

THE RECORDINGS OF TEDDY HILL AND HIS ORCHESTRA

An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

HILL, 'Teddy' Theodore, tenor and soprano saxes, clarinet

Born: Birmingham, Alabama, 7th December 1909;
Died: Cleveland, Ohio, 19th May 1978

Played drums in school band, then switched to trumpet. Whilst studying at the Industrial High School in Birmingham, received tuition from 'Fess' Whatley, gave up trumpet and specialized on saxes and clarinet. Toured with the Whitman Sisters' show (1926-27), then joined drummer George Howe's Band (1927) at the Nest Club, New York, subsequently worked in Luis Russell's Band (1928-29), also assisted in management of Russell's Band. Worked with James P. Johnson (1932), regularly led own big band from 1932, residencies at Lafayette Theatre, Ubangi Club, Savoy Ballroom, New York, etc. Toured England and France in 1937, played at Moulin Rouge in Paris before touring Britain (including bookings at the London Palladium, July 1937). Returned to U.S.A., continued to lead band until 1940, was then active as manager of the famous 'early bop' club at Minton's in Harlem. Managed Minton's for many years, except for period of army service during World War II. (J. Chilton, Who's Who of Jazz)

This personnel-discography is based on Rust, Jazz And Ragtime Records 1897 - 1942.

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

- Documented, most certain and aurally absolutely obvious identifications are listed thus: **Teddy Hill**
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Teddy Hill*
- Not attributable identifications – although the musician in question might be an otherwise well-known person – are listed thus: unknown
- If a possible identification for an otherwise unknown musician is suggested by the author without the possibility to prove the factual evidence, it is listed thus: *(Teddy Hill)*

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

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

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

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

Teddy Hill became well-known in Harlem jazz circles as the tenor saxophonist of Luis Russell and his Orchestra in the late 1920s. His strength, yet, was not on the musical/instrumental side, but as organizer and bandleader. As such, he permanently led a big band from 1932 until 1940, then becoming manager of famous 'Minton's Playhouse' in Harlem, one of the cradles of Be Bop.

A. McCarthy, Big Band Jazz: "The Teddy Hill band first recorded in 1935, but the four titles made were disappointing, despite the presence in the group of outstanding soloists. ... In the early part of 1937 the Hill band took part in three recording sessions for RCA Victor's cheap Bluebird label. ... It would be interesting to know who selected most of the material that the Hill band recorded, for the preponderance of average pop numbers was hardly beneficial. The instrumental performances certainly give every indication that it was a hard swinging group with a quota of individual soloists, though whether it was quite as outstanding as some musicians have claimed must remain, on record evidence, an open question."

TEDDY HILL AND HIS ORCHESTRA

001 **TEDDY HILL AND HIS ORCHESTRA** New York, Feb. 26, 1935
 Bill Dillard, Bill Coleman, Roy Eldridge – tpt; Dicky Wells – tbn;
 Russell Procope, Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Teddy Hill, Leon Chu Berry – ten;
 Sam Allen – pno; John Smith – gtr; Richard Fullbright – sbs; Bill Beason – dms;
 Bill Dillard – voc (2,4)

16923-1	(Lookie, Lookie, Lookie) Here Comes Cookie	Ban 33384,	Chronological Classics 645
16924-1	Got Me Doin' Things	Ban 33384,	Chronological Classics 645
16925-1	When The Robin Sings His Song Again	Ban 33397,	Chronological Classics 645
16926-1	When Love Knocks At Your Heart	Ban 33397,	Chronological Classics 645

Composer credits: 16923 (M. Gordon); 16924 (M. Gordon); 16925 (Parish – Coots); 16926 (Hill – De Rose)

Teddy Hill, bandleader in Harlem all through the 1930s, was a veteran on tenor sax of the important Luis Russell Band in Harlem in the late 1920s. His most important band in the 1930s had the above personnel and featured outstanding musicians of the time in Roy Eldridge and Chu Berry. These are the first recordings the band made, a bit short in jazz content and more on the dance band side, but with good swing and excellent musician-ship. Bill Coleman plays a solo chorus in the third title, muted, with urgent and acid playing and upward jumps in his very personal style. And listen to that soft muted trumpet chorus by Eldridge in the last title. Very beautiful and un-usual. These are Roy Eldridge's first issued recordings!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Bill Dillard, Bill Coleman, Roy Eldridge (tp); Dicky Wells (tb); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson, Teddy Hill (as); Leon "Chu" Berry (ts); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fulbright (b); Bill Beason (dm)*
 - *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Bill Dillard, Roy Eldridge, Bill Coleman (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Leon "Chu" Berry (ten); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fulbright (bs); Bill Beason (d)*
 - *Rust*2: Bill Dillard, Roy Eldridge, Bill Coleman (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Chu Berry (ten); Sam Allen (pno); John Smith (gtr); Richard Fulbright (sbs); Bill Beason (dms)*
 - *Rust*3: Bill Dillard -Roy Eldridge -Bill Coleman -t; Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Chu Berry -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fulbright -sb; Bill Beason -d*
 - *Rust*4,*6: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -Roy Eldridge -Bill Coleman -t; Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -cl -as; Howard Johnson -as; Chu Berry -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fulbright -sb; Bill Beason -d*

Tunes structures:

16923-1 (Lookie, Lookie, Lookie) Here Comes Cookie Key of C / F / Db Banner
 (Intro 8 bars ens 4 – RE o-tpt 4)(Chorus 1 34 bars AABA' ens)(Chorus 2 34 bars AABA' saxes 4 – RE o-tpt 1+4- saxes 4 – RE o-tpt 2+4 – ens 8 – saxes 4 – BD o-tpt 6)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars ens modul.)(Chorus 3 34 bars AABA' CB ten 16 – DW o-tbn 1+1+8 – CB ten 10)(Interlude 10 bars ens modul.)(1/4 Chorus 4 10 bars A' ens)

16924-1 Got Me Doin' Things Key of F / G / Ab Banner
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Chorus 1 34 bars AB ens)(Chorus 2 34 bars AB BD voc)(Bridge 6 bars ens 2 – SA pno 4 modul.)(Chorus 3 34 bars AB TH ten + ens modul.)(1/2 Chorus 4 18 bars B ens)

16925-1 When The Robin Sings His Song Again Key of F Banner
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA BC m-tpt 16 – HJ alt 8 – BC m-tpt 8)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA CB ten 16 – DW o-tbn 1+8 – CB ten 8)(Chorus 4 32 bars AABA ens 16 – SA pno 1+8 – ens 8)(Tag 2 bars ens)

16926-1 When Love Knocks At Your Heart Key of Bb / C Banner
 (Chorus 1 32 bars ABAC ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars ABAC BD voc)(Chorus 3 32 bars ABAC RE m-tpt)(1/2 Chorus 4 AC ens)

002 **TEDDY HILL AND HIS ORCHESTRA** New York, Apr. 01, 1936
 Teddy Hill – ldr, ten, dir;
 Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins – tpt; Dicky Wells – tbn;
 Russell Procope – alt, clt; Howard Johnson – alt; Kenneth Hollon – ten;
 Sam Allen – pno; John Smith – gtr; Richard Fullbright – sbs; Bill Beason – dms

18911-1	Uptown Rhapsody	Voc 3294,	Chronological Classics 645
18912	Christopher Columbus	Voc unissued	not on LP/CD

Composer credits: 18911 (Hill – Johnson - Berry)

'Uptown Rhapsody' has a very interesting chord sequence, its A-parts consisting mainly of whole-tone chords, in the tradition of Fletcher Henderson's 'Queer Notions' and Don Redman's 'Chant Of The Weed'. And altoist Howard Johnson makes the best of it in "standing harmony", the band swinging smoothly. Tenorist Kenneth Hollon takes one B-part to solo only - in common chording - as do Russell Procope and Dicky Wells.

It certainly is a great pity that the Vocalion people did not issue this version of 'Christopher Columbus'!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, "Shad" Collins (tp); Dicky Wells (tb); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson, Teddy Hill, Cecil Scott (s); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fulbright (b); Bill Beason (dm)*
 - *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Lester "Shad" Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ten); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fulbright (bs); Bill Beason (d)*
 - *Rust*2: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth*

Hollon (ts); Sam Allen (pno); John Smith (gtr); Richard Fullbright (sbs); Bill Beason (dms)
 - Rust*3: Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Cecil Scott -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d
 - Rust*4: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Cecil Scott -ts -bar; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d
 - Rust*6: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Kenneth Hollon -ts -bar; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d
Solos ad-lib:
 18911: HJ alt 16 +8; KH ten 8; RP clt 8; DW o-tbn 8

003 TEDDY HILL AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 04, 1936

Teddy Hill – ldr, ten, dir;

Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins – tpt; Dicky Wells – tbn;

Russell Procope – alt, clt; Howard Johnson – alt; Cecil Scott – ten, clt, bar;

Sam Allen – pno; John Smith – gtr; Richard Fullbright – sbs; Bill Beason – dms;

Chappie Willett – arr (2)

19175-1 At The Rug Cutter's Ball

Voc 3247,

Chronological Classics 645

19176-1 Blue Rhythm Fantasy

Voc 3247,

Chronological Classics 645

19177-1 Passionette

Voc 3294,

Chronological Classics 645

Composer credits: 19175 (Procope - Hill); 19176 (C. Willett – T. Hill); 191877 (Willie 'The Lion' Smith)

In '... Rug Cutter's Ball' Cecil Scott is immediately recognisable by his light and slim tone on tenor sax – and his fluency. The same applies for his baritone work later-on in the title. Frankie Newton obviously does not feel at ease with this fast pace, and his solos lacks in beauty and structure. What has been identified by Johnny Simmen – via Hugues Panassié and the Hill Orchestra (see cover text Harlequin HQ 2053) - as a duet of alto sax and clarinet (Johnson and Procope) I interpret as a clarinet solo over a riff by one of the trumpet players, what sounds like some chase-chorus. 'Blue Rhythm Fantasy' then is much more interesting with its beautiful arrangement featuring great Dicky Wells, Russell Procope, Frankie Newton, and Cecil Scott. Willie 'The Lion' Smith's filigree piano composition 'Passionette' certainly is a bit hard to adapt to a big band. And thus, it features a string of 16-bar solos only – deriving from the antiquated ragtime formula. It's a pity that this item oozes out with a tedious riff.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, "Shad" Collins (tp); Dicky Wells (tb); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson, Teddy Hill, Cecil Scott (s); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fullbright (b); Bill Beason (dm)

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Lester 'Shad' Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ten); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fullbright (bs); Bill Beason (d)

- Rust*2: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ts); Sam Allen (pno); John Smith (gtr); Richard Fullbright (sbs); Bill Beason (dms)

- Rust*3: Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Cecil Scott -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d

- Rust*4,*6: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Cecil Scott -ts -bar; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d

Solos ad-lib:

19175: SA pno 16; CS ten 32; FN o-tpt 32; RP clt 32; CS bar 8; DW o-tbn 8

19176: DW o-tbn 16; HJ alt; RP clt 3 + 2 + 16, FN o-tpt 14; CS ten 2+16 + 2 + 2 + 2

19177: SA pno 4 + 16 + 16; SC m-tpt 16; HJ alt 16; DW o-tbn 16

004 TEDDY HILL AND HIS NBC ORCHESTRA

New York,

Mar. 26, 1937

Teddy Hill – ldr, ten, dir;

Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins – tpt; Dicky Wells – tbn;

Russell Procope – alt, clt; Howard Johnson – alt; Cecil Scott – ten, clt, bar;

Sam Allen – pno; John Smith – gtr; Richard Fullbright – sbs; Bill Beason – dms;

Teddy Hill – voc (3); Bill Dillard – voc (1,3); Beatrice Douglas – voc (2,4); band – voc (1)

06462-1 The Love Bug Will Bite You

BB B-6897,

Chronological Classics 645

06463-1 Would You Like To Buy A Dream?

BB B-6897,

Chronological Classics 645

06464-1 Big Boy Blue

BB B-6908,

Chronological Classics 645

06465-1 Where Is The Sun?

BB B-6898,

Chronological Classics 645

06466-1 The Harlem Twister (The New Sensation)

BB B-6908,

Chronological Classics 645

06467-1 My Marie

BB B-6898,

Chronological Classics 645

Composer credits: 06462 (Pinky Tomlin); 06463 (S. Cahn – S. Chaplin); 06464 (Lawrence – Howell - Tinturin); 06465 (J. Redmond – L. David); 06466 (---); 06467(Berlin)

The Teddy Hill band now has been taken under Victor's wing recording for their cheap label 'Bluebird'. And the recorded repertoire growing to be more commercial. Yet, the band is in top form and swinging like mad, although I'd wished for more hot solos. There are just too few solos by Dicky Wells and Frankie Newton, and I'd liked to hear more from the young Shad Collins. Sam Allen is a much overlooked fine pianist, and the rest of the rhythm section is fantastic, with a strong but dry guitar, voluminous string-bass, and soft but driving snare-drumming. Very good!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, "Shad" Collins (tp); Dicky Wells (tb); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson, Teddy Hill, Cecil Scott (s); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fullbright (b); Bill Beason (dm); Beatrice Douglas (vo)

- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Lester 'Shad' Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ten); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fullbright (bs); Bill Beason (d); Beatrice Douglas (vcl)

- Rust*2: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ts); Sam Allen (pno); John Smith (gtr); Richard Fullbright (sbs); Bill Beason (dms); Bill Dillard (vcl); vcl ensemble; Teddy Hill (vcl)

- Rust*3: Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Cecil Scott -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d; Teddy Hill -Beatrice Douglas -members of the Orchestra -v

- Rust*4,*6: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Cecil Scott -ts -bar; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d; Teddy Hill -Beatrice Douglas -v

Solos ad-lib:

06462-1: CS clt 8 + obl 32; BDi + choir 32; SA pno 16; SC o-tpt 8
 06463-1: BDo voc 32; SA pno 2+8; BDo voc 16
 06464-1: BDi voc 8 + 32; TH voc 12; BD m-tpt 32; TH voc 8
 06465-1: BDo voc 32; CS ten 4; FN o-tpt 1+4 + 2
 06466-1: RP clt 16; BB dms 4; DW o-tbn 16; CS ten 4 + 2 + 2 + 6; SA pno 16; SC o-tpt 2 + 2 +2+4; BB dms 2; CS ten 4
 06467-1: CS ten 1 + 2 + 8 + 2 + 2 + 5; SA pno 32; DW o-tbn 3+32; BB dms 1

005 TEDDY HILL AND HIS NBC ORCHESTRA

New York,

Apr. 23, 1937

Teddy Hill – ldr, ten, dir;
 Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins – tpt; Dicky Wells – tbn;
 Russell Procope, Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Cecil Scott – ten, clt, bar;
 Sam Allen – pno; John Smith – gtr; Richard Fullbright – sbs; Bill Beason – dms;
 Bill Dillard – voc (1,2,3)

07925-1	I Know Now	BB B-6954,	Chronological Classics 645
07926-1	The Lady Who Couldn't Be Kissed	BB B-6954,	Chronological Classics 645
07927-1	(Have You Forgotten) The You And Me That Used To Be?	BB B-6941,	Chronological Classics 645
07928-1	A Study In Brown	BB B-6943,	Chronological Classics 645
07929-1	Twilight In Turkey	BB B-6943,	Chronological Classics 645
07930-1	China Boy	BB B-6941,	Chronological Classics 645

Composer credits: 07925 (A. Dubin – H. Warren); 07926 (A. Dubin – H. Warren); 07927 (W. Bullock – A. Wrubel); 07928 (L. Clinton); 07929 (R. Scott); 07930 (D. Winfree – P. Boutelje)

One month after the fore-going session we have the same band/personnel still again. And the music is yet more commercial. There is little spectacular soloing on these sides, but listen to Dick Fullbright's powerful slap-bass at the end of 'Twilight In Turkey'. Sam Allen can be heard stretching out in solo in the very fast 'China Boy'.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, "Shad" Collins (tp); Dicky Wells (tb); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson, Teddy Hill, Cecil Scott (s); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fullbright (b); Bill Beason (dm); Beatrice Douglas (vo)
 - Carey, *McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Lester 'Shad' Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ten); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fullbright (bs); Bill Beason (d); Beatrice Douglas (vcl)

- Rust*2: Bill Dillard, Frank Newton, Shad Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Kenneth Hollon (ts); Sam Allen (pno); John Smith (gtr); Richard Fullbright (sbs); Bill Beason (dms); Bill Dillard (vcl)

- Rust*3: Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Cecil Scott -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d; Teddy Hill -Beatrice Douglas -members of the Orchestra -v
 - Rust*4,*6: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -Frank Newton -Shad Collins -t); Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Cecil Scott -ts -bar; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d; Teddy Hill -Beatrice Douglas -v

Solos ad-lib:

07925-1: BD voc 32; SA pno 8
 07926-1: DW o-tbn 2; BD voc 32+2; ?FN o-tpt 8
 07927-1: BD voc 32; SC o-tpt 8
 07928-1: SC o-tpt 16; CS ten 2+14; DW o-tbn 2+14
 07929-1: BB dms 2; JS gtr 2; BB dms 8; CS ten 16
 07930-1: SA pno 4 + 32 + 30 + 28; FN o-tpt 2+16; CS bar 8; FN o-tpt 6; BB dms 2; SA pno 20

006 TEDDY HILL AND HIS NBC ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 17, 1937

Teddy Hill – ldr, ten, dir;
 Bill Dillard, Shad Collins, Dizzy Gillespie – tpt; Dicky Wells – tbn;
 Russell Procope, Howard Johnson – alt, clt; Robert Carroll – ten;
 Sam Allen – pno; John Smith – gtr; Richard Fullbright – sbs; Bill Beason – dms;
 Bill Dillard – voc (1,2,3,4);
 Chappie Willett – arr (6)

010206-1	San Anton´	BB B-6988,	Chronological Classics 645
010207-1	I'm Happy, Darling, Dancing With You	BB B-6989,	Chronological Classics 645
010208-1	Yours And Mine	BB B-7013,	Chronological Classics 645
010209-1	I'm Feeling Like A Million	BB B-7013,	Chronological Classics 645
010210-1	King Porter Stomp	BB B-6988,	Chronological Classics 645
010211-1	Blue Rhythm Fantasy	BB B-6989,	Chronological Classics 645

Composer credits: 010206 (A. Razaf – P. Denniker); 010207 (J. Young – F.E. Ahlert); 010208 (A. Freed – F.A. Brown); 010209 (A. Freed – F.A. Brown); 10210 (F. Morton); 010211 (T. Hill – Chappie Willett)

Let's not forget that the bands in Harlem had to deliver music for dancing. Not necessarily music with much hot soloistic. (By the way: the Fletcher Henderson band was famed for their beautiful waltzes they played at their performances!) And that's just what the Hill band had recorded with their first four titles, plain swinging music for dancing. The hot jazz was added in the last two tunes.

'King Porter Stomp', Jelly Roll Morton's composition of twenty years ago, still proves its attractivity for swing/dance bands with this Teddy Hill version in an own arrangement. It is distinctively different from thirty other versions of this title listed in Rust*6. Although recorded in 1937 already, this very version seems to be the most musically modern one before 1942, the riffs being different, and above all, there is young Dizzy Gillespie with his most fiery style of playing and the use of his newly developed harmonic devices. Equally inspiring is 'Blue Rhythm Fantasy' with its arrangement by Chappie Willett, recorded by the Hill band one year ago for Decca (see session 003). Great solos by Dicky Wells in his most individual style, Russell Procope fluid and bog-tones clarinet, Robert Carroll's agile tenor sax, and Dizzy Gillespie's phenomenal trumpet.

This really is fantastic swing jazz music of the highest order.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Bill Dillard, Dizzy Gillespie, "Shad" Collins (tp); Dicky Wells (tb); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson, Teddy Hill, Robert Carroll (s); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fulbright (b); Bill Beason (dm); Beatrice Douglas (vo)
 - Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 4*: Bill Dillard, Dizzy Gillespie, Lester 'Shad' Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Robert Carroll (ten); Sam Allen (p); John Smith (g); Richard Fulbright (bs); Bill Beason (d); Beatrice Douglas (vcl)

- Rust*2: Bill Dillard, Dizzy Gillespie, Shad Collins (tpt); Dicky Wells (tbn); Russell Procope, Howard Johnson (alt); Teddy Hill, Robert Carroll (ts); Sam Allen (pno); John Smith (gtr); Richard Fullbright (sbs); Bill Beason (dms); Bill Dillard (vcl)

- Rust*3: Bill Dillard - Dizzy Gillespie - Shad Collins -t; Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -Howard Johnson -as; Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Robert Carroll -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d; Teddy Hill -Beatrice Douglas -members of the Orchestra -v

- Rust*4,*6: Teddy Hill -ts -ldr; Bill Dillard -t -v; Shad Collins -Dizzy Gillespie -t; Dicky Wells -tb; Russell Procope -cl -as; Howard Johnson -as; Robert Carroll -ts; Sam Allen -p; John Smith -g; Richard Fullbright -sb; Bill Beason -d; Teddy Hill -Beatrice Douglas -v

Solos ad-lib:

010206-1: BD voc 16 + 16; SA pno 2+8; DW o-tbn 4; RC ten 6; BD voc 8

010207-1: SC o-tpt 1+7; BD voc 32; HJ alt 4

010208-1: RC ten 4; BD voc 32; RC ten 2 + 2; SC o-tpt 16 + 6; BB dms 2; SA pno 4

010209-1: BD voc 32; DW m-tbn 2+16; RC ten 2+10+2

010210-1: DG o-tpt 2+16; HJ alt 16; DW o-tbn 16; RC ten 16; DG o-tpt 16

010211-1: DW o-tbn 1 + 1 + 10; RP clt 2 + 2 + 16; DG o-tpt 1+14; RC ten 2+14 + 14

It must be added that the Teddy Hill Orchestra's musical output on record in the above titles is rather limited regarding the jazz content. But it seems that what we hear is a realistic cross-section of what the band had to offer every evening when appearing in ballrooms, theatres, or other premises. In any case, the music was expertly played, with swing, fire, and aplomb. One of the great bands of the Harlem area!

K. - B. Rau
 05-06-2024