

# THE RECORDINGS OF HERSCHEL BRASSFIELD

## An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

BRASSFIELD, Herschel L., reeds

no personal dates known

Brassfield is known to have led an own group in Erie, Pa. in 1920, including among others Arville Harris, clarinet, and Juice Wilson on violin. Recorded with the Ford Dabney band in 1921, also with Johnny Dunn's Original Jazz Hounds and accompanying Edith Wilson, Lena Wilson and Mamie Smith. Moved to California (c. 1923/24) and worked and recorded with Curtis Mosby's Dixieland Blue Blowers. Led own band(s) in LA until 1928 at least, documented by letter to LA local 767 on complaints against musicians George Orendorff, Lawrence Brown and Lionel Hampton.

- T. Stoddard, *Jazz on the Barbary Coast*, p. 94/95: Charlie "Duke" Turner: "*I played a few gigs with Bob (sic - KBR) Brassfield around here. His drummer was "Babe" Lewis, and he lived right around the corner from me. If he felt like taking the night off, he's just get me to go in his place. Babe also played for Sonny Clay. .... Brassfield and Clay were mainly Los Angeles guys.*"

### STYLISTICS

#### STYLE

Very melodic and quite romantic singing saxophone style, somewhat in the way Otto Hardwick played, yet more on the blues side. His improvisational style is hot and might possibly be determined by his ability to arrange orchestral scores. His single recording with Curtis Mosby shows him to be a surprisingly interesting and able improviser – on soprano sax here.

#### TONE

Strong and voluminous tone.

#### VIBRATO

Brassfield owns a strong middle-range vibrato, medium fast and of medium altitude.

#### TIME

His time is exact and driving in scored band-parts.

#### PHRASING

As section leader he is able to play a strong and secure lead, scored probably by himself. He is equally secure when playing ad-lib, as on the Curtis Mosby recording.

This personnel-discography is based on RUST, *JAZZ AND RAGTIME RECORDS 1897 - 1942*.

Personnel are taken from this source, but modified in the light of earlier or subsequent research or on the strength of my own listening, discussed with our listening group or other interested collectors.

- Documented, most certain and aurally absolutely obvious identifications are listed thus: **Herschel Brassfield**  
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Herschel Brassfield*

- Not attributable identifications – although the musician in question might be an otherwise well-known person – are listed thus: unknown  
- If a possible identification for an otherwise unknown musician is suggested by the author without the possibility to prove the factual evidence, it is listed thus: (*Herschel Brassfield*)

When feeling certain without a musician's documented presence, I have not refrained from altering Rust's statements without using italics. In any case, my statements are open to discussion and I would appreciate any contribution - pro or contra!

As always in my discographies on this website I have written recording sessions with their headings, dates, titles and names of musicians in italics, whenever I am convinced that the eponymous musician of this discography is not part of the accompanying group of this session! Documented names of musicians if known – in recording ledgers or on record labels – are listed in bold letters.

This discography still is - and will certainly be - a work in progress for a long time, if not eternally. Yet, on the way to a definite discography of all jazz recordings before 1942 - which certainly will never be possible - it is intended to fill some gaps that have not been treated before.

The following statements and the resulting list of recordings only reflect the opinion of this writer/listener and are open to discussion. More so, discussion is eagerly invited. Corrections, amendments and controversial opinions are much appreciated.

HERSCHEL BRASSFIELD

001	<b>ETHEL WATERS</b>	her Jazz Masters	New York,	c. Aug. 1921
	Ethel Waters – voc;			
	unknown – tpt; <i>Chink Johnson</i> – tbn;			
	Garvin Bushell – clt; ( <i>Herschel Brassfield</i> ) – clt, alt; <i>Charlie Jackson</i> – vln;			
	Fletcher Henderson – pno; <i>Ralph Escudero</i> – bbs			
P-149-1	Dying With The Blues		BS 2038,	Chronological Classics 796
P-150-1	Kiss Your Pretty Baby Nice		BS 2038,	Chronological Classics 796

Both titles are neatly arranged and thus no personal improvising/playing style can be identified. But Henderson's presence may be seen as certain. And accordingly, some men of the Black Swan stable. The assumption of Brassfield's presence comes from Bushell, and he might well have known. But his personal style as known from Johnny Dunn and Curtis Mosby cannot be detected.

Notes:

- BGR\*2: 2 unknown tpt; unknown tbn; Garvin Bushell, unknown, clt, alt; Charlie Jackson, vln; Fletcher Henderson, pno; Chink Johnson, bbs.  
 - BGR\*3: unknown, t; poss Chink Johns, tb; prob Garvin Bushell, cl; poss Charlie Jackson, vn; Fletcher Henderson, pno; poss Ralph Escudero, bb.

- BGR\*4: unknown, t; poss Chink Johns, tb; Garvin Bushell, cl; poss Herschel Brassfield, cl, as; poss Charlie Jackson, vn; Fletcher Henderson, pno; poss Ralph Escudero, bb.

- Rust\*3: 2 unknown t; unknown tb; Garvin Bushell, unknown -cl -as; Charlie Jackson -vn; Fletcher Henderson -p; Chink Johnson -bb.

- Rust\*4,\*6: unknown -t; ?Chink Johnson -tb; Garvin Bushell, unknown -cl; ?Charlie Jackson -vn; Fletcher Henderson -p; ?Ralph Escudero, bb.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 23: unknown, trumpet; Chink Johnson ?, trombone; prob Garvin Bushell, plus one other, clarinets; possibly Charlie Jackson, violin; Fletcher Henderson, piano; possibly Ralph Escudero, tuba..

- Bushell/Tucker, *Jazz from the Beginning*, p.151: "This might be Ed Cox or Elmer Chambers on trumpet. Or perhaps Luke Smith, brother of Joe and Russell Smith. The violin is cross-firing with everybody else, playing the lead right against the singer. He was reading that line. This was a very modern arrangement for the day. In those days tuba players didn't seem to know how loud to play. That's why some smart guy found out they could get better results with a bass player. Old Braud (Wellman Braud) was one of the people being responsible for that. There's no ad lib here, it's all arrangement. It sounds like something William Grant Still might have done. Kiss Your Pretty Baby Nice: I hear four horns – trumpet, trombone, clarinet, and alto saxophone. It might be Herschel Brassfield on saxophone."

002	<b>FORD DABNEY AND HIS ORCHESTRA</b>		New York,	Oct. 26, 1921
	Wesley Johnson, Pike Davis – tpt; John Reeves – tbn;			
	Herschel Brassfield - alt, clt; Casey Cooper or Willie Carroll – vln;			
	Ford Dabney – pno, ldr; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs; Mose Ross – dms			
25672	Sweet Cookie		Vic unissued	not on LP/CD
25673	Dapper Dan		Vic unissued	not on LP/CD

As both these titles are unissued and unfortunately no tests seem to have been found, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- Rust\*2,\*3: prob similar to: unknown (tpt); Nappy Lee (tbn); Edgar Campbell (clt); Alonzo Williams (alt); unknown (vln); Ford Dabney (pno, ldr); unknown (bjo); John Haywood (bbs); Dennis Johnson (dms)

- Rust\*4,\*6: Ford Dabney -p -dir; Pike Davis -Wesley Johnson -t; John Reeves -tb; Herschel Brassfield -cl -as; unknown -ts; Casey Cooper or Willie Carroll -vn; unknown -bj; unknown -bb; Mose Ross -d.

003	<b>EDITH WILSON</b>	her Jazz Hounds	New York,	Dec. 21, 1921
	Edith Wilson – voc;			
	Johnny Dunn – tpt; Herb Flemming – tbn;			
	<i>Ernest Elliott</i> – clt; <i>Herschel Brassfield</i> – clt, alt;			
	Dan Wilson – pno; John Mitchell – bjo; <i>Harry Hull</i> - bbs			
80111-2	I Don't Want Nobody Blues		Col A-3537,	Archeophone 6006
80112-2	The West Texas Blues		Col A-3537,	Archeophone 6006

The trumpet player here is again unequivocally Johnny Dunn with his very individual style as mentioned above.

On trombone is a different man now. Whereas the player of the preceding Dunn session plays very functional well placed quarter notes to support the melody of the trumpet and occasional tailgate slides, this very trombonist here plays some sort of second trumpet part, using a lot of double-time phrases with good technique, thus showing a strong influence of Dunn. He is more restrained in playing power than the former man, but this might also result from another position in the recording studio. Herb Flemming has been listed on trombone here and this is probably right when compared to the playing of Bud Aiken in the Gulf Coast Seven session of May 1923. This here then might be a referential record for Flemming's early style: Johnny Dunn on trombone, so to say.

The predominant clarinetist very probably is Elliott because of Mitchell's comment and Elliott's characteristics. He does not play tenor sax on this session as listed elsewhere. (By the way: I do not know of any recording session Elliott playing tenor sax on!)

There certainly is a second reed player who mainly plays clarinet together with Elliott, but at times he switches to alto playing long sustained notes thus probably fulfilling the requested function of a violin player, who is not present on this session. This second reed man was not named by Mitchell (see below) but may be Herschel Brassfield, one of the many enigmatic figures of this early period of Harlem jazz. Both clarinetists maintain a permanent background of squeaking and screaming without any relation to the melody lines of trumpet and trombone. Piano is probably Dan Wilson as listed, although there is no individual style to detect. Banjo virtuoso John Mitchell is present on his own statement as is tuba player Harry Hull.

On this date, Johnny Dunn's Original Jazz Hounds also recorded their first coupling under Dunn's own name using that same personnel.

Note: For this session the following personnels have been listed:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: No personnels given.*

- RR 73: "During November, she and the band toured on the vaudeville circuit. An item in the New York CLIPPER (Dec. 7, 1921) stated that she had just returned with her band, the Original Jazz Hounds, and was under contract with Perry Bradford to make records for Columbia. The 'Jazz Hounds' name, in fact, was a Perry Bradford property and had previously been used with Mamie Smith on Okeh records – and Johnny Dunn and Bushell had been on several of Mamie's earliest records. Late in December, Edith Wilson and the band recorded again. Bushell was no longer in the band, being on the road with Ethel Waters' Jazz Masters as part of the Black Swan Troubadours. A young banjo player named John Mitchell had come to New York from (I think) Baltimore, and joined the group in time for this his first record date. Personnel is as given by Mitchell on hearing the record, except that he missed the second reed player. Brassfield is suggested because Mitchell remembered him on other sessions."

- BGR\*2,\*3,\*4: Johnny Dunn, cnt; Herb Flemming, tbn; Ernest Elliott, clt; poss Hersal Brassfield, clt,alt; Dan Wilson, pno; Johnny Mitchell, bjo; Harry Hull, bbs.

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Herb Flemming -tb; Ernest Elliott -Herschel Brassfield -cl -as; Dan Wilson -p; John Mitchell -bj; Harry Hull -bb.

- Archeophone 6006 liner notes: Johnny Dunn, c; Herb Flemming, tb; Ernest Elliott and Herschel Brassfield, cl/as; Dan Wilson, p; Johnny Mitchell, bj; Harry Hull, bb.

#### 004 JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ HOUNDS

New York, Dec. 21, 1921

Johnny Dunn – tpt; Herb Flemming – tbn; Ernest Elliot, Herschel Brassfield – clt;

Dan Wilson – pno; John Mitchell – bjo; Harry Hull - bbs

80113-1 Bugle Blues

Col A3541,

Frog DGF 33

80114-1 Birmingham Blues

Col A3541,

Frog DGF 33

This is the first of Johnny Dunn's recordings under his own name and with his Original Jazz Hounds, recorded immediately following the above listed Edith Wilson session. Everything said about the personnel applies exactly for this very session. So, see above! Piano same as before, thus Wilson.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- RR 76: "The first instrumental record under Dunn's name took place at the same session as one of his Edith Wilson dates (see last – KBR). Instrumentation is the same, and the personnel would be as above. This was John Mitchell's first record date." Personnel given – with assistance by John Mitchell, Harold Flakser, and Carl Kendziora – is: Johnny Dunn, cornet; Herb Flemming, trombone; Ernest Elliott, and possibly Herschel Brassfield, clarinets, saxes; Dan Wilson, piano; John Mitchell, banjo; Harry Hull, tuba.

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); R.H. Horton or Herb Fleming or poss Dope Andrews (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (bbs).

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Herb Flemming -tb; Herschel Brassfield -cl -as; Ernest Elliott -cl -ts; Dan Wilson -p; John Mitchell -bj; Harry Hull -bb.

- FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): Johnny Dunn – tpt; Herb Flemming – tbn; Ernest Elliot, Herschel Brassfield – clt; Dan Wilson – pno; John Mitchell – bjo; ?Harry Hull - bbs

#### 005 FORD DABNEY'S SYNCOPATED ORCHESTRA

New York, Mar. 1922

Wesley Johnson, Pike Davis – tpt; John Reeves – tbn;

Herschel Brassfield - alt, clt; unknown – alt; unknown – ten;

Casey Cooper or Willie Carroll – vln;

Ford Dabney – pno, ldr; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs; Mose Ross – dms

1017-2 Sweet Man O'Mine

Par 20120

not on LP/CD

1017-3 Sweet Man O'Mine

Par 20120

not on LP/CD

1018-2 Bugle Call Blues

Par 20125

not on LP/CD

1018-3 Bugle Call Blues

Par 20125

not on LP/CD

Note: 1018-2 or 1018-3 is held by the author

Luckily, I own a copy of the 'Bugle Call Blues' recording. The item plays ten blues chorusses, the first seven of them containing the well-known four-bar military bugle calls in variations, followed by 8 bars of band ensembles with very prominent alto sax mainly playing long sustained chordal notes. These seven chorusses are succeeded by three chorusses played without the military call breaks, the second chorus of them being played in Bb minor, all other ones in Bb major. Pike Davis with his strong, short and peppery tone is the trumpet soloist, who might be relieved in the fifth chorus where the trumpet sounds softer and might thus be Wesley Johnson. Chorusses 6 and 7 certainly are Davis again.

There are no improvisational efforts of the participating musicians. Thus, Herschel Brassfields' presence cannot be secured, but is very probable.

Notes:

- Rust\*2,\*3,\*4: Pike Davis, Wesley Johnson (tpt); John Reeves (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, alt); unknown (ten); Casey Cooper, Willie Carroll (vln); Ford Dabney (pno, ldr); unknown (bbs); Mose Ross (dms)

- Rust\*6: Pike Davis, Wesley Johnson, t; John Reeves, tb; Herschel Brassfield, cl, as; unknown, ts; Casey Cooper or Willie Carroll, vln; Ford Dabney, p, ldr; unknown, bj; unknown, bb; Mose Ross, d

#### 006 FORD DABNEY'S SYNCOPATED ORCHESTRA

New York, May 1922

Wesley Johnson, Pike Davis – tpt; unknown – tbn;

Herschel Brassfield -alt, clt; Casey Cooper or Willie Carroll – vln;

Ford Dabney – pno, ldr; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs; Mose Ross – dms

1043-1 Doo Dah Blues

Par 20120

not on LP/CD

1043-2 Doo Dah Blues

Par 20120

not on LP/CD

Unfortunately, I do not have access on any of these takes, and therefore I am unable to comment.

Notes:

- Rust\*2,\*3,\*4: Pike Davis, Wesley Johnson (tpt); John Reeves (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, alt); unknown (ten); Casey Cooper, Willie Carroll (vln); Ford Dabney (pno, ldr); unknown (bbs); Mose Ross (dms)  
 - Rust\*6: Pike Davis, Wesley Johnson, t; John Reeves, tb; Herschel Brassfield, cl, as; unknown, ts; Casey Cooper or Willie Carroll, vln; Ford Dabney, p, ldr; unknown, bj; unknown, bb; Mose Ross, d  
 - Storyville 143-179, Mark Berresford: "To start the ball rolling, references to John Reeves with Sweatman from 6 August 1924 onwards, and with Ford Dabney on the May 1922 Paramount session an be deleted – he died 7 April 1922!"

**007 MAMIE SMITH AND HER JAZZ HOUNDS**

New York,

c. Jun. 10, 1922

Mamie Smith – voc;

George Mullen – tpt; Cecil Carpenter – tbn;

Bob Fuller – clt, alt; Coleman Hawkins – ten; George Bell – vln;

Charles Matson – pno; Curtis Mosley – dms

70729-C

Mamie Smith Blues

OK 4658,

Doc DOCD 5359

70730-A

Alabama Blues

OK 4658,

Doc DOCD 5359

Basically, this seems to be the same personnel as on the former session.

It may be George Mullen again on tpt, but it might also be another trumpet player in this stylistic range. But it certainly is neither Dunn nor Miley! The trombonist seems to be Carpenter again, as do Fuller, Hawkins and Bell. Pianist and drummer might also be Matson and Mosby again.

Notes:

- BGR\*2,\*3: Johnny Dunn, poss Bubber Miley, cnt; poss Herb Flemming, tbn; poss Bob Fuller, clt; poss Coleman Hawkins – alt (sic); poss.

Leroy Parker – vln; unknown – pno; unknown – dms

- BGR\*4: poss Bubber Miley, unknown, t; poss Herb Flemming, tbn; poss Bob Fuller, clt; poss. Coleman Hawkins – alt (sic); poss. George

Bell – vln; unknown – pno; unknown – dms

- Rust\*3,\*4: Johnny Dunn, ? Bubber Miley – c; ? Herb Flemming – tb; ? Bob Fuller – cl; unknown – as; ? Leroy Parker – vn; unknown – p; unknown – d.

- Rust\*6: Johnny Dunn or Bubber Miley, c; ? Herb Flemming, tb; Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell, cl, as; Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Leroy Parker or George Bell, vn; unkn.p; Sam Speed, bj; unkn. dr.

- Scherman/Eriksson: unkn. tpt; poss. Herb Flemming (tb); poss. Bob Fuller (cl); poss. Coleman Hawkins (C-mel or ts); poss. George Bell (vln); unkn. (p); (dr).

- Storyville 1996/7 p.230: "Charles Matson and his Mamie Smith Jazz Hounds are at the Garden of Joy in New York City. George Bell, George Mullen, Coleman Hawkins, Cecil Carpenter, Curtis Mosely and Bob Fuller are the bunch that is drawing the public to Mr. Raymond's hilltop place (BAA 23/6/22 11/1). It appears that the band was appearing without Mamie and this seems to be the group which made matrices 70777-B and 70778-C". (see below!?)

- J.-F. Villetard, Coleman Hawkins Vol.1: not listed!

- Bushell/Tucker, Jazz from the Beginning: this session not listed in the G. Bushell discography!

**008 MAMIE SMITH'S JAZZ HOUNDS**

New York,

c. Aug. 15, 1922

Joe Smith – tpt; Cecil Carpenter – tbn;

Herschel Brassfield – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten; George Bell – vln;

Everett Robbins – pno; Sam Speed – bjo; unknown – dms

70777-B

Stuttering

OK 8036,

Doc DOCD 5359

70778-C

Those Longing For You Blues

OK 8072,

Doc DOCD 5359

No Mamie Smith vocal here on these sides.

The trumpet/cornet player definitely is not Dunn nor Miley! In the light of Walter C. Allen's note in RR 63 (below) I see the possibility of Joe Smith on trumpet/cornet because of this player's assured and secure but mellow and smooth tone. Smith had been touring with Ethel Waters/Fletcher Henderson for a time and certainly was in fine fettle and could well be him on this session. He came to New York in July 1922 and joined Mamie Smith's entourage subsequently, touring California until c. early 1923, from what time on he freelanced in New York. For this period he may always be suggested as Mamie's trumpet player.

The trombone player is comparable to the man of the former two sessions, thus Carpenter. Also, on a band photo of this period (early 1923 see booklet to Mosaic CD set, Classic Coleman Hawkins Sessions) there is Carpenter together with Smith, Hawk and others.

I hear two reed players, only. (There is a third voice in the saxophone section in the penultimate chorus of "Stuttering" which is the cornet!)

One of them, who plays tenor sax throughout, is most probably Coleman Hawkins. The other man is a saxophonist doubling on clarinet. His

improvised clarinet parts are played just like a saxophone. Elliott and Bushell are out of question because of stylistic and tonal reasons,

Bushell, too, as he started to have played alto not earlier than 1923. So, this might be an example of the very little documented Mr. Brassfield, who is listed by Rust in his various editions.

Lacking any characteristics, nothing can be said about piano, banjo and drums.

These two sides give a beautiful example of Harlem Jazz of this early period!

**DB:** Most importantly here, the Joe Smith issue. No other Smith with which to compare at this date but if we agree – and there seems consensus – that he is definitely on 030 (RR 63) then he is also on 023 onwards. Mix of styles but, so far, resolutely East Coast. Stiff, relatively fast articulation, staccato passages. A rather 'soft' attack. A falling away in pitch constantly through all sessions 023 – 030. Rather poor technician compared with Dunn. Difficult for me to relate this with later Smith, a far superior player, but he had received direct western influence by then and I am forced to observe that East Coast pre-western influence is a poor, poor thing. The cornet playing improves throughout these sessions but that s only to be expected at the age of 20. So Smith on all sessions 023 – 030.

Agree: very probably same trombone as previous sessions. Agree altoist doubling clarinet – badly. Without documentary evidence Brassfield is only a guess. Relatively legato tenor throughout but unlikely to be anybody but Hawk, aurally not verifiable. The rest, like Brassfield, seems to come from Rust, dangerous as his front line here is bollocks.

Notes:

- RR 63, W.C. Allen, Notes on Joe Smith: "The cornetist does not sound like Joe Smith on any records until July 1922. On 'That Da Da Strain' /s-70825, OK4689) there is some wa-wa style trumpet which I once suggested was Dunn; but in view of Smith's now known affinity for Dunn's style at that time, perhaps it was Smith. Smith could not have been with Mamie earlier than July 1922, as he was still on tour with Ethel Waters/Fletcher Henderson from January through early July 1922. The only Mamie record on which I can undoubtedly identify Joe Smith is 'You've Got To See Mamma' (s-71161, OK 4781) on which he takes a characteristic break."

- BGR\*2,\*3,\*4: not listed

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn, Bubber Miley ? - c; unknown - tb; Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell - as, cl; Herschel Brassfield - as; Coleman Hawkins - ts; unknown - p; Samuel Speed - bj; unknown - d  
 - Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn, ?Bubber Miley - c; ? Herb Flemming - tb; ? Garvin Bushell - cl; ? Herschel Brassfield - as; Coleman Hawkins - ts; ? Everett Robbins - p; Samuel Speed - bjo; unknown - d.  
 - Scherman/Eriksson have the same personnel leaving out Bubber Miley, but adding George Bell as violinist.  
 - Laurie Wrights statements as to the clarinetist in Storyville.1998/99 p. 222 have to be strongly doubted as to this session.  
 - J.-F. Villetard, Coleman Hawkins Vol.1: possible personnel :Johnny Dunn,Bubber Miley - cnt; Herb Flemming - tbn; Garvin Bushell - clt, alt; Herschel Brassfield - alt; Coleman Hawkins - ten; Everett Robbins - pno; Sam Speed - bjo; unknown - dms  
 - Bushell/Tucker, Jazz from the Beginning: no comment to this session in the G. Bushell discography!

## 009 JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ HOUNDS

New York,

Aug. 18, 1922

Johnny Dunn - tpt; Earl Granstaff - tbn;  
 Herschel Brassfield - alt; Rollen Smith - ten;  
 George Rickson - pno; John Mitchell - bjo;  
 Hersal Brassfield - arr (2)

80529 Four O'Clock Blues  
 80530-2 Hawaiian Blues

Col unissued  
 Col A3729,

not on LP/CD  
 Frog DGF 33

This then seems to be a secured Dunn personnel as all the participants are said to come from Will Vodery's Plantation band. Listen to Rickson's great piano playing in Hawaiian Blues! He also seems to have been one of the unsung heroes of jazz. He distinctly is a different piano player from the one assumed to be Leroy Tibbs on the foregoing Edith Wilson sessions. Brassfield is credited as arranger and shows a forward looking way of writing for a Harlem dance band of this time. Arrangements used on the following Dunn band sides might be his as well.

Notes:

- Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).  
 - RR 76-7: "On the next (including this one! - KBR) few Dunn sessions, there is no such question as to personnel (as on session Feb. 23 1922 - KBR). John Mitchell has studied several of these, and the personnels given are a synthesis of his identifications. The men were drawn largely from the Will Vodery orchestra at the Plantation. Note the arranger credits on some of these - possibly the earliest examples of such credits." Dunn, cornet; Earl Granstaff, trombone; Hersal Brassfield and Rollen Smith, saxes; George Rickson, piano; Mitchell, banjo.  
 - Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Gus Horsley (bjo)  
 - Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Earl Granstaff-tb; Herschel Brassfield-cl-ss-as-a; Rollen Smith-ts; George Rickson-p; John Mitchell -bj  
 - FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): Johnny Dunn - tpt; Earl Granstaff - tbn; Herschel Brassfield - alt, arr; Rollin Smith - ten; George Rickson - pno; John Mitchell - bjo

## 010 MAMIE SMITH'S JAZZ HOUNDS

New York,

c. Aug. 22, 1922

Mamie Smith - voc (1,2);  
 Joe Smith - tpt; Cecil Carpenter - tbn;  
 Herschel Brassfield - alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins - ten;  
 Everett Robbins - pno; Sam Speede - bjo; unknown - dms  
 70790-B Got To Cool My Doggies Now  
 70791-B You Can Have Him, I Don't Want Him, Didn't Love Him Anyhow Blues  
 70792-A Strut Your Material

OK 4670,  
 OK 4670,  
 OK 8036,

Doc DOCD 5359  
 Doc DOCD 5359  
 Doc DOCD 5359

No Mamie Smith vocal here on the third title.

The band might be the same as on the former session, but there is no alto-saxophone and probably no violin. If it really is Joe Smith here on cornet, he certainly plays more akin to Dunn here than on the former session. But there are elements of style that do not belong to Dunn's playing.

Trombone playing is in accordance with Carpenter on the former sessions.

The clarinetist probably is a different man than the alto/clt player on the previous session. Contrary to the former session we have a thorough comment on this session by Bushell. He is not sure about his own presence (see below) but does not exclude it. From listening he might faintly be the man, yet this in contradiction to his claim not to have played alto sax before 1923. Elliott had a very different tonal quality than Bushell and I'd like to sort him out. There is alto sax only on the first title of the session, and it has to be noted that Bushell did not take up the sax until 1923 when joining the Wooding band! Herschel Brassfield may be this player as got to know from listening to the former sides. Again, I feel unable to discuss the rhythm section. (Can anybody, please, sort out the diverging styles of the banjo players?!)

**DB:** Same trombone. Novelty elements in clarinet which would point to Fuller. Do we have any documentary evidence for Fuller with Mamie at this time? (Yes! Photo in booklet to Mosaic CD-set MD8 251 'Classic Coleman Hawkins Sessions 1922 - 1947) K-B) The rest of personnel same comment as 023. Banjos: I am but seriously unqualified.

Notes:

- Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: No personnels given.  
 - Scherman/Eriksson, Bubber Miley Discography: prob: Johnny Dunn (tp); unknown (tb); poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell (cl,as); poss Herschel Brassfield (as). Coleman Hawkins (ts); George Bell (vln); unknown (p); Samuel Speed (bj); unknown (woodblocks)  
 - BGR\*2,\*3: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell (clt, alt); Herschel Brassfield (alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); unknown (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (dms)  
 - BGR\*4: Bubber Miley, t; unknown, tb; poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell, cl, as; Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; George Bell, vn; unknown, p; Samuel Speed, bj; unknown, d  
 - Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn -c; unknown-tb; Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell-as-cl; Herschel Brassfield-as; Coleman Hawkins-ts; unknown-p; Samuel Speed-bj; unknown-d  
 - Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; ?Herb Flemming-tb; ?Garvin Bushell-as-cl; ?Herschel Brassfield-as; Coleman Hawkins-ts; unknown-p; Samuel Speed-bj; unknown-d  
 - J.-F. Villetard, Coleman Hawkins Vol.1: Same as August 15, 1922  
 - Bushell/Tucker JftB p.155: Johnny Dunn, c; ?Herb Flemming, tb; ?Garvin Bushell, cl; ?Herschel Brassfield, as; Hawkins, ts; ? Everett Robbins, p; Sam Speed, bj; unknown, dr.

- Bushell/Tucker p. 155/6: "Got To Cool My Doggies Now: That's a tenor sax in a lower register. It could be Hawk. He used to do a lot of slap-tongue in those days. After Mamie takes the first chorus, the band 'tears out' in the middle. 'Tear out' was a term meaning every man for himself. But as a clarinet player I had to follow a certain format. It was the custom to play a third above the trumpet player, and I'd try to emulate or answer his patterns – like a fugue, more or less. You Can Have Him, I Don't Want Him Anyhow Blues: That could be Ernest Elliott on clarinet, but it sounds like me. We played a lot alike then. Perry Bradford was always insisting on the clarinets hitting the high notes; he loved that. It may be George Bell on violin. That middle part, on a vocal number, was called the 'patter section'. On an instrumental number it was called the 'trio'.

011 **MAMIE SMITH'S JAZZ HOUNDS** New York, c. Aug. 30, 1922  
 Mamie Smith – voc;  
 Joe Smith - cnt; Cecil Carpenter – tbn;  
 Herschel Brassfield – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten; George Bell – vln;  
 Everett Robbins – pno; unknown - dms  
 70809-A Wish That I Could But I Can't Forgive Blues OK 4689, Doc DOCD 5359

The trumpet player shows traits of Dunn's style, but is less powerful than Dunn. In his break in the first chorus he shows a mellow and pretty tone – and signs of Joe Smith, rather than Bubber Miley, and could thus be assumed as Smith (see W.C.Allen in RR 63!). The trombonist obviously is Cecil Carpenter. There is very little clarinet playing (if at all – at the very end?), but possibly an alto player. This would rule Bushell out, as he stated that he did not handle the alto before 1923 with Wooding! So, a possible alto player cannot definitely be secured and identified, but might be Herschel Brassfield as before. The prominent tenor player may be Hawkins, but sounds a little trivial and lacking bite when compared with Hawkins, but it still might be him. I hear a violinist who often sounds like a clarinet. The pianist is undistinguishable. There obviously is no banjo, but a very prominent drummer on woodblocks.

**DB:** Same trombone. Clarinet so little exposed as to make judgement impossible. Again, legato tenor but must be Hawk as he was a Mamie fixture at this time. The rest would be just guessing.

Notes:

- Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: No personnels given.*  
 - Bushell/Tucker *JftB* do not list this session, so probably not Bushell!  
 - BGR\*2,\*3: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell (clt, alt); Herschel Brassfield (alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); unknown (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (dms)  
 - BGR\*4: Bubber Miley, t; unknown, tb; poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell, cl, as; Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; George Bell, vn; unknown, p; Samuel Speed, bj; unknown, d  
 - Rust\*3,\*4: Acc. by unknown -t; unknown -tb; unknown -cl; unknown -as; unknown -p; unknown -d.  
 - Rust\*6: probably Johnny Dunn, c; ?Herb Flemming, tb; ? Garvin Bushell, cl, as; ? Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; ?Everett Robbins, p; Sam Speed, bj; unkn. dr.  
 - Scherman/Eriksson, *Bubber Miley Discography: prob: Johnny Dunn or poss Bubber Miley (tp); unknown (tb); poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell (cl,as); poss Herschel Brassfield (as), Coleman Hawkins (ts); George Bell (vln); unknown (p); Samuel Speed (bj); unknown (woodblocks)*  
 - J.-F. Villetard, *Coleman Hawkins Vol.1: not listed!*

012 **MAMIE SMITH AND HER JAZZ HOUNDS** New York, c. Sep. 06, 1922  
 Mamie Smith – voc;  
 Joe Smith – cnt; Cecil Carpenter – tbn;  
 (Bob Fuller) – clt; Herschel Brassfield – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten; George Bell – vln;  
 unknown – pno  
 70824-B Sighin' Around With The Blues OK 4767, Doc DOCD 5359  
 70825-B That Da Da Strain OK 4689, Doc DOCD 5359

Following Walter C. Allen I would name Joe Smith as trumpet player here again. And possibly again Cecil Carpenter on trombone. On the first title I believe to hear two clarinets and a violin in a muddle of treble voices. Bob Fuller comes to my mind (the "laughing" phrases) and another reed player who switches to alto on the second title. This man seems to be more an alto player doubling clarinet and might be Brassfield. Again Hawkins, and probably Bell on violin. There is only piano in the rhythm department. And we have scored saxophone parts here, maybe Brassfield's effort.

Notes:

- Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: No personnels given.*  
 - RR 63 *Notes on Joe Smith (Walter C. Allen): "The cornetist does not sound like Joe Smith on any records until July 1922. On 'That Da Da Strain' (s-70825, OK 4689) there is some wa-wa style trumpet which I once suggested was Dunn; but in view of Smith's now known affinity for Dunn's style at that time, perhaps it was Smith."*  
 - BGR\*2,\*3: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell (clt, alt); Herschel Brassfield (alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); unknown (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo)  
 - BGR\*4: prob. Bubber Miley, t; unknown, tb; poss. Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell, cl, as; Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; unknown, p  
 - Rust\*3,\*4: Acc. by unknown -t; unknown -tb; unknown -cl; unknown -as; unknown -p; unknown -bj.  
 - Rust\*6: ?Bubber Miley, c; unknown, tb; ?Ernest Elliott or ?Garvin Bushell, cl,as; Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; unknown, p.  
 - Scherman/Eriksson, *Bubber Miley Discography: prob: Johnny Dunn or poss Bubber Miley (tp); unknown (tb); poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell (cl,as); poss Herschel Brassfield (as), Coleman Hawkins (ts); George Bell (vln); unknown (p)*  
 - J.-F. Villetard, *Coleman Hawkins Vol.1: not listed!*

013 **JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ HOUNDS** New York, Sep. 21, 1922  
 Johnny Dunn – tpt; Earl Granstaff – tbn;  
 Herschel Brassfield – alt; Rollen Smith – ten;  
 George Rickson – pno; John Mitchell – bjo; unknown - bells  
 80529-5 Four O'Clock Blues Col A3729, Frog DGF 33

As on the date of August 18, 1922 this seems to be a secured personnel. The virtuoso on the bells might have been Bradford himself.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- RR 76-7: "Remake – Same instrumentation" "On the next (including this one! – KBR) few Dunn sessions, there is no such question as to personnel (as on session Feb. 23 1922 – KBR). John Mitchell has studied several of these, and the personnels given are a synthesis of his identifications. The men were drawn largely from the Will Vodery orchestra at the Plantation. Note the arranger credits on some of these – possibly the earliest examples of such credits." - *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).* (This personnel for all Dunn records 1921 – 1923! KBR)

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Gus Horsley (bjo)

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn –c; Earl Granstaff –tb; Herschel Brassfield –cl –ss –as –a; Rollen Smith –ts; George Rickson –p; John Mitchell –bj

- FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): As last; unknown band member - chimes

**014 MAMIE SMITH AND HER JAZZ HOUNDS**

New York,

c. Dec. 06, 1922

Mamie Smith – voc;

Joe Smith – cnt; Cecil Carpenter – tbn;

Bob Fuller – clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten; George Bell – vln;

Harvey Brooks – pno; Cutie Perkins – dms

71079-B I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of This Jelly-Roll

OK 4752,

Doc DOCD 5359

71080-B Don't Mess With Me

OK 4752,

Doc DOCD 5359

Very probably Joe Smith and Cecil Carpenter as before. And then Bob Fuller (typically) and Hawkins on reeds, George Bell on violin. The piano player may now be Harvey Brooks as on the band photo of early 1923 in the booklet to the Mosaic CD set "Classic Coleman Hawkins Sessions". The same applies to Cutie Perkins as drummer.

Notes:

- BGR\*2,\*3: Johnny Dunn, cnt; unknown, tbn; poss Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell, clt, alt; Herschel Brassfield, alt; Coleman Hawkins, ten; unknown, pno; Samuel Speed, bjo; unknown, dms.

- BGR\*4: prob. Bubber Miley, t; unknown, tb; poss. Ernest Elliott or Garvin Bushell, cl, as; Herschel Brassfield, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; unknown, p

- Rust\*3,\*4: unknown –t; unknown –tb; unknown –cl; unknown –as; unknown –p; unknown –bj.

- Rust\*6: ?Bubber Miley –t; unknown –tb; ?Ernest Elliott or ?Garvin Bushell –cl –as; Herschel Brassfield –as; Coleman Hawkins –ts; unknown –p.

- Scherman/Eriksson: "Same instrumentation and prob. same personnel as last."

- J.-F. Villetard, *Coleman Hawkins Vol.1: not listed!*

**015 JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ HOUNDS**

New York,

Feb. 14, 1923

Johnny Dunn – tpt; Earl Granstaff – tbn;

Herschel Brassfield – alt; Rollen Smith – ten;

George Rickson – pno; John Mitchell – bjo; Harry Hull – bbs; Perry Bradford – castanets;

Perry Bradford, another – voc (1);

80859-3 Hallelujah Blues

Col A3839,

Frog DGF 33

80860-2 Spanish Dreams – Espanola Blues

Col A3839,

Frog DGF 33

The recording card of Spanish Dreams lists take 80860-1 as rejected (R. Wondraschek). Rust is obviously wrong here.

We hear the same band of Vodery men under Dunn's name here. Brassfield is the strong section leader on his alto-sax. He might also be the arranger.

The banjo player certainly is Mitchell and not Speede as given somewhere else. Additionally, we have a tuba here to support the rhythm, assumably played by Vodery's tuba man, Harry Hull. And again, we find Mr. Bradford as percussionist and singer.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- RR 76-7: "Same instrumentation, probably same personnel" "On the next (including this one! – KBR) few Dunn sessions, there is no such question as to personnel (as on session Feb. 23 1922 – KBR). John Mitchell has studied several of these, and the personnels given are a synthesis of his identifications. The men were drawn largely from the Will Vodery orchestra at the Plantation. Note the arranger credits on some of these – possibly the earliest examples of such credits."

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).* (This personnel for all Dunn records 1921 – 1923! KBR)

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (bbs)

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn –c; Earl Granstaff –tb; Herschel Brassfield –cl –ss –as –a; Rollen Smith –ts; George Rickson –p; Sam Speed –bj; ?Harry Hull –bb; Perry Bradford, another –v (chanting the word "Hallelujah")

- FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): Johnny Dunn – tpt; Earl Granstaff – tbn; Herschel Brassfield – alt; Rollen Smith – ten; George Rickson – pno; Sam Speed – bjo; ? Harry Hull – bbs; Perry Bradford and another – vocal exhortation. Bradford probably plays castanets on 80860-2.

**016 JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ HOUNDS**

New York,

Feb. 20, 1923

(Johnny Dunn) – tpt; (Earl Granstaff) – tbn;

(Herschel Brassfield) – alt, clt; (Rollen Smith) – ten, clt;

(George Rickson) – pno; (John Mitchell) – bjo; (Harry Hull) – bbs

80866 I Promised Not To Holler, But Hey! Hey!

Col unissued

not on LP/CD

80867 Careless Blues

Col unissued

not on LP/CD

As both these titles are unissued and unfortunately no tests seem to have been found, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- *Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (bbs)*

- *Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Earl Granstaff -tb; Herschel Brassfield -cl -ss -as -a; Rollen Smith -ts; George Rickson -p; Sam Speed -bj; ?Harry Hull -bb*

017	<b>LENA WILSON</b> and Johnny Dunn's Jazz Hounds	New York,	Feb. 26, 1923
	Lena Wilson - voc;		
	(Johnny Dunn) - tpt; (Earl Granstaff or Herb Flemming or Calvin Jones) - tbn;		
	(Garvin Bushell or Ernest Elliott or Herschel Brassfield - clt, alt);		
	(Leroy Tibbs or George Rickson or Dan Wilson) - pno; (John Mitchell) - bjo		
80875	I Don't Let No One Man Worry Me	Col unissued	not on LP/CD
80876	Humming Man	Col unissued	not on LP/CD

As both these titles are unissued and unfortunately no tests seem to have been found, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Not listed.*

- *BGR\*2: Johnny Dunn, cnt; Ralph Granstaff, Herb Fleming or Calvin Jones, tbn; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield clt/alt; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson or Dan Wilson, pno; John Mitchell or Samuel Speed, bjo; possibly others*

- *BGR\*3: Johnny Dunn, cnt; Earl Granstaff, Herb Fleming or Calvin Jones, tbn; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield clt/alt; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson or Dan Wilson, pno; John Mitchell or Samuel Speed, bjo; possibly others*

- *BGR\*4: Johnny Dunn, c; instrumentation and personnel otherwise unknown.*

- *Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Earl Granstaff, Herb Flemming or Calvin Jones -tb; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield -cl -as; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson or Dan Wilson -p; John Mitchell or Sam Speed -bj; possibly others.*

018	<b>JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ BAND</b>	New York,	Mar. 13, 1923
	Johnny Dunn - tpt; Earl Granstaff - tbn;		
	Herschel Brassfield - alt; Rollen Smith - ten;		
	George Rickson - pno; John Mitchell or Sam Speed - bjo; Harry Hull - bbs		
80866	I Promised Not To Holler, But Hey! Hey!	Col unissued	not on LP/CD
80898-1	Dixie Blues	Col A3878,	Frog DGF 33

The recording card of Dixie Blues lists take 80898-2 as rejected (R. Wondraschek). Rust is obviously wrong here.

Dunn, Granstaff, Brassfield and Smith are on this session again. As is George Rickson with his exuberant piano style. But on banjo I hear a restrained Mitchell or Sam Speed playing with unusually many arpeggios. The tuba player is very much in the background. Scoring for saxophones very probably is the work of Herschel Brassfield again.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- *RR 76-7: "Same instrumentation, probably similar personnel" "On the next few (including this one! - KBR) Dunn sessions, there is no such question as to personnel (as on session Feb. 23 1922 - KBR). John Mitchell has studied several of these, and the personnels given are a synthesis of his identifications. The men were drawn largely from the Will Vodery orchestra at the Plantation. Note the arranger credits on some of these - possibly the earliest examples of such credits."*

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g). (This personnel for all Dunn records 1921 - 1923! KBR)*

- *Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (bbs)*

- *Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Earl Granstaff -tb; Herschel Brassfield -cl -ss -as -a; Rollen Smith -ts; George Rickson -p; Sam Speed -bj; ?Harry Hull -bb*

- *FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): As last, Bradford omitted (Feb. 14, 1923 - KBR)*

019	<b>LENA WILSON</b> Perry Bradford's Jazz Phoools	New York,	c. early Apr. 1923
	Lena Wilson - voc;		
	Gus Aiken - tpt; Herb Flemming - tbn;		
	Perry Bradford - pno; Sam Speed - bjo		
1362-1	Deceitful Blues	Pm 12029,	Timeless CBC 1-073
1362-2	Deceitful Blues	Pm 12029,	Document DOCD-5443
1362-3	Deceitful Blues	Pm 12029,	Document DOCD-T002
1363-1	I Don't Let No One Man Worry Me	Pm 12029,	Timeless CBC 1-073
1363-2	I Don't Let No One Man Worry Me	Pm 12029,	Document DOCD-5443
1363-3	I Don't Let No One Man Worry Me	Pm 12029,	Document DOCD-5627

This is the first recording under the Perry Bradford's Jazz Phoools sign. I have listened to it after checking the session of late May (see below), generally dated May/June 1923. Rust's personnel for this session is vague or even non-existent. With first delving into the matter it became apparent that there are some familiar figures present and the sounds heard easily give hints to Gus Aiken in his Dunn-derived style of the time, a very fluent and elegant trombone player who has to be Flemming in contrast to Gus Aiken's brother Bud, who very often teamed with his trumpet playing brother, but plays in a less exuberant style than Flemming, Flemming had been with Lt. Europe's "Hell-Fighters Band" in Europe in World War I, and he certainly had learned how to play a trombone with all of its tricks and finesse, and accordingly he did not have any competitor at this early time in Harlem. Bradford can be heard with his own busy tinkle-tinkle-plink piano and a banjo player



trying to sound like John Mitchell, but without his expertise. Then the next day I happened to skim through Record Research 79 finding the notice below re this session by W.C. Allen which perfectly verified my assumptions. Bradford and Speede were easy to identify.

There is no reed player on these sides! Comparison with other recordings by Edith Wilson suggests that Aiken plays at a couple of other instances where Dunn is listed. (There even are a couple of recordings listed as Dunn's Jazz Hounds where a Sam Wooding aggregation plays!) Gus Aiken obviously was able to play exactly in the Dunn manner, so much so that nobody in the past doubted Dunn's presence and tried to find out whether it was really Dunn or somebody else. But this might be the subject of a subsequent article!

Recording date is from: The Rise and Fall of Paramount Records, Vol. 1, Third Man Records.

But very funny: Perry Bradford, himself, named the non-existent drummer for this session as "Brass" Field. Nice!

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: No personnels given.*

- *Info from Walter C. Allen in 'Filling In Discographically', Record Research 79 p. 10: "Johnny Dunn or Gus Aiken, cornet; Herb Flemming, trombone; Garvin Bushell, clarinet; George Rickson ?, piano; John Mitchell, banjo. This personnel, with Dunn is from John Mitchell after hearing the record. However, the cornetist does not sound at all times like Dunn's other work, and according to the 'New York Age', May 5, 1923, Dunn along with Rickson and other members of the Plantation Revue troupe had already sailed for England by that date. WCA suggests Gus Aiken as a more likely candidate for cornetist - although Aiken was a regular member of the Gonzell White troupe which toured the country and was in Cuba from June to December, 1923."*

- *Jazz Information 1-35 p.2: "Les Zacheis of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, writes that with the help of Dave Caughren he has obtained the correct personnel (sic!) of the Paramount/Claxtonola records by Perry Bradford's Jazz Phools. For 'Charleston South Carolina' - 'Hoola Boola Dance' (Claxtonola 40309) and 'Daybreak Blues' - 'Fadeaway Blues' (National 12255), also issued on other labels, this personnel was given by Perry Bradford himself: Gus Aiken, trumpet; Garvin Bushell, clarinet; Brassfield, clarinet and sax; (for other records, Bradford has given "Brass" Field, drummer! KBR) "Speed", banjo; Bradford, piano. Johnny Dunn is definitely not on these sides. According to Bradford, Dunn was in Europe when they were made (No, not yet! KBR)."*

- *BGR\*2,\*3: probably similar to: Johnny Dunn, cnt; Ralph Granstaff, Herb Fleming or Calvin Jones, tbn; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield clt/alt; prob Perry Bradford, pno; John Mitchell or Samuel Speed, bjo; possibly others*

- *BGR\*4: "prob. Johnny Dunn, c; unknown, tb; prob. Perry Bradford, p; unknown, bj."*

- *Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: "probably similar to Johnny Dunn -c; Earl Granstaff, Herb Flemming or Calvin Jones -tb; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield -cl -as; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson or Dan Wilson -p; John Mitchell or Sam Speed -bj; possibly others." (take your choice! - KBR)*

- *Bushell/Tucker p.157: no comment by Bushell here, but "personnel as above?: Lena Wilson, v; Johnny Dunn, c; Earl Granstaff, Herb Flemming, or Calvin Jones, tb; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott, and/or Herschel Brassfield. cl, as; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson, or Dan Wilson, p; John Mitchell or Sam Speed, bj; others?"*

Discernible differences of takes:

1362-1 bars 7/8 of first chorus: trumpet break - trombone coming in at the end with 4 upward notes

1362-2 bars 7/8 of first chorus: trumpet break - no trombone coming in

1362-3 bars 7/8 of first chorus: trumpet break - trombone playing one single note on beat 2 of break and coming in at the end with 7 upward notes

1363-1 bars 15/16 of first chorus (after 4 bars intro and 8 bars verse): vocal break - no background noise  
bar 3 of ensemble chorus; bjo break with one tremolo

1363-2 bars 15/16 of first chorus (after 4 bars intro and 8 bars verse): vocal break - pno softly in background  
bar 3 of ensemble chorus; bjo break with two tremolos

1363-3 bars 15/16 of first chorus (after 4 bars intro and 8 bars verse): vocal break - no background noise  
bar 3 of ensemble chorus; bjo break with two tremolos

**020 JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ BAND**

New York,

Apr. 11, 1923

Johnny Dunn - tpt; Earl Granstaff - tbn;

Herschel Brassfield - alt, clt; unknown - alt; Rollen Smith - ten;

George Rickson - pno; John Mitchell - bjo; Harry Hull - bbs; Jesse Baltimore - dms

80947-2 Sugar Blues

Col A3878,

Frog DGF 33

Johnny Dunn, Earl Granstaff and George Rickson seem to be undisputed. Then we hear two alto saxophonists, one of them the always rhapsodic Herschel Brassfield with his strong tone, and another one with a leaner tone, but much jazzier playing. He improvises above the melody of the verse played by Brassfield after the introduction, and again in the first chorus. I certainly do not have any clue as to his identity. The published personnel of the Vodery band of the time only comprise one alto player, Brassfield. This personnel is shown and documented as having sailed to England aboard the Cunard liner 'Albania' (Howard Rye, Visiting Firemen 13, Storyville 133). As all orchestra parts of a big band required two altos, the name of the second player might have been lost or forgotten. Can it be that the second alto man of the band simply did not make the trip and stayed behind? In the second chorus we then hear what was later called a chase chorus: a succession of short 4-bar phrases by a succession of different players one after another (in this order: Dunn - Granstaff - Brassfield - Dunn - unknown alto - prob. Brassfield, clt). As we hear alto sax plus tenor played in the last chorus it probably is Brassfield on clarinet over the ensemble. It is Rickson again on piano, and definitely Mitchell on banjo. Once again, the tuba is only faintly heard and may be Hull. At the end we hear a cymbal played in the coda which seems to be the same one as played on Noble Sissle's "Kansas City Kitty" recorded in England in 1929, and might therefore be proof of Jesse Baltimore's presence.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- *RR 76-7: "Add a third reed man playing clarinet and sax, also a drummer (possibly Jesse Baltimore, regular percussionist with Vodery)."*

- *"On the next (including this one! - KBR) few Dunn sessions, there is no such question as to personnel (as on session Feb. 23 1922 - KBR).*

- *John Mitchell has studied several of these, and the personnels given are a synthesis of his identifications. The men were drawn largely from the Will Vodery orchestra at the Plantation. Note the arranger credits on some of these - possibly the earliest examples of such credits." - -*

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g). (This personnel for all Dunn records 1921 - 1923! KBR)*

- *Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); unknown (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Garvin Bushell (alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo); unknown (bbs); unknown (dms)*

- *Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; Earl Granstaff-tb; Herschel Brassfield-cl-ss-as-a; unknown-cl-as; Rollen Smith-ts; George Rickson-p; Sam Speed-bj; ?Harry Hull-bb; ?Jesse Baltimore-d*

- *FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): Johnny Dunn - trumpet; Earl Granstaff-trombone; unknown-clarinet; Herschel Brassfield-alto sax; Rollin Smith-alto and tenor sax; George Rickson-piano; John Mitchell-banjo; ? Jesse Baltimore-dms*

021	<b>JOHNNY DUNN'S ORIGINAL JAZZ BAND</b>	New York,	Apr. 19, 1923
	Johnny Dunn, unknown – tpt; Earl Granstaff – tbn; unknown or ( <i>Herschel Brassfield</i> ) – alt; Rollen Smith – ten; George Rickson – pno; John Mitchell – bjo		
80975-2	Sweet Lovin' Mama – Please Come Back To Me	Col A3893,	Frog DGF 33
80976-2	Vamping Sal – The Sheba Of Georgia	Col A3893,	Frog DGF 33

We hear Dunn on solo trumpet and another trumpet player, who in my ears is a rather unsecure and timid player. He plays the break in the introduction of "Sweet Lovin' Mama", and later on he plays the first part of the melody in the first chorus, Dunn playing the breaks. Then in the following chorus he seems to play the "wa-wa" answering Dunn's phrases, but this might also be executed by Dunn himself playing straight into the microphone and alternately to the side. Granstaff certainly is on trombone.

On alto sax we have the unknown player of the last session again, this time replacing Brassfield. He has an even sweeter style than Brassfield. In "Vamping Sal" this player seems to be ordered to play in the rhapsodic manner, but bringing it to an extreme. I feel uncertain whether there is a tenor sax player! Three-part sections as heard seem to be composed of unknown alto, unknown trumpet and Granstaff on trombone.

George Rickson is on piano and Mitchell on banjo again.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g).*

- RR 76-7: "Dunn, cornet; Earl Granstaff, trombone; Herschel Brassfield, Rollen Smith, clarinets and saxes; George Rickson, piano; Mitchell, banjo. (Personnel from John Mitchell; he also thought Harry Hull, tuba, was present, but no tuba seems to be audible.)" "On the next (including this one! – KBR) few Dunn sessions, there is no such question as to personnel (as on session Feb. 23 1922 – KBR). John Mitchell has studied several of these, and the personnels given are a synthesis of his identifications. The men were drawn largely from the Will Vodery orchestra at the Plantation. Note the arranger credits on some of these – possibly the earliest examples of such credits."

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g). (This personnel for all Dunn records 1921 – 1923! KBR)*

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); Herb Flemming (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Gus Horsley (bjo); unknown (bbs)

- Rust\*3, \*4, \*6: Johnny Dunn –c; Earl Granstaff –tb; Herschel Brassfield –cl –ss –as –a; unknown –cl –as; Rollen Smith –ts; George Rickson –p; Sam Speed –bj; ?Harry Hull –bb; ?Jesse Baltimore –d

- FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): As last (Apr. 10, 1923 – KBR), but unknown clarinet and ?Baltimore omitted.

022	<b>LENA WILSON</b> Perry Bradford's Jazz Phoools	New York,	c. late Apr. 1923
	Lena Wilson – vco; Gus Aiken or (Johnny Dunn) – tpt; Herb Flemming or Bud Aiken – tbn; Garvin Bushell – clt; Leroy Tibbs or (Charlie "Smitty" Smith) – pno; Sam Speed – bjo		
1378-2	Here's Your Opportunity	Pm 12042	not on LP/CD
1378-3	Here's Your Opportunity	Pm 12042,	Document DOCD-5443
1379-3	Memphis, Tennessee	Pm 12042,	Document DOCD-5443
	Note: Perry Bradford probably does not play on this recording!		

Rust lists this session under the same date as before - and with the same personnel - without paying attention to the large gap in matrix numbers. Furthermore, there is a reed player here who is not on the session above. B&GR have separated sessions listed and list the reed player. Johnny Dunn had been to England early May until September 1923. So, as by this date it might have been Dunn here, but aurally this is the same trumpet player as on the foregoing session, thus Aiken. Gus Aiken plays very much in the Johnny Dunn style, but with a little more rhythmic freedom and a somewhat less brilliant tone, and - as Bushell expressed it - "If that's Gus Aiken, he's playing Johnny Dunn's patterns note for note". The trombone player lacks a bit of Flemming's brilliance and might therefore be Gus Aiken's brother Gene "Bud" Aiken, who - as always - plays in his no-nonsense style. The clarinetist might well be Garvin Bushell, as he belonged to this circle of musicians frequently engaged by Bradford, Dunn and cohorts. His technical ability is demonstrated in the first title where he on the spot repeats fast trumpet runs improvised by Aiken. Tone and vibrato are well in his range. The pianist shows nothing of Perry Bradford's characteristics (frequent treble figures), but plays in a simplified stride style, and might therefore be Leroy Tibbs, but might also be Charlie Smitty Smith of later Blue Rhythm Orchestra fame. The banjo player is Sam Speede with his straight four beat playing and his difficulties keeping time when playing arpeggios.

Recording date is from: The Rise and Fall of Paramount Records, Vol. 1, Third Man Records.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: No personnels given.*

- BGR\*2, \*3: probably similar to: Johnny Dunn, cnt; Ralph Granstaff, Herb Fleming or Calvin Jones, tbn; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield clt/alt; prob Perry Bradford, pno; John Mitchell or Samuel Speed, bjo; possibly others

- BGR\*4: "prob. Johnny Dunn, c; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; prob. Perry Bradford, p; unknown, bj."

- Bushell/Tucker p.157: no comment by Bushell here, so possibly not Bushell on this session! but: "personnel as above?: Lena Wilson, v; -

Rust\*3, \*4, \*6: "probably similar to Johnny Dunn – c; Earl Granstaff, Herb Flemming or Calvin Jones – tb; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott and/or Herschel Brassfield – cl-as; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson or Dan Wilson – p; John Mitchell or Sam Speed – bj; possibly others."

Johnny Dunn, c; Earl Granstaff, Herb Flemming, or Calvin Jones, tb; Garvin Bushell, Ernest Elliott, and/or Herschel Brassfield. cl, as; Leroy Tibbs, George Rickson, or Dan Wilson, p; John Mitchell or Sam Speed, bj; others?"

Discernible differences of takes:

As take -2 of the first title does not seem to be reissued, apparent differences cannot be stated!

023	<b>PERRY BRADFORD'S JAZZ PHOOLS</b>	New York,	c. mid May 1923
	Gus Aiken – tpt; Eugene Bud Aiken – tbn; Garvin Bushell – clt; unknown – ten; Charlie "Smitty" Smith – pno; John Mitchell – bjo		
1429-1	Fade Away Blues	Pm 12041,	Timeless CBC 1-073

1429-2	Fade Away Blues	Pm 12041,	Frog DGF 56
1429-3	Fade Away Blues	Pm 12041,	Document DOCD-5353
1430-1	Daybreak Blues (Original Bugle Blues)	Pm 12041,	Biograph BLP-12007(LP)
1430-2	Daybreak Blues (Original Bugle Blues)	Pm 12041,	Frog DGF 56
1430-3	Daybreak Blues (Original Bugle Blues)	Pm 12041,	Timeless CBC 1-073

This session obviously has to be seen in relation to the first Gulf Coast Seven session for Columbia, organised by Perry Bradford and certainly executed under his guidance. The two recorded tunes are Bradford's and the same ones as with the Gulf Coast Seven (see my article on the Gulf Coast Seven in Names&Numbers 69). And obviously and aurally the band personnel is the same, too. This then unquestioningly has to change the hitherto listed recording date(s). As Gus Aiken left New York for an extended tour to Cuba at last on May 25, this session has to be predated before this day (Dunn was in England by this date)! As Columbia's Gulf Coast Seven recording session of the same two titles seems to be better documented and dated May 17, 1923 I tend to date this latter Paramount session on the same day (same personnel!) or only on an insignificantly different date. The unknown saxophonist, who certainly is neither Brassfield nor Rollen Smith, who both were in England at the time together with Dunn, might possibly be found in the ranks of Gonzell White's 'Real Jazzers of Jazz', the band Gus Aiken was about to leave for Cuba with, namely Harvey Lankford or Amanzie Richardson. But this is only my own guess-work.

Note: Perry Bradford probably does not play on this recording!

Notes:

- RR 75 p.9: "Aiken recalled recording Daybreak Blues and Fade Away Blues". Gus Aiken was in Cuba from Mid-May until End-December 1923. Johnny Dunn was in England from early May 1923 until September 1923 with Will Vodery's Orchestra.

Against our recent opinion, the above testimony obviously shows that Aiken was still at hand for these two sessions recording Fade Away Blues and Daybreak Blues! But then Aiken delivers a perfect copy of Dunn's very personal style!

- Jazz Information 1-35 p.2: "Les Zacheis of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, writes that with the help of Dave Caughren he has obtained the correct personnel (sic!) of the Paramount/Claxtonola records by Perry Bradford's Jazz Phools. For 'Charleston South Carolina' - 'Hoola Boola Dance' (Claxtonola 40309) and 'Daybreak Blues' - 'Fadeaway Blues' (National 12255), also issued on other labels, this personnel was given by Perry Bradford himself: Gus Aiken, trumpet; Garvin Bushell, clarinet; Brassfield, clarinet and sax; (for other records, Bradford has given "Brass" Field, drummer; which is correct?) "Speed", bano; Bradford, piano. Johnny Dunn is definitely not on these sides. According to Bradford, Dunn was in Europe when they were made."

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn or June Clark? (cnt); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); "Smitty" (clt); Herschel Brassfield (clt/alt); Charles Smith (pno); Samuel Speed (bjo)

- Rust\*3: Gus Aiken - c; Bud Aiken - tb; Garvin Bushell - Herschel Brassfield - cl-as; Charles Smith - p; Samuel Speed - bj.

- Rust\*4,\*6: Gus Aiken - c; Bud Aiken - tb; Garvin Bushell - cl-as; Charles Smith - p; Samuel Speed - bj.

- Bushell/Tucker p. 158: Fade Away Blues: "If that's Gus Aiken, he's playing Johnny Dunn's patterns note for note. Day Break Blues: That's not Johnny (Dunn), but he sure plays like Johnny. This date puzzles me, because I don't recall Gus playing so much like Johnny. There's a saxophone in there, so there had to be two reeds."

Discernible differences of takes:

1429-1: first 4 bars of 5<sup>th</sup> chorus: clt plays very restrained trying to find his part which he hits on bar 5

1429-2: first 4 bars of 5<sup>th</sup> chorus: clt plays arranged part in harmony with tenor from the beginning

1429-3: first 4 bars of 5<sup>th</sup> chorus: clt enters on bar 3

1430-1: bar 9 of first strain B (after 4 12-bar blues chorus): clarinet in harmony with tenor

bar 1/2 of second strain B: tpt starts with short legato notes from first beat on

1430-2: bar 9 of first strain B (after 4 12-bar blues chorus): clarinetist struggles for finding his part

bar 1/2 of second strain B: tpt starts on second beat, short pause on first beat

1430-3: bar 9 of first strain B (after 4 12-bar blues chorus): clarinet in harmony with tenor

bar 1/2 of second strain B: tpt plays long legato notes with little jump in the middle from 1<sup>st</sup> beat on

RR 75: "As discussed in my previous article on Edith Wilson, Johnny Dunn, Earl Granstaff and Hershal Brassfield were members of the Will Vodery Orchestra with the Plantation Revue, and all went to England for four months, early May - Sept. 1923."

Storyville 133 p.12: "On 10 May 1923, the real Plantation Revue company from Sam Salvin's Plantation Restaurant in New York City arrived at London's George V Dock aboard the Cunard liner Albania. They had sailed from New York on 29 April (Lloyd's list, 30 April 23)."

Members were: Clifton Pike Davis, Johnny Dunn - tpt; Earl Granstaff - tbn; Herschel Brassfield, Rollen Smith - reeds; Floyd Hickman - vln; George Rickson - pno; George Francis - bjo; Harry Hull - bbs; Jesse Baltimore - dms.

024 **MARY JACKSON** Perry Bradford's Jazz Phools

New York,

Oct. 1923

Mary Jackson - voc;

unknown - tpt; unknown - tbn; unknown - clt;

unknown - pno

70373 All The Time

PA 032013,

Frog DGF 56

70374 Who'll Get It When I'm Gone?

PA 032013,

Frog DGF 56

Once again, the trumpet player cannot be Aiken and Johnny Dunn may have been back from England at this time, but do we really know the exact recording date? And stylistically it certainly is not Dunn! Instead, I hear a trumpet player obviously uninfected by the ubiquitous Dunn style. He is much more playing in a Western style and bears some elements of Tommy Ladnier's style, using a mute throughout and displaying a wide vibrato.

On trombone we hear a very tasteful jazzy player with beautiful tone and execution, probably not belonging to the New York bunch of Dunn influenced players. He plays a legato style and uses high interval jumps. His origin might possibly be found in Chicago. Both brass men might even hail from the South! In any way this player is not Bud Aiken or Herb Flemming!

The clarinet player shows some elements of the fashionable clarinet style of the time as executed by Ernest Elliott or Bob Fuller, but plays much more functionally and with more taste. This man does not double on alto as listed in the discos.

The piano player plays a blues influenced style, with rolling basses at times, and should therefore also be searched for in a western surrounding! Jimmy Blythe and other Chicago pianists come to mind when looking for a hint. I am unable to hear a banjo player. If there is one, he is too restrained to give any hint and be identified.

It is thus my firm estimation that this accompanying band is of Chicago origin or had been recruited out of a touring band from the West. In any case, this group has nothing in common with the predominant Johnny Dunn school of New York which is omnipresent on New York recordings of the time. And imagine: this was the time when the Oliver band in Chicago was at the peak of their powers, but in New York musicians still stuck with Dunn's unswinging heroic military style!

Prior to this research project of the Bradford recordings we (our group of listeners Michael Rader, Dave Brown, K-B Rau) have attributed this recording as the work of Gus and Bud Aiken and consorts (see The FROG Blues & Jazz Annual No. 3, 2013). But more recent research and further gained knowledge of this music has brought the author to the above stated conclusions.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Not listed.*

- B&GR\*2,\*3,\*4: prob Gus Aiken, cnt; Bud Aiken, tbn; Garvin Bushell, clt, alt; Leroy Tibbs, pno; Samuel Speed, bjo.

- Rust\*3: probably Gus Aiken-c/Bud Aiken-tb/Garvin Bushell-cl-as/Leroy Tibbs-p/Samuel Speed-bj.

- Rust\*4,\*6: prob Gus Aiken or Bubber Miley -c; Bud Aiken or Herb Flemming -tb; Herschel Brassfield or Garvin Bushell -cl -as; Leroy Tibbs -p; Samuel Speed -bj.

- Bushell/Tucker p 158: no comment by Bushell on this session

- Schermann/Eriksson Miley Disco: "The above personnel is listed in Dixon-Godrich and seems very likely to us. Rust has Gus Aiken or BM on trumpet and also alternative names on tb and cl/as. Aurally, it is definitely not BM but very probably Aiken in our opinion (Aiken was in Cuba at the time! KBR)."

Notes:

- Rust\*3: probably: Gus Aiken -c; Bud Aiken -tb; Garvin Bushell -cl -as; Leroy Tibbs -p; Samuel Speed -bj.

**025 JOHNNY DUNN AND HIS JAZZ BAND**

New York,

Oct. 30, 1923

Johnny Dunn – tpt; unknown – tbn;  
unknown or (Herschel Brassfield) – alt; Rollen Smith – ten;  
(George Rickson?) – pno; (Sam Speed?) – bjo, ?cymbal; (Harry Hull?) – bbs;  
two unknown voices (2)

81321-3 Jazzin' Babies Blues

Col 13004-D,

Frog DGF 33

81322-2 I Promised Not To Holler, But Hey! Hey!

Col 13004-D,

Frog DGF 33

Now, back from his tour to England, Dunn is in the studio again. He probably brought with him a contingent from the Vodery band again, a member of which he was until 1925.

It is Dunn on trumpet, but not Granstaff on trombone, he had stayed in Europe after the Plantation show tour to London.

This trombone player is rhythmically less interesting than Granstaff and plays in a very simple style.

On alto I think to hear the hitherto unknown alto player of the last two sessions, not Brassfield anymore. Unfortunately, I do not find any notes re Brassfield's emigration to California. So, as close to the Vodery band's arrival from Europe, he might still be Brassfield, but again exaggerating his romanticisms a bit.

The tenor player might be Rollin Smith again, but as we do not have any distinct and recognizable characteristic of his style – if he really had one – it might also be anyone, the more so as it is not sure whether Smith returned with the Vodery band, as there were members that did not, and stayed in Europe. Later, Smith had an eminent career as a singer in Europe.

The pianist might be a restrained George Rickson, although his pianistics can only be heard in the trumpet chorus of the last title. There is simple and rhythmic banjo playing with two solo breaks in the second title, appropriate for Sam Speede, not Mitchell. Harry Hull may be the tuba player. Of the drummer – if there is one – only a final cymbal stroke after the first title can be heard which might also have been executed by the banjo player (see next Dunn session!), or even anybody else.

Notes:

- RR 76-10: "Dunn made one more band record for Columbia soon after his return; possibly with members of the Vodery orchestra. Dunn remained with Vodery at least through 1925." Dunn, cornet; unknown trombone, clarinet/sax, sax, piano, banjo, tuba, drums.

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnels uncertain but featuring Johnny Dunn (c); Cal Jones and Bud Aiken (tb); Garvin Bushell (as); George Rickson and Dan Wilson (p); Cokey Spivey and John Mitchell (g). (This personnel for all Dunn records 1921 – 1923! KBR)*

- Rust\*2: Johnny Dunn (cnt); Herb Flemming (tbn); Herschel Brassfield (clt, sop, alt); Leroy Tibbs (pno); Gus Horsley (bjo); unknown (bbs)

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: Johnny Dunn -c; unknown -tb; unknown -cl -as; unknown -ts; unknown -p; unknown -bj; unknown -bb; unknown -d

- FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): As last (Apr. 10, 1923 – KBR), but unknown clarinet and ? Baltimore omitted.

**026 MOSBY'S DIXIELAND BLUE BLOWERS**

Los Angeles,

c. 1924 - 25

Harry Barker – tpt; Lloyd Allen – tbn; Herschel Brassfield – alt, sop;

Henry Starr – pno; Fred Vaughn – bjo; Curtis Mosby – dms, ldr

42 Riverboat Shuffle

unissued test,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8003

45 All Night Blues

unissued test,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8003

This is the first release of this very interesting unissued test-pressing of 'Mosby's Dixieland Blue Blowers'. The CD booklet gives an in-depth account of this elusive test which is urgently recommended for information. Of the musical content the following is said: "It is likely that Riverboat Shuffle and All Night Blues were recorded during Mosby's run at 'Solomon's' (Dance Pavilion, De Luxe in Los Angeles – KBR).

Aurally, these sides date from late 1924 or early 1925. Both tunes were popular in Chicago at the time and were recrded by other performers on recordings that received broad distribution. Riverboat Shuffle is given an enthusiastic treatment with solos from H.L. Brassfield on alto and Harry barken on trumpet. The clarinet solo on All Night Blues is probably by Brassfield, and Henry Starr plays the piano solo." And also: "One final discographical note on the test is the gap in the matrix numbers. It is highly likely that two other sides were recorded during the session representing matrices 43 and 44. Regrettably, other titles representing these matrices remain undiscovered."

Against the CD booklet of Jazz Oracle BDW 8003, Herschel Brassfield does not play clarinet on this session, but obviously soprano sax, and alto sax in the first half of 'Riverboat Shuffle'. Re his soprano style, he seems to have listened to Clarence Williams' Blue Five and learned some phraseology from Sidney Bechet. In all, Brassfield plays a hot and assured reed performance here, not expected because of his relatively obscure musical identity on records. The band as a whole is of great competence and consists of expert musicians. (The CD booklet gives the trumpet player as Harry Barken, but Tom Stoddard's 'Jazz on the Barbary Coast' lists him as Harry Barker!)

Notes:

- These items have not been listed anywhere, so far.

**027 GEORGIA STRUTTERS**

New York,

May 23, 1927

Tommy Ladnier – tpt; Jimmy Harrison – tbn;

Edgar Sampson – alt, clt, vln; Happy Caldwell – ten, clt;

James P. Johnson – pno; Billy Taylor, Sr. or (Harry Hull) – bbs;  
 Perry Bradford – voc, cymbal  
 144202-3 Rock, Jenny, Rock  
 144202-4 Rock, Jenny, Rock  
 144203-1 It's Right Here For You  
 144203-3 It's Right Here For You

Har 468-H, Timeless CBC 1-073  
 Har unissued not on LP/CD  
 Har unissued not on LP/CD  
 Har 468-H, Timeless CBC 1-073

This item certainly does not comprise Herschel Brassfield among its personnel.

Storyville 31 in 1970 carried a very interesting letter by Chris Hillman – “Discographical double takes” – which contained the following passages: “Recently I came to hear the six titles by the Georgia Strutters. These are spread over three sessions, of which the first two feature Bubber Miley (sic!) in a typical Perry Bradford group and the last has a different man, listed in the new edition of Jazz Records as Jabbo Smith. Aurally this is wide of the mark, and I am indebted to Richard Rains for his suggestion that it is in fact Tommy Ladnier, a suggestion with which I entirely agree. Although the performance of the tunes in a typical Bradford manner (sic) would tend to mask Ladnier's strong individual style all the trademarks are there to be heard if one listens carefully. The titles are 'Rock, Jenny Rock' and 'It's Right Here For You' – made in May 1927, a time one would automatically tend to look for Ladnier's presence among the unidentified cornet players – especially when, as here, the band also included Jimmy Harrison.”

And there certainly is nothing to add, except that this very important – and easy to verify – statement did not find its way into the Rust editions up to the present! (This, by the way, is my own reason not to trust anything anymore listed in Rust!) From my own listening experience and my audio memory I do not doubt Ladnier's presence at all. Dan Vernhettes in his great book “Traveling Blues” on Ladnier's life (p.125) is not as final as I am, but he ends his chapter on this recording thus: “All this said, Tommy Ladnier can neither be excluded nor included as the cornetist (sic) at this Georgia Strutters session. Suffice to say, it is more likely that he is playing than that there should be anybody else.”

Given that Bradford only hired first-class musicians for this session, I have to ask if there could have been any other top trumpet player in Harlem, unknown and unnoted, and so much into Ladnier's style just out of the blue? Certainly not! So, I myself definitely stick to Ladnier! By the way: he played trumpet when with Henderson. (Dan Qualey of Brooklyn, sponsor of Solo Art Records, received this information from Perry Bradford (Jazz Information Vol.1 No.19): “The cornet player on Bradford's Okeh record of "Lucy Long", however, is Johnny Dunn, who also recorded with Bradford under the name of the Georgia Strutters, on Harmony, and the Gulf Coast Seven, on Columbia. Besides Dunn these discs, which many of our readers have inquired about, feature Garvin Bushell, clarinet; Brass, Field, drums; and "Speed", banjo”)

There is no doubt as to Harrison's presence, and the discs are right on that matter. And certainly, Harrison's very personal style is easy to recognize, his unique vibrato, his phrasing derived from listening to the Oliver/Armstrong band in 1923, together with his companion June Clark, absolutely new to trombone jazz playing of the twenties. (It is therefore not surprising that Henderson immediately hired Harrison for his band in late 1926 away from Billy Fowler although he had no written parts for him. There were no parts for a second trombone in the arrangements of the time, and, as Benny Morton or Charlie Green were not fired in favour of Harrison's sole presence, they stick to playing the arranged parts and Harrison played ad-lib parts, what can easily be heard on the recordings. Yet, in January 1927 Don Redman was at hand with a new arrangement of 'Some Of These Days' which comprised one chorus for the trombones in two-part harmony, and this might well be seen as the beginning of the trombone section in jazz big bands.)

The reed players have been listed as Edgar Sampson and Herschel Brassfield. There certainly is nothing to object Sampson's presence, if alone because of his doubling on violin, which fits perfectly with other examples of his playing. His clarinet or alto style definitely is not as developed as can be heard with the Charlie Johnson band later on and – probably with Clarence Williams in December 1929 (*Zonky, You've Got To Be Modernistic*) or even later with Chick Webb.

The problem is the tenor player who is listed as Herschel Brassfield. We only have rather secure knowledge of this man playing with Johnny Dunn's band in 1922/23, where he plays alto in a rhapsodic singing style, something in the kind of Otto Hardwick of the Ellington band. He played with Ford Dabney and later Will Vodery's Plantation Band, an organization with which he made an UK trip in 1923, together with Johnny Dunn. Brassfield later migrated to the West Coast joining Curtis Mosby's Dixieland Blue Blowers, with whom he can be found on a photo of c.1925 and presumably heard on a test pressing of the band which can be found on the Jazz Oracle CD BDW 8003. A hand-written letter from Brassfield to the Los Angeles Local 767 of 1928 – advertised by E-bay on the web in 2021 - as: “Complaint to Los Angeles Musicians' Union Local 767 (African American Musicians) about the members of his orchestra “double crossing” him – musicians accused were Lionel Hampton, Joe (sic) Orendorff, and Lawrence Brown. Two letters; one against the Quality Orchestra for “soliciting and obtaining the job that my band was filling at 'Solomon's Dance Hall' .... My drummer, trumpet and trombone player tried out with the Quality Orchestra on my band-stand.” (These three musicians then obviously changed over to 'Paul Howard's Quality Serenaders' and together made a fantastic band.) Later than this date nothing is known of Brassfield's whereabouts. According to this – and the fact that he played alto on his recordings – I see no reason to hear Brassfield as the tenor cum clarinet man on this Georgia Strutters session.

Instead, I would opt for the well-known, but little listed, band-mate with Edgar Sampson in the Arthur Gibbs Orchestra that played the Savoy and the Arcadia Ballrooms from mid 1927 to mid 1928, when part of this band were taken over by Charlie Johnson. His name was Albert Happy Caldwell, and he was a very prominent tenor sax player in Harlem at the time. What can be heard of him in these two titles is – in my opinion – absolutely compatible with other recordings of his known.

From March 1927 on Bradford's favoured piano player for his band recordings was James P. (Price) Johnson, the so-called “Father of Stride Piano”. Johnson's pianistic skills were definitely much more developed and expert than Bradford's, and so it is not surprising that Bradford used Johnson on his later recordings, the more so as Johnson was not able to gain public fame and distinction as would have been due. When Johnson was able to record a band under his own name in 1929, he was grateful and decent enough to appoint Bradford as singer. He also used Bradford in this capacity in the Johnson's Jazzers coupling in September 1927. Bradford himself did not record as pianist any more from October 1926 on. Under these circumstances it is very strange but interesting to note that all editions of Rust have Willie The Lion Smith as pianist, the more so, as nothing stylistically hints to Smith, no broken tenths, no airy melodic phrases, but everything heard is compatible with Johnson's playing of the time. I therefore do not see any reason not to list James P. Johnson as the most probable pianist on this date. And I herewith revoke emphatically my suggestion in VJM 143 that the pianist might be Bradford himself! (Of all The Lion Smith's nine recording dates prior to 1934 listed in Rust and subsequently in John Collinson's Tentative Listing of Smith's recordings beginning in Storyville 132 I have only been able to appoint two sessions to The Lion – the Mamie Smith sessions of Feb. 14, 1920 and Aug. 10, 1920 – with a relative certainty, another one with strong reservation – Cl. Williams Aug. 07, 1933, see N&N 61 p.16. All other six recording sessions listed do not contain Willie “The” Lion!)

Rust lists Gus Horsley on banjo in all his editions, although with a question mark from edition 3 on. Han Enderman also lists him with question mark for this session in his very interesting and well-founded article on this musician in N&N 72. From this article I have to receive that Horsley's activity as banjo player is at least in question if not most improbable, and I have to admit that from Rust I never did question Horsley as banjoist. But Enderman is certainly right in his deductions. Luckily, I am not forced to judge Horsley's or any other banjo player's presence on these sides, because there is no such! The listener certainly will be impossible to hear any banjo sounds! The more amazing it is how Johnson (?) on piano drives the band along like nobody's business.

Lacking any substantiated characteristics of Harry Hull's tuba style at the time, I can say nothing about his presence here, only, that he obviously had some connexion to James P. Johnson who might well have brought him to the studio. The source of his being listed is unknown to me. But, if my thesis re the presence of Happy Caldwell on this session is right, there might also be the probability of Billy Taylor being the

tuba man, as he was with the Arthur Gibbs band as well as Edgar Sampson and Caldwell. And: Taylor was the first, perhaps, to play walking-lines on the tuba, what you can hear easily on these sides.

Well, this then leaves to find out the drummer. And I am afraid that again there is none, because the singular cymbal crashes at the very ends of both titles could have been and probably were provided by the band leader/organizer and singer Perry Bradford himself.

Order of solos:

*Rock, Jenny, Rock:* Ladnier – Bradford voc /Johnson and Ladnier in background – Caldwell clt – Harrison – Caldwell ten.

*It's Right Here For You:* Bradford voc /Johnson pno – Sampson vln – Harrison – Sampson alt – Ladnier – Johnson coda.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: probably Johnny Dunn (c); Garvin Bushell (cl); Perry Bradford (p)*

- Rust\*2: *Bubber Miley cnt; Jimmy Harrison tbn; same unknown clt; Edgar Sampson alt, vln; Ben Waters ? ten; Willie The Lion Smith pno; Gus Horsley bjo; unknown bbs; unknown dms; Perry Bradford vcl*

- Rust\*3,\*4,\*6: *Jabbo Smith, c; Jimmy Harrison, tb; Herschel Brassfield, cl; Edgar Sampson, as, vn; Willie The Lion Smith, p; ? Gus Horsley, bj; ? Harry Hull, bb; unknown, d; Perry Bradford, v*

- Storyville 31 p. 32, Chris Hillman (1970): “Recently I came to hear the six titles by the Georgia Strutters. These are spread over three sessions, of which the first two feature Bubber Miley (sic! – KBR) in a typical Perry Bradford group and the last has a different man, listed in the new edition of Jazz Records (Rust\*3 – KBR) as Jabbo Smith. Aurally this identification is wide of the mark, and I am indebted to Richard Rains for his suggestion that it is in fact Ladnier, a suggestion with which I entirely agree. Although the performance of the tunes in a typical Bradford manner would tend to mask Ladnier’s strong individual style all the trademarks are there to be heard of one listens carefully. The titles are ‘Rock, Jenny Rock’ and ‘It’s Right Here For You’ – made in May 1927, a time one would automatically tend to look for Ladnier’s presence among the unidentified cornet players – especially when, as here, the band also included Jimmy Harrison.”

Tune Structures:

144202-3 *Rock, Jennie, Rock* Key of Eb - Cm – Eb Harmony

(Intro 4 bars ens Eb)(Vamp 4 bars tpt growl Cm)(Verse 18 bars ens Cm)(Chorus 1 12 bars blues tpt-tbn-clt-alt Eb)(Chorus 2 12 bars voc PB+ tpt Eb)(Chorus 3 12 bars clt ES)(Chorus 4 tbn JH +clts)(Chorus 5 12 bars ten AHC +clt/tpt)(Coda 4 bars ens)

144203-3 *It's Right Here For You (Bradford)* Key of F Harmony

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Verse 12 bars ens)(Chorus 1 18 bars voc PB)(Chorus 2 18 bars vln ES)(Chorus 3 18 bars tbn JH)(Chorus 4 18 bars alt ES)(Chorus 5 18 bars tpt TL)(Chorus 6 18 bars ens)(Coda 4 bars pno JPJ – ens)

Notable differences of takes:

No alternate takes of each title reissued, so no comment possible

K.-B. Rau  
22-02-21