

THOMAS MORRIS

A Tentative Discography

Contributors:

Jörg Kuhfuss (JK)

John Olivar (JO)

Dave Brown (DB) ('as received' means: as supposed by KBR in the first draft of this listing)

Documented, most certain and aurally absolutely obvious identifications are listed thus : Thomas Morris

Probable, generally agreed on, but not documented identifications are listed thus : *Thomas Morris*

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 has been suggested without any real evidence in support, it has been listed thus : unknown (*Thomas Morris*)

Sessions found not to include Thomas Morris are enclosed in a box.

At this point I have to remind everybody interested in this project that certainly Brian Rust, Godrich/Dixon and a lot of other discographers certainly have their unmeasurable merits, but they have also accumulated a lot of wrong and even ridiculous data concerning the personnels in early jazz. This fact has to make us – and all readers and listeners - very careful when taking their personnels for granted and to doubt everything not positively documented! This also means that some audio-memory you might have in your brains may be founded only on Rust or others and not on actuality, and might therefore simply be wrong. If so, we ask you to rethink along the lines shown here and maybe come up with a completely new view on a specific matter. Without any doubt this all does also concern myself, which certainly means that I do not pretend to be right in all my identifications. But I hope that in places where I am wrong, this attempt may at last be a hint to a better or final solution.

003 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS

New York,

Feb. 1923

unknown, Thomas Morris – cnt; unknown – tbn;

unknown – alt;

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

unknown – bbs; unknown – dms;

unknown (*Thomas Morris*) – voc exclamations (1)

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

OK

71307-B Original Charleston Strut

OK

KBR: See my article in Names&Numbers 49.

JK: Strong "New Orleans" feeling. Morris is recognizable by his tone.

JO: I feel that Miley is present throughout the Past Jazz Masters sessions. The 2nd cornet's style on these early dates seems a logical progression of his musical development, as documented on the Mamie Smith sides of 1922. Miley had also experienced a musical revelation when hearing King Oliver in Chicago, in late 1921: I think this accounts for the "Western" influence detectable on some Mamie Smiths, and later on the PJMs. Bubber would find his stylistic niche by the autumn of 1924 (at the latest), with refinement of the now-famous plunge and growl technique. Agree with and applaud KB's solid identification of Charles "Smitty" Smith on piano (in Names&Numbers 49) ... I had him listed as merely possible, by virtue of the exhortation "Play it, Mr. Smith" (010, 71582-B) leading to Rust's only "Smith" piano entry with associated musicians (Perry Bradford's Jazz Phools the same month, piano virtually inaudible). I'd recommend: Bubber Miley – cornet.

JO: Musically and lyrically, the shouted breaks in *E Flat Blues No. 2* are very similar to those in Johnny Dunn's *I Promised Not To Holler, But Hey! Hey!* (10-30-23; unheard versions in February and March were rejected by Columbia). While I'm not suggesting Dunn as second cornetist, the parenthetical title *Memphis. Tenn. Blues* might be significant (Dunn was from Memphis). This is not the same tune as Perry Bradford's contemporaneous *Memphis, Tennessee*, which it seems Dunn had already attempted with Edith Wilson (12-16-22, unissued).

DB: as received. I only hear Tom featured and the other cornet seems a less distinguished player so no overwhelming evidence for Bubber.

004 EVA TAYLOR vocal duet with Sara Martin

New York,

c. Apr. 24, 1923

Eva Taylor, Sara Martin – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt;

Clarence Williams – pno

71465-A Yodeling Blues

OK

KBR: this is typically Thomas Morris, should be used as a reference
JK: All participants are named on the label of the original pressing, so OK.
DB: as received.

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

KBR: certainly no Irvis, Mayfield instead
JK: I agree.
DB: as received

007 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS		New York,	May 1923
unknown, Thomas Morris – cnt; <i>Charlie Irvis</i> – tbn; unknown (<i>Happy Caldwell</i>) – ten;			
Charles "Smitty" Smith – pno; unknown (<i>Will Splivey Escoffery</i>) – bjo;			
71531-C	Lonesome Journey Blues	OK	
71532-B	When The Jazz Band Starts To Play	OK	

KBR: See my article in Names&Numbers 49.
JK: "New Orleans" feeling gone. In my opinion the second trumpet player is Miley (compare 'Texas Blues Destroyers').
JO: Same as session 003
DB: second cornet stronger than 003 and some wa-wa. I think Bubber. Rest as received.

008 EVA TAYLOR	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	c. May 17, 1923
Eva Taylor – voc;			
Thomas Morris – cnt; <i>John Mayfield</i> – tbn;;			
<i>Ernest Elliott</i> – clt, unknown - alt;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo			
71538-B	Barefoot Blues	OK	
71539-A	Do It A Long Time Papa	OK	

KBR: tbn Mayfield, plays identical break as on Blind Man Blues session 013, Lord hears alto
JK: I agree.
DB: as received. Same clt as 006 so therefore definite Elliott. I struggle to hear any alto.

009 EVA TAYLOR	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	c. May 17/18, 1923
Eva Taylor – voc;			
Thomas Morris – cnt; <i>John Mayfield</i> – tbn;;			
<i>Ernest Elliott</i> – clt, unknown - alt;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo			
71499-F	Farewell Blues	OK 12" unissued	not on LP/CD
71500-F	Gulf Coast Blues	OK 12"	

KBR: not Irvis, but Mayfield?, Lord hears alto again
JK: I agree.
DB: same comment and clt as 008. The matrix nos. suggest this is the wrong place. There must be evidence? Also hear no alto.

010 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS		New York,	May 1923
Bubber Miley, Thomas Morris – cnt; unknown (<i>Charlie Irvis</i>) – tbn;			
unknown (<i>Ernest Elliott</i>) – alt (<i>cms</i> ?);			
Charles "Smitty" Smith – pno; unknown (<i>Buddy Christian</i>) – bjo;			
unknown – voc exhortations			
71582-B	Just Blues, That's All	OK, LAR	
71583-C	Bull Blues (E Flat No. 1 Blues)	OK, LAR	

KBR: See my article in Names&Numbers 49. Bjo sounds like B. Christian.
JK: Probably Irvis on trombone. Morris and Miley are certain.
JO: Same as session 003, but add: unknown – exhortation on *Just Blues, That's All* (71582-B)
DB: as received. The novelty nature of the alto might suggest Elliott.

011 SARA MARTIN	vocal duet with Eva Taylor	New York,	c. Jun 20, 1923
Sara Martin, Eva Taylor – voc;			

Thomas Morris – cnt;
 Clarence Williams – pno
 71640-B That Free And Easy Papa O' Mine OK
 71641-B Hesitation Blues OK

JK: All participants are named on the label of the original pressing, so OK.

DB: as received

012 CLARENCE WILLIAMS BLUE FIVE New York, Jul. 30, 1923
 Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;
 Sidney Bechet – clt, sop;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
 71706-B Wild Cat Blues OK
 71707-B Kansas City Man Blues OK

JK: I agree. These are some of the best titles of the early Blue Five.

DB: as received

013 SARA MARTIN Clarence Williams' Blue Five New York, c. Aug. 01, 1923
 Sara Martin – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;
 Sidney Bechet – sop;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
 71711-B Blind Man Blues OK
 71712-B Atlanta Blues OK

KBR: tbn same break as Barefoot Blues session 008

JK: I agree.

DB: as received

014 THOMAS MORRIS PAST JAZZ MASTERS New York, Aug. 07, 1923
 Bubber Miley, Thomas Morris – cnt; *John Mayfield* – tbn;
Ernest Elliott - clt;
 Charles "Smitty" Smith – pno; unknown – bjo;
 unknown - bbs
 71739-B Those Blues OK
 71740-B Beaucoupe de Jazz (Lots Of Jazz) OK

KBR: tbn not Irvis, but prob. Mayfield

JK: I agree.

DB: as received but definite Elliott.

015 EVA TAYLOR Clarence Williams' Blue Five New York, c. Aug. 11, 1923
 Eva Taylor – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; *John Mayfield* – tbn;;
 Sidney Bechet – clt;
 Clarence Williams – pno, voc (1); Buddy Christian – bjo
 71747-B Oh ! Daddy Blues OK
 71748-B I've Got The Yes ! We Have No Banana Blues OK

JK: I agree.

DB: as received

016 CLARENCE WILLIAMS BLUE FIVE New York, c. Aug. 27, 1923
 Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;
Sidney Bechet – clt;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
 71797-A Achin' Hearted Blues OK

JK: Even if I am absolutely alone with my opinion: this is 100 proof Bechet on clarinet. Others OK.

JO: To my ears, there seems almost no doubt of Bechet's presence. Whereas on the first Blue Five instrumentals (012) Bechet played soprano, over-recorded, he performs here on clarinet, under-recorded. Perhaps the divergence of sound has caused some to doubt his presence? His trademark heavy vibrato remains in evidence, but due to the recording, not as prominent as it usually sounds. In his book 'Sidney Bechet, The Wizard of Jazz' (1987), John Chilton wrote of *Achin' Hearted Blues*: "Bechet is again on clarinet and is featured on the

breaks that serve as an introduction. The band sounds more cohesive than on its previous recordings; cornetist Thomas Morris was rarely as bold and assertive as he is here. ...the outstanding feature of the recording is Bechet's work on clarinet, which effortlessly combines a scorching timbre and ingenious timing. His solo begins with a thrilling entry note, and there is no lessening of the tension throughout the next two choruses; these are full of complicated phrases, all of which are perfectly resolved. Bechet rarely used his technique to show off." Indeed, the relative imbalance of the July recording becomes reversed here, more apparent as Morris thunders in after the clarinet solo with some highly adventurous playing. To my ears, Morris seems generally more experimental under the leadership of others, and more conservative on his own records. Here, he seems inspired by the virtuosity of Bechet (as he later would with Waller). The 1923 Blue Fives are invaluable examples of Morris's varied approach within a single group. I'd recommend: *Sidney Bechet* – clarinet.

DB: as received but definite Bechet.

017 EVA TAYLOR	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	c. Aug. 27, 1923
Eva Taylor – voc;			
Thomas Morris – cnt; <i>Charlie Irvis</i> – tbn;;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;			
unknown – voc exhortations			
71803-B	Original Charleston Strut	OK	
71804-A	If You Don't, I Know Who Will	OK	

KBR: this is probably Irvis!

JK: I agree.

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.

DB: as received

018 FANNIE GOOSBY		New York,	c. Sep. 28, 1923
Fannie Goosby – voc;			
Thomas Morris – cnt;			
Clarence Williams – pno; <i>Buddy Christian</i> - bjo			
71924-B	I've Got The Blues, That's All	OK	
71925-B	Grievous Blues	OK	

KBR: there is a bjo, prob. B. Christian!

JK: I don't hear a banjo. Personnel is on the label of the Okeh disc.

DB: as received but hear no banjo

019 CLARENCE WILLIAMS BLUE FIVE		New York,	Oct. 1923
Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;			
Sidney Bechet – sop;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo			
71928-B	'Tain't Nobody's Business If I Do	OK	
71929-B	New Orleans Hop Scop Blues	OK	
71930-B	Oh Daddy! Blues (Oh Daddy! You Won't Have No Mama At All)	OK	

JK: Agreed

DB: as received

020 SARA MARTIN	Clarence Williams' Harmonizing Four	New York,	Oct. 11, 1923
Sara Martin – voc;			
Thomas Morris – cnt; Sidney Bechet – sop;			
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo			
71961-B	Graveyard Dream Blues	OK	
71962-B	A Green Gal Can't Catch On Blues	OK	

JK: Agreed

DB: as received

021 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	OK, Par	

71973-B E Flat Blues OK, Par

JK: Agreed
DB: as received

022 EVA TAYLOR vocal duets with Lawrence Lomax New York, c. Nov. 10, 1923
Eva Taylor, Lawrence Lomax – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;;
Sidney Bechet – sop;
Clarence Williams – pno
72028-C Old Fashioned Love OK
72029-B Open Your Heart OK

JK: Agreed
DB: as received

023 CLARENCE WILLIAMS BLUE FIVE New York, c. Nov. 10, 1923
Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;
Sidney Bechet – sop;
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
72040-B Shreveport OK
72041-B Old Fashioned Love OK

JK: Agreed. Irvis owns a somewhat smoother style than Mayfield.
DB: as received

024 CLARENCE WILLIAMS BLUE FIVE New York, c. Nov. 14, 1923
Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;
Sidney Bechet – sop;
Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo
72059-B House Rent Blues OK
72061-B Mean Blues OK

KBR: I hear Bechet playing sop only, not clt.

JK: That's right, Bechet plays soprano only. By the way: it's a widespread custom of reed players to snatch up the lead part. Bechet did this (nearly) all the time.

DB: as received

025 ROSA HENDERSON New York, Dec. 1923
Rosa Henderson – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt;
Louis Hooper - pno
105013 He's Never Gonna Throw Me Down PA, Per
105014 Every Day Blues PA, Per

KBR: pno player obviously Hooper.

JK: It certainly would have been too nice of me to agree all the time. Not Morris here! Sounds more like Miley! It may be Hooper, but I do not know him enough.

DB: too many notes and too tight for Tom and none of his frailty nor licks. Nothing typical of later Bubber but can't find any other candidate.

026 VIRGINIA LISTON her Jazz Trio New York, c. Jan. 07, 1924
Virginia Liston – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; unknown – alt;
Clarence Williams or Porter Grainger – pno
72258-D I Don't Love Nobody OK
72259-D 'Tain't A Doggone Thing But The Blues OK

KBR: pno seems to be P. Grainger, not C. Williams.

JK: I do not own this disc, therefore no comment. But it looks most interesting.

DB: as received but definite Tom.

026-1 ETHEL FINNIE Porter Grainger's Novel Three New York, c. Apr. 1924
 Ethel Finnie – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Ernest Elliott – alt;
 Porter Grainger – pno
 31535 Don't Know And Don't Care Blues Ajax

JK: I do not own this disc, therefore no comment. But it looks most interesting.

DB: none of Tom's licks and lots of doubling up. In such an intimate context Tom is usually instantly recognisable and I would place him here between possible and probable.

027 ETHEL FINNIE Porter Grainger's Novel Three New York, c. Apr. 1924
 Ethel Finnie – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt;
 Porter Grainger – pno; Lincoln M. Conaway – stg
 31538 Hula Blues Ajax

JK: I do not own this disc, therefore no comment. Ajax records are hard to obtain.

DB: none of Tom's licks and lots of doubling up. In such an intimate context Tom is usually instantly recognisable and I would place him here between possible and probable.

028 HELEN GROSS Choo Choo Jazzers New York, c. Apr. 1924
 Helen Gross – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt;
 Louis Hooper – pno
 31561 He's Never Gonna Throw Me Down Ajax
 31564 Hard Luck Blues Ajax
 31565 Eavesdropper's Blues Ajax
 31567 Haunted House Blues Ajax

JK: I do not own this disc, therefore no comment. Ajax records are hard to obtain.

DB: as received but definite Tom.

029 GEORGE McCLENNON'S JAZZ DEVILS New York, May 09, 1924
 Thomas Morris – cnt; John Mayfield – tbn;
 George McClennon – clt; unknown (George Scott) – alt;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;
 unknown – dms
 72512-B Box Of Blues OK, Od
 72513-B Dark Alley Blues OK, Od

KBR: this seems to be just the CW Blue Five plus McClennon, alto plays very simple chordal arpeggios, might be George Scott (sorry, my mistake, not Andrew Brown! K-B) (see Storyville 95), has to be substantiated.

JK: Morris is obvious. Trombone is not Mayfield, neither Irvis, perhaps Jake Frazier? McClennon is obvious. I do not know Andrew Brown and I do not have the Storyville article. Christian is on bjo.

DB: as received but unknown tbn, alto unless documentary evidence.

032 SARA MARTIN Clarence Williams' Harmonizers New York, c. Jun. 01, 1924
 Sara Martin – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; unknown (John Lindsey or Aaron Thompson) – tbn;
 unknown (Ernest Elliott) – clt (sop?);
 Clarence Williams – pno
 72592-B He's Never Gonna Throw Me Down OK

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.

033 SIPPY WALLACE Clarence Williams' Harmonizers New York, c. Jun. 13, 1924
 Sippie Wallace – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; unknown (John Lindsey or Aaron Thompson) – tbn;
 unknown (Ernest Elliott) – clt (sop?);

Clarence Williams – pno; *Buddy Christian* – bjo(if at all)
 72606-B Sud Bustin Blues OK
 72607-B Wicked Monday Morning Blues OK

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.

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

KBR: tbn most simple, Elliott doubtful

DB: Tom. Not enough clt, tbn to identify.

035 MARGARET JOHNSON Clarence Williams' Harmonizers New York, c. Sep. 05, 1924
 Margaret Johnson – voc;
 Thomas Morris, unknown (*Joe King Oliver*) – cnt; unknown – tbn;
 unknown (*Ernest Elliott*) - clt;
 Clarence Williams – pno; unknown (*Charles Bocage*) – bjo
 72789-B I Love You Daddy, But You Don't Mean Me No Good OK
 72790-B Nobody Knows The Way I Feel This Mornin' OK, Par
 72791-B Absent Minded Blues OK, Par

KBR: second cnt sounds just like Oliver, and has been suggested as such in earlier years. 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. Bjo sounds more like Bocage than Christian.

DB: personnel from Clarence himself: Morris, Miley, Irvis, Elliott, Christian. 2nd cornet can be heard at 1-42 on 'Absent' before Morris enters at about 1-47. That does not sound like Oliver. But short breaks at 1-23, 2-32 'I Love You Daddy' might be him. All other solo cornet I hear as Tom. I hear no evidence for Bubber but why has Clarence's personnel been discounted? I hear alto, not clarinet. Maybe also tenor but only one reed player. If we place Charles Bocage here how about the rest of Piron's? But, whatever else, surely Clarence would have known if he had used Piron on this?

001 LOUELLA JONES AND JAZZ CASPER New York, c. Oct. 30, 1924
 Alberta Perkins, Billy Higgins – voc duet;
Bubber Miley (or *Thomas Morris*) – tpt;
 Louis Hooper – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo
 5695-1 Who Calls You Sweet Mama Now? Ban, Dom, Hg, Or, Re not on LP/CD
 5695-2 Who Calls You Sweet Mama Now? Ban, Dom, Hg, Or, Re not on LP/CD
 5695-3 Who Calls You Sweet Mama Now? Ban, Dom, Hg, Or, Re
 5696-1 Sweet Mandy Ban, Dom, Hg, Or, Re
 5696-2 Sweet Mandy Ban, Dom, Hg, Or, Re

041 JOSIE MILES New York, Feb. 18, 1925
 Josie Miles – voc;
Thomas Morris or *Bubber Miley* – cnt; *Jake Frazier* – tbn (2);
 Bob Fuller – clt (1);
 Louis Hooper – pno
 5861-2 Ghost Walkin' Blues Ban, Do, Re, Fos not on LP/CD
 5862-2 Can't Be Trusted Blues Ban, Do, Re, Fos not on LP/CD

KBR: this recording could not be examined! According to sessions 039 and 040 Morris' presence seems to be most improbable.

DB: not found.

046-1 SAM MANNING his Blue Hot Syncopators New York, c. Mar. 01, 1926
 Sam Manning – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt;
 unknown – alt, unknown - clt;
Gerald Clark – bjo; unknown – dms
 74031-B Keep Your Hands Off That OK

35763-3	Jackass Blues	Vic
35764-2	Charleston Stampede	Vic

DB: as received. Rex Stewart was sometime listed here and the Louis influenced style could also be him but I bow to Happy Caldwell's rather contradictory evidence.

057 THOMAS MORRIS AND HIS SEVEN HOT BABIES New York, Aug. 17, 1926

Thomas Morris, Big Charlie Thomas – cnt; Geechie Fields – tbn;
Ernest Elliott – alt, clt; Happy Caldwell - ten;
Mike Jackson – pno, voc; unknown – bjo;
Bill Benford – bbs

36047-3	Georgia Grind	Vic
36048-2	Ham Gravy	Vic
36048-3	Ham Gravy	Vic

JO: I would certainly discount "Big Charlie" here... This is likely Jabbo Smith's debut on record, some fast fingering on Ham Gravy (36048-2) already typical of him. It should be taken into account that in 1977 he volunteered his debut with Morris to Richard Rains. This conversation was prior to Jabbo suffering a stroke (reported by Yves in the Redhotjazz group) which may have significantly impaired his memory. Later Jabbo would claim his first recording was with Eva and Clarence (Feb. 10, 1927). In one of his last interviews – perhaps the last, with Benjamin Franklin V in 1987 – he also cited Eva and Clarence; yet he admitted that he didn't remember, and further, that he couldn't remember (quoted by Michael in rhj).

Some problematic comments by Happy Caldwell, interviewed by Laurie Wright and Al Vollmer:

Happy Caldwell: "The first electrical recordings I made were with Tommy Morris – I remember we had a microphone instead of those big horns. Ward Pinkett and Tommy were on trumpets, Geechie Fields on trombone and Marlowe Morris – he was Tommy's cousin, er no, his uncle, he was on piano. I remember we did *Ham And Gravy* (sic) and *Jackass Blues*" (Storyville 99).

This has been taken as identifying Morris's then 11-year-old nephew Marlowe, but makes me wonder: did TM have an uncle or cousin – not suggesting Waller, a relative apparently – who played piano? The two titles Happy mentions, from different sessions, were issued together on Victor 20179. As with Jabbo's and some other reminiscences, let's remember these comments were made over 50 years after the fact.

DB: Jabbo both convincingly denied and claimed this. But he was got at by the discographical mafia – I mention no name. Anyway the keening Jabbo harshness is not there. Not though convinced same player as 055. Rex did claim a Tom session somewhere. The rest depends on Happy's memory. Could there not have been an unissued session that fits?

058 MAMIE SMITH New York, Aug. 27, 1926

Mamie Smith – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis - tbn;
Bob Fuller – clt;

Mike Jackson – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

36069-1	Goin' Crazy With The Blues	Vic	
36069-2	Goin' Crazy With The Blues	Vic	
36070-1	Sweet Virginia Blues	Vic	not on LP/CD
36070-2	Sweet Virginia Blues	Vic	

DB: as received.

059 THOMAS MORRIS AND HIS ORCHESTRA New York, Aug. 27, 1926

Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
Bob Fuller – clt;

Mike Jackson – pno;

Thomas Morris, Charlie Irvis –speech

36071-2	Who's Dis Heah Stranger ?	Vic
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DB: as received.

060 MAMIE SMITH New York, Aug. 31, 1926

Mamie Smith – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;
unknown – clt;

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

36081-2	What Have I Done To Make Me Feel This Way ?	Vic
36081-3	What Have I Done To Make Me Feel This Way ?	Vic
36082-2	I Once Was Yours I'm Somebody Else's Now	Vic

KBR: very interesting clt here different from Bob Fuller, pno plays strong rhythm other than Mike Jackson, bjo plays up-and-down other than Buddy Christian

DB: as received.

061 ELIZABETH SMITH	New York,	Sep. 06, 1926
Elizabeth Smith – voc;		
Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt;		
unknown (<i>Mike Jackson</i>) – pno		
36098-2	Gwine To Have Bad Luck For Seven Years	Vic

KBR: additional titles are without Th. Morris!

DB: as received.

062 EVELYN PREER	New York,	Sep. 07, 1926
Evelyn Preer – voc;		
Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt;		
Mike Jackson – pno		
36099-2	Make Me Know It	Vic
36099-3	Make Me Know It	Vic

DB: as received.

062-1 EVELYN PREER	New York,	Sep. 08, 1926
Evelyn Preer – voc;		
<i>Thomas Morris</i> – cnt; unknown (<i>Bob Fuller</i>) – clt, b-clt; unknown – vln;		
unknown – pno; unknown – bjo; unknown - dms		
6810-2	Lucky Day	Ban, Dom, Re not on LP/CD
6811-2	The Birth Of The Blues	Ban, Dom, Re, BM, Imp

KBR: first title could not be heard, as unissued on LP/CD. On second title cnt has only one short passage in the introduction which tonally could very well be by Th. Morris. I am unable to hear a trombone, as listed by Rust*6.

JO: In his notes for 'Too Late, Too Late – Vol.9' (DOCD-5590), Dr. Guido van Rijn suggests Morris and Fuller as possible on *The Birth Of The Blues*. It's performed by what seems like a theatre band (Preer was a successful Broadway stage performer, and a film actress). Morris and Fuller as possible are readily identifiable in the introduction: "of a piece" with their work on Preer's session the day before (session 062). After the intro, they rarely (and then only tentatively) reemerge – they may have been recruited in an attempt to infuse the show tune with some "blues feeling". I haven't heard the first title yet. Morris and Mike Jackson would work in off-Broadway theatre with Mae West (whose singing style was not far from Preer's) the following year.

DB: not enough aural evidence to identify cornet. Rest as received.

063 MANDY LEE	New York,	Oct. 01, 1926
Mandy Lee – voc;		
Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt;		
Mike Jackson – pno; <i>Buddy Christian</i> – bjo		
6859-1	I Need A Plenty Of Grease In My Frying Pan	Ban, Cq, Do, Or, Re not on LP/CD
6859-2	I Need A Plenty Of Grease In My Frying Pan	Ban, Cq, Do, Or, Re not on LP/CD
6859-6	I Need A Plenty Of Grease In My Frying Pan	Ban, Cq, Do, Or, Re
6860-2	Crap Shootin' Papa, Mama Done Caught Your Dice	Or not on LP/CD
6860-6	Crap Shootin' Papa, Mama Done Caught Your Dice	Ban, Cq, Do, Or, Re

DB: as received.

063-1 EVELYN PREER	New York,	Oct. 14, 1926
Evelyn Preer – voc;		
<i>Thomas Morris</i> – cnt;		
unknown (<i>Bob Fuller</i>) – alt; unknown (<i>Ernest Elliott</i>) – alt; unknown – vln;		
unknown – pno; unknown – bjo;		
unknown – bbs; unknown – dms		
36823-2	It Takes A Good Woman To Keep A Good Man At Home	Vic

KBR: this record could not be heard, but Richard Rains lists it in his article in Frog Yearbook Vol. 1 and confirms that Morris is the cornet/trumpet player.

DB: not heard.

064 MARGARET JOHNSON Black And Blue Trio New York, Oct. 20, 1926
 Margaret Johnson – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt, sop;
 Mike Jackson – pno

36846-1	When A 'Gator Hollers, Folks Say It's A Sign Of Rain	Vic
36846-2	When A 'Gator Hollers, Folks Say It's A Sign Of Rain	Vic
36847-2	Graysom Street Blues	Vic

DB: as received.

065 NEW ORLEANS BLUE FIVE New York, Nov. 02, 1926
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Joe Nanton – tbn;
 Bob Fuller – clt, sop;
 Mike Jackson – pno; *Bobbie Leecan* or *Buddy Christian* – gtr;
 Helen Baxter, Thomas Morris, Joe Nanton – dialogue (3,4)

36895-1	My Baby Doesn't Squawk	Vic
36895-2	My Baby Doesn't Squawk	Vic
36896-1	The King Of The Zulus	Vic
36896-2	The King Of The Zulus	Vic
36897-1	South Rampart Street Blues	Vic
36897-2	South Rampart Street Blues	Vic

KBR: R. Rains suggests Bobbie Leecan on gtr in Storyville 153 and is aurally right.

DB: as received. Leecan or similar.

066 THOMAS MORRIS AND HIS SEVEN HOT BABIES New York, Nov. 12, 1926
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Joe Nanton – tbn;
 Ernest Elliott – ten, clt;
Phil Worde or *Mike Jackson* – pno; *Buddy Christian* – bjo;
 Wellman Braud – sbs; unknown - dms

36925-1	Blues From The Everglades	Vic
36925-2	Blues From The Everglades	Vic
36925-3	Blues From The Everglades	Vic
36926-1	P.D.Q. Blues	Vic
36926-2	P.D.Q. Blues	Vic
36926-3	P.D.Q. Blues	Vic

KBR: pno plays more sparsely than Mike Jackson does, therefore more probably Worde (boogie figures in P.D.Q.!). Bjo sound is not like Christian, in P.D.Q. Blues bjo plays arpeggio-like figures unheard of by Christian.

DB: as received and I think enough to firm Elliott but I don't know his tenor. No comment piano or banjo – not qualified.

067 SIX HOT BABIES Camden, N.J. Nov. 17, 1926
Thomas Morris – cnt; *Joe Nanton* – tbn;
Bob Fuller – clt;
 Nat Shilkret – pno; *Fats Waller* – org;
Bobby Leecan – gtr; unknown – dms

36775	All God's Chillun Got Wings	Vic unissued	not on LP/CD
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KBR: Victor Master Book lists only Shilkret by name, but Waller's presence seems to be fact as he recorded two titles (organ solos) immediately before with consecutive matrix numbers. Other names are not listed. Suggestions as published in Storyville 2, all Rust editions and Laurie Wright might be made according to the recordings of May and September 1927? John R.T. Davies (1953) and Steven Taylor do not list this item! So, this is a very doubtful Morris item.

DB: not heard. Has anybody?

068 EDNA WINSTON New York, Nov. 23, 1926
 Edna Winston – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; unknown – tbn;
 Bob Fuller – clt;
 Phil Worde – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo

36958-3	I Got A Mule To Ride	Vic
36959-2	Mama's Gonna Drop Your Curtain	Vic
36960-3	Pail In My Hand	Vic
36961-1	Peeping Jim	Vic

KBR: Personnel as listed. Beautiful, but unknown – or not yet identified – trombonist, one of the better players, probably the name known, but unlinked to any known recordings. Christian's presence should be questioned in comparison to next E. Winston session!
DB: as received.

069 THOMAS MORRIS AND HIS SEVEN HOT BABIES New York, Nov. 24, 1926
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Joe Nanton – tbn;
 Bob Fuller – alt, clt;
 Mike Jackson or Phil Worde – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;
 Wellman Braud – sbs; unknown - dms
 36962-2 The Mess Vic
 36962-3 The Mess Vic
 36963-1 The Chinch Vic
 36963-2 The Chinch Vic

DB: as received.

070 MIKE JACKSON vocal duet with Mabel Richardson New York, Nov. 24, 1926
 Mike Jackson, Mabel Richardson – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt;
 Mike Jackson – pno
 35739-2 I'm Gonna Kill Myself Vic

DB: as received.

071 ROBINSON / MACK New York, Nov. 27, 1926
 Sam Robinson, Baby Mack – voc duet;
 Thomas Morris – cnt;
 Phil Worde – pno
 E-4106W I'm Sure Gonna Put You In Jail Voc unissued not on LP/CD
 E-4107W Make Room For Someone Else Voc unissued not on LP/CD

KBR: this recording could not be examined!

DB: not heard. Has anybody?

072 NETTIE ROBINSON New York, c. Dec. 24, 1926
 Nettie Robinson – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt;
 Mike Jackson – pno;
 107311 I've Got The Right Man Now PA, Per
 107312 I Never Loved But One Woman's Son PA, Per

KBR: aurally personnel seems to be right.

DB: as received but definite.

073 NASHVILLE JAZZERS New York, c. 1927
 unknown (Thomas Morris) – tpt;
 unknown – clt, alt; unknown – alt;
 unknown (Mike Jackson) – pno; unknown (Charlie Dixon) – bjo
 102-A St. Louis Blues VD/Mad, VD
 102-B St. Louis Blues VD/Mad, VD

KBR: Any hitherto issued personnel seems to be highly doubtful, and I wonder if there is a connection of this band to the Walter Bennett circle (see my article in N&N 52). There seems to be no other link of Thomas Morris to the Grey Gull record family. ADD 120802: the tpt player certainly is not Morris, but not Bennett as well – despite the disc provenience. Yet, the clt player rings a bell in my head, although I am unable to locate him at the moment.

DB: not Tom. He was far better than this certainly by this time.

074 LAURA SMITH her Wild Cats New York, c. Jan. 15, 1927
 Laura Smith – voc;
 Thomas Morris – cnt; Bob Fuller – clt

Mike Jackson – pno
 107313 I'm Goin' To Have Seven Years' Bad Luck PA, Per
 107314 When A 'Gator Hollers (Folks Say Sign O' Rain) PA, Per

KBR: aurally personnel seems to be right, though the trumpet player bears some similarity to Gus Aiken's style.

DB: I accept the personal although Tom sounds untypical at times – slurs – but he starts 'When A Gator' with his standart entry.

074-1 MONETTE MOORE New York, Jan. 26, 1927
 Monette Moore – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; *Ernest Elliott*, *Bob Fuller* – clt, bcl; unknown – flt;
Phil Worde or *Edgar Dowell* – pno
 37572-2 Moaning Sinner Blues Vic
 37573-1 Hard Hearted Papa Vic
 37573-2 Hard Hearted Papa Vic

KBR: contrary to Moore's session November 09, 1926, this tpt player here certainly is Morris and not Rex Stewart.

JO: Identification a bit difficult... I don't know of any (other?) example of Fuller playing bass clarinet. I agree Morris is probable, especially on *Hard Hearted Papa* (correct tile).

DB: as received definite Tom. More likely a whistle than a flute.

075 ELIZABETH SMITH New York, Jan. 26, 1927
 Elizabeth Smith – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; *Ernest Elliott*, *Bob Fuller* – clt, bcl; unknown – flt;
Phil Worde or *Edgar Dowell* – pno
 37574-2 Police Done Tore My Playhouse Down Vic

KBR: same as session 074-1 Monette Moore. Certainly Thomas Morris.

DB: as 074-1 but no bs-clt or whistle/flute. I hear two clarinets

076 EDNA WINSTON New York, Feb. 16, 1927
 Edna Winston – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt; *Charlie Irvis* – tbn;
Bob Fuller – clt, alt;
Mike Jackson – pno; *Buddy Christian* – bjo
 37786-1 'Way After One And My Daddy Ain't Come Home Yet Vic
 37787-1 Joogie Blues Vic
 37788-1 Ever After On Vic
 37789-1 Rent Man Blues Vic

KBR: Certainly Irvis here. Typical Christian ringing bjo sound here.

DB: as received.

077 CHARLIE JOHNSON'S ORIGINAL PARADISE TEN New York, Feb. 25, 1927
 unknown (*if at all*), *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 Vic
 38116-1 Birmingham Black Bottom Vic
 38116-2 Birmingham Black Bottom Vic
 38117-1 Don't You Leave Me Here Vic
 38117-3 Don't You Leave Me Here Vic

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

DB: as received. Hear no third tpt.

078 LAURA SMITH (Sara Lawrence) New York, Feb. 25, 1927
 Laura Smith – voc;
Thomas Morris – cnt, voc injections;
Mike Jackson (or *Charlie Johnson*) – pno

7130-2	Don't You Leave Me Here	Ban, Do, Re
813-2	Don't You Leave Me Here	Or
814-2	If You Don't Like My Potatoes	Or

KBR: both accompanists are mentioned by name on the Oriole issue. I have to admit that I seriously thought the pianist to be Charlie Johnson. And although Guido van Rijn of the Netherlands writes in the CD booklet of Document DOCD-5461 "Contrary to Blues & Gospel Records her accompanists are pianist Mike Jackson and cornetist Thomas Morris, who are both mentioned by name on these recordings" I cannot help but keep my feeling of Charlie Johnson's presence here. The pianist's style is very reminiscent of Johnson's piano style (compare Johnson's *Don't You Leave Me Here* on Victor) and very different from Jackson's, it is the same recording date (Morris might have helped Johnson out as there might have been some difficulty with Johnson's trumpet players on this day), and what of the pseudonym of Lukie Johnson in Rust and Godrich/Dixon?

JO: *Thomas Morris* or *Tommy Ladnier* – cnt; *Mike Jackson* or *Lukie Johnson* or *James P. Johnson* – pno.

It's almost definitely Morris and Jackson in accompaniment. Laura during the cornet solo: "My my my, Thomas, Oh, Thomas." Laura during the piano solo: "Oh, play it, Mister Mike, Play it. Do it."

I think Morris – a voice resembling that of the main speaker on *Who's Dis Heah Stranger* (session 059) – and Jackson alternate with comments during the first chorus: TM: "What's That?" MJ: "Do you think I'm blind?" TM: "Who don't like potatoes?" MJ: "Everybody likes potatoes." TM: "My, my, my..."

So, amended: Thomas Morris – cnt, speech; Mike Jackson – pno, speech.

DB: as received. I bale out on Jackson/Johnson.

079 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	Vic
38050-3	Fats Waller Stomp	Vic
38051-1	Savannah Blues	Vic
38051-2	Savannah Blues	Vic
38052-2	Won't You Take Me Home ?	Vic
38052-3	Won't You Take Me Home ?	Vic

DB: as received.

080 DIXIE JAZZERS WASHBOARD BAND

New York,

Jul. 1927

Thomas Morris – cnt; Robert Cooksey – har, voc;

Mike Jackson – pno; Bobbie Leecan – gtr;

Eddie Edinborough – dms, wbd

107617	Memphis Shake	PA, Per
107618	My Old Daddy's Got A Brand New Way To Love	PA, Per
107619	Kansas City Shuffle	PA, Per
107619-2	Kansas City Shuffle	PA, Per
107620	Black Cat Bone	PA, Per
107620-2	Black Cat Bone	PA, Per

DB: as received.

081 JANE HOWARD

New York,

Sep. 02, 1927

Jane Howard – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt;

Mike Jackson – pno

7489-	Kissin' Mule Blues	Ban, Do	
7490-2	Peepin' Jim Blues	Ban, Do, Je Or	
7491-2	Hard-Hearted Papa	Do	not on LP/CD
7491-3	Hard-Hearted Papa	Ban, Do, Re, Or	

DB: as received.

082 THOMAS WALLER WITH MORRIS' HOT BABIES

Camden, N.J.,

Sep. 01, 1927

Thomas Morris – cnt; James Archey – tbn;

Fats Waller – pno, org, voc; Bobbie Leecan – gtr;

Eddie King – dms

40093-1	He's Gone Away	Vic
40093-2	He's Gone Away	Vic
40093-3	He's Gone Away	Vic

40096-1	Red Hot Dan	Vic
40096-2	Red Hot Dan	Vic
40097-1	Geechee	Vic
40097-2	Geechee	Vic
40098-1	Please Take Me Out Of Jail	Vic
40098-2	Please Take Me Out Of Jail	Vic

Note: additional titles are without Th. Morris!

JO: Has 40093-3 been confirmed as a distinct take (different from -1 and -2) ... ? If so, does it appear on any reissues?

There are two vocalists on *Red Hot Dan*: the second sounding like Morris, compared to his voice on *Who's Dis Heah Stranger* (session 059, the voice Irvis addresses as 'Tommy').

KBR: 40093-3 had been listed in Rust *3, but not anymore in Rust*6. According to my files it had been reissued on RCA RD-7599, but I still have to check this in an easy hour.

DB: as received.

083 HAPPY HOLMES

Happy Holmes – voc, monologue;

Thomas Morris – cnt ;

Claude Austin – pno

39372-2 Solid Ground

39373-2 When Folks Stop Walkin' And Talkin'

Camden, N.J.,

Oct. 27, 1927

Vic

Vic

DB: as received.

084 BESSIE SMITH J. R. Johnson a. t. Hall Johnson Choir

Bessie Smith – voc;

probably:

Joe Smith, Thomas Morris, *Russell Smith* or *Sidney de Paris* (if at all) – tpt; *Charlie Green* – tbn;

unknown – clt; unknown – alt; unknown (*Happy Caldwell*) – ten;

James P. Johnson – pno; *Charlie Dixon* – bjo; *Bernard Addison* – gtr;

Harry Hull – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms;

J. Rosamont Johnson and the Hall-Johnson choir

St. Louis Blues

New York,

c. Jun. 1929

film soundtrack "St. Louis Blues"

film soundtrack

KBR: Now here a lot of research has to be done! Although I pretend to own a reasonable memory for faces I can only recognize Joe Smith, Thomas Morris (if it is he) and Kaiser Marshall. All other persons – especially the reed men – are unknown to me. But I have to check again!