

THE PRE-ELLINGTON RECORDINGS OF REX STEWART

An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

STYLISTICS

STYLE

Stewart plays in a distinctly Armstrong-influenced trumpet style, but sometimes using a Ragtime derived staccato phrasing which he loses in his further development. He plays as if using high atmospheric air pressure. At other times (Rosa Henderson March 02, 1926) he plays with beautiful "schmaltz" without being trashy. But sometimes - when he plays fast runs - a great amount of fast technique can be heard. He performs easily all over the cornet/trumpet's range and also handles the mutes with taste.

STONE

Tone is sharp and clear. No slurs up or downward as with Louis Metcalf.

VIBRATO

He uses a permanent irregular fast vibrato (ca. until mid-1925). This later gives room to an Armstrong derived final vibrato which becomes even wider with the time (ca. 1930).

TIME

Rex's time is a bit hasty at times which prevents him from really swinging in the early 20s. Later he plays with enormous rhythmic pressure which, yet, does not oppose his immense swing now.

PHRASING

His phrasing follows very much Louis Armstrong's, thus is "Western" style and does not show the otherwise ubiquitous Johnny Dunn influence.

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.

With distinct thanks to Joerg Kuhfuss for clearing up label inscriptions and discussing recording personnels.

001 BILLY PAGE AND HIS BROADWAY SYNCOPATORS	New York,	May 23, 1924
Clarence Dolsey, Rex Stewart – cnt; Henry Robinson – tbn;		
Billy Page, Harrison Jackson - alt, clt; Fred Washington – ten, clt;		
Danny Wilson – pno; Elmer Turner – bjo; Frank Holden – bbs; Robert Dews – dms		
72559-	Chicago Gouge	OK unissued
72560-	Burning Kisses	OK unissued
		not on LP/CD
		not on LP/CD

As no tests of this recording seem to have been found nothing can be said about its content.

Notes:

- Rex Stewart, *Jazz Masters of the 30s* p.29!

- Rust*6: Clarence Dolsey, Rex Stewart, c; Henry Robinson, tb; Billy Page, Harrison Jackson, as, cl; Fred Washington, ts, cl; Danny Wilson, p; Elmer Turner, bj; Frank Holden, bb; Robert Dews, d; Floyd Fitch, unknown instrument

002 LENA HENRY	New York,	Sep. 15, 1924
Lena Henry – voc;		
Rex Stewart – cnt;		
John Montague – pno; unknown - whistle		
13695	Family Skeleton Blues	Voc 14902, Document DOCD-5513
13697	Sinful Blues	Voc 14902, Document DOCD-5513

Beautiful trumpet playing, already very distinct in Armstrong style. This would mean that Stewart had listened carefully to Armstrong's recordings – but he still displays some ragtime derived staccato phrases (just remind his growing up with the Spillers!). His eagerness to

await Armstrong's arrival in New York certainly is understandable. He plays a straight-forward jazz style, no downward bending notes as heard from Metcalf.

On piano is Rex Stewart's bandleader of the time, Johnny Montague, of whose band Stewart wrote in highest praise for their togetherness (Boy Meets Horn, p. 46).

Notes:

- *Rex Stewart, Jazz Masters of the 30s, p. 132!*

- *BGR*4: Tom Morris, c; Louis Hooper, p.*

- *Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; John Montague, p.*

003	HELEN GROSS	Choo Choo Jazzers	New York,	Nov. 23- Dec. 03, 1924
	Helen Gross – voc;			
	Rex Stewart – cnt; unknown (<i>Jake Frazier or Herb Gregory</i> ?) – tbn (1,2); Bob Fuller – clt (3);			
	Louis Hooper – pno			
31755	Last Journey Blues		Ajax 17090,	Document DOCD-5477
31757	Bitter Feelin' Blues		Ajax 17086,	Document DOCD-5477
31759	Workin' Woman's Blues		Ajax 17133,	Document DOCD-5477

I feel certain for Rex Stewart, Bob Fuller and Louis Hooper. But I do not think that this is Jake Frazier here on trombone. This is a different player stylistically. I do not know this man from any other recordings and can therefore not attribute a name. But I would like the reader /listener to consider that Rex Stewart had a drinking and trombone playing buddy named Herb Gregory with whom he used to spend his days and go jamming. These trumpet/trombone partnerships were common in Harlem at the time. Unfortunately we do not have any documented example of Gregory's playing – we even do not know if he ever recorded at all – but this might possibly be this man.

Notes:

- *RR 86-6: Rex Stewart, cnt; Jake Frazier, tbn; Louis Hooper, pno. Bob Fuller, clt for Frazier on 31759.*

- *W. Bryant, Ajax Records: personnel per Hooper: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p.*

- *BGR*4: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb (1,2); Bob Fuller, cl (3); Louis Hooper, p.*

- *Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c (1,2); Jake Frazier, tb (1,2); Bob Fuller, cl (3); Louis Hooper, p. (Stewart plays on all three titles!)*

004	SUSIE SMITH AND BILLY HIGGINS	Choo Choo Jazzers	New York,	c. Jan. 25 – Feb. 05, 1925
	Monette Moore, Billy Higgins – voc duet;			
	Rex Stewart - cnt; Louis Hooper – pno			
31773	How Can I Miss You?		Ajax 17095,	Document DOCD-5339
31775	You Ain't Nothin' To Me		Ajax 17095,	Document DOCD-5339

There certainly is no doubt that this is young Rex Stewart here with his narrow and squeezed tone and a little strange hasty rhythm of his. In the future he will be developing these elements and they will be his trade-marks for his later musical life. Louis Hooper with his economical and rather simple piano style, rather outside of New York stride playing.

Notes:

- *RR 77-6: Rex Stewart, Louis Hooper*

- *W. Bryant, Ajax Records: Personnel per Hooper: Rex Stewart, c; Louis Hooper, p.*

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

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

005	ROSA HENDERSON	the Kansas City Trio	New York,	Feb. 19, 1925
	Rosa Henderson – voc;			
	Rex Stewart – cnt;			
	Louis Hooper – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo			
385 / 86 / 87W	12 th Street Blues		Voc 15011,	Document DOCD-5403

Rex Stewart, Hooper and busy Elmer Snowden are undisputed from my side.

Notes:

- *RR 77-6: Rex Stewart; Louis Hooper; Elmer Snowden.*

- *BGR*4: Rex Stewart, c; Louis Hooper, p; Elmer Snowden, bj.*

- *Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; Louis Hooper, p; Elmer Snowden, bj.*

006	ROSA HENDERSON	the Choo Choo Jazzers	New York,	Feb. 19-Mar. 16, 1925
	Rosa Henderson – voc;			
	Rex Stewart – cnt; Jake Frazier – tbn;			
	Louis Hooper - pno			
31795	It Takes A Two-Time Papa (To Make A One-Time Mama Mad)		Ajax 17116,	Document DOCD-5403

I hear Rex Stewart with his tone, vibrato and time very different from Metcalf's. Frazier and Hooper are obvious.

Notes:

- *RR 77-6: Rex Stewart, Jake Frazier*

- *W. Bryant, Ajax Records: Rex Stewart (cornet), Jake Frazier (trombone). Hooper did not name a pianist, although one is present.*

- *BGR*4: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Louis Hooper, p.*

- *Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Louis Hooper, p.*

007	JOSIE MILES	Choo Choo Jazzers	New York,	Feb. 19-Mar. 16, 1925
	Josie Miles – voc;			
	Rex Stewart – cnt; Jake Frazier – tbn;			
	Louis Hooper - pno			

- 31805 At The Cakewalk Stepper's Ball Ajax 17127, Document DOCD-5467
- Rex Stewart and Jake Frazier and probably Hooper on piano.
Notes:
 - RR 77-6: Rex Stewart, Jake Frazier, Louis Hooper.
 - W. Bryant, Ajax Records: Rex Stewart (cornet), Jake Frazier (trombone), Louis Hooper(piano).
 - BGR*4: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Louis Hooper, p.
 - Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Louis Hooper, p.
- 008 **ETHEL RIDLEY** Choo Choo Jazzers New York, Feb. 19-Mar. 16, 1925
 Ethel Ridley – voc;
 Rex Stewart – cnt (1); Bob Fuller – clt (2);
 Louis Hooper - pno
 31813 Get It Fixed Ajax 17126, RST-1526-2
 31814-E Low Down Daddy Blues Ajax 17126, RST-1526-2
- The CD reissue unfortunately uses a rather muddy sounding original. So it is hard to judge the trumpeter's tone. The vibrato and the phrasing are Rex Stewart's, but the tone is more Metcalf's. Considering the quality of the original I would therefore tend to hear Stewart here. On the second side it is certainly Fuller on clarinet. And Hooper on both sides.
Notes:
 - RR 77-6: not listed.
 - W. Bryant, Ajax Records: no personnel per Hooper.
 - BGR*4: prob Rex Stewart, c (1); Bob Fuller, cl (2); Louis Hooper, p.
 - Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c (1); Bob Fuller, cl (2); Louis Hooper, p.
- 009 **MONETTE MOORE** Texas Trio New York, Feb. 19-Mar. 16, 1925
 Monette Moore – voc;
 Rex Stewart – cnt; Louis Hooper - pno
 31819-E All Alone Ajax 17124, Document DOCD-5339
 This certainly is young Rex Stewart playing straight and sweet. Vibrato and tone certainly is his, and thus there is little – if any – doubt.
 Hooper probably is the pianist in this “beautiful” little waltz.
Notes:
 - RR 77-6: not listed
 - W. Bryant, Ajax Records: no personnel per Hooper.
 - BGR*4: Bubber Miley, c; Louis Hooper, p.
 - Rust*6: instrumentation and personnel unknown..
- 010 **KANSAS CITY FOUR** New York, Feb. 19-Mar. 16, 1925
 Rex Stewart – cnt; Jake Frazier – tbn; Bob Fuller – clt, alt;
 Louis Hooper – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo
 31827 Dark Gal Blues Ajax 17128, Jazz Archives No.131 159252
 31831 Get It Fixed Ajax 17128, Jazz Archives No.131 159252
- I certainly hear Rex Stewart – not Metcalf as with Rust*6 – together with the usual participants as given.
Notes:
 - RR 77-6: Rex Stewart, Jake Frazier, Bob Fuller, Louis Hooper, Elmer Snowden.
 - W. Bryant, Ajax Records: personnel per Hooper: Rex Stewart, cornet; Jake Frazier, trombone; Bob Fuller, clarinet; Louis Hooper, piano; Elmer Snowden, banjo.
 - Rust*6: Louis Metcalf, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Bob Fuller, cl; Louis Hooper, p; Elmer Snowden, bj.
- 011 **HELEN GROSS** Choo Choo Jazzers New York, Mar. 25-Apr. 01, 1925
 Helen Gross – voc;
 unknown (Rex Stewart ?) – tpt; unknown (Jake Frazier ?) – tbn;
 Louis Hooper – pno;
 unknown - speech
 31840-E Dark Man (You Ain't Gonna Darken My Life) Ajax 17133, Document DOCD-5477
- I certainly do not believe that this unsecure trumpet/cornet player is Rex Stewart. This player's tone is not as sharp and brilliant as Stewart's, and the playing lacks Stewart's “high atmospheric” pressure. Stewart was much more into Louis Armstrong's style at this time (see session 094)! Guessing intuitively I would opt for Thomas Morris.
 Although Jake Frazier is not one of the most accomplished trombonists in the Harlem period, he is not as simple or primitive as this trombonist. At least he owns a distinct style which cannot be detected here. Or was it just booze?
 Louis Hooper probably is the pianist.
Notes:
 - RR 86-6: Rex Stewart, Jake Frazier, Louis Hooper.
 - W. Bryant, Ajax Records: personnel per Hooper: Rex Stewart, cornet; Jake Frazier, trombone; Louis Hooper, piano.
 - BGR*4: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Louis Hooper, p; unknown male, sp.
 - Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; Jake Frazier, tb; Louis Hooper, p.
- 012 **ROSA HENDERSON** the Kansas City Trio New York, Mar. 20, 1925
 Rosa Henderson – voc;
 Rex Stewart – cnt (1); Charlie Green – tbn (3); Bob Fuller – clt (2);

Louis Hooper – pno; unknown – bjo (1)			
577 / 79W	Get It Fixed	Voc 15044,	Document DOCD-5403
580 / 82W	Low Down Daddy Blues	Voc 1501,	Document DOCD-5403
583 / 85W	Poplar Bluff Blues	Voc 15044,	Document DOCD-5403

What a wonderful Rex Stewart – after only listening for four months to Louis Armstrong in New York – with a much freer new phrasing. Great! And even Hooper is developing.

And then Bob Fuller with his dated clarinet playing inclosing this silly fast vibrato. But he, too, is developing. Unfortunately he apparently had no New Orleans model to listen to. He is not a bad musician. He only did not recognize the evolution of jazz music and its direction. I myself would probably not have identified Charlie Green here, and he certainly is difficult to determine. But a couple of his phrases and the overall sound make clear that this is Green as named in RR 77. His trombone playing showed a lot of different approaches depending on the musicians he worked with momentarily. He could be very crude and simple with singers and even brilliantly technical when with high class colleagues as on Henderson's Dixie Stompers session of April 6, 1928, where he is often mistaken for Jimmy Harrison.

The pianist might be Louis Hooper, but where is that banjo? It can definitely only be detected in the first title, and this player very probably is not Snowden as he does not show any arpeggios, trills or other gimmicks. He is a hard swinging and strong player and might be found with the likes of Buddy Christian.

Notes:

- RR 77-8: first title: Rex Stewart, Louis Hooper, Elmer Snowden; third title: Charlie Green, Louis Hooper

- BGR*4: Rex Stewart, c (1); Jake Frazier, tb (3); Bob Fuller, cl (2); Elmer Snowden, bj (1).

- Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c (1); Jake Frazier, tb (3); Bob Fuller, cl (2); Elmer Snowden, bj.

013 MONETTE MOORE		New York,	Oct. 19, 1925
Monette Moore – voc;			
Rex Stewart – cnt; Louis Hooper – pno			
141153-3	Take It Easy	Col 14105-D,	Document DOCD-5339
141154-3	Get It Fixed	Col 14105-D,	Document DOCD-5339

This is a quite unusual recording as the personnel is documented in the recording ledgers. And we thus can easily identify young Rex Stewart and a mature Louis Hooper. Very beautiful and exemplary performances of both men. There are sounds parallel to the singers phrases which may be echoes in the recording room or Stewart playing softly along with the singer when not answering her phrases. I certainly do not hear a second trumpet here.

Notes:

- Record Research #77-8: Rex Stewart, Louis Hooper.

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

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

014 VIOLA McCOY Dixie Trio		New York,	Jan. 06, 1926
Viola McCoy – voc;			
Rex Stewart – cnt; unknown – vln;			
unknown (Louis Hooper) – pno			
E-2043/5	Stomp Your Blues Away	Voc 15245,	Document DOCD-5417
E-2046/8	Shake That Thing	Voc 15245,	Document DOCD-5417

The record labels bears: "Piano, violin and cello". Yet, Rex Stewart certainly is the trumpet/cornet player. The violinist cannot be identified as he plays straight melody throughout. We hear a strong pianist in a modest stride style here who might possibly be a further developed Louis Hooper (compare session of Oct. 19, 1925 Monette Moore above).

Notes:

- Record Research #77-8: not listed.

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

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

015 ROSA HENDERSON		New York,	Mar. 02, 1926
Rosa Henderson – voc;			
Rex Stewart – cnt; Louis Hooper – pno			
141740-1	Let's Talk About My Sweetie	Col 14130-D,	Document DOCD-5403
141741-2	Mama Is Waitin' For You	Col 14130-D,	Document DOCD-5403

If we only had records like this one! An investigation like the one the listener might be reading just now would be simply unnecessary! Here we have Rex Stewart and Louis Hooper named in the Columbia recording files on the record label and nobody has to wonder. Just like in session 013 Monette Moore this record is a perfect model to compare and judge others.

Yet, Rex Stewart is not as sharp-cut and brilliant as on other sessions tackled above. He is a bit exaggerated here. The ubiquitous booze might have been a trigger to it. But what a development he had made until this date – from session 001 on! At the date of this session he was just about to join the Fletcher Henderson band as successor to Louis Armstrong. And it is easy to see that he was an able and fitting substitute. If only his nerves would have endured this challenge! Also Hooper is a much better pianist now like at the beginning of our investigation.

Notes:

- Record Research #77-8: not listed

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

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

016 THE DIXIE STOMPERS		New York,	Mar. 22, 1926
Russell Smith – tpt; Joe Smith – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;			
Buster Bailey, Don Redman – alt, sop, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;			

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Kaiser Marshall – dms

141832-2	Tampeekoe	Har 166-H,	Chronological Classics 610
141833-1	Hi-Diddle-Diddle	Har 179-H,	Chronological Classics 610
141833-2	Hi-Diddle-Diddle	Har 179-H	not on LP/CD
141834-3	Hard-To-Get Gertie	Har 197-H,	Chronological Classics 610

For these sides Rust*3 lists Rex Stewart, but W.C.Allen does not! After intense listening only two trumpets can be discerned, obviously none of them Rex Stewart. All other musicians as listed. There obviously is no tuba.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 192: "There are no hot trumpet solos on these sides; there are some flourishes which sound like Russell Smith, and what little of a second trumpet as can be heard in the brass passages is consistent with the style of Joe Smith, probably reading his parts. The late Prince Robinson once told Len Kunstadt that he had substituted for Coleman Hawkins on a Henderson date in the 20's, and when Len read him off a list of Henderson titles, Prince was volunteering the information that he recorded Hard-To-Get Gertie with Henderson! (Beware the power of suggestion.) This would be excellent information, except that on aural study, the tenor sax solos on this session are unmistakably by Coleman Hawkins! It was obviously not on this session that Prince subbed for Hawk."

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.192: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, trumpets; Charlie Green, trombone; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, clarinets, soprano and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; Ralph Escudero, tuba; Kaiser Marshall, drums and bells

- Rust*3: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart - t; Charlie Green - tb; Buster Bailey, cl -ss- as; Don Redman, cl - as - a- v; Coleman Hawkins, cl- ts- bsx; Fletcher Henderson, p - ldr - a; Charlie Dixon - bj; Ralph Escudero - bb; Kaiser Marshall - d

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, t; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Don Redman, cl, ss, as, gfs, a; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Charlie Dixon, bj; Kaiser Marshall, d

Solos ad-lib:

- Tampeekoe: CG 2, CH 2+10

- Hi-Diddle-Diddle: CH 15, CG 1+15, BB 15

- Hard-To-Get Gertie: CG 16, CH 1+31

017 FLETCHER HENDERSON'S ORCHESTRA

New York,

Mar. 1926

Russell Smith – tpt; Joe Smith – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;

Buster Bailey, Don Redman – alt, sop, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Ralph Escudero – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms

X-50 Honeybunch

Gnt 3286,

Chronological Classics 610

X-54-A When Spring Comes Peeping Through

Gnt 3285,

Chronological Classics 610

For these sides Rust*3 lists Rex Stewart again, but W.C.Allen does not! After intense listening again only two trumpets can be discerned, obviously none of them Rex Stewart. All other musicians are as listed. But now, although not listed by Rust or Allen, there certainly is a tuba with the band, although somewhat in the background.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 192: "Same personnel as for above session. (Aural evidence; no tuba is audible) Joe Smith definitely present."

Ibid. "NOTE: Schuller (in EARLY JAZZ, 1968, p.263-64) attributes this solo (When Spring ... - KBR) to Benny Morton. However, the solo which he transcribed does not match the notation of either trombone solo on this title." I am sorry to report that W.C.Allen is wrong here as Schuller's notation shows the ad-lib trombone solo in the second chorus, Ex. A showing the last two bars of the first A part (of AABA structure) and Ex. B showing the B part (of AABA structure) of the same chorus!

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.192: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, trumpets; Charlie Green, trombone; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, clarinets, soprano and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; Ralph Escudero, tuba; Kaiser Marshall, drums

- Rust*3: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart - t; Charlie Green - tb; Buster Bailey, cl -ss- as; Don Redman, cl - as - a- v; Coleman Hawkins, cl- ts- bsx; Fletcher Henderson, p - ldr - a; Charlie Dixon - bj; Ralph Escudero - bb; Kaiser Marshall - d

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, t; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Don Redman, cl, ss, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Charlie Dixon, bj; Kaiser Marshall, d

Solos ad-lib:

- Honeybunch: CG 8, DR sop 8, CG 7, BB 16, CH 8, BB 8

- When Spring Comes Peeping Through: CG 30, JS 8, FH 8, CH 24

018 THE DIXIE STOMPERS

New York,

Apr. 14, 1926

Russell Smith – tpt; Joe Smith – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;

Buster Bailey, Don Redman – alt, sop, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Kaiser Marshall – dms;

Don Redman – voc (1); Harold Arlen – arr (1)

141958-1 Dynamite

Har 209-H,

Chronological Classics 610

141959-2 Jackass Blues

Har 166-H,

Neatwork RP 2016

141959-3 Jackass Blues

Har 166-H,

Chronological Classics 610

141960-2 Static Strut

Har 197-H,

Chronological Classics 610

For these sides Rust*3 lists Rex Stewart again, but W.C.Allen does not! After intense listening again only two trumpets can be discerned, obviously none of them Rex Stewart. All other musicians are as listed, yet no tuba. Different from session 019 below this Jackass Blues does not use the well-known stock arrangement of Jackass Blues (as known from Oliver, Clarence Williams, etc.), but a different one possibly written by Redman.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.193: "A reference in Orchestra World, May 1926, p.20, states that Fletcher Henderson, of the Roseland Ballroom, N.Y., has recorded the tune Dynamite, composed by himself and Jack Palmer, for Columbia; this confirms this as a Henderson session. According to Jablonski (1961, p.39) this orchestration of Dynamite was written by Harold Arlen, newly arrived in New York with the Buffalodians. Arlen 'had even inserted what sounded like an improvised jazz solo for trumpeter Joe Smith."

Notes:

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.192: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, trumpets; Charlie Green, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet and alto sax; Don Redman, clarinet, alto sax and vocal; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; Kaiser Marshall, drums*

- *Rust*3: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart - t; Charlie Green - tb; Buster Bailey, cl - ss - as; Don Redman, cl - as - a - v; Coleman Hawkins, cl - ts - bsx; Fletcher Henderson, p - ldr - a; Charlie Dixon - bj; Ralph Escudero - bb; Kaiser Marshall - d*

- *Rust*6: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, t; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Don Redman, cl., as, v; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Charlie Dixon, bj; Kaiser Marshall, d*

Solos ad-lib:

- *Dynamite: FH 20, (JS 15) (!)*

- *Jackass Blues: JS 12, CG 12, last chorus ens ad-lib lead JS*

- *Static Strut: CG 32 ad-lib over ens, CH 16, JS 16 ad-lib over ens*

019 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 14, 1926

Russell Smith – tpt; Joe Smith, Rex Stewart – cnt; Benny Morton – tbn;

Buster Bailey, Don Redman – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Ralph Escudero – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms

142205-3 The Stampede

Col 654-D,

Chronological Classics 597

142206-2 Jackass Blues

Col 654-D,

Chronological Classics 597

Well, what is there to say? For me this is the first real jazz recording of the Fletcher Henderson band, the earlier recordings – in spite of Armstrong's presence and solos – mainly those of a dance band. But what does make it a jazz recording? First: Redman's jazzy arrangement as different from his earlier ones, second: Hawkins' and Joe Smith's solos, and then third: Rex Stewart's amazingly hot solistics in "The Stampede" introduction and the first half of the last chorus. These two short solos and the fifth chorus of "Jackass Blues" make these sides classic examples of early big band jazz. And Stewart shows himself to be a full-fledged successor to Armstrong's vacated seat in the Henderson band. It is a sad thought that he himself did not see himself ready and able to fill Louis' chair.

By the way, when listening to these sides again after a long time, I think that Benny Morton's presence here might be questioned. I believe to hear Charlie Green on trombone. Yet, W.C. Allen p.194 says: "*Rex Stewart and Benny Morton have confirmed their presence on these sides, being their first solos with Henderson.*"

Notes:

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.194: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, trumpets; Benny Morton, trombone; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; Ralph Escudero, tuba; Kaiser Marshall, drums*

- *Rust*6: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, t; Benny Morton, tb; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, cl, ss, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon, bj; Ralph Escudero, bb; Kaiser Marshall, d*

Solos ad-lib:

- *The Stampede: RexSt 4+4, CH 24+2+2, JS 30, FH 2, RexSt 2+12*

- *Jackass Blues: ?RSm 12, BM 12, BB 12, RexSt 12*

020 THE DIXIE STOMPERS

New York,

Oct. 20, 1926

Joe Smith, Rex Stewart – cnt; Benny Morton – tbn;

Buster Bailey, Don Redman – alt, sop, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Kaiser Marshall – dms

142845-3 Off To Buffalo

Har 299-H,

Chronological Classics 597

142846-1 Brotherly Love

Har 299-H,

Chronological Classics 597

142847-3 Alabama Stomp

Har 283-H,

Chronological Classics 597

As often with these cheap record labels, the Henderson band is not with their complete personnel. This might be excusable in regard to the non-suitability of the recording equipment to fetch the tuba bass notes, but why they dropped the first trumpet player I do not know. A reason might be that they used discharged older arrangements for the cheap labels that did only comprise two trumpet parts?

But there is strong Stewart here, very secure and self-confident and blowing great solos, contrary to what he later told about his own psychic state – chorus 3 in "Off To Buffalo", chorus 2 in "Brotherly Love" and chorus 4 in "Alabama Stomp".

W.C. Allen, p. 194: "*The identity of the trombone soloist remains in doubt for the present; although Morton says he remained with for some time until he left to join Chick Webb in 1928, he may have been joined sporadically by Charlie Green as a section mate, or have had to have a substitute on some particular record date such as this. The soloist here sounds somewhat like Green, without the growl.*" As there are no earlier examples of Benny Morton's style on record, we do not have any comparison and do not know his style at the time. But I would suggest that Charlie Green would have been attributed more solo space than the short 8 bar trombone solo in the last chorus of "Brotherly Love".

Rex Stewart first instalment with the Henderson organization lasted from early May until late October 1926 when he switched over to Horace Henderson's Wilberforce University band.

Notes:

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.194: Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, trumpets; Benny Morton ?, trombone; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; Kaiser Marshall, drums*

- *Rust*6: Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, t; Benny Morton, tb; Buster Bailey, Don Redman, cl, ss, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts;*

Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon, bj; Ralph Escudero, bb; Kaiser Marshall, d

Solos ad-lib:

- *Off To Buffalo: CH 8, RexSt 16, RexSt 8, BB 24*

- *Brotherly Love: RexSt 16, BM 8*

- *Alabama Stomp: RexSt 30, BB 2+30*

018 MONETTE MOORE

New York,

Nov. 09, 1926

Monette Moore – voc;

Thomas Morris – cnt; Ernest Elliott – clt;

Phil Worde – pno

36916-2

If You Don't Like Potatoes

Vic 20356,

Doc DOCD-5339

Although all the discographies list Rex Stewart as the cornetist here I have to express my strong doubts as to his presence here, this in the context of my compiling this list of all Stewart pre-Ellington recordings and consecutive re-checking the records. Having Stewart's stylistic and technical development in my mind I have to report that these sides are definitely below par with the before checked recordings, and they probably have to be adjoined to Thomas Morris just as on the following session.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.213: "Trumpeter Rex Stewart reportedly recorded (according to Dixon & Godrich, 1969) four titles for Victor behind Monette Moore, on Nov. 9, 1926 and Jan. 26, 1927; and two titles for Cameo behind Viola McCoy, in March 1927. All these were made at times when the Wilberforce Collegians were presumably in Ohio, and when no New York engagements are documented. Of course he may not have been in the band all this time." This then would be a strong reason not to believe in Stewart's presence in sessions 018, 019 and 020!

This is what I have written earlier in my Ernest Elliott list:

It is a joy to hear young Rex Stewart on cornet. It is only a pity that Stewart in later years did not relate his own encounters with Elliott. He does not mention his name at all in his publications. It seems that he was not impressed. But it's all there what makes Elliott at this time, everything from his "Stylistics", plus some later achievements (i.e. fast downward arpeggios and freak growl).

The piano player may be Phil Worde. I do not know on what basis. Does anybody know anything about him? But he plays a beautiful and unexpected single Bb (in C7) leading to Fmajor just after Elliott's growl half-chorus in 'Somebody's Been Lovin' My Baby'. Very nice!

Notes:

- Rust, Victor Master Book Vol. 2: acc. by c / cl / p

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Rex Stewart - c; Ernest Elliott - cl; ? Phil Worde - p

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Rex Stewart, cnt; Ernest Elliott, clt; poss Phil Worde, pno

019 **MONETTE MOORE**

New York,

Jan. 26, 1927

Monette Moore - voc;

Thomas Morris - cnt; Ernest Elliott - clt; unknown - bclt; unknown - flt;

Phil Worde - pno

37572-2 *Moaning Sinner Blues*

Vic 20484,

Document DOCD-5339

37573-1 *Hard Hearted Papa*

Vic 20484,

Document DOCD-5339

37573-2 *Hard Hearted Papa*

Vic 20484,

Document DOCD-5339

These sides have been seen by our listening group as a probable Thomas Morris appearance. When re-listening to these sides I am very uncertain re the trumpet player. The octave upward jump in both takes of 'Hard-Hearted Papa' rather hints to Rex Stewart, but other insecurities let me think of Morris. And - as we are in 1927 now - I think that Stewart would be much more developed and that Morris is the likely candidate here.

Little can be heard of Ernest Elliott here, given that it is him on clarinet. The whole affair is arranged, presumably by the pianist, who plays according to the arranged passages. 'Moaning Sinner Blues' features no instrumental solos, but 'Hard Hearted Papa' has a bass clarinet solo at prominent place, only that it is not played by Elliott, but by an unknown musician of moderate improvisational abilities, using dated slap-tongue technique and very simple rhythmic structure. Elliott's clarinet is mainly coupled with the flute which gives the whole affair an airy and light sound compensated by the bass clarinet. But at a few instances Elliott's smears and slurs and his resulting sour tones become apparent, so that his presence may be ascertained. (It might be added that Evelyn Preer (Thompson) had a bass clarinet used on her recording session of c. 8 September 1926 for Banner, too.)

There is strong piano accompaniment to the items, presumably by Phil Worde, who might have been Moore's permanent accompanist at the time.

This is what my listening companions had to say some years ago:

KBR: 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.

MR: Morris and Fuller both likely.

Notes:

- Rust, Victor Master Book Vol. 2: acc. by c / cl / b-cl / f / p

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Rex Stewart, cnt; Ernest Elliott, clt; unknown, bcl; unknown, flt; poss Phil Worde, pno

- Rust*3*4,*6: Rex Stewart - c; Ernest Elliott - cl; ? Phil Worde - p; unknown b-cl / f added

032 **VIOLA McCOY**

New York,

Mar. 01, 1927

Viola McCoy - voc;

Horace Holmes - cnt; Louis Hooper - pno

2364-A *Slow Up Papa*

Cam 1144,

Document DOCD-5418

2364-C *Slow Up Papa*

Cam 1144,

Document DOCD-5654

2365-A *Fortune Teller Blues*

Cam 1144,

Document DOCD-5418

2365-B *Fortune Teller Blues*

Cam 1144,

Document DOCD-5654

Trumpet tone, vibrato and style do probably not show Rex Stewart as given in the discs, although he might have been in a somewhat very restrained mood - if not too restrained. This is not Louis Metcalf. But this player positively corresponds to what can be heard on Ethel Water's session of July 28, 1925, where the trumpet played is documented as Horace Holmes. And this man very probably is the trumpeter heard on session 033 below and named there tentatively as Horace Holmes. Please, listen and compare! (But this is beautiful trumpet blues playing!)

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

Notes:

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

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

021 **REX STEWART'S HARLEM SERENADERS**

New York,

Apr. 04, 1927

Rex Stewart – cnt; unknown – tpt; unknown – tbn;
 unknown – clt, alt; unknown – clt, ten;
 unknown – pno; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs; unknown – dms;
 Andy Razaf – voc (2)

E-4793/4	Ten O'Clock Blues	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD
E-4795/7	Oh Malinda	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD

As obviously no tests have been found, nothing can be said about the personnel and musical content of these titles.

Notes:

- Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; probably t; tb; 2-3 cl, as, ts; p; bj; bb; d; Andy Razaf, v.

022	TE ROY WILLIAMS AND HIS ORCHESTRA	New York,	May 25, 1927
Rex Stewart – cnt; Te Roy Williams – tbn; Joe Garland – alt, clt; unknown – ten, clt; Freddy Johnson – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo; Bob Ysaguirre – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms; Teddy Nixon - arr			
144214-2	Oh! Malinda	Har 439-H,	Frog DGF 38
144215-3	Lindbergh Hop	Har 439-H,	Frog DGF 38

As you may read in the notes below, this was Elmer Snowden's Nest Club Band. How it came to be re-named after the trombonist is a miracle nobody can explain.

For many years now, the trumpet player on this session has been a matter of discussion, beginning with Walter C. Allen's notice in Storyville 21 (see below). I remember that I assumed this player to be Tommy Ladnier when I first heard these sides on the IAJRC 12 LP. And it is interesting to see that Rust immediately changed his personnel according to Allen's note. Most interesting for me is the note of VJM 169 (see below) which cites a participant of this session – Bob Ysaguirre - claiming it was Rex Stewart, yet. When listening it becomes apparent that the trumpet certainly is not far from Ed Allen, but this certainly is not Allen's tone and vibrato. As I have got to know Rex Stewart's development into a fine trumpet player in the Armstrong mould after Louis' arrival in New York, I would also think that he could be able to play in such a southern style after some years of gigging in Harlem. Accordingly I would opt for Stewart.

Te Roy Williams was not the bandleader, and it is an unsolved question how he could be put as bandleader on the record label.

Joe Garland was a player of all the saxophones. Performing mostly on tenor sax in later years he was mainly engaged as an alto sax man cum clarinetist in the twenties. I therefore think that he is on alto here and that he is the clarinet soloist (see also Chick Webb's Jungle Band session, where Garland is on alto and clarinet, and not Louis Jordan!). He can be heard in an alto break just after the tenor solo in A3 of 'Oh! Malinda'.

As it is definitely known that Prince Robinson as part of the Leon Abbey band arrived at exactly this recording date in Rio de Janeiro (Storyville 73, p.8). Robinson – who was a tenor player and clarinetist throughout – cannot be present. The tenor solo spots do affirm exactly this fact! But then, who is the tenor player in A3 of the first title? He is a player below Robinson's level! He may also be found playing with the Okeh Melody Stars. At last it has to be stated that other than Walter Allen's suggestion there are only two reed men on this session!

Freddie Johnson is on piano, but I wonder why Rust lists a second pianist who is heard nowhere.

Snowden is the bandleader anyhow, and he plays his banjo in his very own strumming way.

Bob Ysaguirre of early Armand Piron and later Don Redman fame obviously is the tuba player, and Walter Johnson – who later, with Fletcher Henderson, "invented" the modern jazz style of drumming – is heard in his first recording session, playing quite "old-fashioned".

Teddy Nixon, Fletcher Henderson's trombonist of 1923/24, is said to be the arranger of these titles.

Notes:

- Rust*2: ? Rex Stewart – cnt; Te Roy Williams – tbn; Prince Robinson – clt; Joe Garland – clt, ten; Freddie Johnson and another – pno; Elmer Snowden – bjo; Bob Ysaguirre – bbs; Walter Johnson - dms

- Rust*3,*4: Ed Allen – c; Re Roy Williams – tb -ldr; Prince Robinson – cl; unknown – cl –as; Joe Garland – cl –ts; Freddie Johnson and another – p; Elmer Snowden – bj; Bob Ysaguirre – bb; Walter Johnson – d.

- IAJRC 12, cover text: Snowden: "Te Roy Williams was my trombone player, who was on notice when this record was made. ... This was my Nest Club Band, and to this day, I can't figure out how his name got on the label."

- Storyville 21, p.112: "In Jazz Information, Vol.2 No.2 there appeared a photo of the Elmer Snowden Orchestra at the Nest Club in '1925'. The personnel was Rex Stewart (cnt), TeRoy Williams (tbn), Joe Garland and Prince Robinson (saxes), Freddie Johnson (pno), Elmer Snowden (bjo), Bob Ysaguirre (bbs) and Walter Johnson (dms). So far so good. But in a copy of Melody Maker in 1942 (?) someone preposed that this personnel applied to the Te Roy Williams recordings on Harmony 439-H: Oh! Malinda (Razaf and Johnson) / Lindbergh Hop (Nixon and Snowden). Since that time, this personnel has come to be accepted by Rust and everyone else, with absolutely no corroboration or foundation, purely as the result of someone's suggestion. It seems time to set the record straight. By this time, even Elmer Snowden believes that this is the correct personnel, probably because someone showed him 'the book'. (But did that someone actually play him the record ???) I have a fine copy of the record, and on listening, the instrumentation appears to be: trumpet, trombone, three clarinets and saxes, piano, banjo, tuba and drums. The trumpeter, to my ears, is Es Allen and nothing at all like Rex Stewart. I admit that I am not certain of all the facets of Rex's style, but I do know my Ed Allen from his Clarence Williams work, and Rex never played in that lovely 'singing' style or with that tone. The trombone, apparently, is Te Roy Williams, for obvious reasons. One title being a band original, co-composed by Elmer Snowden, would indicate that his presence on banjo is a distinct possibility, but who 'Nixon' might be, and which particular 'Johnson' wrote 'Oh! Malinda', is something I do not know. Incidentally, is it not strange that as important a Harlem bandleader as Elmer Snowden never recorded under his own name?"

- Rust*6: Ed Allen, c; Te Roy Williams, tbn; Prince Robinson, cl, as; Joe Garland, cl, ts; Freddie Johns, and another, p; Elmer Snowden, bj; Bob Ysaguirre, bb; Walter Johnson, d.

- VJM 169-19: "Juan Carlos Lopez (Spain) interviewed Bob Ysaguirre, Te Roy Williams' bass player, who was very insistent that it was Rex Stewart who plays cornet on the Te Roy Williams Harmony session (see Doctor Jazz Mag. #205, June 2009). The interview took place in 1979 together with Al Vollmer. Incidentally Richard Rains notes that 'Oh! Malinda' was recorded for Vocalion – but rejected – seven weeks earlier by ... Rex Stewart & His Orchestra! Coincidence?"

023	FLETCHER HENDERSON'S COLLEGIANS	New York,	Nov. 26, 1927
Russell Smith – tpt, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart – cnt; Benny Morton – tbn; Buster Bailey, Don Pasquall – alt, sop, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt; Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; June Cole – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms;			

Andy Razaf - voc			
622-3	Dear, On A Night Like This	Ban 6128,	Chronological Classics 572
7624-1	There's A Rickety Rackety Shack	Ban 6129,	Chronological Classics 572
7624-2	There's A Rickety Rackety Shack	Reg 8442	not on LP/CD
7638-3	Sorry	Ban 6154,	Neatwork RP 2016
7638-4	Sorry	Ban 6154,	Chronological Classics 572

This certainly is one of the least known Henderson sessions. Henderson's authorship of the first title has even been denied for a long time (see Rust*3 where it is omitted). Yet, when listening to these titles it becomes obvious that Rex Stewart in his book "Boy Meets Horn" did remember quite correctly his own presence here. As always in remembrances of musicians facts have been mixed and changed, and thus Stewart certainly was wrong when attributing "Whiteman Stomp" to this very recording session (see below)! (Or did he perhaps also play on the "Whiteman Stomp" session of May 11, 1927?) W.C. Allen already assumed Stewart's presence in RR 19 as early as 1960, yet also to admit Ladnier's presence as a possibility! This did not find entrance into any discography up to now although the stylistic characteristics of the trumpet/cornet solo late in both takes of "Sorry" are clearly Stewart's. His own recollection, yet, should be proof now! But what fantastic hot solos Rex was able to deliver at this early time! His solos here, yet, are not played muted as noted by W.C. Allen in RR 19, but open. Allen's supposition certainly is caused by the sound quality of the ARC recordings which leaves much to be desired.

Rex Stewart was off and on with the Fletcher Henderson band in 1927 and 1928, requested from Horace Henderson's Wilberforce band whenever it was necessary to fill a vacant chair until Bobby Stark joining the band.

Rex Stewart, *Boy Meets Horn*, p. 114: "... It was on this date that Don Redman's *Whiteman Stomp* was produced. The other side of the record was a *ballad, Dear, On A Night Like This, and there's a little story to be told. We made what we thought was a perfect take the first time but, on hearing the playback, smack in the middle of Russell's high and muted solo, just 16 bars before the end, we heard a foreign cluster of sound. This was just a problem that prevented Henderson's band (and others) from being recorded to best advantage.*"

Notes:

- *Record Research 19-13*: "... The first trumpet solo on SORRY might be Joe Smith, and a hotter muted near the end might be Ladnier or Rex Stewart."

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, 245*: probably: Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Benny Morton, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet, alto sax; Jerome Pasquall, soprano & alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; June Cole, tuba; Kaiser Marshall, drums; Andy Razaf, vocals. "Instrumentation seems to be as above; of the trumpeters, only one is heard in solos, playing in a new fast-fingering style totally unlike anything Ladnier had played – presumably Stark, in his recorded debut."

- *Rust*6*: probably Russell Smith, Joe Smith, Bobby Stark, t; Benny Morton, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Jerome Pasquall, ss, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Charlie Dixon, bj; June Cole, bb; Kaiser Marshall, d; Andy Razaf, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- *Dear On A Night Like This*: AR voc 32, no ad-lib solos

- *There's A Rickety Rackety Shack*: AR voc 32, RexSt 16

- *Sorry*: RS 30 straight, AR voc 32, CH 8, RexSt 2+16

Discernible differences of takes:

- *There's A Rickety Rackety Shack*: as take -2 has not been reissued differences could not be determined!

- *Sorry*: -3 no ad-lib clarinet in final ensemble (16 bars); -4 Buster Bailey plays ad-lib clt over final ensemble (16 bars)

024 THE DIXIE STOMPERS

New York,

Apr. 06, 1928

Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt; Charlie Green – tbn;

Buster Bailey – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Charlie Dixon – bjo; Don Pasquall – bxs; Kaiser Marshall – dms;

Maceo Pinkard – arr (3)

145975-1 Oh, Baby!

Har 636-H,

Chronological Classics 572

145976-1 Feelin' Good

Har 636-H,

Chronological Classics 572

145977-2 I'm Feelin' Devilish

Har 974-H,

Chronological Classics 572

As will be discussed later in this work, it is difficult to discriminate the trumpet soloists. Stewart's and Stark's styles are rather similar in their virtuosic and fast-fingering approach. It will, yet, be my aim to distinguish one from the other, and I hope to find correct answers. A couple of notes re this similarity in earlier publications will be most helpful in this respect. First, let me cite *Hendersonia*, p.247: "The late Bobby Stark claimed these as his own best recordings. His work here has been mistaken for Jabbo Smith, and indeed there are many similarities in phrasing and attack; but when these were played for Jabbo by John Steiner and Bruce Davis, Jabbo said he did not make these and in fact never played with Henderson at all. Rex Stewart recalled this date, too, and swapping the lead with Stark. The trombonist sounds like Charlie Green – c.f. his work on the Bessie Smith session of March 20, 1928; Panassie agrees that it is not Jimmy Harrison here. Bailey and Hawkins can be readily recognized as soloists, and in place of the tuba, Don Pasquall plays the bass sax."

So, everything has been said here, except that it seems to be Stark all over the first title, probably Rex Stewart playing lead after Stark's growl solo and before Green's trombone solo in *Feelin' Good*, and the trumpet break in the middle of the last chorus. In *I'm Feeling Devilish* it seems to be Stark again all over. If it wouldn't have been for Stewart's recollection as above, I would probably have denied his presence on this session at all. It should be added that Stewart's style at this time was strongly influenced by Louis Armstrong whereas Stark displays a fast and more technical approach to his playing, using open final vibrato.

Notes:

- *Rust*2*: Bobby Stark, Rex Stewart (cnts); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Don Pasquall (clt, alt); Coleman Hawkins (ten, clt); Fletcher Henderson (pno, ldr); Charlie Dixon (bjo); June Cole (bbs); Kaiser Marshall (dms)

- *Rust*3*: Bobby Stark –t; Jimmy Harrison –tb; Buster Bailey –cl-ss-as; Jerome Pasquall –cl-as-bs; Coleman Hawkins –cl-ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Kaiser Marshall –d.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p247: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Charlie Green, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet and sax; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon, banjo; Jerome Pasquall, bass sax; Kaiser Marshall, drums.

- *Rust*6*: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Jerome Pasquall, bxs; Charlie Dixon, bj; Kaiser Marshall, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- *Oh Baby*: BS 6, CG 2, BS 6, CH 2+6, BS 2+8, CH 16, BS 8, CH 8, BB 14, CG 2+8, BB 6, CG 2+15, BS 6

- *Feelin' Good*: CH 16, BS muted 8, CH 6, RexSt lead 12, RexSt 1+4, CG 1+16, BB 8, CG 6, DP 2, BS 16, CH 2, CG 2, BB 2, RexSt 2

- *I'm Feelin' Devilish*: BB 16 over ens, BS 8, BB 8 over ens, BB 30, BB 24 over ens, CH 16, CG 8, CH 6, BS 2+16, DP 8, BB 10 over ens

025 **GRANT AND WILSON** Henderson's Happy Six Orchestra New York, Nov. 1928
 Coot Grant, Kid Wesley Wilson – voc-duet;
 Bobby Stark – tpt; Buster Bailey – clt (if at all); Benny Carter - alt;
 Fletcher Henderson – pno
 3489-B Ducks Cam 9015, Document DOCD-5563
 3490-A Mama Didn't Do It And Papa Didn't Do It Cam 9015, Document DOCD-5563

As W.C. Allen writes in Hendersonia, p. 248 “Positive identification is impossible because there are no solo spots.” I have to add that the sound of the CD reissue is very thin as a consequence of bad quality of ARC recordings and battered originals. It is thus absolutely impossible to give a reliable statement as to the musicians present and playing. I hear a trumpet, a saxophone and a piano. There may be faint signs of a clarinet on the second title, but only sporadically, if at all, but no trombone. Considering the definite presence of Benny Carter on the band title below, the saxophone sound heard here very probably is he on alto sax. But I feel unable to say anything of the trumpeter's identity. Only, that it probably is Bobby Stark as explained in session 026 below.

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia: Rex Stewart ?, cornet; Charlie Green ?, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet; unknown, sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano.

- BGR*4: poss. Rex Stewart, c; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl; unknown sax; Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust*6: ? Rex Stewart, c; ? Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl; ? as; Fletcher Henderson, p.

026 **HENDERSON'S HAPPY SIX ORCHESTRA** New York, Nov. 1928
 Bobby Stark – tpt; Charlie Green – tbn;
 Buster Bailey – clt; Benny Carter – alt;
 Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; Coleman Hawkins – bsx
 3491-A Old Black Joe's Blues Cam 9033, Chronological Classics 572

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 224: “Clarence Holiday replaced Dixon about this time (middle of November), and Benny Carter replaced Pasquall before mid November; at least. Carter can be heard on alto sax and clarinet on recordings from this period, and a bass sax is seen in front of him in a later photo of the band. Joe Smith and his brother Russell actually joined the pit band for the touring company of Lew Leslie's BLACKBIRDS show, as confirmed by pianist Louis Hooper. Joe's chair was filled by Rex Stewart, into the band for the second time; it is Rex or Bobby Stark who plays the growl trumpet solos from this period – Rex had already learned to use the plunger from Bubber Miley. Russell Smith's replacement was not secured until about January or February, but Jimmy Harrison had left Charlie Johnson to rejoin the band. Benny Morton left to join Chick Webb, and Charlie Green came back in.” Bobby Stark is reported as third trumpet player with the Henderson band from at least early 1928 on. From research published after the publication of Hendersonia we know that very probably Bobby Stark was the growl soloist in the Henderson band, not Stewart. (I believe that Stewart had always been taken as growl soloist because he was an “Ellington man”, and he therefore seemed to be the natural choice for the growl device. But this is at least doubtful. He did not join Ellington before 1935!) This trumpet player shows a rather coated trumpet sound and uses broken chords phrases, thus vertical phrasing and not horizontal phrasing as Stewart does. Furthermore he has no final vibrato on sustained notes. In all probability it is thus Bobby Stark playing trumpet on this recording session (nos. 025, 026, 027).

This single band title features an arranged first chorus that sounds to have been pinned down on the spot by Benny Carter. Then it is Buster Bailey in a clarinet solo chorus with a horribly out of tune clarinet, followed by a beautiful and typical chorus by Charlie Green on trombone. This is concluded by a two-bar break by Benny Carter in his inimitable style. Follows a trumpet solo chorus which features phrases known from Bobby Stark on some Dixie Stompers and other Henderson band recordings of later (jumping trill phrasings in Bubber Miley style in bars 15, 16, 17 of his solo here). Or is it Rex Stewart, yet? The tune is ended by another 16 bar strain which is played in harmony over different changes from before. Henderson's piano may be there, but cannot be heard possibly drowned by the banjo and Hawkins' bass sax. Comparing the trumpet parts heard with what I know of Rex Stewart I do believe that it is Bobby Stark here on trumpet – not Stewart – and he may thus also be the trumpet player of the Grant and Wilson sides before and later. Also, this trumpeter lacks Stewart's fire, and he seems to be rather insecure. Or is it booze again? (Bobby Stark was known as a heavy drinker! As to Stark's growl soloing, see below!)

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia: Rex Stewart, cornet; Charlie Green, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet; Benny Carter, alto sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Charlie Dixon or Clarence Holiday, banjo; Coleman Hawkins, bass sax.

- Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl; Benny Carter, as; Fletcher Henderson, p; Charlie Dixon or Clarence Holiday, bj; Coleman Hawkins, bsx.

027 **COOT GRANT** Henderson's Happy Six Orchestra New York, Nov. 1928
 Coot Grant – voc;
 Bobby Stark – tpt; Charlie Green – tbn;
 Buster Bailey – clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten (or bsx ?);
 Fletcher Henderson – pno
 3492-A Stevedore Blues Cam 9240, Document DOCD-5564
 3492-B Stevedore Blues Ro 1042 not on LP/CD

Again there is nothing to definitely indicate Rex Stewart's playing here, and I assume that it is Bobby Stark again. Bailey and Green can easily be recognized, Henderson on piano as well, but there is a saxophone playing in the background of which I am not certain if it is Hawkins tamely on his tenor sax, or if he is still trying to get his bass sax going. W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.248: “Rex Stewart (in Down Beat, April 7, 1966) has recalled a story about Hawkins bringing a bass sax to a recording session, amid much laughter and kidding; but on that occasion, he simply could not coax a coherent solo out of the monster, so that the session (this one? KBR) was one of the few Henderson dates without a Hawkins solo.” This might possibly mean that Stewart was on the session but, it might also have been hearsay to him only, thus no proof for Stewart's presence, the more so as this particular session is not dated anyhow.

Notes:

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia: Rex Stewart ?, cornet; Charlie Green, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet; Fletcher Henderson, piano; (no sax or banjo audible).

- BGR*4: poss. Rex Stewart, c; Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p.

- Rust*6: ? Rex Stewart, c; ? Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl; ? as; Fletcher Henderson, p.

028 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 12, 1928

Rex Stewart – cnt; Bobby Stark – tpt; Charlie Green – tbn;
 Buster Bailey – alt, clt; Benny Carter – alt, voc (1); Coleman Hawkins – ten;
 Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; June Cole – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms;
 Benny Carter - arr

147421-3 Come On, Baby !

Col 14392-D,

Chronological Classics 572

147422-2 Easy Money

Col 14392-D,

Chronological Classics 572

Now, this is one of my favourite Henderson sessions. With all those little gems heard: Carter's great arrangements and his genial alto solos, Charlie Green's fine trombone playing, Hawkins' virile tenor solos, Marshall's beautiful and melodious cymbal playing (he must have mounted his cymbal close to the mike, you don't hear any other drum sounds than the cymbal, played with two sticks while choking it with the left hand) and the fervent trumpet solos. Yet, Bailey's playing wrong harmonies at the end of *Come On, Baby* should not be kept back here. The only problem is: who does play which trumpet solos? I believe that in *Come On, Baby* Stewart plays the lead in intro and first chorus being relieved by Stark in the chase chorus together with Carter, each one playing eight bars each. From then on it seems to be Stewart again playing lead until the end. In *Easy Money* we hear Stark first for 16 bars, then after the Hawkins solo it seems to be Stewart leading the ensemble, and after the clarinet solo then again Stark for an eight-bar solo.

Obviously did Henderson appoint Stewart to play first parts and gave the solo portions to Bobby Stark here. Rex Stewart owns the clearer tone of both players. Charlie Green's presence is documented by Benny Carter's statement after hearing the side that it is Green. Close inspection of Green's playing characteristics supports Carter's statement.

Notes:

- *Jazz Directory Vol. 4: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark (cor); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Benny Carter (alt, vcl); Coleman Hawkins (ten); Fletcher Henderson (p); Charlie Dixon (bj); June Coles (tu); Kaiser Marshall (d).*

- *Rust*2: Russell Smith, Bobby Stark (cnts); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Benny Carter (alt, vcl); Coleman Hawkins (ten); Fletcher Henderson (pno); Clarence Holiday (bjo/gtr); June Coles (bbs); Kaiser Marshall (dms).*

- *Rust*3: Rex Stewart – Cootie Williams - Bobby Stark -t-c; Jimmy Harrison – Benny Morton – tb; Buster Bailey –cl-as; Benny Carter – cl-as-v; Coleman Hawkins –cl-ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj-v; John Kirby or June Cole –d (sic); Kaiser Marshall -d.*

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p248: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Charlie Green ?, trombone; Buster Bailey, clarinet and alto sax; Benny Carter, alto sax and vocal; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, banjo; June Cole, tuba; Kaiser Marshall, drums. "Personnel reconstructed from instrumentation and known playing personnel of the period. Joe and Russell Smith had left, and the personnel was in a state of flux. Pannassie says all the trumpet solos are by Stark, but some sound to me more like Stewart."*

- *Rust*6: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; ? Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Benny Carter, as, a, v; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj, v; June Cole, bb; Kaiser Marshall, d.*

Solos ad-lib:

- *Come On, Baby: RexSt 8, RexSt 6, BS muted 7, BC 1+8, BS muted 8, BC 6, CG 8, BC voc 8, CH 8, BB clt 6*

- *Easy Money: BS 16, CG 8, CH 6, BB 8, BS 6*

029 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Mar. 13, 1929

Russell Smith, Bobby Stark – tpt; Rex Stewart – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;
 Buster Bailey, Benny Carter – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo, voc (1); June Cole – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms

148064-3 My Kinda Love

Col unissued

not on LP/CD

148065-3 Basin Street Blues

Col unissued

not on LP/CD

As obviously no tests have been found, nothing can be said about the personnel and musical content of these titles.

Notes:

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 249: "presumably full band personnel of the period. No information in the Columbia files except for the name of the vocalist (Clarence Holiday) who was the band's banjoist."*

- *Rust*3: Russell Smith -Rex Stewart - Bobby Stark -t-c; Jimmy Harrison – Benny Morton – tb; Buster Bailey –cl-as; Benny Carter –cl-as-v; Coleman Hawkins –cl-ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj-v; John Kirby or June Cole –d (sic); Kaiser Marshall -d.*

- *Rust*6: probably Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; ? Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, cl, as; Benny Carter, as, a, v; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj, v; June Cole, bb; Kaiser Marshall, d.*

030 BESSIE BROWN

New York,

c. Mar./Apr. 1929

Bessie Brown – voc;

Rex Stewart – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;

Harvey Boone – clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; Del Thomas – bbs

E-29531

Song From A Cotton Field

Br 4409,

Document DOCD-5456

E-29532

He Just Don't Appeal To Me

Br 4409,

Document DOCD-5456

This is a beautiful swinging affair accompanying singer Bessie Brown, with a selection of Henderson band heroes playing mainly ad-lib. W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.249: "Instrumentation is as above; except for Hawkins, who takes a long solo, it is difficult to recognize the players. However, the Brunswick files contain the following quotation from an apparent publicity blurb for Brunswick 4409: "Fletcher Henderson and his Orch. accomp. hot trumpet – trombone and wailing sax. Composer assisted in making record. High and low clarinets, muted trumpet, shaking trombone – blue piano chords." This confirms this date as a Henderson session, although the reference to "composer" assisting may indicate that (Porter) Grainger played some of the piano."

The trumpet part is played very functionally and sparingly, different from Bobby Stark's multi-toned and fast-fingering style, and very much in Armstrong mode. I therefore definitely believe in Stewart's presence here. The trombone is what can be expected from Green. Hawkins is easy to identify. Harvey Boone's presence on clarinet is obviously derived from his known membership with the band at this time and period. The same applies to the banjo player – Clarence Holiday – and the tuba player – Delbert Thomas. Piano playing is very unobtrusive, but effective, and there are little snippets which I would not attribute to Porter Grainger's style as I know it. I therefore opt for Henderson. Grainger's possible presence is certainly assumed from the fact that both items are his compositions as listed on the record label.

Notes:

- *Hendersonia*, p. 249: Rex Stewart or Bobby Stark – trumpet; Charlie Green – trombone; Harvey Boone – clarinet; Coleman Hawkins – tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson or Porter Grainger – piano; Clarence Holiday – banjo; Del Thomas ? – tuba
 - *MBR*4*: poss Rex Stewart or Bobby Stark, t; Charlie Green, tb; Harvey Boone, cl; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson or poss. Porter Grainger, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj; poss Del Thomas, bb
 - *Rust*6*: Rex Stewart or Bobby Stark, t; Charlie Green, tb; Harvey Boone, cl; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson or Porter Grainger, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj;? Del Thomas, bb

031 HENDERSON 'S ROSELAND ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 1929

Rex Stewart – cnt; Bobby Stark – tpt;
 Jimmy Harrison, *Charlie Green* (if at all) – tbn;
 Buster Bailey, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;
 Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; *Del Thomas* – bbs;
 Benny Carter - arr
 3798-B Freeze And Melt
 3799-A Raisin' The Roof

Cam 9174,
Cam 9175,Chronological Classics 572
Chronological Classics 572

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.249: „*Personnel is reconstructed from identification of soloists and his playing personnel of the period. Cootie Williams was long thought to be one of the trumpeters, playing the growl solo on the second title, but on comparison with his Ellington work, they are really not at all alike. Panassie identifies the growl soloist as Rex Stewart, and I (W.C.Allen - KBR)agree. Rex had already learned growl technique from Bubber Miley, whereas Cootie has already left Henderson to join Ellington (mid Feb. 1929), and had not yet learned the growl style. His earliest known growl solos with Ellington do not occur until September 1929. The alto sax/clarinet soloist, other than Bailey, is not Benny Carter, who had already left to form his own band; perhaps it was Harvey Boone, who had joined this early. Driggs names Claude Jones as one of the trombones, but Claude did not come east until Henderson was with GREAT DAY in Atlantic City (late June 1929). I cannot hear any drums.*”

This again is one of the Henderson sessions where the band sounds fat and urgent using Benny Carter's arrangements. As in session 028 it seems that Stewart plays the first trumpet parts, with Stark on second trumpet. But this would probably mean that Stark is the soloist of the growl solo on the second title. Yet, compared with other reported Stark growl solos (Henderson's *The House Of David Blues* et al.) this player here owns a stronger and straight-ahead yet less flexible tone than Stark and plays in an essential and not fast-fingered style, and therefore is very probably Stewart. The solo's growl style is derived from Miley's, whereas Stark's growl style is rather similar to Cootie Williams'. The trombone soloist definitely is Harrison, Bailey solos on clarinet, Hawkins on tenor sax. The only questionable solo is in the last chorus of the second title, 8 bars on alto sax which probably come from Boone, not from Bailey.

It certainly is a great pity that Kaiser Marshall is not on this session.

Notes:

- *Rust*3*: two of: Rex Stewart – Cootie Williams - Bobby Stark -t-c; Jimmy Harrison – tb; Buster Bailey –cl-as; Benny Carter –cl-as-v; Coleman Hawkins –cl-ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj-v; John Kirby or June Cole –d (sic); Walter Johnson -d.
 - *Hendersonia*, p. 249: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – trumpets; Jimmy Harrison, Charlie Green ?– trombones; Buster Bailey, Harvey Boone – clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins –clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson – piano; Clarence Holiday – banjo; Del Thomas ? – tuba
 - *Rust*6*: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey, ?Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj;? Del Thomas, bb

Solos ad-lib:

- *Freeze And Melt*: CH 6x2, *RexSt 16*, JH 16, BB 4x2, *RexSt 8*, BB 2
 - *Raisin' The Roof*: *RexSt 30*, CH 2+16, BB 8, CH 8, ?HB 8

032 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 16, 1929

Rex Stewart – cnt; Bobby Stark – tpt;
 Jimmy Harrison, *Charlie Green* (if at all) – tbn;
 Benny Carter, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;
 Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; *Del Thomas* – bbs; Kaiser Marshall – dms;
 Benny Carter - arr
 148540-2 Blazin'
 148541-3 The Wang Wang Blues

Col 1913-D,
Col 1913-D,Chronological Classics 572
Chronological Classics 572

And another session of the Henderson band playing Benny Carter arrangements, and again the band sounds fat and urgent. All discographies say that now – after a period of Russell Smith's absence and the attempt to install young Cootie Williams as lead trumpeter – Russell Smith is back again on his stool, but I still do hear only two trumpet players as in the former sessions, together with possibly one trombone only. Listen to the brass section chorus in *Blazin'* and the brass parts in *Wang Wang Blues* and keep in mind that Benny Carter in his arrangements wrote four-part harmony – and that he led and arranged for the Savoy Play Boys at exactly this time, with two trumpeters and two trombonists, which might be the cause for the instrumentation of these Henderson personnels! So, for my taste, Russell Smith's presence is highly questionable, as is Charlie Green's. With Bobby Stark taking the main part of trumpet soloing it seems that Stewart again plays first trumpet as he obviously did in the last sessions. A delicate instance occurs at the beginning of the trumpet solo of *The Wang Wang Blues* (first chorus): Bobby Stark with his rather coated tone starts his solo for one bar, is then interrupted by Rex Stewart with his clean tone in a one bar uprising phrase, and continues his solo in a lowly started, but also uprising phrase, without being interrupted again.

The trombone soloist definitely is Jimmy Harrison, and Green's presence cannot be verified by the recorded sound.

With Buster Bailey in Europe now (from early May on), Harvey Boone probably played the first alto with the band, but the sound of the first alto here is so much that of Benny Carter, that I feel positively certain that he had been hired to lead the saxophones here, Boone playing third sax (second alto). And thus Carter might also be responsible for the two 4 bar solo alto bridges in *Blazin'* (the B parts of 16 bar AABA choruses). After Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter Vol. II, p. 6, no engagements of the Savoy Play Boys – led by Carter – are documented for May 1929, so he might have been in New York at this time. W.C. Allen assumes possibly Arville Harris on second alto – and following him Rust, but I feel unable to follow as well.

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 250: „*The growl trumpet on these sides does not sound like Cootie Williams and he is not believed to be on this session either. Russell Smith had probably replaced him by this time. Personnel is reconstructed from identification of the soloists and from the regular playing personnel of the period. Panassie identified all the trumpet solos as by Bobby Stark, including the growl work; he also ascribes the alto sax solos to Don Pasquall, on the basis of the late Freddie Johnson's statements, but Pasquall had gone back to Chicago in late 1928 and staid until 1932, so could hardly have recorded these titles.*”

Notes:

- Rust*3: two of: Rex Stewart – Cootie Williams - Bobby Stark -t-c; Jimmy Harrison – tb; Buster Bailey –cl-as; Benny Carter –cl-as-v; Coleman Hawkins –cl-ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj-v; John Kirby or June Cole –d (sic); Walter Johnson -d. - Hendersonia, p. 250: Personnel is reconstructed from identification of the soloists and from the regular playing personnel of the period: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – trumpets; Jimmy Harrison, Charlie Green ? – trombones; Harvey Boone, poss Arville Harris – clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins –clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson – piano; Clarence Holiday – banjo; Del Thomas ? – tuba

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, ?Charlie Green, tb; Buster Bailey,?Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts, cl; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj;? Del Thomas, bb

Solos ad-lib:

- Blazin': CH 2+4+2, BS 4+2, JH 8, RexSt 2, BS 8, HB 4, BS 4, CH 1+8, BS 4, CH 4, FH 2, HB 4, RexSt 4

- The Wang Wang Blues: BS 16 with RexSt in bar 2, RexSt muted 10, RexSt 8, BS 1+1, JH 2+14, RexSt 2, BS growl 14, RexSt 14, CH 2+16

033 THE LITTLE CHOCOLATE DANDIES

New York,

Sep. 18, 1929

Leonard Davis – tpt; J. C. Higginbotham – tbn;

Don Redman, Benny Carter – alt, clt; unknown (Robert Carroll?) – ten;

Thomas Fats Waller – pno; Dave Wilborn – bjo; Billy Taylor – bbs; George Stafford – dms; Don Redman (1), Fats Waller (2) – cel;

J. C. Higginbotham, Don Redman, Benny Carter - voc-trio; Don Redman – scat voc;

Benny Carter – arr

402965-C That's How I Feel Today

OK 8728,

Jazz Archives No 67

402966-D Six Or Seven Times

OK 8728,

Jazz Archives No 67

This very beautiful recording band certainly is some sort of early All Star band collected by advice of or by Benny Carter himself, as I believe, not by Don Redman as stated in Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter Vol. II, p. 39. The musicians are lured out of the Charlie Johnson band (Len Davis, Cyrus St. Clair, George Stafford), the Henderson band – perhaps! (Rex Stewart, Coleman Hawkins), and Luis Russell (J.C. Higginbotham). Redman was with McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Carter with the Savoy Play Boys, and Fats Waller was his own bandleader-soloist. The only person not known until today is the banjo player. If you'd allow me "an educated guess" I would opt for Dave Wilborn of the McKinney's Cotton Pickers, band mate of Redman, and known for his very strict four-four playing which you may hear on these two sides. He might have been in New York together with Redman, just like on Dec. 05, 1928, when both men were members of Louis Armstrong's Savoy Ballroom Five – the 'Save It, Pretty Mama' session. This player certainly is not Bobby Johnson from the Charlie Johnson band because of this player's strict 4/4 playing which is not Johnson's style. Bobby Johnson uses trills and tremolos very often and everywhere. There might even be the possibility that Carter brought the Savoy Play Boys' banjo player, Talcott Reeves, later with Don Redman. The light ringing banjo sound might even be Buddy Christian's.

After an introduction with typical Carterish four part harmonized chords a trumpet player starts musical proceedings with a beautiful ad-lib solo in the first chorus of 'That's How I Feel Today', playing only the three A parts of the chorus in front of Don Redman's clarinet obligato, the middle B part being played by the Carter led saxophone section in typical Carter style. This player's tone and style is clear, hot and urgent, making frequent use of blue notes when varying the melody line in his solo, using final vibrato and off-beat phrasing. But close listening reveals that there is only one trumpeter present at this session. And because of Rex Stewart's absence from New York with the Fletcher Henderson band in September 1929, this trumpet player has to be Davis judging from style and tone. After Fats Waller's piano solo it is Carter soloing on the three A parts of the chorus again, the B part arranged for three saxophones in inimitable Carter style. After the bridge we hear the ensemble led by the majestic Leonard Davis in 4 bar riffs followed by Higginbotham on trombone and a 16 bar band ride out. This title definitely is arranged by Carter. As comparison listen to the same title by McKinney's Cotton Pickers of November 09, 1929 – there titled 'The Way I Feel Today' – with a definite Don Redman arrangement.

On 'Six Or Seven Times' little trumpet can be heard. The whole title consists of a Benny Carter alto solo, a three-part vocal chorus and a chase chorus with Carter on alto and Don Redman answering him scat singing. And then finally the phrase that later as a riff was part of Count Basie's 'One O'Clock Jump', which, by the way, is also played as an introduction.

Cyrus St. Clair's presence is distinctly questioned, and stylistic reasons point to Billy Taylor, Charlie Johnson's tuba man at this time – and band-mate to Len Davis. But George Stafford's great cymbal work is a joy to hear. He certainly was one of the real great drummers of his time. I only wished we had a bunch full of more titles of this great pick-up band.

The only really noteworthy fact is that Coleman Hawkins does not play any solo note at all! Would Hawkins really be that modest and unassuming to be part of an all-star pick-up recording band and not to solo? Nothing at all points at his presence. May this possibly mean that we do have another tenor sax player here? Because of Redman's presence we might possibly hear Prince Robinson on tenor, or because of the many Charlie Johnson men in this aggregation they might also have brought Benny Waters, but I assume that Benny Carter brought Robert Carroll, tenorist of the band Carter led at this time at the Alhambra Ballroom.

And this certainly means that no Henderson musician is present at all here, as the Henderson band was at the Pla-Mor Ballroom in Kansas City in September 1929, not being back in New York before late November. Unfortunately, the record on the label does not say anything about the participants. It would be very interesting therefore to be told whose recognition the presence of Hawkins and Stewart was.

Notes:

- Delaunay, New Hot Discography 1948: Leonard Davis, Rex Stewart (tp); J.C. Higginbotham (tb); Don Redman (vo & s); Benny Carter (as); Coleman Hawkins (ts); Fats Waller (p); and others.

- Rust*3: Rex Stewart –c; Leonard Davis –t; J.C. Higginbotham –tb-v; Don Redman, Benny Carter –cl-as-v; Coleman Hawkins –ts; Fats Waller –p; unknown –bj; Cyrus St.Clair –bb; George Stafford –d

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.250: „On September 18, 1929, Coleman Hawkins recorded two titles for OKeh with a pickup group, The Chocolate Dandies.”

- Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter Vol. II, p.39: Rex Stewart, Leonard Davis (tp); J.C. Higginbotham (tb); DonRedman, Benny Carter (as, cl, v); Coleman Hawkins (ts); Fats Waller (p); Bobby Johnson (bj); Cyrus St. Clair (tuba); George Stafford (d)

- Rust*6: Rex Stewart, c; Leonard Davis, t; J.C. Higginbotham, tb-v; Don Redman, Benny Carter, cl,as,v; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fats Waller, p; unknown bj; Cyrus St.Clair, bb; George Stafford, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- That's How I Feel Today: LD 16+6, FW 2+32, BC 16+5, FW 4, JCH 4+4

- Six Or Seven Times: BC 16, FW 4, BC – DR trades 16

034 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 03, 1930

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

Claude Jones, Jimmy Harrison – tbn;

Benny Carter, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;
 Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – sbs; Walter Johnson – dms, vib;
 Jimmy Harrison – voc (2); Rex Stewart, Claude Jones, Benny Carter – voc-trio (2);
 John Nesbitt – arr (1); Benny Carter – arr (2)

150857-1	Chinatown, My Chinatown	Col 2329-D,	Chronological Classics 572
150858-3	Somebody Loves Me	Col 2329-D,	Chronological Classics 572

About 16 months after the last Fletcher Henderson recording session (032) and the “Great Day” disaster the band is back again, and in fantastic form. This – to my ears – is the beginning of “Swing”! The use of a string bass playing four-to-the-bar rhythm and the altered drumming away from accentuating the after beats, together with the smoother sound of the guitar, mark a very distinct change in conception of the music, sweeping along the whole band and – above all – the soloists. And this all supported by forward pointing arrangements of John Nesbitt and Benny Carter.

Soloists are easy to distinguish because of their individual stylistic features. Rex Stewart is heard in a whole solo chorus at the start of the first title showing his further developing horizontal improvisational style – in contrast to Bobby Stark’s vertical soloing at the start of the second tune.

As Bobby Stark seems to have been used as main trumpet soloist – he solos more often than Stewart – from now on I shall be listening the trumpet section thus: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt, not regarding Stewart playing the cornet.

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark – t; Rex Stewart – c; Jimmy Harrison – tb-v; Claude Jones – tb; Benny Carter – cl-as-a; Harvey Boone – cl – as; Coleman Hawkins – cl – ts; Fletcher Henderson – p-cel – ldr-a; Clarence Holiday – bj – g; John Kirby – bb – sb; Walter Johnson – d; Claude Jones – Benny Carter – v; John Nesbitt – a.

- Hendersonia, p. 264: Personnel is reconstructed from identities of the soloists, and matched against known playing personnels of the period: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – trumpets; Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones, trombones; Harvey Boone, alto sax; Benny Carter, clarinet and alto sax; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson – piano; Clarence Holiday – guitar; John Kirby, string bass; Walter Johnson, drums and bells; vocal by “quartet” of band members – Harrison, possibly Carter, Jones and Stewart.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones, tb; Benny Carter, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; v quartet (probably Jones, Stewart, and Carter supporting Harrison, identifiable; John Nesbitt, a.

Solos ad-lib:

- Chinatown, My Chinatown: RexSt 30, BC clt 2+16, CJ 14, CH 4+32

- Somebody Loves Me: BS 8, CH 6, JH voc 32

035 McKINNEY’S COTTON PICKERS

New York, Nov. 03, 1930

Don Redman – alt, clt, dir;

Langston Curl, Buddy Lee – tpt; Rex Stewart – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn;

Jimmy Dudley, Benny Carter – alt, clt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;

Todd Rhodes – pno, cel; Dave Wilborn – bjo, gtr; Billy Taylor – bbs; Cuba Austin – dms;

Don Redman – voc (1,2,3); Don Redman – arr (1,2,3)

64605-1 Talk To Me

Vic 22640, Frog DGF 26

64605-2 Talk To Me

Vic unissued on 78 (test), Frog DGF 27

64606-1 Rocky Road

Vic 22932, Frog DGF 26

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 264: „On November 3-4-5, 1930, Rex Stewart and Benny Carter recorded eight titles for Victor with McKinney’s Cotton Pickers. Although they did play later with this band as regulars, they were at this time with Henderson.”

It seems that McKinney’s Cotton Pickers always needed some expert support from New York musicians when coming to the East. Just see what had happened with the MKCP in November 1929! But this time the reason probably was a very severe one: after J. Chilton Rex Stewart and Benny Carter subbed for Joe Smith and George ‘Fathead’ Thomas who both had been affected by a car-crash, George Thomas with fatal results. This then would mean that, different from Rust naming Joe Smith as trumpeter, it should be Nesbitt on second trumpet, although the temporal sequence of the car-crash, Thomas’ untimely death and this recording session seem a bit unclear. Also, there seems to be some insecurity on Edward Inge’s joining the band as replacement for Thomas. After Chilton Inge joined together with Quentin Jackson in December 1930, what then would leave Jimmy Dudley as first alto/saxophone. As the reader/listener might see: I am following John Chilton’s personnel as listed in his “McKinney’s Music”, which certainly is more up-to-date than Rust’s, and certainly evaluated with more knowledge – musically and historically. The personnels in the Frog CD booklets follow Rust!

Notes:

- Rust*3: Rex Stewart – Joe Smith – c; Langston Curl – t; Ed Cuffee – tb; Don Redman – cl-as-bar-v-ldr-a; Benny Carter – Edward Inge cl-as; Prince Robinson – cl-ts; Todd Rhodes – p-cel; Dave Wilborn – bj-v; Billy Taylor – bb; Cuba Austin – d.

- J. Chilton, McKinney’s Music: Langston Curl, George Buddy Lee, Rex Stewart, tpts; Ed Cuffee, tbn; Don Redman, clt, sop, alt; Jimmy Dudley, clt, alt; Benny Carter, alt, clt; Prince Robinson, clt, ten; Todd Rhodes, pno; Dave Wilborn, bjo, gtr; Billy Taylor, bbs; Cuba Austin, dms.

- Rust*6: Don Redman, cl, as, bar, v, a; Langston Curl, t; Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, c; Ed Cuffee, tb; Benny Carter, cl, as; Edward Inge, cl, as, a; Prince Robinson, cl, ts; Todd Rhodes, p; Dave Wilborn, bj, v; Billy Taylor, bb; Cuba Austin, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- Talk To Me: BL 4, BC 6, PR 8, BL 2+2, PR 6, EC 8

- Rocky Road: RexSt muted 32, BC 8

Discernible differences of takes:

- Talk To Me: second line of vocal: - 1 Awh, Baby, talk to me when you’re feeling blue
 - 2 Baby, talk to me when you’re feeling blue

036 McKINNEY’S COTTON PICKERS

New York, Nov. 04, 1930

Don Redman – alt, clt, dir;

Langston Curl, Buddy Lee – tpt; Rex Stewart – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn;

Jimmy Dudley, Benny Carter – alt, clt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;

Todd Rhodes – pno, cel; Dave Wilborn – bjo, gtr; Billy Taylor – bbs; Cuba Austin – dms;

Bill Coty – voc (1,2,3,4); Don Redman – arr (1,2,3,4)

64607-1 Laughing At Life

Vic unissued on 78 (test), Frog DGF 27

64607-2	Laughing At Life	Vic 23020,	Frog DGF 26
64608-1	Never Swat A Fly	Vic 23020,	Frog DGF 26
64608-2	Never Swat A Fly	Vic unissued on 78 (test),	Frog DGF 27

This is the continuation of the recording session of the day before, having the same personnel, except the singer who replaces the late George 'Fathead' Thomas. Again I am following J. Chilton's personnel!

Notes:

- Rust*3: Rex Stewart – Joe Smith –c; Langston Curl –t; Ed Cuffee –tb; Don Redman –cl-as-bar-v-ldr-a; Benny Carter –Edward Inge cl-as; Prince Robinson –cl-ts; Todd Rhodes –p-cel; Dave Wilborn –bj-v; Billy Taylor –bb; Cuba Austin –d; Bill Coty –v.

- J. Chilton, McKinney's Music: Langston Curl, George Buddy Lee, Rex Stewart, tpts; Ed Cuffee, tbn; Don Redman, clt, sop, alt; Jimmy Dudley, clt, alt; Benny Carter, alt, clt; Prince Robinson, clt, ten; Todd Rhodes, pno; Dave Wilborn, bjo, gtr; Billy Taylor, bbs; Cuba Austin, dms.

- Rust*6: Don Redman, cl, as, bar, v, a; Langston Curl, t; Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, c; Ed Cuffee, tb; Benny Carter, cl, as; Edward Inge, cl, as, a; Prince Robinson, cl, ts; Todd Rhodes, p; Dave Wilborn, bj, v; Billy Taylor, bb; Cuba Austin, d; Bill Coty, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- Laughing At Life: DW gtr 4, TR cel 2, RexSt muted 16, PR 8

- Never Swat A Fly: BL obligato voc 32, EC 16, TR 8, EC 8, BL 16, BC clt 8, BL 8, BC clt 16, PR 8, BC clt 8

Discernible differences of takes:

- Laughing At Life: second A section of vocal: - 1 if you will o-honly (yodel a fifth upward)

- 2 if you will only (no upward yodel, just plain "only")

- Never Swat A Fly: trombone solo after vocal: - 1 Cuffee starts on 1st beat of first bar, Austin plays press-rolls behind piano in B part

- 2 Cuffee starts with two-toned upward beat in last bar of vocal chorus, Austin switches to brushes behind piano in B part

037 MCKINNEY'S COTTON PICKERS

New York,

Nov. 05, 1930

Don Redman – alt, clt, bar, voc, arr, dir;

Langston Curl, Buddy Lee – tpt; Rex Stewart – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn;

Jimmy Dudley, Benny Carter – alt, clt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;

Todd Rhodes – pno, cel, vib; Dave Wilborn – bjo, gtr; Billy Taylor – bbs; Cuba Austin – dms;

Dave Wilborn – voc (1,2,3); George Bias – voc (4,5); Don Redman – arr (1,2,3,4,5)

63195-1 I Want Your Love

Vic unissued on 78 (test),

Frog DGF 27

63195-2 I Want Your Love

Vic 22683,

Frog DGF 26

63196-2 Hello !

Vic 23031,

Frog DGF 26

64609-2 After All, You're All I'm After

Vic 23024,

Frog DGF 26

64610-2 I Miss A Little Miss

Vic 23024,

Frog DGF 26

Again the continuation of the recording sessions of the days before, having the same personnel, except the singers who replaces the late George 'Fathead' Thomas.

Again I am following J. Chilton's personnel! My soloist identifications on these last 3 sessions might not implicitly correspond with Chilton's!

Notes:

- Rust*3: Rex Stewart – Joe Smith –c; Langston Curl –t; Ed Cuffee –tb; Don Redman –cl-as-bar-v-ldr-a; Benny Carter –Edward Inge cl-as; Prince Robinson –cl-ts; Todd Rhodes –p-cel; Dave Wilborn –bj-v; Billy Taylor –bb; Cuba Austin –d; George Bias –v.

- J. Chilton, McKinney's Music: Langston Curl, George Buddy Lee, Rex Stewart, tpts; Ed Cuffee, tbn; Don Redman, clt, sop, alt; Jimmy Dudley, clt, alt; Benny Carter, alt, clt; Prince Robinson, clt, ten; Todd Rhodes, pno; Dave Wilborn, bjo, gtr; Billy Taylor, bbs; Cuba Austin, dms.

- Rust*6: Don Redman, cl, as, bar, v, a; Langston Curl, t; Joe Smith, Rex Stewart, c; Ed Cuffee, tb; Benny Carter, cl, as; Edward Inge, cl, as, a; Prince Robinson, cl, ts; Todd Rhodes, p; Dave Wilborn, bj, v; Billy Taylor, bb; Cuba Austin, d; George Bias, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- I Want Your Love: BC 4, PR 4, EC 4

- Hello!: EC obligato voc 30, PR 8, PR 4, RexSt muted in coda 4

- After All, You're All I'm After: BC clt obligato voc 30, EC 2, BC 8

- I Miss A Little Miss: EC 7, TR 2, LC or BL 4, EC 4, LC or BL 4, EC 4, PR 8

Discernible differences of takes:

- I Want Your Love: last bar (bar 32) of first chorus (ensemble): -1 fourth beat of bar no cymbal crash

- 2 fourth beat of bar distinct cymbal crash (immediately before verse)

038 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 02, 1930

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

Claude Jones, Jimmy Harrison – tbn;

Benny Carter, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

Benny Carter – arr (1)

150997-2 Keep A Song In Your Soul

Col 2352-D,

Chronological Classics 572

150998-2 What Good Am I Without You ?

Col 2352-D,

Chronological Classics 572

This again is the Henderson band of 1930 at the transition to Swing, yet somewhat restrained here by using a tuba. Yet, the tuba is mainly played four-to-the bar in the first title, thus giving the whole affair a beautiful depth. Instrumental solos are given below. There obviously is no solo by Rex Stewart on these sides. The trumpet soloist on 'What Good Am I Without You', playing the theme very beautifully, certainly is Russell Smith. Russell Procope thought this soloist to be Bobby Stark (see below) and might positively be right because there is difference of tone and vibrato between the trumpet player playing the introduction – and should therefore be the first chair player – and the soloist. But equally Stark or Stewart might have played the intro to give room for Russell Smith's beautiful and sensitive rendition of the melody.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p.264: „The muted trumpet solo at the beginning of 'What Good Am I Without You ?' resembles Joe Smith's work, but Joe was then a member of McKinney's Cotton Pickers, and Panassie says it is definitely not Joe on this Henderson title, suggesting

Russell Smith instead (see session 023 of Nov. 26, 1927 above – KBR). Russell Procope, who listened to this record, suggested that this solo is by Bobby Stark. There is no information in the Columbia files as to personnel or instrumentation.”
Holiday plays banjo and Kirby tuba throughout.

Notes:

- Rust*3: Joe Smith – Bobby Stark – t; Rex Stewart – c; Jimmy Harrison – tb-v; Claude Jones – tb; Benny Carter – cl-as-a; Harvey Boone – cl – as; Coleman Hawkins – cl – ts; Fletcher Henderson – p-cel – ldr-a; Clarence Holiday – bj – g; John Kirby – bb – sb; Walter Johnson – d; Benny Carter – a.

- Hendersonia, p. 264: Probably same personnel as before (session 034 of Oct. 03, 1930 – KBR). Kirby plays tuba; Holiday may play banjo at least some of the time.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones, tb; Benny Carter, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; v quartet (probably Jones, Stewart, and Carter supporting Harrison, identifiable; John Nesbitt, a.

Solos ad-lib:

- Keep A Song In Your Soul: JH 16, FH 4, BC 16, FH 7, CH 4+4, BS 8

- What Good Am I Without You?: RSmith theme 16+6, CH 16, CH 7, BC clt coda 1

039 THE CHOCOLATE DANDIES

New York, Dec. 04, 1930

Rex Stewart (or Bobby Stark ?) – tpt; Jimmy Harrison – tbn;
Benny Carter – alt, voc; Coleman Hawkins – ten;
Horace Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; John Kirby – sbs
404566-A Goodbye Blues

Col 35679, Jazz Archives No 67

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 264, says: “Personnel is from standard discographical references, except that the trumpet soloist sounds more like Rex Stewart than like Bobby Stark, usually listed for this session (cf. ‘Chinatown’ above).”

To my ears this very probably is Bobby Stark on trumpet here, having a very different vibrato from Stewart’s, and a different and not so brilliant tone. Furthermore this player plays vertical and fast phrases just as Bobby Stark does in the Dixie Stompers session of April 06, 1928 (session 024). He does not show Stewart’s final open vibrato. This is my personal opinion after several listening sessions, which then was severely damaged when checking Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter, p.43! There we find what obviously is Benny Carter’s own opinion, although we do not know given in what circumstances. I reluctantly have to bow to the inevitable. But, although I have the utmost respect for Carter’s knowledge, experience and his genius – Carter is one of my utmost favourite musicians – I still maintain my doubt as to his agreement for Stewart and still stick to Stark as trumpeter inside.

The other participants obviously are as given, with the exception of the guitarist. I definitely do hear a banjo on this side, very much in the range of Clarence Holiday, who was banjoist/guitarist with the Henderson band at this time, and would then be first choice. He has the same slim and even banjo sound as Holiday. A Benny Jackson was a guitarist with the mid-Western bands of Oliver Cobb’s Rhythm Kings and Eddie Johnson’s Crackerjacks, and whose presence in New York at the time would be rather doubtful.

Notes:

- Rust*3: Bobby Stark – t; Jimmy Harrison – tb-v; Benny Carter – cl – as-v – a; Coleman Hawkins – ts; Horace Henderson – p; Benny Jackson – g; John Kirby – sb.

- Hendersonia, p. 264: Rex Stewart ?, trumpet; Jimmy Harrison, trombone; Benny Carter, alto sax and vocal; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Horace Henderson, piano; Benny Jackson ?, guitar; John Kirby, string bass.

- Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter II, p.43: “Rust lists Bobby Stark (tp) for Stewart; Allen’s Hendersonia suggests Stewart. Carter agrees that it is Stewart.”

- Rust*6: Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, v (sic); Benny Carter, cl, as, v, a; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Horace Henderson, p; Benny Jackson or Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, sb.

040 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Dec. 08, 1930

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;
Claude Jones, Jimmy Harrison – tbn;
Benny Carter, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;
Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – bbs, sbs; Walter Johnson – dms;
Lois Deppe – voc
E-35668-B We’re Friends Again Br unissued not on LP/CD
E-35669-B What Good Am I Without You? Br unissued not on LP/CD

As obviously no tests have been found, nothing can be said about the personnel and musical content of these titles.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 265: „Instrumentation: Three trumpets, two trombones, three saxes, piano, guitar, tuba, drums. Information on this session was discovered in the English Brunswick files; the personnel would presumably have been the usual for this period.”

Notes:

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones, tb; Benny Carter, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d.

According to the McKinney’s Cotton Pickers personnel for the sessions of Dec. 17, 1930, Dec. 18, 1930, and Feb. 12, 1931 in the various editions of Rust, Rex Stewart should be a member of this band if the listing would be taken literally. But although subbing for Joe Smith on the MKCP sessions of November 1930 (sessions 035 – 037 above) Rex Stewart did not join McKinney’s Cotton Pickers earlier than August 1931 on a regular basis. He therefore is not on the band’s recording sessions of Dec. 17, 1930, Dec. 18, 1930, and Feb. 12, 1931. He definitely is part of the band on the session of Sep. 08, 1931, though (see session 050 below).

041 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York, Feb. 05, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;
Claude Jones, Jimmy Harrison – tbn;
Benny Carter, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;	
Lois Deppe – voc (1,3); Jimmy Harrison – voc (4); Bill Challis – arr (2); <i>Benny Carter</i> – arr (3,4), Archie Bleyer – arr (4)	
151274-2 I've Found What I Wanted	Col 2414-D, Chronological Classics 572
151275-1 My Gal Sal	Col 2586-D, Chronological Classics 572
151276-2 My Pretty Girl	Col 2586-D, Chronological Classics 572
151277-2 Sweet And Hot	Col 2414-D, Chronological Classics 555

Now, that the Henderson band has a rather stable personnel with little changes for some months, I shall only remark observations that catch my eye/ear.

Benny Carter is known to have switched over to the Chick Webb band in March 1931, together with Jimmy Harrison. But when listening to these sides I found aurally little indication for his presence here. He usually is easy to determine as the leading saxophone voice, but this I can find only in the last title. And he does not play any solo or any short solo spot at all, what is really remarkable. So I wonder, did Henderson cancel his solos in anger? Another possible reason might be that the band does not play Carter arrangements here, and the used arrangements do not call for alto sax solos. I also do not think that the clarinet obligato behind Claude Jones trombone melody in 'My Pretty Girl' is by Carter as listed in Hendersonia. There is nothing of Carter's easily recognizable licks and phrases there, and I therefore believe that this is one of the very few solo spots of Harvey Boone.

John Kirby plays the tuba throughout this session – rather antiquated as you might think – but his occasional four-four rhythm on the big horn together with Walter Johnson's very modern drumming makes this a perfect and beautiful kind of rhythm section! Holiday is on banjo for the whole session.

Arrangements of the last two titles are attributed to Benny Carter in the Mosaic Coleman Hawkins CD-set, but W.C. Allen in Hendersonia attributes 'Sweet And Hot' only to Carter, which in turn is attributed to Archie Bleyer somewhere else – if I only knew, where! But, to be honest, I do not hear any sign of Carter's arranging skills in the four titles here!

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark –t; Rex Stewart –c; Jimmy Harrison –tb-v; Claude Jones –tb; Benny Carter –cl-as-a; Harvey Boone –cl –as; Coleman Hawkins –cl –ts; Fletcher Henderson –p –ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj –g; John Kirby –bb –sb; Walter Johnson –d; Lois Deppe –v.

- Hendersonia, p. 266: Personnel is reconstructed from identities of the soloists, and matched against known playing personnels of the period: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Jimmy Harrison, trombone and vocal; Claude Jones, trombone; Benny Carter, clarinet and alto sax; Harvey Boone, alto sax; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar and banjo; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums; Lois Deppe, vocals.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones, tb; Benny Carter, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, dir; Clarence Holiday, bj; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- I Found What I Wanted: CH 4

- My Gal Sal: BS muted 16 Verse, JH 30, RexSt muted 30, CH 4, CH 2+8

- My Pretty Girl: CH 3, BS 24 Verse, HB clt obligato 30, CH 2+8, BS 8, CH 8, BS 4+2

- Sweet And Hot: BS 8+8, CJ muted 16, JH voc - RexSt obligato 42, CH 10, CH 4, CJ muted 4

042 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Mar. 19, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;
Claude Jones, Benny Morton – tbn;

Russell Procope, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, bar, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno (1,2); Horace Henderson – pno (3,4); Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

Bill Challis – arr (1); Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman – arr (2,3); Horace Henderson – arr (4,5)

151441-2 Clarinet Marmalade	Col 2513-D, Chronological Classics 555
151442-1 Sugar Foot Stomp	Col 2513-D, Chronological Classics 555
151442-2 Sugar Foot Stomp	Col 2513-D, Mosaic MD8-251 CD02
151443-1 Hot And Anxious	Col 2449-D, Chronological Classics 555
151444-1 Comin' And Going	Col 2449-D, Chronological Classics 555

On 'Clarinet Marmalade' Stewart plays a typical solo with much straight-ahead steam and swing. After Benny Morton's trombone solo and the immediately following 12 bar minor strain we have a chorus arranged for three-part saxophone section led by a trumpet – obviously Bobby Stark – which makes a four-part harmonized section, a device Benny Carter used to write. Benny Morton, Jimmy Harrison's replacement, plays very assured in his own inimitable way, using lip-trills throughout his solos. He must have had a wonderful embouchure and great "chops". Russell Procope – new with the band – does not seem to feel at home when listening to his clarinet solo. He certainly had to carry a burden sitting in Benny Carter's chair. In the penultimate chorus there is a baritone playing some sort of obligato leading into a two-bar break, obviously played by Coleman Hawkins

According to Rex Stewart's own testimony he plays the "Oliver" solo on 'Sugar Foot Stomp', not muted as by Oliver and with much less off-beat, but in the way Armstrong played it in the 1925 Henderson recording. This very solo is repeated afterwards by Benny Morton on trombone.

The last two titles do not have Rex Stewart soloing. They both are arrangements by Horace Henderson – he also has taken over the piano chair – and probably show his developing talent for arranging. In 'Hot And Anxious' Horace uses the well known 'Tar Paper Stomp' motive which later became famous in Glenn Miller's 'In The Mood', while snatching the first strain of Ellington's 'Doing The Voom Voom' for his theme of 'Comin' And Going'.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 266: „Guitar soloist sounds same as „Benny Jackson“ on the Chocolate Dandies session, but is presumably Clarence Holiday here.“

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark –t; Rex Stewart –c; Benny Morton - Claude Jones –tb; Russell Procope - Harvey Boone –cl –as; Coleman Hawkins –cl –ts; Fletcher Henderson –p(1,2,3) –ldr-a; Horace Henderson –p (4,5); Clarence Holiday –bj –g; John Kirby –bb –sb; Walter Johnson –d.

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 266: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, trombones; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, clarinets and alto sax; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet, tenor and baritone sax; Fletcher Henderson (first two titles) or Horace Henderson (last two titles), piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, tuba; Walter Johnson, drums.

- Storyville 125/163: Trumpet (At) Tributes, More Johnny Simmen Snippets (originally in CODA)

"Fletcher Henderson's five 1931 versions of Sugar Foot Stomp. Generally Rex Stewart is considered to have taken those famous 36 bars on the five well-known versions; one each on Columbia, Brunswick and Crown, and two on Victor. However, in 1949 while discussing his

activities with Fletcher Henderson, Rex remarked that he was not sure he was the soloist on all versions. He thought that while he (Rex) was in the band when all the various versions of Sugar Foot Stomp were recorded, Bobby Stark took the three 12-bar choruses on some of them. On his 1966 visit to Europe, Rex and I (Johnny Simmen – KBR) listened to Fletcher's five versions of the tune together, and he clearly identified the trumpet soloist as follows: Columbia: Rex, muted, playing close to Joe Oliver's famous creation. Brunswick: Bobby Stark, open. Victors: Rex, muted, and again playing close to the Oliver version. Crown: Bobby Stark, plunger. This latter came as a surprise, but Rex told me to play Fletcher's House of David Blues as a comparison, and while listening to that, I saw the light – the very special and personal use Bobby made of the plunger. Very unlike Rex. Since that memorable afternoon with Rex, I have heard the Chick Webb Sugar Foot Stomp and there is no doubt that the trumpet soloist is the same as on Fletcher's Crown version – Bobby Stark."

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, tb; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts, bar; Fletcher Henderson, p (1,2,3), dir; Horace Henderson, p (4,5); Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- Clarinet Marmalade: BM 16, CH 16, RexSt 16, RP clt 16, CH bar 3+2

- Sugar Foot Stomp: CJ muted 12, RexSt muted 12 x 3, FH 8, FH 8, BM muted 12 x 3, CH 12, CH 10

- Hot And Anxious: BS growl 12, CH clt 11, ClHol gtr 1+11

- Comin' And Going: BM 12, BS 3, RP 8, BM 12, BS 10, FH 1+1, BM 6, FH 4

Discernible differences of takes:

- Sugar Foot Stomp: last tone in 2nd chorus of Stewart's solo (upbeat to third chorus): -1 clean tone (same as tone held for 4 bars)

-2 muffed tone (tone jumping up, thus higher than long held tone)

043 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

c. Mar./Apr. 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

Claude Jones, Benny Morton – tbn;

Russell Procope, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – sbs, bbs; Walter Johnson – dms, vib;

unknown – voc (1,4); Bill Challis – arr (2)

1230-2 After You've Gone

Crown 3093,

Chronological Classics 555

1231-3 Star Dust

Crown 3093,

Chronological Classics 555

1232-3 Tiger Rag

Crown 3107,

Chronological Classics 555

1233-3 Somebody Stole My Gal

Crown 3107,

Chronological Classics 555

This is a rather unrewarding and unattractive recording session of the Henderson band. W.C. Allen attributes the arrangements of the first and fourth titles to "possibly" Benny Carter, but I do not hear any of Carter's known arranging devices and would therefore leave the arranger as unknown.

I hear Rex Stewart solo in Star Dust in his well-known Bix Beiderbecke derived mode in the penultimate chorus.

Other than Allen I hear Stewart in the trumpet – tenor sax chase chorus in 'Tiger Rag', and not Bobby Stark. Furthermore it is definitely Claude Jones on trombone in the third strain of this title just before the first trio-part/chorus and not Benny Morton.

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.267: „The identity of the vocalist remains unknown. By aural comparison, it is not Dick Robertson, George Bias, Lois Deppe, nor Orlando Roberson, nor does it sound quite the same as the likewise unidentified vocalist on the next (Melotone) session. Take 3 of 'After You've Gone' has been reported, but its existence is unconfirmed.”

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark – t; prob Rex Stewart – c; Benny Morton – Claude Jones – tb; Russell Procope – Harvey Boone – cl – as; Coleman Hawkins – cl – ts; Fletcher Henderson – p – ldr – a; Clarence Holiday – bj – g; John Kirby – bb – sb; Walter Johnson – d; unknown – v.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 266: Russell Smith, prob Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, trombones; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, clarinets and alto sax; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums and bells or vibes; unknown male (white?) vocalist.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, tb; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; unknown, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- After You've Gone: FH 6, CH 6, BS 8

- Star Dust: RexSt 30

- Tiger Rag: RP clt 6, CJ 2+2+2, RexSt 2+4, CH 4, RexSt 4, CH 4, RexSt 4, CH 4, RexSt 4, CH 2, RP clt 2+32

- Somebody Stole My Gal: BS 22, BM 2+16, CH 22, CH 4

044 CONNIE'S INN ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 10, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

Claude Jones, Benny Morton – tbn;

Russell Procope, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

unknown – voc (1,4); Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman – arr (2); Fletcher Henderson – arr (3); Bill Challis – arr (4)

E-36454-A I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby

Mt M-12145,

HEP CD 1016

E-36455-A Sugar Foot Stomp

Mt M-12239,

HEP CD 1016

E-36456-A Just Blues

Mt M-12239,

HEP CD 1016

E-36457-A Singing The Blues

Mt M-12145,

HEP CD 1016

Here we have the established Henderson band of the time. Soloists are identified below (not necessarily same as by W.C. Allen!). It certainly is difficult sometimes to separate Stark from Stewart or Jones from Morton! But I have tried my best, just as above! So, here we have Bobby Stark playing the "Oliver" solo in 'Sugar Foot Stomp', and he plays it with open horn and gives it a very different treatment (see Allen below).

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.267: "Rex Stewart told Johnny Simmen that the "Oliver" solo on 'Sugar Foot Stomp' was played by Bobby Stark on this Melotone version and also on the later Crown version, but by himself (Stewart) on the Victor and Columbia versions. Harry Carney (in *Jazz Journal*, April 1963, p.13) identified the clarinet soloist on this same Melotone 'Sugar Foot Stomp' as Harvey Boone, but Russell Procope, on hearing the record, identified himself and says Boone did not take clarinet solos at this time. ... Personnel was confirmed by the late Eugene Williams of Decca."

Listen to that gorgeous rhythm section with “antiquated” banjo and tuba and “modern” drumming (there is guitar and string bass on these sides).

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark -t; prob Rex Stewart –c; Benny Morton - Claude Jones –tb; Russell Procope - Harvey Boone –cl –as; Coleman Hawkins –cl -ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj -g; John Kirby –bb -sb; Walter Johnson –d; Dick Robertson –v.

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 267/8: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, trombones; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, clarinets and alto sax; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums and bells or vibes; unknown male (white?) vocalist.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, tb; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; George Bias, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby: BS muted Verse 16, CJ muted 16, BS muted 1+8, CJ 8, BS muted obligato 32, CH 16, RP clt 12

- Sugar Foot Stomp: CJ muted 12, BS 12 x 3, RP clt 12 x 2, BM 1+12 x 3, CH 12+10, WJ 2

- Just Blues: CJ 3, BS 1, CJ 2, BS 2, CJ 2, BS 2, RexSt 12, CH 2, BS 2, CH 2, BS 2, CH 2, BM 2, BM 12, BS coda 4

- Singing The Blues: RexSt 32, RP clt obligato 8, RP clt 8, RP clt obligato 6+ 2

045 CONNIE'S INN ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 29, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

Claude Jones, Benny Morton – tbn;

Russell Procope, Harvey Boone – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

George Bias – voc (3,4,5,6); Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman – arr (1,2); Bill Challis – arr (7,8)

53066-1	Sugar Foot Stomp	Vic 22721,	Chronological Classics 555
53066-2	Sugar Foot Stomp	Vic unissued on 78,	Neatwork RP 2016
53067-1	Roll On, Mississippi, Roll On	Vic 22698,	Chronological Classics 555
53067-2	Roll On, Mississippi, Roll On	Vic unissued on 78,	Neatwork RP 2016
53068-1	Moan, You Moaners	Vic 22698,	Chronological Classics 555
53068-2	Moan, You Moaners	Vic unissued on 78,	Neatwork RP 2016
53069-1	Singing The Blues	Vic 22721,	Chronological Classics 555
53069-2	Singing The Blues	Vic 22721, Bluebird ND90413 ,	not on CD?

Bobby Stark might have had a bad day on this 29 April because you don't hear him soloing. All trumpet solos are Stewart's, although I have to confess that I have some slight doubts concerning the trumpet solo in 'Singing The Blues' which could tonally even be Bobby Stark, but it is not known if he ever did take over this task. In 'Roll On, Mississippi' (strange 40 bar chorus!) it is Rex Stewart in full flight with his high air-pressure cornet playing.

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark -t; Rex Stewart –c; Benny Morton - Claude Jones –tb; Russell Procope - Harvey Boone –cl –as; Coleman Hawkins –cl -ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj -g; John Kirby –bb -sb; Walter Johnson –d; George Bias –v. - W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 268: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, trombones; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, clarinets and alto sax; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, tuba; Walter Johnson, drums; George Bias vocal.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, tb; Russell Procope, Harvey Boone, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb; Walter Johnson, d; George Bias, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- Sugar Foot Stomp: CJ muted 12, RexSt muted 12 x 3, FH 8, FH 8, BM 12 x 3, CH 12+10

- Roll On, Mississippi, Roll On: RexSt muted 1+22, RexSt muted obligato 40, RP 14, BM 8

- Moan, You Moaners: CH 2, RP lt obligato 32, RexSt 8

- Singing The Blues: RexSt 32, RP clt - CJ obligato 8, RP clt 8, RP clt -CJ obligato 8, FH 2

Discernible differences of takes:

- Sugar Foot Stomp: bar 3 of introduction: -1 afterbeats played by tuba and very soft drums, both exactly on the beat
- 2 afterbeats played by tuba and drums, first drum-beat distinctly before first tuba beat
- Roll On, Mississippi: band chords in coda: - 1 half note, half note, quarter note, quarter note, eighth note by steam whistle(very short)
- 2 half note, half note, quarter note, quarter note, distinct quarter note by steam whistle
- Moan, You Moaners: second A part of last chorus: - 1 ens phrase, clt upward run, ens phrase, clt upward run, ens phrase
- 2 ens phrase, clt upward run, ens phrase, clt downward run, ens phrase
- Singing The Blues: Bluebird ND90413 claims to include Singing The Blues take -2. After repeated intense listening no differences from Singing The Blues take -1 on Chronological Classics could be detected! W.C. Allen reports a test pressing of take -2.

046 REX STEWART

New York,

May 20, 1931

unknown bandsize and personnel

TCL 1485

Crazy 'Bout My Baby

Br unissued

not on LP/CD

What a pity!

Notes:

-Storyville 159/120: Steven Lasker sent on details from a New York Brunswick Test Series which has not been listed before. This is the TCL series and only four items are of jazz interest: ... Rex Stewart 20 May 1931 TCL 1485 Crazy 'Bout My Baby No details of accompaniment given.

047 CONNIE'S INN ORCHESTRA

New York,

Jul. 17, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

Claude Jones, Benny Morton – tbn;

Russell Procope – alt, clt; Edgar Sampson – alt, clt, vln; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

Nat Leslie – arr (3); Rex Stewart – voc (4)		
E-36925-A	Low Down On The Bayou	Br 6176, Chronological Classics 555
E-36926-A	The House Of David Blues	Ban 32733, Chronological Classics 555
E-36927-A	Radio Rhythm	Br 6176, Chronological Classics 555
E-36928-A	You Rascal You	Mt M-12216, Chronological Classics 555

These sides are not so much convincing solistically. But we have a documented example of Rex Stewart singing here which certainly is not so easy to find anymore. As from the arrangements the session is not rewarding either, with the exception of ‘The House Of David Blues’ which shows essential scoring and features beautiful Bobby Stark on trumpet and the new added sounds of Edgar Sampson on violin, and beautiful Benny Morton. And mind Clarence Holiday’s nice guitar fill-ins (he obviously plays a steel guitar).

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark – t; Rex Stewart – c; Benny Morton – Claude Jones – tb; Russell Procope – cl – as; Edgar Sampson – cl – as – vn; Coleman Hawkins – cl – ts; Fletcher Henderson – p – ldr – a; Clarence Holiday – bj – g; John Kirby – bb – sb; Walter Johnson – d; Claude Jones – v; Nat Leslie – a.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 268: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, trombones; Russell Procope, clarinet and alto sax; Edgar Sampson, clarinet, alto sax and violin; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, tuba; Walter Johnson, drums; Rex Stewart, vocal. “Brunswick files list above instrumentation, but omit the tuba which is plainly audible; they also name the vocalist (Stewart) on the fourth title.”

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, Benny Morton, tb; Russell Procope, cl, as; Edgar Sampson – cl – as – vn; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb; Walter Johnson, d; Rex Stewart, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- Low Down On The Bayou: RexSt muted 8, RexSt muted 8, CJ 10, BM 4

- The House Of David Blues: CH 16, BS muted 15, ES vln 1+15, BM 1+12

- Radio Rhythm: BM 8, RP 32, CJ 4, CJ 4

- You Rascal You: CH 16, RexSt voc 16 x 4

048 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS CONNIE INN ORCHESTRA	New York,	Jul. 31, 1931
Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt; J.C. Higginbotham or Sandy Williams – tbn;		
Russell Procope – alt, clt; Edgar Sampson – alt, clt, vln; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;		
Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;		
Dick Robertson – voc; Archie Bleyer – arr (1)		
70140-1	Oh, It Looks Like Rain	Vic 22786, Chronological Classics 555
70141-1	Sweet Music	Vic 22775, Chronological Classics 555
70142-1	My Sweet Tooth Says I Wanna	Vic 22786, Chronological Classics 546
70143-1	Malinda’s Weddin’ Day	Vic 22775, Chronological Classics 546

Following the Victor files there are only two trumpets here. We hear both trumpeters solo, and I believe that Stewart plays the first trumpet part as he did in sessions 028, 031 and 032. But apart from that he also took most of the solos as seen below. Bobby Stark might have been in poor shape?

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.270: “Victor files show the instrumentation as above (two trumpets, one trombone), and the names have been filled in from the identified soloists. Robertson’s name is on the record labels. I find it difficult to be sure whether or not there is a third trumpet present; if so, it would be either Russell Smith or possibly Mrs. Leora Henderson, who did recall filling in for someone during this period. I cannot hear two trombones at any one time, and all the solos are by Jones; Morton seems to have left the band about this time, a period of low morale and changing personnel.”

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark – t; Rex Stewart – c; J.C. Higginbotham or Sandy Williams – tb; Russell Procope – cl – ss – as; Edgar Sampson – cl – as – vn; Coleman Hawkins – cl – ts; Fletcher Henderson – p – ldr – a; Clarence Holiday – bj – g; John Kirby – bb – sb; Walter Johnson – d; Claude Jones – v; Nat Leslie – a.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 270: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, trombone; Russell Procope, clarinet and alto sax; Edgar Sampson, alto sax and violin; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, tuba; Walter Johnson, drums and bells; Dick Robertson, vocal.

- Rust*6: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, tb; Russell Procope, cl, as; Edgar Sampson – cl – as – vn; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb; Walter Johnson, d; Dick Robertson, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- Oh, It Looks Like Rain: CH 1+1, RexSt muted obligato 32, CH 15, ES vln 1+8, CH 8, RexSt muted 16, CJ 8, RexSt 8, FH 8

- Sweet Music: FH 2, FH 2, ES vln 15, CH 1+16+2

- My Sweet Tooth Says I Wanna: ES vln obligato 32, ES vln 16, RP 16, BS 16

- Malinda’s Weddin’ Day: RexSt muted fills 32, RexSt muted obligato 32, RP 1+16, CH 16

049 CONNIE’S INN ORCHESTRA	New York,	Aug. 1931
Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;		
Claude Jones – tbn, voc (1,2); J. C. Higginbotham – tbn;		
Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;		
Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – sbs; Walter Johnson – dms;		
Nat Leslie – arr (3,4,6); Fletcher Henderson, Don Redman – arr (5)		
1431-2	You Rascal, You	Crown 3180, Neatwork RP 2016
1431-3	You Rascal, You	Crown 3180, Chronological Classics 546
1432-1	Blue Rhythm	Crown 3180, Neatwork RP 2016
1432-3	Blue Rhythm	Crown 3180, Chronological Classics 546
1433-3	Sugar Foot Stomp	Crown 3194, Chronological Classics 546
1434-3	Low Down On The Bayou	Crown 3194, Chronological Classics 546

Note: Oliver solo on - 33 is by Bobby Stark – plunger muted!

Stewart seems not to have convinced when singing ‘You Rascal, You’ on session 048 – and he certainly was very far from Armstrong’s way to deliver the tune vocally. So Henderson tried out Claude Jones as vocalist here, and he is much more convincing. The trumpet section

show some pitch problems which might be a sign for a different first trumpet than listed – or just for Stewart intoxicated. This might possibly be the cause for Rex Stewart not soloing on this session. This might also have been the cause for Bobby Stark to take over the famous “Oliver” solo from Stewart. And he plays it very beautifully in his own way. With Higginbotham we have one of the most exiting brass players of the classic jazz period in this band. Listen how he handles his three “Oliver” choruses in ‘Sugar Foot Stomp’! Great. W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.270: “Presumably full band personnel but see above session for remarks on third trumpeter. Two trombone soloists are again present. Rex Stewart has identified Stark as soloist on this version of ‘Sugar Foot Stomp’.”

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark –t; Rex Stewart –c; Benny Morton – Claude Jones –tb; Russell Procope –cl –as; Edgar Sampson – cl – as –vn; Coleman Hawkins –cl –ts; Fletcher Henderson –p–ldr–a; Clarence Holiday –bj –g; John Kirby –bb –sb; Walter Johnson –d; Claude Jones –v; Nat Leslie –a.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 270: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; Claude Jones, J.C. Higginbotham, trombones; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, string bass; Walter Johnson, drums; Claude Jones, vocal.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; Claude Jones, J.C. Higginbotham, tb; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb; Walter Johnson, d; Rex Stewart, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- *You Rascal, You*: CH 16

- *Blue Rhythm*: CJ 7, CJ 14, RP 30

- *Sugar Foot Stomp*: CJ 12, BS muted 12 x 3, JCH 12 x 3, CH 12+10

- *Low Down On The Bayou*: CJ 12, JCH 4

Discernible differences of takes:

- *You Rascal, You*: second vocal chorus, second line: - 2 “I’ll be standing on the corner high”

- 3 “I’ll be standing on the corner lap down”

- *Blue Rhythm*: second chorus - alto solo bars 15/16: - 1 a row of eight dotted same notes (F), then two downward dotted notes

- 3 six alternating dotted notes and one sustained higher note

050 McKINNEY’S COTTON PICKERS

Camden, N.J.,

Sep. 08, 1931

Benny Carter – dir;

Adolphus “Doc” Cheatham, Joe Smith, Rex Stewart – tpt;

Quentin Jackson, Ed Cuffee – tbn;

Benny Carter, Jimmy Dudley - alt, clt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;

Todd Rhodes – pno, cel; Dave Wilborn – gtr; Billy Taylor – bbs; Cuba Austin – dms;

Quentin Jackson – voc; Benny Carter – arr

68300-1 Do You Believe In Love At Sight ?

Vic unissued on 78 (test), Frog DGF 27

68300-2 Do You Believe In Love At Sight ?

Vic 22811, Frog DGF 27

70495-1 Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams

Vic 22811, Frog DGF 27

70495-2 Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams

Vic unissued on 78 (test), Frog DGF 27

Although there are some uncertainties concerning the personnel, we hear a very typical Rex Stewart full-chorus hot solo in the first title. The second title brings muted Doc Cheatham taking the melody and Joe Smith taking over for snatches of the melody in his own very special muted smooth style. Smith is clearly recognizable, and so Buddy Lee is not on the record as listed by Rust. Benny Carter leads the saxophone section in his very own inimitable way, leaving no room for Hilton Jefferson who obviously had not yet joined the band at this recording date. The second alto (third sax) will then probably be Jimmy Dudley, and not Joe Moxley who was only regularly with the band from 1932 on (Chilton ‘McKinney’s Music).

Notes:

- Rust*3: Adolphus ‘Doc’ Cheatham – Buddy Lee – Rex Stewart –t; Ed Cuffee- Quentin Jackson – tb; Benny Carter –cl-as-ldr-a; Joe Moxley – Hilton Jefferson –cl-as; Prince Robinson –cl-ts; Todd Rhodes –p-cel; Dave Wilborn –bj-v; Billy Taylor –bb; Cuba Austin –d;

- J. Chilton, *McKinney’s Music*: Rex Stewart, Joe Smith, Adolphus ‘Doc’ Cheatham, tpts; Ed Cuffee, Quentin Jackson, tbns; Benny Carter, clt, alt; Jimmy Dudley, clt, alt; Prince Robinson, clt, ten; Todd Rhodes, pno, vibes; Dave Wilborn, gtr; Billy Taylor, bbs, sbs; Cuba Austin, dms.

- Rust*6: Benny Carter , cl, as, dir; Rex Stewart, c; Buddy Lee, Doc Cheatham, t; Ed Cuffee, tb; Quentin Jackson, tb, v; Joe Moxley, Hilton Jefferson, cl, as; Prince Robinson, cl, ts; Todd Rhodes, p, cel; Dave Wilborn, bj, g; Billy Taylor, bb; Cuba Austin, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- *Do You Believe In Love At Sight?*: RexSt muted 36, RexSt muted obligato 24 (in -1 only), PR 10, PR 4

- *Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams*: ADC muted 16, ADC muted 8, JS muted 4, JS muted 4, JS muted 4, TR 4, BC clt obligato 30

Discernible differences of takes:

- *Do You Believe In Love At Sight?*: cnt break at end of cnt solo chorus: - 1 phrase of eight double eighth notes declining in steps, then three more single notes

- 2 downward phrase of ten notes starting with an upward “rip”

- *Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams*: tpt in first chorus, end of 2nd A- part, last phrase leading to B-part: - 1 4 eighth notes, one quarter note

- 2 2 eighth notes, one half note

051 CONNIE’S INN ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt; J. C. Higginbotham – tbn;

Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

Fletcher Henderson – arr (2)

1503-2 12th Street Rag

Crown 3212, Chronological Classics 546

1506-3 Milenburg Joys

Crown 3212, Chronological Classics 546

We hear a rather soft Rex Stewart solo on the first title, but this may also be caused by Crown’s not so effective recording equipment? Stark solos in the second title. And there is no sign of a second trombonist. Whether Kirby plays string bass or tuba is very difficult to differentiate. But I believe that he plays tuba on both titles.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 271: „If this session was indeed recorded in October, the Henderson band had already left Connie's Inn, and Claude Jones (who is not audible on these sides) had left Henderson to join Don Redman's new band which was soon to begin playing at Connie's Inn itself. See previous sessions for remarks on trumpeters; the bass instrument is not well resolved.”

Notes:

- Rust*3: probably: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark -t; Rex Stewart –c; J.C. Higginbotham or Sandy Williams –tb; Russell Procope –cl–ss–as; Edgar Sampson –cl–as–vn; Coleman Hawkins –cl -ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj -g; John Kirby –bb -sb; Walter Johnson –d; Claude Jones –v; Nat Leslie -a.

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 271: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; J.C. Higginbotham, trombone; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, tuba or string bass; Walter Johnson, drums.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; J.C. Higginbotham, tb; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb; Walter Johnson, d.

Solos ad-lib:

- 12th Street Rag: JCH 2, JCH 14, CH 16, RexSt 14

- Milenburg Joys: BS 16, JCH 15

052 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 15, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt; J. C. Higginbotham – tbn;

Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – gtr, bjo; John Kirby – sbs, bbs; Walter Johnson – dms, vib;

Les Reis – voc; Frank Skinner – arr (2)

151845-1 Singin' The Blues

Col 2565-D,

Chronological Classics 546

151846-3 It's The Darndest Thing

Col 2565-D,

Chronological Classics 546

This is nice commercial Henderson, beautifully played. One solo by Rex Stewart in the first title. The rhythm section is guitar and string bass in the first title, and banjo and tuba in the second title. Great four-four tuba by John Kirby.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 271: „On the next two (this one and the next – KBR) Columbia record dates, I cannot positively hear a second trombone. It is apparently Rex Stewart who takes the lovely, muted “talking” style trumpet solos on ‘Singin’ The Blues’ and ‘Sugar’; he plays in similar vein on some other Henderson recordings, and on some of McKinney's records, especially ‘Rocky Road’. At one time, I had thought it was not Rex, because of contemporary evidence that he was then playing (and recording) with McKinney's Cotton Pickers; but on the other hand, these solos are NOT by Smith or Stark, and Stanley Dance says, “on ‘Singin’ there's n upward flare of a kind I never heard anyone but Rex do.” Frank Driggs' LP notes, Hugues Panassie, and Dance all agree these solos are by Rex Stewart.”

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 272: „See remarks on previous pages about trumpet solos. Les Reis' name is from the Columbia files. The tune ‘Singin’ The Blues’ on this date is not the Con Conrad – J. Russell Robinson tune of that name, from 1927, which had been recorded for all time by Frankie Trumbauer's band with Bix Beiderbecke on cornet, and the arrangement of which had been re-orchestrated, probably by Bill Challis, for Henderson's Melotone and Victor recordings of the past months. Rather, it, and ‘It's The Darndest Thing’, were from a Negro musical named ‘Singin’ The Blues’ which opened at the Liberty Theater, New York, on Sept. 16, 1931.

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark -t; Rex Stewart –c; J.C. Higginbotham - Sandy Williams –tb; Russell Procope –cl –ss –as; Edgar Sampson –cl –as –vn; Coleman Hawkins –cl -ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj -g; John Kirby –bb -sb; Walter Johnson –d; Les Reis –v.

- W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 272: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; J.C. Higginbotham, trombone; Russell Procope, clarinet and alto sax; Edgar Sampson, alto sax and violin; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums; Les Reis, vocals.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; J.C. Higginbotham, tb; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, cl, as, vn; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb; Walter Johnson, d; Les Reis, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- Singin' The Blues: RexSt muted 24, BS 8, BS 8, CH 8, CH 4

- It's The Darndest Thing: FH 4, BS muted 16, BS muted 8, JCH 8, CH 16

053 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 16, 1931

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt; J. C. Higginbotham – tbn;

Russell Procope – alt, clt; Edgar Sampson – alt, vln; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;

Les Reis – voc (1,2); Archie Bleyer – arr (3)

151847-1 Blues In My Heart

Col 2559-D,

Chronological Classics 546

151848-1 Sugar

Col 2559-D,

Chronological Classics 546

151849-1 Business In F

Col 2615-D,

Chronological Classics 546

This is not one of the average Henderson sessions of 1931 in that we have a beautiful rendition of ‘Blues In My Heart’, yet not played with the ubiquitous Benny Carter arrangement, but in a different version the arranger of which is not documented. J.C. Higginbotham plays the melody with a feeling, and it is certainly Bobby Stark on trumpet behind the singer, and not Rex Stewart as given by Walter C. Allen.

The following ‘Sugar’ encompasses great violin by Edgar Sampson, a fiery and enthusiastic trumpet solo by Bobby Stark and an equally lively muted trumpet/cornet solo by Rex Stewart. In comparison ‘Business In F’ is inferior for composition and arrangement.

But listen to that great rhythm section again: Holiday and Kirby throughout on banjo and tuba and Walter Johnson with his hi-hat a finger-post to future drum styles.

W.C. Allen, Hendersonia, p. 272: „There were two earlier tunes entitled ‘Sugar’ – one by Alexander, Mitchell and Pinkard, recorded by McKenzie and Condon's Chicagoans among others; and one by Red Nichols in collaboration with Yellen, Ager and Crum. The tune recorded at this session is the third!”

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark -t; Rex Stewart –c; J.C. Higginbotham - Sandy Williams –tb; Russell Procope –cl –ss –as; Edgar Sampson –cl –as –vn; Coleman Hawkins –cl -ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Clarence Holiday –bj -g; John Kirby –bb -sb; Walter Johnson –d; Les Reis –v.

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia*, p. 272: *Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; J.C. Higginbotham, trombone; Russell Procope, clarinet and alto sax; Edgar Sampson, alto sax and violin; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums; Les Reis, vocals.*

- *Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; J.C. Higginbotham, tb; Russell Procope, cl, as; Edgar Sampson, as, vn; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; Les Reis, v.*

Solos ad-lib:

- *Blues In My Heart: JCH muted 16, JCH mutes 8, BS muted obligato 32, CH 1+8*

- *Sugar: ES vln 2+16, BS 14, RexSt muted 32*

- *Business In F: CH 16, JCH 8, CH 8*

054 **FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Mar. 10, 1932

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

J. C. Higginbotham, *Sandy Williams* (if at all) – tbn;

Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – bjo, gtr; John Kirby – bbs, sbs; Walter Johnson – dms, bells; unknown – effects (2);

“John Dickens” – voc (1); Ikey Robinson – voc (2); Baby Rose Marie – voc (3,4); Harlan Lattimore – voc (5,6); *Benny Carter* – arr (2,6)

71938-1 Strangers Vic 22955, Chronological Classics 546

71939-1 Take Me Away From The River Vic 24008, Chronological Classics 546

71940-1 Say That You Were Teasing Me Vic 22960, Chronological Classics 546

71941-1 Take A Picture Of The Moon Vic 22960, Chronological Classics 546

71942-1 I Wanna Count Sheep Vic 22955, Chronological Classics 546

71943-1 Poor Old Joe Vic 24008, Chronological Classics 546

This now is a real commercial recording session – oh yes, everything in the music business was commercial! But read the titles, there is no title of any jazz origin. And no identifiable Rex Stewart trumpet solo here.

Strangers has short solos by Hawkins and Bobby Stark – not Rex Stewart as given by Allen. And also: what Allen identifies as trombone duet is really a trombone leading the saxophone section, a device Benny Carter had already developed in his arrangement for Charlie Johnson’s ‘Mo’Lasses’ of 1929.

In ‘Take Me Away From The River’ it is the great banjo virtuoso Ikey Robinson who sings the melody. But according to his own testimony (*Storyville* 2002-3, p.56) he did not play, but only sang. There is little soloing – Coleman Hawkins 15 bars and Fletcher Henderson 16 bars. But there is beautiful tuba playing here by John Kirby. W.C. Allen guesses that this is a Benny Carter arrangement, and there certainly are some devices that Carter used in other tunes, e.g. the saxophone voicings in the last chorus. But as a whole I would tend to suggest another arranger.

For the third and fourth titles, please, read W.C. Allen’s comment below.

‘I Wanna Count Sheep’ brings a couple of short solos by Hawkins, Stark and Higginbotham, but the extraordinary is Kirby’s slapping string bass which dominates authoritatively the rhythm section – and swings like hell.

W.C. Allen attributes the trumpet obligato behind the first vocal chorus in ‘Poor Old Joe’ to Rex Stewart, but I believe this player to be Stark. The glockenspiel in the second chorus is by Walter Johnson whose brushes are silent whenever the glockenspiel sounds. The clarinetist behind the second vocal chorus probably is Russell Procope, whereas the clarinetist in the last chorus is another player, most probably Edgar Sampson – or perhaps even Coleman Hawkins? Here also Allen suggests Carter as arranger.

But at no instance do I hear two trombones or any sign of Sandy Williams. Is he really there?

And it is still banjo and tuba in the rhythm section, but also guitar and string bass.

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.307: “*Victor files give the same instrumentation as above, except that they specify string bass only. The plethora of vocalists seems strange for this period of economic hardship, but is real. “John Dickens” is not Bias, Deppe or Reis, nor Dick Robertson, present on the previous Gene Kardos session (adjacent matrices 71934-37). Ikey Robinson, Negro banjoist-singer known as “Banjo Ike” and not to be confused with Dick Robertson, recalled making this one title with the Henderson band. The two titles by then-child-star Babe Rose Marie (reminding one of a much-later Brenda Lee) were apparently made as an afterthought, as an audition “on approval” with the band reading from stocks; without the Victor information, one would never know from listening to them that it was the Hendersonband behind her – there are NO instrumental solos or even hot accompaniments. Harlan Lattimore was then regularly singing with Don Redman’s orchestra, but did make this and a few other record dates as a guest vocalist in the Bing Crosby vein. ... Two takes were made of all six titles, but only the #1 take in each case was mastered. There seems no possibility of the existence of alternate takes from this session.*”

Notes:

- *Rust*3: Russell Smith – Bobby Stark – t; Rex Stewart – c; Sandy Williams – J.C. Higginbotham – tb; Russell Procope – cl – as; Edgar Sampson – as – vn; Coleman Hawkins – cl – ts; Fletcher Henderson – p – ldr – a; Ikey Robinson – g – v; John Kirby – bb – sb; Walter Johnson – d; John Dickens – Harlan Lattimore – Baby Rose Marie – v.*

- *W.C. Allen, Hendersonia*, p. 272: *Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams, trombones; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, guitar; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums and bells; vocals by “John Dickens”, Ikey Robinson, Baby Rose Marie – ----, Harlan Lattimore, and chorus from band.*

- *Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams, tb; Russell Procope, cl, as; Edgar Sampson, cl, as, vn; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p; Clarence Holiday, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; John Dickens, Ikey Robinson, Harlan Lattimore, Baby Rose Marie, v.*

Solos ad-lib:

- *Strangers: CH 16, BS 14*

- *Take Me Away From The River: CH 15, FH 1+16*

- *Say That You Were Teasing Me: No ad-lib solos*

- *Take A Picture Of The Moon: No ad-lib solos*

- *I Wanna Count Sheep: CH 2, FH 4, CH 16, BS 8, CH 8+2, JCH 4, BS 4*

- *Poor Old Joe: BS obligato 8, BS obligato 8, CH 8, RP clt obligato 32, ES clt 8, CH 1+1*

055 **CONNIE’S INN ORCHESTRA**

New York,

Mar. 11, 1932

Leora Henderson, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

J. C. Higginbotham, *Sandy Williams* – tbn;

Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Clarence Holiday – grt; John Kirby – bbs; Walter Johnson – dms;
Harlan Lattimore – voc (3,4,5); Gene Gifford – arr (1); Fletcher Henderson – arr (2)

11445-A	Casa Loma Stomp	Ban 32701,	HEP CD 1016
11446-A	Blue Moments	Mt M-12368 (not issued),	HEP CD 1016
11447-A	How'm I Doin', Hey, Hey	Ban 32440,	HEP CD 1016
11447-B	How'm I Doin', Hey, Hey	Mt 91340-A (test)	not on LP/CD
11448-A	Good-Bye Blues	Mt M-12340,	HEP CD 1016

'Casa Loma Stomp' is exactly the arrangement the Casa Loma Orchestra used for their signature song, only that – as must be expected – the instrumental solos are those of the Henderson musicians.

'Blue Moments', possibly one of the earliest arrangements of bandleader Henderson himself, was not issued on 78 originally, probably because of its very below-par trumpet solo in the second half or the title (a display of this strange phenomenon can be found below). The Columbia people, when preparing their famous LP set 'A Study In Frustration', edited this solo out, with the strange consequence that the tune did not loose exactly 16 bars (= 64 beats), but an uneven number of beats which caused a change of meter in the bridge leading into the final chorus. (Which means that there remained one bar with only three beats or one bar with five beats. Very crazy!) But we are compensated with beautiful solos by Rex Stewart and Coleman Hawkins. The complete tune – together with Leora Henderson's, the bandleader's wife's! – goofed trumpet solo is issued on later days CDs.

Don Redman's title 'How Am I Doin'?' comprises good soloing by Higginbotham, an obligato by probably Stewart behind the vocal verse, a great 2 bar augmented alto break by Edgar Sampson in the first A part of the last chorus, and a number of short solo bits by others, among which Sandy Williams' earliest solo performances in the Henderson band come a bit uneven. As for W.C. Allen there exists an unissued take –B of 'How Am I Doin'' on test, obviously sadly unissued until now.

Oh yes, and then the very beautiful 'Good-Bye Blues' – which, by the way, is everything but a blues. Contrary to W.C. Allen I think that it is Bobby Stark taking the first trumpet solo. And what a wonderful ride-out band chorus, swinging like mad.

Holiday plays guitar and Kirby plays tuba throughout.

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p.308: "Instrumentation is from the ARC files. Personnel is as for previous session, except that Fletcher and Leora Henderson thought she had played trumpet on some Brunswick sessions from this period, and seemed to recall 'Casa Loma Stomp' as one title. There is a trumpet solo on 'Blue Moments' (so bad it was deleted from the Columbia LP issue) which is not at all like any known work of Bobby Stark or Rex Stewart, who are both heard on other titles on this session. It does not sound like Russell Smith either, but although Leora said she never recorded any solos with the band, I am tentatively ascribing it to her. (John Chilton essentially agrees – a straight player, out of practice.)"

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark –t; Rex Stewart –c; Sandy Williams –J.C. Higginbotham –tb; Russell Procope –cl –as; Edgar Sampson –as –vn; Coleman Hawkins –cl –ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Ikey Robinson –g-v; John Kirby –bb –sb; Walter Johnson –d; Harlan Lattimore –v.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 308: Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, possibly Leora Henderson, trumpets; J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams, trombones; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, clarinets and alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, clarinet and tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Clarence Holiday, banjo and guitar; John Kirby, string bass and tuba; Walter Johnson, drums; vocals by Harlan Lattimore, and chorus from band.

- Rust*6: Leora Henderson, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams, tb; Russell Procope, Edgar Sampson, cl, as; Coleman Hawkins, cl, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, a; Clarence Holiday, bj, g; John Kirby, bb, sb; Walter Johnson, d; Harlan Lattimore, v; Gene Gifford –a

Solos ad-lib:

- Casa Loma Stomp: JCH 16, CH 16, BS 16, RP 16

- Blue Moments: RexSt muted 14, CH 14, LH 14

- How'm I Doin', Hey, Hey: CH 4, JCH 1+16, BS 2, RexSt muted obligato 16, CH 1+16, SW 4+2, ES 2, RexSt 1, ES 1, SW 1, CH 1, CH 2, BS 2

- Good-Bye Blues: BS muted 16, JCH 14, CH 1+1, CH coda 1

Discernible differences of takes:

- How'm I Doin', Hey, Hey: first and second vocal chorus, Lattimore sings: - A "Oh gee baby oh shaw"
- B "Oh gee baby hee shaw" (W.C. Allen)

056 FLETCHER HENDERSON AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 09, 1932

Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark – tpt;

J. C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams – tbn;

Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson – alt, clt; Coleman Hawkins – ten, clt;

Fletcher Henderson – pno; Freddie White – grt; John Kirby – sbs (aluminum); Walter Johnson – dms;

Katherine Handy – voc (3); *Claude Hopkins*, Fletcher Henderson – arr (1); Fletcher Henderson – arr (2,3)

152324-1	Honeysuckle Rose	Col 2732-D,	HEP CD 1016
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152325-1	New King Porter Stomp	OK 41565,	HEP CD 1016
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152326-1	Underneath The Harlem Moon	Col 2732-D,	HEP CD 1016
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It seems that have arrived in big band swing now. This is very modern jazz music for late 1932.

The first two titles show an array of soloists – all the big names of the Henderson aggregation. It is a pity only that they did not find time and room for both the magnificent alto saxophonists they had in their ranks. And it is a pity that this is Rex Stewart final record session with Henderson.

Rust gives an issued take –2 of 'Underneath The Harlem Moon', but Allen does not!

W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 308: „Session organized by John Hammond, whose reports in *Melody Maker* cited soloists. White recalled making 'Harlem Moon' with the band.”

Notes:

- Rust*3: Russell Smith –Bobby Stark –t; Rex Stewart –c; Sandy Williams –J.C. Higginbotham –tb; Russell Procope –cl –as; Edgar Sampson –as –vn; Coleman Hawkins –cl –ts; Fletcher Henderson –p-ldr-a; Bernard Addison –g; John Kirby –bb –sb; Walter Johnson –d; Katherine Handy –v.

- W.C. Allen, *Hendersonia*, p. 308: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, trumpets; J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams, trombones; Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson, alto saxes; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Freddie White, guitar; John Kirby, aluminum string bass; Walter Johnson, drums; Katherine Handy, vocal.

- Rust*6: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark, t; J.C. Higginbotham, Sandy Williams, tb; Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson, as; Coleman Hawkins, ts; Fletcher Henderson, p, a; Freddie White, g; John Kirby, sb; Walter Johnson, d; Katherine Handy, v;
Solos ad-lib:

- Honeysuckle Rose: JCH 32, CH 32, BS 32

- New King Porter Stomp: BS muted 24, BS muted 16, CH 16, SW 16, RexSt 16, JCH 32

- Underneath The Harlem Moon: CH 6, CH 1+6, RexSt 8, CH 1+6, JCH 8, CH coda 2

057 LUIS RUSSELL AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Aug. 08, 1934

Leonard Davis, Gus Aiken – tpt; Rex Stewart – cnt;

Nathaniel Story, James Archey – tbn;

Henry “Moon” Jones, Charlie Holmes – alt, clt; Bingie Madison, Greely Walton – ten, clt;

Luis Russell – pno; Lee Blair – gtr; Pops Foster – sbs; Paul Barbarin – dms, vib;

Sonny Woods – voc (1,2,6); The Palmer Brothers – voc (3)

15571-1 At The Darktown Strutters’ Ball

Ban 33179,

Chronological Classics 606

15572-1 My Blue Heaven

Ban 33399,

Chronological Classics 606

15573-1 Ghost Of The Freaks

Ban 33367,

Chronological Classics 606

15574-1 Hocus Pocus

Ban 33367,

Chronological Classics 606

15575-1 Primitive

Ban 33399,

Chronological Classics 606

15576-1 Ol’ Man River

Ban 33179,

Chronological Classics 606

After being fired from the Henderson band to make room for Henry ‘Red’ Allen Rex Stewart tried out being his own bandleader with engagements at the Empire Ballroom and other premises for a year, only to find himself in the ranks of the Luis Russell band. His stay did not last as long as that with Henderson or that with Ellington later. He does not tell much about it in his ‘Boy Meets Horn’.

The whole concept is different from that of the Russell band in its heyday, just plain run-of-the-mill Swing music, with little hot soloing.

Rex Stewart at least is the busiest trumpet soloist on this session, with the only exception of the trumpet solo in the first title which I would like to attach to Gus Aiken. On ‘Ol’ Man River’ Stewart plays his solo in a very fast manner showing that he had developed into one of the best technicians in the then whole world of jazz. His later development in the Ellington band was only possible with this capability.

Other soloists are tried to be identified as well as I could.

Notes:

- Rust*3: Leonard Davis – Gus Aiken – t; Rex Stewart – c; Nathaniel Story – James Archey – tb; Henry Jones – Charlie Holmes – cl – as; Bingie Madison – Greely Walton – cl – ts; Luis Russell – p – ldr; Lee Blair – g; Pops Foster – sb; Paul Barbarin – d – vib; Sonny Woods – The Palmer Brothers – v.

- Rust*6: Leonard Davis, Gus Aiken, t; Rex Stewart, c; Nathaniel Story, James Archey, tb; Henry Jones, Charlie Holmes, cl, as; Bingie Madison, Greely Walton, cl, ts; Luis Russell, p, ldr; Lee Blair, g; Pops Foster, sb; Paul Barbarin, d, vib; Sonny Woods, The Palmer Brothers, v.

Solos ad-lib:

- At The Darktown Strutters’ Ball: GA? 18, JA 18, GW? ten 2+18

- My Blue Heaven: no hot solos

- Ghost Of The Freaks: JA growl 12, CH 12, LB 4, RexSt + BM clt obligato 12 x 2, LR 4

- Hocus Pocus: CH? 8, BM ten 16, RexSt 8, BM ten 8, CH 8

- Primitive: BM? clt 32, GW ten 32, RexSt 32

- Ol’ Man River: BM clt obligato 32, BM clt obligato 16, RexSt muted 32, CH 32, JA 16

058 REX STEWART AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 12, 1934

Rex Stewart – cnt; George Stevenson – tbn;

Rudy Powell – clt, alt; Bingie Madison – clt, ten;

Roger ‘Ram’ Ramirez – pno; Billy Taylor – bbs; Jack Maisei – dms;

Rex Stewart – voc (2); Rex Stewart, unknown – dialogue (2)

16410-1 Stingaree

Voc 2880,

Chronological Classics 931

16411-1 Baby, Ain’t You Satisfied ?

Voc 2880,

Chronological Classics 931

This is the first recording under Stewart’s own name. And what beautiful they make! I would only to remind the listener to the smooth trombone of George Stevenson. What a fine unsung musician! Then to the agile and beautiful clarinet of Bingie Madison. He certainly was one important person in the transformation to Swing jazz. Just listen to the recordings of his own big band – Bingie Madison and his Broadway Danceland Orchestra - made under the names of Clarence Williams, King Oliver and the Memphis Hot Shots in 1930/31. It is really sad that this great outfit on the border to Swing music did never have an opportunity to record under their real name. And then Rudy Powell on alto and clarinet – he started playing clarinet in this very year, 1934. And the very young and promising Roger ‘Ram’ Ramirez on piano. And Billy Taylor on string bass. The drummer, Jack Maisei, was drummer in Ted Wallace’s Swing Kings and therefore seems to have been a white musician. How he came into this band of promising young black musicians I do not know. Rex Stewart does not mention him in his books.

And we hear Rex himself, further on the way to a distinct individual approach of trumpet/cornet playing which made him such an important and precious member of the Duke Ellington band for more than ten years.

Notes: John Chilton, McKinney’s Music

John Chilton, Who’s Who Of Jazz

- Rust*3: Rex Stewart – t – v; George Stevenson – tb; Rudy Powell – cl – as; Bingie Madison – cl – ts; Roger Ramirez – p; Billy Taylor – sb; Jack Maisei – d

- Rust*6: Rex Stewart, t, v; George Stevenson, tb; Rudy Powell, cl, as; Bingie Madison, cl, ts; Roger Ramirez, p; Billy Taylor, sb; Jack Maisei, d

Solos ad-lib:

- Stingaree: GSt 16, BM clt 16 x 2, RR 16, RR 14, RP 2+4, RexSt 16 x 2

- Baby, Ain’t You Satisfied?: RexSt 1+6, RexSt 2, RP alt obligato 8, BM ten obligato 8, RP clt obligato 8, RexSt + GSt + RP clt + BM ten 8

Rex Stewart joined Duke Ellington's Orchestra ca. Jan. 1935

With many thanks to:

Walter C. Allen, Brian Rust, Laurie Wright, John Chilton, Johnny Parth and so many more who have contributed to find out how it all happened in the twenties!

I have tried to find out the soloists of the big bands listed in this personello-discography – which is based on Allen and Rust – on my own, and have then checked the results against the list in Allen, Hendersonia. In some instances I have accepted his opinion, in others I have listed my own conclusions.

Sources:

Walter C. Allen, Hendersonia

Berger, Berger, Patrick, Benny Carter

John Chilton, McKinney's Music

John Chilton, Who's Who Of Jazz

Brian Rust, Jazz Records 1897 – 1942, various editions

Rex Stewart, Boy Meets Horn

Rex Stewart, Jazz Masters of the Thirties

Laurie Wright, Storyville