

THE RECORDINGS OF PORTER GRAINGER

An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

GRAINGER, Porter, pianist, composer

No personal data known

“Though Porter Grainger accompanied numerous vaudeville and “classic” Blues singers on record, amazingly little biographical information about him seem to have been assembled. Neither his date of birth nor his date of death are recorded in any source I have thought of.”

(Howard Rye, booklet to RST Records JPCD-1521-2)

STYLISTICS

STYLE

Grainger performs in a late ragtime/early Harlem stride style with a rather simple left-hand rhythm – strong after-beat notes and chordal melodic phrases in his right hand. In blues titles he uses some sort of abbreviated boogie elements in his left hand.

TIME

His time is strong and swinging, and he keeps good time.

PHRASING

His right-hand phrasing encompasses many upward rips but shows little blues elements.

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: **Porter Grainger**
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Porter Grainger*
- 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: (*Porter Grainger*)

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.

PORTER GRAINGER

001 **GLADYS BRYANT**

Gladys Bryant – voc;

New York,

c. Mar. 1923

Porter Grainger – pno (1,2,3,4,5,6); Bob Ricketts – pno (3,4,5,6)

1336-1	Laughin’ Cryin’ Blues	Pm 12026,	RST JPCD-1521-2
1336-2	Laughin’ Cryin’ Blues	Pm 12026	not on LP/CD
1337-1	You’ve Gotta See Mama Every Night (Or You Can’t See Mama At All)	Pm 12026,	RST JPCD-1521-2
1338-1	The Dark-Town Flappers Ball	Pm 12027,	RST JPCD-1521-2
1339-2	Triflin’ Blues	Pm 12027	not on LP/CD

1339-3 Triflin' Blues Pm 12027, RST JPCD-1521-2

These first recordings of Porter Grainger show him accompanying young Gladys Bryant singing vaudeville blues tunes. The singer owns a pleasant and smooth voice with a strong vibrato on sustained notes.

Porter Grainger plays his two-handed late ragtime/early Harlem stride piano with nice ringing chords in his right hand. He owns a strong rhythm and swings. He can be heard alone on the first title. The other three titles then have Bob Ricketts as added pianist – with his right hand only - obviously playing the sharp sounding discant parts over Grainger's solid middle-range pianistics.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger and Bob Ricketts, pno; or Porter Grainger, pno (1,2)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger – Bob Ricketts -p or Porter Grainger -p only

Discernible differences of takes:

1336: As only one of two takes of this title is reissued, nothing can be said about differences of these takes.

002	LENA WILSON		New York,	May 09, 1923
	Lena Wilson – voc;			
	Porter Grainger – pno			
27894-3	Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do	Vic 19085,	Document DOCD-5443	
27895-4	Triflin' Blues (Daddy Don't You Trifle)	Vic 19085,	Document DOCD-5443	

This piano accompanist really plays a romping and exuberant stride piano and is thus very different from what I have got to know from Porter Grainger. But this is very fine and I therefore probably have to change my opinion re Porter Grainger – given that it is really he on this recording. But – as my good friend Jörg Kuhfuss just reports - the label says: Porter Grainger, and this should then be a reference recording for other sessions featuring him. 'Triflin' Blues' – his own number, obviously – has some nice "rolling" blues basses.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger - p

003	LENA WILSON		New York,	Jun. 15, 1923
	Lena Wilson – voc;			
	Porter Grainger – pno			
10853	Sad 'n' Lonely Blues	Br unissued	not on LP/CD	

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: not listed

- BGR*3,*4: acc unknown

- Rust*3: not listed

- Rust*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

004	LENA WILSON		New York,	Jun. 29, 1923
	Lena Wilson – voc;			
	Porter Grainger – pno			
10973	Bleeding Hearted Blues	Br 2464,	Document DOCD-5443	
10976	Chirpin' The Blues	Br 2464,	Document DOCD-5443	

Porter Grainger's name is listed on the record label, and he certainly plays a pleasant accompaniment in stride style. Grainger's backing of the singer is in his above-described manner, attractively played, but a little un-eventful.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger - p

005	SARA MARTIN		New York,	c. Aug. 03, 1923
	Sara Martin – voc;			
	Porter Grainger - pno			
71715-B	My Good Man's Blues (Mahalia's Blues)	OK 8087,	Document DOCD-5396	
71716-B	Jelly's Blues	OK 8087,	Document DOCD-5396	
71717-B	Troubled Blues	OK 8093,	Document DOCD-5396	
71718-B	I'm Satisfied	OK 8093,	Document DOCD-5396	

After all the Clarence Williams accompanied sides there is another pianist here now. His identity is believed to be Porter Grainger's, but a clarification of this question has not been done until now. He plays a dragging piano here, different from the fore-going recordings. But there seems to be no reason to doubt Grainger's presence on these sides. Possibly, his style displayed here – in case it is he on the piano - might have been asked for by Miss Martin.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: prob Porter Grainger, pno.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: ?Porter Grainger -p.

006	SARA MARTIN		New York,	c. Aug. 06, 1923
	Sara Martin – voc;			
	Porter Grainger - pno			
71736-B	Blue Gum Blues	OK 8097,	Document DOCD-5396	
71738-A	Slow Down Sweet Papa Mama's Catching Up On You	OK 8097,	Document DOCD-5396	

This pianist is believed to be the same musician as at the session before, thus possibly/probably Porter Grainger. His style is identical to the session above, and some slight doubts as to Grainger's identity may be allowed. But if really Grainger, he uses a different style here with Sara Martin as before, more into blues fields.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: prob Porter Grainger, pno.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: ?Porter Grainger -p.

007 MAMIE SMITH Mamie Smith – voc; Porter Grainger – pno 71727-A Plain Old Blues	New York,	Aug. 06, 1923
	OK 4960,	Document DOCD-5359

Aurally this decidedly is Grainger.

Notes:

- RR 57/10: Porter Grainger?, piano
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

008 MAMIE SMITH Mamie Smith – voc; Porter Grainger – pno 71759-A Mistreatin' Daddy Blues 71760-A Do It, Mr. So-And-So	New York,	Aug. 15, 1923
	OK 4960, OK 40019,	Document DOCD-5359 Document DOCD-5359

Aurally this decidedly is Grainger as before.

Notes:

- RR 57/10: Porter Grainger?, piano
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

009 MAMIE SMITH Mamie Smith – voc; Porter Grainger – pno 71764-B My Mammy's Blues	New York,	Aug. 16, 1923
	OK 40019,	Document DOCD-5360

Aurally this is certainly Grainger as before.

Notes:

- RR 57/10: Porter Grainger ?, piano
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

010 LENA WILSON Lena Wilson – voc; Porter Grainger – pno 28398 'Tain't No Tellin' 28399 Wish I Had You	New York,	Aug. 22, 1923
	Vic unissued Vic unissued	not on LP/CD not on LP/CD

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

011 ETHEL FINNIE Ethel Finnie – voc; Porter Grainger – pno 31017-2 I Don't Love Nobody (So I Don't Have No Blues) 31018-1 Don't You Quit Me, Daddy	New York,	c. Nov. 1923
	Ajax 17015, Ajax 17015,	RST JPCD-1521-2 RST JPCD-1521-2

Miss Finnie sounds very competent and strong singing her kind of vaudeville-blues of the time. She was Mrs. Porter Grainger, as is reported. No wonder we do hear her accompanied by her husband. Here, we decidedly hear Mr. Grainger on the keys.

Consequently, all other four recording sessions of Miss Finnie have her husband as accompanist. Only one of these sessions might possibly yet have Fletcher Henderson as pianist. But I would certainly opt for Porter Grainger, with some Henderson men of the time, yet (see session 013 below!).

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 3: not listed
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

012 LENA WILSON Lena Wilson – voc;	New York,	c. Mar. 1924
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Porter Grainger – pno
 42582-2 'Tain't No Tellin' (What The Blues Will Make You Do) Em 10745, Document DOCD-5443
 42583-2 I Don't Love Nobody (So I Don't Have No Blues) Em 10745, Document DOCD-5443

Beautiful and stomping stride style piano accompaniment by probably Porter Grainger. Stylistically, there is no reason to doubt his presence. The style is decidedly his as heard before.

Notes:

- BGR*2: poss Fletcher Henderson, pno
- BGR*3,*4: unknown -p
- Rust*2: poss Fletcher Henderson, pno.
- Rust*3: ? Fletcher Henderson -p
- Rust*4,*6: (Porter Grainger?) -p

013 **ETHEL FINNIE** New York, Mar. 1924
 Ethel Finnie – voc;
 Howard Scott – tpt; (Teddy Nixon?) – tbn; (Don Redman?) – clt;
 Porter Grainger or (Fletcher Henderson?) – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Ralph Escudero – bbs
 42604-2 Heart-Breakin' Joe Em 10746, Document DOCD-5343
 42605-1 He Wasn't Born In Araby But He's A Sheikin' Fool Em 10746, Document DOCD-5343

This very probably is Howard Scott, still showing some Johnny Dunn phrasing, but on his way to a more "Western" style. He plays very assured. Nixon and Redman are doubtful to my ears. The pianist is very retained and more in Porter Grainger's style than in Henderson's. For me very probably Porter Grainger! And, as W.C. Allen remarks: "Band has a different 'sound' than contemporary Henderson units."

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 3: not listed
- BGR*2: Joe Smith, cnt; Teddy Nixon, tbn; Don Redman, clt; Fletcher Henderson, pno; Charlie Dixon, bjo; Ralph Escudero, bbs.
- BGR*3,*4: prob Howard Scott, c; unknown, tb; poss Don Redman, cl; Fletcher Henderson or Porter Grainger, p; unknown, bj; unknown bbs.
- BGR*2: Joe Smith, cnt; Teddy Nixon, tbn; Don Redman, clt; Fletcher Henderson, pno; Charlie Dixon, bjo; Ralph Escudero, bbs.
- Rust*3: Joe Smith -c; Don Redman -cl; Fletcher Henderson -p; Charlie Dixon -bj; Ralph Escudero -bb; Kaiser Marshall -d.
- Rust*4,*6: Howard Scott or Joe Smith -c; unknown -tb; ?Don Redman -cl; Fletcher Henderson or Porter Grainger -p; ?Charlie Dixon -bj; ?Ralph Escudero -bb.
- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.102: prob Howard Scott, cornet; unknown, trombone; poss Don Redman, clarinet; Fletcher Henderson or Porter Grainger, piano; unknown, banjo; unknown, tuba. "Band has a different 'sound' than contemporary Henderson units, but the cornet sounds typical of Scott in his Joe Smith vein, and the band is tentatively ascribed to Henderson. See remarks on page 100 (of Hendersonia – KBR) re Joe Smith, at this time on tour with 'In Bamville'. Alternatively, the pianist might have been Ethel Finnie herself; late that same year, 'Ethel Finnie' played piano for Amos White in New Orleans."

014 **ETHEL FINNIE** Porter Grainger's Novel Three New York, c. Mar. 12-20, 1924
 Ethel Finnie – voc;
 unknown – tpt;
Porter Grainger – pno; Lincoln M. Conaway – stg
 31538 Hula Blues Ajax 17027, RST JPCD-1521-2

This trumpet player clearly is a Johnny Dunn follower, probably a "legitimate" player, and is rhythmically very limited. I believe that he is not an improviser and that he has prepared his short solo part carefully though unimaginative. He certainly is not Morris, nor is he Joe Smith. Grainger plays very simple chordal accompaniment and Mr. Conaway goes "Hawaiian".

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 3: not listed
- BGR*2: poss Joe Smith, cnt; poss Lincoln M. Conaway, steel gtr; Porter Grainger, pno.
- BGR*3,*4: unknown, cnt; poss Lincoln M. Conaway, steel gtr; Porter Grainger, pno.
- Rust *3,*4,*6: ?Tom Morris -c; Porter Grainger -p; ?Lincoln M. Conaway -stg.

015 **LENA WILSON** New York, Apr. 09-23, 1924
 Lena Wilson – voc;
 Porter Grainger – pno
 31551 He Wasn't Born In Araby, But He's A Sheikin' Fool Ajax 17025 not on LP/CD
 31553 If You Love Me, Act Like Me Ajax 17025 not on LP/CD

This session seems not to be reissued on LP or CD and could thus not be checked.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger -p
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

016 **ETHEL FINNIE** Porter Grainger's Novel Three New York, c. Apr. 1924
 Ethel Finnie – voc;
 Joe Smith – cnt; (Ernest Elliott) – alt;
Porter Grainger – pno
 31535 Don't Know And Don't Care Blues Ajax 17027, RST JPCD-1521-2

Porter Grainger is documented on piano.

If we find Ernest Elliott on alto here, he must have been very retained on this session. We hear a couple of his characteristics, but not as much as usual, and this player could easily be another one, a legitimate player with better taste and better pitch. Elliott's presence cannot be

contradicted decidedly or excluded, but is certainly very doubtful. Did he feel self-conscious in partnership with this beautiful and tasteful trumpet player/cornetist? And made this reach him better results and improve?

To list Joe Smith as cornetist here is what I would call a 'well educated guess', and I think it not to be off the mark. I believe to hear his smooth and soft tone together with remnants of his Johnny Dunn copying style of a year ago, mainly playing in the cornet's lower register, but already on his way to the style that made him famous - and the ladies moan and weep.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 3: not listed
- BGR *2: poss Joe Smith, cnt; poss Ernest Elliott, alt; Porter Grainger, pno; second unknown, alt; or one man playing both (now what does that mean? - KBR)
- BGR *3, *4: unknown, cnt; poss Ernest Elliott, alt; Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust *3: ? Joe Smith - cnt; ? Ernest Elliott - alt; Porter Grainger - pno
- Rust *4, *6: unknown, cnt; ? Ernest Elliott, alt; Porter Grainger, pno
- W.R. Bryant, Ajax Records: Porter Grainger (piano) with uncredited clarinet and saxophone (sic).

017 BESSIE SMITH Bessie Smith - voc; Porter Grainger - pno; John Mitchell - bjo; Clarence Conaway - uke 81720 Banjo Blues 81721 Four Flushin' Papa	New York, Col unissued Col unissued	Apr. 23, 1924 not on LP/CD not on LP/CD
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As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3: Porter Grainger, pno; John Mitchell, bjo; Clarence Conaway, uke
- BGR*4: Porter Grainger, pno (2); John Mitchell, bjo (1,2)
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p; John Mitchell -bj; Clarence Conaway -u

018 PORTER GRAINGER Porter Grainger - voc; Thomas Fats Waller - pno 31578 In Harlem's Araby	New York, Ajax 17039,	c. May 1924 Chronological Classics 664
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This is Porter Grainger, the singer. Easy to understand that this would not be his future. His performance is not convincing and amateurish, and far from any anticipated public success. It has, yet, to be added that for Grainger the chosen tune does not offer a basis to shine on. But young Fats on the piano is a joy to hear.

Laurie Wright states that Ajax matrices 31576/77 may be unissued takes by Hazel Meyers with Porter Grainger (L. Wright, "Fats" in Fact, p. 20).

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: not listed
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -v; Fats Waller -p

019 TENNESSEE TOOTERS Sterling Grant, Roscoe Wickham - kazoo; Porter Grainger - pno; Sam Speed - bjo 81788-3 Ground Hog Blues 81789-2 Chattanooga (Down In Tennessee)	New York, Col 144-D, Col 144-D,	May 21, 1924 not on LP/CD not on LP/CD
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As this session seems to be un-reissued on LP/CD, nothing can be said about the music. Only, that these two sides have absolutely nothing in common or to do with the white Vocalion recording group of the same name and time.

Notes:

- Rust*2: Vernon Dalhart, Ed Smalle (kazoo); John Cali (bjo)
- Rust*3: Vernon Dalhart -kazoo -v, Ed Smalle -kazoo; John Cali -bj
- Rust*4,*6: Sterling Grant -Roscoe Wickham -k; Porter Grainger -p; Sam Speed -bj

020 ETHEL FINNIE Ethel Finnie - voc; Porter Grainger - pno 9675-A You're Gonna Wake Up Some Morning But Your Papa Will Be Gone	New York, Amb 4917 (Cyl),	Aug. 27, 1924 Document DOCD-1005
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Miss Finney's voice comes out shrill here, probably caused by the recording cylinder. But she "sings with great personality and vigour in a tuneful soprano on this stop-time vaudeville blues" (S. Tracy, booklet to DOC-1005).

Sound quality of this side is a bit problematic since the source was published on an Amberol cylinder of the Edison company. Mr. Grainger attributes an urging piano accompaniment in his personal style between ragtime and Stride.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 3: vcl acc Porter Grainger (p), 1927
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p.
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger -pno

021 THE GET-HAPPY BAND Bubber Miley - tpt; Joe Nanton - tbn; Sidney Bechet - sop; Otto Hardwick - alt; Porter Grainger - pno; Fred Guy - bjo; unknown - dms 140773-2 Junk Bucket Blues	New York, Col 14091-D,	Jul. 17, 1925 Frog DGF 32
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I state that Mr. Porter Grainger, composer of three of the four recorded titles at these two sessions and probable pianist – and documented as such for the second session below – obviously assembled his recording bands just like a couple of other pianists in Harlem without working band units did: He draw musicians from well-known and respected working units of the day and had them record under his own name. Clarence Williams had this habit, Perry Bradford, Lem Fowler, and certainly many more. In this case Grainger very probably raided the recent Duke Ellington band and recruited Bubber Miley, Sidney Bechet and possibly Otto Hardwick for his own front line. Sidney Bechet undoubtedly is identified by his own idiomatic and very individual soprano playing. As far as can be recognized, he does not use his clarinet here. We are in mid-1925 and know that Bechet was with the Ellington band on and off in this year. For the trumpet the CBS LP sleeve suggests “possibly Johnny Dunn” and it has to be considered that Bubber Miley was a strict Dunn pupil in his early days, not changing his style essentially in his few later years. In this respect I am very thankful for Mr. Dave Dodd's feelings as expressed in Storyville 1996/7 below. In relation to Bechet's presence at this particular time Bubber Miley certainly is a good choice for trumpet player, the more so as his playing on the second side reveals his individual style. He may not have had his best day here, if it is him. And he was known for his love of the liquor and his notorious unreliability. There only was a written part for him to play at this session and the sound and time is recognisably Miley's in the second title. What can be heard from the alto player – there is no baritone on these sides as in Rust*6! – would be absolutely in Hardwick's range and sound. And Hardwick was an anchor-man for the early Ellington band. Sidney Bechet shares most of the solo work with the trombonist. In my suggestion Joe Nanton is the only name appropriate and acceptable for the trombone part here. Nobody else at this time played like that and with that sound – and these devices. The only quibble is the fact that Nanton was not yet a member of the Ellington band at this time, joining in mid-1926. But he was around in Harlem at the time of this recording. He might have been around these circles – if not playing then at least drinking. The band-leader plays over-unobtrusively, pounding simple and regular chordal fours on the keys – just like at the second session, for which he is documented in the Columbia files as “Porter Grainger & Five”. The banjo player is generally given as Sam Speed, banjo champion of some sort of the Harlem scene (at least in early Rusts), and I lack distinct knowledge of banjo sounds to contradict. ADDITION 17-09-20: I have just been informed by Steven Lasker that “Fred Guy identified himself on this session to the late Brooks Kerr, who so told me” (S. Lasker). The drummer can only be heard on a cymbal and a bit on wood-block, but lacking any distinct individual features.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory Vol.3: unknown tpt; unknown tbn; poss Sidney Bechet (clt, sop); unknown alt; unknown p; unknown bj; unknown bs; unknown d.
- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Clarence Williams or Porter Grainger recording group; personnel uncertain.
- Cover text CBS (F) 63093: unidentified (possibly Johnny Dunn)(tp); Joe Nanton (tb); Sidney Bechet (cl & ss); Bob Fuller (as); unidentified (possibly Mike Jackson or Porter Grainger)(p); unidentified banjo, tuba and drums.
- Rust*2: unknown (cnt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Bob Fuller (alt); Mike Jackson or Porter Grainger (pno); unknown (bjo); unknown (bbs); unknown (dms)
- Rust*3,*4: unknown -c; Joe Nanton -tb; Sidney Bechet -ss; Porter Grainger -p; Samuel Speed -bj; unknown -d.
- Rust*6: unknown c; Joe Nanton, tb; Sidney Bechet, ss; unknown as, bar; Porter Grainger, p; Sam Speed, bj; unknown d.
- Storyville 1996/7-241: “(The Columbia files) are silent on the first session but note “Porter Grainger & Five” for the second. Dave (Dodd) doubts Nanton on trombone (both sessions) but says that it sounds like the trombonist on a number of Henderson sides in mid to late 1924, i.e. Teddy Nixon. He also feels that the cornet on the first date may be Bubber Miley.”

Tune structures:

140773-2 Junk Bucket Blues key of F / Bb / F Columbia
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 1 12 bars blues ens final break 2 sax)(Verse 2 12 bars blues ens - final break tbn)(Chorus 1 16 bars AABC ens - breaks tbn) (Chorus 2 16 bars AABC ens - breaks sop)(Verse 3 12 bars blues ens)(Coda 2 bars ens)

140774-1 Harlem's Araby key of Eb (Cm) / Ab / Eb Columbia
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Strain A 16 bars ens - break alt)(Strain B1 32 bars AABC ens - breaks alt)(Chorus 1 16 bars ens - breaks sop) (Chorus 2 16 bars ens - breaks sop)(Strain B2 32 bars AABC ens - breaks tpt)(Coda 4 bars ens)

Composer credits:

140773: (Grainger); 140774: (Grainger, Trent, Waller)

022 THE GET HAPPY BAND

Harry Cooper – tpt; DePriest Wheeler – tbn; George Scott – alt;
 Porter Grainger – pno; Charley Stamps or Buddy Christian – bjo; (Leroy Maxey) - dms

New York,

Sep. 21, 1925

141024-3 Puddin' Papa

Col 14099-D,

Frog DGF 32

141025-2 On The Puppy's Tail

Col 14099-D,

Frog DGF 32

Oh yes, this is a peculiar record. This band reminds me of the early Cotton Club Orchestra. And certainly, the trumpet player is not Thomas Morris. He lacks all of Morris' idiosyncrasies - and flaws. And our Th. Morris investigation of a few years back convinced our listening team that he is not Morris! Yet, he is not R.Q. Dickerson either. He uses a wide and open vibrato and can securely be identified as Harry Cooper, first trumpet man with the Cotton Club Orchestra of the day. The trombone player certainly may very well be DePriest Wheeler. And on alto we might find George Scott who played and recorded with a couple of bands, not documented anywhere beyond the Cotton Club Orchestra and Missourians sides (see Storyville 95-200). There is nothing of Bob Fuller's vibrato here.

The pianist is stylistically Porter Grainger, displaying a little soloing with very sparse right-hand embellishments in the fourth chorus of 'Puddin' Papa'. The banjo player sounds like Buddy Christian with his softly ringing banjo. Charley Stamps of the Cotton Club Orchestra displays a much sharper sound. The drummer owns a nice cymbal and may be Leroy Maxey who probably uses this same cymbal at the Cotton Club Orchestra session of 10 November 1925.

There certainly are no musicians of the Get Happy Band playing on the respective Sam Manning session of the same day as suggested somewhere in the past.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory Vol.3: unknown tpt; unknown tbn; poss Sidney Bechet (clt, sop); unknown alt; unknown p; unknown bj; unknown bs; unknown d.
- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Clarence Williams or Porter Grainger recording group; personnel uncertain.
- Rust*2: Tom Morris (cnt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Bob Fuller (sop); Mike Jackson or Porter Grainger (pno); unknown (bjo); unknown (bbs); unknown (dms)

- Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris -c; Joe Nanton -tb; Bob Fuller -ss; Mike Jackson -p; ?Elmer Snowden -bj; unknown -d.
 - Rust*6: Tom Morris, c; Joe Nanton, tb; Bob Fuller, ss, as; Porter Grainger, p; ? Elmer Snowden, bj; unknown d.
 - Storyville 1996/7-241: "(The Columbia files) are silent on the first session but note "Porter Grainger & Five" for the second. Dave (Dodd) doubts Nanton on trombone (both sessions) but says that it sounds like the trombonist on a number of Henderson sides in mid to late 1924, i.e. Teddy Nixon. He also feels that the cornet on the first date may be Bubber Miley."

023 HARMONY HOUNDS		New York,	Nov. 27, 1925
unknown vocal trio – voc;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
141315-2	Done Got De Blues	Col 14119-D,	RST JPCD-1521-2
141316-2	I've Got A Gal And She Ain't No Good	Col 14119-D,	RST JPCD-1521-2

The singers perform in a three-part choir, partly singing scat choruses, partly word choruses, or even animal sounds. Piano accompaniment is almost entirely strict four-to-the-bar chordal in the right hand and bass-notes on one and three in the left hand, with no melodic elements whatsoever and no variations, except for short bass-note transitions into choruses.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: vcl group acc. Porter Grainger (p)
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: vcl group acc Porter Grainger, pno
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: not listed

024 HARMONY HOUNDS		New York,	Dec. 18, 1925
unknown vocal trio – voc;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
141480-3	Up North Blues	Col 14131	not on LP/CD
141481-2	That Dog O'Mine	Col 14131	not on LP/CD

As this session seems to be un-reissued on LP/CD, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: vcl group acc. Porter Grainger (p)
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: vcl group acc Porter Grainger, pno
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: not listed

025 HARMONY HOUNDS		New York,	Feb. 15, 1926
unknown vocal trio – voc;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
141628	I'm So Glad Trouble Don't Last Always	Col unissued	not on LP/CD
141629	I've Opened My Soul To You Lord	Col unissued	not on LP/CD

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: not listed
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: vcl group acc Porter Grainger, pno
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: not listed

026 PORTER GRAINGER'S THREE JAZZ SONGSTERS		New York,	c. May 17, 1926
Bert Howell, Gus Horsley, Perry Bradford – voc-trio;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
X-118-A	Where Did You Get That Hat	Gnt 3323,	RST JPCD-1521-2
X-119-A	Baa-Baa Blues	Gnt 3323	not on LP/CD

Performance on these sides is entirely the same as on the Harmony Hounds session above (session 023) with three-part singing and very simple piano accompaniment. The singers might perhaps even be the same on the above session.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory: not listed
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: Bert Howell, Gus Horsley, Perry Bradford, vcl trio; pres Porter Grainger, pno

027 PORTER GRAINGER'S THREE JAZZ SONGSTERS		New York,	c. May 21, 1926
Bert Howell, Gus Horsley, Perry Bradford – voc-trio;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
X-123-A	It Makes No Difference To Me	Gnt 3317,	RST JPCD-1521-2
X-124-A	Ground Hog Blues	Gnt 3317,	RST JPCD-1521-2

And again, the same as above, only, that on the second title even a cuckoo appears.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory: not listed
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: Bert Howell, Gus Horsley, Perry Bradford, vcl trio; pres Porter Grainger, pno

028 PORTER GRAINGER'S JUBILEE SINGERS		New York,	May 24, 1926
Bert Howell, Gus Horsley, Perry Bradford – voc- trio;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
X-143-A	Wish I Had A-Died In Egypt Land	Gnt 3349,	RST JPCD-1521-2

X-144-A I'm On The Right Road Now Gnt 3349, RST JPCD-1521-2

Same procedure as above. I only wonder what market this music was aimed for. This here certainly is not sincerely religious singing.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory*: not listed
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Bert Howell, Gus Horsley, Perry Bradford, vcl trio; pres Porter Grainger, pno

029	BUDDY CHRISTIAN'S FOUR CRY-BABIES	New York,	May 25, 1926
	unknown vocal quartet (poss. same as above);		
	Porter Grainger – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo		
80034	Nina Lee	OK unissued	not on LP/CD
80035	Jonah's Ridin' On His Mule	OK unissued	not on LP/CD

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol 2*: not listed
- BGR*2: unknown vcl quartet acc by prob Porter Gainger, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
- BGR*3,*4: vocal quartet acc by prob Porter Gainger, p; Buddy Christian, bj
- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: not listed

030	BUDDY CHRISTIAN'S FOUR CRY-BABIES	New York,	May 26, 1926
	unknown vocal quartet (poss. same as above);		
	Porter Grainger – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo		
80039-B	Jonah's Ridin' On His Mule	OK 8332,	RST JPCD-1521-2
80040-B	Nina Lee	OK 8332,	RST JPCD-1521-2

This seems to be the same aggregation as on the above Porter Grainger sessions, only fortified by the nominal leader's banjo. All musical elements as before!

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol 2*: unknown personnel
- BGR*2: unknown vcl quartet acc by prob Porter Gainger, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
- BGR*3,*4: unknown vcl quartet acc by prob Porter Gainger, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: not listed

031	OKEH MELODY STARS	New York,	Aug. 23, 1926
	June Clark, Big Charlie Thomas – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;		
	unknown – alt, clt; unknown – ten;		
	Porter Grainger (or Vivian Wright?) – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;		
	Clarence Todd – voc		
74310-B	Look Out, Mr. Jazz	OK 8382,	? Timeless CBC 1-030
74311-B	A Glass Of Beer, A Hot Dog And You	OK 8382	not on LP/CD

Note: The Timeless CD booklet gives matrix-number 74311-A for 'Look Out, Mr. Jazz'

As stated above, it is definitely June Clark here on first trumpet/cornet with his strong tone, his permanent irregular vibrato and his very personal fiery and hasty attack.

On second trumpet/cornet – and thus mainly in the background – is the mysterious, but beautifully poetic “Big Charlie” Thomas. (I make no attempt to repeat what his mystery is and what is known about him. This can be easily read in the booklet to the Timeless CD CBC 1-030 bearing his very name.) Listen to his breaks in the last chorus of “Look Out, Mr. Jazz”. Mr. Thomas displays a very light and slim tone with a wide vibrato and a phrasing very close to Louis Armstrong's recordings of the time, using wide interval jumps. And I am fairly certain that he leads the band in the out chorus of ‘A Glass Of Beer, A Hot Dog And You’.

The trombonist has finally been identified as Charlie Irvis in Rust*6, and this is certainly correct. Irvis plays with his usual vigour and legato style and is easy to identify.

There is an alto player who doubles clarinet throughout on “Look Out, Mr. Jazz”. I feel unable to identify this player as there is too little to judge, and his performance lacks recognizable stylistic characteristics. On alto, which he plays throughout the second title, he only plays set parts, which makes him even more undistinguishable. So, no assumption here.

It might be possible to find a name for the beautifully driving tenorist, but I do not know which one. He plays powerfully in a simplified Hawkins manner, but still using strong staccato technique, getting rather old-fashioned at the time, and he has a good and strong tone. He is not Caldwell, nor Prince Robinson, but Benny Waters from the Charlie Johnson band might be a reasonable possibility – and a possible clue to the altoist? Or, perhaps, one of the youngsters, such as Arville Harris or Elmer Williams. Judging from the other musicians he must have been an accomplished musician. And: there were not so many respectable tenor saxophonists in Harlem at the time. (Will reed specialists, please, listen carefully and let me know what they think?)

Both titles are Porter Grainger's compositions. Thus, it would be appropriate to assume Grainger's presence on piano here. Yet, after listening to his vocal-group accompaniments (Harmony Hounds, P. Grainger's Three Jazz Songsters, Buddy Christian's Four Cry-Babies, P. Grainger's Jubilee Singers) I have been unable to find anything compatible with what can be heard from the pianist on the Okeh Melody Stars. Grainger here employs desperately simple piano comping and chording behind the singers, almost without any melodious alterations contrary to what is heard in the vocal chorus of “Look Out, Mr. Jazz”. His own probable accompaniment to these same titles recorded by Sara Martin on September 05, 1926 (this is not Clarence Williams!) may give a hint to his possible presence on the Okeh Melody Stars session. With Martin and other singers Dolly Ross or Clint Jones he shows a little more melodious style which may correspond with what can be heard on ‘Look Out, Mr. Jazz’ in the background to the vocal chorus: a simple eighth-note chordal arpeggiation. So, Grainger's presence cannot be ruled out, but may be probable rather than definite.

Storyville 1998/9 p.195 lists a quote from the Baltimore Afro-American: “Vivian Wright, former pianist with Sammy Lewis”. *She obviously herded with Okeh Stompers, noted recording artists*” (sic). (BAA25/9/26 6/3) Her former activity as noted here might possibly be proof of her possible presence. But lacking any musical information on Miss Wright nothing can be said about her stylistically. So, Porter Grainger's possible presence seems to be more reasonable and probable.

The very strong and straight banjo player probably is Buddy Christian, pianist and banjo player from New Orleans, as noted in the Chicago Defender 16/4/27 p.6: "Buddy Christian, banjo with Clarence Williams Blue Five, Okeh jazz band, playing with Charles A. Watson's (sic) Dreamland Orchestra on West 125th Street, New York, every evening." We are familiar with his very sober four-to-the-bar strumming from many Clarence Williams recordings.

Clarence Todd is the singer listed on the record label.

Notes:

- Rust*2: Clarence Williams (pno) dir. unknown group; Clarence Todd (vcl)
- Storyville 21, p93: Clarence Todd (vcl) acc 2 unknown cnt, tbn, alt, ten, pno and bjo (Bob Graf says that his copy is in rather poor shape and he is unable to determine whether bass or drums are present. One of the reedmen doubles clarinet on the first side. He says that although the record doesn't have a Clarence Williams sound it is still a very fine record.)
- Rust*3,*4: 2c / tb / cl-as / ts / p / bj / Clarence Todd -v
- Rust*6: Charlie Thomas and another, c / Charlie Irvis, tb / cl, as / ts / p / bj / Clarence Todd, v
- L. Wright, Okeh Race Records: vocal chorus by Clarence Todd (Bob Graf owned a copy of this record which used take -a on both sides, but he kept no record of label type or stampers. Jazz Records shows take -B used for each side. The only copy inspected is as above (74311-a /74310-b).

Discernible differences of takes:

74310: As only one of two takes of this title is reissued, nothing can be said about differences of these takes.

74311: As none of two takes of this title is reissued, nothing can be said about differences of these takes.

Tunes:

74310-B Look Out, Mr. Jazz key of C (or Bb?) OKeh
(Chorus 1 32 bars ABAC ens JC lead - nice BCT in bars 16 - 21) (Verse 16 bars ens) (Chorus 2 32 bars voc - ten, pno in background) (Chorus 3 32 bars ens JC lead - cnt, tbn, clt breaks)

(CD plays B natural, but that would be a very uncommon pitch. Sara Martin on her recording sings in C, not Db as given by Tom Lord)

74311 A Glass Of Beer, A Hot Dog And You key of G (or F?) OKeh
(Chorus 1 32 bars ABCA' ens JC lead) (Chorus 2 32 bars ten 16 - ens 8 - ten 8) (Verse 16 bars ens) (Chorus 3 32 bars voc - ens in background) (Chorus 4 32 bars ens BCT lead 16 - saxophones 8 - ens 8)

(record probably plays Gb. Sara Martin on her own recording of this title sings in G, not Ab as given by Tom Lord)

Composer credits:

74310: (Grainger, Whipper); 74311: (Grainger, Whipper)

032 **ODETTE AND ETHEL**

New York, Sep. 30, 1926

Odette Jackson, Ethel Finnie (Grainger) - voc duet;

Porter Grainger - pno, arr

142709-2 Befo' This Time Another Year (How Long, Oh Lord, How Long?) Col 14169-D, Document DOCD-5350

142710-2 When The Train Comes Along Col 14169-D, Document DOCD-5350

BGR*2 state: "These artists are Odette Jackson and Ethel Grainger, who accompany the Rev. J.C. Burnett (on other Col sides! see below - KBR). They are sub-credited 'The Baptist Duet'".

As religious music is not in my interest, I omitted to obtain a copy of Document DOCD-5350. I am thus unable to contribute any recognitions on this music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: vcl duets acc by poss Porter Gainger, pno; unknown chimes - 1
- BGR*3,*4: vcl duet acc by prob Porter Gainger, pno; unknown chimes - 1. Columbia files credit Porter Grainger as arranger of both the above titles.

033 **REV. J.C. BURNETT**

New York, Oct. 06, 1926

Rev. J.C. Burnett - voc sermons and singing;

Sisters Odette Jackson, Ethel Grainger - voc;

Porter Grainger - pno, org

142741-1 Drive And Go Forward Col 14173-D, Document DOCD-5557

142742-2 Go Wash In Jordan Seven Times Col 14173-D, Document DOCD-5557

142743-2 Hebrew Children In The Fiery Furnace Col 14211-D, Document DOCD-5557

As religious music is not in my interest, I omitted to obtain a copy of Document DOCD-5557. I am thus unable to contribute any recognitions on this music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: Rev. J.C. Burnett - sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson - singing
- BGR*3,*4: Rev. J.C. Burnett - sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson - singing; Porter Grainger -p-o

034 **REV. J.C. BURNETT**

New York, Oct. 07, 1926

Rev. J.C. Burnett - voc sermons and singing;

Sisters Odette Jackson, Ethel Grainger - voc;

Porter Grainger - pno, org

142744 Hold To God. Unchanging Hands Col unissued not on LP/CD

142745-2 Christians' Home Col 14191-D, Document DOCD-5557

142747-2 Daniel In The Lion's Den Col 14211-D, Document DOCD-5557

142748-1 Lord Help Me Col 14180-D, Document DOCD-5557

142749-2 It's Your Time Now But My Time After Awhile Col 14191-D, Document DOCD-5557

As religious music is not in my interest, I omitted to obtain a copy of Document DOCD-5557. I am thus unable to contribute any recognitions on this music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: Rev. J.C. Burnett - sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson - singing
- BGR*3,*4: Rev. J.C. Burnett - sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson - singing; Porter Grainger -p-o

035 **ALBERTINA AND VICTORIA, THE TWO BAPTIST SISTERS** New York, Nov. 11, 1926
 Albertina, Victoria – voc duet;
 Porter Grainger – pno
 74417-B Wish I Had A Died In Egypt Land OK 8415, Document DOCD-5350
 74418-B There´s A Meetin´ Here Tonight OK 8415, Document DOCD-5350

As religious music is not in my interest, I omitted to obtain a copy of Document DOCD-5350. I am thus unable to contribute any recognitions on this music.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: vcl duets; Porter Grainger, pno

036 **CLARA SMITH - SISTERS WHITE AND WALLACE** New York, Nov. 23, 1926
 Clara Smith, Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson (as Sisters White and Wallace) – voc;
 Porter Grainger - pno
 143140-1 Percolatin´ Blues Col 14202-D, Document DOCD-5367
 143141-3 Ease It Col 14202-D, Document DOCD-5367
 143142-2 Livin´ Humble Col 14183-D, Document DOCD-5367
 143143-1 Get On Board Col 14183-D, Document DOCD-5367

These two titles certainly are accompanied by Porter Grainger in his very personal smooth stride style. BGR*2 and all Rusts still have Lem Fowler for these two titles.

Notes:

- BGR*2: Lem Fowler, pno

- BGR,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Lem Fowler -p

037 **LETHIA HILL** New York, Jan. 15, 1927
 Lethia Hill – voc;
 Porter Grainger - pno
 E-4388 Make Me Love You Voc unissued not on LP/CD
 E-4389 Prescription For The Blues Voc unissued not on LP/CD

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: not listed

- BGR*3,*4: Porter Grainger, p

038 **PORTER GRAINGER TRIO** New York, Feb. 07, 1927
 Instrumentation and personnel unknown
 E-4530/31W Ground Hog Blues Voc unissued not on LP/CD
 E-4532/33W Nuthin´ Don´t Bother Me Voc unissued not on LP/CD

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory: not listed

039 **LETHIA HILL** Porter Grainger´s Four New York, Feb. 17, 1927
 Lethia Hill – voc;
 instrumentation and personnel unknown
 Porter Grainger – pno
 80437 Cheatin´ Daddy OK unissued not on LP/CD

As no tests of this session seem to have survived, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: instrumentation unknown

- BGR*3,*4: instrumentation and personnel unknown

040 **DOLLY ROSS** New York, c. Mar. 21, 1927
 Dolly Ross – voc;
 Porter Grainger – pno
 E-22038 He Don´t Know (And I Can´t Make Him Understand) Br 7005, RST JPCD-1521-2

Howard Rye´s comment to the RST CD ‘Porter Grainger’ rightly says that Dolly Ross is a wonderful singer, but, as he adds, a complete mystery (or a pseudonym). Miss Ross owns a convincing blues voice and great performance. Porter Grainger changes over to a more blues-drenched style, but very nice and powerful.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger -p

- Rust*2: not listed

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger, pno

041 **DOLLY ROSS** New York, c. Mar. 22, 1927
 Dolly Ross – voc;
 unknown – alt;
 Porter Grainger – pno; unknown - chimes
 E-22064 Hootin' Owl Blues Br 7005, RST JPCD-1521-2

As before, great blues singing by Miss Ross, with fitting piano accompaniment, but little alto playing and even less chimes. Mr. Grainger's double-tempo part seems to be a bit out of the line.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger -p, unknown – alt; unknown - chimes
- Rust*2: not listed
- Rust*3,*4,*6: unknown -as; unknown -chimes; Porter Grainger, pno

042 **REV. J.C. BURNETT** New York, May 16, 1927
 Rev. J.C. Burnett – voc sermons and singing;
 Sisters Odette Jackson, Ethel Grainger – voc;
 Porter Grainger – pno, org
 144149-2 Jesus Of Nazareth, King Of The Jews Col 14225-D, Document DOCD-5557
 144150-3 This Thing Was Not Done In The Corner Col 14242-D, Document DOCD-5557
 144151-2 I Will Stay Here And Send The News In Town Col 14295-D, Document DOCD-5557

As religious music is not in my interest, I omitted to obtain a copy of Document DOCD-5557. I am thus unable to contribute any recognitions on this music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: Rev. J.C. Burnett – sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson – singing; unknown organ added
- BGR*3,*4: Rev. J.C. Burnett – sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson – singing; Porter Grainger -p -o

043 **MARGARET JOHNSON** New York, Sep. 08, 1927
 Margaret Johnson – voc;
 Bob Fuller – clt, sop;
 Porter Grainger – pno
 81424-B Stinging Bee Blues OK 8506, Document DOCD-5436
 81425-B Best Friend Blues OK 8506, Document DOCD-5436

Margaret Johnson sounds modest and human on these sides.

Positively Fuller and Grainger. But other than Mr. Grainger's tasteful and soft accompaniment, Fuller delivers a distasteful, un-fitting and un-swinging clarinet part.

Notes:

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Bob Fuller –cl; Porter Grainger -p
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Bob Fuller, clt; Porter Grainger, pno

044 **REV. J.C. BURNETT** New York, Sep. 21, 1927
 Rev. J.C. Burnett – voc sermons and singing;
 Sisters Odette Jackson, Ethel Grainger – voc;
 Porter Grainger – org
 144697 God's Judgement Upon The World - Part 1 Col unissued not on LP/CD
 144698-1 The Angel Done Gone Down Col 14261-D, Document DOCD-5557
 144699-2 Cry, Till Jesus Comes Col 14317-D, Document DOCD-5557
 144766-2 The Gambler's Doom Col 14261-D, Document DOCD-5558

As religious music is not in my interest, I omitted to obtain a copy of Document DOCD-5557. I am thus unable to contribute any recognitions on this music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: Rev. J.C. Burnett – sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson – singing; unknown organ
- BGR*3,*4: Rev. J.C. Burnett – sermons and singing; Ethel Grainger, Odette Jackson – singing; Porter Grainger -p -o

045 **BESSIE SMITH** New York, Sep. 27, 1927
 Bessie Smith – voc;
Porter Grainger – pno; **Lincoln M. Conaway** - gtr
 144796-3 Mean Old Bed Bug Blues Col 14250-D, Frog DGF 45
 144797-3 A Good Man Is Hard To Find Col 14250-D, Frog DGF 45

Bessie Smith and Porter Grainger had an earlier attempt to record two sides for Columbia on the 23rd April 1924 which, yet, remained unissued (session 017 above).

Bessie Smith just had engaged Grainger as new accompanist and their collaboration would last for about a year including the 'Mississippi Days' show for the TOBA circuit, and that notorious event at Carl Van Vechten's appartement in April 1928.

On these sides Grainger modestly only gives a retained chordal support behind guitarist Conaway on the first side, whereas he shows some varied pianistic performance parallel to the guitar part. Bessie decidedly is in great form on the these sides.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno; Lincoln M. Conaway, gtr
- Rust*3:

046 BESSIE SMITH Bessie Smith – voc;	New York,	Sep. 28, 1927
Ernest Elliott – alt; Porter Grainger – pno		
144800-3 Homeless Blues	Col 14260-D,	Frog DGF 45
144801-3 Looking For My Man Blues	Col 14569-D,	Frog DGF 45

It is so nice to have a secure anchor place from time to time to compare and judge. This coupling is one such, and the listener is asked to hear Elliott's sound, tone, vibrato, and phrasing and then compare with any recording listed above and below. Cast iron Elliott here!

Porter Grainger is accompanying in his light Stride manner, giving good rhythm and drive. The accompanists are miles apart in musical taste. Yet, Bessie delivers a good performance.

Notes:

- E. Brooks, *The Bessie Smith Companion* p.130: "But in spite of her (Bessie Smith – KBR) sincerity, the performance is blighted by the all pervading non-jazz alto saxophone. Ernest Elliott's lack of empathy is epitomised by his quotations from 'Home, Sweet Home' which in this context are an affront to Bessie's veracity. Porter Grainger withers in the enervating atmosphere."

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ernest Elliott –as; Porter Grainger –p

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Ernest Elliott, as; Porter Grainger, p

047 PORTER GRAINGER (The Singin' Piano Man) Porter Grainger – voc, pno	New York,	c. Oct. 1927
81512-B Nothin' But A Double Barrel Shot-Gun	OK 8516	not on LP/CD
81513-B Song From A Cotton Field	OK 8516	not on LP/CD

As this session seems to be un-reissued on LP/CD, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- Carey, *McCarthy, Jazz Directory Vol.4: Porter Grainger, p, vcl*

048 PORTER GRAINGER (The Singin' Piano Man) Porter Grainger – voc, pno	New York,	Dec. 30, 1927
145236-1 He's Gone Home (Dedicated to the late Tiger Flowers)	Col 14269,	not on LP/CD
145238-3 I Wonder What This New Year's Gonna Bring To Me	Col 14269,	not on LP/CD

As this session seems to be un-reissued on LP/CD, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- Carey, *McCarthy, Jazz Directory Vol.4: Porter Grainger, p, vcl*

- BGR*2

049 LIZZIE MILES Lizzie Miles – voc;	New York,	Jan. 04, 1928
Porter Grainger - pno		
7708-2 Shootin' Star Blues	Ban 7025,	Document DOCD-5459
7709-2 Lonesome Ghost Blues	Ban 7048,	Document DOCD-5459
7710-2 If You Can't Control Your Man	Ban 7048,	Document DOCD-5459

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger - pno

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger - p

050 BESSIE SMITH Bessie Smith – voc;	New York,	Feb. 16, 1928
Ernest Elliott, Bob Fuller – clt;		
Porter Grainger – pno		
145650-2 I'd Rather Be Dead And Buried In My Grave	Col 14304-D,	Frog DGF 45
145651 Hit Me In The Nose Blues	Col unissued	not on LP/CD

Let me guess: it's Elliott in the first clarinet part here, easily recognisable in the introduction, Fuller is on third/upper part. Mercy has the clarinetists contempt themselves with contributing a pre-set harmonic accompaniment.

Porter Grainger might have suffered from the awfully tasteless clarinetists, Elliott being the epitome, but Fuller being surprisingly able at times to play bluesy/jazzy when wanted. But Bessie is great again and really moving.

May the clarinetists have been the cause to reject the second title recorded?

Notes:

- E. Brooks, *The Bessie Smith Companion* p.135: "Presumably the dire high-register yelpings of the clarinets in the introduction are intended as references to Bessie's early 'fox' and 'dog' similes but they do not augur well and true to form, Elliott and Fuller proceed to trot out a pack of enervating harmonic clichés. Luckily however, after the introduction they confine themselves to background noises in the chalumeau register."

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ernest Elliott, Bob Fuller –cl; Porter Grainger –p

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Ernest Elliott, Bob Fuller, cl; Porter Grainger, p

051 BESSIE SMITH Bessie Smith – voc;	New York,	Mar. 19, 1928
Abraham Wheat – clt, sop; Bob Fuller – clt;		
Porter Grainger – pno		

145783-2	Spider Man Blues	Col 14324-D,	Frog DGF 45
145784	Tombstone Blues	Col unissued	not on LP/CD

Personnel as listed and documented in the Columbia files.

Strong and dominant Bessie singing the blues, accompanied again by a reed duet including Bob Fuller in acceptable mode, yet with his obtrusively fast and narrow vibrato, and an obscure soprano sax player Abraham Wheat whose only appearance on record this is. Mr. Grainger adds a nice and tasteful but modest piano part to the proceedings.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Abraham Wheat, clt, sop; Bob Fuller, clt; Porter Grainger, pno.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Abraham Wheat -cl -ss; Bob Fuller -cl; Porter Grainger -p
- Columbia files: Bob Fuller, Abraham Wheat, clts; Porter Grainger, p.

052	BESSIE SMITH	New York,	Mar. 20, 1928
Bessie Smith – voc;			
Charlie Green – tbn;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
145785-3	Empty Bed Blues – Part 1	Col 14312-D,	Frog DGF 45
145786-1	Empty Bed Blues – Part 2	Col 14312-D,	Frog DGF 45
145787-3	Put It Right Here (Or Keep It Out There)	Col 14324-D,	Frog DGF 45

Here we probably have the epitome of Bessie Smith's co-operation with Charlie Green. Green is a complete master of trombone playing, having absolute control over his instrument, great chops and a beautiful tone. In 'Empty Bed Blues – Part 1' he plays his horn open – without mutes. In Part 2 of this title he uses a straight-mute which makes his tone sharper and stringent. Composer Porter Grainger accompanies in a moderate stride-style.

Notes:

- D. Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Files: Charlie Green, tbn; Porter Grainger, p.
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Charlie Green, tbn; Porter Grainger, p.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Charlie Green, tb; Porter Grainger, p.

053	CLINT JONES	New York,	May 17, 1928
Clint Jones – voc;			
unknown – vln;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
146303-2	Ramona	Col 14322-D,	RST JPCD-1521-2
146304-3	Right Or Wrong	Col 14322-D,	RST JPCD-1521-2

I did not know that 'Ramona' is such an old song. I remember it from my youth in the 1950s as a saccharine-sweet trash song in Germany. Howard Rye should have heard the German versions before writing so negatively about this side in the CD-booklet. OK, the singer sings a pop tune of the time, and has a fine violinist accompanying him, together with Grainger probably playing from a score. And this all in 3/4 time. It certainly is not jazz, but it is one of Mr. Grainger's recordings. Just like everybody, he had to earn his living. The second side has another song of the time with partly improvised accompaniment by violin and piano. It's all not so bad as long as the singer does not start to yodel!

But I would like to know the violinist's name!

Notes:

- D. Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Files: violin and piano accomp.
- BGR*2,*3,*4: unknown, vln; Porter Grainger, p.
- Rust *3,*4,*6: not listed

054	CLINT JONES	New York,	Jun. 11, 1928
Clint Jones – voc;			
Porter Grainger – pno			
400779-A	Mississippi Woman Blues	OK 8587,	RST JPCD-1521-2
400780-A	Blue Valley Blues	OK 8587,	RST JPCD-1521-2

Nice and retained accompaniment by Porter Grainger in his modest Stride style with sympathetic understanding. Only that Mr. Jones spoils his own attempts with this awful yodelling. It, yet, may cover his incapability to delve into blues spheres.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, p.
- Rust *3,*4,*6: not listed

055	BESSIE SMITH	New York,	Aug. 24, 1928
Bessie Smith – voc;			
Joe Williams – tbn (6); Bob Fuller – clt, sop (4),ten (3,5,6); Ernest Elliott – clt, alt (3,4,5);			
Porter Grainger – pno			
146887-2	Yes Indeed He Do	Col 14354-D,	Frog DGF 45
146888-2	Devil's Gonna Get You	Col 14354-D,	Frog DGF 45
146889-3	You Ought To Be Ashamed	Col 14399-D,	Frog DGF 45
146893-2	Washwoman's Blues	Col 14375-D,	Frog DGF 45
146894-2	Slow And Easy Man	Col 14384-D,	Frog DGF 46
146895-1	Poor Man's Blues	Col 14399-D,	Frog DGF 46

On 'Yes Indeed He Do' we hear the reed men both on clarinets, with Elliott playing first part in the intro, then leaving the field open for Fuller, who bears most of the following accompaniment with his fine and warm clarinet. Only at the end do we hear both musicians together

again, difficult to discriminate. Judging from tone, loudness and vibrato, Elliott seems to lead the ensemble of 'Devil's Gonna Get You' on first clarinet throughout, but this again is difficult to discriminate. The rudimental arrangements seem to come from P. Grainger. On 'You Ought To Be Ashamed' it is very obvious from tone, vibrato and smears that Elliott plays the alto sax and Fuller the tenor. On "Washwoman's Blues" we hear Elliott again on alto, Fuller on soprano. Elliott with his antiquated time and phrasing and Fuller as the much better jazz man on soprano, unlisted up to now! 'Slow And Easy Man' has Elliott on alto again and Fuller on tenor. Fuller sometimes plays very high, which might lead to a sound of seemingly two altos. This is apparent here. 'Poor Man's Blues' has – apart from the great but unsung Joe Williams on trombone – Bob Fuller on tenor, again sometimes very high, and Elliott on clarinet.

Throughout my whole investigation on Ernest Elliott, I have nowhere found Ernest Elliott to actually play tenor sax. This session again is proof to this fact!

Porter Grainger accompanies expertly in his un-obtrusive way and his moderate Stride style. Also, he is the composer of the first three titles recorded at this session.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography: Ernest Elliott, Bob Fuller (s); Porter Grainger (p)*
- Rust*3: Bob Fuller –cl-as; Ernest Elliott –cl –as –ts; Porter Grainger –p; with Joe Williams –tb as noted (6)
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Bob Fuller, clt,alt; Ernest Elliott, clt,alt,ten; Porter Grainger, pno; with Joe Williams, tb
- Rust*4,*6: Bob Fuller –cl-as; Ernest Elliott –cl –as –ts; Porter Grainger –p; with Joe Williams –tb added
- E. Brooks, *The Bessie Smith Companion p.143*: 1st title: "the trouble with the reeds is that although aiming for a New Orleans style polyphony, they can manage only a chaotic, pitch-doubling heterophony. The instrumental chorus is typical – they not only get in each other's way but sound alike too, in spite of the alternative instruments available at the session." 2nd title: "The discographies show Bob Fuller playing clarinet and alto saxophone and Ernest Elliott clarinet, alto and tenor saxophones at this session; it is a reflection of their lack-lustre performance that no one has bothered to identify which instruments are used on which sides."
- *ibid p.144*: 3rd title: "The chord sequence is uninspiring, the words and Bessie's line not varied enough, the reeds sound muddy with the tenor saxophone often out of tune and the piano languishes. ... Here with the oily timbre of the clarinet absent, it takes little effort to identify the reeds as tenor (Ernest Elliott) and alto (Bob Fuller) saxophones."
- *ibid p. 145*: 5th title: "But nothing she (Bessie! – KBR) can do in any way influences the reeds to abandon their worn-out phrases full of pitch and timbre collisions. It is true ion the instrumental chorus, the arranged lines prevent pitch collision but there it is their rapid vibratos and considerable imprecision which offends. Porter Grainger seems to have moved to another room."
- *ibid. p. 146*: 6th title: "... and a considerable amount of the credit must go to Joe Williams whose fine trombone has the vital effect of pushing the reeds into a subordinate role, one they are capable of coping with." "Even the reeds, relieved of their melodic and antiphonal duties are not unpleasing; their organ-like harmony, richer now, hangs as a stable backdrop in front of which Bessie and Joe Williams display their art. Williams can now be seen the be the flux necessary to join effectively the disparate talents of Bessie and the reeds. Not that the are blameless – that the performance falls short of the higher quality is due entirely to the saxophone's uncertain harmonies behind Bessie's first words and the unobtrusive tonguing of both reeds in the second chorus."

056 **BESSIE SMITH**

Bessie Smith – voc;

Joe Williams – tbn;

Porter Grainger – pno

146896-2 Please Help Me Get Him Off My Mind

146897-3 Me And My Gin

New York,

Aug. 25, 1928

Col 14375-D,

Frog DGF 46

Col 14384-D,

Frog DGF 46

Here, Williams is Bessie's sole accompaniment, and he plays strong and urgent his part in the call-and-response manner stated by Bessie Smith. He has a strong, sharp and expressive sound on his trombone, with slight but distinct growl sounds underlining his dramatic performance.

Porter Grainger on piano is much busier here than on the preceding session, where he was retaining because of the many musical voices present.

Notes:

- Mahony, *Columbia 13/14000-D Series: trombone and piano acc.*
- E. Brooks, *The Bessie Smith Companion p. 150*: "Although Joe Williams sometimes plays phrases identical to those in the previous number (Please Help Me Get Him Off My Mind – KBR), he sounds more at home with this lighter-weight material. And for the first time he has the chance to show us if he has a sense of humour. The lyrics allow Bessie to take a detached view of her problem: they contain an element of self-awareness sometimes bordering upon face. But whilst Williams' work here is fine and congruous with much of Bessie's mood, he does not respond to the admittedly few opportunities for humour given to him. His reply to Bessie's 'I'll fight the Army, Navy, just me and my gin' at the end of the second chorus makes no reference to the hyperbole."
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Joe Williams, tbn; Porter Grainger, pno
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Joe Williams -tb; Porter Grainger -p

057 **OZIE McPHERSON**

Ozie Ware – voc;

Porter Grainger – pno

407 Dese Men Don't Mean You No Good – Part 1

408 Dese Men Don't Mean You No Good – Part 2

New York,

Jan. 03, 1929

Vic unissued (test)

not on LP/CD

Vic unissued (test)

not on LP/CD

As the tests of this session do not seem to be issued on LP/CD, nothing can be said about the music.

Notes:

- BGR*2: not listed
- BGR*3: Ozie Ware, v; acc Porter Grainger, p
- BGR*4: Ozie Ware, v; acc Porter Grainger, p unissued trial recording
- Rust*3,*4: not listed
- Rust*6: Porter Grainger, p

058 **CLARA SMITH**

Clara Smith – voc;

Joe Williams - tbn; Porter Grainger - pno

New York,

Jan. 26, 1929

147889-2	Daddy Don't Put That Thing On Me Blues	Col 14398-D,	Document DOCD-5368
147890-3	It's Tight Like That	Col 14398-D,	Document DOCD-5368

The pianist seems to be Porter Grainger as assumed by others.

But as for my knowledge of Charlie Green: this trombonist here is somebody else. Green is much more cultivated at this time of recording. Being trombonist of the Henderson band, he possessed a well-founded technique with a deeply rooted full tone and a middle vibrato. Our man here has a much shallower tone and less technique, but he certainly tries to copy Charlie Green with his gruff blues style. And he certainly is not so far from his model. But he is rougher and uses more growl tones. Thus, I'd prefer to identify this player as the much under-rated Joe Williams, known from a few Bessie Smith sides of August 1928. He sounds more "primitive" than Green, but uses the same style. No wonder that he was misidentified as Charlie Green for many years.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: trombone and piano acc.
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: Charlie Green, tbn; poss Porter Grainger, pno
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Charlie Green -tb; ?Porter Grainger -p

059	ADA BROWN	New York,	May 02, 1929
	Ada Brown – voc;		
	Porter Grainger – pno		
401848-B	Down Home Dance	OK 8694,	RST JPCD-1521-2
401849-A	Crazy 'Bout My Lollypop	OK 8694,	RST JPCD-1521-2

Ada Brown is the singer accompanied by Fats Waller's band in the 'Stormy Weather' movie starring Lena Horn and 'Bojangles' Robinson, together with Cab Calloway and his great band, of about ten years later. Porter Grainger really is coming out of his shell here, showing his strong ragtime influence. His sensitivity in accompaniment and support of the singer is remarkable and shows his great but little appreciated abilities.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger, pno
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

060	MEMPHIS JAZZERS	New York,	Nov. 1929
	Walter Bennett – tpt voc (2); Alberto Socarras – alt, clt (2); Walter Edwards – clt, alt;		
	Porter Grainger – pno		
3741-A	Don't Know And Don't Care	GG 1797,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8038
4742-B	Ev'rybody Dance	GG 1816,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8038
4743-B	Miss Golden Brown	GG 1805,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8038
4744-A	In Harlem's Araby	GG 1804,	not on LP/CD
4744-B	In Harlem's Araby	GG 1804,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

The inclusion of this and the following session may come as a surprise to everybody interested in the recordings of classic jazz in New York in the twenties, even more so to people interested in the Grey Gull group of recordings. For all these years collectors have assembled dates and personnels on classic jazz recordings since the late thirties, much has been suspected of who is playing here. Rust in his early years suggested no one less than King Oliver as trumpet player here, later changing his mind as to Mike Mosiello on trumpet - this for a comparison! - and when reading LP or CD cover text on these sessions, the reader is astonished at how these assumptions all fit together. On the history of placing and classifying these two sessions I would like to point out to Laurens Hertzdahl's most interesting article in VJM (www.vjm.biz/newpage4.htm), which nevertheless does not bring us further on except for the fact, that Mosiello is at least very questionable! Interestingly Mr. Hertzdahl says: "Some collectors attribute the trumpet playing to Louis Metcalf who recorded on other Grey Gull sessions (e.g. The Wabash Trio)." They are exactly right, only, that Metcalf is not on the Wabashes, but Bennett. It certainly is a severe mistake to rely on RUST in all his editions and take it for granted when trying to find out personnels of the early period of jazz. This is not to diminish his efforts and his work!

Take numbering after Rust 6* again.

- when listening to my Bennett compilations it happened, that I immediately afterwards by chance had the Memphis Jazzers on my CD player, and when listening to these titles, it dawned on me, that I heard very familiar trumpet phrasing, which I had just heard before. And after repeated listening I, for my part, became certain that this was Walter Bennett on trumpet here. It is the same tone, vibrato, phrasing and time as before. Only that on these two sessions Bennett also plays muted trumpet, which may irritate the listener. Maybe he had a good connection with the Grey Gull people after the Wabash and Moonlight recordings? After all, what a better compliment can you think of than having him taken for King Oliver by Rust?!

Assigning the Memphis Jazzers to Walter Bennett, we have a completely new direction as to the reed players! First: forget Sannella. And second: we hear two different reed players, one playing mostly clarinet, the other one mostly alto sax.

- The clarinetist, who also doubles on alto (or ten?) on *Miss Golden Brown* chorus 1, owns a rather harsh tone and a simple phrasing. I think to hear traces of Caribbean tone scales as on the Houdinis. So, Walter Edwards of the Houdinis could be a possibility here, as obviously he was part of a group of Caribbean musicians residing in New York, taking part in recording sessions by Houdini and Sam Manning. Yet, I certainly cannot be sure and would like to invite interested collectors/ musicians to compare and let me know their conclusions!

- The alto player has knowledge of - for the time - advanced harmonies and seems to be much more technically accomplished than the clarinetist. He plays all the alto solos (and perhaps the low toned clarinet solo on *Ev'rybody Dance*). I see the possibility, that this man is Alberto Socarras, who also plays alto on the *Swamplanders' Big Ben*, and I think to hear his characteristic wooden and not swinging time. Instrumental technique and accomplishment and harmonic knowledge would be fitting to Socarras. As before, please, listen and let me know your conclusions! There certainly could be a connection to W. Edwards and other Caribbean musicians, as Socarras came from Cuba.

- As nobody knows the piano player, it has been the rule to list Porter Grainger because he is listed as composer of all four titles recorded at this session. Hertzdahl writes: "*The piano style is confident and strong, suggestive of Grainger's known style (hear him accompanying Ethel Waters on her 1924 Vocalion recording of Pleasure Mad or accompanying Lena Wilson on her Victor recording of 'Tain't Nobody's Business If I Do' to get a good idea of his abilities)*". I have nothing to add.

For sceptics: my assumptions and suggestions re the reed players may be wrong, but they at least are much nearer the truth than anything listed before. If they should not be the real thing, I nevertheless do not feel ashamed!

Notes:

- Rust*2: Mike Mosiello (tpt); Andy Sanella (clt, alt); unknown (alt); Porter Grainger (?) (pno); unknown (Negro?) (vcl).
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Mike Mosiello -t; Andy Sanella -cl -as; unknown -as;?Porter Grainger -p (composer of all four numbers recorded at this session); unknown negro -v.

Tunes:

3741-A Don't Know And Don't Care key of Eb Grey Gull
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 28 bars AB alt (AS))(Chorus 2 tpt)(Chorus 3 clt (WE)/ ens)
 4742-B Ev'rybody Dance key of Eb Grey Gull
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 1 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 16 bars AA' ens)(Chorus 2 alt (AS))(Verse 2 ens)(Chorus 3 clt (WE))(Chorus 4 voc (WB?))(Chorus 5 ens)(Coda 4 bars ens)
 4743-B Miss Golden Brown key of F Grey Gull
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA saxes)(Chorus 2 tpt 16 bars / alt (AS) 16 bars)(alt. Chorus 1 12 bars blues tpt)(alt. Chorus 2 12 bars clt (WE))(Chorus 3 32 bars ens)
 4744-A In Harlem's Araby pres key of Eb/Cm Grey Gull
 listed by RUST, but not inspected. (exists in possession of Mr. Hertzdahl). Presumably same as 4744-B
 4744-B In Harlem's Araby key of Eb / Cm Grey Gull
 (Intro 4 bars pno)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 16 bars AA alt (AS))(Chorus 2 tpt)(alt. Chorus 1 16 bars minor clt (WE))(alt. Chorus 2 clt (WE))Vamp 4 bars pno)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 3 alt (AS))(Chorus 4 tpt 8 bars / ens 8 bars)

061 LIZZIE MILES

New York, Feb. 27, 1930

Lizzie Miles – voc;

Porter Grainger – pno; Teddy Bunn – gtr; George Pops Foster - sbs

58676-1	The Man I Got Ain't The Man I Want	Vic 23281,	Document DOCD-5460
58677-	Yellow Dog Gal Blues	Cam CDN-147 (LP),	Doc. DOCD-5460
58678-2	Too Slow Blues	Vic 23298 uniss.,	Doc. DOCD-5666
58679-1	Done Threw The Key Away	Vic 23306,	Document DOCD-1012

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Porter Grainger – pno; Teddy Bunn -gtr; Pops Foster -sbs
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger – p; Teddy Bunn -g; Pops Foster -sb
 - B. Rust, The Victor Master Book Vol. 2: Porter Grainger – p; Teddy Bunn -g; George Foster -sb

062 BETTY KASHMAN

New York, Feb. 26, 1932

Betty Kashman – voc;

Porter Grainger – pno

405148-B	Hot Hot Mama (Looking For A Fire-Proof Man)	OK 8942	not on LP/CD ?
405149-B	Hoochie Miss Lou	OK 8942	not on LP/CD ?

These sides do not seem to be reissued. Comment is impossible.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Porter Grainger -p

063 VICTORIA SPIVEY

New York, Mar. 12, 1937

Victoria Spivey – voc;

(Sidney De Paris) – tpt;

Garvin Bushell – alt, clt; Charlie Holmes – alt; unknown – ten;

Porter Grainger or Luis Russell – pno; George Pops Foster – sbs

20793-1	One Hour Mama	Voc 0350,	Document DOCD-53195
20794-1	Harlem Susie-Kue	Voc uniss on 78,	Document DOCD-53195
20794-2	Harlem Susie-Kue	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD
20795-1	Give It To Him	Voc uniss on 78,	Document DOCD-53195
20795-2	Give It To Him	Voc uniss on 78,	Document DOCD-53195
20796-1	Got The Blues So Bad	Voc 0350,	Document DOCD-53195

Against the personnel list provided by Tucker/Bushell in 'Jazz from the Beginning', there certainly is no drummer on this session. Sidney de Paris is a good choice in my eyes/ears – but not Henry Red Allen! - Charlie Holmes might well be the alto soloist, the more so as he himself confirmed his presence. The tenorist only plays scores. Luis Russel is a possibility, Pops Foster as well. But the clarinetist decidedly is not Albert Nicholas in my ears, although I would not have assumed Bushell on clarinet here extemporaneously and intuitively. But: it astonishes that there is so little clarinet played while the saxophone section sounds rather voluminous. This would certainly mean that the clarinetist – whoever he may be – plays alto in the first instance. Interestingly, Bushell did not comment on this session, although he could have done so when being confronted with a personnel containing his name. Thus, we may assume that he remembered having been on the session, but not remembered anything at all of this session.

But: who is the piano player? After all we have recognised compiling this list, there is nothing heard here of Porter Grainger's style on these sides. The pianist does nothing but play all four beats per bar with his both hands in a very retained manner. This might have been Russell's style when playing in his band. It might as well be Porter Grainger's way to play his part in a band of this kind, just as he did in his 'Harmony Hounds' recordings of 1925 (sessions 023, 024, 025 above).

Notes:

- BGR*2: unknown, tpt; unknown, clt; unknown, alt; unknown, ten; unknown, pno; unknown, sbs.

- BGR*3,*4: Henry Allen, t; Albert Nicholas, cl; Charlie Holmes, as; unknown, ts; Luis Russell, p; Pops Foster, sb.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: unknown -t; unknown -cl; unknown -as; unknown -ts; unknown -p; unknown -sb
- Will Warner, covertext to Merritt 13-14 (LP): "Red Allen was now between jobs when this session took place. He had just left the Mills Blue Rhythm Band and would shortly rejoin Luis Russell's Orchestra to back Louis Armstrong. Charlie Holmes recently confirmed this session. Henry Allen, t; Albert Nicholas, cl; Charlie Holmes, as; unknown, ts; Luis Russell, p; Pops Foster, sb, - Len Kunstadt, Editor of "Record Research" magazine and producer of the "Spivey" label, has this comment about this session: "No, that's not Red (Allen - KBR) on Victoria's March 12th, 1937 session. He claims the following personnel: Charlie Johnson group with Sidney de Paris, Garvin Bushell, Porter Grainger + unknown bass and drums. Our (W. Warner - KBR) Comment: When Charlie Holmes was interviewed, he recalled this session. He remembered that it was one with difficulty and "a lot of mistakes were made." (This would account for 20794/20795 not being released.) Frank Driggs has listened, feels it is Red (Allen - KBR), and most definitely by the Luis Russell Band."
- F. Hoffmann, The Henry "Red" Allen & J.C. Higginbotham Collection, Part 1b, p. 238: poss ?Red Allen (t); poss ?Albert Nicholas (cl); poss ?Charlie Holmes (as, ts); poss Luis Russell (p); poss Pops Foster (b). "I personally mean: the presence of Albert Nicholas is very doubtful."
- Document DOCD-5319 booklet text: Henry Allen, tp; Albert Nicholas, cl; Charlie Holmes, as/ ts; Luis Russell, pno; Pops Foster, sb
- Bushell/Tucker, Jazz from the Beginning, p. 165: Sidney de Paris, t; Garvin Bushell, cl; unknown, as; unknown, ts; Porter Grainger, p; unknown, sb; Wilbert Kirk, d. No comment on this session personnel in the G. Bushell discography!

K. - B. Rau
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