

THE RECORDINGS OF KATHERINE HENDERSON

An Annotated Tentative Name-Discography

HENDERSON, Katherine, singer
Wife of tuba player Cyrus St. Clair

Born: St. Louis, Missouri, June 23, 1909; Died: prob late 1940s

This personnelo-discography is based on RUST, JAZZ AND RAGTIME RECORDS 1897 - 1942.

Personnels 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: **Katherine Henderson**
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Katherine Henderson*
- 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: (*Katherine Henderson*)

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.

KATHERINE HENDERSON

001 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE ORCHESTRA	New York,	Apr. 27, 1927
Ed Allen – cnt; Charlie Irvis – tbn; Arville Harris – ten, clt; Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Floyd Casey – dms; Katherine Henderson or (<i>Eva Taylor?</i>) - voc		
E-4861; E-23235 Baltimore	Br 7017,	Frog DGF 37
E-4862; E-23236 Baltimore	Br 7017,	Frog DGF 37
E-4857; E-23237 Take Your Black Bottom Dance Outside	Br 7017,	Frog DGF 37

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

Notes:

- Storyville 21: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Floyd Casey (dms); Katherine Henderson (vcl).*

- Lord, Clarence Williams p207: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Floyd Casey (dms); Katherine Henderson (vcl).*

- Rust*2: *Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Floyd Casey (dms); Katherine Henderson (vcl).*

- Rust*3: *Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Arville Harris -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Floyd Casey -d; Katherine Henderson -v.*

- Rust*4, *6: *Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Arville Harris -cl -as or ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Floyd Casey -d; Katherine Henderson -v..*

- BGR*2, *3, *4: *Ed Allen, cnt; Charlie Irvis, tbn; Arville Harris, clt, ten; Clarence Williams, pno; Leroy Harris, bjo; Floyd Casey, dms; Katherine Henderson, vcl.*

Discernable differences of takes (from Lord p208):

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

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

002	KATHERINE HENDERSON	Clarence Williams and his Orchestra	Long Island City	Sept. 1928
	Katherine Henderson – voc;			
	Ed Allen – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn; Arville Harris – clt;			
	Clarence Williams - pno			
235-A	West End Blues		QRS R-7024,	Frog DGF 48
236-A	St. Louis Blues		QRS R-7024,	Frog DGF 48

The personnel for this session seem clear, but some doubts are raised as to the presence of Ed Cuffee on trombone when hearing the trombone’s sound. Yet, these seem to be un-founded. The ensemble parts played in ‘West End Blues’ are entirely scored, while improvised in ‘St. Louis Blues’. And Clarence plays a strong fundamental and consequent piano accompaniment, without any help by anybody else.

By the way: Miss Henderson was Mrs. Cyrus St. Clair.

Notes:

- Storyville 23: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Arville Harris (clt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p253: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Arville Harris (clt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Ed Allen, cnt; Ed Cuffee, tbn; Arville Harris, clt; Clarence Williams, pno.
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; Arville Harris -cl; Clarence Williams -p.

003	KATHERINE HENDERSON	Clarence Williams and his Orchestra	Long Island City,	c. Oct. 1928
	Katherine Henderson – voc;			
	Joe King Oliver – cnt; Ben Whitted – clt, alt; Ben Waters – ten;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs			
256-A	Lonesome Lovesick Blues		QRS R-7032,	Frog DGF 48
257-A	Have You Felt That Way?		QRS R-7032,	Frog DGF 48
258-	What Can You Do Without Me?		QRS R-7054,	Frog DGF 48

The clarinet solo is more blues inflected than Arville Harris’ work, so most likely Whitted, who was capable of good blues playing. The tenor is not really prominent and the brass bass might not be St. Clair.

Notes:

- Storyville 23: Joe Oliver (cnt); Benny Moten (clt, alt); Ben Waters (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p256: Joe Oliver (cnt); unknown (clt, alt); Ben Waters (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
- Rust*3: King Oliver -c; ?Ben Whitted -cl; Arville Harris or Ben Waters -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
- Rust*4,*6: King Oliver -c; ?Ben Whitted -cl; Ben Waters -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
- BGR*2: King Oliver, cnt; Benny Moten, clt; Ben Waters, ten; Clarence Williams, pno; Leroy Harris, bjo; Cyrus St. Clair, bbs.
- BGR*3,*4: King Oliver, c; unknown, cl, as; Ben Waters, ts; Clarence Williams, p; Leroy Harris, bj; Cyrus St. Clair, bb.

004	KATHERINE HENDERSON	Clarence Williams and his Orchestra	Long Island City,	c. Nov. 1928
	Katherine Henderson – voc;			
	Joe King Oliver – cnt; Arville Harris – clt, alt; Ben Waters – ten;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs			
273-A	Do It Baby		QRS R-7041,	Frog DGF 49
274-A	Mushy Love		QRS R-7054,	Frog DGF 49
275-	If You Like Me		Pm 12840,	Frog DGF 49
275-A	If You Like Me		QRS R-7041,	Frog DGF 49

The musicians in the listening group recognise pitching problems here. Harris is struggling out of tune on clarinet, this probably caused by an out of tune piano which forces the reedmen to lower their pitch. This may explain the previous suggestion that there is an additional clarinet player on the first title only. The tenor sax might be Waters.

Notes:

- Storyville 24: Joe Oliver (cnt); poss Ben Whitted (clt); Albert Socarras (alt); poss Ben Waters (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p261: Joe Oliver (cnt); poss Ben Whitted (clt); Albert Socarras (alt); poss Ben Waters (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
- Rust*3: King Oliver -c; ?Ben Whitted -cl; Arville Harris or Ben Waters -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
- Rust*4,*6: King Oliver -c; ?Ben Whitted -cl; Arville Harris, ?Albert Socarras -as; Ben Waters -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.
- BGR*2: King Oliver, cnt; Benny Moten, clt; Arville Harris, ten; poss unknown, sax (1); Clarence Williams, pno; Cyrus St. Clair, bbs.
- BGR*3,*4: King Oliver, c; poss Ben Whitted, clt; Albert Socarras, as; poss Ben Waters, ts; Clarence Williams, p; Cyrus St. Clair, bb.

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p262 and KBR):

- 275- : Second chorus, bar 16 (bar 66 of tune): second bar of cornet break: 2 long held notes G - F
- 275-A: Second chorus, bar 16 (bar 66 of tune): second bar of cornet break: sequence of 2 quarter notes a – G, 2 eighth notes G – Gb, 1 quarter note F.

005	CATHERINE HENDERSON		New York	Feb. 13, 1930
	Katherine Henderson or (Eva Taylor?) – voc;			
	Ed Anderson – tpt; Garvin Bushell – clt; Albert Socarras – alt;			
	Clarence Williams - pno			
149983-2	What If We Do		Ve 7976,	Document DOCD-5376
149984-1	Keep It To Yourself		Ve 7966,	Document DOCD-5376

The vocal is credited to Catherine Henderson, however, Eva Taylor claimed that it is she who is singing. There remain controversies among the listening group members as to the identity of the singer which could not be cleared away. Personnel as #178 above. (see Storyville 14/40 and 16/22 on this matter).

VJM 194 of autumn 2022, Ate's Discographical Ramblings: Ate van Delden certifies that the vocals on the above sessions are performed by Katherine Henderson. He writes: "*She was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 1909 and starred in the ill-fated musical comedy 'Bottomland', written and composed by Clarence Williams and which also starred Eva Taylor, Sara Martin and Clarence Todd. She married John Jackson in 1928 and continued to perform into the mid-1940s. She is not the Catherine Henderson heard on two sides made by Okeh in Atlanta in 1925 – the composer credits of both sides are to Edmonia Henderson.*"

Notes:

- Storyville 26: Ed Anderson (cnt); unknown (clt); Alberto Socarras (alt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p314: Ed Anderson (tpt); poss Albert Socarras (clt); poss Garvin Bushell (alt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Rust*3: Ed Anderson -c; Albert Socarras -cl; unknown -as; Clarence Williams -p.
- BGR*2: Ed Anderson, cnt; Albert Socarras, clt; unknown, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Eva Taylor, vcl.
- BGR*3,*4: Ed Anderson, c; poss Albert Socarras, cl; poss Garvin Bushell, as; Clarence Williams, p; Katherine Henderson, v. "Eva Taylor claimed that this coupling was be herself rather than by her niece Katherine Henderson, but aural evidence does not support this."
- Rust*4: Ed Anderson -c; Albert Socarras -cl; ?Garvin Bushell -as; Clarence Williams -p.
- Rust*6: Ed Anderson -c; Albert Socarras -cl; Garvin Bushell -as; Clarence Williams -p.

K.-B. Rau
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