

THE RECORDINGS OF ALBERT SOCARRAS

An Annotated Tentative Discography

SOCARRAS, Albert, flute / saxes / clarinet Born: Oriente, Cuba, 19th September 1908; Died: New York City, 26th August 1987
After playing with local orchestras moved to U.S.A. and began a regular series of recordings with Clarence Williams. With 'Blackbirds' shows from 1928 until 1933, including tour of Europe. Briefly with Benny Carter in 1933, then formed own band, in 1934 again visited Europe, this time as musical director to an all-girls' band. With Sam Wooding in 1935, then again formed own band. Worked with Erskine Hawkins for '1937 Cotton Club Parade', then again formed band for residency at Harlem Uproar House from September 1937. From 1939 regularly led own band, residencies include: Glen Island Casino, Boston Beachcomber, Rendezvous Inn, etc. For many years specialised in classical flute playing – gave solo performance at Carnegie Hall in 1945 and was solo flautist in first performance of Eddie Bonnemere's 'Missa Hoosierna' (1966). Active as a teacher throughout the 1970s. (J. Chilton, Who's Who of Jazz)

Read Herb Friedwald's very interesting article on Socarras in Storyville 90! Although Mr. Friedwald's article always notes Socarras' forename "Alberto" – what certainly is Socarras' correct name – I have kept to name him "Albert" as he is listed mostly in the discographies.

STYLISTICS alto sax

STYLE

Socarras starts his recordings with Clarence Williams rather un-even and not showing any individual characteristics. He mainly played first parts from scores, probably. But he achieves some soaring tension when he plays soprano sax in session 002 and later.

STONE

He owns a beautiful silken but slender tone on alto sax.

VIBRATO

Socarras does not show a decided vibrato, because of his classical musical education he received at his home. But if there is one, it is slow and with very little amplitude.

TIME

His time is very exact, but lacks the micro-rhythm attitude of a standing jazz musician.

PHRASING

His alto solos are rare and phrased a bit stumbling, but later – with growing experience with the music of Harlem – he developed a still somewhat uneven but yet swinging style of interesting harmonics.

STYLISTICS flute

STYLE

Albert Socarras' style of improvisation is rooted in his Cuban origin and inheritance and his extraordinary technical abilities developed when still living in Cuba. These abilities mainly were part of his musical education in European classics and their necessities. Therefore, his style lacks blues playing devices and off-beat phrasing, but excels in tonal beauty, technical brilliance, and fluidity.

STONE

Very full and soft, yet strong tone on his flute.

VIBRATO

He displays a fast vibrato with a medium altitude.

TIME

As Socarras' rhythmic concept is not that of the coloured musicians of the U.S.A., his rhythmic lines are not built on the triplet-based swing of phrasing usually used by the former, and thus seem to stumble slightly. The more so when he plays staccato lines.

PHRASING

Phrasing is very much depending on classical melodic fundamentals, but also encompassing fast and virtuoso arpeggios and runs that might as well be rooted in Jazz.

This personnel-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: **Albert Socarras**
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Albert Socarras*
- 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: (*Albert Socarras*)

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.

Albert Socarras was not one of the stars of hot jazz soloistic in the 1920s, but a most adept technician, sight-reader and section player on reed instruments – particularly on the flute – from out of the Caribbean-Cuban musical tradition, and thus an asset for any big band performing in the Harlem era. And he was a perfect successor to Carmelo Jari, serving Clarence Williams' bands as first-chair reedman when Jari toured South America with the Savoy Bearcats from mid-1927 on. But Clarence Williams' bands were not his only recording-bands as Socarras' steady employment was with Lew Leslie's Blackbirds theatre orchestra until 1933. Later he led own bands for many years in New York, combining jazz with his natural Caribbean style music. Later, he recorded a lot of flute solos with Latin rhythm when the public taste corresponded with Caribbean/Latin style music. With Clarence Williams he soloed mainly on flute, rather less on sax or clarinet.

ALBERT SOCARRAS

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

Three takes of each title are listed in Rust*6 and we do not know whether they really exist or whether this is an error. We have therefore preferred to list the tunes according to Rust*4 and Lord. In the past, these sources gave two takes of each title, the takes without vocals being those on German Brunswick A-457.

The whole session seems to be a concerto for young Henry 'Red' Allen from New Orleans whose first recordings these were. Undisputed is Irvis on trombone, but our group is unable to give any reasonable name for the reedmen and for the other trumpet player who plays some sort of call-and-response pattern with Allen in "Zulu Wail" and seems to be stylistically very similar to Allen. As Ed Anderson is traditionally named for this session it might be him as his style was reportedly very akin to Oliver's. And that is what we hear from the muted trumpet player who plays behind Allen. Ed Anderson was with the King Oliver band a year later, where he played the trumpet solos that were attributed to Oliver still today ('Aunt Hagar's Blues'!).

There is some uncertainty whether we have two altos or alto and tenor on this recording. Ben Whitted as alto player (re Rust*2) may be excluded from this personnel as he spent the summer season of each year with the Charlie Johnson band in Atlantic City! Notwithstanding this fact, we still have Irvis on this session, and he also was with the Charlie Johnson band at this time! The alto solo on 'Slow River' take E-6056 (German edition without vocal) is so uneven and rhythmically amateurish that I am unable to associate it with an experienced big band musician as Whitted.

This, yet, may be a hint as to Albert Socarras' recollection (see Storyville 90, below). He tries to improvise a jazz solo, when having joined the Clarence Williams stable only recently – at the age of 19. Quite contrary, the alto solo in 'Zulu Wail' take E-6057 (German edition without vocal, again) is strong and secure, while being played straight from the music. So, I assume the altoist to be Albert Socarras. This, then, would be Albert Socarras' first appearance on record!

Behind the alto I – KBR - hear a tenor sax, prominently, recognised in the middle-break of the second chorus of 'Slow River' and clearly behind the singer in the second chorus of 'Zulu Wail'. A possible candidate for the tenor sax player would be Arville Harris – or the tenor player of the 'Bottomland' show band, perhaps? but the performance of the tenor part does not allow any deduction as to his identity.

Lacking a tuba and a banjo, Clarence Williams is confined to deliver a most simple piano accompaniment using strict 4-to-the-bar chordal thumping, supported by Floyd Casey's sock-cymbal and Chinese tom-tom.

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

Notes:

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

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

-Rust*2: Ed Anderson and another (June Clark ?) (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Ben Whittet (?) and another (clt, alt); Arville Harris (?) (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Floyd Casey (dms); Evelyn Preer (vcl).
 -Rust*3,*4: Henry Allen -?Ed Anderson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Albert Socarras and another -as; Clarence Williams -p; Floyd Casey -d; Evelyn Preer -v.
 -Rust*6: Henry Allen -?Ed Anderson -t; Charlie Irvis -tb; Albert Socarras and another -as; Clarence Williams -p -a; Floyd Casey -d; Evelyn Thompson -v.
 - Storyville 90, Herb Friedwald, Alberto Socarras Story: "The director of the orchestra for Clarence Williams' show 'Bottomland' was Joe Jordan. I was first alto in the orchestra. It opened at the Savoy Theatre in Atlantic City and went to the Princess Theatre in New York, where we did not have a long run. That was a shame because it had some beautiful music. Eva Taylor, Sara Martin, and Clarence were all in the show. I think we recorded some of the compositions."

Tunes Structures:

E-6055 *Slow River* Key of Eb / Bb / Eb Brunswick
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AA' ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AA' EP voc over ens)(Chorus 3 32 bars AA' ens - middle-bk HRA o-tpt)(tag 2 bars ens)

E-6056 *Slow River* Key of Eb Brunswick
 (Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA' ens - middle-bk HRA o-tpt)(Chorus 2 32 bars AA' sax section with ad-lib brass)(Chorus 3 32 bars AA' ens - middle-bk HRA o-tpt)(tag 2 bars ens)

E-6057 *Zulu Wail* Key of Eb / Cm / Eb Brunswick
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AABA ens)(Verse 16 bars CI o-tbn - ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA CI o-tbn 16 - sax section 16)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA ens)

E-6058 *Zulu Wail* Key of Eb / Cm / C / Ed Brunswick
 (Chorus 1 32 bars AABA ens)(Verse 16 bars CI o-tbn - ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA EP voc over ens)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA ens)

Notable differences of takes (from Lord p. 211):

E-6055; E-23500: Second chorus is vocal chorus.
 E-6056; E-23501: This item has no vocal despite the label legend.
 E-6057; E-23502: This item has no vocal despite the label legend.
 E-6058; E-23503: Second chorus - after verse - is vocal chorus.

002 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' ORCHESTRA

New York, Jul. 1927

Ed Allen - cnt; Charlie Irvis - tbn;
 Albert Socarras - alt, sop, flt; Arville Harris - ten, clt;
 Clarence Williams - pno; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs

2837-2	Shooting The Pistol	Pm 12517,	Frog DGF 37
2838-2	Bottomland	Pm 12517	not on LP/CD
2838-3	Bottomland	Pm 12517,	Frog DGF 37

Composer credits: 2837 (Clarence Williams); 2838 (Clarence Williams)

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

With Carmelo Jari gone to South America, it seems that now the era of another Caribbean clarinetist is beginning: Albert Socarras, his first recording ever at the fore-going session (see above). Our group agree on Arville Harris on alto and clarinet. I - KBR - am very doubtful whether Arville Harris plays alto at all on these sides. To me he seems to play tenor on the second title and clarinet on the first title. But Albert Socarras blows in some soaring tension when he plays soprano sax ad-lib above the ensemble in the second title, convincingly and beautiful. Again, read Herb Friedwald's very interesting article on Socarras in Storyville 90!

Notes:

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

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

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

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

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

Solos ad-lib:

2837: EA m-cnt + ens 32; AS alt 24; CI o-tbn 8; AS flt 24; CSC bbs 6; EA m-cnt + ens 2+22; CH o-tbn 2; EA m-cnt 8

2838: CSC bbs 2; AS sop 2

Notable differences of takes:

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

003 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS

New York, Aug. 18, 1927

Ed Allen - cnt; Charlie Irvis - tbn;
 Albert Socarras - alt, sop, clt;
 Clarence Williams - pno; Leroy Harris - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs

144546-1	I'm Going Back To Bottomland	Col 14244-D,	Frog DGF 14
144547-2	You'll Long For Me (When The Cold Winds Blow)	Col 14244-D,	Frog DGF 14

Composer credits: 144546 (Williams and Trent); 144547 (Williams)

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

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

As before, Clarence Williams probably choose two titles from his short-lived show 'Bottomland'. Here, with the addition of a strong and exact banjo player - Leroy Harris - the rhythm section is much more convincing than the duet Clarence W. and Cyrus St. Clair.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.

- Storyville 21: Ed Allen (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, sop, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p214: Ed Allen (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, sop, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 -Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, sop); Arville Harris (?) (alt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 -Rust*3, *4, *6: Ed Allen -c; Charlie Irvis -tb; Albert Socarras -cl -ss -as; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

Solos ad-lib:

144546: AS alt 16; EA m-cnt 10

144547: EA m-cnt 12; CI m-tbn 7; CSC bbs 1+15; EA m-cnt 1+15; AS sop 1+15; EA m-cnt 1+16

004 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE SEVEN

New York, Sep. 23, 1927

Louis Metcalf – tpt; Charlie Irvis – tbn;

Albert Socarras – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

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

81472-A Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?

OK 8510, Chronological Classics 736

81473-A Close Fit Blues

OK 8510, Chronological Classics 736

Composer credits: 81472 (Williams - Warfield); 81473 (Williams)

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

While listening to all recordings attributed to Metcalf in a steady row it becomes apparent that on these sides above we have all Metcalf's characteristics as heard before, a bit tamed yet, and thus retained by being encompassed in a Williams-led conception.

Charlie Irvis is recognised by his typical legato playing.

Socarras and Arville Harris certainly are the reed-men as identified in our earlier effort, and the rhythm section is the regular Williams rhythm section of this time.

Notes:

- Storyville 21: Louis Metcalfe (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); prob Buster Bailey (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p216: Louis Metcalf (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); prob Buster Bailey (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (clt, alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Rust*2: Charlie Gaines or Louis Metcalf (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Buster Bailey (?) (clt, alt); Arville Harris (?) (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Rust*3, *4, *6: Louis Metcalf -c; Charlie Irvis – tb; Buster Bailey, ?Arville Harris -cl -as; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

Solos ad-lib:

81472: LM m-tpt 18; CI o-tbn 18; LM o-tpt 1+18

81473: LM m-tpt 12 + 12; CI m-tbn 2+10

005 EVA TAYLOR

New York, Jun. 02, 1928

Eva Taylor – voc;

Ed Allen – cnt;

(Buster Bailey) or (Arville Harris) – alt, clt; Albert Socarras - flt;

David Martin – cello; Clarence Williams – pno

400738-B Chloe

OK 8585, Collector's Classics COCD-19

400739-A Back In Your Own Back Yard

OK 8585, Collector's Classics COCD-19

Composer credits: 400738 (Kahn - Moret); 400739 (Jolson – Rose - Dreyer)

A very unusual instrumentation here, including a cello! Judging from the solos it might be Bailey here as suggested before, but this is rather vague and only a possibility. This player's tone decidedly is not as straight as Bailey's, and I would name Arville Harris as the player.

The flute playing definitely is by Socarras. And it is of great beauty. As I assume that there were no scores for a flute player for these titles, the flute part might have been composed/improvised by Mr. Socarras personally. And this may be proof of his astonishing musicality and technical facility

Cellist David Martin had already been employed by Clarence at a slightly earlier date.

Notes:

- Storyville 22: Ed Allen (cnt); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Albert Socarras (flt); David Martin (cello); Clarence Williams (pno).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p231: Ed Allen (cnt); poss Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Albert Socarras (flt); David Martin (cello); Clarence Williams (pno).

- Rust*3: Ed Allen -c; Buster Bailey -cl -ss; Albert Socarras -f; David Martin -vc; Clarence Williams -p.

- Rust*4, *6: Ed Allen -c; Buster Bailey -cl -ss or as; Albert Socarras -f; David Martin -vc; Clarence Williams -p.

- BGR*2: Ed Allen, cnt; Buster Bailey, clt, sop; Albert Socarras, flt; David Martin, cello; Clarence Williams, pno.

- BGR*3, *4: Ed Allen, c; poss Buster Bailey, cl, as; Albert Socarras, f; David Martin, vc; Clarence Williams, p.

Solos ad-lib:

400738: EA m-cnt 16 over ens; EA m-cnt 16 behind voc

400739: EA m-cnt + AS flt 8; AS flt obl to voc 16; AS flt obl to voc 30; EA m-cnt 1; EA m-cnt+AS flt 16; BB or AH clt 7; EA m-cnt 2

006 LIZZIE MILES

New York, Jun. 12, 1928

Lizzie Miles – voc;

Joe 'King' Oliver – cnt;

Albert Socarras – alt, flt;

Clarence Williams – pno

W146430 You're Such A Cruel Papa To Me

Col unissued not on LP/CD

W146431 My Dif'rent Kind Of Man

Col unissued not on LP/CD

The names of all four participants along with full details are given on the Columbia recording cards (Allen/Rust/ Wright, "King" Oliver, p. 93). Regrettably, we do not have tests, but we have the remake session of June 30, 1928 (see session #008).

Notes:

- Storyville 22: Joe Oliver (cnt); Albert Socarras (alt, flt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p234: Joe Oliver (cnt); Albert Socarras (alt, flt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Rust*3,*4,*6: King Oliver -c; Albert Socarras -as -f; Clarence Williams -p.
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Joe Oliver, cnt; Albert Socarras, alt, flt; Clarence Williams, pno.

007 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' ORCH.

New York, Jun. 23, 1928

Ed Allen, Joe 'King' Oliver – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn;
 Albert Socarras - alt, clt (2,3); Arville Harris – ten, clt;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Cyrus St.Clair – bbs; Floyd Casey - dms
 400818-A Lazy Mama
 400819-A Mountain City Blues
 400620-C Sweet Emmaline
 Composer credits: 400818 (Gray - Gifford); 400819 (Troutt); 400620-C (Razaf – Palmer)

OK 8592, Collectors Classics COCD-19
 OK 8592, Collectors Classics COCD-19
 OK 8572, Collectors Classics COCD-19

On this recording session, the third title 'Sweet Emmaline' is re-recorded for this same title of the Okeh recording session of April 18, 1928, with a single reed player - according to the original title - our listening group assumed to be Carmelo Jari. But later re-listening brought a change of recognition as to Arville Harris playing the clarinet. This clarinetist decidedly is not Albert Socarras. For the two other titles recorded we have an additional alto sax man who might well be Albert Socarras. The tenor player is certainly Harris. Beautiful big band sound of the Harlem kind. Some people say that there is no piano player, as Williams cannot be heard, but this would be most unusual and doubtful, the more so as Williams is clearly heard on 'Sweet Emmalina'.

Notes:

- Storyville 22: Ed Allen, Joe Oliver (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); unknown (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, alt, ten); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms); Clarence Williams (dir).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p234: Ed Allen, Joe Oliver (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); unknown (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, alt, ten); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms); Clarence Williams (dir).
- Rust*2: Ed Allen, King Oliver (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Arville Harris (clt, alt, ten); Buster Bailey (clt, sop, alt); Ben Waters (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).
- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen, King Oliver -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; unknown -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -as -ts; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d; Clarence Williams -dir -a.

Solos ad-lib:

400618: CSC bbs 2; EA o-cnt 8; AS alt 2; EA o-cnt 2; EC o-tbn 2+16; EA o-cnt 16
 400619: AS alt 12; EC o-tbn 12; AH ten 8; EC o-tbn 2; JKO m-cnt 12
 400620-C: AH clt obl 32; AH clt obl 16; AH clt 30; EA o-cnt 2

008 LIZZIE MILES

New York, Jun. 30, 1928

Lizzie Miles – voc;
 Joe 'King' Oliver – cnt;
 Albert Socarras – alt, flt;
 Clarence Williams – pno

146430-6 You're Such A Cruel Papa To Me
 146431-4 My Diff'rent Kind Of Man

Col 14335-D, Frog DGF 14
 Col 14335-D, Frog DGF 14

Composer credits: 146430 (Williams, Piron and Perrault); 146431 (Palmer)

This is the remake of the unissued session of 12 June, 1928. Instrumentation and personnel for this remake session are again given on the recording cards and provide a useful identification reference point for Oliver's style at this time and that of Socarras. There appear to have been no other recordings on this date in this series (Allen/Rust/ Wright, "King" Oliver, p. 94).

The first title starts with a 4-bar introduction by all participants plus a 2-bar vamp, Socarras playing flute together with Oliver with his sharp-sounding cornet and a lively Clarence Williams on piano. And it seems that Clarence immediately gets into trouble with the chord structure of the chorus. But, at the end of the first chorus, they are together again.

Lizzie Miles sings beautifully, with a lot of warmth and clarity all through this session.

'King' Oliver certainly is not the man anymore of three years earlier, and he obviously has problems with his embouchure, but he plays unobtrusive and functionally, sticking to the melody. Socarras switches to alto sax on the second title, and he sounds very assured besides the "King". Dig his solo break in the last chorus of 'My Diff'rent Kind Of Man' using the Bb+ chord.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Files: Joe Oliver, cnt; Alberto Socarras, flute, alt; Clarence Williams, p..
- Storyville 22: Joe Oliver (cnt); Albert Socarras (alt, flt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Lord, Clarence Williams p237: Joe Oliver (cnt); Albert Socarras (alt, flt); Clarence Williams (pno).
- Rust*3,*4,*6: King Oliver -c; Albert Socarras -as -f; Clarence Williams -p.
- BGR*2,*3,*4: Joe Oliver, cnt; Albert Socarras, alt, flt; Clarence Williams, pno.

Solos ad-lib:

146430: JKO cnt + AS flt 4 + 2; AS flt obl 16; AS flt obl 32; JKO cnt + AS flt 32; JKO cnt obl + AS flt obl 32
 146431: JKO cnt + AS alt 8; JOK cnt + AS alt 28+1

009 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS

New York, Aug. 01, 1928

Ed Allen, Joe 'King' Oliver – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn;
 Albert Socarras, (Russell Procope?) – alt, clt; Ben Waters or (Albert 'Happy' Caldwell) – ten, clt;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs;

Ed Allen, Clarence Williams – voc (2)
 146825-3 The Keyboard Express
 146826-3 Walk That Broad

Col 14348-D, Frog DGF 14
 Col 14348-D, Frog DGF 14

Composer credits: 146825 (Jackson); 1460826 (Delany and Frisimo)

Our group agrees to the previously stated personnel with the only exception: the tenor player. Some of us hear Ben Waters playing, and not Arville Harris. King Oliver as second trumpet has been named by William Russell (see below), and should thus be confirmed. There certainly is a second tpt/cnt player, who very often drops out of the ensemble in the first title (because of lacking sight-reading skills? or embouchure troubles?), but is much more secure in the second title. This probably would give a special hint to Oliver.

'The Keyboard Express' is entirely played from scores, with Socarras leading the reed section and securely performing all the solo chordal melody parts. It does not include any solo improvisations – except a 4-bar ad-lib sequence by Ed Cuffee on trombone. The last chorus of this title includes a 2-bar saxophone middle-break which clearly exposes the three-part saxophone section, which we did not recognise in our Cl. Williams investigation of about 15 years ago (see below: Lord, Clarence Williams, p. 240).

In 'Walk That Broad' we find a nice three-part clarinet section, eight bars of open trombone by Mr. Cuffee, and a four-bars tenor sax solo which certainly is not by Arville Harris as regularly attributed by Rust and Lord, but much closer to Benny Waters style, or, as I – KBR – have recognised just today (15-02-2024), might also be played by Albert 'Happy' Caldwell.

As to the third (or rather second) alto saxophonist: unfortunately, we do not have any hint as to his identity. We will never know, probably, but considering the possibility of Russell Procope's presence as at session 012, the same might be assumed for this session. Procope – as a young unexperienced section player – may well also be present at this session (see session 012 below).

In case it really is 'King' Oliver on second trumpet/cornet at this session, we have to note that he is not given the slightest solo part on any of both titles.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.

- Storyville 22: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); prob Albert Socarras (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (clt, alt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p. 241: Ed Allen, poss Joe Oliver (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); prob Albert Socarras (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (clt, alt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs). "... personnel, based upon aural study and consideration of Williams' usual recording band of that period. Instrumentation is as given (he lists 3 reeds), Oliver does not solo, but his name was seen in Williams' files by William Russell in 1938 for this session. Unfortunately, WR did not note down the rest of the personnel at that time."

- Rust*2: prob Ed Allen, King Oliver (cnt); Charlie Irvis or Ed Cuffee (tbn); Arville Harris, Buster Bailey (clt, sop, alt); Ben Waters (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen, King Oliver -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; ?Albert Socarras -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -as -ts; Clarence Williams -p -v; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

Solos ad-lib:

146825: EC o-tbn 4

146826: EA m-cnt 2; EC o-tbn 8; BW or HC ten 4; EA voc 12 + 1

010 LEW LESLIE'S BLACKBIRDS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Aug. 14, 1928

Demas Dean, Pike Davis –tpt; Herb Flemming – tbn;

Albert Socarras – alt, clt, flt; Carmelo Jari – alt, clt; Ramon Usera – ten, clt, vln;

George Rickson – pno; Benny James – bjo; Henry Bass Edwards – bbs; Jesse Baltimore – dms

E-28057- Bandanna Babies

Br 4030

on LP/CD ?

E-28058- Magnolia's Wedding Day

Br 4030

on LP/CD ?

This is beautifully and urgently played show music with hot soloistic. We have an entirely Caribbean reed section here, with Socarras using his flute hitherto unlisted for this session. And listen to the marvellous tuba playing of Bass Edwards, and Jesse Baltimore's using the temple-blocks. And then the nice Eb minor chorus with the oriental touch in 'Magnolia's Wedding Day'.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory Vol. 4: unknown personnel

- Rust*2: Johnny Dunn, Pike Davis (tpt); Calvin Jones (tbn); Buster Bailey, Nelson Kincaid (clt, alt); Alonzo Williams (ten); Ralph Shrimp Jones, George Smith (vln); George Rickson (pno); Maceo Jefferson (bjo); Bill Benford (bbs); Jesse Baltimore (dms)

- Rust*3: Pike Davis -Demas Dean -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Carmelo Jejo -Albert Socarras -cl -as; Ramon Usera -ts -vn; George Rickson -p; Benny James -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Jesse Baltimore -d

- Rust*4,*6: Pike Davis -Demas Dean -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Carmelo Jejo or Jari -Albert Socarras -cl -as; Ramon Usera -ts -vn; George Rickson -p; Benny James -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Jesse Baltimore -d.

Tune structures:

E-28057- Bandanna Babies Key of C

Brunswick

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars ABAC ens)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars ABAC PD o-tpt – middle brk saxes)(Chorus 3 32 bars ABAC GR pno 14 – CJ clt 16 – ens 2)(Chorus 4 32 bars ABAC ens)

E-28058- Magnolia's Wedding Day Key of Eb

Brunswick

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA saxes+ vln)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA DD m-tpt 14 – ens 2 – RU ten 8 – ens 8)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA (Ebm!) clts 16 – ens 8 – flt 8)(Chorus 4 32 bars AABA ens)

011 ADELAIDE HALL Lew Leslie's Blackbirds Orchestra

New York,

Aug. 14, 1928

Adelaide Hall – voc;

Demas Dean, Pike Davis –tpt; Herb Flemming – tbn;

Albert Socarras – alt, clt, flt; Carmelo Jari – alt, clt; Ramon Usera – ten, clt, vln;

George Rickson – pno; Benny James – bjo; Henry Bass Edwards – bbs; Jesse Baltimore – dms;

Lew Leslie – arr (2,3,4)

E-28059- I Must Have That Man

Br 4031,

Conifer CDHD 169

E-28060-A Baby

Br 4031,

Conifer CDHD 169

E-28060-B Baby

Br 4031,

Conifer CDHD 169

E-28061- Dixie

Br unissued

not on LP/CD

Note: Conifer CDHD has one but undesignated take of matrix E-28060!

This is the same session as before, yet under Adelaide Hall's name now. Miss Hall is accompanied by scored clarinet, flute and violin in the first chorus of 'I Must Have That Man', and by Demas Dean muted trumpet in the last chorus (re his rhythmic concept). The muted trumpet accompanist of Miss Hall in the last chorus of 'Baby' obviously is Pike Davis.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory Vol. 4: unknown personnel

- Rust*2: Personnel includes Pike Davis (tpt); Calvin Jones (tbn); Nelson Kincaid (clt, alt); Alonzo Williams (ten); George Rickson (pno); Bill Benford (bbs)

- Rust*3: Pike Davis -Demas Dean -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Carmello Jejo -Albert Socarras -cl -as; Ramon Usera -ts -vn; George Rickson -p; Benny James -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Jesse Baltimore -d

- Rust*4: Pike Davis -Demas Dean -t; Herb Flemming -tb; Carmello Jejo (or Carmelo Jari?) -Albert Socarras -cl -as; Ramon Usera -ts -vn; George Rickson -p; Benny James -bj; Bass Edwards -bb; Jesse Baltimore -d

- Rust*6: Pike Davis, Demas Dean, t; Herb Flemming, tb; Carmello Jejo (or Carmelo Jari?), Albert Socarras, cl, as; Ramon Usera, ts, vn; George Rickson, p; Benny James, bj; Bass Edwards, bb; Jesse Baltimore, d, Lew Leslie, a (2,3,4)

Tune structures:

E-28059- I Must Have That Man Key of G Brunswick
(Intro 2 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars AH voc + ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA AH voc + clt/flt/vln)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA AH voc + DD m-tpt 16 – ens/flt 8 – DD m-tpt 8)

E-28060- Baby Key of G Brunswick
(Intro 8 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars AH voc + ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA AH voc + ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA AH voc + PD m-tpt 28 – ens 4)

012 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' ORCH.

New York, Sep. 20, 1928

Ed Allen, (Ed 'Andy' Anderson) – cnt/tpt; Ed Cuffee – tbn;

Albert Socarras, (Russell Procope) – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

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

401131-B Organ Grinder Blues

OK 8617, Collectors Classics COCD-28

401132-B I'm Busy And You Can't Come In

OK 8617, Collectors Classics COCD-28

Composer credits: 401131 (Williams); 401132 (Williams)

Again, beautiful Clarence Williams big band music. Recognizable musicians are Allen, Cuffee, Socarras, and the rhythm section. Doubtful are the second trumpet player, second (third!) alto and the tenor man. Ed Anderson who has been listed in the past, as have Russell Procope and Arville Harris. Harris may be OK, but there is nothing to identify Anderson or even Procope. And for all the listings of Procope, our group has been unable to find any certain prove of his presence in the Williams ranks before 1937, although he himself has stated that his first recordings were with Williams (although he recalls differently as stated above (Willie Jackson!).

Again, beautiful Clarence Williams big band music. Recognizable musicians are Allen, Cuffee, Socarras, and the rhythm section. Doubtful are the second trumpet player, second (third!) alto and the tenor man. Ed Anderson who has been listed in the past, as have Russell Procope and Arville Harris. Harris may be OK, but there is nothing to identify Anderson or even Procope. And for all the listings of Procope, our group has been unable to find any certain prove of his presence in the Williams ranks before 1937, although he himself has stated that his first recordings were with Williams. (although he recalls differently as stated above (Willie Jackson!).

ADDITION 22-11-2023: I now see – and hear – the possibility of Russell Procope's presence on these sides, because in an extended interview with Russell Procope, executed by Chris Albertson and kept at Rutgers University, Procope recalls that his first recording was with J.C. Johnson. Re-checking against J.C. Johnson's recordings (see my J.C. Johnson list elsewhere at this website), singer Willie Jackson's Columbia recordings of December 12, 1927, accompanied by J.C. Johnson and an unknown clarinetist – but assumed as Ernest Elliott in some discos - would be the first recordings of Procope before this session and the Jelly Roll Morton session of Dec. 06, 1928. (The clarinet style heard on the Willie Jackson recording is rather different from Elliott's, but would rather be like Procope's later thick clarinet sound!)

Notes:

- Storyville 23: Ed Allen and another (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); poss Russell Procope (clt, alt); Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p249: Ed Allen, poss Ed Anderson (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); poss Russell Procope (clt, alt); Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*2: Ed Allen, Ed Anderson (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Russell Procope, Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen, ?Ed Anderson -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; ?Russell Procope, Albert Socarras -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d.

- Rutgers University, C. Alberston, interview with Russell Procope, p. 41: "... all during this time (1927/1928 – KBR) I was making records here and there. Clarence Williams, I made a few with, and other people ... (not specified – KBR)"

Solos ad-lib:

401131: EA m-cnt 2; AS alt 2

401132: EC o-tbn 1+16; EA o-cnt 16

013 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 Ben Waters.

A participation of Alberto Socarras on this session can not be recognised!

Notes:

- Storyville 24: Joe Oliver (cnt); poss Ben Whittet (clt); Albert Socarras (alt); poss Ben Waters (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Lord, Clarence Williams p261: Joe Oliver (cnt); poss Ben Whittet (clt); Albert Socarras (alt); poss Ben Waters (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Rust*3: King Oliver -c; ?Ben Whittet -cl; Arville Harris or Ben Waters -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

- Rust*4,*6: King Oliver -c; ?Ben Whittet -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 Whittet, 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.

014 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' ORCHESTRA

New York,

Dec. 19, 1928

Ed 'Andy' Anderson - tpt; Ed Cuffee - tbn;

Ben Whitted, (Russell Procope) - alt, clt; Ben Waters - ten, clt;

unknown - pno; Leroy Harris - bjo; Billie Taylor - bbs; Floyd Casey or (George Stafford?) - dms

401466-C Watchin' The Clock

OK 8663, Collectors Classics COCD-28

401467-B Freeze Out

OK 8663, Collectors Classics COCD-28

Composer credits: 401466 (Oliver); 401467 (Waller)

This session raises a number of doubts regarding the personnel. Anderson is identified from his playing with King Oliver's Dixie Syncopators around the same time and Cuffee is undisputed. The reeds and rhythm section are less clear, with suggestions that the musicians were recruited wholesale from existing bands (Bingie Madison or Leroy Tibbs). Casey, the Harrises and Socarras are possible compared to their other work, but several other names have been suggested, including Prince Robinson, Ben Waters, Bingie Madison and Ben Whitted. The pianist is a modern, for the time, stride player and the names Leroy Tibbs, Claude Hopkins, Joe Steele and Gene Rodgers were all put forward. In the past, there were suggestions that the rhythm section, and presumably some of the wind players, were from the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra.

But these suggestions certainly do not find consent with our actual estimation (February 2024):

- Ed 'Andy' Anderson on trumpet is agreed upon for stylistic, technical and sound reasons.

- Also, there is no doubt as to Cuffee's presence for performance and stylistic reasons.

- The first alto player owns a much thicker sound and a much more appropriate approach to his horn than Albert Socarras. His swing is of the 'Harlem' style and much more driving. If we accept that this player also is the author of the 4-bar clarinet solo - what would be appropriate from a stock arrangement - I would suggest Ben Whitted from the Charlie Johnson band as our man here. This also for reasons discussed later. His rather bluesy and funky clarinet solo in the final 4-bar A part of the third chorus are compatible with what we know of Whitted. It has to be added that there are no Whitted alto-sax solos among the Charlie Johnson recordings. He only soloed on clarinet was this band. He did also solo on alto with Fats Waller and his Rhythm on the May 16, 1934 session.

- according to Russell Procope's reminiscences at Rutgers University he might as well be the third (second) alto saxophonist at this session. But lacking any decided individual strains heard, we do not know.

- The tenor sax soloist's tone is much stronger and slimmer than Arville Harris'. The same applies to his vibrato. As we have learned in our Clarence Williams investigation of years ago, Williams almost always hired a group of two or three musicians from a noted and respected working band in Harlem for his recordings. If we accept Ben Whitted as one of the reed players, it would consequently make sense to have a look for further musicians from Charlie Johnson band for this session, here. Thus, Ben Waters, Johnson's tenor player, may be a pretty nice candidate for our tenor sax player. More appropriate than Arville Harris, or Prince Robinson, or Happy Caldwell for stylistic, sound and tone reasons.

- The pianist? No idea! Yet, he presents a very individual ephemeral style in advanced harmonics, but lacking a basic left-hand bass.

- The banjo player "is more adventurous than usual" as he Storyville 'team' remarks in Storyville 24. This - I am sorry - I cannot hear.

What I hear is a retained banjo player, almost drowned by the horn-men's strong sound and the drummer's cymbal smashes. And his strumming is swinging and exact, without being unusual. Thus, I do not see any reason to doubt Leroy Harris' presence.

- The tuba player got me on the track of the Charlie Johnson band. Stylistically and tonally he unmistakably is Billy Taylor - Sr. that is - who was with the Charlie Johnson at this time. It decidedly is his rather light, a bit multi-noted and retained sound what can be recognised here. And his somewhat coated tone, not that bell-like sound of St. Clair.

- On drums I would tend to hear Clarence Williams' regular drummer Floyd Casey. But it seems to me that someone had ordered him to play more offensive than usual, and that they had supplied him with a couple of additional cymbals, as he plays a choked hi-hat cymbal in almost the whole 'Watchin' The Clock', alternated by a choked single cymbal in some short parts. In 'Freeze Out' it is the "modern" choked hi-hat cymbal again, played with single or double strokes. As usually, a snare drum cannot be recognised. The drummer's concept sounds a bit erratic, but this might well fit with Floyd Casey's way of playing. Alternately, the presence of Johnson's drummer George Stafford could also be considered. But this only in a state of alcoholic intoxication, as I think.

For this Socarras listing it has yet to be determined that Albert Socarras is not on these sides!

Notes:

- Storyville 24: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); poss Ben Whittet (clt, alt); unknown (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); unknown (pno); poss Charlie Dixon (bjo); poss June Cole (bbs); poss Kaiser Marshall (dms). Note: (Aug./Sep. 1969) "Two cornets have previously been shown for this session, the second being given as Tommy Ladnier. We can see the reason for this suggestion, but at no time are two men heard simultaneously and all the cornet work is compatible with Ed Allen. Again, the pianist is usually named as Fats Waller, but although this is certainly not Williams, we are equally certain that this is not Fats, since the cross-handed gimmicky playing would be out of character for him and the left hand lacks the firmness associated with him. We can go no further here than to say that it is a Harlem stride man of the second rank. Further problems crop up with the rhythm team which is clearly not one normally associated with Williams; the banjo is more adventurous than usual, the brass lacks the sensitivity of St. Clair and the drummer is much too busy for Casey and his fondness for cymbal work is suggestive of Kaiser Marshall - which leads us to think that this may well be the Henderson rhythm section, and although it is unlikely that Fletcher would have sat in under the nominal leadership of another man the pianistics are well within his technical ability."

- Lord, Clarence Williams p. 267: poss Ed Anderson (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); poss Ben Whittet (clt, alt); unknown (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); unknown (pno); poss Charlie Dixon (bjo); poss June Cole (bbs); poss Kaiser Marshall (dms).

- Rust*2: Ed Allen, (?) Tommy Ladnier (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Albert Socarras (?), Russell Procope (?) (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten);

Fats Waller (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; ?Ben Whittet, another -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; unknown -p; ?Charlie Dixon -bj; ?June Cole -bb; ?Kaiser Marshall -d.

Solos ad-lib:

401466: EA m-tpt 1; EC o-tbn 16; ?BWh clt 4; EA m-tpt 8; ? pno 4; EA m-tpt 4
 401467: ? pno 14; ?BWA ten 2+16

015 **EVA TAYLOR** Clarence Williams' Orchestra New York, Dec. 20, 1928
 Eva Taylor – voc;
 Ed Allen – cnt;
 Albert Socarras – flt; (*Russell Procope*) – alt; unknown – ten;
 Clarence Williams – pno; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs
 401469-A Happy Days And Lonely Nights OK 8665, Collectors Classics COCD-28
 401470-B If You Want The Rainbow (You Must Have The Rain) OK 8665, Collectors Classics COCD-28
Composer credits: 401469 (Rose - Fisher); 401470 (Rose – Dixon - Levant)

The flute can be heard throughout. There are two other reed players present, one of whom plays alto sax and the other tenor sax. The alto plays very straight and legitimately and has been suggested as Procope (see session 012 above). All accompaniment is scored on these sides, and there is only very little room for ad-lib playing on these sides, mainly by Ed Allen, but also by Socarras on flute for very short 8 bars in the second title. The most tasteful St. Clair with his tuba is a real joy to hear – as always!

Notes:

- Storyville 24: Ed Allen (cnt); unknown (clt, alt); Russell Procope (alt); Albert Socarras (flt, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs). "Russell Procope states that he had recorded with Williams at about this time and aurally, this is he. The unknown reed player is a "legitimate" musician."

- Lord, Clarence Williams p. 268: Ed Allen (cnt); unknown (clt, alt); Russell Procope (alt); Albert Socarras (flt, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Rust*3: Ed Allen -c; unknown -as; Albert Socarras -f; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

- Rust*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Albert Socarras -cl -f; unknown -cl -as; Russell Procope -as; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

- BGR*2: Ed Allen, cnt; unknown alt; Albert Socarras, flt; Clarence Williams, pno; Cyrus At. Clair, bbs.

- BGR*3,*4: Ed Allen, c; unknown, cl, as; Russell Procope, as; Albert Socarras, f, cl; Clarence Williams, pno; Cyrus At. Clair, bb.

Solos ad-lib:

401469: EA m-cnt 8

401470: EA m-cnt 8; EA m-cnt 1+16; AS flt 8

016 **CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS** New York, Dec. 21, 1928
 personnel unknown, presumably including Clarence Williams - pno
 147399 Do It, Baby Col unissued not on LP/CD
 147400 My Kitchen Man Col unissued not on LP/CD
 147726 If You Like Me Like Like I Like You Col unissued not on LP/CD

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

Notes:

- Storyville 24: unknown personnel and instrumentation.

- Lord, Clarence Williams p266/9: instrumentation and personnel unknown.

- Rust*2: prob similar to Ed Allen, (?) Tommy Ladnier (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Albert Socarras (?), Russell Procope (?) (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Fats Waller (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*3: Instrumentation and personnel unknown.

- Rust*4,*6: possibly: Ed Allen -c; Albert Socarras -cl -as -f; Arville Harris – cl -as -ts; Clarence Williams -p -v or James P. Johnson -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; perhaps others.

017 **CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS** New York, Feb. 05, 1929
 Ed Allen – cnt;
 Albert Socarras – alt, flt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;
 James P. Johnson – pno; Clarence Williams – pno (I); Leroy Harris – bjo;
 Clarence Williams - voc
 147726-4 If You Like Me Like Like I Like You Col 1735-D, Frog DGF 17
 147726-5 If You Like Me Like Like I Like You Col unissued not on LP/CD
 147728-3 Have You Ever Felt That Way Col 1735-D, Frog DGF 17
Composer credits: 147726 (Williams); 147728 (Williams and Castleton)

Tom Lord, Clarence Williams, p.279: "Both sources (Rust and TKD – KBR) assume the presence of Williams on piano, however we feel that it is definitely James P. Johnson on piano, with Williams possibly playing piano on part of the first title." I – KBR – am not able to define any part of these two titles where James P. is not playing the piano. And I feel unable to find any where Clarence takes over the piano.

The group's banjo specialist opted for Charlie Dixon on banjo because of stylistic characteristics that do not apply for Leroy Harris. This would probably mean the single-string parts behind Clarence's vocals and the total loss of the banjo below James P.'s piano. Here I must ask: wouldn't it be possible that Leroy Harris started to execute single-string playing behind Clarence's vocals and James P's piano just for his personal interest – or his fun? This banjoist obviously plays very reserved beside James P. Johnson. In general, Leroy Harris was a modest, un-obtrusive and reliable player and fitted perfectly for Clarence's piano playing and imagination.

Of Charlie Dixon's characteristics in contrast to Leroy Harris' I am unable to judge. I have listened – as long as my spare time permitted it – to Dixon's recordings with the Henderson band of 1928, without recognition of any traits other than Harris', but an even stricter tendency to strong four-four beat and notice of rhythmical particulars of the scores.

Also, I hear distinct characteristics of Ikey Robinson's style (the rhythmic impetus, the single-string passages below Clarence Williams' vocals, the sound of the banjo) and would be very certain about it, if only Robinson himself in Storyville 2002/3-39 had not reported that he started recording with Jabbo Smith in Chicago in the beginning of 1929 (The Rhythm Aces 29 Jan. 1929 and JS and his Rhythm Aces 22 Feb. 1929). But, physically, his presence in NYC for a day would have been possible at this date, but certainly unlikely.

Socarras does not play clarinet on these sides.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.

- Storyville 25: Ed Allen (cnt); Albert Socarras (clt, alt, flt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); James P. Johnson (pno); unknown (bjo); Clarence Williams (vcl). "It is possible that Clarence Williams may play piano on part of the first title."
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p279: Ed Allen (cnt); Albert Socarras (clt, alt, flt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); James P. Johnson (pno); Clarence Williams (vcl, pno (1)); poss Leroy Harris (bjo).
 - Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Albert Socarras (clt, flt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo).
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Albert Socarras -cl -as -f; Arville Harris -cl -ts; James P. Johnson -p; Leroy Harris -bj; Clarence Williams -v (and p on 147726-4?).

Solos ad-lib:

147726: EA m-cnt 16 + 8; EA m-cnt 16; CW voc 30; AH clt 2+16; CW voc 16; EA o-cnt 16; AH ten 8; EA o-cnt 8
 147728: JPJ pno 8; CW voc 32; EA m-cnt 2+32; AS flt 1+16; JPJ pno 8; AS flt 6; AH ten 2+16; EA m-cnt 8

018 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS	New York,	Mar. 19, 1929
instrumentation and personnel unknown, presumably including Clarence Williams - pno		
148104	Breeze (Blow My Baby Back To Me)	Col unissued not on LP/CD
148105	Mountain City Blues	Col unissued not on LP/CD

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

Notes:

- Storyville 25: unknown personnel and instrumentation.
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p282: unknown personnel and instrumentation.
 - Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Buster Bailey, Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris or Ben Waters (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*3: Instrumentation and personnel unknown.
 - Rust*4,*6: Instrumentation and personnel possibly similar to that of April 6, 1929..

019 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS	New York,	Apr. 06, 1929
Ed Allen – cnt; Ed Cuffee – tbn; Albert Socarras – alt, clt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt; Clarence Williams – pno, voc; Leroy Harris – bjo; Cyrus St. Clair - bbs		
148104-4	Breeze (Blow My Baby Back To Me)	Col 14422-D, Frog DGF 17
148105-5	Mountain City Blues	Col 14422-D, Frog DGF 17
Composer credits: 148104 (Hanley, McDonald and Goodwin); 148105 (Troutt)		

Contrary to the findings by Lord and the Storyville team, consensus is that it is the same two reed players throughout the session. There are two clarinets only behind Williams behind his vocal in 'Breeze' and behind Cuffee's solo on 'Mountain City Blues'. Prince Robinson is proposed on account of the virile tenor playing – and the smooth tone - behind Ed Allen's playing the verse in "Breeze", and his documented presence at the recording location two days later. And Socarras may be recognised by his silken tone and a bit wooden rhythm. The Storyville team's assumption that each side has a different saxophone section is a somewhat odd intellectual construction, as I think.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.
 - Storyville 25: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, alt)(1); Russell Procope (clt, alt)(2); Prince Robinson (clt, ten)(1); unknown (clt, ten)(2); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p284: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, alt)(1); Prince Robinson (clt, ten)(1); Russell Procope (clt, alt)(2); unknown (clt, ten)(2); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Buster Bailey, Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris or Ben Waters (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; Albert Socarras, Russell Procope -cl -as; Prince Robinson -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p -v; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.

Solos ad-lib:

184104: EC o-tbn 32; EA o-cnt 8; CW voc 28; EA o-cnt + EC o-tbn 4
 184105: CW voc 11; AS alt 1+12; CW voc 12; EC o-tbn 12; CW voc 10

020 CLARENCE WILLIAMS AND HIS BAND	New York,	Apr. 16, 1929
Frankie Newton – tpt; Ed Cuffee – tbn; Albert Socarras - alt, clt; Cecil Scott – ten, clt; (Don Frye) – pno; Leroy Harris – bjo; (Mack Walker) – bbs		
51230-1	I'm Not Worrying	Vic V-38630, Frog DGF 37
51231-1	Touch-Down	Vic V-38630, Frog DGF 37
Composer credits are: 51230 (C. Williams – "Fats" Waller); 51231 ("Fats" Waller)		

Newton was identified aurally by the author a few years ago and this identification has been confirmed by Newton's discographer, Bob Weir. In view of Williams' habit of using groups of musicians from bands resident in Harlem around the times of his recording sessions, the remaining unidentified musicians may well be from the Cecil Scott band, although the straight alto playing is probably Alberto Socarras, a musician mainly employed by Williams for his sight-reading skills.

The tenor sax playing behind the trumpet in the first chorus – as well as the clarinet - is decidedly typical for Cecil Scott's fluent and flexible style. This chase-chorus might have been the idea of Scott, as Newton was trumpeter in his band, and they both certainly knew how to co-operate. And listen to Newton's most individual and typical way of phrasing with its melodic "fragility" and the unequalled way of "hesitation" in its inner rhythm. (Very surprising for me was some author's remark in an article on Frankie Newton somewhere in the internet, that he "did not believe" in Newton's presence on these sides. Just a plain statement, un-substantiated, without any explanation and reason. This is not the way of dealing with such an interesting point. And I – KBR – am very (!) certain on this Newton matter.)

Ed Cuffee is the trombonist aurally.

The musicians given for the rhythm section in Rust and other discographic works do not correspond with what can be heard. The piano may perhaps be Don Frye and the tuba is probably Mack Walker – both players from the Cecil Scott Orchestra of this time, whereas the banjo player probably is Clarence Williams' regular of the time, Leroy Harris. It has to be kept in mind that it was a normal procedure for owners

of recording contracts without steady bands to snatch single - or even groups of - musicians from working bands for recording purposes. It is not Clarence Williams on piano here, but possibly Don Frye from the Scott Brothers' band.

The somewhat unusual arrangements used may be caused by the fact that they were Fats Waller compositions and thus possibly be published – and used - as piano sheet-music. 'Touch-Down' was also recorded by Clarence Williams under the title 'Railroad Rhythm' on September 26, 1929

Notes:

- Storyville 25: unknown (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); prob Albert Socarras and one other (reeds); poss J.C. Johnson (pno); unknown (bjo); unknown (bbs). "Clarence's second Victor session for the year 1929 had some curious results. This coupling is a discographer's nightmare. The band is obviously reading a somewhat tricky and unfamiliar arrangement of the sort that Fats was capable of turning out. It is extremely unlikely that Fats himself is at the piano but it is a stride man, hence the suggestion of J.C. Johnson, who could perform creditably in the idiom. Various ideas have been considered for the trumpet player, from a "sick" King Oliver to almost every other player of note around at the time, but we prefer to leave him as unknown. Cyrus St. Clair is an outside possibility for the bbs chair, but the banjoist is certainly not Leroy Harris or rather the man we have identified as Harris. The session is on all counts, something of a failure, and it is only when one realizes that it was not issued until December 12, 1930 – the height of the depression, when Victor was scaping around in the vaults rather than record new material – that one can see why it was issued."

- Rust, Victor Master Book Vol.2: c; tb; 2s; p; bj; bb.

- Lord, Clarence Williams p285: unknown (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); prob Albert Socarras and one other (reeds); poss J.C. Johnson (pno); unknown (bjo); unknown (bbs).

- Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Ed Cuffee (tbn); Buster Bailey, Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris or Ben Waters (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).

- Rust*3,*4,*6: unknown -c; Ed Cuffee -tb; ?Albert Socarras and another -cl -as; ?J.C. Johnson -p; unknown -bj; unknown -bb.

Tunes structures:

51230-1 I'm Not Worrying Key of C Victor
(Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 8 bars EC o-tbn 4 – saxes 4)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA FN m-tpt + CS ten 16 – ens 8 – FN m-tpt 8)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA CS clt + FN o-tpt + DF pno obbl)

51231-1 Touch-Down Key of C/F Victor
(Strain A1 8 bars ens)(Strain A2 8 bars saxes)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(Strain B 32 bars AABA saxes 6 – FN o-tpt 2 – AS clt + CS ten 8 – EC o-tbn 6 – ens 2 - saxes 6 – ens 2)(Strain C 12 bars EC o-tbn 6 – ens 4)(Strain D1 32 bars AB FN o-tpt + reeds)(Strain D 32 bars EC o-tbn + clts 28 – ens 4)

Solos ad-lib:

51230: EC o-tbn 4; FN m-tpt + CS ten 16; FN m-tpt 8; CS clt + FN o-tpt + DF pno 32

51231: FN o-tpt 4 + 2; EC o-tbn 6; EC o-tbn 6; FN o-tpt 32; EC o-tbn 32

021 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS

New York,

May 28, 1929

Ed Allen – cnt; Wilbur de Paris – tbn;

Albert Socarras – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

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

148638-2 In Our Cottage Of Love

Col 14434-D,

Frog DGF 17

148639-2 Them Things Got Me

Col 14434-D,

Frog DGF 17

Composer credits: 148638 (Milne and Schafer); 148639 (Williams and Jackson)

Allen, Harris and rhythm team undisputed, also the somewhat strained jazzy Socarras. The problem is the trombone player. He is suggested to be Wilbur de Paris because of this man's not very melodic legato style and his ability to play bouncing trills which requires some amount of technique that certainly was not common in those days among jazz trombone players (see also next session).

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.

- Storyville 26: Ed Allen (cnt); unknown (tbn); Buster Bailey (alt); unknown (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms). "Note. The trombonist here previously listed as Jimmy Harrison (!) makes far too many mistakes to be he and equally sounds far too mobile to be Cuffee, so we prefer to list him unknown. We would have identified the clarinet player as Harris ... as we would the tenor which rides straight out of of the clarinet on 148639, but on balance think that Harris is more likely as the tenor man – but who then is the clarinet???"

- Lord, Clarence Williams p290: Ed Allen (cnt); unknown (tbn); unknown (clt, alt); prob Arville Harris (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Buster Bailey, Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*3: Ed Allen -c; unknown -tb; Buster Bailey and another -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d.

- Rust*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; unknown -tb; unknown -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d.

Solos ad-lib:

148638: AH ten 4; AS alt 4; AH ten 4; AS alt 4; WdP o-tbn 8; AH ten 4; AS alt 4; WdP o-tbn 16; EA m-cnt 1+8; WdP o-tbn 8; AH clt 8

148639: EA o-cnt 4 +4; AS alt 16; WdP o-tbn 4 + 4; AH clt 16

022 CLARENCE WILLIAMS' JAZZ KINGS

New York,

Jun. 21, 1929

Ed Allen – cnt; Wilbur de Paris – tbn;

Albert Socarras – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

Clarence Williams – pno; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs; Floyd Casey – dms;

Clarence Williams - voc

148744-2 Whoop It Up

Col 14447-D,

Frog DGF 17

148745-3 I'm Not Worrying

Col 14447-D,

Frog DGF 17

Composer credits: 148744 (Jackson); 148745 (Williams and Waller)

Again, only two reeds present, most likely Socarras and Harris who certainly were Williams' regulars at this time.

According to Storyville 26, p. 51 Wilbur de Paris volunteered the information to Brian Rust that he had made a number of sides with Williams, and on hearing these thought that he might have been on them. He plays a very pleasing and cultivated straight half-chorus in the

second title while his obligato to Clarence's vocal in that title has blues and earth.

Notes:

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: Author gives accumulated personnel without distinct deposition.

- Storyville 26: Ed Allen (cnt); poss Wilbur de Paris (tbn); unknown (alt); prob Arville Harris (ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms). "Note: Wilbur de Paris volunteered the information to Brian Rust that he had made a number of sides with Williams, and on hearing these thought that he might have been on them."

- Lord, Clarence Williams p292: Ed Allen (cnt); poss Wilbur de Paris (tbn); 2 unknown (alt); prob Arville Harris (ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*2: Ed Allen (cnt); Wilbur de Paris (tbn); Buster Bailey, Albert Socarras (clt, alt); Arville Harris (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs); Floyd Casey (dms).

- Rust*3: Ed Allen -c; ?Wilbur de Paris (tbn); 2 unknown -as; ?Arville Harris -ts; Clarence Williams -p -v; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d.

- Rust*4,*6: Ed Allen -c; unknown -tb; unknown -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p; Cyrus St. Clair -bb; Floyd Casey -d.

Solos ad-lib:

148744: EA m-cnt 18; AS alt 6

148745: EA m-cnt 32; WdP m-tbn 32 obl to voc; EA o-cnt + WdP m-tbn 8

023 **MARY DIXON**

New York,

Oct. 31, 1929

Mary Dixon – voc;

Ed Allen - cnt;

unknown – clt;

J.C. Johnson – pno

149455-3 Daddy, You're A Low Down Man

Col 14532-D,

Document DOCD-5504

149456-3 Unhappy Blues

Col 14532-D,

Document DOCD-5504

Very beautiful Ed Allen of Clarence Williams fame undeniably here with his cornet. There is great and very melodic double-handed piano playing, stylistically certainly by J.C. Johnson.

I very much doubt Socarras' presence. Socarras technically was a much better player, but he played less funky/bluesy than this player here – if at all, and his rhythmic approach was less swinging, but stiffer in the kind of the Caribbean players. I would therefore list this player as unknown. I do not know any player possibly being responsible for these clarinet sounds. Mahony lists the above participants cum Socarras as "reputedly"! This would certainly mean that he had no officially documented personnel from the Columbia vaults. Insofar, I feel sufficiently entitled to doubt Socarras' presence here. Unfortunately only, I feel unable to name another possible player instead.

Notes:

- Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 2: Acc. unknown.

- Mahony, Columbia 13/14000 Series: acc. cnt; clt; p; reputedly Ed Allen, Alberto Socarras, J.C. Johnson resp.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Ed Allen, c; ?Albert Socarras, cl; J.C. Johnson, p.

- BGR*2,*3,*4: Ed Allen, cnt; poss Albert Socarras, clt; J.C. Johnson, pno.

024 **MEMPHIS JAZZERS**

New York,

Nov. 1929

Walter Bennett – tpt voc (2);

Albert Socarras – alt, clt (2); Walter Edwards – clt, alt;

Porter Grainger – pno

3741-A Don't Know And Don't Care

GG 1797,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

4742-B Ev'rybody Dance

GG 1816,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

4743-B Miss Golden Brown

GG 1805,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

4744-A In Harlem's Araby

GG 1804

not on LP/CD

4744-B In Harlem's Araby

GG 1804,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

Composer credits: 3741 (Grainger); 3742 (Grainger); 3743 (Grainger); 3744 (Grainger)

The inclusion of this and the following session may come as a surprise to everybody interested in the recordings of classic jazz in New York in the twenties, even more so to people interested in the Grey Gull group of recordings. For all these years collectors have assembled dates and personels on classic jazz recordings since the late thirties, much has been suspected of who is playing here. Rust in his early years suggested no one less than King Oliver as trumpet player here, later changing his mind as to Mike Mosiello on trumpet - this for a comparison! - and when reading LP or CD cover texts on these sessions, the reader is astonished at how these assumptions all fit together. On the history of placing and classifying these two sessions I would like to point out to Laurens Hertzdahl's most interesting article in VJM (www.vjm.biz/newpage4.htm), which nevertheless does not bring us further on except for the fact, that Mosiello is at least very questionable! Interestingly Mr. Hertzdahl says: "Some collectors attribute the trumpet playing to Louis Metcalf who recorded on other Grey Gull sessions (e.g. The Wabash Trio)." They are exactly right, only, that Metcalf is not on the Wabashes, but Bennett. It certainly is a severe mistake to rely on Rust in all his editions and take it for granted when trying to find out personels of the early period of jazz. This is not to diminish his efforts and his work!

Take numbering again after Rust 6*.

- When listening to my Bennett compilations it happened, that I immediately afterwards by chance had the Memphis Jazzers on my CD player, and when listening to these titles, it dawned on me, that I heard very familiar trumpet phrasing, which I had just heard before. And after repeated listening I, for my part, became certain that this was Walter Bennett on trumpet here. It is the same tone, vibrato, phrasing and time as before. Only that on these two sessions Bennett also plays muted trumpet, which may irritate the listener. Maybe he had a good connection with the Grey Gull people after the Wabash and Moonlight recordings? After all, what a better compliment can you think of than having him taken for King Oliver by Rust?!

Assigning the Memphis Jazzers to Walter Bennett, we have a completely new direction as to the reed players! First: forget Sannella. And second: we hear two different reed players, one playing mostly clarinet, the other one mostly alto sax.

- The clarinetist, who also doubles on alto (or ten?) on 'Miss Golden Brown' chorus I, owns a rather harsh tone and a simple phrasing. I think to hear traces of Caribbean tone scales as on the Houdinis. So, Walter Edwards of the Houdinis could be a possibility here, as obviously he was part of a group of Caribbean musicians residing in New York, taking part in recording sessions by Houdini and Sam Manning. Yet, I certainly cannot be sure and would like to invite interested collectors/ musicians to compare and let me know their conclusions!

- The alto player has knowledge of - for the time - advanced harmonies and seems to be much more technically accomplished than the clarinetist. He plays all the alto solos (and perhaps the low toned clarinet solo on 'Ev'rybody Dance'. I see the possibility, that this man is Alberto Socarras, who also plays alto on the Swamplanders' 'Big Ben', and I think to hear his characteristic wooden and not swinging time. Instrumental technique and accomplishment and harmonic knowledge would be fitting to Socarras. As before, please, listen and let me know your conclusions! There certainly could be a connection to W. Edwards and other Caribbean musicians, as Socarras came from Cuba.

- As nobody knows the piano player, it has been the rule to list Porter Grainger because he is listed as composer of all four titles recorded at this session. Hertzdahl writes: "*The piano style is confident and strong, suggestive of Grainger's known style (hear him accompanying Ethel Waters on her 1924 Vocalion recording of 'Pleasure Mad' or accompanying Lena Wilson on her Victor recording of 'Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness If I Do' to get a good idea of his abilities)*". I have nothing to add.

For sceptics: my assumptions and suggestions re the reed players may be wrong, but they at least are much nearer the truth than anything listed before. If they should not be the real thing, I nevertheless do not feel ashamed!

Notes:

- Rust*2: Mike Mosiello (tpt); Andy Sanella (clt, alt); unknown (alt); Porter Grainger (?) (pno); unknown (Negro?) (vcl).

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Mike Mosiello -t; Andy Sanella -cl -as; unknown -as; ?Porter Grainger -p (composer of all four numbers recorded at this session); unknown negro -v.

Tunes:

3741-A *Don't Know And Don't Care* key of Eb Grey Gull

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 28 bars AB alt (AS))(Chorus 2 tpt)(Chorus 3 clt (WE) / ens)

4742-B *Ev'rybody Dance* key of Eb Grey Gull

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 1 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 16 bars AA' ens)(Chorus 2 alt (AS))(Verse 2 ens)(Chorus 3 clt (WE))(Chorus 4 voc (WB?))(Chorus 5 ens)(Coda 4 bars ens)

4743-B *Miss Golden Brown* key of F Grey Gull

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA saxes)(Chorus 2 tpt 16 bars / alt (AS) 16 bars)(alt. Chorus 1 12 bars blues tpt)(alt. Chorus 2 12 bars clt (WE))(Chorus 3 32 bars ens)

4744-A *In Harlem's Araby* pres key of Eb/Cm Grey Gull

listed by RUST, but not inspected. (exists in possession of Mr. Hertzdahl). Presumably same as 4744-B

4744-B *In Harlem's Araby* key of Eb / Cm Grey Gull

(Intro 4 bars pno)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 1 16 bars AA alt (AS))(Chorus 2 tpt)(alt. Chorus 1 16 bars minor clt (WE))(alt. Chorus 2 clt (WE))Vamp 4 bars pno(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 3 alt (AS))(Chorus 4 tpt 8 bars / ens 8 bars)

025 **LEVEE SYNCOPATORS**

New York,

c. Jan. 17, 1930

Walter Bennett – tpt;

Albert Socarras – alt; Walter Edwards – ten, clt;

Claude Austin – pno; unknown - bjo

3843-A *The Rackett*

GG 1843,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

3843-B *The Rackett*

GG 1843,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

3844-A *The Harlem Stomp Down*

GG 1836,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

3844-B *The Harlem Stomp Down*

GG 1836,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8038

Composer credits: 3843 (Claude Austin); 3844 (Claude Austin)

This is the second enigmatic Grey Gull session (see Memphis Jazzers above), and again I hope to have found out part of the solution. All I have said for the Memphis Jazzers session applies also for this one. L. Hertzdahl, a profound connoisseur of Grey Gull recordings, writes in his letter to the author: "*I'm convinced that both the Levee and the Memphis Jazzers sides have the same sidemen.*" To this I again have nothing to add.

In Rust*6 this recording session is listed under Grey Gull Studio Bands!

- Trumpet player again certainly Walter Bennett.

- Clarinet player - and tenor sax - possibly Walter Edwards.

- Alto sax possibly Alberto Socarras.

- A big problem is the piano player. L. Hertzdahl writes: "*The identity of the piano player on the Levee sides is still a mystery. The composer credit on my copy of Harlem Stomp Down and The Rackett is Claude Austin, however there is not a trace to be found of this musician anywhere. He was not a member of the musicians union so this name could have been an invention of a Grey Gull executive to cover something up, maybe to prevent royalty claims.*" So, I follow Hertzdahl and Rust and list Claude Austin as a possibility.

Barclay Draper in Storyville 87, p. 95: "*The leader who gave me the job (1926) was Claude Austin, a very popular and good pianist. We also played at Herman's Inn on 145th Street. Claude Austin was a composer, arranger, and a very fine person. He eventually settled in South America and married a wealthy senorita.*"

Another proof of this man's existence is his participation in a recording by singer Happy Holmes on Victor 21075 together with Thomas Morris. This recording is not listed in Rust but in Godrich/Dixon and may therefore have been overlooked for long.

- This personnel includes a banjo player, but as this man plays rhythm banjo throughout, a name cannot be attributed. We have to leave him unknown.

The identification of the composer of the tunes recorded by the Levee Syncopators as an Afro-American pianist and bandleader will certainly strengthen my suggestion that the Levee Syncopators (and the Memphis Jazzers accordingly) are groups of Afro-American musicians and not, as for a long time suggested, groups containing white musicians Mike Mosiello and Andy Sannella.

Notes:

- Rust*2: unknown tpt; unknown clt, alt; unknown alt; Claude Austin (?) (pno); unknown bjo.

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Mike Mosiello -t; unknown -cl -as; Andy Sanella -as; ?Claude Austin -p; unknown -bj.

Tunes:

3843-A *The Rackett* key of C / Bb / C Grey Gull

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA' ens 16 bars / saxes 16 bars)(Verse 24 bars ens)(Chorus 2 (Bb) alt 8 bars / tpt 6 bars / ten 10 bars / tpt 6 bars / 2 bars belonging to bridge)(Bridge 2 bars ens)(Chorus 3 ens)(Coda 2 bars ens)

3843-B *The Rackett* key of C / Bb / C Grey Gull

same as 3843-A

3844-A *The Harlem Stomp Down* key of F Grey Gull

(Intro 4 bars clt - ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA ens)(Verse 16 bars ens)(Chorus 2 tpt)(Chorus 3 clt 16 bars / alt 8 bars / ens 8 bars)

4844-B *The Harlem Stomp Down* key of F Grey Gull

same as 3844-A

Discernible differences of takes:

3843-A: Chorus 2 bars 10 - 14 tpt + alt
 3843-B: Chorus 2 bars 10 - 14 tpt only
 3844-A: Chorus 3 bars 25 - 27 (last eight bars of tune) clt playing low notes in ens
 3844-B: Chorus 3 bars 25 - 27 (last eight bars of tune) clt playing sequence of 10 high quarter notes (f''')

026 **MARGARET WEBSTER** New York, Feb. 13, 1930
 Margaret Webster – voc;
 Ed Anderson – tpt;
 Garvin Bushell – clt; Albert Socarras – alt;
 Clarence Williams - pno
 149981-1 Wipe 'Em Off Ve 7976, Document DOCD-5376
 149982-3 How Can I Get It (When You Keep On Snatchin' It Back) Ve 7966, Document DOCD-5376

The playing on clarinet is similar to that on the Bessie Smith session of 27 March 1930 on which it is definitely Bushell. So, we give Bushell the clarinet and Socarras the alto sax despite former determinations.

Notes:

- Storyville 26: Ed Anderson (cnt); unknown (clt); Alberto Socarras (alt); Clarence Williams (pno).
 - Lord, Clarence Williams p313: Ed Anderson (tpt); poss Albert Socarras (clt); poss Garvin Bushell (alt); Clarence Williams (pno).
 - Rust*3: Ed Anderson -c; unknown -cl; Albert Socarras -as; Clarence Williams -p.
 - Rust*4,*6: Ed Anderson -c; ?Albert Socarras -cl; ?Garvin Bushell -as; Clarence Williams -p.
 - BGR*2: Ed Anderson, cnt; Alberto Socarras, clt; unknown, alt; Clarence Williams, pno.
 - BGR*3,*4: Ed Anderson, c; poss Alberto Socarras, cl; poss Garvin Bushell, as; Clarence Williams, p.

027 **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. I - KBR – do not identify Eva Taylor as this singer, in that Eva Taylor has more substance in her voice, the more so when singing in low register. But tone, phrasing and delivery is very akin to Eva.

Clarence seems to be in another tune when playing the intro to 'What If We Do'. Ed Anderson plays wonderfully bluesy and with funk, Bushell tends to this side on his clarinet, yet rather retained. But Socarras is more on the harmonic and academical side – listen to his nice and interesting alto solo in the second title.

Personnel as #026 above. (see Storyville 14/40 and 16/22 on this matter).

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.
 - 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.
 - 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."

028 **LAZY LEVEE LOUNGERS** New York, Jun. 25, 1930
 Charlie Gaines, George 'Buddy' Lee – tpt; unknown – tbn;
 Albert Socarras – alt, clt, flt; Prince Robinson – ten, clt;
 Clarence Williams - pno; Leroy Harris - bjo; Cyrus St. Clair – bbs;
 Clarence Williams - voc
 150612-1 If I Could Be With You (One Hour To-Night) Col 2243-D, Frog DGF 17
 150613-1 Shout, Sister, Shout ! Col 2243-D, Frog DGF 17
 Composer credits: 150612 (Creamer and Johnson); 150613 (Williams, Brymn and Hill)

This session is discussed as an early possible Roy Eldridge appearance on records, but seems unlikely since according to Chilton, Eldridge came to New York in October 1930. Yet it should be considered, that Eldridge might have been in New York before settling down there in October. The only serious suggestion for the second trumpet player is Buddy Lee (YFS). YFS also suggests Jonas Walker for trombone. There is slight doubt about the banjo player being Leroy Harris.

After occupying myself more intensely with Jonas Walker's trombone style, I must clearly state that the trombonist on these two sides have very little in accordance with Mr. Walker, and I sadly have to revoke YFS' suggestion of a couple of years ago. Sorry, YFS! There is nothing which reminds me of Walker's playing on the foregoing session. But YFS' suggestion for the McKinney's Cotton Pickers' trumpeter Buddy Lee as second trumpeter of this session here implies a good deal of likelihood, and I tend to list this player here, the more so as the MCKP's tenor sax player Prince Robinson is on this session, as well. And the clean and sober trumpet style heard may certainly be Lee's. Thanks, YFS!

The first trumpet solo on 'If I Could Be With You' certainly is by Charlie Gaines. It's his style, tone and vibrato. Gaines' own testimony says that he "definitely was on these two sides". But there is a very agile second trumpet player, whose presence is discussed as a possible first Roy Eldridge appearance on records, but seems unlikely since, according to Chilton, Eldridge came to New York in October 1930. He might be the soloist on the second title. Yet it should be considered, that Eldridge might have been in New York before settling down there in October. Our listening team suggests Jonas Walker for trombone (very interestingly Charlie Green also has been listed as a "possible" for some time). Listen to the sweet saxophone lead by Socarras! And his flute obligato. On clarinet and tenor sax is undoubtedly Prince

Robinson. Harris is the likely banjo player. And there is the incomparable player of the tuba, Cyrus St. Clair, "singing" on his majestic instrument.

Notes:

- *Storyville 27: Henry 'Red' Allen, prob Charlie Gaines (tpt); Albert Socarras (clt, flt, alt); Prince Robinson (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- *Lord, Clarence Williams p321: Charlie Gaines, unknown (tpt); unknown (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, flt, alt); Prince Robinson (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- *Rust*2: Charlie Gaines and another (tpt); unknown (tbn); Buster Bailey, Arville Harris (clt, alt); Prince Robinson (clt, ten); Clarence Williams (pno, vcl); Leroy Harris (bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- *Rust*3: Charlie Gaines and another -t; unknown -tb; Arville Harris and another -cl -as; Prince Robinson -cl -ts; Clarence Williams -p -v; Leroy Harris -bj; Cyrus St. Clair -bb.*

- *Rust*6: Charlie Gaines, unknown, t; unknown, tb; Albert Socarras, as, cl, fl; Prince Robinson, ts, cl; Clarence Williams, p; Leroy Harris, bj; Cyrus St. Clair, bb.*

Solos ad-lib:

150612: CH o-tpt 1+16; PR ten 4; AS flt obl to voc 14, PR ten 6; AS flt 1

150613: PR ten 8; PR ten 1+32; ?? o-tbn 16; PR clt 8; ?? o-tbn 8; GBL o-tpt 2+24

029 CLARENCE WILLIAMS & HIS JAZZ KINGS

New York,

Jul. 23, 1930

(Charlie Gaines) – tpt; unknown – tbn;

Albert Socarras – alt, clt, flt; unknown – alt, clt; Arville Harris – ten, clt;

Leroy Harris – bjo; (Cyrus St. Clair) – bbs;

Clarence Williams - dir

150659-2 High Society Blues

Col 14555-D,

Frog DGF 17

150660-2 Lazy Levee Loungers (From "Garrick Gaieties")

Col 14555-D,

Frog DGF 17

Composer credits: 150659 (Williams); 150660 (Robinson)

Once again, this was discussed as a possible Roy Eldridge item, but has been denied because of the above noted reasons. The trombone is impossible to identify for lack of exposure. Socarras is identified on the strength of his flute playing. Harris possibly is the other reed player. There certainly are three of them, not two only as noted at this spot some years ago during our evaluation of the whole Clarence Williams output. There is no piano to be heard so Williams might simply be directing. Harris is the likely banjo player. Lord and the Storyville team feel that the sound of the tuba is "too heavy" to be St. Clair's, but I contradict! Instead, I hear it as too flat and too short. The player might be a man as McKinney's Cotton Pickers' Bob Escudero. And also: the banjo's sound is not that attributed to Leroy Harris. Instead, to me he sounds like Buddy Christian.

Notes:

- *Storyville 27: Henry 'Red' Allen (tpt); unknown (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, flt, alt); unknown (alt, clt); poss Arville Harris (ten, clt); unknown (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); prob Leroy Harris (bjo); unknown (bbs).*

- *Lord, Clarence Williams p322: possibly Charlie Gaines or Roy Eldridge (tpt); unknown (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, flt, alt); unknown (alt, clt); poss Arville Harris (ten, clt); unknown (ten); Clarence Williams (pno); prob Leroy Harris (bjo); unknown (bbs).*

- *Rust*2: unknown (tpt); unknown (tbn); Albert Socarras (clt, flt, alt); unknown (alt, clt); Arville Harris (?)(ten, clt); Clarence Williams (pno); Leroy Harris (?)(bjo); Cyrus St. Clair (bbs).*

- *Rust*3: Henry Allen -t; unknown -tb; Albert Socarras -cl -as -f; unknown -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; unknown -ts; Clarence Williams -p; ?Leroy Harris -bj; unknown -bb.*

- *Rust*4,*6: Henry Allen (or possibly Charlie Gaines or Roy Eldridge) -t; unknown -tb; Albert Socarras -cl -as -f; unknown -cl -as; Arville Harris -cl -ts; unknown -ts; Clarence Williams -p; ?Leroy Harris -bj; unknown -bb.*

Solos ad-lib:

150659: AS flt 30

150660: CG o-tpt 16 + 4; CG o-tpt 8; CG o-tpt 16 + 8

030 BENNETT'S SWAMPLANDERS

New York,

Sep. 05, 1930

Walter Bennett – tpt; Isaiah 'Big Ike' Robinson – tbn;

Albert Socarras – clt, alt, flt;

J. C. Johnson – pno; unknown – gtr, bjo; unknown – bbs;

J.C. Johnson – voc (2)

150767-2 Big Ben

Col 14557-D,

Frog DGF 32

150768-2 You Can't Be Mine And Somebody Else's Too

Col 14557-D,

Frog DGF 32

150769-2 Jet Black Blues

Col 14662-D,

Frog DGF 32

Composer credits: 150767 (Johnson); 150768 (Johnson); 150769 (Johnson)

Walter Bennett appears as band leader here, and these recordings should be regarded as reference for all the other items listed.

- On trumpet unequivocally Walter Bennett!

- Isaiah "Trombone Ike" Robinson is listed here for the first time, I think. RUST 6* still leaves him unknown. Yet STORYVILLE 32 - December 1979 - bears a remark in "Afterthoughts", that Graham Russell talked to Isiah (sic – KBR) "Trombone Ike" Robinson, who said that he made the title Big Ben with "Cuban" Bennett.

Now, there are some problems here. First, "Cuban" Bennett is NOT Walter Bennett! Walter Bennett's nickname was "Jock", whereas "Cuban" Bennett, being Benny Carter's cousin, was a highly regarded trumpet player in Harlem in the twenties. But he never recorded, living a restrained life dominated by alcohol, playing little clubs and obviously lacking any ambition. So, Robinson probably got the two Bennetts mixed up. And second: you won't find a trombonist by the name of Isiah Robinson listed anywhere in Harlem. But: when reading Daniel Hardie's 'Exploring Early Jazz' the other day, I came across an Isiah (sic – KBR) Robinson as member of the Camellia Orchestra of 1917 in New Orleans being led by Wooden Joe Nicholas. Searching further I found the name in Rose/Souchon 'Family Album'. Listed here is Isaiah (sic) "Big Ike" Robinson as member of several bands, working with Chris Kelly until the latter's death in 1927, having retired in 1937. Halas, there is no mention of him having made trip(s) to New York. But, if we consider him as the possible trombonist, he must have stayed in Harlem for some time, or, alternately, must have made several trips to be recorded with the Hot Sparks (Feb. 1929), the 'Swamplanders' (September 1930) and possibly the Revellers (August 1929). This New Orleans trombone player was apparently known under two nicknames: "Trombone Ike" and "Big Ike", respectively.

But this trombone player's style here reminds me very much of a New Orleans man, and it is therefore not surprising, that Davies and Wright say, that "both tone and style are very like those of Roy Palmer. However, it seems unlikely that Palmer would have been on the East coast at the time." So, Robinson is a very interesting and likely possibility, and it should be kept in mind, that he, Robinson, as a New Orleans musician, must have had some intimate knowledge of little-known Harlem musicians (naming "Cuban" (!) Bennett) that he probably can only have gathered in Harlem himself!

- Who else could have played a flute like that in Harlem of the late twenties? So, for a long time now, Socarras has been listed as the reed man here. Citing Davies / Wright article: "The 'Swamplanders' clarinet/sax is also a fine musician, but is possessed neither of the same attack nor of the same warmth of tone displaying traits associated with classical training; the story is quite different, though, when he takes to flute on *You Can't Be Mine* and ripples his way through with incredible technique, beautiful tone, and a wonderful sense of music which goes so far beyond the reed work that in spite of reconciliation between reed and flute styles we are inclined to the belief that this may not be the same man." Yet, certainly he is, and the reader is referred to an excellent article on Alberto Socarras in 'Storyville 90'. Re his traits of classical training: it is this feature that obviously makes his time so wooden and un-swinging. He had not grown up in jazz surroundings in Cuba.

- On piano J. C. Johnson seems to be undisputed. He also seems to be the vocalist on 'You Can't Be Mine', which is his own composition. In my ears this is a great song, which has been undeservedly little recorded, except for Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald and Fats Waller in one of his Yacht Club broadcasts.

- Bernard Addison has been formerly listed as guitarist. This man here plays banjo at least in the first and second title. I am unable to decide what he plays on the third title: maybe some sort of dobroe or any kind of banjo-guitar hybrid? I do not question Addison's identity here. It has been questioned if Addison played banjo at all. He did, as can be seen in a photo of the Seminole Syncopators on the cover of Collector's Items LP 006. ADDITION : In Storyville 78/235 L. Wright says that Addison being played these sides disclaimed his presence saying only that it was "nice work". So, the banjo/guitar player's identity remains unknown!

- Last the tuba player. Davies/Wright say: "Also a fine musician is the brass bass player on the *Swamplanders* who may well be none other than Cyrus St. Clair whose fullness of tone and delicately precise attack have made him - in our book at least - one of the finest, if not THE finest, performer of all time on this instrument." As much as I would like to follow two experts as these two, I am completely unable to do so here. What they say about St. Clair is absolutely right in my eyes, but this man here does not have a beautiful cloudy tone like St. Clair, and he does not play rhythmically assured as St. Clair does, and in the middle break of chorus 1 of 'Big Ben' he nearly makes the rhythm collapse. I would leave this man listed as unknown.

Notes:

- D. Mahony, Columbia 13/14000-D Series: instrumental group, possibly a J.C. Johnson unit.

- Rust*2: Louis Metcalfe (tpt); J.C. Higginbotham (tbn); Ernest Elliott (clt); J.C. Johnson (pno); Bernard Addison (?)(gtr); unknown (bbs); unknown (vcl).

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Walter Bennett -t; unknown -tb; Albert Socarras -cl -f; J.C. Johnson -p; Bernard Addison -g; unknown -bb; unknown -v.

Tunes:

150767-2 *Big Ben* Key of Eb Columbia
(Intro 8 bars tpt/alt)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA' ens)(Verse 16 bars alt)(Chorus 2 tpt)(Chorus 3 clt)(Chorus 4 tbn 14 bars - ens 18 bars)
(Coda 2 bars clt)

150768-2 *You Can't Be Mine And Somebody Else's Too* Key of F Columbia
(Intro 8 bars flt)(Verse 10 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA' flt - tpt)(Chorus 2 voc - flt)(Chorus 3 tpt 24 bars / ens 8 bars)

150769-2 *Jet Black Blues* Key of Eb Columbia
(Chorus 1 12 bars blues ens)(Chorus 2 ens)(Chorus 3 tbn)(Chorus 4 clt)(Chorus 5 tpt - ens)

031	WOODING'S GRAND CENTRAL RED CAPS	New York,	May 13, 1931
	unknown, unknown – tpt; Benny Morton – tbn; Q. Wooding or (Albert Socarras?) – alt, clt, flt; unknown – alt, clt; Gene Kennedy – ten, clt; unknown – pno; unknown - bjo; unknown – bbs; Percy Robinson – dms; Willie Jackson – voc (1,2); Frank Luther – voc (3)		
69607-2	Nina	Vic 23382,	Frog DGF 11
69608-1	Niagara Falls	Vic 23382,	Frog DGF 11
69609	That's My Desire	Vic unissued	not on LP/CD
69610-1	I Can't Get Enough Of You	Vic 22718,	Frog DGF 11
	Composer credits: 69607 (Andy Razaf – Russell Wooding); 69608 (Walter Brown); 69610 (Joe Goodwin _ Larry Shay)		

This is expertly played hot dance music from New York in the early 1930s, not very jazzy – and not funky at all, but well suited for dancing. The band recorded four titles for Victor on May 13, 1931, of which 'That's My Desire' was unissued, but re-recorded at the later session below.

Rather curiously we find trombonist Bennie Morton among the band's musicians.

In 'I Can't Get Enough Of You' a flute is present among the three-part reed section, but heard only in the vocal chorus together with an oboe. As Wooding's flutist is named as his brother Quentin in Storyville 72-215 (see below), Socarras might possibly only be an assumption of record collectors conveyed to Brian Rust and listed in Rust*4,*6, based on his uniqueness as flutist among coloured musicians in the late 1920s in New York.

The flute part heard in this title is quite short in size and requirement, and may well be played by any flutist. But regarding Quentin Wooding's documented activity as reed/flute-player in his brother's band in c. 1929 (see below) this might well be a clue to this player's identity. The scored flute parts, yet, do not allow any determination as to the musician's identity.

Another name cited in Storyville 72 is a Mr. Kennedy playing oboe. He might possibly be the ill-famed Gene Kennedy, notorious for always carrying a gun and threatening others, but known for playing with Luis Russell, June Clark, Leon Abbey and other leaders. (He is the soprano sax player on the famous Pery Bradford band photo in 'Keepnews / Grauer, A Pictorial History of Jazz', p.129! It must yet be added that the band shown actually is 'June Clark and his Creole Stompers', house band at 'Smalls' Sugar Cane Club' in 1924/25!)

If in fact this is 'this' Gene Kennedy, he must be the tenor sax soloist in the band, playing an un-swinging tenor sax style of by-gone times, yet the only examples of this enigmatic man's musical activities on record.

Notes:

- Storyville 72-215: Russell Wooding Orchestra (no date, no location, but before August 1929?): Demas Dean, trumpet; Juan Tizol, Trombone; --- Blanchette, violin; Russell Wooding, piano; R. Tizol, bass; --- Kennedy, oboe; Q. Wooding, flute; unknown, banjo; unknown, drums; Busch (sic) Hunter, cello, vocal; Wesley Howard, violin.

- L. Wright, "Fats" in Fact, p.61: "The 'International Musician' of February 1930 has a report of what appears to be the Russell Wooding Orchestra from Local 9 of Boston which lists Russell Wooding, Bernard Parker, vn; Willie Hicks, t; Joe Marshall, d; Thomas Waller, p; Charles Green, tb; and Dallas Chambers, t."

- Rust*2: two unknown (tpt); unknown (tbn); three unknown (reeds); unknown (pno); unknown (bjo); unknown (bbs); Percy Robinson (dms); Willie Jackson, Frank Luther (vcl)
 - Rust*3: two unknown -t; unknown -tb; three unknown -cl -ss -as -ts; unknown -p; unknown -bj; unknown -bb; Percy Robinson -d; Willie Jackson, Frank Luther -v
 - Rust*4: 2 unknown -t; Benny Morton (?) -tb; Albert Socarras -as -f; 2 unknown -cl -ss -as -ts -one doubling -o; unknown -p; unknown -bj; unknown -bb; Percy Robinson -d; Willie Jackson, Frank Luther -v
 - Rust*6: unknown, unknown, t; Benny Morton, tb; unknown, unknown, cl, ss, as; unknown, cl, ss, ts; Albert Socarras, as, f; unknown p; unknown bj; unknown bb; Percy Robinson, d; Willie Jackson, Frank Luther -v

032 **WOODING'S GRAND CENTRAL RED CAPS** New York, May 20, 1931
 unknown, unknown – tpt; Benny Morton – tbn;
Q. Wooding or (*Albert Socarras?*) – alt, clt, flt; unknown – alt, clt; *Gene Kennedy* – ten, clt;
 unknown – pno; unknown – bjo; unknown – bbs; Percy Robinson – dms;
 Dick Robertson – voc
 69609-4 That's My Desire Vic 22718, Frog DGF 12

This is the re-recording of the unissued title of the fore-going session. No additional titles seem to have been recorded on this date. Here the flutist leads the three-piece reed section, again including an oboe, in the first chorus. He may well be the same musician as before in the vocal chorus of 'I Can't Get Enough Of You'. Yet, on this 'That's My Desire' he is featured much more on flute, playing scored fast arpeggiated phrases behind the vocalist.

In case this in fact would be Socarras as listed in Rust*4,*6, he is not added to a three-piece reed section, but is part of it, and would thus perhaps be an integral part of the Wooding band. But unfortunately, Socarras does not mention any connection or business with the Russell Wooding band - recording for Victor - in his reminiscence in Storyville 90! Instead, he remembered working as a studio musician for Columbia Records for some time.

Conclusively, I do not think that Albert Socarras is the flutist/saxophonist on these two Russell Wooding sessions, the flute parts being played nicely and musically, but not necessarily by Mr. Socarras.

Notes:

- Storyville 72-215: *Russell Wooding Orchestra* (no date, no location, but before August 1929?): *Demas Dean*, trumpet; *Juan Tizol*, Trombone; --- *Blanchette*, violin; *Russell Wooding*, piano; *R. Tizol*, bass; --- *Kennedy*, oboe; *Q. Wooding*, flute; unknown, banjo; unknown, drums; *Busch* (sic) *Hunter*, cello, vocal; *Wesley Howard*, violin.

- *L. Wright*, "Fats" in *Fact*, p.61: "The 'International Musician' of February 1930 has a report of what appears to be the Russell Wooding Orchestra from Local 9 of Boston which lists Russell Wooding, Bernard Parker, vn; Willie Hicks, t; Joe Marshall, d; Thomas Waller, p; Charles Green, tb; and Dallas Chambers, t."

- Rust*2: two unknown (tpt); unknown (tbn); three unknown (reeds); Albert Socarras (alt, flt); unknown (pno); unknown (bjo); unknown (bbs); Percy Robinson (dms); Dick Robertson (vcl)

- Rust*3: two unknown -t; unknown -tb; Albert Socarras -as -f; three unknown -cl -ss -as -ts; unknown -p; unknown -bj; unknown -bb; Percy Robinson -d; Dick Robertson -v

- Rust*4: 2 unknown -t; Benny Morton (?) -tb; Albert Socarras -as -f; 2 unknown -cl -ss -as -ts -one doubling -o; unknown -p; unknown -bj; unknown -bb; Percy Robinson -d; Dick Robertson -v

- Rust*6: unknown, unknown, t; Benny Morton, tb; unknown, unknown, cl, ss, as; unknown, cl, ss, ts; Albert Socarras, as, f; unknown p; unknown bj; unknown bb; Percy Robinson, d; Dick Robertson, v

033 **SOCARRA'S ORCHESTRA** New York, Mar. 1935
 Alberto Socarras – clt, ten, ldr;
 unknown – tpt; Cecil Scott – clt, ten;
 unknown – pno; unknown – gtr; unknown – sbs; unknown – dms;
 H. Blanchard – voc
 TO-1538 Hocus Pocus Col unissued test not on LP/CD

May this have been an unsuccessful attempt of Mr. Socarras to lead a jazz unit, or perhaps a Latin unit with un-appropriate (jazz) musicians? Very probably, we shall never get to hear how the band sounded. A great pity!

Notes:

- Rust*2,*3,*4: not listed

- Rust*6: Albert Socarras –cl -ts -dir; unknown –t; Cecil Scott –cl -ts; unknown –p; unknown –g; unknown –sb; unknown –d; H. Blanchard –v

- Storyville 90, p. 224, *H. Friedwald*, Alberto Socarras Story: "I always tried to have a good jazz player on tenor sax. Prince Robinson was a very dark fellow. He played marvellous clarinet and tenor sax with me at Small's (sic – KBR) Paradise, but we were getting ready for a long residence in Atlantic City and he wasn't interested in going. He said: 'Socarras, I have a good clarinet and tenor sax to take my place. His name is Cecil Scott.' Well, I wasn't so sure but Cecil came to rehearsal and smiled and stuck out his hand and don't you know I liked him just because of his smile. He has a marvellous personality. I gave him the job and was glad I did because I loved the way he played my arrangements and the jazz numbers, too."

034 **BABS GONZALES AND HIS ORCHESTRA** New York, Apr. 27, 1949
 Babs Gonzales – voc, ldr;
 J.J. Johnson – tbn;
 Albert Socarras or Tony Scott – flt; Don Redman – sop; Sonny Rollins – ten;
 Ray Nance – vln;
 Wynton Kelly – pno; Bruce Lawrence – sbs; Roy Haynes – dms;
 Bruce Lawrence - voc
 3779 St. Louis Blues Cap 57-60012 on LP/CD ?
 Real Crazy Cap unissued not on LP/CD
 Then You'll Be Boppin' Too Cap unissued not on LP/CD
 When Lovers They Loose Cap unissued not on LP/CD

| From 1947 on, Socarras recorded prolifically Latin music with his own band(s), what, yet, is outside the scope of this list.

K. – B. Rau
27-02-2023
16-10-2023
16-01-2024
15-02-2024
01-03-2024