

THE RECORDINGS OF CHARLIE IRVIS

An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

IRVIS, Charlie, trombone born: New York City, c. 1899; died: New York City, c. 1939
Brother of pianist Gibbie Irvis. Began playing in boy's band with Earle Howard, Bubber Miley, etc. With Lucille Hegamin's Blue Flame Syncopators (1920-21), then with Willie 'The Lion' Smith at Capitole Palace. Joined the Washingtonians (Duke Ellington, Elmer Snowden) in early 1924 (replacing John Anderson), with Duke Ellington and Elmer Snowden (1925-26). During the 1920s took part in many Clarence Williams recording sessions. With Charlie Johnson (1927-28), then toured with Jelly Roll Morton (1929-30), member of Bubber Miley's Band (1931). (John Chilton, Who's Who of Jazz)

With Chick Webb and his Orchestra in 1931 (band-photo in booklet to Mosaic MD8-252)

IRVIS, Charlie (Charles) Trombonist (b. ?New York, c. 1899; d ?New York, c. 1939)
He first played in a boy's band with Bubber Miley and then worked in New York with Lucille Hegamin and Willie "The Lion" Smith. In 1924 he joined the Washingtonians, then under the direction of Elmer Snowden, and remained with the band after Duke Ellington took over its leadership. From 1923 to 1927 he also recorded regularly as a member of Clarence Williams' ensembles, accompanying classic blues singers. After leaving Ellington in 1926 he played with Charlie Johnson (1927 – 1928), Jelly Roll Morton (1929 – 1930), and Miley (1931). Irvis was the first of Ellington's trombonists to make use of the growl and plunger-mute technique. His few recordings with the group do not include work in this style, however, and those he made with Fats Waller and Thomas Morris in 1927 probably give a better impression of his contribution to Ellington's band. (B. Kernfeld, The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz)

STYLISTICS

STYLE

Irvis' style was above all a legato style and he used staccato notes only at the beginning of a phrase; exceptions to this statement might certainly be found on records, but as a rule he played legato with strong linear horizontal phrases and melody. His tone was rather straight, with little vibrato, with a rather antiquated punctuated phrasing. His legato style was in decline on his later recordings of the late 1920s.

TONE

His tone was rather straight, sharp and shallow, with little vibrato.

VIBRATO

He surprisingly – for the time - did not use much vibrato, and if he did it was slow and broad.

TIME

As Irvis did not play in a staccato-manner, his time might not have been very exact and on-the-beat, but he always played forward and in time.

PHRASING

Used a rather antiquated punctuated phrasing in his early days (1920 – 1925).

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

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.

CHARLIE IRVIS

001	LUCILLE HEGAMIN her Blue Flame Syncopators	New York,	c. Feb. 1921
	Lucille Hegamin – voc;		
	Wesley Johnson – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;		
	unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms;		
	Bill Hegamin – pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; George Barber – dms		
18016-1	Arkansas Blues	Arto 9053,	Document DOCD-5419
18016-2	Arkansas Blues	Arto 9053,	Document DOCD-5573
18017-1	I'll Be Good But I'll Be Lonesome	Arto 9053,	Document DOCD-5419
18017-2	I'll Be Good But I'll Be Lonesome	Arto 9053,	Document DOCD-1011

For all the following Lucille Hegamin sessions it has to be stated that Irvis' presence is listed in the discos, but cannot be identified musically, as all accompaniments of the Blue Flame Syncopators are played from written scores and do not enable the trombonist to play ad-lib and in his individual style. The identification of the musicians of these sessions is based on the Lucille Hegamin band photo in Record Research 39-7 or Charters/Kunstadt, *Jazz, A History of the New York Scene*, p. 99.

This second Hegamin recording session shows a couple of differences from the first session. Rust*6 claims the personnel to be possibly the same as for the preceding session. This is in contradiction to Hegamin's statement that she did not record with her first accompanying band again (RR 39 p. 6). Following her statement and the definite presence of an accomplished C-melody-sax player – probably Harvey Boone as on the band photo (see RR 39-7 or Charters/Kunstadt, *Jazz, A History of the New York Scene*, p.99) - I assume this personnel mostly identical to the subsequent sessions.

This would deduce that we probably have the afore-mentioned Wesley Johnson on cnt (he may be the cornettist on the Hegamin band photo in RR 39-7) again – as continuously until October 1921, when Miss Hegamin started her 'Shuffle Along' engagement. Obviously, he is given some opportunity to play some ad-lib parts here what makes him sound a bit relaxed. The trombonist is confined to play background, being heard in some prominent arranged spots, only. But he owns a fine and soft tone, yet impossible to be definitely identified as Charlie Irvis.

The clarinetist presents some very strange chirping devices in his ad-lib parts, but he is a fine accomplished musician and very much to the fore.

On the second title we hear a prominent sax player who performs a straight rendition of the melody as written. This certainly points to a C-melody-sax, since these instruments were intended to enable reed players to play melody sheets without the necessity to transpose on the spot. This may be the first appearance of the later frequently used Harvey Boone, who is pictured with his C-melody-sax on the first Hegamin band photo (see RR 39-7 or Charters/Kunstadt, *Jazz, A History of the New York Scene*, p.99).

On piano we probably have Bill Hegamin, Lucille's husband at the time, following her own testimony. Leaves the brass bass player and the drummer, whose names we know from Miss Hegamin's reminiscences.

For Hegamin's second recording session Björn Englund proposed the Jimmy Wade musicians for her accompaniment (see below), yet, the sound does not support this assumption. But in fact, Wade stayed with Hegamin for about two years from 1915 on, and later for an undefined short period in mid-to-late 1922, or perhaps even later when the Wade band held a one-year-long engagement at the Club Alabam in Harlem 1926/7 (see below). Christopher Hillman in his very interesting and suggestive 'Chicago Swingers' does not mention any connection between Wade and his men – in particular Arnett Nelson – and Lucille Hegamin!

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: Harris' Blues and Jazz Seven: Wesley Johnson (tpt); Jan Reeve (tbn); Clarence Harris (sax); Wilson Kyer (pno); Bob Escudero (tu); Kaiser Marshall (dms).*

- BGR*2, *3: possibly: *Harris' Blues and Jazz Seven: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Jim Reeve, tbn; unknown, clt; Clarence Harris, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; Kaiser Marshall, dms.*

- BGR*4: *Wesley Johnson, tpt; Jim Reeve, tbn; unknown, clt; Clarence Harris, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; Kaiser Marshall, dms.*

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Possibly: *Wesley Johnson -t; Jim Reeve -tb; Clarence Harris -as; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb; Kaiser Marshall -d.*

- RR 39: "By June 1921 Lucille Hegamin was first in having her recorded version of 'Arkansas Blues' (Arto) on the market. It was a great hit for her. This blues was prolifically recorded by many for records and music rolls. ... Lucille's version found its way on to Black Swan, Banner, Puritan and other labels. Such was its popularity that these companies were buying up the masters in order to issue it on their respective labels. This formula seemed to follow suit on many of L.H.'s other Arto recordings. The prestige received from her Arto recordings made her a household name."

- Storyville 56 p. 55/6: Article by R. Gulliver "Jimmy Wade": "The earliest professional references date from 1915 when he (Wade) was engaged by pianist Bill Hegamin to join the newly formed accompaniment group for Lucille Hegamin, "The Blue Flame Syncopators". With them he toured the mid-west through to Seattle, Washington, where they stayed for almost two years." "Jimmy's wife of later times, Mrs. Marie Clemons, states that he (Wade) played overseas with a band during World War I and that this later qualified him for a grave monument. This suggests that he was drafted into the army for at least 1918, and would thus disprove that he was continually with Lucille Hegamin until 1922, as has been previously published. However, he and Bill Dover have been noted as members of the Blue Flame

Syncopators during their time in New York, although Mrs. Clemons does not think it as early as 1920, when Lucille first arrived and recorded. An article in the *Melody Maker* (25 August 1956) lists Wade, Johnny Dunn, tpts; Bill Dover, Herb Flemming, -- Page, tbns; Lonnie Williams, te; Cecil Smith, reeds/tapdancer; Hegamin or Cyril Fullerton, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo; George Barber, Kaiser Marshall, dms. Strangely, discographies list few of these men, preferring the Harlem regulars of the period." "Bill Hegamin's fighting with his wife prior to their divorce in 1923 disrupted the band so both Wade and Dover returned to Chicago where Jimmy was offered the opportunity to gather a band for the "House That Jack Built" run by Albert Bouche. This was, I (Gulliver!) believe, in mid-to late-1922." - *VJM* 140 p.12: Björn Englund in his "Additions and Corrections to Jazz and Ragtime Records 1897 – 1942 (vulgo: Rust*6!) lists: "Acc Jimmy Wade t / William Dover tb / Arnett Nelson cl, rest unknown." Source unknown. On request B. Englund states that he is not able to name his source, but that it may have been the Record Research team's internal memo papers which were on his disposal many years ago.

Discernible differences of takes:

- 18016-1: first note (eb) of clarinet break in coda is started slightly before the beat (the clt breaks in this title are obviously written out and therefore almost identical!)
- 18016-2: first note (eb) of clarinet break in coda is started on the beat (the clt breaks in this title are obviously written out and therefore almost identical!)
- 18017-1: L.H. sings 8 bars after 16-bar instrumental part (12-bar chorus and 4-bar vamp), followed by 2 x 16-bar vocal (no C-melody-sax solo here!)
- 18017-2: L.H. sings 8 bars after 16-bar instrumental part (12-bar chorus and 4-bar vamp), followed by 16-bar C-melody-sax Solo (did L.H. forget the words?) and L.H. 16-bar vocal

002 **LUCILLE HEGAMIN** her Blue Flame Syncopators New York, c. Mar. 1921
 Lucille Hegamin – voc;
 Wesley Johnson – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
 unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms;
 Bill Hegamin - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; George Barber – dms
 He's My Man (You'd Better Leave Him Alone) Arto 9058, Document DOCD-5419
 Mama Whip! Mama Spank! (If Her Daddy Don't Come Home) Arto 9058, Document DOCD-5419

Again, the band mostly play written scores for Miss Hegamin's accompaniment. Therefore, individual traces of the musicians are scarce and hard to identify, if existent at all. But the musicians seem to be the same as in the preceding session, which does not correspond to the first session as assumed by Rust and BGR. And there is no violin on these sides.

The names of Seymour Irick, Herb Flemming and Maude Jones as listed in Rust*6 probably are too early here when considering that these men belonged to Lucille Hegamin's accompanying band in November 1921.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: Harris' Blues and Jazz Seven: Wesley Johnson (tpt); Jan Reevy (tbn); Clarence Harris (sax); Wilson Kyer (pno); Bob Escudero (tu); Kaiser Marshall (dms).*
- BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvey Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some.
- BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.
- BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown, d.
- Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.
- Rust*4,*6: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if used; Frank Robinson -d if used.
- E. Biagioli, *Herb Flemming p.15*: "John Chilton thinks that he (Flemming – KBR) made his jazz-record debut in late 1921 with Johnny Dunn. This is probably not correct, since Brian Rust's most recent discography (Rust*3 – KBR) (contrarily to the somewhat older edition of the blues discography by Godrich & Dixon (BGR*2? – KBR)) names Herb as the trombonist for the recording sessions by blues singer Lucille Hegamin from c. March 1921 on.

003 **DAISY MARTIN** Five Jazz Bell Hops New York, Mar./ Apr. 1921
 Daisy Martin – voc;
 Gus Aiken – tpt; Charlie Irvis or Jake Frazier – tbn;
 Garvin Bushell – clt; unknown – ten;
 Dude Finley – pno; unknown - dms
 7466-A Royal Garden Blues Gnt 4712, Document DOCD-5660
 7466-? Royal Garden Blues Gnt 4712, Document DOCD-5522
 7467-A Spread Yo' Stuff Gnt 4712, Document DOCD-5522
 7467-? Spread Yo' Stuff Gnt 4712, Document DOCD-5602

Very probably the trombonist on these sides is either Irvis or Frazier and thus Bud Aiken might be disregarded here.

Garvin Bushell in his "Jazz from The Beginning" does not comment on this session – what might be taken as an approval?!

Accompaniment is mainly played straight, therefore very difficult to discriminate personal styles. The trombonist might possibly be Charlie Irvis, judging from this man's legato style! Yet, he does not use Irvis' later frequent 6/8 phrasing. Yet, on the second side he is much more agile (ad-lib?) and would possibly be Jake Frazier as listed in G. Bushell, *Jazz from the Beginning* – and subsequent discographies.

Trumpet playing (tone, vibrato, time) is within the limits of Gus Aiken as displayed in session 006 and 010 (of my Gus Aiken list). Yet, the trumpet player seems to have taken a break for the second title! He cannot be heard at all and might possibly play very low only in the background.

Bushell is also listed for alto sax, but did not take up alto until 1923 which, by the way, cannot be detected at all on these sides.

The listed banjo is inaudible and is probably non-existent.

Notes:

- BGR*2: unknown cnt; poss Charlie Irvis, tbn; unknown clt; unknown ten; poss Clarence Williams pno; unknown bjo; unknown dms.
- BGR*3,*4: unknown, c; unknown, tb; unknown, cl; unknown, ts; unknown, p; unknown, bj; unknown, d.
- Rust*3: unknown -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -cl; unknown -ts; ?Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj; unknown -d.
- Rust*4,*6: probably: Gus Aiken -t; Jake Frazier -tb; Garvin Bushell -cl -as; Dude Finley -p; unknown -bj.
- Garvin Bushell, *Jazz from the Beginning*: probably Gus Aiken, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Garvin Bushell, cl, as; Dude Finley, p; unknown, bj;

unknown, d. "I recorded with many different singers. On one date with Daisy Martin we had Gus Aiken on trumpet and Jake Frazier on trombone. For the two sides, I remember we were paid thirty dollars."

Discernible differences of takes:

7466-A: Trombone leading into first chorus in last bar of 4-bar modulation: quarter-note slur into chorus
 7466-?: Trombone leading into first chorus in last bar of 4-bar modulation: very short eighth-note slur into chorus
 7467-A: clt in last bar of intro plays one quarter-note e on first beat, leaving the subsequent e on third beat out
 7467-?: clt in last bar of intro plays one quarter-note e on first beat and a distinct second quarter-note e on third beat

004 **LUCILLE HEGAMIN** her Blue Flame Syncopators New York, c. May 1921
 Lucille Hegamin – voc;
 Wesley Johnson – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
 unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms;
 Bill Hegamin - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; George Barber - dms
 I Wonder Where My Brown Skin Daddy's Gone? Arto 9063, Document DOCD-5419
 You'll Want My Love Arto 9063, Document DOCD-5419

Aurally, we find the same accompanying personnel here as before. And still, no violin!

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: Harris' Blues and Jazz Seven*: Wesley Johnson (tpt); Jan Reevy (tbn); Clarence Harris (sax); Wilson Kyer (pno); Bob Escudero (tu); Kaiser Marshall (dms).
 - BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvey Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some.
 - BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.
 - BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown, d.
 - Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; unknown, clt; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.
 - Rust*4,*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -cl; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb.
 - RR 39/7: "About May of 1921, Lucille Hegamin with her Arto publicity was on the road with a new band formed by Bill Hegamin. They were on an extended tour under the Cutting-Gellert Attractions management playing Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. Lucille, at that time coined the band title "Blue Flame Syncopators". According to L.H. there was no real significance to the name. "Some of the boys on Arto records who toured with me were Bill Hegamin, piano; Harvey Boone, sax; Charlie Irvis, trombone; George Barbour, drums. Band members of Sam Wooding were also on some of my records during this period. Bill Hegamin was on all my Arto dates."
 Storyville 1996/7 p. 206. (L.H.) Billed to appear at Richmond Market Armory with her Ten Blue Flame Syncopators on Friday 13 May 1921 (Ad BAA 6/5/21 p1). (Wooding's band? - KBR)

005 **LUCILLE HEGAMIN** her Blue Flame Syncopators New York, c. May 1921
 Lucille Hegamin – voc;
 Wesley Johnson – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
 unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms;
 Bill Hegamin - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; George Barber - dms
 18070-2 I Like You Because You Have Such Loving Ways Arto 9068, Document DOCD-5419
 18071-2 Wang Wang Blues Arto 9068, Document DOCD-5419

And again, we obviously have the same band-personnel – without violin - on this session. Very interesting is the vocalized version of Wang Wang Blues – probably the very only one!

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: Harris' Blues and Jazz Seven*: Wesley Johnson (tpt); Jan Reevy (tbn); Clarence Harris (sax); Wilson Kyer (pno); Bob Escudero (tu); Kaiser Marshall (dms).
 - BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvey Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some.
 - BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.
 - BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown, d.
 - Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.
 - Rust*4,*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb.

006 **BLUE FLAME SYNCOPATORS** New York, c. May 1921
 Wesley Johnson – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
 unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms;
 Bill Hegamin - pno; unknown – bjo; Ralph Escudero – bbs; George Barber - dms
 Strut Miss Lizzie Arto 9069, Document DOCD-5419
 Sweet Mama, Papa's Getting Mad Arto 9069, Document DOCD-5419

For this session, Miss Hegamin allowed free play to her accompanists. Again, we obviously have the same personnel, but this time it is strengthened by a banjo, which is not noted in any discography. The banjo suddenly appears in the first strain C of 'Strut Miss Lizzie' with some triplets while its player doubles the melody lines in single-string manner for almost the entire second title. I wonder whether this player might be Lucille Hegamin herself. Do we have any knowledge of her being a banjo player? Or, might this be the generally listed Maud Jones doubling on banjo?

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4*: not listed.

- BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvie Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some; no vcl.
 - BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; no vocal.
 - BGR*4: not listed.
 - Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.
 - Rust*4: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -cl; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb.
 - Rust*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -cl; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb. The following two titles are instrumental performances by the Blue Flame Syncopators.
 - Storyville 1996/97, Lucille Hegamin: "Billed to appear at Richmond Market Armory with her Ten Blue Flame Syncopators on Fri 13 May, 1921 (Ad BAA 6/5/21 p1)"

007 LUCILLE HEGAMIN	her Blue Flame Syncopators	New York,	c. May-Jun. 1921
Lucille Hegamin – voc;			
Wesley Johnson – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;			
unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms;			
Bill Hegamin - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; <i>George Barber - dms</i>			
18086-2	Lonesome Monday Morning Blues	Arto 9074,	Document DOCD-5419 ?
18086-3	Lonesome Monday Morning Blues	Arto 9074,	Document DOCD-5419 ?
	Getting Old Blues	Arto 9074,	Document DOCD-5419
-2	Getting Old Blues	Arto 9074,	not on LP/CD
-3	Getting Old Blues	Arto 9074,	not on LP/CD

Only one take of both titles is reissued on the Document CD, but sadly Johnny Parth, the utmost meritorious producer of the Document series had obviously not been informed about the take-numbers of the titles on Arto 9074, so that we do not know now. And a confirmation of any alternate take of these titles is thus impossible.

The condition of the source material for this reissue was terrible. The band seems to be the same as before. Very prominent is – as before – the tasteful – possibly Southern – clarinetist. Who plays arranged reed parts together with Boone's C-melody-sax in the second title.

A drummer cannot be recognised here, possibly because of the meagre aural sound condition. On the sessions above he was only partly determinable by his temporary wood-block sounds. But the pianist is not determinable, as well!

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4*: not listed.
 - BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvie Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some.
 - BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.
 - BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.
 - Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.
 - Rust*4,*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb.

Discernible differences of takes:

No identification of takes possible because of lack of alternate takes on LP/CD.

008 EDDIE GRAY	J. P. Johnson's Harmony Eight	New York,	c. Sep. 1921
Eddie Gray - voc, uku;			
Gus Aiken - tpt; (Bud Aiken) - tbn;			
unknown – alt, clt; Walter Watkins - ten; unknown -flt;			
James P. Johnson - pno; unknown – bjo; unknown - bbs			
P-159	You've Got What I'm Looking For	BS 2020,	Document DOCD-1015
P-160	Ukulele Blues	BS 2020,	Document DOCD-1015

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

The trombonist certainly is not Charlie Irvis! But there is a prominent flute that has not been listed anywhere. On 'Ukulele Blues' banjo and tuba can clearly be detected in the last chorus.

Gus Aiken is listed as trumpeter by Walter C. Allen as a possibility, but as June Clark is listed as trumpet player in many recordings by blues/vaudeville singers accompanied by J. P. Johnson's bands, it certainly seems to be wise to inspect all of these in this respect. But, just with the recordings of Alice Leslie Carter and Lavinia Turner, there is absolutely nothing what you can positively identify as a June Clark note. Only, that the cornettist/trumpeter plays securely with real drive and fire. After repeated listening I would like to see a rather faint possibility of Clark's participation!

Brown / Hilbert date this session as early November 1921, but the consecutive master numbers point to September!?

Notes:

- *Jazz Directory Vol. 4*: James P. Johnson (p) with unknown personnel.
 - W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*: poss Gus Aiken, trumpet; Bud Aiken, Jake Frazier or Charlie Irvis, trombones (sic); unknown alto; Walter Watkins, tenor sax; Johnson, piano; unknown bass and drums.
 - Brown / Hilbert, *JAMES P. JOHNSON A Case of Mistaken Identity*: poss. Gus Aiken, trumpet; Bud Aiken, Jake Frazier or Charlie Irvis, trombones (sic); unknown alto; Walter Watkins, tenor sax; Johnson, piano; unknown bass and drums (from W.C. Allen).
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: not listed
 - Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: not listed

009 LUCILLE HEGAMIN	her Blue Flame Syncopators	New York,	c. Oct. 1921
Lucille Hegamin – voc;			

Seymour Irick or (June Clark) – tpt; Charlie Irvis or Herb Flemming – tbn;
unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms; unknown – ten;
Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; Frank Robinson - dms
 Mississippi Blues Arto 9105, Document DOCD-5419
 Wabash Blues Arto 9105, Document DOCD-5419

The accompanying band features a restrained, unsecure and in the first title almost impossible to hear trumpet player. He may possibly be Seymour Irick, trumpet player in the recent accompanying band documented for November at the New York 'Shuffle Inn' (see below). But also, there might be another solution to this problem as discussed below.

Comparing this trumpeter's performance with Seymour Irick's recordings with Lem Fowler and Percy Glascoe do not necessarily be proof of his presence, as his obtrusive staccato playing in 1925 can not be found here. Yet, this may also be explained by the fact that this trumpeter had written scores to play.

A copy of this record was found in June Clark's uncle's house in New York, and might therefore have been belonging to June Clark's own property. It might as well have been a gift to his uncle, thus indicating June's presence and participation. As with all recordings with Clark's possible presence in the early 1920s, there is nothing to definitely identify his trumpet/cornet playing as it certainly is possible in his recordings from 1925 on. In the middle of the last chorus of 'Wabash Blues' there is a short ad-lib phrase of the cornet which – by attack and tonal quality - might as well be played by a juvenile June Clark.

It is not to recognise whether we still have Charlie Irvis here on trombone, or Herb Flemming, already, who is present in November as documented below.

From the band sound, and then clearly in the coda break of the first title, we hear two saxophones beside the clarinet. As the first – upper – part is played by probably Boone on C-melody-sax, and the second part played by a tenor sax, I assume the tenor sax player to be a recent addition to the band. Obviously, the prominent clarinet mainly plays ad-lib parts. So, we have scored saxophone parts here, much earlier than the Henderson band had them! Again, a drummer cannot be determined here, but might nevertheless be present. And there certainly is no violin.

At this time Fred Turnstall might have been installed as pianist and leader of Hegamin's 'Blue Flame Syncopators', following Lucille and Bill Hegamin's divorce that must have happened in mid-1921.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: unknown accompaniment.*

- BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvie Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some.

- BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.

- BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb.

- Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.

- Rust*4,*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb.

- RR 40 p.3: "In a recent discussion, veteran trombonist Herb Flemming interjected that he was a member of the SHUFFLE INN pit band during this period (i.e. early 1922). Other members of the band in addition to Herb Flemming, trombone, were: Seymore Irick, trumpet; Bill Hegamin, piano; Frank Roberts, drums & sax; and Maude Jones, violin. Thanks, Herb. (Ed.)"

- Storyville 1996/7 p. 206: (L.H.) at Shuffle Inn 131st & 7th. Orchestra led by Fred Tunstall, p; Seymour Irick, c; Herbert Fleming, tb; Maud Jones, vn; Frank Robinson, d (NYA 26/11/21).

010 LUCILLE HEGAMIN her Blue Flame Syncopators

New York,

c. Nov. 1921

Lucille Hegamin – voc;

Seymour Irick – tpt; Herb Flemming – tbn;

unknown – clt; Harvey Boone – cms; unknown – ten;

Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; Frank Robinson - dms

Ain't Givin' Nothin' Away

Arto 9119,

Document DOCD-5419

Can't Feel Jolly Blues

Arto 9119,

Document DOCD-5419

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

Aurally, we have the tamer cornettist of before again, thus perhaps Seymour Irick. But although the sound of my CD leaves much to be desired I dare to list the instrumentation including a tenor sax as before. And again, a drummer can not be determined.

Judging from the note in the New York Age of 26 Nov. 1921 (see above) L. Hegamin appeared at the 'Shuffle Inn' 131st & 7th, accompanied by an orchestra including trumpeter Seymour Irick, trombonist Herb Flemming, violiniste Maud Jones and drummer Frank Robinson. It would then be wise to assume these musicians to be present on this recording date, possibly also on the preceding date. It is interesting to note that we have a three-part reed section from the preceding date on, and we know that Miss Hegamin had divorced her former husband Bill Hegamin. Thus, Charlie Irvis' presence is most uncertain and probably wrong.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: not listed.*

- BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvie Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some.

- BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown pac or o, added.

- Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.

- BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown, pac.

- Rust*4,*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p; Ralph Escudero -bb.

011 LUCILLE HEGAMIN her Blue Flame Syncopators

New York,

c. Jan. 1922

Lucille Hegamin – voc;

(Wesley Johnson), Seymour Irick – tpt; unknown or Herb Flemming – tbn;

unknown – flt; Harvey Boone – cms; unknown – ten;

Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall - pno; Ralph Escudero – bbs; Frank Robinson - dms

He May Be Your Man But He Comes To See Me Sometimes
You've Had Your Day

Arto 9129,
Arto 9129,

Document DOCD-5419
Document DOCD-5419

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

We now hear a complete big band accompaniment, encompassing two trumpets/cornets and three reeds, as noted in a newspaper advertisement of 6 May, 1921 in the Baltimore Afro-American (see above), yet with a flutist - who may be the clarinetist of the former sessions – on both titles. Because of the long-time interval to the May 1921 recordings above, Charlie Irvis presence on these later sessions must be totally unexpected and most probably wrong. And again, the drummer is undeterminable and might as well be absent, together with the violinist.

Most discographies list an organ or a piano-accordion. But this would certainly mean, that there would be chordal portions played by the organist – whether Bill Hegamin or anybody else. Instead, we do hear only single-tone passages as part of the reed-section, while the so prominent clarinet of before is silent. And these are flute-notes to me, playing first saxophone-parts, mostly in lower register, by a player who was not a very accomplished flutist. Or the scores did not reward further technique. Or, we do possibly hear the clarinetist who might have flirted with this particular instrument. Yet, on the second title he dares to play long sustained trills in a convincing manner. Perseverers of the organ or accordion idea might still declare, that the organist/accordionist plays the first melody-part of the reeds with his right hand on a reed-organ or a harmonium, but this certainly would not make any sense for the bandleader. Only, that the clarinetist would not have shown up for the session. And also, there is no violinist as listed before, who could then have substituted for the ailing clarinetist.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: unknown accompaniment.*

- BGR*2: probably: Wesley Johnson, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Harvie Boone, alt; Bill Hegamin, pno; Ralph Escudero, bbs; with unknown vln on some; organ added.

- BGR*3: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; unknown vn some sides only; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown pac or o, added.

- BGR*4: probably: Wesley Johnson, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Harvey Boone, as; Bill Hegamin, p; Ralph Escudero, bb; unknown, pac.

- Rust*3: Wesley Johnson or Seymour Irick -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn when used; Bill Hegamin or Fred Turnstall -p; Ralph Escudero -bb if any; Frank Robinson -d if any.

- Rust*4: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p -or; Ralph Escudero -bb.

- Rust*6: Probably: Wesley Johnson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Harvey Boone -as; Maud Jones -vn on some sides; Bill Hegamin -p -or; Ralph Escudero -bb; Bill Hegamin? doubling organ, first side only.

RR 40 p.3: "In a recent discussion, veteran trombonist Herb Flemming interjected that he was a member of the SHUFFLE INN pit band during this period (i.e. early 1922). Other members of the band in addition to Herb Flemming, trombone, were: Seymore Irick, trumpet; Bill Hegamin, piano; Frank Roberts, drums & sax; and Maude Jones, violin. Thanks, Herb. (Ed.)"

012 IRENE GIBBONS AND JAZZ BAND

New York,

Dec. 05, 1922

Eva Taylor – voc;

unknown – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;

(Ernest Elliott) – clt; unknown – alt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; unknown – dms

80723-4 My Pillow And Me

Col A-3922,

Doc DOCD-5408

80724-3 That Da Da Strain

Col unissued

not on LP/CD

This, definitely, is Charlie Irvis on trombone, and very beautiful.

The trumpet player plays straight melody only throughout and might be anyone. He may even be early Miley, not Morris. (JK hears the same trumpet player as on Eva Taylor's 'New Moon'.)

The clarinet player plays quarter and eighth notes only, shown as a characteristic of Elliott's style. In the middle break of the last chorus we hear the first four notes played in pitch and then the next two (or four) notes played with slight downward slides, typical for Elliott's playing. But his smears and slurs are not there. Instead the clarinet plays well-pitched phrases unlike Elliott. So, the playing heard here is only slightly fitting and compatible with Elliott's documented style and his assumed presence. Alto sax is playing melody behind Eva Taylor.

Notes:

- Storyville 13: prob Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); unknown (woodblocks)

- BGR*2,*3,*4: prob Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ernest Elliott, clt, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo; unknown - dms . (BGR*4 lists both titles as unissued. The issued ones are dated early January 1924.)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: ? Tom Morris – c; Charlie Irvis – tb; Ernest Elliott - cl, ?as; Clarence Williams – p; Buddy Christian – bj; unknown - d

- T. Lord, Clarence Williams p27: prob Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Ernest Elliott - clt; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; unknown – woodblocks "TKD lists: Elmer Chambers or Charlie Gaines – tpt; Irvis – tbn; Don Redman – clt; Williams, Christian and unknown – dms. Goldman lists Th. Morris, Irvis, and Sidney Bechet – clt."

013 IRENE GIBBONS AND JAZZ BAND

New York,

Jan. 06, 1923

Eva Taylor – voc;

unknown - tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Julian Baugh – clt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; unknown – dms

80724-6

That Da Da Strain

Col A-3834,

Doc DOCD-5408

The trumpet player shows J. Dunn influence, but he plays rather insecure and his identity must remain unknown. On trombone Irvis' characteristics can be recognized, although this player plays rather restricted, other than Irvis on the session before.

Clarinet here is smoother than Elliott. Elliott tended to play a lead part like a trumpet player, obviously derived from his practice of earlier years (Detroit 1919), where he played lead in Hank Duncan's Kentucky Serenaders. This clarinet player here plays a clarinet part, in his solo passages going back into second harmony part when joining the ensemble again at the appropriate places. This is not Elliott's style.

Therefore, very probably not Elliott. Rust *3 says that Clarence Robinson may replace Elliott on clarinet. Rust's source for this is Walter C. Allen, who in his definitive 'Hendersonia' discusses the clarinet on Ethel Waters' 'That Da Da Strain' (Black Swan 14120-A) and states that

the clarinetist plays the same ensemble part as on this record by Irene Gibbons.” If this should be right, the clarinetist’s name would then be Julian Baugh, as researched by Bo Lindström in ‘Oh Joe, Play That Trombone, George L. Brashear’, p. 35, not Clarence Robinson who was a dancer, but not a musician.

I do not hear an alto saxophone at this session.

Clarence Williams’ presence on piano is doubted because the style heard is not his. The banjo is strong and could well be Christian.

Very interesting is the presence of a drummer on woodblocks – just as on the session before – because Clarence only hired drummers only later in his recording career.

Notes:

- Storyville 13: prob Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); unknown (woodblocks)

- BGR*2,*3,*4: prob Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; poss Clarence Robinson, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo; unknown - dms. (BGR*4 lists this as a remake session for both titles of early December 1923. Accordingly, 80723-4 or -6 might also stem from this session.)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: ?Tom Morris – c; Charlie Irvis – tb; Clarence Robinson or Ernest Elliott - cl, as; Clarence Williams – p; Buddy Christian – bj; unknown - d

- T. Lord, Clarence Williams p27: prob Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; poss Clarence Robinson or Ernest Elliott - clt; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; unknown – woodblocks. “Rust *3 says that Clarence Robinson may replace Elliott on clarinet. Rust’s source for this is Walter C. Allen, who in his definitive ‘Hendersonia’ discusses the clarinet on Ethel Waters’ ‘That Da Da Strain’ (Black Swan 14120-A) and states that the clarinetist plays the same ensemble part as on this record by Irene Gibbons.”

014 BESSIE SMITH

New York,

c. Jan. 1923

Bessie Smith – voc;

Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – clt, sop;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate

?OK unissued

not on LP/CD

It really is a shame that this item has never been issued and is thus lost for posterity. Any facts about this recording below, nothing more can be said.

Notes:

- Storyville 13: Joe Smith (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (clt/sop); James P. Johnson or Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – clt, sop; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – clt, sop; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

- Lord, Clarence Williams p30: Bessie Smith’s first record was ‘I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate’ with a background consisting of Bechet, Irvis, Miley and Clarence. CW mentioned that this record was the greatest she ever did but was not approved for issue because the (CW was hary over the identity of the record company) did not wish to take a chance with the new style of Bessie. After it was rejected CW remembered giving the master to Bessie. Its whereabouts is a mystery today.” “Sidney Bechet seems sure that it was made for OK, but they already had so many blues singers – Virginia Liston, Sara Martin, Laura Smith and Mamie Smith – that they just didn’t want anymore.”

015 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS

New York,

Feb. 1923

unknown, Thomas Morris – tpt; unknown – tbn; unknown – alt;

Charles “Smitty” Smith – pno; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs; unknown – dms;

(Thomas Morris) – voc exclamations (1)

71306-A E Flat Blues No. 2 (Memphis, Tennessee)

OK 8055,

Chronological Classics 823

71307-B Original Charleston Strut

OK 8055,

Chronological Classics 823

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

Both tunes bear a remarkable New Orleans flavour insofar as the tunes are known today as belonging to this city’s tradition. “E Flat Blues” is very similar to a New Orleans brass band tune known as “Whoopin’ Blues” as recorded by the Eureka Brass Band and the Young Tuxedo Brass Band in the fifties, and probably more often later on. And “Original Charleston Strut” is derived, as I have said, from “Weary Blues”.

The trumpets: It has first to be mentioned that “Lonesome Journey Blues” of April ’23 is a solo piece for trumpet/cornet. (I shall further on only use the term trumpet for a trumpet or a cornet being heard. Thomas Morris is always listed to have played cornet! Yet, on a photo of him wearing a straw hat – on the Fountain LP and the Classics CD – he holds a trumpet as far as I can identify!) As I assume that the bandleader cum trumpet player spares such a feature for himself, it can safely be considered this to be a solo number for Mr. Morris, the band leader. Moreover, the trumpet cum mute style heard here goes well with other known Th. Morris recordings. So, this special trumpet sound is understood to be Morris’. This solo trumpet player’s – I’d call him tpt II – playing is opposed to the other trumpet player present, who plays mainly without mute throughout and in a rather “straight” style (tpt I). As you always have Bubber Miley and Thomas Morris listed as trumpeters in the discos (Bub Miley always played trumpet, not cornet!) I believe, that in the early days of discographical effort the “muted” player has been mistaken to be Miley and the other one accordingly to be Morris. Tpt I sometimes uses a straight-mute when playing third parts above Th. Morris (at the end of “Lonesome Journey Blues”). For me, though, it is absolutely clear, that the “muted” player – tpt II – is Morris playing second parts and solos, and the other trumpet player, whose identity I am unable to find out, is the lead man. And I never hear anything which reminds me of Miley! To my ears, Morris’ playing is characterized by a lot of (mainly!) use of a mute (plunger?), the tendency to repeat short simple phrases three or four times in a row, a blues-oriented playing, frequent use of blue-notes and a rather unsecure tone and pitch. G. Bushell in his book “Jazz From The Beginning” attributes this latter quality to the lack of basic training: “Like Thomas Morris. He had some great ideas, but no lip – it just splattered all over the place.” Further and most obvious examples of this lack of security you can hear on the sides by “Waller with Morris’ Hot Babies”. Miley - throughout his career - played in that military derived, triplet dominated staccato style of Johnny Dunn, which was common in Harlem before the advent of Louis Armstrong in late 1924. But this is not the style by this player here! Therefore, my conclusion is that Miley’s name ought to be cancelled from the discos! The New Orleans flavor crops up also when you listen to the first trumpet player who plays a strong swinging open lead on “Original”, completely different from Morris’ playing in the first tune. Although Morris does not play in that Johnny Dunn oriented “square” style as Miley used to do, he nevertheless is far apart from the “western” style of tpt I. So, we have to leave the lead trumpet player - tpt I - as unknown.

The trombone: Also, the trombone player plays in a New Orleans tailgate style completely different from Charlie Irvis’ legato melodic playing. RUST 6th edition still lists him as Irvis, whereas I have somewhere seen John Mayfield of Clarence Williams Blue Five fame. This certainly is a much better possibility. Or is he somebody else, of whom I shall speculate below?

The saxophone(s): I hear a legato playing alto saxophonist in a style uncommon for early Harlem music.

There may be a tenor saxophonist, heard only with difficulty, if at all in the ensemble. In one two-bar break at the end of "Original Charleston Strut" there is a saxophone heard playing low notes in "slap-tongue" style. This could easily be Ernest Elliott as listed, but I have to bear in mind that Garvin Bushell in his book JAZZ FROM THE BEGINNING says that he never (!) heard Ernest Elliott play saxophone. And he should have known! I am quite uncertain about the saxophone(s). To me it sounds like alto throughout both numbers. The break in A6 of "Original", could be played by alto as well as by tenor (I have asked a proficient alto sax player about this). It is in the range of either variant. So, do we have alto and tenor, or do we hear an alto that is played very low at some places, especially at the end of "Original", or is it someone playing a C-melody-sax? Saxophone players, please, comment! My conclusion: it is only alto saxophone throughout.

The piano: In the first number we can hear piano-comping which ascertains my conclusion for Charles "Smitty" Smith.

The banjo: The style of the banjo player is typical Harlem of the first half of the twenties, doubling time in "E Flat Blues No. 2" as you can hear it in many recordings under Johnny Dunn's name, so, perhaps Sam Speed or John Mitchell?

The tuba: The tuba player is listed nowhere, as far as I know. A surprise for this early time is his definite four-to-the-bar rhythm on "Original", which was absolutely uncommon in early Harlem music and again points to New Orleans jazz.

The drummer: The drummer then with his cow-bell breaks in paradiddle could be from either sphere.

These observations give rise to a provocative and most daring question: Can it be that some of Piron's men (tpt I, tbn, alt, bbs) were hired by Thomas Morris? Can anybody tell me when the Piron band arrived in New York? Their earliest documented engagement in New York was in May 1923. But, were they in New York already in February?

There was a strong link of the Piron band to Thomas Morris, as the Piron band was managed by Clarence Williams (see foto in P. Bradford, BORN WITH THE BLUES, where the Piron band is named Williams' Jazz Kings!) and Williams used Th. Morris as trumpet player in his recording bands.

Engelbert Wengel from Frankfurt, Germany, a noted specialist for New Orleans Jazz, though, does not think, that these men are from the Piron band, but he agrees to the New Orleans flavour.

Notes:

-Rust*2: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley (cnts); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo).

-Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -ts; unknown -p; unknown -bj; unknown -d. Contrary to previous statements and suggestions, the pianist on these records is neither Willie "The Lion" Smith (who denies all knowledge of them and in any case was not in New York at the time) nor Clarence Williams.

-Rust*6: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; ?Ernest Elliott, ts; ?Willie "The Lion" Smith, p; unknown, bj; unknown, d.

- Scherman/Eriksson/Anderby/Wallen, Bubber Miley Disco: Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), unknown (C-mel), ... Smith (p), Buddy Christian (bj), unknown (bb), unknown (dr). "The above personnels are listed by the sleeve writer of FJ113, who is more accurate than Rust. We have added the pianist's last name, which is called by somebody on Just Blues That's All (Play it, Mister Smith!). The trumpet break on Original Charleston Strut, the open solo and break on When The Jazz Band ... and the open solo on Those Blues are aurally by Miley, all other trumpet solos are by Morris. The sleeve notes of FJ113 also identify Miley in the solo breaks at the end of Beaucoup De Jazz, but it is clearly Morris, who continues to lead the ensemble with some typical fill-ins by Miley in the last few bars."

Tunes' Structures:

E Flat Blues No 2 (Memphis Tennessee) (Morris) Key of Eb OKeh

(Intro 2 bars ens)(Chorus A1 12 bars ens)(Chorus A2 12 bars tpt II muted)(Chorus A3 12 bars tpt II muted)(Chorus A4 12 bars ens)(Chorus A5 12 bars ens)(Chorus A6 12 bars ens, break voc bars 2 + 4)(Chorus A7 12 bars ens break voc bars 2 + 4)(Coda 1 bar tpts)

"E Flat Blues" is a regular 12-bar blues with 2-bar introduction and a short coda. On chorus 2 and 3 we hear a muted trumpet/cornet solo. Then we have two ensemble chorus and again two chorus with breaks on bars 2 and 4 with someone shouting: "Hey!"

Original Charleston Strut (Morris) Key of F/Bb/F

OKeh

(Chorus A1 12 bars strain a ens Break bjo bars 5+6)(Chorus A2 12 bars strain a ens Break dms bars 5+6)(Chorus A3 12 bars strain a ens)(Chorus A4 12 bars strain a ens)(Chorus A5 12 bars strain a ens Break tpt bars 5+6)(Chorus B1 16 bars strain b ens)(Chorus B2 16 bars strain b tpt II obligato tbn)(Chorus B3 16 bars strain b tpt II obligato tbn)(Chorus A6 12 bars strain a ens Break alt (or ten ?) bars 5+6)(Chorus A7 12 bars strain a ens)(Coda 2 bars ens - dms)

"Original Charleston Strut" (key in F / Bb / F) is a tune obviously derived from "Weary Blues" with five 12-bar chorus / verse in F (strain a), then three 16-bar chorus in Bb (strain b), and again three 12-bar chorus in F (strain a).

016 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS

New York,

Apr. 1923

unknown, Thomas Morris - tpt; unknown - tbn; (Happy Caldwell) - ten;

Charles "Smitty" Smith - pno; (Will Splivey Escoffery) - bjo

71531-C Lonesome Journey Blues

OK 4867,

Chronological Classics 823

71532-B When The Jazz Band Starts To Play

OK 4867,

Chronological Classics 823

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

The New Orleans flavour is gone in parts, just because there is no singing alto sax anymore, the four-to-the-bar tuba is gone, and the two tunes do not bear any particular New Orleans influence.

The trumpets: Tpt II - Morris - plays "Lonesome Journey Blues" as his solo tune. There is no other trumpet soloist. Tpt I plays lead trumpet throughout in the ensembles. At the end of the second blues chorus in "When The Jazz Band" there is some confusion about the trumpet players. In my estimation, Morris, who soloed on open horn on the two preceding blues chorus, grabs his mute for the last two Verses II, whereas tpt I plays open horn further on.

The trombone: The trombone player may be the same as before.

The saxophone(s): There is definitely a tenor saxophonist, playing in rather archaic Harlem saxophone style. Elliott? In any case, Elliott - judging from his entries in the discographies - was a very much occupied player in the 20ies, and although his style seems to be very antiquated from our point of view today, he certainly should be researched. I have started to compile a list of his recordings.

The piano: In "When The Jazz Band" we can hear a pno solo, which stylistically fits exactly to what is played by Charles "Smitty" Smith in the pno breaks "Hold 'Er, Deacon" by the Blue Rhythm Orchestra (see my June Clark Discography). To my ears these 6 and 4 bars of soloing are sufficient proof of "Smittie's" presence.

The banjo: The style of the banjo player seems to be a little more straightforward than that on the Feb. 1923 session. But this might also be caused by the band leader's demands. I see the possibility that this is a different player. Escoffery was banjo player of Charles Smith's band for a time.

There are neither tuba nor drums on this session!

Notes:

-Rust*2: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley (cnts); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo).

-Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -ts; unknown -p; unknown -bj. Contrary to previous statements and suggestions, the pianist on these records is neither Willie "The Lion" Smith (who denies all knowledge of them and in any case was not in New York at the time) nor Clarence Williams.

- Rust*6: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; ? Ernest Elliott, ts; ? Willie "The Lion" Smith, p; unknown, bj.

- Scherman/Eriksson/Anderby/Wallen, Bubber Miley Disco: Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), unknown (C-mel), ... Smith (p), Buddy Christian (bj). "The above personnels are listed by the sleeve writer of FJ113, who is more accurate than Rust. We have added the pianist's last name, which is called by somebody on Just Blues That's All (Play it, Mister Smith!). The trumpet break on Original Charleston Strut, the open solo and break on When The Jazz Band ... and the open solo on Those Blues are aurally by Miley, all other trumpet solos are by Morris. The sleeve notes of FJ113 also identify Miley in the solo breaks at the end of Beaucoup De Jazz, but it is clearly Morris, who continues to lead the ensemble with some typical fill-ins by Miley in the last few bars."

Tunes Structures:

Lonesome Journey Blues (Morris) Key of G (or Ab ?) OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Chorus A1 12 bars tpt II tpt/tbn obligato)(Chorus A2 12 bars tpt II tpt/tbn obligato)(Chorus A3 12 bars tpt II tpt/tbn obligato)(Chorus A4 12 bars tpt II tpt/tbn obligato)(Chorus A5 12 bars ens)(Chorus B1 8 bars ten - ens) (Chorus B2 8 bars tpt - ens)

"Lonesome Journey Blues" again is a normal 12 bar blues, which is a solo number for the band leader. He plays 4 chorus tpt solo, after which there are two 8 bar strains by the ensemble in call-and-response fashion.

When The Jazz Band Starts To Play (Morris) Key of Bb / Eb / Bb OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse I strain a AA 16 bars ens)(Verse II strain b AA' 16 bars ens middle break tbn)(Verse II strain b AA' 16 bars ens middle break tbn)(Verse II strain b AA' 16 bars tpt II solo)(Chorus A2 12 bars tpt II solo)(Verse II strain b AA' 16 bars tpt II muted - ens)(Verse II strain b AA' 16 bars ens middle break tpt II) (Coda 4 bars ens)

"When The Jazz Band Starts To Play" is kind of a stomp tune of Morris' own authorship. The same tune has been recorded by Thomas Morris And His Seven Hot Babies with the title "Ham Gravy" in 1926. Verse II is very similar to the chorus of Charlie Johnson's recording of "Birmingham Black Bottom" (second strain), which might be a clue to Morris' assumed presence on this recording session.

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

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

The trumpeter/cornetist could be a youthful June Clark (this only is my personal assumption or even guess!). His style cannot be attributed to any other early Harlem trumpet player of that quality. He certainly is not Thomas Morris!

Just the same, the trombone player is not Irvis, yet named in all discos. This player restricts himself to mainly contribute simple tailgate slurs, while Charlie Irvis plays harmonically defined beautiful long legato phrases.

The little clarinet playing heard is strong and sounds to be "Western". There are none of Elliott's characteristic horrible pitch variations.

What can be heard from the alto sax player is unattributable. As Bob Rickett is listed as band leader it would be him on piano. He strongly leads the band from the piano. The banjo could be Buddy Christian here as listed, but certainly not Elmer Snowdon. And there seems to be a drummer as can be heard from the strong rhythm and a well-placed cymbal crash in the middle of 'Tired O' Waitin' Blues'.

As Bob Ricketts belonged to the Clarence Williams agency, the musicians heard here might have been chosen from the Clarence Williams stable.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: possible personnel: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ernest Elliott, clt; unknown alt; Bob Ricketts, pno; Buddy Christian or Elmer Snowden, bjo

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

Discernible differences of takes:

No identification of takes possible because of lack of alternate takes on LP/CD.

018 EVA TAYLOR Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	c. May 04, 1923
Eva Taylor – voc;		
Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn; Ernest Elliott – clt;		
Clarence Williams – pno; (Buddy Christian) – bjo		
71499-A	Farewell Blues	OK 3055 (12"), Doc DOCD-5408
71500-A	Gulf Coast Blues	OK 3055 (12") not on LP/CD

Not a Charlie Irvis item!

Thomas Morris and Clarence Williams seem to be certain. The trombone player certainly is not Charlie Irvis and might be John Mayfield instead. Aural evidence supports Elliott's presence. For stylistic and sound reasons, I doubt Buddy Christian here. This player lacks Christian's ease and sounds wooden instead.

Notes:

- Storyville 13: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt/alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

- Lord, Clarence Williams p48: Thomas Morris – cnt; prob Charlie Irvis – tbn; Ernest Elliott – clt; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo.

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; prob Charlie Irvis, tbn; prob Ernest Elliott, clt, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.

- Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris – c; ?Charlie Irvis – tb; ?Ernest Elliott – cl-as; Clarence Williams – p; Buddy Christian – bj.

- Rust*6: Tom Morris – c; ?Charlie Irvis – tb; ?Ernest Elliott – cl; unknown – as; Clarence Williams – p; Buddy Christian – bj.

019 EVA TAYLOR Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	c. May 17, 1923
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Eva Taylor – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt; *Charlie Irvis* – tbn;

Ernest Elliott – clt; *unknown* – alt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

71499-F Farewell Blues

OK 3055 (12")

not on LP/CD

71500-F Gulf Coast Blues

OK 3055 (12"),

Doc DOCD-5408

Certainly, Morris and Williams. Different from the session of May 04, 1923 it seems to be Irvis here, and the banjo player is more likely Buddy Christian.

Elliott – if it is he on this side – plays very restrained clarinet, at times reminding of Sidney Bechet. No wonder that Bechet has been listed as clarinetist in an early Bechet discography. Unfortunately, the sound of this title on my CD reissue leaves much to be desired, and it is hard to find out where the clarinet plays at all. An alto sax may play throughout this issued side. This player remains in the background and can therefore not be identified at all. Which certainly makes Elliott's presence rather doubtful as he usually is not restrained with his playing.

Notes:

- *Charters/Kunstadt, Jazz A History of the New York Scene p 228: Tommy Morris, cornet; Charlie Irvis, trombone; "Sticky" Elliott, clarinet; Clarence Williams, piano; Buddy Christian, banjo;*

- *Storyville 13: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt/alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*

- *Lord, Clarence Williams p48: Thomas Morris – cnt; prob Charlie Irvis –tbn; Ernest Elliott –clt; unknown –alt; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian –bjo.*

- *BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; prob Charlie Irvis, tbn; prob Ernest Elliott, clt, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.*

- *Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris – c; ?Charlie Irvis –tb; ?Ernest Elliott –cl-as; Clarence Williams – p; Buddy Christian –bj.*

- *Rust*6: Tom Morris – c; ?Charlie Irvis –tb; ?Ernest Elliott –cl; unknown –as; Clarence Williams – p; Buddy Christian –bj.*

020 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS

New York,

May 1923

Bubber Miley, Thomas Morris – tpt; (*Charlie Irvis*) – tbn; (*Ernest Elliott*) – alt (cms?);

Charles "Smitty" Smith – pno; (*Buddy Christian*) – bjo;

unknown – voc exhortations

71582-B Just Blues, That's All

OK 8075,

Chronological Classics 823

71583-C Bull Blues (E Flat No. 1 Blues)

OK 8075,

Chronological Classics 823

The trumpets: Tpt II - Morris - plays "Just Blues, That's All" as his solo tune. There is no other trumpet soloist on this item. Tpt I plays lead trumpet throughout in the ensembles. He is very much in the background on this session, but at the end of Bull Blues, where Morris plays the lead part (Chorus 6 and Coda), elements of Miley's playing become apparent in the upper trumpet part. So, I would assume that it is Miley here playing tpt I!

The trombone: This trombone player bears a certain resemblance with Charlie Irvis. But, from my knowledge of Irvis' style, I do not think that it is he.

The saxophone(s): We hear a saxophone player here whose tone reminds me of a soprano saxophone and I assume it to be an alto. But certainly, the pitch of this instrument would allow it to be a C-melody saxophone as well. No idea, who it could be.

The piano: Definitely Charlie "Smitty" Smith! The piano solos in "Just Blues", Chorus A5 and A6 are unmistakable. And here you can hear someone shout: "Play it, Mister Smith!"

The banjo: The style of the banjo player certainly is straightforward and swinging to a degree. Buddy Christian?

Notes:

- *Rust*2: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley (cnts); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo).*

- *Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -ts; unknown -p; unknown -bj. Contrary to previous statements and suggestions, the pianist on these records is neither Willie "The Lion" Smith (who denies all knowledge of them and in any case was not in New York at the time) nor Clarence Williams.*

- *Rust*6: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; ?Ernest Elliott, ts; ?Willie "The Lion" Smith, p; unknown, bj.*

- *Scherman/Eriksson/Anderby/Wallen, Bubber Miley Disco: Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), unknown (C-mel), ... Smith (p), Buddy Christian (bj). "The above personnels are listed by the sleeve writer of FJ113, who is more accurate than Rust. We have added the pianist's last name, which is called by somebody on Just Blues That's All (Play it, Mister Smith!). The trumpet break on Original Charleston Strut, the open solo and break on When The Jazz Band ... and the open solo on Those Blues are aurally by Miley, all other trumpet solos are by Morris. The sleeve notes of FJ113 also identify Miley in the solo breaks at the end of Beaucoup De Jazz, but it is clearly Morris, who continues to lead the ensemble with some typical fill-ins by Miley in the last few bars."*

Tunes Structures:

Just Blues, That's All (Morris) Key of Eb

OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Chorus A1 12 bars tpt II muted)(Chorus A2 12 bars tpt II muted)(Chorus A3 12 bars tpt II muted) (Chorus A4 12 bars alt)(Chorus A5 12 bars pno 4 bars / ens 8 bars)(Chorus A6 12 bars pno 4 bars "play it, Mr. Smith" / ens 8 bars)(Chorus A7 12 bars tpt II - ens)(Chorus A8 12 bars tpt II - ens)(Coda 2 bars pno / ens)

"Just Blues, That's All" is a normal 12 bar blues, which again is a solo number for the band leader (tpt II). He plays 3 chorus tpt solo, after which there are an alto solo (tonally similar to soprano sax here), two ensemble chorus with pno passages in the first four bars and chorus tpt II against the ensemble in call-and-response fashion. In the piano parts in Chorus A1 up to A3 you can hear exactly what William "Count" Basie understood by "comping".

Bull Blues (E Flat Blues No.1) (Morris) Key of Eb

OKeh

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus A1 12 bars ens)(Chorus A2 12 bars ens)(Chorus A3 12 bars ens breaks in bars 2 + 4 tpts) (Chorus A4 12 bars ens)(Chorus A5 12 bars tbn - alt tpts obligato)(Chorus A6 12 bars ens breaks in bars 2 + 4 brass)(Coda 4 bars ens break brass)

"Bull Blues" bears a second title: "E Flat No.1 Blues" or "E Flat Blues No. 1". RUST (and following him the Fountain sleeve and the Classics booklet) gives this second title as E Flat No. 1 Blues, the Natchez sleeve gives E Flat Blues No. 1, as it would be appropriate, when referring it to E Flat Blues No. 2 of the Feb. 1923 session. Musically this tune has no relation to E-Flat No. 2 of Feb. 1923.

This tune is played mostly in ensemble style and bears some resemblance to the style of Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, who's first recordings of April 1923 might have been published at exactly the time of this Morris session and thus be of influence. This blues is akin to "Tin Roof Blues" and "Jazzin' Babies Blues"

021 EVA TAYLOR Clarence Williams' Blue Five

New York,

c. May 30, 1923

Eva Taylor – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn; Ernest Elliott – clt;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
 71538-B Barefoot Blues
 71539-A Do It A Long Time Papa

OK 8073, Doc DOCD-5408
 OK 8073, Doc DOCD-5408

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

The trombonist shows no characteristics of Irvis, although playing a legato style. Because he plays a largely identical break as John Mayfield in Sara Martin's 'Blind Man Blues' of 01 Aug. 1923 – where he is generally acknowledged - this player should be Mayfield. Thomas Morris and Clarence Williams are undisputed.

Stylistically the clarinetist seems to be Elliott (break in 'Barefoot Blues' with its smears, laughing clarinet in '... Papa'), although there is not much heard of the clarinet. There very probably is no alto player on the session.

The banjo player seems to be stiffer than Christian and does not have his ringing sound, but might as well be him.

Notes:

- Storyville 14: prob Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)
 - BGR*2: Tom Morris, cnt; prob Charlie Irvis, tbn; prob Ernest Elliott, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
 - BGR*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; prob Charlie Irvis, tbn; prob Ernest Elliott, clt; unknown, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
 - Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris (cnt); prob Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); unknown (alt); Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian – bj
 - Rust*6: Tom Morris –c; ? Charlie Irvis –tb; ? Ernest Elliott –cl; unknown –as; Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian –bj
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p49: Tom Morris –c; ? Charlie Irvis –tb; ? Ernest Elliott –cl; unknown –as; Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian –bj. Lord gives this session as on c. May 30, 1923! "All sources seem to agree on the personnel for Okeh 8073, except Goldman who lists King Oliver (tpt) and Sidney Bechet (sop), but this is disproven by aural evidence. A discography of Sidney Bechet by Robert McGarvey lists Bechet on clarinet. The same source suggests John "Masefield" as possibly the trombonist. Sometimes the clarinet is listed as Bob Elliott in earlier discographies."

022 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS

New York, Aug. 07, 1923

Bubber Miley, Thomas Morris –tpt; John Mayfield – tbn; unknown – clt;

Charles "Smitty" Smith – pno; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs

71739-B Those Blues

OK 4940, Chronological Classics 823

71740-B Beaucoupe de Jazz (Lots Of Jazz)

OK 4940, Chronological Classics 823

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

The trumpets: Tpt II - Morris - plays a much lesser role on these two items than on the former ones! Tpt I plays lead trumpet throughout in the ensembles, very secure and in the Dunn influenced style we know of Bubber Miley. So, I feel certain that it is definitely Miley here on this coupling. Further proof may be that "Those Blues" is Miley's tune.

The trombone: other than with the former session, this trombone player bears no resemblance with Charlie Irvis. No idea, who it could be. Maybe he can be identified by his "laughing" trombone parts? Possibly John Mayfield (Cl. Williams Blue Five!)

The clarinet: We now have a clarinet instead of a saxophone player. Rust lists him as ?Ernest Elliott. Elliott is a very limited player, recognizable by his habit of approaching his notes from below which gives his playing a "sour" characteristic. And he always plays a "trumpet" style. But here we have a clarinet player with a very jazzy style. Listen to the middle break in Verse I B1 of "Beaucoupe ...". It is laid back playing, with a harsh tone, almost like Johnny Dodds. And listen to his ensemble playing. If this really is Elliott, I think I'll have to change my opinion of him. I quote Garvin Bushell in Jazz From The Beginning, p.13: "Those guys had a style of clarinet playing that's been forgotten. Ernest Elliott had it, Jimmy O' Bryant had it, and Johnny Dodds had it." This for a recommendation. (I have compiled a list of Elliott's recordings – see elsewhere on this website.) Might this be Lorenzo Tio, Jr.?

The piano: Just piano comping, therefore certainly Charlie Smith.

The banjo: The banjo is straightforward and swinging. Maybe Buddy Christian?

The tuba: On this session we have a tuba player again, who at times - when required - plays four-to-the-bar. But comparing his playing with that of his colleague's on the first coupling, this player's style seems stiff and not swinging. No idea of his identity.

DB: as received but definite Elliott.

Notes:

-Rust*2: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley (cnts); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); unknown (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); unknown (bbs).

-Rust*3,*4: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley –c; Charlie Irvis –tb; ? Ernest Elliott –cl; unknown –ts; unknown –p; unknown –bj; unknown –bb. Contrary to previous statements and suggestions, the pianist on these records is neither Willie "The Lion" Smith (who denies all knowledge of them and in any case was not in New York at the time) nor Clarence Williams.

- Rust*6: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; ? Ernest Elliott, cl; ? Willie "The Lion" Smith, p; unknown, bj.

- Scherman/Eriksson/Anderby/Wallen, Bubber Miley Disco: Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), poss Ernest Elliott (cl), ... Smith (p), Buddy Christian (bj), unknown (bb). "The above personnels are listed by the sleeve writer of FJ113, who is more accurate than Rust. We have added the pianist's last name, which is called by somebody on Just Blues That's All (Play it, Mister Smith!). The trumpet break on Original Charleston Strut, the open solo and break on When The Jazz Band ... and the open solo on Those Blues are aurally by Miley, all other trumpet solos are by Morris. The sleeve notes of FJ113 also identify Miley in the solo breaks at the end of Beaucoupe De Jazz, but it is clearly Morris, who continues to lead the ensemble with some typical fill-ins by Miley in the last few bars."

Tunes Structures:

Those Blues (Miley) Key of F / Bb / F

OKeh

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Verse I 16 bars AA ens middle break probably tpt I Miley)(Verse II 28 bars AA' ens)(Chorus A1 16 bars AB clt end break brass)(Chorus A2 16 bars AB ?tpt I Miley)(Verse II 28 bars AA' ens)(Coda 2 bars ens)

"Those Blues" is a composition by Bubber Miley and has nothing to do with a normal 12 bar blues. Only in Verse II the first 12 bars (of unusual 28 bars !) remind us of a blues chorus.

Beaucoupe de Jazz (Morris) Key of F / Bb

OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Chorus A1 16 bars AABA ens)(Verse I B1 16 bars AA' ens with tpt II lead middle break clt)(Verse I B2 16 bars AA' ens middle break tpt II)(Chorus A2 16 bars AABA ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens modulation to Bb)(Chorus C1 16 bars AABA ens)(Chorus C2 16 bars AABA ens tpt II lead)

"Beaucoupe de Jazz (Lots Of Jazz)" is a Morris composition and is of the "Weary Blues" type again.

023 EVA TAYLOR Clarence Williams' Blue Five
 Eva Taylor – voc;

New York, c. Aug. 27, 1923

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;
three band members – voc exhortations (1)

71803-B	Original Charleston Strut	OK 8089,	Doc DOCD-5408
71804-A	If You Don't, I Know Who Will	OK 8089,	Doc DOCD-5409

Tom Morris is generally agreed upon. The two rhythm players certainly sound a little different from earlier recordings, but still seem to be Williams and Christian. The absence of a clarinet or soprano may have altered sound conditions in the studio and increase their audibility. But it certainly is Charlie Irvis on trombone with his legato playing and his own 6/8th phrasing at instances. Some familiar voices can be heard at the end of the first title.

There is no reed player on these sides, and I wonder where Bechet had been on these days. He might have been away for a couple of days and would thus not be available for Clarence, so that Clarence renounced a reed player for this session – or did not find any suitable one as on the session before.

Notes:

- Storyville 14: Thomas Morris (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)
- Lord, Clarence Williams p60: Thomas Morris (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); prob Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

“Morris is heard and the trombonist is felt to be Irvis. There is no reed man on this session, despite previous reports.”

- BGR*2: Tom Morris, cnt; poss Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ernest Elliott, clt/alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

- BGR*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; poss Charlie Irvis, tbn; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

- Rust*3: Tom Morris –c; ? Charlie Irvis –tb; ? Ernest Elliott –cl –as; Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian –bj

- Rust*4,*6: Tom Morris –c; Charlie Irvis –tb; Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian –bj; Bechet omitted

JO: Morris' s solo on Original Charleston Strut is a well-recorded example of a relaxed delivery at medium tempo (slower than the earlier instrumental), with a warm, full tone. Add: various band members – exclamations on Original Charleston Strut (71803-B). At least three male voices are heard during the out-chorus.

024 **SNOWDEN'S NOVELTY ORCHESTRA**

New York, Oct. 18, 1923

Bubber Miley, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Otto Hardwick, as;
Duke Ellington, p; Elmer Snowden, bj; Sonny Greer, d.

Home

Vic test (unnumbered)

not on LP/CD

M.T. Pocket Blues

Vic test (unnumbered)

not on LP/CD

Would be nice to get to hear!

Since no tests have ever been found, existence of these sides seems to be most doubtful (see below)!

Notes:

- Rust*2: Instrumentation and personnel unknown; this may include Q. Roscoe Snowden (pno) or Elmer Snowden (bjo), or both.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Bubber Miley –c; Charlie Irvis –tb; Otto Hardwick –as; Duke Ellington –p; Elmer Snowden –bj; Sonny Greer –d

- Scherman/Eriksson/Anderby/Wallen, Bubber Miley Disco: This session, allegedly recorded for Victor and featuring Bubber Miley, is unsubstantiated in the Victor files, according to Steven Lasker.

025 **MARGARET JOHNSON** Clarence Williams' Blue Five

New York, c. Oct. 19, 1923

Margaret Johnson – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

71972-B	If I Let You Get Away With It Once You'll Do It All Of The Time	OK 8107,	Doc DOCD-5436
71973-B	E Flat Blues	OK 8107,	Doc DOCD-5436

Thomas Morris, Sidney Bechet, Clarence Williams and Buddy Christian are certain. But, although I am certain that it really is Irvis because of tone, vibrato and legato playing, I miss his 6/8th phrasing which – at that early date - would make his identity clearer.

Notes:

- Storyville 14: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

- Lord, Clarence Williams p68: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

“All sources seem to agree on the personnel.”

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Thomas Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Sidney Bechet, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Tom Morris –c; Charlie Irvis –tb; Sidney Bechet –ss; Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian –bj

026 **EVA TAYLOR & LAWRENCE LOMAX**

New York, c. Nov. 10, 1923

Eva Taylor, Lawrence Lomax – voc duet;

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop;

Clarence Williams – pno

72028-C	Old Fashioned Love	OK 8114,	Doc DOCD-5409
72029-B	Open Your Heart	OK 8114,	Doc DOCD-5409

Personnel seems to be as given in all sources. With Irvis Clarence certainly had a better and individual trombonist who was not yet with Ellington at this time. The music sounds a bit strange in comparison of all we have heard before.

Notes:

- Storyville 14: Thomas Morris (cnt); John Masefield (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

- Lord, Clarence Williams p69: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno) “Clarence is not mentioned on the label of this record, but perhaps Okeh omitted that purposely because this is a different kind of music than that associated with Clarence's name. Lomax, with the heavier voice, sings melody most of the time, with Eva taking the harmony part. The ensemble is subdued behind the vocalists, although Bechet is immediately recognizable.”

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Tom Morris –c; Charlie Irvis –tb; Sidney Bechet –ss; Clarence Williams –p

027 PERRY BRADFORD'S JAZZ PHOOLS	New York,	Feb. 1924
unknown, Bubber Miley – tpt; <i>Charlie Irvis</i> – tbn; <i>Otto Hardwick</i> – alt; unknown – alt, clt; (<i>Albert Happy Caldwell?</i>) – ten; Perry Bradford – pno; <i>Elmer Snowden</i> – bjo; <i>Harry Hull</i> – bbs		
1668-1	Charlestown, South Carolina	Pm 20309, Frog DGF 56
1668-2	Charlestown, South Carolina	Pm 20309, Timeless CBC 1-073
1669-1	Hoola Boola Dance	Pm 20309, Frog DGF 56
1669-3	Hoola Boola Dance	Pm 20309, Timeless CBC 1-073

It seems that we have one of those complete take-overs of bands here that have been mentioned in my earlier articles on the Perry Bradford recordings. Just as Clarence Williams did in January 1926 Bradford obviously engaged part of the Ellington band – Snowden still the leader in early February 1924, but replaced by George Francis later on Feb. 22, 1923 – adding a tenor sax and a tuba player and Bradford himself on piano.

Re trumpet players, I would like to follow Scherman/Eriksson assuming Bubber Miley and an unknown colleague who stays very much in the background and obviously plays straight parts. This man is impossible to identify, but certainly is not the exuberant Johnny Dunn as we know him. We hear a trombone player – unlisted by Rust – who very probably is Charlie Irvis stylistically and tonally, although not as distinct as desirable.

On clarinet we hear a musician who might be found with Mamie Smith on her session of August 31, 1926. A clarinet player, who plays in a much more fashionable and modern style than Bushell – he himself denying his presence – or Fuller, who is usually listed for this very Mamie Smith date, with interesting melodic phrases - unheard of by Fuller – especially in 'I Once Was Yours' and a completely different vibrato.

On alto then we find a sax player with a romantically singing legato style, rather uncommon for this time. When assuming Miley's and Irvis' presence, who might be easier to suggest than Otto Hardwick, at this time with the Washingtonians at the Hollywood Club. The style is Hardwick's, only the tone is a bit harsh but cannot exclude the possibility of Hardwick's presence.

Contrary to Scherman/Eriksson's statement, the tenor sax player plays on both titles and can easily be heard on the second title unisono with the trumpet in the verse and later behind the prominent alto. As with the trumpet players I have been following their assumption of Hawkins on tenor, only that I wonder why he does not solo. But I do have a better proposal in Albert Happy Caldwell who was one of the not so many tenor sax players at this time playing in this advanced manner. Hawkins had not been influential that early and consequently there were few other tenor sax players playing in his very own style. And Hawkins is not known to have played or even soloed on clarinet that early. The riff the tenorist plays in the last chorus of the first title seems to be ad-libbed and has a distinct Hawkins flavour. Also, this player has been left out by Rust.

I hear Bradford's typical piano tinkling behind the clarinet solo of the first title, avoiding all the bass notes as he mostly does. On the second title he delivers some more essential and supporting playing. I would suggest to listen to the banjo breaks in the verse of the second title. To me this is Elmer Snowden, very different from Mitchell and Speed. And in early February the Washingtonians still were Snowden's band, Snowden leaving later that month (Dutton, Birth of a Band, Storyville 80-44). The tuba might be Hull as listed in Rust or might even have been Bob Escudero brought over from the Henderson band by Hawkins.

So, I am convinced that we have 4/5 of the early Ellington band here, together with some colleagues from other bands.

Notes:

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

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Johnny Dunn, Bubber Miley – c; Herb Flemming – tb-dir; ? Garvin Bushell – Herschel Brassfield – cl-as; ? Leroy Tibbs – p; Samuel Speed – bj; ?Harry Hull – bb.

- Schermann/Eriksson: Bubber Miley, unknown (tp); prob Charlie Irvis (tb); poss Garvin Bushell (cl, ss); poss Herschel Brassfield (as); Coleman Hawkins (ts -1,2); Leroy Tibbs (p); Samuel Speed (bj); poss Harry Hull (bb). "Rust lists two trumpets, Johnny Dunn and Bubber Miley. One of them is prominent and is most certainly BM, the other one can be heard faintly in the background and is impossible to identify aurally. The latest edition of Rust doesn't list the trombonist and tenor sax player, whom we have identified as Charlie Irvis and Coleman Hawkins respectively, the latter audible only in the first title (which, incidentally, has nothing to do with James P. Johnson's famous composition). An earlier edition of Rust has Herb Flemming as trombonist and leader, but this seems unlikely aurally."

- Bushell/Tucker p. 159 "I doubt if I was playing clarinet on this session, because at the time I was playing saxophone with Wooding and wouldn't have taken a clarinet date. That sounds like Brassfield on saxophone. I don't think Bubber Miley would have been on a date with Johnny Dunn, since by this time he'd established himself down at the Kentucky Club with Ellington." (Miley joined the Washingtonians at the Hollywood Café (later Kentucky Club) in the fall of 1923! KBR).

Discernible differences of takes:

1668-1	tpt chorus after bridge: tpt plays 3 identical 2-bar phrases, starts 7 th bar with same phrase, altering melody in bar 8
1668-2	tpt chorus after bridge: tpt plays 3 identical 2-bar phrases, continuing 7 th bar with different melody
1669-1	2 nd verse (after 8-bar intro and 1 st 16-bar verse): bar 3/4 tenor tries to find his part behind alto – silent on first 3 beats
1669-2	2 nd verse (after 8-bar intro and 1 st 16-bar verse): bar 3/4 tenor in harmony with alto throughout

028 GEORGE McCLENNON'S JAZZ DEVILS	New York,	May 09, 1924
Thomas Morris – cnt; (<i>John Lindsey</i>) – tbn; George McClellon – clt; (<i>George Scott</i>) – alt; Clarence Williams – pno; unknown – bjo; (<i>Louis Cottrell</i>) – dms		
72512-B	Box Of Blues	OK 8143, Jazz Oracle BDW 8022
72513-B	Dark Alley Blues	OK 8143, Jazz Oracle BDW 8022

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

For this session Rust*6 lists the personnel as below (see Notes). The Jazz Oracle CD booklet follows this statement. Tom Lord's Clarence Williams (1976) lists the same with some reservations and the following statement: "Rust is the only previous source to list this as a Clarence Williams session. His listing is undoubtedly a result of a Record Research (i.e. 66) article. Williams mentioned Morris and Irvis. Since Rust's listing (Rust*3?), it's felt that the identity of the cornetist is not absolutely certain. The alto player here is aurally the same man as on Virginia Liston's OK 8138 (January 7, 1924). The estimation of the date is from Rust."

Trumpet/cornet: In an attempt to sort out all the 'impossibles' in the discographically listed appearances of Thomas Morris, I have – together with an expert listening group – not been able to deny Morris' presence here. This tpt/cnt player shows all the characteristics of Morris as listed in my article in Names& Numbers 49/23: "Morris' playing is characterized by a lot of (mainly) use of mute (plunger?), the tendency to repeat short simple phrases three or four times in a row, a blues-oriented playing, frequent use of blue-notes and a rather unsecure tone and pitch". So, for me this is certainly Morris.

Trombone: The trombonist certainly is not Irvis. Irvis owns a mainly linear style of playing which cannot be heard here. This man here plays rather vertical phrases. His assured playing marks an experienced player who seems to come from the South. He frequently uses an end phrase in his solos which is familiar from Kid Ory's playing with Armstrong, Oliver or Morton. Yet I feel unable to put a name to him. In the light of John Lindsey's assumed presence on the following recording session I am inclined also to take this man in consideration.

Alto sax: The proposed presence of George Scott on alto-sax might seem highly speculative but will be explained in the sessions of August and September 1926. I only maintain that he is the same player as on the named sessions. But I do not hear a distinct correspondence to the Victoria Liston session player as stated by Lord below (Joe Garland).

Piano: As Clarence Williams was an important A&R man for Okeh records in New York. In this function he introduced George McClennon to records. Judging from the simple piano pounding in 4/4 rhythm Clarence very certainly is the man on piano.

Banjo: I have no name to propose for the banjo player. Concerning this I have to lament the non-existence of a detailed study of Harlem banjo styles! Only, that the banjo player "tremolos" very much which is completely untypical of Buddy Christian or other banjoists from the Clarence Williams stable. Accordingly, Christian can simply be ruled out.

Drums: I hear frequent woodblock playing in the background and from the sound and pitch of the cymbal crashes I would suggest Piron's drummer Louis Cottrell, also because I hope to show that the Piron band had very strong hands in this and the next McClennon sessions.

Last but not least: McClennon's piping clarinet has not to be proved. He is always there.

Notes:

- Rust*2: Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George McClennon (clt); unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian? (bjo); unknown (dms).

- Rust*3: Tom Morris -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; George McClennon -cl; ?Bob Fuller -as; Clarence Williams -p; ?Buddy Christian -bj; unknown -d.

- Rust*4: Tom Morris -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; George McClennon -cl; Bob Fuller -as; Clarence Williams -p; Buddy Christian -bj; unknown -d.

- Rust*6: probably: Tom Morris, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; George McClennon, cl; Bob Fuller, as; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj; unknown, d.

- Tom Lord, Clarence Williams, p. 84: poss Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George McClennon (clt); poss Bob Fuller (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); poss Buddy Christian (bjo); unknown (dms): "Rust is the only previous source to list this as a Clarence Williams session. His listing is undoubtedly a result of a Record Research (i.e. 66) article. Williams mentioned Morris and Irvis. Since Rust's listing (Rust*3?), it's felt that the identity of the cornetist is not absolutely certain. The alto player here is aurally the same man as on Virginia Liston's OK 8138 (January 7, 1924). The estimation of the date is from Rust."

029 EVA TAYLOR	Clarence Williams' Harmonizers	New York,	c. May 16, 1924
Eva Taylor – voc;			
Peter Bocage – cnt; John Lindsey – tbn; Lorenzo Tio – clt;			
Clarence Williams – pno			
72531-B	When You're Tired Of Me (Just Let Me Know)	OK 8145,	Doc DOCD-5409
72532-A	Ghost Of The Blues	OK 8145,	Doc DOCD-5409

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

After long listening sessions and consecutive discussion our listening team agrees that this trumpet/cornet player is not Thomas Morris (JO decidedly persisted in Morris), but is probably Peter Bocage of the Piron band, then in New York and under Williams' aegis and management. Lorenzo Tio had earlier already been identified as clarinetist, although the clarinet is sometimes reminiscent of the way Bechet plays, and one title was indeed issued on an LP otherwise devoted to Bechet accompaniments. Therefore the trombonist's identity can be seen in John Lindsey - Piron's trombone player - and comparison with Piron's recordings seems to indicate this. Clarence Williams very probably is on piano.

'Ghost Of The Blues' has also been recorded by the Piron band.

Notes:

- Storyville 15: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Lorenzo Tio (clt); Clarence Williams (pno)

- Lord, Clarence Williams p87: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Lorenzo Tio (clt); Clarence Williams (pno) "This next session offers Lorenzo Tio as clarinetist. He came North with the Piron Orchestra and played on their recordings made in New York. Sometime this year the orchestra returned to New Orleans, but Tio remained in New York. Eva has suggested Tio as the clarinetist on this date. He should be considered as a possibility on other recording dates, as well. Eva states: "I'm sure he played on more than one record with Clarence. I am also sure he played with Joe Jordan's outfit, too." There seems to be agreement on most of the personnel with the exception of the clarinet. Elliott was suggested earlier, but Tio seems to be a more logical choice upon hearing the record."

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; poss Lorenzo Tio, clt; Clarence Williams, pno

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Tom Morris -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; ? Lorenzo Tio -cl; Clarence Williams -p

KBR: for this session Thomas Morris has formerly been listed as cnt player, but this probably is not a Th. Morris item!

This again seems to be a contingent from the Piron band.

JO: Cornet work on Ghost Of The Blues seems more similar to Morris than to Bocage... although the Piron version has a fairly strict arrangement, which may have called for a different approach. I do hear slight similarities – yet Bocage employs a vibrato not apparent on the vocal version, and this cornetist has a lazier, more behind-the-beat delivery. The cornet on When You're Tired Of Me (Just Let Me Know) also seems characteristic of Morris.

DB: not Morris items. The cornet is too busy. I hear the same band on both sides and can accept Piron although agree 'Michigan' is different in effect, the balance is same. Don't associate Bocage with wa-wa but cite Ida G. Brown 'Jail House Blues'. That is a N.O. trombone.

MR: I agree that the cnt is not Morris. Bocage is possible as is Tio, although the clt is sometimes reminiscent of the way Bechet plays and one title was indeed issued on an LP otherwise devoted to Bechet accompaniments. I assume that the compiler originally thought it was Bechet and then had second thoughts.

030 SARA MARTIN	Clarence Williams' Harmonizers	New York,	Jun. 04, 1924
Sara Martin – voc;			
Peter Bocage or (Thomas Morris) – cnt; John Lindsey – tbn; Lorenzo Tio – clt;			
Clarence Williams – pno			
72592-B	He's Never Gonna Throw Me Down	OK 8154,	Doc DOCD-5397

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

This possibly is not Thomas Morris as identified before but Peter Bocage, and the trombone player definitely is not Irvis with his legato style! Instead he shows a somewhat dated staccato style using some triplet and 7/8 phrasing which is compatible with Aaron Thompson's playing on the Red Onion Jazz Babies sides. But Clarence's relation to Aaron Thompson – then A. Russell Wooding's band manager and probably trombonist – did not begin until November 1924, the time of Thompson participating in the Red Onion Jazz Babies recordings. Soprano playing has nothing of Elliott's characteristics and certainly the player is someone else trying to copy Bechet. Or is it clarinet? Because of the notes heard and what is said before I am tempted to assume the possible presence of John Lindsey and Lorenzo Tio here. Tio played clarinet and tenor sax in the Piron band and it would be very easy for him to switch over to soprano, the more so as Williams obviously was eager at the time to find a temporary substitute for Bechet. But it still is not certain whether we hear a soprano here or a clarinet. Regarding this the identity of the trumpet/cornet player could also be questioned as Peter Bocage's. I would follow Tom Lord in his suggestion as to banjo player or not (see below in the notes!).

Notes:

- Storyville 15: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott (sop); Clarence Williams (pno)
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams p 92: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); possibly Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno)
 "Bechet and Bailey have been mentioned as clarinetist at times, but aural evidence indicates Elliott (No! – KBR). Bailey was not yet in New York, according to WCA. Rust and Godrich & Dixon both list a banjo (Buddy Christian) for this side, however I do not hear one. The heavy chordal playing of the piano (in the absence of the banjo) does suggest a banjo, particularly in this accustical recording."
 - BGR *2: Thomas Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; poss Ernest Elliott, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
 - BGR *3,*4: Thomas Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; poss Ernest Elliott, sop; Clarence Williams, pno
 - Rust *2: Tom Morris - c; Charlie Irvis - tb; ? Ernest Elliott - ss; Clarence Williams - p; Buddy Christian - bj
 - Rust *3,*4: Tom Morris - c; Charlie Irvis - tb; ? Ernest Elliott - ss; Clarence Williams - p; Buddy Christian - bj (some authorities say no bj used).
 - Rust *6: Tom Morris - c; Charlie Irvis - tb; ? Ernest Elliott - ss; Clarence Williams - p;
KBR: rather simple tbn, could be Lindsey or perhaps A. Thompson of later CW Blue Five fame. clt (or sop?) player tries to imitate Bechet, did Elliott do such things?
DB: rather busy for Tom and no disputable licks, similarities player 026-1, 027. I put Tom here as probable. Think clarinet but indeed hard to tell. Is not Elliott's clarinet more readily distinguishable as clarinet? Not enough for me to comment tbn.
MR: Morris OK, tbn possibly Lindsey, clt probably not Elliott. In view of 031 and the suspected presence of Lindsey we might think about Tio, but did Tio ever play soprano?

031 SIPPIE WALLACE	Clarence Williams' Harmonizers	New York,	c. Jun. 13, 1924
Sippie Wallace – voc;			
Peter Bocage or (Thomas Morris) – cnt; John Lindsey – tbn; Lorenzo Tio – clt;			
Clarence Williams – pno			
72606-B	Sud Bustin Blues	OK 8177,	Doc DOCD-5399
72607-B	Wicked Monday Morning Blues	OK 8177,	Doc DOCD-5399

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

Having heard Thomas Morris here in the past I know believe this cornetist to be Peter Bocage of the Piron band. The trombonist certainly is not Irvis, but could be John Lindsey or Aaron Thompson instead. I am unable to hear a banjo. Clarence Williams is undoubted. Just as with the foregoing session of Sara Martin we hear a soprano player who stylistically certainly is not Elliott, but a Bechet copyist. Or is it a clarinet again? There is no musical comparison between Elliott and this much better musician, whose name is unknown today. As before with Sara Martin I see the possibility that this again is part of the Piron band, thus Bocage, Lindsey and Tio. Only, that they are not on their homely ground.

'Sud Bustin Blues' has also been recorded by the Piron band.

Notes:

- Storyville 15: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams p 93: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); possibly Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno) "It seems to be the same group as on the Sara Martin session, ca. June 1, 1924, with the addition of a banjo. Certainly, it is the same clarinetist, possibly Ernest Elliott. Here again, Bailey has been previously mentioned as clarinetist, but WCA points out that Bailey was not in New York at this time. It certainly doesn't sound like Bailey."
 - BGR *2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; poss Ernest Elliott, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
 - Rust *3,*4,*6: Tom Morris, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; ? Ernest Elliott, cl; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj
KBR: rather simple tbn, could be Lindsey or perhaps A. Thompson of later CW Blue Five fame, clt (or sop?) player tries to imitate Bechet, did Elliott do such things?, not certain of bjo here, although listed in Rust. Same as before.
DB: more typical for Tom. Rest must remain unknown. Hear no banjo.

032 LAURA SMITH	Clarence Williams' Harmonizers	New York,	c. Aug. 01, 1924
Laura Smith – voc;			
Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn; Ernest Elliott – clt;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo			
72719-B	Texas Moaner Blues	OK 8157,	Doc DOCD-5429
72720-B	I'm Gonna Get Myself A Real Man	OK 8186,	Doc DOCD-5429
72721-B	Has Anybody Seen My Man ?	OK 8157,	Doc DOCD-5429

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

Morris and Williams are obvious. The banjo might be a bit too heavy to be Christian. But the trombonist very certainly is not Charlie Irvis with his legato trombone, but could rather be John Mayfield of the early Clarence Williams stable with his simple staccato style. There is little clarinet to hear, but the square quarter tone phrasing and the downward smear in bar four of the introduction of 'Has Anybody Seen My Man?' are typically Elliott and seem to be proof of his presence.

Notes:

- Storyville 15: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p97: Thomas Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo) "There is agreement on the personnel with the exception of the clarinet. TKD lists Buster Bailey, however Bailey was not in New York, and aural evidence suggests Elliott."
 - BGR *2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ernest Elliott, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

- Rust *3,*4,*6 Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ernest Elliott, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

033 MARGARET JOHNSON Clarence Williams' Harmonizers	New York,	c. Sep. 05, 1924
Margaret Johnson – voc;		
Peter Bocage or Thomas Morris, (Joe King Oliver) – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn; Ernest Elliott – alt;		
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo		
72789-B I Love You Daddy, But You Don't Mean Me No Good	OK 8230,	Doc DOCD-5436
72790-B Nobody Knows The Way I Feel This Mornin'	OK 8262,	Doc DOCD-5436
72791-B Absent Minded Blues	OK 8262,	Doc DOCD-5436

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

It is very seldom (if at all?) that we hear two trumpets/cornets in early Clarence Williams accompanying groups. But here something unusual must have happened! But probably because of the presence of two cornets Williams wrote some minor arrangements for the four horns present. This is the reason that we do not hear more of the alto saxophone than arranged passages of his part. And from what we can hear nothing substantial can be said about the reed man. He may be Elliott, but lacking any distinct elements of his style as listed in my Elliott investigation, the player might also be someone else. But when compared to Elliott's alto playing on the succeeding Clara Smith session it becomes apparent that his skills on the saxophone had improved and become smoother by now, which would coincide with what can be heard here.

The second cornet surprisingly sounds just like Oliver, and has been suggested to be him in earlier years (see notes below!). And this is the unusual case here! Oliver spent some time in September in NY as guest of C. Williams, but nobody knows how long he stayed. He recorded with Butterbeans and Susie on Sep. 12 or 14. When hearing these sides for the first time I immediately felt that the breaks in 'I Love You Daddy' (at 1-23 and 2-32) with their sharp conet tone and the typical phrases had to be Oliver. At that time, I did not know that he had been suggested before. Then in 'Absent Minded Blues' at 1-42 he can be discriminated again as Morris enters at about 1-47 (I have to thank Dave Brown for affirmation and sorting out the exact places where Oliver can possibly be heard). I do therefore not have any sincere doubts as to Oliver's presence on these sides! It has equally to be stated that there is absolutely nothing to suggest Bubber Miley on trumpet! Morris is undisputed, but here Peter Bocage's presence should also be considered as the first trumpet sounds somewhat more secure than Morris usually does.

The trombonist again is not Irvis and might rather be John Mayfield because of stylistic reasons and because he was frequently used by Williams at the time.

Clarence Williams undisputed. But we can certainly see again that statements or assertions of the participants of the recording sessions cannot be trusted in any case!

To me the banjo sounds more like Bocage than Christian, just like on the session above.

Notes:

- Storyville 15: Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley (cnts); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)

- BGR *2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; poss Ernest Elliott, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

- Rust *3,*4,*6: Tom Morris, Bubber Miley -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; ? Ernest Elliott, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo

- Lord, Clarence Williams p 98: Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Ernest Elliott (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo) "The session includes two cornets, with Morris credited as one. Davies lists the other as King Oliver. TKD (T. Keith Daniel – KBR) has a note that his personnel (which agrees with the one below (above – KBR)) is from Williams on hearing the disc, "however, some authorities, including BALR (who in the world is this? – KBR), believe that Joe 'King' Oliver is one of the trumpet men. It is possible that the session took place during his brief visit to New York." WCA (Walter C. Allen – KBR) thinks the cornet is not Oliver. Clarence Williams (to WCA) identified the cornets as given, below (above – KBR). The alto is agreed upon by most as Elliott. The estimation of the date is from Godrich and Dixon. The preceding matrix is assigned to Ernest V. Stoneman, recorded September 4, 1924. The succeeding matrix is assigned to an unknown foreign-language item, recorded on September 9th."

- L. Wright, King Oliver p 42/43: "He stayed with Clarence Williams and Eva Taylor and went to see Jack Kapp to try and secure a recording contract, but to no avail. Whilst in town, the two old friends went down to Jersey City to watch the Harry Wills – Luis Angel Firpo fight (which Wills won) on Thursday, 11 September and, the following day, Clarence invited Joe to make a couple of sides backing Butterbeans and Susie, no doubt to help out with his train fare back to Chicago. The duration of Joe Oliver's stay in New York is not known, but it is unlikely to have been any longer than was necessary to complete the business he had in mind and, on his return to Chicago, he resumed leadership of the band at the Lincoln Gardens." (Oliver had an advertisement in the Chicago Defender which was issued on 6 September 1924 saying: "At Liberty. The celebrated King Oliver's Jazz Band 8 men playing 15 instruments. Open for engagements in or out of Chicago." This would mean that the advertisement had been ordered in the early days of September. As the exact recording date of this session has to be placed between 4 September and 9 September (see above), Oliver's presence might certainly be seen as possible – KBR)

- Scherman, Eriksson, Bubber Miley discography: Thomas Morris, poss Bubber Miley (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); poss Ernest Elliott (as); Clarence Williams (p); Buddy Christian (bj) "The above personnel, with definitely Bubber Miley on 2nd trumpet, is listed by Dixon-Godrich, Rust and Tom Lord in his Clarence Williams discography. Lord notes that "some authorities believe that Joe 'King' Oliver is one of the trumpet players", but we find this very unlikely. The more prominent of the two sounds like Morris. The other one is more in the background but could possibly be Bubber Miley."

034 KANSAS CITY FIVE	New York,	Sep. 18-22, 1924
Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; (Bob Fuller) – clt, ten/cms;		
Louis Hooper – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo		
31709 Believe Me, Hot Mama	Ajax 17078, Jazz Archives No.131 159252	
31711 St. Louis Blues	Ajax 17078, Jazz Archives No.131 159252	
31713 Louisville Blues	Ajax 17072, Jazz Archives No.131 159252	
31715 Temperamental Papa	Ajax 17072, Jazz Archives No.131 159252	

These very familiar band recordings of the early Harlem period probably are in everybody's collection since VJM Records in GB issued a LP half a century ago. And nobody since seems to have doubted the trombonist's identity! This is definitely Charlie Irvis on the slide-horn here – not Frazier! - and with a very uncommon bucket-mute on the first title. Since this is the time Duke Ellington took over the band from Snowden, Snowden departed – and returned at about just this time, Charlie Irvis has to be first choice for trombonist when Miley and Snowden are around (see Perry Bradford's Jazz Phoools of February 1924). I am not certain of Bob Fuller's presence here as I think that he is a better clarinetist than what is heard here. And this player's doubling on tenor sax (not alto as in Rust) or c-melody-sax (?) is absolutely below standard and only funny.

Notes:

- RR 77-8: *Bubber Miley, Charlie Green, Bob Fuller, Louis Hooper, Elmer Snowden*
 - *W. Bryant, Ajax Records: no personnel per Hooper*
 - *Rust*2: Bubber Miley (cnt); Jake Frazier (tbn); Bob Fuller (clt); Louis Hooper, Arthur Ray or Mike Jackson (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - *Rust*3,*4,*6: Bubber Miley -c; Jake Frazier -tb; Bob Fuller -cl -as; Louis Hooper -p; Elmer Snowden -bj.*
 - *Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: Bubber Miley (tp), Jake Frazier, (tb); Bob Fuller (cl, as); Louis Hooper, (p); Elmer Snowden (bj).*
 - *VJM 175, B. Hitchens, Choo Choo Jazzers: Bubber Miley (t); poss Charlie Irvis (tb); Bob Fuller (cl, as, cmel?); Louis Hooper (p); Elmer Snowden (bj). "A new (tb) is present similar to 9812 below (Edison 51478 – KBR). KBR thinks this is Ch. Irvis and I agree. However, Irvis seems not previously to have been linked by researchers with this group. I am concerned that Irvis is not mentioned at all in the index to Bastin. Sax seems to be Cmcl (the band modulates before and after its solo). The (bj) continues behind the sax and therefore E. Snowden is not the cmel player."*

035 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE

New York, Oct. 17, 1924

Louis Armstrong – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop, clt;
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
 72914-B *Texas Moaner Blues*

OK 8171, *Hot 'n Sweet FDC 5109*

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

With Armstrong's arrival in New York we now enter the third period of Clarence Williams' Blue Five and affiliate band recordings (the first period dominated by Thomas Morris and the second – in my ears/eyes – as Clarence Williams Harmonizers, shaped by the presence of Piron's musicians).

We hear two of the greatest musicians of classic jazz together in one band – they worked together on only two occasions later in their lives – lead by a somewhat third-rate pianist. But the result is phantastic. And: here Armstrong recorded even earlier than with his New York leader and employer Fletcher Henderson. Clarence certainly must have had a sharp and keen eye and sense of business.

In my eyes the trombonist is everybody, but never Charlie Irvis. Irvis has a very distinct own legato style which cannot be heard here! I assume this man to be John Mayfield from the sessions before. The style certainly seems to be Mayfield's. His style is simpler and more staccato and not as individual as Irvis'. (Oh, I know! In every discography Irvis is listed, but I am certain it is not he!) But after all, he is not so bad and can be heard to advantage on these sides, just as on sessions 016 - 018 of this investigation. Yet, as this was the time that Clarence switched over to use Aaron Thompson, it faintly might as well be the latter.

Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz* p109, gives an analyses and transcription of Armstrong's solo on 'Texas Moaner Blues'.

Notes:

- *Storyville 16: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - *Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - *Lord, Clarence Williams p107: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)* "Whilst in New York, Louis played on several sessions organized by Clarence Williams. Williams' musical skills were limited, but as a session organizer he was as shrewd as they come; wise enough to capitalize on the fact that the two greatest improvisers of the era, Armstrong and Sidney Bechet (both working in New York), could be brought together in a recording studio. Realizing that there was more than a possibility of up-staging, Williams took fastidious care in allocating an even amount of solo space to the two giants. To hear the musical thrust and parry of these two men, both pioneering the same concept of swing, is one of the great jazz listening experiences. Both submerge individual aspiration during the ensembles, but come solo time and each is out to cao the other's performance. On 'Texas Moaner Blues' (the first of the series) Louis plays a gem of a solo and brings it to conclusion with a down ward run covering almost two octaves. Bechet, to combine power and invention, takes his chorus on soprano saxophone, and promptly inserts an ascending double octave glissando. He returns to clarinet for a final chorus, and again both masters pool their talents for a classic example of ensemble rapport." (Max Jones/John Chilton) It's hard to say enough about this historic and exciting association. The personnel seems to be agreed upon for this first recording except that Davies includes a washboard."

036 VIRGINIA LISTON Clarence Williams' Blue Five

New York, Oct. 17, 1924

Virginia Liston – voc;
Louis Armstrong – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop, clt;
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
 72915-B *Early In The Morning*
 72916-B *You've Got The Right Key, But The Wrong Keyhole*

OK 8171, *Hot 'n Sweet FDC 5109*
OK 8173, *Hot 'n Sweet FDC 5109*

No Charlie Irvis at this session!

These two titles have been recorded together with 'Texas Moaner Blues' on the same session. So, everything said about the above session also applies to these two titles. And again, it is not Irvis!

Notes:

- *Storyville 16: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - *BGR*2,*3,*4: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - *Rust*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - *Lord, Clarence Williams p108: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*

037 KANSAS CITY FIVE

New York, late Oct. 1924

Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; (Lorenzo Tio) – clt;
Louis Hooper – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo
 105643 *Get Yourself A Monkey Man And Make Him Strut His Stuff*
 105644 *Louisville Blues*

PA 036175, *Jazz Archives No.131 159252*
PA 036175, *Jazz Archives No.131 159252*

Miley, Hooper and Snowden are certain. Yet, it is definitely Charlie Irvis on trombone here (compare this player's legato style to Irvis' on the Washingtonians 'Choo Choo' and 'Rainey Nights')! This is not Charlie Green as in RR 77! The clarinetist does not have Fuller's fast vibrato and exuberant phrasing, and he plays in a "Western" style. Furthermore, he does not double on alto as given by Rust. Lorenzo Tio certainly is an assumption with a reasonable degree of sense.

Notes:

- RR 77-8: *Bubber Miley, Charlie Green, Bob Fuller, Louis Hooper, Elmer Snowden*
 - Rust*2: *Bubber Miley (cnt); Jake Frazier (tbn); Bob Fuller (clt); Louis Hooper, Arthur Ray or Mike Jackson (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: *Bubber Miley -c; Jake Frazier -tb; Bob Fuller -cl -as; Louis Hooper -p; Elmer Snowden -bj.*

038 **ROSA HENDERSON** the Kansas City Five New York, Oct. 28, 1924
 Rosa Henderson – voc;
 Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; unknown – clt;
 unknown – pno; unknown - bjo
 9812-A Don't Advertise Your Man Ed 51478, Document DOCD-1012
 9812-B Don't Advertise Your Man Ed 51478, Document DOCD-5403
 9812-C Don't Advertise Your Man Ed 51478 not on LP/CD
Note: takes issued on Document DOCD-5403 and IAJRC 49 (LP) seem to be identical.

I do hear Bubber Miley and Charlie Irvis! There are instrumental phrases by both of them that are unmistakably theirs as we know them from early Ellington records. The distinct modesty of both might be seen as a sort of intimidation they may have felt in an Edison recording studio, rather than as a state of intoxication, that probably was impossible there.
 I do not hear Fuller. But I do not hear Lorenzo Tio either, as assumed for the Kansas City Five before. The clarinetist sounds a bit familiar, but I do not know where to place him. He plays with a reedy, voluminous sound and wide vibrato and seems to be of "Western" origin. The pianist is only faintly audible, but plays arranged passages together with the horn men. His style is far from Hooper's. The banjo player displays very modest banjo sounds far from Snowden's exuberant style.

Notes:

- *Jazz Directory Vol.4: unknown personnel*
 - *BGR*2: prob personnel: Bubber Miley, Tom Morris or Rex Stewart, cnt; Jake Frazier, tbn; Bob Fuller. clt; Louis Hooper, pno; Elmer Snowden, bjo*
 - *BGR*3: prob Bubber Miley, Tom Morris or Rex Stewart, cnt; prob Jake Frazier, tbn; prob Bob Fuller. clt; prob Louis Hooper, pno; prob Elmer Snowden, bjo*
 - *BGR*4: unknown, c; prob Jake Frazier, tb; prob Bob Fuller, cl; prob Louis Hooper, p; prob Elmer Snowden, bj.*
 - *Rust*3: ? Bubber Miley, c; ? Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p; Elmer Snowden, bj.*
 - *Rust*4,*6: ? Bubber Miley, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p; Elmer Snowden, bj.*
 - *Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: Bubber Miley (tp), Jake Frazier (tb), Bob Fuller (cl), Louis Hooper (p), Elmer Snowden (bj). "The alternative take (-A or -C), which is aurally different from take -B and confirms (sic) our believe that B. Miley is the trumpet player on this date."*

Discernible differences of takes:

- 9812-A: *Introduction: trumpet starts alone on beat one, trombone following on beat two*
 9812-B: *Introduction: trumpet and trombone start simultaneously on beat one*
 9812-C: *not reissued*

039 **HELEN GROSS** Kansas City Five New York, Oct. 28, 1924
 Helen Gross – voc;
 Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; unknown – clt;
 unknown – pno; unknown – bjo; unknown - bell
 9813-A Undertaker's Blues Ed unissued, Document DOCD-5477
 9813-B Undertaker's Blues Ed unissued not on LP/CD
 9813-C Undertaker's Blues Ed unissued not on LP/CD

As this side seems to have been made on the same session as the above the same personnel is assumed to be responsible. My remarks as to the brass player's state of consciousness as before may therefore be considered. (Can this be a reason for rejecting this 'Undertaker's Blues' by the Edison company?) It is certainly Irvis on trombone (see trombone phrase at 3:14 min) as well as Miley on trumpet. The banjo player sounds too dry to be Snowden. The bell player might be anyone, particularly the singer herself, but probably not Joe Davis as he was not on the Edison bill.

Notes:

- *BGR*2: Bubber Miley, cnt; Jake Frazier, tbn; Bob Fuller, clt; Louis Hooper, pno; prob Elmer Snowden, bjo.*
 - *BGR*3: Bubber Miley, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper or Arthur Ray, p; prob Elmer Snowden, bj.*
 - *BGR*4: unknown, c; prob Jake Frazier, tb; prob Bob Fuller, cl; prob Louis Hooper, p; prob Elmer Snowden, bj, unknown, chimes.*
 - *Rust*3,*4: Bubber Miley -c; Jake Frazier -tb; Bob Fuller -cl; Louis Hooper -p; Elmer Snowden -bj.*
 - *Rust*6: ? Bubber Miley, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p; ? Elmer Snowden, bj.*
 - *Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: Bubber Miley (tp), Jake Frazier (tb), Bob Fuller (cl), Louis Hooper (p), Elmer Snowden (bj). "For the above Rosa Henderson/Helen Gross session, Dixon-Godrich have unknown (tp) and a "prob" before all the other musicians on the Rosa Henderson and before Frazier on the Gross title. Rust has ?BM (tp) and no reservation about the identity of the others. To our ears, it is definitely B. Miley on trumpet, and all the other musicians listed above are most certainly also present. Undertaker's Blues, which B. Miley recorded again with Rosa Henderson the following month, is an early example of a blues in a minor key. Also, it is interesting to note in both versions the quotation from Frédéric Chopin's "Funeral March" from Sonata No. 2, Opus 35, in B-flat minor, which Miley used later in his composition "Black And Tan Fantasy", first recorded with Duke Ellington April 7, 1927."*

Discernible differences of takes:

As only one of three takes of this title are reissued on CD, comparison is impossible.

040 **JULIA MOODY** New York, c. Oct. 29, 1924
 Julia Moody – voc;
 Bubber Miley – tpt (2); Charlie Irvis – tbn (1); Bob Fuller – clt;
 Louis Hooper – pno
 5693-3 Worried Blues Ban 1468, Document DOCD-5418
 5694-2 Mad Mama's Blues Ban 1451, Document DOCD-5418

I certainly hear Charlie Irvis here, and not Frazier because of stylistic reasons: legato against staccato playing. And Irvis' very personal legato harmonic melodies. And not to forget Irvis' partnership with Miley in the Snowden/Ellington band at the time! Bob Fuller's fast vibrato is distinct, as is Hooper's simple equal fours in his left hand.

Notes:

- RR 77-9: *Bubber Miley; Jake Frazier; Bob Fuller; Louis Hooper; Snowden.*
- BGR*2,*3,*4: *Bubber Miley, cnt; Jake Frazier, tbn; Bob Fuller, clt; Louis Hooper, pno.*
- Rust*3,*4,*6: *Bubber Miley, cnt; Jake Frazier, tbn; Bob Fuller, clt; Louis Hooper, pno.*
- Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, *Bubber Miley Discography: Bubber Miley (tp), Jake Frazier, (tb); Bob Fuller (cl), Louis Hooper, (p).*

041 THE WASHINGTONIANS

New York, c. Nov. 1924

Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Otto Hardwick – alt;
 Duke Ellington – pno, arr; *George Francis* – bjo; Sonny Greer – dms
 T-2005-2 Choo Choo (Gotta Hurry Home)
 T-2006-1 Rainy Nights

BD T-1002, Chronological Classics 539
 BD T-1002, Chronological Classics 539

This is the first record of the Duke Ellington band. And it is a classic, as it shows Ellington's talent to think and write in his very own inimitable musical way. All players in their recognized stylistic and characteristic individualities.

Notes:

- *Delaney, New Hot Discography, 1948: Bubber Miley (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); Otto Hardwick (as); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bjo); Sonny Greer (dm). "Early 1926"!*
- *Jazz Directory Vol. Three: Bubber Miley (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwick (alt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Sonny Greer (d). "Late 1926"!*
- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: *Bubber Miley (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwick (clt, alt); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Sonny Greer (dms).*

042 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE

New York, Dec. 17, 1924

Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop, sarrusophone;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;
 Eva Taylor – voc

73026-B Mandy, Make Up Your Mind
 73027-B I'm A Little Blackbird Looking For A Bluebird

OK 40260, Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109
 OK 40260, Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109

Well, what is there to say? The Blue Five in full flight, and Bechet on sarrusophone, a very peculiar reed instrument of the 19th century used for march music purposes. And here now, at last and after a year's time, we have Charlie Irvis on trombone with Clarence Williams' Blue Five again! Phantastic music! (The Clarence Williams' Harmonizers of the preceding sessions mainly have personnel of the Piron band.) Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz*, discusses Armstrong's solo on 'Mandy, Make Up Your Mind' at length, complete with notation.

Notes:

- *Storyville 16: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop/sarrusophone); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)*
- *Lord, Clarence Williams p117: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop/sarrusophone); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "Clarence finishes up the year with a winner. It's one of his best-known recordings, with an exciting group. Irvis is acknowledged as trombonist, and it's definitely Armstrong and Bechet. The personnel is confirmed by Charles Edward Smith, supposedly from Clarence's files."*
- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: *Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop/sarrusophone); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)*
- BGR*2: *Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Buster Bailey, sop; Sidney Bechet, sarrusophone; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo; Eva Taylor, voc. (They forgot to mark Bechet's taking over from Bailey! - KBR)*
- BGR*3,*4: *Louis Armstrong, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Sidney Bechet, ss/sarrusophone; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj; Eva Taylor v*

043 ALBERTA HUNTER Red Onion Jazz Babies

New York, Dec. 22, 1924

Alberta Hunter – voc; Clarence Todd – voc;
 Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – clt, sop;
 Lil Armstrong – pno; Buddy Christian - bjo

9246 Nobody Knows The Way I Feel This Mornin'
 9247-A Early Every Morn

Gnt 5626, Document DOCD-5424
 Gnt 5626, Document DOCD-5424

The accompanying band simply is the Gennett version of Clarence Williams' Blue Five, only, that Williams was fixed to Okeh by contract. His place at the piano is taken over by Louis Armstrong's wife Lil Hardin-Armstrong.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3: *Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Sidney Bechet, clt, sop; Lil Armstrong, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.*
- BGR*4: *Louis Armstrong, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Sidney Bechet, ss; Lil Armstrong, p; Buddy Christian, bj.*
- Rust*3,*4,*6: *Louis Armstrong -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Sidney Bechet -cl -ss; Lil Armstrong -p; Buddy Christian -bj; Clarence Todd -v.*

044 RED ONION JAZZ BABIES

New York, Dec. 22, 1924

Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop;
 Lil Armstrong – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;
 Alberta Hunter, Clarence Todd (as Beatty And Todd) – voc duet

9248-A Cake Walking Babies From Home

Gnt 5627, Chronological Classics 24-2

Again, the Gennett version of Clarence Williams' Blue Five with Lil Hardin-Armstrong at the piano, recorded at the same session as before.

Notes:

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (clt, sop); Lil Armstrong (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Clarence Todd and Josephine Beatty (Alberta Hunter) (vcl duet).
 - Rust*6: "Although Eva Taylor claimed to be the female vocalist on this side, the voice is unmistakably that of Alberta Hunter, who also recorded two solos sides accompanied by the Red Onion Jazz Babies at this session. (Taylor did sing on the Okeh version of this title, q.v. under Clarence Williams.)

045	MARGARET JOHNSON	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	Jan. 07 - 08, 1925
	Margaret Johnson – voc;			
	Bubber Miley - tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo			
73081-A		Who'll Chop Your Suey (When I'm Gone)?	OK 8193,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109
73082-B		Done Made A Fool Out Of Me	OK 8193,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109

For this session Louis seems not to have been on hand, and Clarence's second choice obviously was Bubber Miley. The trombonist certainly is not Aaron Thompson, but Charlie Irvis with his strong legato trombone. And what would have been more reasonable than that Miley brought his Ellington colleague along when they were free.

Notes:

- Storyville 16: Bubber Miley (cnt); Aaron Thompson (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo);
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p122: Bubber Miley (cnt); Aaron Thompson (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo) "For the first session of the new year Clarence uses Bubber Miley, rather than Louis. According to WCA, Louis, in Fletcher Henderson's band, was still in New York and would stay there until late June, 1925. Perhaps Louis wasn't available, or perhaps Clarence didn't want to completely discard his former sideman. Bechet holds a strong lead on both sides, especially on the first composition, his tune, with its provocative title. Most sources have listed Irvis as the trombonist, however, Rust lists Aaron Thompson."
 - BGR*2,*3,*4: Bubber Miley, cnt; Aaron Thompson, tbn; Sidney Bechet, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo "This session is stated to have begun late on 7 January and continued into the early hours of 8 January."
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Bubber Miley –c; Aaron Thompson –tb; Sidney Bechet –ss; Clarence Williams –p; Buddy Christian –bj

046	CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE		New York,	Jan. 08, 1925
	Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet – sop;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;			
	Eva Taylor – voc			
73083-A		Cake-Walking Babies From Home	OK 40321,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109
73084-B		Pickin' On Your Baby	OK 40330,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109

'Cake-Walking Babies' without any doubt is one of the hottest sides in classic jazz, with everyone in the studio swinging like mad. And listen to the glorious Bechet breaks, and then Armstrong blowing the roof off. A special detail: the three-quarter rhythm he plays in the last bars of the item against the four-quarter rhythm of the band. Phantastic!

'Pickin' On Your Baby' is Eva's tune, with Louis playing the melody in high register. There certainly were not many trumpeters at the time who could do this convincingly as Louis does.

Notes:

- Storyville 16: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p122: Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "The first side has the stomping excitement of Armstrong and Bechet playing together. The second side has a beautiful, almost straight, chorus by Louis, following Eva's vocal."
 - Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)
 - BGR*2: Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Buster Bailey, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo. (They forgot to mark Bechet's taking over from Bailey! - KBR)
 - BGR*3,*4: Louis Armstrong, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Sidney Bechet, ss; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj

047	CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE		New York,	Mar. 04, 1925
	Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Sidney Bechet, Buster Bailey – sop;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;			
	Eva Taylor – voc			
73204-A		Cast Away	OK 40330,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109
73205-A		Papa De-Da-Da	OK 8215,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 5109

There is real "schmaltz" in the first title, and everybody might have had a joyous time playing it. Great Louis again in the second tune, but I wonder where the third reed (alto) should be. I can only hear two sopranos, the first one played by Bechet, the second probably by Bailey, although Redman would not be impossible.

Notes:

- Storyville 16: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet, Buster Bailey (sop); Don Redman (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "There is some doubt as to the presence of the third reed."
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p124: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Sidney Bechet, Buster Bailey (sop); Don Redman (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "This session includes a waltz which he (Clarence Williams – KBR) recorded with this talented group. Most sources agree on their identities, except that TKD omits Redman and lists only two reeds. There is still some doubt as to the presence of the third reed. All reeds would probably be used on the first side. Armstrong's and Bailey's presence would indicate the possibility of Redman's presence, as he too was a member of Henderson's band."
 - Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt/sop); Sidney Bechet (sop); Don Redman (clt/alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)
 - BGR*2: Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Buster Bailey, clt, sop; Don Redman, clt, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo. (They still forgot to mark Bechet's taking over from Bailey! - KBR)

- BGR*3,*4: Louis Armstrong, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Sidney Bechet, Buster Bailey, ss; Don Redman, as; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj

048 THE WASHINGTONIANS	New York,	Sep. 1925
Clifton Pike Davis – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;		
Otto Hardwick – alt, cms; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;		
Duke Ellington – pno, arr; Fred Guy – bjo; Henry Bass Edwards – bbs; Sonny Greer – dms		
106250 I'm Gonna Hang Around My Sugar	PA 36333,	Chronological Classics 539
106251 Trombone Blues	PA 36333,	Chronological Classics 539

Listen to Hardwick's dominant position in the band. And hear Pike Davis' fiery and urgent trumpet playing, much in the Johnny Dunn manner. This is one of only 12 recording session he was part of. Irvis shows his individual legato style with long phrases, often displaying his strange 6/8 phrasing.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: unknown personnel.*

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 3: unknown personnel; tpt; tbn; 2 sax; Duke Ellington (p); bj; tu.*

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Pike Davis (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwick (clt, alt); Prince Robinson (clt, ten); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Bass Edwards (bbs).

049 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE	New York,	Oct. 06, 1925
Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Buster Bailey – sop; Don Redman – sop;		
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;		
Eva Taylor – voc		
73686-B Just Wait 'Til You See My Baby Do The Charleston	OK 8272,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 151222
73687-B Livin' High Sometimes	OK 8272,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 151222

I have to confess that I have difficulties to hear a second soprano distinctly, but in instances there seem to be two. The first – and loudest – of them certainly is Bailey. The other one might be Redman, but there is nothing to identify him stylistically, and in saying so I am only following the discographies. On trombone I believe to hear Irvis, although tonally there are similarities to Big Charlie Green, only that Green did not use to play legato as Irvis does here. Armstrong, Williams and Christian as given.

Notes:

- Storyville 17: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt/sop); Don Redman (clt or sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "It is difficult to determine whether some of the reed work might be soprano and clarinet or two sopranos."

- Lord, Clarence Williams p137: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt/sop); Don Redman (clt or sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "Louis Armstrong, Don Redman, and Buster Bailey returned to New York with the Henderson Orchestra, which was to stay in the city until approximately January 25, 1926. Clarence brought together another exciting Blue Five session. He continues the sound of cornet with soprano that he had inaugurated with Bechet, this time using Bailey and Redman. It is difficult to determine whether some of the reed work might be soprano and clarinet or two soprano saxes. TKD and Davies have listed Charlie Green as the trombonist. Goldman agrees. However, WCA adds his correction to TKD, indicating it is Irvis."

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt/sop); Don Redman (clt/alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Buster Bailey, clt, sop; Don Redman, clt or sop; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.

050 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE	New York,	Oct. 08, 1925
Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn; Buster Bailey – sop;		
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;		
Eva Taylor – voc		
73694-B Coal Cart Blues	OK 8245,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 151222
73695-B Santa Claus Blues	OK 8245,	Hot'n Sweet FDC 151222

Stylistically, this is unmistakably Charlie Green on trombone now. Bailey very fluent, but poorly swinging and too much to the fore, and Louis in heroic fashion. Absolutely great Blue Five recordings. Probably Green was the best trombonist for this kind of band and music.

Notes:

- Storyville 17: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Don Redman (clt); Buster Bailey (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "It is possible that Redman plays only on the first side."

- Lord, Clarence Williams p138: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Don Redman (clt); Buster Bailey (sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc) "... The same group returns, although Goldman lists Charlie Green on trombone. Here again the two reeds cause a little confusion. It is possible that Redman plays only on the first side. Sidney Bechet is quoted in TKD as saying that both he and Bailey are present, with Bailey playing the lead. This doesn't sound like Bechet to me, and no other sources mention him."

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt/sop); Don Redman (clt/alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)

- BGR*2: Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Buster Bailey, clt, sop; Don Redman, clt or sop; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj

- BGR*3,*4: Louis Armstrong, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Don Redman, cl; Buster Bailey, ss; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj

051 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE	New York,	Oct. 26, 1925
Louis Armstrong – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;		
Don Redman – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;		
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;		
Eva Taylor – voc		

73738-A	<i>Squeeze Me</i>	OK 8254,	<i>Hot 'n Sweet FDC 151222</i>
73739-B	<i>You Can't Shush Katie (The Gabbiest Girl In Town)</i>	OK 8342,	<i>Hot 'n Sweet FDC 151222</i>

This is the last edition of Clarence Williams' Blue Five, and what an array of great musicians it comprises. Armstrong, Redman – clearly identifiable – and Hawkins come from the Henderson band. But the trombonist is Charlie Green again in my ears, stylistically and tonally. And this certainly makes sense as Green was band-mate to the other brass men present in the Henderson band.

Notes:

- Storyville 17: *Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Don Redman (clt/alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)*

- Lord, *Clarence Williams p140: Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Don Redman (clt/alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)* "This was to be Louis' last recording session with Clarence Williams. He left Fletcher Henderson to return to Chicago in early November 1925. Along with Louis, Clarence had been using other musicians from Henderson's orchestra – Buster Bailey and Don Redman. This session introduces Coleman Hawkins as a Williams sideman. The personnel is pretty well agreed upon by all sources except that TKD and Davies suggest Charlie Green as the trombonist. Aurally, this is not so."

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: *Louis Armstrong (cnt); Charlie Green (tbn); Don Redman (clt/alt); Coleman Hawkins (clt/ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (voc)*

- BGR*2,*3: *Louis Armstrong, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Don Redman, clt or sop; Coleman Hawkins, ten; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj.*

- BGR*4: *Louis Armstrong, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Don Redman, cl(1),as(2); Coleman Hawkins, ts; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj.*

052 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' STOMPERS

Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;

Otto Hardwick – alt, bar, sop; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Henry "Bass" Edwards - bbs

73893-B Spanish Shawl

73894-B Dinah

New York,

Jan. 04, 1926

OK 40541,

Chronological Classics 695

OK 40541,

Chronological Classics 695

After relistening our research group agree that we hear the Duke Ellington band with its contemporary personnel except Williams and (certainly) Buddy Christian. The tenor playing heard here is consistent with Prince Robinson's style. This would mean that the tenor player is not Hawkins. The instrument identified as oboe very certainly is a soprano sax played by Hardwick, with Robinson on clarinet playing in close harmony. Clarence Williams is on piano. The softly ringing banjo certainly belongs to Buddy Christian – who should be the banjo player of chronological terms – and Henry "Bass" Edwards with his short and sharply played notes is the tuba player. He, too, belonged to the Ellington band at this time.

Notes:

- Rust*2: *two unknown (tpts), Charlie Irvis? (tbn), Don Redman (clt, sop, alt), unknown (ten), Coleman Hawkins (clt, ten, bxs), Clarence Williams (pno), Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bjo), Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- Rust*3: *Tom Morris, ?Ed Allen (if two present) -c; Charlie Irvis – tb; ? Otto Hardwicke – as; ?Coleman Hawkins -cl -ts -bar; possibly a third reed - ? Don Redman -ss; Clarence Williams -p; Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.*

- T. Lord, *Clarence Williams: Thomas Morris, if a second cornet, poss Ed Allen (cnts); Charlie Irvis (tbn), Don Redman or poss Otto Hardwick (alt), poss Coleman Hawkins (clt, ten, bar); poss unknown third reed; Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- Rust*4: *Joe Smith -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Don Redman -ss -as; Coleman Hawkins -cl -ts -bar; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris (or possibly Buddy Christian) -bj, Cyrus St. Clair -bb.*

- Rust*6: *Bubber Miley, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Don Redman, ss, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts, bar; Clarence Williams, p; Leroy Harris (or possibly Buddy Christian), bj, Cyrus St. Clair, bb.*

- Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, *Bubber Miley Discography: B. Miley (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), Otto Hardwick (ss, as, bars), poss Coleman Hawkins or Prince Robinson (cl, ts); Clarence Williams (p); Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bj); Henry "Bass" Edwards (bb). "This session and the two other Clarence Williams sessions with Miley from 1926 have caused a lot of controversy among discographers. Rust lists Joe Smith, Irvis, Don Redman (ss, as), Hawkins (cl, ts, bars), Williams, Harris or Christian, Cyrus St. Clair. Tom Lord's Clarence Williams discography has Thomas Morris, and if a second trumpet, poss. Ed Allen, Irvis, Redman or poss Hardwick (as), poss Hawkins (cl, ts, bars), poss unknown third reed, Williams, Christian or Harris, St. Clair. The sleeve of FJ-121 (LP) has Morris, B. Miley?, unknown (tb), Redman (ss, as), Hawkins (cl, ts, bars), Williams?, Harris?, St. Clair. We don't agree entirely with any of them. Only one trumpet and two reeds can be heard. On aural evidence, the front line is the one regularly with Ellington (Miley, Irvis and Hardwick), augmented by a clarinet and a tenor sax player, who doesn't get much exposure and is difficult to identify. Hawkins' presence seems doubtful to us, and Goran Eriksson thinks Prince Robinson is a more likely name. Goran E. thinks the banjo player, whose style is rather simple without embellishments, sounds like Christian, while Bo Scherman thinks he doesn't have his characteristic drive. The brass man does not sound at all like St. Clair, who has a softer, more melodic style with long, deep notes. According to Goran E. (and Bo agrees), it is definitely "Bass" Edwards (another Ellingtonian), who plays in the "percussive" style with short, hard and resonant notes heard on this and the next session Clarence Williams recordings with Miley."*

053 BILLY AND MARY MACK Clarence Williams' Trio

Mary Mack – voc; Billy Mack – voc (2,3,5);

Charlie Irvis – tbn;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

73906-B Oh! Me Oh! My Blues

73907-A You've Got To Quit Your Low Down Ways

73908-B Fetch It When You Can

73909-B How Could My Good Man Turn His Back On Me Now

73911-B You Don't Want Much

New York,

c. Jan. 1926

OK 8339,

Document DOCD-5375

OK 8274,

Selmerphone SHN-4028 (LP)

OK 8274,

Document DOCD-5375

OK 8296,

Document DOCD-5375

OK 8296,

Document DOCD-5375

To my ears this trombone player definitely is Charlie Irvis with his distinct legato style, but very probably in a somewhat intoxicated form.

Also, I would not doubt Buddy Christian's presence. I do not agree with Storyville's remarks below.

Document DOCD-5375 carries the Mack's "You Gotta Quit Your Low Down Ways" of 22 Dec. 1936 and not the second title above, although listed on the sleeve!

Notes:

- *Storyville 17: unknown (tbn); Clarence Williams (pno); poss Buddy Christian (bjo). "The trombone is very weak and thin and the banjosounds too stolid to be Christian although previously listed so."*

- *BGR*2,*3,*4: unknown, tbn; Clarence Williams, pno; poss Buddy Christian, bjo.*

- *Rust*3,*4,*6: unknown -tb; Clarence Williams -p; ?Buddy Christian -bj.*

- *Lord, Clarence Williams p150: unknown (tbn); Clarence Williams (pno); poss Buddy Christian (bjo).*

054 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE		New York,	c. Jan. 22, 1926
Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Otto Hardwick – alt;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Henry "Bass" Edwards – bbs;			
Eva Taylor – voc			
73957-A	I've Found A New Baby	OK 8286,	Chronological Classics 695
73958-B	I've Found A New Baby	OK 8286,	Chronological Classics 695
73959-B	Pile Of Logs And Stone (Called Home)	OK 8286,	Chronological Classics 695

As will be seen more often later on, Clarence used to recruit good musicians from well-known bands, or even newcomers to Harlem. It will also be seen later that he used to hire two – sometimes more - musicians from a specific band, so to take advantage of their being used to each other. So, just like in the session above we have part of the Ellington band of the time again, here except Clarence and Buddy Christian on bjo. Leroy Harris' and Cyrus St. Clair's times are still to come!

Notes:

- *Rust*2: Bubber Miley, Tom Morris (cnts), Buster Bailey (clt), unknown (ten), Clarence Williams (pno), Leroy Harris (bjo), Cyrus St. Clair (bbs), Eva Taylor (vcl).*

- *Rust*3: Bubber Miley -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Otto Hardwicke -as; Clarence Williams -p, ? Leroy Harris -bj, Cyrus St. Clair -bb, Eva Taylor -v.*

- *T. Lord, Clarence Williams: Bubber Miley (cnt); prob Charlie Irvis (tbn), poss Ottos Hardwick or Don Redman (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); allegedly Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- *Rust*4: Bubber Miley -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Otto Hardwick or Don Redman -as; Clarence Williams -p; ? Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Eva Taylor -v.*

- *Rust*6: Bubber Miley, c; ?Charlie Irvis, tb; Otto Hardwick, as; Clarence Williams, p; ?Leroy Harris, bj; Cyrus St. Clair, bb; Eva Taylor, v.*

- *BGR*2: Bubber Miley, cnt; prob Charlie Irvis, tbn; Otto Hardwicke, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; poss Leroy Harris, bjo; Cyrus St. Clair, bbs.*

- *BGR*3,*4: Bubber Miley, c; prob Charlie Irvis, tb; poss Otto Hardwick or Don Redmsn, as; Clarence Williams, p; poss Leroy Harris, bj; Cyrus St. Clair, bb.*

- *Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: B. Miley (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), Otto Hardwick (as), Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bj); Henry "Bass" Edwards (bb). "Both versions of I've Found A New Baby, entirely different from each other in arrangement and tempo, were issued on Okeh 8286, the first (slower) one being credited to Eva Taylor, the second to Clarence Williams' Blue Five. Rust and Lord have prob Irvis, Hardwick or Redman, Harris and St. Clair. The sleeve of Fj-121 has the same and an unknown washboard. We are certain that the musicians are exactly the same as for the previous session but without the clarinet and tenor man. There is no washboard audible."*

Discernible differences of takes:

73957-A medium tempo (c. 140), Eva Taylor starts with verse after 4 bars intro and 2 bars vamp, then continues with only vocal chorus.

73958-B fast tempo (c. 200), Bubber Miley starts first chorus with up-beat, Eva Taylor starts only vocal in third chorus.

055 DUKE ELLINGTON'S WASHINGTONIANS		New York,	Mar. 1926
Leroy Rutledge, Harry Cooper – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;			
Otto Hardwick - alt, bar; Don Redman - alt, clt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;			
Duke Ellington – pno, arr; Fred Guy – bjo; Henry Bass Edwards – bbs			
106729	Georgia Grind	PA 7504,	Frog DGF 78
106730	Parlor Social Stomp	PA 7504,	Frog DGF 78

These are two surprisingly hard-hitting sides by Ellington's early band. The development of the band's personnel was not finished yet, but the nucleus was there. Only, that the Duke was not settled with the trumpet section. Leroy Rutledge was known for fine and dependable first chair playing – he was not a hot man – and thus Harry Cooper must have been the soloist. All ad-lib trumpet parts seem to be Cooper's, and stylistically they would fit with his style, which, by the way, is remarkably secure and hard driving here – with some deficiencies in his phrasing. Charlie Irvis is only heard doing harmony duties in the brass section. Otto Hardwick is clearly playing first parts with his "singing" alto style and soloing in chorus A4 of the first side on baritone, the young Prince Robinson doing clarinet and tenor sax parts, and on third alto sax Duke had borrowed Don Redman with his dry style from the Henderson band. This then marks the first time Ellington had a three-piece reed-section on record.

The rhythm section is what is known of it at this time, only that Sonny Greer is absent. Not a single cymbal stroke can be found.

It is my strong opinion that both arrangements are the Duke's attempts, a bit hasty and somewhat over-arranged, but harmonically interesting and advanced. 'Georgia Grind' is played at a fast pace, but retaining the original length of the melody, so that the 12 bar blues chorus of the original tune becomes a 24-bar chorus. And: here already Ellington uses the device of starting a subsequent part of the arrangement into the last two bars – the last two tonic bars - of the preceding chorus, thus shortening it for two bars. It is this device which André Hodeir in his famous 'Jazz, It's Evolution and Essence' has described as absolutely 'novel' for his description of Ellington's 'Concerto For Cootie' of 1940. Here it is 16 years earlier. 'Parlor Social Stomp' seems to be a recreation of a typical ragtime tune with its multitude of different strains. Again, beautiful harmonies and changes. Both titles are the Duke's own compositions. So, there is no indication of the arrangements being the work of Don Redman, as I have found being assumed somewhere.

Notes:

- *Jazz Directory Vol. 3: unknown personnel: 2 tpt; tbn; Don Redman, another (sax); Duke Ellington (p); bj; tu; d.*

- *Rust*2: Harry Cooper, Leroy Rutledge (tpts); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwick (clt, alt); Don Redman (clt, alt, bar); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Bass Edwards (bbs); Sonny Greer (dms)*

- *Rust*3,*4,*6: Harry Cooper -Leroy Rutledge -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Otto Hardwick -as -bar; Don Redman -cl -as; Duke Ellington -p -a -ldr; Fred Guy -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Sonny Greer -d.*

Note: see VJM 157-9

Tune Structures:

106729 *Georgia Grind* Key of Eb/Bb/Eb Pathé Actuelle
(Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 24 bars ens tpt lead HC ?)(A2 Chorus 24 bars saxes + brass modulation to Bb)(A3 Chorus 22 bars! clt PR 20 – ens 2 modulation to Eb)(A4 Chorus 24 bars bar 20 – ens 2)(A5 Chorus 20 bars! pno DE)(Bridge 8 bars ens)(A6 Chorus 24 bars ens tpt lead HC ?)

106730 *Parlor Social Stomp* Key of G/C Pathé Actuelle
(Intro 6 bars ens)(A1 strain A 16 bars AA saxes)(B1 strain B 32 bars AABA ens - breaks alt DR)(B2 strain B 32 bars ens breaks - clt PR)(A2 strain A 16 bars saxes + brass)(Bridge 4 bars tpts modulation to C)C1 strain C 16 bars AA saxes)(C2 strain C 16 bars tpt HC)(D1 strain D 16 bars AA alt DR)(D2 strain D 16 bars tpt HC)(D3 strain D 16 bars clt PR)(D4 strain D 16 bars ens)(Coda 2 bars saxes)

056 **BUDDY CHRISTIAN'S CREOLE FIVE**

New York,

c. Mar. 23, 1926

Harry Cooper – tpt; John Mayfield – tbn; Albert 'Happy' Caldwell – clt;

Charlie 'Smitty' Smith – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; unknown – dms;

Louise Vant – voc (1,2)

74057-A *Sunset Blues*

OK 8311,

Hot'n Sweet 151222

74058-A *Texas Mule Stomp*

OK 8311,

Hot'n Sweet 151222

74059-A *Sugar House Stomp*

OK 8342,

Hot'n Sweet 151222

No Charlie Irvis here!

Louise Vant performs as band singer here with Buddy Christian's Creole Five. This certainly is a beautiful band and it is worthy of note that no unequivocal and coherent personnel have been suggested up to now (Dec. 2016).

The cornet/trumpet player certainly – for all I know – is not Thomas Morris. Chris Hillman in his record review of the Herwin 107 LP 'New Orleans Sounds in New York 1924 – 1926' (Jazz Journal Oct. 1975) writes: "I am certain that the Creole Five cornetist is Harry Cooper." And I shall gladly follow Mr. Hillman's well-founded and correct identification. Comparison with what can be heard on the Seminole Syncopators and the Harry's Happy Four show us that Cooper is our man here.

But the other musicians obviously need new consideration. On trombone I hear the trombonist of Clarence Williams Blue Five of 1923, a man playing a partly legato and partly staccato style. He must be John Mayfield, and to my ears this is clearly recognizable. After repeated listening I hear a faint possibility this player to be Charlie Irvis on a bad day.

The clarinetist – ever since the advent of discography – identified as Bob Fuller to my ears is most probably Albert Happy Caldwell, playing in a modernized Johnny Dodds derived style. The pianist shines in pure comping without any solo ambition, and only behind the singer he plays some three to four figures which I know from Charlie Smith, at this time pianist of the June Clark Creole Stompers at Smalls' Sugar Cane Club. This band recorded under the pseudonyms of Blue Rhythm Orchestra and the Gulf Coast Seven.

The strong banjo is played by the leader, Buddy Christian, banjo player and pianist from New Orleans. Only on 'Sugar House Stomp' 14 cymbal strokes can be heard at appropriate places – no other drum features – and it has to be asked whether a drummer was participating on this last title of the session or somebody of the recording staff, or perhaps one of the other band players. But, as the cymbal strokes are choked by hand, no other participating musician would have been able to fulfil this special task and still playing on his own instrument.

Notes:

- Rust*2: Tom Morris? (cnt); Jake Frazier? (tbn); Bob Fuller (clt); Louis Hooper or Mike Jackson (less likely Clarence Williams (pno);

Buddy Christian (bjo); unknown (dms)

- Rust*3: ? Charlie Gaines -t; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Bob Fuller -cl; Louis Hooper (or poss Mike Jackson) -p; Buddy Christian -bj; unknown -d;

Louise Vant -v (1,2)

- Rust*4,*6: ? Tom Morris -c; ?Jake Frazier -tb; Bob Fuller -cl; ? Porter Grainger (part composer of the first two titles) or Louis Hooper or Mike Jackson -p; Buddy Christian -bj; unknown -d; Louise Vant -v (1,2)

- BGR*2: poss Tom Morris (or any one of the three cnts from earlier L. Vant sessions); poss Jake Frazier or Charlie Irvis, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; poss Louis Hooper or Mike Jackson, p; Buddy Christian -bj; unknown, d; Louise Vant, v (1,2)

- BGR*3,*4: poss Tom Morris, c; poss Jake Frazier or Charlie Irvis, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; poss Louis Hooper or Mike Jackson, p; Buddy Christian -bj; unknown, d; Louise Vant, v (1,2)

Tune Structures:

74057-A *Sunset Blues* Key of C

OKeh

(A1 Chorus 12 bars blues ens)(B Verse 16 bars AA' ens)(A2 Chorus 12 bars voc + ens)(A3 Chorus 12 bars voc + ens)(A4 Chorus 12 bars voc + ens)(A5 Chorus 12 bars tpt + ens riff)(A6 Chorus 12 bars ens)

74058-A *Texas Mule Stomp* Key of C - Em - C

OKeh

(Intro 8 bars ens)(A strain A 16 bars AA ens)(B strain B 16 bars AA ens)(C1 Chorus 16 bars AA voc + ens)(C2 Chorus 16 bars voc + ens)(C3 Chorus 16 bars ens)

74059-A *Sugar House Stomp* Key of Bb

OKeh

(Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 strain A 16 bars AA' clt + tbn)(A2 strain A 16 bars AA tpt + ens)(B1 strain B 16 bars AA' ens)(B2 strain B 16 bars tbn)(C1 strain C 16 bars AB ens)(C2 strain C 16 bars ens)(A3 strain A 16 bars ens)(A4 strain A 16 bars ens)

057 **SARA MARTIN** Clarence Williams' Blue Five

New York,

Mar. 24, 1926

Sara Martin – voc;

Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Otto Hardwick – alt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Henry Bass Edwards - bbs

74066-B What's The Matter Now?

OK 8336,

Document DOCD-5397

74067-B I Want Every Bit Of It, I Don't Like It Second Hand

OK 8336,

Document DOCD-5397

Aurally the trumpet player here is Miley as suggested by some members of our listening team. In view of the fact that other members of the Ellington band were recruited for this session the presence of Miley is most probable. Irvis and Edwards were members of the Ellington crew, too, and so it seems feasible to suggest Hardwick as altoist although not much characteristics of his playing can be heard. And again, Leroy Harris' and Cyrus St. Clair's times are still to come!

Notes:

- BGR*2: poss Tom Morris, cnt; unknown, tbn; prob Buster Bailey or Don Redman, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; unknown, bjo; with prob Cyrus St. Clair, bbs. "Matrices 74066/67 may have been made on March 24, 1926."

- BGR*3,*4: unknown, c; unknown, tb; unknown, as; Clarence Williams, p; unknown, bj; poss Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

- Rust*3: no personnel, but included in session accompanied by Eddie Heywood -p, with notation: The last two titles are reportedly accomp. by Clarence Williams' Blue Five.
 - Rust*4,*6: unknown -c; unknown -tb; unknown -as; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj; ? Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams: unknown (cnt, tbn, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo); possibly Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: not listed

058	SARA MARTIN	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	Mar. 25, 1926
	Sara Martin – voc;			
	Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Otto Hardwick – alt;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Henry Bass Edwards – bbs			
74072-A		Brother Ben	OK 8325,	Document DOCD-5397
74073-A		The Prisoner's Blues	OK 8442,	Document DOCD-5397
74074-B		Careless Man Blues	OK 8325,	Document DOCD-5397
74075-A		How Could I Be Blue?	OK 8442,	Document DOCD-5397

This could still be a contingent from the Ellington band, but Irvis is uncertain here and the altoist could be anyone. Because of the consecutive session dates the thought of Hardwick seems logic, but I do not hear his characteristics, except that this player bends his notes like Hardwick uses to do when playing in his 'romantic' style.

Notes:

- BGR*2: poss Tom Morris, cnt; unknown, tbn; prob Buster Bailey or Don Redman, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; unknown, bjo; with prob Cyrus St. Clair, bbs. "Matrices 74066/67 may have been made on March 24, 1926."
 - BGR*3,*4: Bubber Miley, unknown, c; unknown, tb; poss Otto Hardwick or Don Redman, as; Clarence Williams, p; unknown, bj; poss Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
 - Rust*3: ? Bubber Miley -c; unknown -tb; Otto Hardwick -as; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
 - Rust*4,*6: ?Bubber Miley -c; unknown -tb; Otto Hardwick or Don Redman -as; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj; ? Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams: Bubber Miley or unknown (cnt); unknown (tbn), poss Ottos Hardwick or Don Redman (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo); possibly Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: Bubber Miley (tp), poss Charlie Irvis (tb), poss Otto Hardwick or Don Redman (as), Clarence Williams (p); poss Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bj); Henry "Bass" Edwards (bb). "Dixon-Godrich and Lord's Clarence Williams discography have Miley for the first, third and fourth title and a different, unknown (tp) for the Prisoner's Blues, unknown (tb) and Cyrus St. Clair (bb). Rust has ?Miley all the way and the rest as the others. We are certain that Miley plays on all four titles and that the brass bass player is the same as for the previous 1926 Clarence Williams recordings, "Bass" Edwards. Unfortunately, Miss Martin belts out her lyrics loudly and close to the microphone throughout the session, leaving little space for the musicians, but Bo goes with the Ellington front-line, while Goran E. is not sure about Irvis and Hardwick, thinking that the alto playing is too straight for the latter."

059	DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA		New York,	c. Apr. 01, 1926
	Leroy Rutledge, Harry Cooper - tpt; Jimmy Harrison - tbn;			
	Otto Hardwick - alt, bar, Don Redman - alt, clt; Prince Robinson - ten, clt;			
	Duke Ellington - pno; Fred Guy - bjo; Henry "Bass" Edwards - bbs; Sonny Greer - dms;			
	Bob Haring - arr (1); Sonny Greer - voc (1); Jimmy Harrison - voc (2)			
X-57-A		(You've Got Those) Wanna Go Back Again Blues	Gnt 3291,	Frog DGF 78
X-58-A		If You Can't Hold The Man You Love	Gnt 3291,	Frog DGF 78

No Charlie Irvis here!

There is much controversy about the trombonist and one of the singers on this recording.

The trombonist(s): Certainly, Charlie Irvis was trombone player with Ellington at that time. But Jimmy Harrison, the undisputed trombone star among Harlem musicians at that time, had just departed from June Clark's band at Smalls' Sugar Cane Club and every band-leader of note wanted to hire him. So did Ellington. And we know that trombonist Harrison was part of a short tour of Connecticut with the Ellington band in early April 1926! And from April 12 to April 26 the Ellington band - with Harrison added to the band as recalled by Ellington, Benny Carter and Harry Cooper - played a two-week engagement doubling at Ciro's and the Lafayette Theatre (S. Lasker, VJM 157). I have contributed a note on the problems inherent in this session in VJM 155 Ate's Discographical Ramblings, which has been commented by Steven Lasker in VJM 157. As it seems he does agree with my thesis re the singer(s), but he does not concern the trombonist ("Contrary to Greer's recollection - but in agreement to Mr. Rau - three friends of mine who've extensively studied Jimmy Harrison and his style - Brad Kay, Dan Weinstein and Jon Zeiderman - are of the opinion that the vocalist on If You Can't Hold The Man You Love is actually Harrison and not Greer (unlike Mr. Rau, however, none of the three contends he plays trombone on the date.)" Steven Lasker VJM 157).

It seems that I stand all alone against the world in stating that I hear Harrison as sole trombone player on this session.

ADDITION 30-08-2019: I have just listened again to these titles on the excellent CD reissue Frog DGF 78, and I am the more convinced of Harrison's presence here on trombone! I feel unable to understand that anybody might hear Irvis on these sides. And I have to ask Mr. Lasker's trombone-playing friends (above) whether they have really listened - or only judged with Irvis in their minds!

So, let's see - and hear - what happens! In 'Wanna Go Back ...' the trombonist plays solo in all three A-parts of the chorus with the B-part taken over by the reeds. Ellington scholar Mark Tucker writes about this solo: "... is a paraphrase solo by Irvis on muted trombone (one of the few extended examples where he uses this technique)" In my estimation this remark could only be interpreted that Tucker judges this solo as untypical for Irvis. This I can whole-heartedly underline and support. Irvis' style was above all a legato style and he used staccato notes only at the beginning of a phrase; exceptions to this statement might certainly be found on records, but as a rule he played legato with strong linear horizontal phrases and melody. His tone was rather straight, not much vibrato, with a rather antiquated punctuated phrasing. Nothing of this can be heard here. Instead, the trombone paraphrase of the theme melody is played staccato, in vertical manner and with a tone and vibrato owned by Harrison. Absolutely different from Irvis' playing. The difference is even stronger when listening to the eight-bar trombone solo in "If You Can't Hold The Man ...". Here we hear a short eight-bar solo on vamp-like changes, played staccato, vertical and in a definite preaching manner completely different to anything I know of Irvis. And just listen to the dramatic construction of the short solo: three slightly changing and developing phrases of acclamation and a resulting answer as a fourth phrase. This is completely beyond Charlie Irvis' power of imagination and capability. The third phrase contains a short jumping-lip-trill unheard in Charlie Irvis' solos. Furthermore, a kind of solo like that could have been played by Louis Armstrong; and we know that Harrison formed his style (together with June Clark) after listening to Oliver and Armstrong in Chicago 1923, Harrison playing the Armstrong part in his duets with Clark! I played trombone myself a couple of years in my youth, and I am not at all unfamiliar with trombone playing. Mr. Lasker in his comment then concludes: "Thus, Harrison didn't join Ellington's ranks until a couple of weeks after the Gennett date on which some contend he took

part." Now, if the Gennett date is given as c. April 01, the band toured shortly to Connecticut and then started at Ciro's on April 12, Mr. Lasker is wrong in maintaining that Harrison joined "a couple of weeks" after the Gennett date. There is only room for a couple of days. And certainly, the Duke had negotiated the terms with Harrison in the meantime. And there certainly was an opportunity to take him into a recording studio as part of his band if only as substitute for Irvis. And the recording date is not securely settled and might also have taken place a few days later! So, the temporal aspect of this matter would certainly not rule out Harrison.

From this background I am absolutely positive that this is Jimmy Harrison on trombone. And with repeated listening I am growing more and more positive about it. May I ask everybody who wants to make his own opinion to first listen really very carefully?! And do not rely on what has been published in the discographies! I suppose that many supporters of the Irvis side only rely on the given personnels without checking it out and because "it has always been listed like that". (By the way, Mr. Tucker, the Washingtonians do not "skip the verse" in *Wanna Go Back Again Blues*! They certainly play it just after the first chorus and before the trombone solo.)

Furthermore, there is not one bar in both titles where you might hear two trombones! At this time, dance band arrangements – original ones like Ellington's or stock arrangements – did not include two trombone parts, and thus it would be far from probable to assume to hear both trombonists simultaneously. So, there is no place for Irvis on this session!

The singers: For years George "Fathead" Thomas has been listed as the singer on the first title, Jimmy Harrison as the singer on the second title. If compared to the rather strange sound of George Thomas' voice familiar from the McKinney's Cotton Pickers recordings ('deep, barrel-chested' as Joel O'Sickey describes it, I would say 'squeezed') the singer on the first title has a much lighter sound and approach.

And from his own testimony we know that Sonny Greer was the singer here. This sounds quite reasonable. From 1925 until 1930 George Thomas was a member of the MKCP (Chilton, McKinney's Music) playing the Detroit's Graystone Ballroom. He was not one the Harlem bunch of musicians, certainly not known in Harlem as the MKCP had not recorded yet (Don Redman took over the band as front-man in the summer of 1927 – first recordings in July 1928 - and certainly would not have promoted a singer/saxophone player whom he did not know in early 1926). So, the presence of George Thomas can easily be ruled out.

The singer on the second title has hitherto been listed as Jimmy Harrison. Here as well, in an interview Sonny Greer claimed his own responsibility as singer. The Frog CD notes say that Greer was adamant on this claim. This writer feels unable to prove the contrary, but comparing the first singer – Greer – to the second, it is my firm belief that the second singer shows better timing and more looseness in his singing – and a different kind of off-beat. Here I opt for Jimmy Harrison. The voice on the Frog CD sounds much crisper than it did on earlier issues – thanks to the great work of Nick Dellow – but when comparing it to Harrison's voice on the recent Coleman Hawkins issue on MOSAIC there seems to be accordance.

If we agree that the singer on the first title is not George Thomas but Greer, there is no need left to list him as a fourth reed player, the more so on tenor as mainly noted. Big bands in the 20s had three reeds – two altos and one tenor, the reedmen doubling on other reed instruments – and not four. Arrangements were made and sold for these three reed players. And it was only in the 1930s that reed sections were augmented. Armstrong/Russell had four reeds in 1935 (two altos, two tenors), Calloway added a fourth reed player – Eddie Barefield – in 1933 (a third alto!), Duke Ellington did so in 1932 (also a third alto with Otto Hardwick back in the band!), Goodman added a second tenor in 1934, Benny Carter used four reeds – two altos, two tenors apart from himself on alto in the Spike Hughes sessions of May 1933 and Fletcher Henderson had four reeds in 1934. So, a fourth reed player in a big band in 1926 would have been completely superfluous. There would not have been any parts for a third man to play. Which means, that we can safely rule out George "Fathead" Thomas as participant in this session of the Ellington band. It simply makes no sense whatsoever! If you listen to the first title 'Wanna Go Back Again Blues' chorus A1 you will hear Hardwick on baritone alternating with clearly two clarinets – Redman and Robinson. If there had been four reed players it would have made sense to write the score for three clts against the baritone sax. But not so here! I only wonder who invented this tale or who absurdly misidentified the singer on the first title as George Thomas.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hor Discography, 1948: Harry Cooper, Leroy Rutledge (tp); Charlie Irvis, Jimmy Harrison (tb); Otto Hardwick, Don Redman (as); Prince Robinson, George Thomas (ts); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bjo); Bass Edwards (bass); Sonny Greer (dm); Jimmy Harrison (vo -1); George Thomas (vo -2).*

- *Jazz Directory Vol. 3: unknown personnel: 2 tpt; tbn; Don Redman, another (sax); Duke Ellington (p); bj; tu; d.*

- *Rust*2: Harry Cooper, Leroy Rutledge (tpts); Charlie Irvis, Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Otto Hardwick (clt, alt, bar);*

Prince Robinson (clt, ten); George Thomas (clt, ten, vcl); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Bass Edwards (bbs); Sonny Greer (dms)

- *Rust*3, *4, *6: Harry Cooper-Leroy Rutledge -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Jimmy Harrison -tb -v; Otto Hardwick -as -bar; Don Redman -cl -as;*

Prince Robinson -George Thomas -cl -ts; Duke Ellington -p -a -ldr; Fred Guy -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Sonny Greer -d.

- *VJM 157-9, St. Lasker, Duke Ellington's Mystery Vocalist: (see there)*

Tune Structures:

X-57-A (You've Got Those) Wanna Go Back Again Blues Key of Gm / Ab / Bb / Ab Gennett

(Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars AABA bar 16 / tpts 8 / clts 4 / brass 4)(Bridge 8 bars ens (saxes 4 / tpts 4) this is a shortened verse)(A2 Chorus 32 bars tbn (Harrison) 16 / saxes 8 / tbn (Harrison) 8)(A3 Chorus 32 bars voc (Greer?) – pno)(A4 Chorus 32 bars ens)(Tag 2 bars ens)

X-58-A If You Can't Hold The Man You Love Key of Bb Gennett

(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars ABAC ens)(B1 Verse 16 bars AA ens)(A2 Chorus 32 bars voc (Harrison) - saxes)(C1 Vamp 16 bars tpts)(C2 Vamp 16 bars bjo 8 / tbn (Harrison) 8)(A3 Chorus 32 bars ens (clt Robinson in bars 24-28)

060 CLARENCE WILLIAMS STOMPERS

New York,

Apr. 07, 1926

Thomas Morris, Bubber Miley – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Don Redman – alt, clt, voc;

Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Henry "Bass" Edwards - bbs

74090-B Jackass Blues

OK 40598,

Chronological Classics 718

74091-B What's The Matter Now?

OK 40598,

Chronological Classics 718

This is a very interesting session! Two trumpet/cornet players are clearly distinguished. Miley plays lead and solo throughout on Jackass Blues (by the way, Bubber Miley always played trumpet, not cornet, despite all quotations in the discs!). The trombone introduction is very much in the manner of Irvis, and not Charlie Green's. Listen to Henderson's Jackass Blues (Dixie Stompers, Apr. 14, 1926), where Green plays this intro in a completely different, his own style! The reed player is undoubtedly Redman, as is Williams on piano.

Williams started using a tuba on his recordings on January 04, 1926 with his first "Stompers" session. This player is named St. Clair in Rust and T. Lord, Clarence Williams, whereas it is clearly Edwards, judging from the tone and the player's approach. The same applies to all Williams' recordings in 1926 up to December 10., when St. Clair takes over (Okeh 8443), again judging from tone and general approach. Now this seems to be some kind of 'All Star' unit from early Harlem, as - apart from the now usual Ellington contingent – we also have Don Redman from the Henderson band (unmistakable for his singing alone) and bandleader and previous C. Williams alumnus Thomas Morris. This seems to be the last of Clarence's recordings including Morris, the others dating from the period before 1925 and thus not discussed here.

Notes:

- LP, Clarence Williams Recordings 1926 – 1930, Fontana (Du) 682 088 TL: June Clark and unknown, trumpets, unknown trombone, Buster Bailey (?) and Don Redman, clarinets/altos, Clarence Williams, piano, Buddy Christian, banjo, unknown drums
 - Rust*2: Bubber Miley, Tom Morris (cnts); Joe Nanton (tbn); Buster Bailey (sop, alt); Don Redman (clt, alt, vcl); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris or Buddy Christian (bjo); Bass Edwrds (bbs).
 - Rust*3: Bubber Miley -Tom Morris -c; ?Joe Nanton -tb; Don Redman -cl -as -v -a; Clarence Williams -p; unknown bj; unknown bb.
 - Rust*4: Bubber Miley -Tom Morris -c; ?Joe Nanton -tb; Don Redman -cl -as -v; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris or Buddy Christian -bj; unknown bb.
 - Rust*6: Bubber Miley, Tom Morris, c; ?Joe Nanton, tb; Don Redman, cl, as, v; Clarence Williams, p; Leroy Harris or Buddy Christian, bj; Harry Edwards, bb.
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams: Bubber Miley, Thomas Morris (cnts); possibly Charlie Green (tbn), Don Redman (clt, alt, vcl); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris or Buddy Christian (bjo); possibly Bass Edwards (bbs).
 - Scherman, Eriksson, Anderby, Wallen, Bubber Miley Discography: Bubber Miley, Thomas Morris (tp), Charlie Irvis (tb), Don Redman (cl, as, vcl), Clarence Williams (p); Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bj); prob Cyrus St. Clair (bb). „Rust has ?Joe Nanton (tb) and unknown (bb). Lord’s Clarence Williams discography has poss Charlie Green (tb) and „Bass“ Edwards (bb), the sleeve of Fj-121 has unknown (tb), Ernest Elliott? (as) and St. Clair (bb). We all finally agreed that the trumpet players are Morris and an off form Miley, after Goran E. had expressed some doubt about the latter at first. The trombonist is aurally Irvis, although he plays note for note the standard solo on Jackass Blues recorded by Charlie Green twice with Fletcher Henderson. The alto sax player is clearly Redman, who also doubles on clarinet. The brass bass man plays long notes and a more legato style than „Bass“ Edwards on the previous Clarence Williams and Sara Martin sessions with Miley and is probably St. Clair.“

061 **ELVIRA JOHNSON** Birmingham Darktown Strutters New York, c. Jun. 17, 1926
 Elvira Johnson - voc
 Charlie Gaines – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Otto Hardwick – sop;
 Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian - bjo
 X-177 How Could I Be Blue? Gnt 3337, Document DOCD-5375
 X-178 Numbers On The Brain Gnt 3337, Document DOCD-5375

We can apparently be quite sure of Gaines' presence on these two sides as documented in Tom Lord's 'Clarence Williams'. Gaines also provided insights into Williams' modus operandi: Williams had contracts with a steady roster of musicians who were on call for recording sessions, both instrumental and blues accompaniments. I hear Gaines' straight and horizontal approach, more into rhythmic and staccato than melodic playing. He uses a cup mute here. There is no musical relationship to Big Charlie's playing here, but Charlie Gaines' horizontal phrasing as known.

There is a very agile soprano saxophone player on these sides who phrases much too "jazzy" to be Elliott, judging from everything we have heard from Elliott up to now. There really are no instances of anything I have written about his style in "Stylistics". This player belongs to a better and more modern class of musicians and resembles in part Buster Bailey of the Clarence Williams Blue Five period. He uses many rhythmic and melodic devices of the "Armstrong" period and does thus not belong to Elliott's pre-Armstrong school. As there are not many – if at all? – distinct soprano players around in New York/Harlem, the identity of this man should be searched for among tenor saxophonists (Bb instrument!) of the time: Prince Robinson, Happy Caldwell and others come to mind. After relistening I believe that Otto Hardwick would be a well-suited candidate (28.06.2018)! Elliott may safely be excluded.

Charlie Gaines named Mike Jackson as pianist, not Clarence Williams. Musical proceedings here rather hint as to Mike Jackson's presence here, not to Williams'!

The other musicians as above, but it has to be recognized that very probably Irvis had a bad day. Too much booze?

Notes:

- BGR*2: unknown cnt; unknown tbn; Buster Bailey, sop; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo
 - BGR*3,*4: Charlie Gaines, c; prob Charlie Irvis, tb; Ernest Elliott, ss; Clarence Williams or Mike Jackson, p; Buddy Christian, bj.
 - Rust*3: unknown -c; unknown -tb; Buster Bailey -ss; ?Clarence Williams -p; ?Buddy Christian -bj
 - Rust*4,*6: Charlie Gaines - c; Charlie Irvis - tb; ?Ernest Elliott - ss; Clarence Williams or poss Mike Jackson - p; Buddy Christian - bj
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams p 167: Charlie Gaines (cnt); prob Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ernest Elliott (sop); Clarence Williams or Mike Jackson (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo) "There is not much agreement on the personnel. Ed Allen has been considered as the cornetist. However, Charlie Gaines, in an interview by Dave Goldenberg "talked about a number which had 'horses and numbers' in the vocal". (This would be Numbers On The Brain.) The (Storyville – KBR) team lists Buster Bailey on soprano sax, Williams, and Christian. I (Tom Lord – KBR) have strong doubts about the identity of the reed player, and in view of the statement by Charlie Gaines, feel that Irvis, Elliott and Mike Jackson might be considered. According to WCA (W.C. Allen – KBR), Bailey was with Henderson on a New England tour. The estimation of the date is by the two sources mentioned above (Rust and Godrich/Dixon – KBR). The assignments of the adjacent matrices is unknown."

062 **DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS WASHINGTONIANS** New York, Jun. 21, 1926
 Charlie Johnson, Bubber Miley – tpt; Joe Tricky Sam Nanton – tbn;
 Otto Hardwick – alt, bar; unknown – alt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;
 Duke Ellington – pno, arr; Fred Guy – bjo; Mack Shaw – bbs; Sonny Greer – dms;
 Paul van Loan – arr (1)
 X-190 I'm Just Wild About Animal Crackers Gnt 3342, Frog DGF 78
 X-191 Li'l Farina Gnt 3342, Frog DGF 78
 Note: the –A takes were destroyed in 1929, the plain takes were released! Irvis had left in June. See VJM 157/10

No Charlie Irvis here!

This is not so much original early Ellington style, but rather the early Ellington band – the Washingtonians! – performing dance band titles of other composers/arrangers with Ellington's own modifications. But Charlie Irvis had just left the band to join Charlie Johnson at Smalls' Paradise. They are showcases for the band's main soloists: Hardwick on his singing alto, great growling by Bubber Miley, Prince Robinson's honking tenor sax, a little bit of new-comer Tricky Sam Nanton, and a fast piano solo in stride style by the bandleader. I believe to hear two alto saxophones in the saxophone parts, together with Robinson on tenor. This is very nice-to-hear music, but to really hear Duke Ellington, we have to wait for some months (read M. Tucker, Ellington, 'The Early Years').

Aside: this Charlie Johnson playing trumpet is not the well-known bandleader from Smalls' Paradise!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Charlie Johnson, Bubber Miley (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); Prince Robinson (cl & ts); Otto Hardwick, Clarence (as); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Bass Edwards (b); Sonny Greer (dm).

- Rust*2: Charlie Johnson, Bubber Miley (tpt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Otto Hardwick ?(clt, alt); Prince Robinson ?(clt, ten); Duke Ellington (pno); Fred Guy (bjo); Bass Edwards (bbs); Sonny Greer (dms)
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Bubber Miley -Charlie Johnson -t; Joe Nanton or Charlie Irvis -tb; Otto Hardwick -as -bar; Prince Robinson -cl -ts; Duke Ellington -p -a -ldr; Fred Guy -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Sonny Greer -d.
 - Media 7 Duke Ellington Vol.1 CD-booklet: Charlie Johnson, Bubber Miley (tp); Tricky Sam Nanton (tb); Otto Hardwick (Cms, bar); Prince Robinson (cl, ts); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Mack Shaw (tu); Sonny Greer (d).
 - VJM 157-9/10: the -A takes were destroyed in 1929, the plain takes were released! Irvis had left in June.

063	BESSIE BROWN	New York,	early Jul. 1926
Bessie Brown – voc;			
Charlie Gaines – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Carmelo Jari – clt;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian - bjo			
6706-1	What's The Matter Now?	Ban 1833	not on LP/CD, but held
6706-3	What's The Matter Now?	Or 698,	Document DOCD-5456
6707-1	How Could I Be Blue?	Or 698	not on LP/CD
6707-2	How Could I Be Blue?	Or 698,	Document DOCD-5456
6707-3	How Could I Be Blue?	Do 3781	not on LP/CD

The trombonist plays much more retained than Irvis usually does, but tone, entirely legato playing, and some Irvis-like licks make his presence probable.

This is the first appearance of reed man Carmelo Jari in the Williams stable. His rather unique and personal style and tone was identified by our team by comparison with the recordings of the Savoy Bearcats. He will be a familiar name with Williams personnels from now on until the Bearcats leave for an extended tour of South America in May 1927. (The second title of this session was also part of the Bearcats' repertoire.)

Notes:

- Storyville 19: unknown (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whittet (clt); poss Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p173: unknown (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Bennie Moten (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).
 - BGR*2: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ben Whittet, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.
 - BGR*3,*4: unknown, c; poss Charlie Irvis, tb; Bennie Moten, cl; Clarence Williams, p; unknown, bj.
 - Rust*3: unknown -c; unknown -tb; Ben Whittet -cl; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bb; unknown -d.
 - Rust*4,*6: unknown -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Bennie Moten -cl; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj.

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p174):

6706-1: final bar of tune: tpt plays long held three-quarter note Bb.
 6706-3: final bar of tune: tpt plays four eighth notes Bb-F-G-F and one quarter note Bb.
 6707-1: this take -1 not reissued, therefore no comment possibly.
 6707-2: two-bar clt break before final vocal chorus is played in high register.
 6707-3: two-bar clt break before final vocal chorus is played in low register.

064	MARGARET CARTER	New York,	Aug. 1926
Margaret Carter – voc;			
Big Charlie Thomas – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;			
Happy Caldwell – clt; (George McClennon?) – clt, alt;			
Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian - bjo			
107041	I Want Plenty Grease In My Frying Pan	PA 7511,	Timeless CBC 1-030
107042	Come Get Me Papa, Before I Faint	PA 7511,	Timeless CBC 1-030

Most unfortunately, Laurie Wright did not have the opportunity to continue his interview with Happy Caldwell published in Storyville 99. Thus, we do not know Happy's possible statements as to this and the next session and have to rely on our own judgement and that of our listening companions. (Both this and the consecutive session have to be seen as one, following the sequence of matrix numbers and the recording company.) Both sessions have been reissued in John R.T. Davies' famed 'Big Charlie Thomas' CD on Timeless and have therefore been – and still are – subject of much controversy. But, what do we hear:

Unequivocal is Buddy Christian's presence as banjoist and probable organizer of the session.

On trumpet/cornet we hear the mysterious 'Big' Charlie Thomas as faintly remembered by Eva Taylor and on this basis identified in a remarkable series of recordings in Harlem in 1926. Against any contradiction I am sure of this player's identity whatever his actual name might have been.

There is little heard from the trombone here, but the trombone break in the ensemble instrumental chorus of 'I Want Plenty Grease ...' is definite Charlie Irvis and has nothing in common with anything heard from Jake Frazier on record.

Both reed players play clarinet in the second title, exclusively in pre-set arranged simple riffs. There is no ad-lib by any of the clarinetists here. In 'I Want Plenty Grease ...' only one clarinet can be distinguished, playing ad-lib and with a distinct Dodds influence in this style. This stylistic element might lead to Happy Caldwell regarding Preston Jackson's statements as to his stylistic ambitions early on in Chicago. Only that he is much more secure here than on the October 1923 sides.

The other reedman delivers a restrained obligato to the musical proceedings, obviously on alto saxophone, without identifiable individual elements.

The pianist takes a back seat in little differentiated accompaniment, using modest treble figurations in his right hand or simply pounding four-four rhythm with both hands. This might be a hint as to Mike Jackson's assumed presence here which corresponds to what I know of Jackson's style.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Margaret Carter -v; unknown -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -cl; Bob Fuller -cl -as; Louis Hooper -p; Buddy Christian -bj.
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Margaret Carter -v; probably Tom Morris -c; Jake Frazier -tb; Happy Caldwell -cl; Bob Fuller -ss; Mike Jackson -p; Buddy Christian -bj.
 - T. Lord, Clarence Williams: Margaret Carter (vcl); unknown (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); Bob Fuller (clt, alt); poss Louis Hooper, or less likely Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo).

065	BUDDY CHRISTIAN'S JAZZ RIPPERS	New York,	early Aug. 1926
	'Big Charlie' Thomas – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Happy Caldwell – clt; (<i>George McClennon?</i>) – clt; Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo, voc		
107043	South Rampart Street Blues	PA 8518,	Timeless CBC 1-030
107044	The Skunk	PA 8518,	Timeless CBC 1-030

These two sessions seem to be the only jazz sessions by Pathe Actuelle of Afro-American musicians in early August 1926 and can therefore be assumed to have been recorded in direct succession. Although there are known examples of changing personnel in the run of recording sessions in the history of jazz, we can consider both personnels identical. So, only this is to add here:

On 'South Rampart Street Blues' the clarinet soloist – who certainly is not the player assumed to be Happy Caldwell – plays in a distinct "freak" or even "gas-pipe" style, and it seems that both reed players are on clarinet now. Rust*6 names George McClennon as second reed man. Comparing these clarinet sounds with George McClennon's documented recordings at least show a most striking similarity. It is this "freak" player who commands all proceedings in the first title, the other clarinetist – Caldwell? – staying in the background. On 'The Skunk' the "freak" player plays the very simple melody, almost sounding like an alto sax because of his sharp tone. Caldwell – if it is he – obviously has difficulties to play a decent jazzy ad-lib part over the ensemble, possibly pre-set in parts. But this may be explained by the fast pace the band takes.

In this respect, Rust's possibility of George McClennon becomes quite reasonable and I am cautiously following. There is not any instance of Bob Fuller on these sides. But this would mean that most probably we also hear McClennon on the Margaret Carter sides, on alto in the first title and in the second one on clarinet together with Caldwell.

Charlie Thomas on trumpet/cornet is certain. Again, the trombonist is very restrained playing only ensemble parts as arranged.

The singer in 'The Skunk' seems to be Mr. Buddy Christian himself as he is accompanied by the two clarinets and the trombone, the trumpet/cornet starting his solo into the vocal. Buddy Christian was a most respected pianist in his New Orleans days, and it is thus not surprising that he recorded his own compositions here. 'The Skunk' is easily recognized as a composition for solo piano.

The band's pianist's only task is comping and delivering a simple chordal four beat rhythm.

Notes:

- Rust*2: pers. similar to: Tom Morris? (cnt); Jake Frazier? (tbn); Bob Fuller (clt); Clarence Williams (pno) definite; Buddy Christian (bjo); unknown (dms)

- Rust*3: probably Tom Morris –c; Jake Frazier –tb; Happy Caldwell –cl; Bob Fuller –ss; Mike Jackson –p; Buddy Christian –bj.

- Rust*4: probably Tom Morris –c; Jake Frazier –tb; George McClennon –cl; Bob Fuller –ss; Mike Jackson –p; Buddy Christian –bj.

- Rust*6: probably Charlie Thomas, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; George McClennon, cl; Bob Fuller, cl, ss; Mike Jackson, p; Buddy Christian, bj.

- T. Lord, Clarence Williams: unknown (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); Bob Fuller (clt, alt); poss Louis Hooper, or Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo).

066	EVA TAYLOR Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	Aug. 06, 1926
	Eva Taylor – voc; (Jimmy Wade) – tpt; (Bill Dover) – tbn; (Arnett Nelson) or (Clifford King) – clt; Clarence Williams – pno; (Stanley Wilson) – bjo		
74243-B	When The Red, Red, Robin Comes Bob, Bob, Bobbin' Along	OK 40671,	Frog DGF 81
74244-B	(There's A Blue Ridge In My Heart) Virginia	OK 40671,	Frog DGF 81

The above-named suggested personnel stems from the French CD Hot'n Sweet 152292. This certainly is an interesting suggestion, following a completely different path than before.

The Wade band was in New York for a period and was definitely used by CW during the period (Eva Taylor).

Lacking further proof re the Wade band's connections with Clarence Williams our team would like to let this matter rest until further information is unearthed. We would very appreciate the help of Christopher Hillman of Tavistock, England who is an expert in this field. We refrain from attempting to give a definite personnel.

Notes:

- Storyville 20: unknown (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p174: unknown (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).

- BGR*2: unknown, cnt; unknown, tbn; unknown, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; unknown, bjo.

- BGR*3,*4: unknown, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; unknown, cl; Clarence Williams, p; unknown, bj.

- Rust*3: unknown –c; unknown –tb; unknown –cl; Clarence Williams –p; unknown –bj.

- Rust*4,*6: unknown –c; Charlie Irvis –tb; unknown –cl; Clarence Williams –p; unknown –bj.

067	BESSIE BROWN	New York,	c. Aug. 10, 1926
	Bessie Brown – voc; Ed Anderson – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Bennie Morton – clt; Clarence Williams – pno; unknown – bjo		
6767-2	Ain't Much Good In The Best Of Men Nowadays	Or 716,	Document DOCD-5456
6767-3	Ain't Much Good In The Best Of Men Now Days	Ban 1833	not on LP/CD, but held

Certainly, a different accompanying group here than the preceding Bessie Brown session. The trumpet player's style bears strong similarities to King Oliver's style. Reportedly Ed Anderson, known for his similarity to the Oliver style, had come to NYC with Eubie Blake and had been recruited by Clarence for his stable in early 1926. It is also worth mentioning that Anderson is regarded by a couple of authorities to be the only trumpet on Oliver's Dixie Syncopators recordings of September 1928! But Charlie Irvis certainly is present here.

Notes:

- Storyville 19: unknown (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whittet (clt); prob Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p175: unknown (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Bennie Moten (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).

- BGR*2: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ben Whittet, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.

- BGR*3,*4: unknown, c; poss Charlie Irvis, tb; Bennie Moten, cl; Clarence Williams, p; unknown, bj.

- Rust*3: unknown –c; ?Charlie Irvis –tb; Ben Whittet –cl; Clarence Williams –p; unknown –bj.

- Rust*4,*6: unknown –c; ?Charlie Irvis –tb; Bennie Moten –cl; Clarence Williams –p; unknown –bj.

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p175):

6767-2: bar 31 of first vocal chorus (after vocal verse)(bar 59 of tune): tpt phrase descending.

6767-3: *bar 31 of first vocal chorus (after vocal verse)(bar 59 of tune): tpt phrase ascending.*

068 **BESSIE BROWN** New York, c. Aug. 1926
Bessie Brown – voc;
Charlie Gaines – tpt; *unknown* – tbn; *Carmello Jari* – clt;
Clarence Williams – pno; *Buddy Christian* - bjo
 6782-2 *Senorita Mine* Or 716, Document DOCD-5456

There is a distant pre-set trombone part played likewise through all two choruses – with no ad-lib variation – which might be played by anyone able to handle a trombone. Thus, Irvis' presence is indecisive. After close and repeated listening members of our team still disagree on the identity of the singer on "Senorita Mine". Some believe her to be a different person from the singer on "What's The Matter Now" and "How Could I Be Blue" others still think her to be one identical person. Lord, p. 178: "One fact indicating that this side ('Senorita Mine') is from a separate session is that the singer on this title is different from the singer on all the other titles from the three Bessie Brown sessions. Eva Taylor and her son Spencer, upon hearing tapes of these three Bessie Brown sessions, felt that 'Senorita Mine' was not sung by Bessie Brown, but by a white woman (whose name they couldn't recall) who used to come around the CWMPC office for new material. Note this singer's peculiar pronunciation of 'Senorita' (Seen-ee-or-ita: phonetic)."

Note: info re matrix number from Björn Englund N&N 60!

Notes:

- *Storyville 19*: *unknown* (cnt); *poss Charlie Irvis* (tbn); *Ben Whittet* (clt); *prob Clarence Williams* (pno); *unknown* (bjo).
- *Lord, Clarence Williams p175*: *unknown* (cnt); *poss Charlie Irvis* (tbn); *Bennie Moten* (clt); *Clarence Williams* (pno); *unknown* (bjo).
- *Rust*3*: *unknown* -c; ?*Charlie Irvis* -tb; *Ben Whittet* -cl; *Clarence Williams* -p; *unknown* -bj.
- *Rust*4,*6*: *unknown* -c; ?*Charlie Irvis* -tb; *Bennie Moten* -cl; *Clarence Williams* -p; *unknown* -bj.
- *BGR*2*: *Tom Morris*, cnt; *Charlie Irvis*, tbn; *Ben Whittet*, clt; *Clarence Williams*, pno; *Buddy Christian*, bjo.
- *BGR*3,*4*: *by unknown*, possibly white, artist of no blues interest.

069 **OKEH MELODY STARS** New York, Aug. 23, 1926
June Clark, 'Big Charlie' *Thomas* – tpt/cnt; *Charlie Irvis* – tbn;
unknown – alt, clt; (*Happy Caldwell*) – ten;
Porter Grainger or (*Vivian Wright?*) – pno; *Buddy Christian* – bjo;
Clarence Todd – voc

74310-A	Look Out, Mr. Jazz	OK 8382	not on LP/CD ?
74310-B	Look Out, Mr. Jazz	OK 8382,	? Timeless CBC 1-030
74311-A	A Glass Of Beer, A Hot Dog And You	OK 8382	not on LP/CD, but held
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 Prince Robinson, but Benny Waters from the Charlie Johnson band might be a reasonable possibility – and a possible clue to the altoist? Or rather Happy Caldwell who seems to have been very busy in Harlem in mid-1926. 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?) After comparison to Happy Caldwell's solos on the Morris Seven Hot Babies sides I feel inclined to see him as the tenor sax player here, cautiously judging from style, tone and vibrato.

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.

As singer, Clarence Todd is listed on the record label.

Notes:

- 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*2: Clarence Williams (pno) dir. unknown group; Clarence Todd (vcl)

- 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)).

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p.175):

Because no alternate takes are reissued, comparison is impossible.

070 MAMIE SMITH

Mamie Smith – voc;

Thomas Morris – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; (Happy Caldwell) – clt;

Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

36069-1 Goin' Crazy With The Blues

36069-2 Goin' Crazy With The Blues

36070-1 Sweet Virginia Blues

36070-2 Sweet Virginia Blues

New York,

Aug. 27, 1926

Vic LPV-534,

Doc DOCD 5360

Vic 20210,

Doc DOCD 5360

Vic 20233

not on LP/CD

Vic 20233,

Doc DOCD 5360

These are very beautiful blues cum jazz recordings of the time. Morris, Jackson and Christian seem to be right, but I feel uncertain re the presence of Charlie Irvis on trombone and Fuller on clarinet. Irvis owns a very distinctive style which cannot be heard here in its entirety. But we have to consider that Irvis – as at other sessions – seemed to have some problem with alcohol. (Hear his incidental very dirty playing in the instrumental chorus of 36069-1). This might have been the case here as well. Only on 'Sweet Virginia Blues' I would immediately agree with Irvis. Yet, with repeated listening I believe to hear general uncertainty among the musicians, rhythmically and chordally! It all sounds like a box of bottles have been brought to the recording studio.

The clarinet is much retained and lacks Bob Fuller's fast vibrato. In view of the assumed presence of Happy Caldwell at these Victor recording sessions of Thomas Morris I would cautiously name him as clarinetist.

The pianist might well be Mike Jackson re his connection to Victor and Morris at this time. The banjo definitely sounds like Christian.

Notes:

- RR 57/10: "Brian Rust suggest a personnel of Thomas Morris, cornet; Charlie Irvis, trombone; Bob Fuller, clarinet; Lem Fowler?, piano; Buddy Christian, banjo. As matrix bve-36071 is by a Thomas Morris group with the same instrumentation, the presence of Morris at least seems quite reasonable."

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Bob Fuller – clt; prob. Mike Jackson or J.C. Johnson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

- Rust*3: Tom Morris – c; Charlie Irvis – tb; Bob Fuller – cl; Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

- Rust*6: Tom Morris – c; Charlie Irvis – tb; Bob Fuller – cl; Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

Notable differences of takes:

36069-1: bar 8 of ensemble chorus (chorus 2) tpt middle break (ca. 1:40): tbn enters with growled half note E on second beat

36069-2: bar 8 of ensemble chorus (chorus 2) tpt middle break (ca. 1:50): tbn enters with clean note low E on fourth beat

36070: no alternate take reissued, so no comment possible

071 THOMAS MORRIS AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; (Happy Caldwell) – clt;

Mike Jackson – pno;

Thomas Morris, Charlie Irvis – dialog

36071-2 Who's Dis Heah Stranger?

New York,

Aug. 27, 1926

Vic 20316,

Frog DGF 1

This single-title of the Thomas Morris band was recorded at the Mamie Smith session of the same day.

Morris certainly is undisputed, but the trombone player is more Nanton from tone, attack and phrasing than Irvis. Irvis' tone is much smoother than the tone heard here and his presence on this recording date may be limited to his part of the dialogue, but might be questioned at all, if only the entry in the Victor Master Book would not exist. Perhaps he just came into the studio to greet his companions and was then sentenced to take part? Any way – what we hear played by these musicians seems to be very little controlled, and I assume that booze is responsible for bad phrasing and intonation heard. This, yet, probably points to Charlie Irvis' presence on this and the foregoing Mamie Smith session. ADDITION Aug. 10. 2020: After re-listening this and the preceding session I feel certain now that we hear Irvis here! The same applies to Happy Caldwell on clarinet. If it is Caldwell, he must have been intoxicated to a degree, so that he was unable to deliver a better performance than what we hear in his "freak" solo behind the dialogue. And this, although he had developed into a fully accomplished clarinet player at that time and was much better than what can be heard here. But all this would also apply to Bob Fuller, only that it is not Fuller's vibrato and style at all!

The piano player only plays simple chordal accompaniment and can therefore not be identified with any certainty, but this simple "pounding" also seems to have been one side of Mike Jackson's style.

Notes:

- Rust, Victor Master Book Vol. 2: c / tb / cl / p; speech by Thomas Morris and Charlie Irvis

- Rust*2,*3: Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Bob Fuller (clt); Mike Jackson (pno); with dialogue by Morris and Irvis.

- Rust*4,*6: Tom Morris, c, speech; Charlie Irvis, tb, speech; Bob Fuller, cl; Mike Jackson, p.

072 MAMIE SMITH

Mamie Smith – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Happy Caldwell – clt;

(J.C. Johnson) – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

36081-1 What Have I Done To Make Me Feel This Way?

Vic 20233

not on LP/CD

36081-2 What Have I Done To Make Me Feel This Way?

Vic 20233,

Doc DOCD 5360

36081-3 What Have I Done To Make Me Feel This Way?

Vic LPV-534,

Doc DOCD 5360

New York,

Aug. 31, 1926

36082-2

I Once Was Yours I'm Somebody Else's Now

Vic 20210,

Doc DOCD 5360

This seems to be partly the same personnel as on the former Mamie Smith session with the exceptions of the clarinet player, who plays in a much more fashionable and modern style than Fuller, with interesting melodic phrases - unheard of by Fuller - especially in 'I Once Was Yours' and a completely different vibrato. Beautiful! Because of the time of recording and of Happy Caldwell's vicinity to the Thomas Morris circle I assume that this might be Caldwell on clarinet here. This clarinetist's style is much more "Western" and Dodds-influenced than Fuller's. Irvis' presence again doubted a little but nearer to Irvis than preceding Mamie Smith session. The pianist plays strong four-beat two-fisted rhythm other than Mike Jackson. Unfortunately, he cannot be heard in solo. So, it is impossible to judge whether he could be J.C. Johnson as reported from his own testimony below. The banjo player may be Christian, but this man here doubles time in 'What Have I Done ...' which elsewhere is unheard of by Christian. So, his presence has to be doubted. But it is his light banjo sound!

Notes:

- RR 57 p 11: "J.C. Johnson in the 'Melody Maker' (April 16, 1955) was reported as saying: "I played on records with Mamie, too. 'Been Some Changes Made' was one, I think, and I am sure she made four sides for Victor around '29". Similar comments were made by Albert McCarthy in 'Jazz Monthly'. Presumably J.C. Johnson was referring to the 1926 Victor session, while the 'Been Some Changes Made' session possibly remains to be discovered."

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris - cnt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Bob Fuller - clt; prob. Mike Jackson or J.C. Johnson - pno; Buddy Christian - bjo
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Tom Morris - c; Charlie Irvis - tb; Bob Fuller - cl; Mike Jackson - pno; Buddy Christian - bjo

Notable differences of takes:

36081-1: this take not reissued in any form, thus no comment possible
36081-2: first bar of introduction - tpt fourth note d is somewhat fluffed and unclear
36081-3: first bar of introduction - tpt fourth note d is clear and clean

073 BESSIE BROWN

New York,

Aug. - Sep. 1926

Bessie Brown - voc;

Big Charlie Thomas - cnt; Charlie Irvis or (Jonas Walker?) - tbn; Bennie Morton - clt;

Clarence Williams - pno; Buddy Christian - bjo

6813-1 Nobody But My Baby Is Getting My Love

Ban 1859,

Doc DOCD-5627

6813-2 Nobody But My Baby Is Getting My Love

Or 771,

Doc DOCD-5456

6814-2 St. Louis Blues

Ban 1859,

Doc DOCD-5627

6814-3 St. Louis Blues

Or 756,

Doc DOCD-5456

Big Charlie Thomas seems to have been identified by John R.T. Davies some years ago (see Timeless CD CBC 1-030), but is still controversially discussed in collectors' circles (see The Frog Annual Vol.1 2009). Our team prefers to follow John R.T..

The trombonist usually is indifited as Irvis, but I have to admit that I believe to hear Jonas 'Daddy' Walker sometimes.

Notes:

- Storyville 19: unknown (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whittet (clt); prob Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p175: unknown (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Bennie Moten (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (bjo).

- BGR*2: probably: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ben Whittet, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.

- BGR*3,*4: unknown, c; poss Charlie Irvis, tb; Bennie Moten, cl; Clarence Williams, p; unknown, bj.

- Rust*3: unknown -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Ben Whittet -cl; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj.

- Rust*4,*6: unknown -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Bennie Moten -cl; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -bj.

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p.180):

6813-1: The first Bessie Brown vocal chorus is followed by 14 bars of Bennie Morton clt - ens.

6813-2: The first Bessie Brown vocal chorus is followed by 16 bars of cnt solo

6814-2: Bessie Brown ends final vocal with: "... die, Hey, Hey."

6814-2: Bessie Brown ends final vocal with: "... die."

074 EDNA WINSTON

New York,

Nov. 23, 1926

Edna Winston - voc;

Thomas Morris - tpt; Eugene 'Bud' Aiken - tbn; Happy Caldwell - clt;

Mike Jackson - pno; (Buddy Christian) - bjo

36958-3 I Got A Mule To Ride

Vic 20407,

Document DOCD-5523

36959-2 Mama's Gonna Drop Your Curtain

Vic 20424,

Document DOCD-5523

36960-3 Pail In My Hand

Vic 20424,

Document DOCD-5523

36961-1 Peeping Jim

Vic 20407,

Document DOCD-5523

Very beautiful, but unknown - or not yet identified - trombonist, one of the better players, probably the name known, but unlinked to any known recordings. In my very personal opinion there only was one trombonist of this stature in Harlem at that time besides Jimmy Harrison and Charlie Green. He was Eugene 'Bud' Aiken, brother of trumpeter Gus Aiken. 'Bud' Aiken also played professional trumpet and was very advanced for his time. Because of this, his trombone playing owed much to trumpet playing. Sadly, Bud Aiken died on the 21st August, 1927, what very certainly made it impossible for him to develop into a great trombonist and gain more prominence.

Christian's presence should be questioned in comparison to next E. Winston session! Is this really Bob Fuller? Rather: Albert Happy Caldwell! Pianist probably is the tinkling Mr. Mike Jackson - with little left hand. He might possibly also be Perry Bradford.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Bob Fuller, clt; Mike Jackson, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Tom Morris -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Bob Fuller -cl; Mike Jackson -p; Buddy Christian -bj.

075 ESTER BIGEOU Clarence' Williams Blue Five

New York,

Dec. 21, 1926

Ester Bigeou - voc;

Probably: Ed Allen - cnt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Arville Harris or Carmello Jari - clt;

Clarence Williams - pno; Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris - bjo

80258-A Midnight Stomp

OK unissued

not on LP/CD

80259-A Zulu Blues

OK unissued

not on LP/CD

Lacking any recording ledger or any other documents this session must remain in absolute obscurity.

Notes:

- Storyville 20: prob personnel: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Waters (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bjo).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p193: possibly Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Waters (clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris (bjo).
- BGR*2: prob Ed Allen, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Ben Waters, clt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris, bjo.
- BGR*3,*4: poss Ed Allen, c; Charlie Irvis, tb; Ben Waters, cl; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris, bj.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: prob: Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Benny Waters -cl; Clarence Williams -p; Buddy Christian or Leroy Harris -bj.

<p>076 EVA TAYLOR Clarence' Williams Blue Five Eva Taylor – voc; Jabbo Smith – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Clarence Williams – pno; <i>Buddy Christian</i> - gtr 80412-A I Wish You Would (Love Me Like I'm Loving You) 80413-B If I Could Be With You</p>	<p>New York,</p>	<p>Feb. 10, 1927</p>
	<p>OK 8444, Collectors Classics COCD-19 OK 8444, Collectors Classics COCD-19</p>	

Jabbo Smith recalled this as his only date with Clarence Williams: "My first ever recording was with Clarence Williams when I was 17 years of age. Charlie Johnson's trombone player got me on the date!" Smith was with Charlie Johnson at the time, as was Irvis. So, it is our strong opinion that this is the first date using Johnson musicians, with the only exception session of 10 Dec. 1926, where we find Cyrus St. Clair for the first time. At this time Clarence seems to have alternated between Buddy Christian and newcomer Leroy Harris. As Christian is also known to have been a guitar player (and expert pianist!), it seems appropriate to suggest him as guitarist here.

Notes:

- Storyville 20: Jabbo Smith (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (gtr).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p197: Jabbo Smith (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); Clarence Williams (pno); unknown (gtr).
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Jabbo Smith, cnt; prob Charlie Irvis, tbn; Clarence Williams, pno; unknown, gtr.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Jabbo Smith -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; Clarence Williams -p; unknown -g.

<p>077 EDNA WINSTON Edna Winston – voc; Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Albert Happy Caldwell – clt, alt; Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo 37786-1 'Way After One And My Daddy Ain't Come Home Yet 37787-1 Joogie Blues 37788-1 Ever After On 37788-2 Ever After On 37789-1 Rent Man Blues</p>	<p>New York,</p>	<p>Feb. 16, 1927</p>
	<p>Vic 20857, Document DOCD-5523 Vic 20654, Document DOCD-5523 Vic 20654, Document DOCD-5523 Vic 20654, Retrieval RTR 79078 Vic 20857, Document DOCD-5523</p>	

As before on several Victor sessions under Thomas Morris' aegis we certainly hear Happy Caldwell on clarinet with his distinct Daddsish style, and – other than the foregoing Edna Winston session – Charlie Irvis on trombone.

There is a very busy pianist's right hand that points to Mike Jackson. And the banjo's sound is Buddy Christian's.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Tom Morris, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Bob Fuller, clt, alt; Mike Jackson, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Tom Morris -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Bob Fuller -cl -as; Mike Jackson -p; Buddy Christian -bj.

Notable differences of takes:

- 37788-1: Introduction: Morris plays a chain of five eighth-notes in the third bar, after one whole note in bar 1 and one quarter-note plus one three-quarter note in bar 2
- 37788-2: Introduction: Morris plays a chain of five eighth-notes in the fourth bar, after one whole-note in bar 1, two half-notes in bar 2 and one half-note plus two eighth-notes and one quarter-note in bar 3.

<p>078 CHARLIE JOHNSON'S ORIGINAL PARADISE TEN unknown, Cladys Jabbo Smith, Thomas Morris – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Ben Whitted, Benny Carter – alt, clt; Benny Waters – ten, clt; Charlie Johnson – pno; Bobby Johnson – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs; George Stafford – dms; Monette Moore – voc 38115-1 Paradise Wobble 38116-1 Birmingham Black Bottom 38116-2 Birmingham Black Bottom 38117-1 Don't You Leave Me Here 38117-3 Don't You Leave Me Here</p>	<p>New York,</p>	<p>Feb. 25, 1927</p>
	<p>Vic 20551, Frog DGF 8 Vic 20551, Frog DGF 8 Vic test, Frog DGF 12 Vic 20653, Frog DGF 8 Vic test, Frog DGF 12</p>	

The personnel is established as given with the exception of the first trumpet player. Rust's 'Victor Master Book Vol. 2' gives three cnt/tpt. After year-long repeated listening I am unable to hear three trumpet/cornet players. Jabbo Smith joined the band most probably in late 1926 as a replacement for Sidney de Paris, who stayed behind in Atlantic City when the band changed over to NYC, as they usually did when the summer season was over. So, de Paris can be disregarded for this session. All solos – except for "Don't You Leave Me Here" – are by Jabbo Smith. It probably is Thomas Morris soloing in this latter tune. Morris' presence has been suggested by Richard Rains in 'Storyville 153'. So, there might be the possibility that the Johnson band was temporarily without a first trumpet, and Morris had been hired as a sub (the trumpet lead in "Birmingham Black Bottom" chorus B1 certainly sounds like Morris). But then the listing in the 'Victor Master Book' would have to be wrong. In this respect it has to be borne in mind that it was most uncommon at the time to have three trumpets in a big band. Two were the rule. The great exception was the Henderson band, which had three trumpets since Armstrong had been engaged. From then on, Redman certainly wrote for three trumpets, and after Armstrong's return to Chicago, writing for two trumpets – plus trombone – certainly would have been a musical relapse.

Or, they had a lead trumpet player (the very enigmatic Cliff Brazzington has been listed at the time also with the Ellington band) and Morris was added for some other reason, maybe because he provided the arrangement of "Birmingham Black Bottom", which looks rather related in

structure and general conception to Morris' own "Ham Gravy" as recorded by Morris' Hot Babies. In return Morris could have been allowed to solo in the unarranged free ensemble of "Don't You Leave Me Here". This then would explain the cited three trumpets/cornets. Yet only two trumpets can be heard in the brass section in chorus A1 of "Paradise Wobble".

Benny Carter was a member of the Johnson band throughout 1927 (Berger, Berger, Patrick 'Benny Carter'), joining – for the second time – in late 1926 and staying until February 1928. He allegedly started arranging with Charlie Johnson, and I can well imagine that "Paradise Wobble" might be one of his first recorded – or even authored – arrangements. (The Berger book names his possibly first recorded arrangement as "P.D.Q. Blues" by Fletcher Henderson. Yet this arrangement definitely sounds as though it was written by a white arranger with its whole-tone parts and is not related to anything Carter has arranged later.)

Alas, Carter cannot be heard in solo in this session. This is the period the Johnson saxophon section was named "The Three Bens" – Whitted, Carter and Waters. Whitted, by the way, was always responsible for the clarinet solos.

McCarthy 'Big Band Jazz' denies Morris' presence on this session and attributes the plunger solos in "Don't You Leave Me Here" to Sidney de Paris. Carter's presence is denied as well.

Richard Rains in 'Storyville' 153 is certainly correct in stating that it is Morris here despite "...Jabbo Smith's assertion when listening to Birmingham Black Bottom, "That's Ham". It is believed that Leonard Davis did not join the Johnson Band until some time in 1928." (Davis left the Arthur Gibbs band to join Johnson in summer 1928.)

"Paradise Wobble" is a heavily arranged 12 bar blues. The arrangement is complex, much more so than the two other titles of this session.

And I suggest this to be one of the earliest arrangements of Benny Carter on record – if not the very earliest. Appropriate and even great soloing by Jabbo Smith and Ben Whitted. (Re Ben Whitted: please, forget all nominations of Whitted in former discographies on Clarence Williams! They are completely wrong and out of place and pure unsubstantiated speculation without documented background!)

"Birmingham Black Bottom" is akin remarkably in structure and thematic material to Thomas Morris' "Ham Gravy" and I speculate whether this tune was contributed to this session by Morris himself, if he really is one of the trumpets. On the other hand, this number is a real swinger – very advanced for early 1927 – and perfectly shows the Johnson band abilities.

"Don't You Leave Me Here" is the very well-known Morton tune, here played unarranged in free ensemble with solo contributions by Monette Moore, then 18-year-old Jabbo Smith, and Charlie Irvis. Great functional ensemble playing here without turning chaotic.

Notes:

- *Delaunay, New Hot Discography 1948: Jabbo Smith, Sidney De Paris - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Ben Whitted - clt; Ben Waters - ten; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - gr; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc*

- *Jazz Directory Vol. Five 1955: Probably similar personnel as session of Jan. 24, 1928: Jabbo Smith, Sidney De Paris - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Ben Whitted - clt; Ben Waters - ten; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms, Monette Moore - voc*

- *Rust*2: Jabbo Smith, Sidney De Paris, Cliff Brazzington - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Ben Whitted - alt, clt; Benny Carter (?) - ten; Ben Waters - ten; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc*

- *Rust*3: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis, Thomas Morris - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Benny Carter - alt, sop, clt, arr; Ben Whitted - alt, clt; Elmer Harrell - ten, clt; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc*

- *Storyville 35-185: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis, Tom Morris, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Benny Carter, Ben Whitted, alt, clt; Elmer Harrell, ten, clt; Charlie Johnson, pno; Bobby Johnson, bjo; Cyrus St. Clair, bbs; George Stafford, dms; Monette Moore, vcl*

- *Rust*6: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis, Thomas Morris - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Benny Carter - alt, sop, clt, arr; Ben Whitted - alt, clt; Benny Waters - ten, clt, arr; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc*

- *Rust, The Victor Master Book Vol. 2: 3 c (tp ?) / tb / 3 s / p / bj / bb / d; vocalist: Monette Moore*

The Tunes' Structures:

38115-1 Paradise Wobble Key of Eb Victor
 (Intro 8 bars ens - tpt - clt)(A1 Chorus 12 bars blues ens)(A2 Chorus 12 bars Irvis tbn + saxes)(A3 Chorus 12 bars ens breaks bjo - Smith tpt 8 bars)(A4 Chorus 12 bars Smith tpt)(A5 Chorus 12 bars saxes - ens)(A6 Chorus 12 bars Moore voc + Smith tpt obligato)(A7 Chorus 12 bars Moore voc + Smith tpt obligato)(A8 Chorus 12 bars Whitted clt - ens)(A9 Chorus 12 bars brass)(A10 Chorus 12 bars ens)

arrangement: Benny Carter? / composer credit is: F. Johnson - T. Morris

38116-1 Birmingham Black Bottom Key of Ab / Eb / Ab Victor
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 12 bars saxes - ens)(A2 Chorus 12 bars saxes - ens)(A3 Chorus 12 bars brass)(A4 Chorus 12 bars Moore voc - ens)(A5 Chorus 12 bars Smith tpt)(A6 Chorus 12 bars Moore voc - ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(B1 Chorus 16 bars AA ens - Morris (?) tpt lead, middle break Smith tpt)(B2 Chorus 16 bars bjo - middle break Waters ten)(Bridge 4 bars ens + cymbals)(A7 Chorus 12 bars ens + Smith tpt lead)(Coda 6 bars ens + Smith tpt lead)

38116-2 Birmingham Black Bottom Key of Ab / Eb / Ab Victor
 same as 38116-1

arrangement: Thomas Morris? / composer credit is: F. Johnson - T. Morris

38117-1 Don't You Leave Me Here Key of Bb Victor
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 16 bars AA ens)(B1 Verse 16 bars ens)(A2 Chorus 16 bars Moore + Whitted clt obligato)(A3 Chorus 16 bars Morris tpt)(A4 Chorus 16 bars Irvis tbn)(A5 Chorus 16 bars Moore + Johnson pno obligato)(A6 Chorus 16 bars ens)

38117-3 Don't You Leave Me Here Key of Bb Victor
 same as 38117-1

Discernible differences of takes:

38116-1 2nd bar of coda: two trombone notes and banjo

38116-2 2nd bar of coda: two trombone notes and banjo plus two heavy drumbeats and cymbal

38117-1 2nd half of vocal: "Hear that bell a-ringin', hear that whistle sound".

38117-3 2nd half of vocal: "Hear that whistle blow, hear that whistle sound".

See my article on the Charlie Johnson band in Names & Numbers 57 and elsewhere on this web-site. The frequently listed enigmatic Cliff Brazzington seems to be a real person and might be the first trumpet player here. He is said to have been with the Ellington band in 1926. If so, he might be playing on *Paradise Wobble* only.

079	SARA MARTIN	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	Apr. 09, 1927
	Sara Martin – voc;			
	Charlie Irvis – tbn; Arville Harris – clt; (Ben Whitted) – alt;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs			
80712-B	Cushion Foot Stomp		OK 8461,	Collectors Classics COCD-19
80713-B	Take Your Black Bottom Outside		OK 8461,	Collectors Classics COCD-19

Our group is proud to have detected a hitherto unlisted banjo player, presumably Buddy Christian. Or Leroy Harris? The clarinetist was for years said to be Benny Waters. We have been unable to find a source for this assumption and it has to be mentioned that Waters started as a saxophonist, soloing on clarinet only in later years. Tone and style seem to belong to Arville Harris. The alto might belong to Ben Whitted stylistically, but this is not documented anywhere and only our vague suggestion. In April 1927 Irvis and St. Clair were with Charlie Johnson's band at Smalls' Paradise and might easily have brought Whitted with them to this recording session.

Notes:

- Storyville 20: *Charlie Irvis (tbn); Benny Waters (clt); Arville Harris (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*
- Lord, *Clarence Williams p203: Charlie Irvis (tbn); Benny Waters (clt); Arville Harris (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*
- BGR*2, *3, *4: *Charlie Irvis, tbn; Benny Waters, clt; Arville Harris, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Cyrus St. Clair, bbs.*
- Rust*3: *Charlie Irvis -tb; Ben Waters -cl; Arville Harris -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.*
- Rust*4, *6: *Charlie Irvis -tb; Benny Waters -cl; Arville Harris -as; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.*

080 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE

New York, Apr. 14, 1927

Ed Allen – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;

Carmello Jari - alt, clt; *Arville Harris – alt, clt;*

Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs; Floyd Casey - dms

80728-B Black Snake Blues

OK 8465, Collectors Classics COCD-19

80729-B Old Folks Shuffle

OK 8465, Collectors Classics COCD-19

Here again the reed players' identities were unsolved. Tonally and stylistically (the bouncing-trills!) the clarinet lead player in "Black Snake Blues" is unquestionably Jari and the other reed man is most probably Arville Harris. As both seem to be playing alto (no tenor here) the group is unable to find out who plays the alto solos in the second title. Others undisputed.

Notes:

- Storyville 21: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whitted (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).*
- Lord, *Clarence Williams p204: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whitted (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten?); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).*
- Rust*2, *3: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whitted, Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).*
- Rust*4, *6: *Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Ben Whitted -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -as or ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d.*

081 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE ORCHESTRA

New York, Apr. 27, 1927

Ed Allen – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Floyd Casey – dms;

Katherine Henderson (or *Eva Taylor*) - voc

E-4861; E-23235 Baltimore

Br 7017, Frog DGF 37

E-4862; E-23236 Baltimore

Br 7017, Frog DGF 37

E-4857; E-23237 Take Your Black Bottom Dance Outside

Br 7017, Frog DGF 37

This personnel is listed uniformly by all accessible sources and so our group generally agrees. Even so, DB is utterly convinced that this singer is Eva Taylor (see Storyville 14/40 and 16/22 on the matter).

Notes:

- Storyville 21: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Floyd Casey (dms); Katherine Henderson (vcl).*
- Lord, *Clarence Williams p207: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Floyd Casey (dms); Katherine Henderson (vcl).*
- Rust*2: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Floyd Casey (dms); Katherine Henderson (vcl).*
- Rust*3: *Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Arville Harris -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Floyd Casey -d; Katherine Henderson -v.*
- Rust*4, *6: *Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Arville Harris -cl -as or ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Floyd Casey -d; Katherine Henderson -v.*
- BGR*2, *3, *4: *Ed Allen, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Arville Harris, clt, ten; Clarence Williams, pno; Leroy Harris, bjo; Floyd Casey, dms; Katherine Henderson, vcl.*

Discernable differences of takes (from Lord p208):

E-4861: *Weak vocal entry „Dance Got 'Em ...“*

E-4862: *Stronger vocal entry „There's a Dance Got 'Em ...“*

082 THOMAS WALLER WITH MORRIS' HOT BABIES

Camden, N.J. May 20, 1927

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;

Fats Waller – pno, org; *Eddie King – dms*

38050-2 Fats Waller Stomp

Jazz Archives 21 (LP), JSP 927D

38050-3 Fats Waller Stomp

Vic 20890, Chronological Classics 674

38051-1 Savannah Blues

Vic 20776, Chronological Classics 674

38051-2 Savannah Blues

Vic 741062 (LP), JSP 927D

38052-2 Won't You Take Me Home?

Vic 741062 (LP), JSP 927D

38052-3 Won't You Take Me Home?

Vic 20776, Chronological Classics 674

Apart from the shortcomings of the pipe-organ, the drummer and the over-all carelessness, Thomas Morris' weaknesses and shortcomings are very obvious. The more so, the bottle might have played a large part in the proceedings.

Notes:

- Rust*2, *3, *4, *6: *Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Fats Waller (pno, pipe-organ); Eddie King (?) (dms)*

Discernible differences of takes:

- 38050-2: *The drummer plays one sole wood-block stroke immediately before trombone starts its 8-bars strain A*
 38050-3: *The drummer plays three wood-block strokes immediately before trombone starts its 8-bars strain A*
 38051-1: *16-bar dialogue of trumpet and trombone, with two-bar middle-break by organ, after 4-bar intro by brass and organ*
 38051-2: *16-bar trombone solo accompanied by a very retained Th. Morris after the 4-bar introduction by brass and organ, no two-bar organ middle-break in tbn-solo*
 38052-2: *Tpt-break in bar 15 of tune: organ is silent behind trumpet*
 38052-3: *Tpt-break in bar 15 of tune: organ plays behind trumpet*

083 CLARENCE WILLIAMS AND HIS BOTTOMLAND ORCHESTRA	New York,	Jun. 07, 1927
<i>Ed Anderson, Henry Red Allen – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;</i>		
<i>unknown – alt; unknown – alt (ten);</i>		
<i>Clarence Williams – pno; Floyd Casey – dms;</i>		
<i>Evelyn Preer – voc</i>		
E-6055; E-23500	Slow River	Br 3580, Frog DGF 37
E-6056; E-23501	Slow River	BrG A-457, Frog DGF 37
E-6057; E-23502	Zulu Wail	BrG A-457, Frog DGF 37
E-6058; E-23503	Zulu Wail	Br 3580, Frog DGF 37

Three takes of each title are listed in Rust*6 and we do not know whether they really exist or whether this is an error. We have therefore preferred to list the tunes according to Rust*4 and Lord. These sources in the past gave two takes of each title.

The whole session seems to be a concerto for young Henry 'Red' Allen from NOLA whose first recordings these were. Undisputed is Irvis on tbn, but our group is unable to give any reasonable name for the reedmen and for the other trumpet player who plays some sort of named call-and-response pattern with Allen in "Zulu Wail" and seems to be stylistically very similar to Allen. As Ed Anderson is traditionally named for this session it might be him as his style was reportedly very akin to Oliver's. There is some uncertainty whether we have two altos or alto and tenor on this recording.

Notes:

- Storyville 21: *Henry Allen, poss Ed Anderson (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Alberto Socarras, unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Floyd Casey (dms); Evelyn Preer (vcl).*

- Lord, Clarence Williams p210: *Henry Allen, poss Ed Anderson (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Alberto Socarras, unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Floyd Casey (dms); Evelyn Preer (vcl).*

-Rust*2: *Ed Anderson and another (June Clark ?) (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whittet (?) and another (clt, alt); Arville Harris (?) (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Floyd Casey (dms); Evelyn Preer (vcl).*

-Rust*3,*4: *Henry Allen -?Ed Anderson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Albert Socarras and another -as; Clarence Williams -p; Floyd Casey -d; Evelyn Preer -v.*

-Rust*6: *Henry Allen - ?Ed Anderson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Albert Socarras and another -as; Clarence Williams -p -a; Floyd Casey -d; Evelyn Thompson -v.*

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p211):

E-6055; E-23500: *Second chorus is vocal chorus.*

E-6056; E-23501: *This item has no vocal despite the label legend.*

E-6057; E-23502: *This item has no vocal despite the label legend.*

E-6058; E-23503: *Second chorus – after verse – is vocal chorus.*

084 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' ORCHESTRA	New York,	Jul. 1927
<i>Ed Allen, – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;</i>		
<i>Alberto Socarras – sop, clt, flt; Arville Harris – alt, clt;</i>		
<i>Clarence Williams – pno; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs</i>		
2837-2	Shooting The Pistol	Pm 12517, Frog DGF 37
2838-2	Bottomland	Pm 12517 not on LP/CD
2838-3	Bottomland	Pm 12517, Frog DGF 37

These two recorded titles come from Clarence's show 'Bottomland'.

This session is very probably Socarras' initial recording with Clarence Williams! With Jari gone to South America, it seems that now the era of another caribbean clarinetist is beginning: Albert Socarras. Our group agree on Arville Harris on alto.

Read Herb Friedwald's very interesting article on Socarras in Storyville 90!

Notes:

- Storyville 21: *Ed Allen (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Arville Harris (clt, alt); Alberto Socarras (sop, flt); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- Lord, Clarence Williams p213: *Ed Allen (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); poss Arville Harris (clt, alt); Alberto Socarras (clt, flt, sop); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

-Rust*2: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

-Rust*3,*4,*6: *Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; ?Arville Harris -cl -as; Alberto Socarras -ss -f; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.*

Notable differences of takes:

2838-2: *this take -2 not reissued, therefore no comment possibly.*

085 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS	New York,	Aug. 18, 1927
<i>Ed Allen – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Alberto Socarras – alt, sop, clt;</i>		
<i>Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs</i>		
144546-1	I'm Going Back To Bottomland	Col 14244-D, Frog DGF 14
144547-2	You'll Long For Me (When The Cold Winds Blow)	Col 14244-D, Frog DGF 14

We have a very similar personnel here to that before. Socarras now developing into a mainstay of Clarence's recordings (see later on), playing all the reeds except tenor or baritone, but very beautiful and excellent flute.

Clarence seems to have taken King Oliver's 'Someday Sweetheart' of September 17, 1926 as a model for his arrangement of 'You'll Long For Me'.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.
 - Storyville 21: Ed Allen (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, sop, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p214: Ed Allen (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, sop, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, sop); Arville Harris (?) (alt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Albert Socarras -cl -ss -as; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

086 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE SEVEN	New York,	Sep. 23, 1927
Louis Metcalf – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Albert Socarras – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt; Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs		
81472-A Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?	OK 8510,	Chronological Classics 736
81473-A Close Fit Blues	OK 8510,	Chronological Classics 736

Much against my own estimation some years ago in the course of our Clarence Williams project I have now to accept that this is certainly Louis Metcalf on trumpet here, and not Anderson or Gaines as assumed by us earlier! This is what we have stated earlier: *For years now, Louis Metcalf has been named as trumpet player on this session. But we think that there is nothing recalling Metcalf's style (listen to all the Ellington recordings of the time). Our group does not agree whether the trumpet player is Anderson or Charlie Gaines.*

While listening all recordings attributed to Metcalf in a steady row it becomes apparent that here we have all Metcalf's characteristics as heard before, only a bit tamed and thus retained by being encompassed in a Williams-led conception. Typical Irvis legato playing. Socarras and Arville Harris certainly are the reed-men as indentified in our earlier effort, and the rhythm section is the regular Williams rhythm section of this time.

Notes:

- Storyville 21: Louis Metcalfe (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); prob Buster Bailey (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p216: Louis Metcalf (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); prob Buster Bailey (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*2: Charlie Gaines or Louis Metcalf (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (?) (clt, alt); Arville Harris (?) (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Louis Metcalf -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Buster Bailey, ?Arville Harris -cl -as; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

087 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS	New York,	Jan. 12, 1928
Ed Allen – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Buster Bailey – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt; Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs		
145521-1 Dreaming The Hours Away	Col 14193-D,	Frog DGF 14
145522-2 Close Fit Blues	Col 14193-D	not on LP/CD
145522-3 Close Fit Blues	Col 14193-D,	Frog DGF 14

Almost all the discographies list Ed Cuffee for trombonist, but aural evidence decidedly has to name Charlie Irvis on trombone with his legato style trombone and not the Miff Mole inspired staccato style of Ed Cuffee as always given! Together with Irvis we hear the Henderson reeds (without Don Redman who was not a soloist fitting into the Williams mode) plus the Williams rhythm team. Our group identified Buddy Christian here because of the banjo sound – bell-like, opposite to Leroy Harris' rather dry sound. And what a most beautiful ride-out chorus they play in the first title!

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.
 - Storyville 21: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Coleman Hawkins (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p222: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Coleman Hawkins (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (?) (tbn); Buster Bailey, (?) Russell Procope or Albert Socarras, (clt, alt); Coleman Hawkins (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; Buster Bailey -cl -as; Coleman Hawkins -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

Notable differences of takes:

145522-2: this take -2 not reissued, therefore no comment possible.

088 CHARLIE JOHNSON'S PARADISE TEN	New York,	Jan. 24, 1928
Sidney de Paris, Cladys Jabbo Smith – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Ben Whitted, Benny Carter – alt, clt; Ben Waters – ten, clt; Edgar Sampson – vln; Charlie Johnson – pno; Bobby Johnson – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs; George Stafford – dms; Monette Moore – voc (1,2); Benny Carter – arr (1,2,3,4); Ben Waters – arr (5,6)		
41639-1 You Ain't The One	Vic test,	Frog DGF 12
41639-2 You Ain't The One	Vic 21247,	Frog DGF 8
41640-1 Charleston Is The Best Dance After All	Vic 21491,	Frog DGF 8
41640-2 Charleston Is The Best Dance After All	Vic test,	Frog DGF 12
41641-1 Hot Tempered Blues	Vic test,	Frog DGF 12
41641-2 Hot Tempered Blues	Vic 21247,	Frog DGF 8

Now, here we have the Johnson band in full flight. With the extra attraction of Benny Carter's definitely first (see "Paradise Wobble" above) recorded arrangements, together with his first recorded solo efforts, straight on the way to later highs.

Trumpet soloing is definitely by Jabbo Smith on the first two titles, by another man on the third title, who may be, but is not necessarily Sidney de Paris. Jabbo Smith told Chip Deffaa ('Voices of The Jazz Age') that he left the band because of being accused of bad behaviour, and that de Paris was his successor. This would mean, that Smith would not have been in the band together with de Paris. So, the first trumpet player's identity has to be questioned, just as in the session of February 25, 1927.

"You Ain't The One" has a typical Carter reed chorus, this time on clarinets. It is not easy to play and Carter's colleagues struggle along in three-part harmony, Carter playing lead. Very advanced and interesting modulations in the bridges show Carter's early mastership. We hear Edgar Sampson with his violin accompanying Monette Moore's vocal chorus. Sampson has always been listed as saxophonist/violinist in this session, but it has to be kept in mind that he still was a member of Arthur Gibbs' band until summer 1928, when he together with Leonard Davis changed over to the Johnson band. Ben Waters in his book 'The Key to A Jazzy Life' said that the Johnson band sometimes had more than two trumpets, but never more than three saxes. So, I think, that Charlie Johnson added Sampson only as violinist in this session, just for the thrill of it, maybe being impressed by this young man's possibilities. The 'Victor Master Book' has three saxes and a violin. We never hear four reeds at the same time, which in 1928 certainly would have been extremely uncommon.

"Charleston Is The Best Dance After All" again have a Carter reed chorus, this time on saxophones. At the end of this saxophone chorus we hear Charlie Johnson's piano playing into the trumpet break, which seems to be proof of Johnson's carelessness.

"Hot Tempered Blues" is Ben Waters' arrangement with his typical bluesy clarinet writing. Then in chorus A4 we hear a trumpet player, who sounds very much like Thomas Morris in his phrasing in take -1, only that he has much better embouchure than Morris had (G. Bushell said about Thomas Morris: "He had some great ideas, but no lip – it just splattered all over the place"). This man here plays assured, with a controlled vibrato/shake and some funny phrases in take -2 which may yet come from de Paris's art of preaching on his horn (see "The Boy In The Boat" of the next session). Beautiful bluesy four-string violin by Sampson and phantastic free collective improvisation by the whole band in the last two choruses, in Gunther Schuller's words: "Here the band swings and rocks in a manner way ahead of its time, especially in the final, climactic improvised chorus. In its all-out abandon, it stops just this side of cacophony, a triumph of the art of ensemble improvisation" (Schuller 'Early Jazz').

Notes:

- Delaunay, *New Hot Discography 1948*: Jabbo Smith, Sidney De Paris, Cliff Brazzington - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Ben Whitted - clt; Benny Carter - alt; Ben Waters - ten; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - gtr; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc

- Jazz Directory Vol. Five 1955: Probably similar personnel as session of Jan. 24, 1928: Jabbo Smith, Cliff Brazzington - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Edgar Sampson - alt, clt, vln; Benny Carter - alt; Ben Waters - ten; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc

- Rust*2: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis, Cliff Brazzington - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Ben Whitted - alt, clt; Benny Carter - alt; Edgar Sampson - alt, vln; Ben Waters - ten; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc

- Rust*3: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Benny Carter - alt, sop, clt, arr; Edgar Sampson - alt, vln; Elmer Harrell - ten, clt; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc

- Storyville 35-185: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis, tpt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Benny Carter, alt, clt; Edgar Sampson, vln, alt; Elmer Harrell, ten, clt; Charlie Johnson, pno; Bobby Johnson, bjo; Cyrus St. Clair, bbs; George Stafford, dms; Monette Moore, vcl

- Rust*6: Jabbo Smith, Leonard Davis - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Benny Carter - alt, sop, clt, arr; Edgar Sampson - alt, vln; Benny Waters - ten, clt, arr; Charlie Johnson - pno; Bobby Johnson - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs; George Stafford - dms; Monette Moore - voc

- Rust, *The Victor Master Book Vol. 2*: 2 t / tb / 3 s / vn / p / bj / bb / d; vocalist: Monette Moore

41639-1 *You Ain't The One* Key of C / Eb / F / Eb Victor
(Intro 6 bars ens - Carter alt)(A1 Chorus 32 bars AA' ens)(A2 Chorus 32 bars Moore voc + Sampson vln obligato)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(B1 Verse 12 bars ens)(A3 Chorus 32 bars / Waters ten + brass 16, Irvis tbn 16)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(A4 Chorus 32 bars clts)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(A5 Chorus 32 bars / J. Smith tpt 16, ens 16)(Coda 2 bars ens)

41639-2 *You Ain't The One* Key of C / Eb / F / Eb Victor
same as 41639-1

arrangement: Benny Carter / composer credit is: Chas. Johnson - Arthur Porter

41640-1 *Charleston Is The Best Dance After All* Key of F Victor

(Intro 6 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars AABA ens)(Bridge 2 bars* ens)(B1 Verse 20 bars ens / ens 8, saxes 8, ens 4)
(A2 Chorus 32 bars saxes in harmony)(A3 Chorus 32 bars / J. Smith tpt 16, B. Carter alt 8, J. Smith tpt 6, ens 2)
(Bridge 2 bars* ens)(A4 Chorus 32 bars ens / ens 14, C. Johnson pno 2, Ch. Irvis 6, ens 10)(Coda 2 bars bbs - ens)

41640-2 *Charleston Is The Best Dance After All* Key of F Victor
same as 41640-1

arrangement: Benny Carter / composer credit is: G. Johnson - A. Porter

(* this bridge actually consists of four bars, two of which are the last two bars of the previous chorus. This same device has been called "an unprecedented practice in the history of jazz arrangements" by Andre Hodeir in his book *JAZZ, IT'S EVOLUTION AND ESSENCE*, only that he discusses Ellington's "Concerto For Cootie" of March 1940. Ellington had used this same device in his "Stevadore Stomp", but never as early as Carter does here. So, who is the originator of this little beautiful trick?)

41641-1 *Hot Tempered Blues* Key of Bb Victor
(Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 12 bars blues tpts in harmony)(A2 Chorus 12 bars Irvis tbn)(A3 Chorus 12 bars E. Sampson vln - clts background riff)(A4 Chorus 12 bars S. de Paris(?) tpt)(B1 Verse 16 bars AA clts)(A5 Chorus 12 bars ens riff)(A6 Chorus 12 bars ens ad lib)(Coda 2 bars ens)

41641-2 *Hot Tempered Blues* Key of Bb Victor
same as 41641-1

arrangement: Benny Waters / composer credit is: Chas. Johnson - Arthur Porter

Discernible differences of takes:

41639-1 Intro: first trumpet plays chromatic downward sequence with 3 times: 1 quarter note, 2 eighth notes (second note downward jump), 1 quarter note in chromatic sequence again, band playing even chromatic sequence

41639-2 Intro: first trumpet plays even chromatic downward sequence together with band

41640-1 pno plays into tpt break at end of Chorus A2 and stops abruptly

41640-2 pno silent in tpt break at end of Chorus A2, foot thumping instead

41641-1 tbn enters for solo in first bar of A2, no Whitted clt in A5

41641-2 tbn enters for solo 3 beats before A2, Whitted clt over ens in A5

Garvin Bushell – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

James P. Johnson, Thomas Fats Waller – pno; Harry Hull or Joe Watts - sbs

E-7232	What's The Use Of Being Alone?	Voc 1176,	Frog DGF 33
E-7233	What's The Use Of Being Alone?	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD
E-7234	Original Bugle Blues	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD
E-7235	Original Bugle Blues	Voc 1176,	Frog DGF 33

This session must certainly rate as one of the most unusual combinations in the whole history of jazz!

Dunn is certain as trumpeter and leader. Certainly, not Flemming on trombone as given elsewhere! I tend to hear him as Irvis because of tone, vibrato and phrasing. The clarinet soloist is Arville Harris – it is his shaky and slim tone - and we might thus conclude that this session has become reality with the help of Waller/Johnson musical circles, just as the famous Fats Waller and his Buddies of March 1929. The clarinet soloist also doubles on tenor sax on both titles. Judging from the alto solo in the second title I am not convinced of Bushell's presence. In his book Bushell does not comment on this session, which he does when he has recollections. Bushell's alto style is a bit more on the intellectual but melodic side, and he owns a slimmer tone than heard here (compare last session of March 13, 1928). Thus, it might be Herschel Brassfield on alto here as listed by Laurie Wright, but in lack of any characteristics of Brassfield's style six years after the early Dunn sessions I feel unable to admit. This alto player certainly lacks Brassfield's rhapsodic abilities as shown in 1922 (!). Brassfield seems to have spent a spell of time in Los Angeles in the mid-twenties, and it is not known when – or even if – he was back in New York. (He is believed to be on a Georgia Strutters recording session of May 23, 1927, but this is highly doubtful as well. See my list of the Georgia Strutters elsewhere on this website!)

There certainly is no banjo at all. But I think to hear a string bass who does not play when the two pianos solo, and might be Harry Hull or Joe Watts, string bassists engaged for recording purposes by James P. Johnson in 1928/9. This musician bows his instrument in the second title.

This is a very interesting, amusing and charming recording session in this writer's – and listener's – ears!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Personnel uncertain*

- Carey/McCarthy *Jazz Directory Vol. 2: Johnny Dunn (cor) with unknown group*

- Bushell/Tucker *Jazz from the Beginning: Johnny Dunn, c; ?Herb Flemming, tb; ?Garvin Bushell, cl, as; unknown, as; James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, p; ?John Mitchell, bj. (No comment on the date, thus approval?)*

- L. Wright "Fats" *In Fact p 42: Johnny Dunn, c; Herb Flemming, tb; Garvin Bushell, cl (1)/as; Herschel Brassfield, as; James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, p.*

- Rust*2: *Johnny Dunn (cnt); Herb Flemming? (tbn); Garvin Bushell? (clt, alt); Herschel Brassfield? (alt); James P. Johnson, Fats Waller? (pno); Gus Horsley? (bjo).*

- Rust*3,*4,*6: *Johnny Dunn, c; ?Herb Flemming, tb; ?Garvin Bushell, cl, as; unknown, as; James P. Johnson, Fats Waller, p; ?John Mitchell, bj.*

- FROG DGF 33 (CD booklet): *Johnny Dunn (trumpet), ?Herb Flemming (trombone) Garvin Bushell, Herschel Brassfield (clarinet, alto sax), James P. Johnson, Fats Waller (pianos)*

Notable differences of takes:

Alternate takes unissued, therefore no comment possible.

090 THE GULF COAST SEVEN

Louis Metcalf – tpt; Joe Nanton – tbn;
unknown – alt; Emmett Matthews – sop, ten;
James P. Johnson – pno; unknown - dms;

Perry Bradford – voc (2)

147151-1 Daylight Savin` Blues

147152-1 Georgia's Always On My Mind

New York,

Oct. 19, 1928

Col 14373-D,

Frog DGF 56

Col 14373-D,

Frog DGF 56

For many years this coupling has been seen as an offshoot of the Ellington band of the day under Perry Bradford's superintendence. The undeniable presence of Louis Metcalf, a seemingly familiar trombonist out of the Ellington circle and a fluent and secure soprano player: this must have been a unit comprised of Ellington men. But it is not that easy!

First: Louis Metcalf presence must be undisputed because of his very personal style of squeezed tone and individual phrasing. But second, the trombonist seems not to be as obvious as Metcalf. Very probably the man is Nanton, but there also are traces of Charlie Irvis in his playing which should not be disregarded.

The alto player has been listed as Johnny Hodges on the strength of the presence of prominent soprano playing. But here we have a real problem! The style is not Hodges' at all! Neither on soprano nor on alto. The soprano can only be heard together with the alto, never together with the tenor. And when we hear the tenor, the soprano is silent. This urges us to the recognition that the altoist cannot be the soprano player. Above all the altoist can only be heard playing in harmony with the tenor and in free ensemble with the soprano. This means that the tenor player also plays the soprano! And the altoist is not Hodges nor the otherwise presumed Charlie Holmes because the altoist cannot be heard in solo, which would necessarily be the case if Hodges or Holmes would have been present – and because of stylistic unsuitability. Consequently - in lack of solo playing - it is impossible to identify the alto player. His ensemble playing certainly lacks the elegance and finesse of either Hodges or Holmes.

With Hodges out of the way and no clarinet at all on these sides there consequently is no need to identify Barney Bigard. And the tenor playing is much too crude to be by Bigard. This player obviously prefers soprano as his main instrument, he plays tenor only in harmony with the alto. This then makes us search for a distinct soprano player at the time in question. He may be found in Emmett Matthews, a singer and reed player who came to New York with Wen Talbert and his Orchestra in 1927 where he was engaged as a tenor player. In his "You Don't Know Me, But .." p. 13 George Winfield recalls "Emmett Matthews running across the stage playing his soprano". Matthews owns a very extrovert style of music making as a singer and soprano player as shown in recordings under his own name in 1931 with singer Laura Rucker and in 1936 with a bunch of Fats Waller musicians. He also can be heard in Waller's 'I Got Rhythm' of December 1935 rising his soprano over the big band in the finale.

On piano we probably hear James P. Johnson, the master, who at that time can often be found in Bradford-directed recording groups. The drummer does not show anything attributable to Sonny Greer who obviously was only named in conjunction with the assumed Ellington connection. It is sometimes possible to get a hint to a drummer's identity from the pitch of his drums or cymbals. But then you need a reference recording which in this case is not existent. Also, that Greer uses different cymbals.

But finally, Bradford and his awful and off-pitch singing can be listed as unequivocal. This then is a weak element of the recording, indeed, but absolutely certain!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: personnel unknown*

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: "This group is generally considered to be connected with Perry Bradford and/or Johnny Dunn. ... Definite information lacking we merely give the basic details (no personnel – KBR)"*

- Rust*2: Bubber Miley (cnt); unknown (tbn); unknown (sop, alt); unknown (alt); unknown (pno); unknown (dms); P. Bradford (voc).

- Rust*3,*4: Louis Metcalf - c; ? Joe Nanton - tb; Johnny Hodges -ss, as; ? Barney Bigard - clt, ts; James P. Johnson - p; unknown - dr; Perry Bradford - v.

- Rust*6: Louis Metcalf - c; ? Joe Nanton - tb; Johnny Hodges -ss, as; ? Barney Bigard - clt, ts; James P. Johnson - p; ? Sonny Greer - dr; Perry Bradford - v.

091 FATS WALLER AND HIS BUDDIES

New York, Mar. 01, 1929

Charlie Gaines - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn; Arville Harris - clt, ten;

Thomas Fats Waller - pno; Eddie Condon - bjo

49760-2 The Minor Drag

Vic V-38050, Chronological Classics 689

49761-2 Harlem Fuss

Vic V-38050, Chronological Classics 689

This is one of the all-time classic jazz sessions of Harlem times, known to everyone interested in the music. From Eddie Condon's narration we have a true and dependable documentation of the participating musicians and the circumstances the session was arranged. Apart from that we here have one of the funniest stories about jazz music and musicians. This session then can serve as reference for the playing of any participant. Much has been said about this session and needs not to be repeated here.

Arville Harris does not play alto sax on these sides.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography 1948: Charlie Gaines (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); Arville Harris (clt & alt); Fats Waller (p); Eddie Condon (bjo)*

- Rust*2: Charlie Gaines (tp); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, alt, ten); Fats Waller (pno); Eddie Condon (bjo)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Charlie Gaines -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Arville Harris -cl, as, ts; Fats Waller -p; Eddie Condon -bj

092 JELLY ROLL MORTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Camden, N.J. Jul. 09, 1929

Walter Briscoe, Boyd Red Rosser - tpt; Charlie Irvis - tbn;

George Baquet - clt; Walter Foots Thomas, Paul Barnes - alt, clt; Joe Thomas - ten, clt;

Jelly Roll Morton - pno; Barney Alexander - bjo; Harry Prather - bbs; William Laws - dms

49452-1 Burnin' The Iceberg

Vic unissued on 78, JSP CD 325

49452-2 Burnin' The Iceberg

Vic V-38075, JSP CD 322

49453-1 Courthouse Bump

Vic unissued on 78, JSP CD 325

49453-2 Courthouse Bump

Vic V-38093, JSP CD 322

49454-1 Pretty Lil

Vic unissued on 78, JSP CD 325

49454-2 Pretty Lil

Vic V-38078, JSP CD 322

When bearing in mind Jelly Roll Morton's great Red Hot Peppers recordings of 1926, these recordings with a "fashionable" big band appear as a decline. The 1926 band was a star-studded formation, and here now, Morton seemed to struggle to catch up with the modern developments. Yet, he did not succeed at all. This band has nothing of the refinement and freshness of the Harlem bands of the time, nor of his own bands of three years ago. And a couple of unknowns were playing, together with some musicians of days by-gone. With pity I have to see Irvis as one of the latter.

The personnel is established as above (see Laurie Wright below, and Storyville 102-204 and 135-91), after years of research and discussion (see L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord, p.63 - 65).

Boyd Rosser is the hot trumpet soloist, Irvis is far from his earlier stylistic individuality, and George Baquet - one of the old Creole New Orleans school - is far from performing a swinging and free-wheeling clarinet part. Instead, he plays wooden and stumbling lines without charm and musicianship, remembrances possibly of the leader's past in New Orleans. His fellow-citizen Paul Barnes instead, delivers beautiful alto solos in the famed New Orleans flowing and legato saxophone manner. Walter 'Foots' Thomas was responsible for writing the saxophone harmony parts, while his brother Joe Thomas plays tenor sax (Walter switched to tenor sax not earlier than when joining the Cab Calloway band. L. Wright is wrong naming Joe Thomas as alto saxophonist on this session's band photo (see Wright, Mr. Jelly lord, p.68). Actually, Walter 'Foots' Thomas is the altoist, sitting between tuba and trombone on the photo, while Joe Thomas plays tenor! While we are with the photo: Boyd Rosser is the tall tpt-player standing behind Joe Thomas.) It is sad that Joe Thomas is not given any solos on his tenor-sax.

Morton is the only pianist an all these three recording sessions, according to Paul Barnes in L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord, p.64. The frequently named Rod Rodriguez - seen as pianist on the band photo - seems to have been an aid only when training the band.

Barney Alexander, whose last name had been remembered also by Paul Barnes, plays a strong and unobtrusive banjo, whereas Harry Prather on his tuba is given a lot of solo spots which he plays assured and with good tone, and he also plays most interesting bass lines that may be arranged or possibly ad-lib. Only the drummer leaves much to be desired in his perpetual and boring use of bass-drum on one and three, but this may possibly even be a demand of Morton. His cymbal playing is exact and obviously as requested by the arrangements, using a beautifully sounding crash cymbal, rather large for the time, and probably factured by the Zildjian company.

Some take distinctions are notated in Laurie Wright's 'Mr. Jelly Lord' (see there).

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Red Rositer, Briscoe, 'Horsecollar' Draper (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); George Baquet (cl); Joe Thomas, Walter Thomas, Paul Barnes (s); Jelly Roll Morton or Rod Rodriguez (p); Barney (bj); Harry Prather (tuba); William Laws (dm)*

- Rust*2: Red Rossiter, Briscoe Draper (tp); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George Baquet (clt); Paul Barnes (sop); Joe Thomas (alt); Walter Thomas (ten); Jelly Roll Morton and/or Rod Rodriguez (pno); Barney ---- (bjo); Harry Prather (bbs); William Laws (dms)

- Rust*3,*4: Red Rossiter -?Barclay S. "Horsecollar" Draper or Walter Briscoe -2t; Charlie Irvis -tb; George Baquet -cl; Paul Barnes -ss; Joe Thomas -as; Walter Thomas -ts; Jelly Roll Morton -solo p; Rod Rodriguez - ensemble p; Barney Alexander -bj; Harry Prather -bb; William Laws -d.

- Rust*6: Boyd "Red" Rossiter, Walter Briscoe, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; George Baquet, cl; Paul Barnes, ss; Joe Thomas, as; Walter Thomas, ts; Jelly Roll Morton, solo p, dir; Rod Rodriguez, ensemble p; Barney Alexander, bj; Harry Prather, bb; William Laws, d.

- L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord: ?David Richards, Boyd "Red" Rosser, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; George Baquet, cl; Paul Barnes, ss; Walter Thomas, as; Joe Thomas, ts; Jelly Roll Morton, p; Barney Alexander, bj; Harry Prather, bb; William Laws, d.

Notable distinctions of takes (from L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord and KBR):

49452-1: Last three bars of tpt solo (after clt solo): shouts of encouragement audible

- 49452-2: Last three bars of tpt solo (after clt solo): no shouts of encouragement
 49453-1: Title ends with an extremely soft cymbal-stroke (almost inaudible)
 49453-2: Title ends with a strong cymbal-stroke
 49454-1: Strain B (after two 16-bars strains A by brass and saxes): tbn is almost inaudible behind tpt in first four bars
 49454-2: Strain B (after two 16-bars strains A by brass and saxes): tbn plays loud and assured in dialogue with tpt

093 JELLY ROLL MORTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Camden, N.J.

Jul. 10, 1929

Walter Briscoe, Boyd Red Rosser – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
 George Baquet – clt; Walter Foots Thomas, Paul Barnes – alt, clt; Joe Thomas – ten, clt;
 Jelly Roll Morton – pno; Barney Alexander – bjo; Harry Prather – bbs; William Laws – dms
 49455-1 Sweet Aneta Mine
 49455-2 Sweet Aneta Mine
 49456-1 New Orleans Bump
 49456-2 Monrovia (A New Orleans Bump)

Vic V-38093, JSP CD 322
 Vic unissued on 78, JSP CD 325
 Vic V-38078, JSP CD 322
 Vic unissued on 78, JSP CD 325

This is part two of Morton's Camden recording series for Victor – as last session above. And again, brothers Walter and Joe Thomas or not allowed to solo. Were they too young, or of the wrong origin?

Some take distinctions are notated in Laurie Wright's 'Mr. Jelly Lord' (see there).

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Red Rositer, Briscoe, 'Horsecollar' Draper (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); George Baquet (cl); Joe Thomas, Walter Thomas, Paul Barnes (s); Jelly Roll Morton or Rod Rodriguez (p); Barney (bj); Harry Prather (tuba); William Laws (dm)
 - Rust*2: Red Rositer, Briscoe Draper (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George Baquet (clt); Paul Barnes (sop); Joe Thomas (alt); Walter Thomas (ten); Jelly Roll Morton and/or Rod Rodriguez (pno); Barney ---- (bjo); Harry Prather (bbs); William Laws (dms)
 - Rust*3,*4: Red Rositer -?Barclay S. "Horsecollar" Draper or Walter Briscoe -2t; Charlie Irvis -tb; George Baquet -cl; Paul Barnes -ss; Joe Thomas -as; Walter Thomas -ts; Jelly Roll Morton -solo p; Rod Rodriguez – ensemble p; Barney Alexander -bj; Harry Prather -bb; William Laws -d.
 - Rust*6: Boyd "Red" Rossiter, Walter Briscoe, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; George Baquet, cl; Paul Barnes, ss; Joe Thomas, as; Walter Thomas, ts; Jelly Roll Morton, solo p, dir; Rod Rodriguez, ensemble p; Barney Alexander, bj; Harry Prather, bb; William Laws, d.
 - L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord: ?David Richards, Boyd "Red" Rosser, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; George Baquet, cl; Paul Barnes, ss; Walter Thomas, as; Joe Thomas, ts; Jelly Roll Morton, p; Barney Alexander, bj; Harry Prather, bb; William Laws, d.

Notable distinctions of takes (from L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord and KBR):

- 49455-1: Last bar of first chorus is played through by the rhythm section
 49455-2: Last bar of first chorus is a one-bar break for brass section (rhythm section pausing)
 49456-1: Entry of clarinet solo: clt starts after seventh beat
 49456-2: Entry of clarinet solo: clt starts after ninth beat

094 JELLY ROLL MORTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Camden, N.J.

Jul. 12, 1929

Walter Briscoe, Boyd Red Rosser – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
 George Baquet – clt; Walter Foots Thomas, Paul Barnes – alt, clt; Joe Thomas – ten, clt;
 Jelly Roll Morton – pno; Barney Alexander – bjo; Harry Prather – bbs; William Laws – dms
 49457-1 Down My Way
 49458-2 Try Me Out
 49459-1 Tank Town Bump
 49459-2 Tank Town Bump

Vic V-38113, JSP CD 322
 Vic V-38113, JSP CD 322
 Vic unissued on 78, JSP CD 325
 Vic V-38075, JSP CD 322

This is part three of Morton's Camden recording series for Victor – as last session above. And everything said as to the above sessions also applies to this one.

Some take distinctions are notated in Laurie Wright's 'Mr. Jelly Lord' (see there).

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Red Rositer, Briscoe, 'Horsecollar' Draper (tp); Charlie Irvis (tb); George Baquet (cl); Joe Thomas, Walter Thomas, Paul Barnes (s); Jelly Roll Morton or Rod Rodriguez (p); Barney (bj); Harry Prather (tuba); William Laws (dm)
 - Rust*2: Red Rositer, Briscoe Draper (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George Baquet (clt); Paul Barnes (sop); Joe Thomas (alt); Walter Thomas (ten); Jelly Roll Morton and/or Rod Rodriguez (pno); Barney ---- (bjo); Harry Prather (bbs); William Laws (dms)
 - Rust*3,*4: Red Rositer -?Barclay S. "Horsecollar" Draper or Walter Briscoe -2t; Charlie Irvis -tb; George Baquet -cl; Paul Barnes -ss; Joe Thomas -as; Walter Thomas -ts; Jelly Roll Morton -solo p; Rod Rodriguez – ensemble p; Barney Alexander -bj; Harry Prather -bb; William Laws -d.
 - Rust*6: Boyd "Red" Rossiter, Walter Briscoe, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; George Baquet, cl; Paul Barnes, ss; Joe Thomas, as; Walter Thomas, ts; Jelly Roll Morton, solo p, dir; Rod Rodriguez, ensemble p; Barney Alexander, bj; Harry Prather, bb; William Laws, d.
 - L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord: ?David Richards, Boyd "Red" Rosser, t; Charlie Irvis, tb; George Baquet, cl; Paul Barnes, ss; Walter Thomas, as; Joe Thomas, ts; Jelly Roll Morton, p; Barney Alexander, bj; Harry Prather, bb; William Laws, d.

Notable distinctions of takes (from L. Wright, Mr. Jelly Lord and KBR):

- 49459-1: Bar 13 of trumpet-solo: drummer observes the break
 Second strain A - first pno break: quarter-pause, then 7 evenly struck quarter-notes
 49459-2: Bar 13 of trumpet-solo: drummer plays two beats into the break
 Second strain A - first pno break: quarter-pause, then sustained seven-quarter-note, then succession of eighth-note, quarter-note, eighth note, quarter-note

095 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JUG BAND

New York,

Sep. 09, 1930

Ed Anderson – tpt; Wilbur de Paris - tbn; Cecil Scott – clt, ten;
 (Alex Hill) – pno; Lonnie Johnson – gr; Clarence Williams - jug
 W404435-B Sitting On Top Of The World
 W404436-B Kansas City Man Blues

OK 8826, Collectors Classics COCD-29
 OK 8826, Collectors Classics COCD-29

No Charlie Irvis here! This trombonist has a very decent and cultivated tone, other than Irvis' at this time. We are rather certain of Wilbur de Paris here! He owns a legato style without the least pauses between his bound notes. Despite the small size of the band, considerable uncertainty surrounds the personnel for this session. While the trumpet sounds like King Oliver, it is not him and Ed Allen denied being present. On the strength of his other work during this period, Ed Anderson is quite likely with Gaines an alternative. The trombone player has also been suggested as Billy Cato or Charlie Irvis. Opinion in our group favours Scott on both clarinet and tenor, since they are never heard simultaneously. Previous candidates have included Prince Robinson, Happy Caldwell and even Omer Simeon. YFS and KBR suggest Alex Hill on piano. Johnson is undisputed.

Notes:

- Storyville 27: Ed Allen (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt); poss Cecil Scott (ten); unknown (pno); Lonnie Johnson (gtr); Clarence Williams (jug).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p324: Ed Allen (cnt); poss Charlie Irvis (tbn); unknown (clt, ten); unknown (pno); Lonnie Johnson (gtr); Clarence Williams (jug).
- Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (?) (tbn); unknown (clt, ten); unknown (pno); Lonnie Johnson (gtr); Clarence Williams (jug).
- Rust*3: Ed Allen -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; ?Omer Simeon -cl -ts; ?Clarence Williams -p, certainly jug; Lonnie Johnson -g.
- Rust*4, *6: Ed Allen -c; ?Charlie Irvis -tb; unknown -cl -ts; unknown -p, Lonnie Johnson -g; Clarence Williams -jug.

K.-B. Rau
14-08-2020