually recorded, but which of these were is not known.

037 <b>VIOLA McCOY</b>	New York,	Jan. 11, 1929
Viola McCoy – voc;		
Manny Klein – tpt; unknown – pno		
147772-3 I Want A Good Man (And I Want Him Bad)	Col 14395-D,	Document DOCD-5418
147773-1 If You Really Love Your Baby	Col 14395-D,	Document DOCD-5418

From the first hearing of these sides on I thought of a trumpet player of white colour. And a very cultivated and legitimate one! Jörg Kuhfuss independently supported my opinion with: "This trumpet player just sounds like Manny Klein". I have to admit that I am not so much familiar with white musicians of the classic Jazz era and I therefore will gladly follow and accept Jörg's attempt at identification. The pianist sounds rather indistinct, and I feel decidedly unable to attribute a name.

Notes:

- BGR\*4: unknown, c; unknown, p.

- Rust\*6: unknown, c; unknown, p.

I have to thank Joerg Kuhfuss who gave generously of his spare time to check the accompanists as documented on the record labels in his exquisite record collection, and generally for his expert advice!

K.-B. Rau  
Erlangen, 20 July 2016