

THE RECORDINGS OF EDDIE WILLIAMS

An Annotated Tentative Discography

WILLIAMS, 'Eddie' Edward

Born: New York, c. 1910; died: after 1961

Worked with Napoleon Zias and his Savoy Ramblers and Claude Hopkins during early 1930s, later led own band at the Savoy Ballroom. With Lucky Millinder (1937), Don Redman (1939). Recordings with Jelly Roll Morton (1940), then with Lucky Millinder, Ella Fitzgerald (1941). Briefly with Henry Allen and Chris Columbus Band in 1942. With de Paris Brothers on and off during 1943 and 1944, during this period also with Don Redman, Cliff Jackson Trio, James P. Johnson Band, and spell on the West Coast with Garvin Bushell Band (late 1944). In U.S. Army 1945-46 including service as a musician in Europe. After demobilisation worked with Emmett Hobson Band (1946-48), then led own small band for several years. With altoist Porter Kilbert (1955-56), continued to lead own band occasionally, also worked regularly with Happy Caldwell in the 1960s. (J. Chilton, Who's Who of Jazz)

Very early in my collecting "career" I stumbled over Eddie Williams with disgust. In Jelly Roll Morton's Six and Sevens he played such a "rubbish" among the giants Morton, Nicholas, and Singleton, that I really became most angry. Red Allen, too, was not my taste at the time, together with the whole Luis Russell band, playing much too many sixths. And it took me some time to get acquainted with non-harmonic notes, diminished and augmented chords, dissonances and the use of whole-step scales. And Eddie Williams with his most interesting improvisations was the man to lead me to hitherto un-experienced delights. For long now, I am fascinated by his ideas and their execution. Thanks for your un-usual and exceptional work, Eddie! - KBR

STYLISTICS

STYLE

Eddie Williams plays a jazz alto sax in a swing manner, comparable perhaps to a - reduced - Tab Smith. His style may be characterised by his playing long singable tone sequences in legato manner, making use of common functional tonality, but often enlarging his tonality by whole-step sequences and chromatically shifting harmonies. These are parts of an atonal system spread over the conventional tonal system. This may sound strange and possibly awkward for the average listener, but rewarding and interesting for the open-minded and advanced one. In any case, it requests a much deeper insight in musical techniques and an additional expense of practice for the musician – and a sensitive feeling.

TONE

Williams owns a slim and silken tone, with medium volume.

VIBRATO

His vibrato is wide and with little amplitude.

TIME

His time is excellent, allowing him mixing up regular with irregular rhythms without any mis-order in time.

PHRASING

Williams loves to play long multi-noted eighth lines which are interrupted by quarter-note parts and long sustained notes, using off-beat phrasing as well as regular rhythmic phrasing.

This personello-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: **Eddie Williams**
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Eddie Williams*
- 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: (*Eddie Williams*)

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

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

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

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

EDDIE WILLIAMS

001 TINY BRADSHAW AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Sep. 19, 1934

Tiny Bradshaw – voc, ldr;

Max Maddox, Lincoln Mills, Shad Collins – tpt;

Eugene Simon or *Eugene Green*, George Matthews – tbn;

Bobby Holmes – alt, clt; Eddie Williams – alt; Edgar Courance – ten, clt; Happy Caldwell – ten;

Clarence Johnson – pno; Bob Lessey – gtr; Ernest Williamson – sbs; Arnold Bolden – dms

| | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 38693-A | Shout, Sister, Shout | Dec 456, | Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |
| 38694-A | Mister, Will You Serenade | Dec 317, | Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |
| 38695-A | The Darktown Strutters' Ball | Dec 194, | Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |
| 38696-A | The Sheik Of Araby | Dec 194, | Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |

This is the little known, but beautifully swinging big band of the late Harlem period, led by Tiny Bradshaw, singer in a Cab Calloway mode. His band of ten years later achieved national fame with several big-selling records (Chilton, 1970).

These sides are most remarkable for the space left to the instrumental soloists. We hear the very much under-rated Shad Collins as principal trumpet soloist, the even more under-rated George Matthews on trombone with his warm and smooth lip-trills, and a couple of other Harlem musicians, among them Happy Caldwell on tenor sax and altoist Eddie Williams, a special favourite of mine for his perpetual use of augmented chords (whole-step scales) when improvising.

I have relied on Johnny Simmen's personnel listing on the LP cover of Harlequin HQ 2053. Mr. Simmen was a life-long jazz fan from the 1920s on and spent a large part of his well-to-do life in contacting and interviewing jazz musicians and discussing their recordings. His knowledge was immense and his recollections always are most informative. He did not list Russell Procope as a member of the Tiny Bradshaw recordings, but Eddie Williams instead, and what can be heard and recognised certainly proves his statement. The Harlequin LP lists – certainly on Mr. Simmen's instigation – Eugene Simon as an alternative trombonist for Eugene Green. I'd assume that either Gene Simon was the factual trombonist – apart from Matthews – at this session (Simon recorded with Benny Carter and Don Redman and probably was therefore favoured by Mr. Simmen) or that in fact an otherwise un-known player with the surname Green was hired. He is listed in Rust for this one single session only. I'd favour to consider (Eu)gene Simon to be the trombonist for this player's advanced technique and virtuosity – and sharp tone. And that the name Green was simply a mis-recollection for a young – and un-known - Gene Simon who worked in the Redman band from 1936 on.

Notes:

- Rust*2: 2 (?) unknown tpts; unknown tbn; unknown alt; Edgar Courance (sic), Happy Caldwell (clts, tens); unknown pno; unknown gtr; Ernest Hill (sbs); Arnold Bolden (dms); Tiny Bradshaw (vcl)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Lincoln Mills -Shad Collins -Max Maddox -t; George Matthews -Eugene Green -tb; Bobby Holmes -Russell Procope -as; Edgar Courance, Happy Caldwell -cl -ts; Clarence Johnson -p; Bob Lessey -g; Ernest Williamson -sb; Arnold Bolden -d; Tiny Bradshaw -v -ldr.

- Record Research 71, Bertrand Demeusy: "The complete personnel of the Tiny Bradshaw's records made in NYC, September 19th, 1934 and October 3rd, 1934 for the label Decca ('Shout, Sister, Shout', 'Mister, Will You Serenade', 'Ol' Man River', 'I Ain't Got Nobody', etc.) is the following: Lincoln Mills, Shad Collins, Max Maddox (tp); George Matthews, Eugene Green (tb); Bobby Holmes, Russell Procope (as); Spider Courance, Happy Caldwell (ts); Clarence Johnson (p); Bob Lessey (g); Ernest Williamson (b); Arnold Bolden (dr); Tiny Bradshaw (voc). The personnel was confirmed to me by both George Matthews and Bob Lessey. G. Matthews added that he took the trombone solo on 'I Ain't Got Nobody' and Eugene Green is the soloist on 'I'm A Ding Dong Daddy'."

- Harlequin HQ 2053, LP cover, Johnny Simmen: Lincoln Mills, Lawrence "Max" Maddox, Lester "Shad" Collins (tpt); "Big" George Matthews, Eugene Green or Eugene Simon (tbn); Bobby Holmes (clt, alt); Eddie Williams (alt); Edgar "Spider" Courance (clt, ten, bar); Albert "Happy" Caldwell (ten); Clarence Johnson (pno, arr); Bob Lessey (gtr); Ernest Williamson (sbs); Arnold "Scrippy" Boling (dms); Myron "Tiny" Bradshaw (voc, ldr)

Order of solos (after Johnny Simmen, with own alterations):

| | |
|---------|---|
| 38693-A | BL gtr 4; SC o-tpt 16; EC clt 8; SC o-tpt 8; ?LM m-tpt obl 32; GM o-tbn 16; HC ten 8; GM o-tbn 8; EW alt 8. |
| 38694-A | SC o-tpt 32; EW alt 4; BH clt 4 + 4; HC ten 4 + 4; GM o-tbn 8. |
| 38695-A | SC m-tpt 24 + 24; EW alt 2 + 24; CJ pno 24 + 24; ES/EG o-tbn 24. |
| 38696-A | LM m-tpt 32; EC ten 16; ES/EG o-tbn 16; BH clt 16; EW alt 16. |

002 TINY BRADSHAW AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Oct. 03, 1934

Tiny Bradshaw – voc, ldr;

Max Maddox, Lincoln Mills, Shad Collins – tpt;

Eugene Simon or *Eugene Green*, George Matthews – tbn;

Bobby Holmes – alt; Eddie Williams – alt; Edgar Courance – ten, bar; Happy Caldwell – ten;

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Clarence Johnson – pno; Bob Lessey – gtr; Ernest Williamson – sbs; Arnold Bolden - dms | | |
| 38785-A | Ol' Man River | Dec 236, Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |
| 38786-A | I Ain't Got Nobody | Dec 456, Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |
| 38787-A | I'm A Ding Dong Daddy (From Dumas) | Dec 236, Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |
| 38788-A | She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain | Dec 317, Harlequin HQ 2053 (LP) |

The same personnel again, equally inspired and enthusiastic. I again followed the late Johnny Simmen in his identification of the soloists. And I must add that Johnny Simmen was in contact with many great jazz musicians for all his life and might have reported Mr. Courance's own testimony.

This personnel of the Tiny Bradshaw Orchestra is the one that played the Renaissance Ballroom in 1934.

Notes:

- Rust*2: 2 (?) unknown tpts; unknown tbn; unknown ast; Edgar Courance (sic), Happy Caldwell (clts, tens); unknown pno; unknown gtr; Ernest Hill (sbs); Arnold Bolden (dms); Tiny Bradshaw (vcl)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: Lincoln Mills -Shad Collins -Max Maddox -; George Matthews -Eugene Green -tb; Bobby Holmes -Russell Procope -as; Edgar Courance, Happy Caldwell -cl -ts; Clarence Johnson -p; Bob Lessey -g; Ernest Williamson -sb; Arnold Bolden -d; Tiny Bradshaw -v -ldr.

- Record Research 71, Bertrand Demeusy: "The complete personnel of the Tiny Bradshaw's records made in NYC, September 19th, 1934 and October 3rd, 1934 for the label Decca ('Shout, Sister, Shout', 'Mister, Will You Serenade', 'Ol' Man River', 'I Ain't Got Nobody', etc.) is the following: Lincoln Mills, Shad Collins, Max Maddox (tp); George Matthews, Eugene Green (tb); Bobby Holmes, Russell Procope (as); Spider Courance, Happy Caldwell (ts); Clarence Johnson (p); Bob Lessey (g); Ernest Williamson (b); Arnold Bolden (dr); Tiny Bradshaw (voc). The personnel was confirmed to me by both George Matthews and Bob Lessey. G. Matthews added that he took the trombone solo on 'I Ain't Got Nobody' and Eugene Green is the soloist on 'I'm A Ding Dong Daddy'."

- Harlequin HQ 2053, LP cover, Johnny Simmen: Lincoln Mills, Lawrence "Max" Maddox, Lester "Shad" Collins (tpt); "Big" George Matthews, Eugene Green or Eugene Simon (tbn); Bobby Holmes (clt, alt); Eddie Williams (alt); Edgar "Spider" Courance (clt, ten, bar); Albert "Happy" Caldwell (ten); Clarence Johnson (pno, arr); Bob Lessey (gtr); Ernest Williamson (sbs); Arnold "Scrippy" Boling (dms); Myron "Tiny" Bradshaw (voc, ldr)

Order of solos (after Johnny Simmen, with own alterations):

| | |
|---------|---|
| 38785-A | EW alt 32 + 16; ES/EG o-tbn 16. |
| 38786-A | SC o-tpt 4; SC m-tpt 16; HC ten 8; SC m-tpt 8; GM o-tbn 16; BH clt 8; GM o-tbn 8. |
| 38787-A | SC o-tpt 16; EC ten 16; ES/EG o-tbn 16; EC bar 16. |
| 38788-A | BH clt obl 16; SC o-tpt 16; BH clt 16; SC m-tpt 16 + 16. |

003 MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

New York,

Feb. 11, 1937

Carl Warwick, Charlie Shavers, Harry Edison – tpt;
Sandy Watson, Wilbur de Paris – tbn;
Eddie Williams, Tab Smith – alt, clt; Ronald Haynes, Harold Arnold – ten, clt;
Billy Kyle – pno; Danny Barker – gtr; John Williams - sbs; O'Neil Spencer – dms;
Chappie Willett – arr (1,2,3,4)

| | | | |
|-------|---------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| M-1-2 | Blue Rhythm Fantasy | Vri 503, | Chronological Classics 731 |
| M-2-1 | Prelude To A Stomp | Vri 546, | Chronological Classics 731 |
| M-3-2 | Rhythm Jam | Vri 546, | Chronological Classics 731 |
| M-4-1 | Jungle Madness | Vri 503, | Chronological Classics 731 |

Composer credits: M-1 (Hill – Willett); M-2 (Willett); M-13 (Willett); M-4 (Willett)

Now, half a year after their last recording session with their virtually un-changed personnel of 6 years, most of the stalwarts of the MBRB have left – some of them moving over to the Edgar Hayes band. And we find a new and younger generation of swing musicians, stirred with some of the older heroes. This session seems to be Shavers', Edison's, and Warwick's recording debut. Also, trombonist Watson and the tenor saxophonists belong to the younger lads. But they decidedly make up a great band. And: Variety is Irving Mills' own recording company and his own record label. As Tab Smith obviously has gained a strong position in the band as number one soloist, the lead part of the reed section is taken by Eddie Williams, of whom we only have some solo parts on clarinet.

All four titles of this session bear Chappie Willett's composer credit, and it seems to be feasible to assume that Willett also delivered the arrangements. Stylistically they all use similar ideas and details.

Billy Kyle plays nice dissonances in the introduction of 'Blue Rhythm Fantasy'. It then seems to be Eddie Williams on clarinet, followed by young Harry Edison and Tab Smith in turn. (This title was also recorded by Teddy Hill's Orchestra in May 1937 with that same - yet a bit - altered arrangement.) 'Prelude To A Stomp' is a hard-driving tune with pre-dominant ensemble work, Tab Smith offering a great and enthusiastic solo on his alto. And 'Rhythm Man' again has fantastic Tab Smith, followed by Harry Edison, then Billy Kyle, and – as I assume – Charlie Shavers in the coda. Billy Kyle is very nice in 'Jungle Madness', as is typical Tab Smith again, and Eddie Williams on clarinet followed by Harold Arnold on tenor. Sadly, all too little is heard of the tenor saxophones on these sides.

There still remains a problem re the drummer: the existing photo of the band (see Chronological Classics 731 booklet) shows O'Neil Spencer as drummer. Spencer joined the John Kirby band in July 1937. This would certainly mean that the photo was taken before July.

Unfortunately, Rust lists four recording sessions only with Lester Nichols on drums: Oliver Cobb 1929, Eddie Johnson's Crackerjacks 1932, Sammy Lewis' Bamville Syncopators (whose drummer is later reported to be Sonny Wilson, not Nichols), and these three MBRB sessions. But the early two sessions do not allow a sincere comparison, only perhaps, that Nichols does not like to use cymbals. Thus, I tend to hear Spencer on this earliest session of the 1937 MBRB. This same photo shows trombonists Al Cobbs and Eli Robinson, who would possibly be present on the next sessions.

On the whole: a fresh and young band, held together by Billy Kyle and Tab Smith – and Johnny Williams! – swinging like mad and performing great music, not to forget the interesting arrangements of Chappie Willett!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography 1948: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison (tp); Sandy Watson, Wilbur de Paris (tb); Tab Smith (as); Eddie Williams, Ronald Haynes, Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (g); John Williams (b); Lester Nichols (dm); Chappie Willett (arr)

- Rust*2: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison (tpt); Sandy Watson, Wilbur de Paris (tbn); Tab Smith (alt); Eddie Williams, Ronald Haynes, Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (gtr); John Williams (sbs); Lester Nichols (dms); Chappie Willet (arr); Lucky Millinder (dir)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: *Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison -t; Sandy Watson, Wilbur de Paris -tb; Tab Smith -as; Eddie Williams, Ronald Haynes, Harold Arnold -ts; Billy Kyle -p; Danny Barker -g; John Williams -sb; Lester Nichols -d -vib; Chappie Willet -a; Lucky Millinder -dir.*

- *Storyville 109, MBRB: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison, t; Sandy Watson, Wilbur de Paris, tb; Tab Smith, as/ss; Eddie Williams, cl/as/bar; Harold Arnold, Ronald Haynes, ts; Billy Kyle, p; Lawrence Lucie, g; Hayes Alvis, sb; O'Neil Spencer, d; Chuck Richards, Lucky Millinder, v.*

- *Storyville 128, Frank Driggs: "Arrangements for the February 1937 date are all by Chappie Willett."*

Soloists ad-lib:

- M-1-2: BK pno fills 16; BK pno 2; TS alt - EW clt chase 8; EW clt 14; HE o-tpt 14; TS alt 2+14; EW clt obbl 12
 - M-2-1: HA ten 14; TS alt 32+17
 - M-3-2: BK pno fills 6; TS alt 2+16 + 6; HE o-tpt 16; BK pno 8; ?CS o-tpt coda 8
 - M-4-1: BK pno 1+16; TS alt 16; EW clt 16; HA ten 16; BK pno 8 + 8

004 BILLY KYLE AND HIS SWING CLUB BAND

New York,

Mar. 18, 1937

Charlie Shavers – tpt;

Eddie Williams – clt; Tab Smith – alt; Harold Arnold – ten;

Billy Kyle – pno; Danny Barker – gtr; John Williams – sbs; O'Neil Spencer – dms;

The Palmer Brothers – voc (1,3)

M-278-1 Sundays Are Reserved

Vri 574,

Chronological Classics 919

M-279-1 Havin' A Ball

Vri 574,

Chronological Classics 919

M-280-2 Big Boy Blue

Vri 531,

Chronological Classics 919

M-281-1 Margie

Vri 531,

Chronological Classics 919

M-281-2 Margie

Vri 531,

Meritt 25 (LP)

Composer credits: M-278 (Kyle); M-279 (Kyle); M-280 (Lawrence – Howell – Tinturin); M-281 (Davis – Conrad – Robinson)

This group clearly is an off-shoot of Mills Blue Rhythm Band issued by Irving Mills' own record label Variety. Unfortunately, Mr. Mills obviously had to attach them the Palmer Brothers, who only steal time from the great blowers.

Apart from them we have a youthful Charlie Shavers on fluent - but still a bit harsh - trumpet here, the very virtuoso Tab Smith in his own individual staccato style, bandleader Billy Kyle on piano with his immensely swinging horizontal legato-with-few-bass-notes only style. Tenor saxist Arnold gets very little time to shine. And then there is Eddie Williams – on clarinet here only – playing his “weird” constructions, melodically and mixed with atonal details shifting the keys chromatically. Even guitarist Danny Barker gets four bars of solo-time in the fourth title. John Williams and O'Neil Spencer deliver a great driving rhythm foundation.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Charlie Shavers (tp); Eddie Williams (cl); Tab Smith (as); Harold Arnold (ts); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (g); John Williams (bs); O'Neil Spencer (dm)*

- *Carey, McCarthy, Jazz Directory, Vol. 6: Charlie Shavers (tpt); Eddie Williams (clt); Tab Smith (alt); Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (g); John Williams (bs); O'Neil Spencer (d)*

- *Rust*2: Charlie Shavers (tpt); Eddie Williams (clt); Tab Smith (alt); Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (pno); Danny Barker (gtr); John Williams (sbs); O'Neil Spencer (dms)*

- *Rust*3,*4,*6: Charlie Shavers -t; Eddie Williams -cl; Tab Smith -as; Harold Arnold -ts; Billy Kyle -p; Danny Barker -g; John Williams -bs; O'Neil Spencer -d; The Palmer Brothers -v*

Notable differences of takes:

M-281-1: *Charlie Shavers enters the last eight bars of the tune with an up-beat of 2 quarter-notes a – bb, followed by melody quarter-notes c – d – c – d*

M-281-2: *Charlie Shavers enters the last eight bars of the tune with a long, sustained blue-note ab*

005 MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

New York,

Apr. 28, 1937

Carl Warwick, Charlie Shavers, Harry Edison – tpt;

Alfred Cobbs, Eli Robinson – tbn;

Eddie Williams – alt, clt, bar; Tab Smith – alt; Ben Williams, Harold Arnold – ten, clt;

Billy Kyle – pno; Danny Barker – gtr; John Williams – sbs; *Lester Nichols* – dms, vib (4);

Chuck Richards – voc (2,3,5)

M-429-1 The Lucky Swing

Vri 604,

Chronological Classics 731

M-430-1 Please Pity My Heart

Vri unissued,

Chronological Classics 731

M-430-2 Please Pity My Heart

Vri unissued

not on LP/CD

M-431-1 Let's Get Together

Vri 634,

Chronological Classics 731

M-432 Since I've Heard It From You

Vri unissued

not on LP/CD

Composer credits: M-429 (Millinder – Kyle – Smith); M-430 (---); M-431 (Webb – Sampson)

The first title is a usual 32-bar riff title played with swing and drive. Soloists as listed below. And it's our friend Chuck Richards again for some commercial sentimentality. But Tab Smith saves it all, together with 4 bars by Charlie Shavers. Then 4 bars of drums introduction start Edgar Sampson's 'Let's Get Together', and this drum style is not O'Neil Spencer's. So, I'd attribute them to Mr. Nichols. Then Tab Smith and Charlie Shavers have their scope to excel. The coda then is taken by Nichols on tom-tom first, then rapidly switching over to the vibes, and finished by the band.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography 1948: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison (tp); Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris (tb); Tab Smith (as); Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (g); John Williams (b); Lester Nichols (dm); Chappie Willett (arr)*

- *Rust*2: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison (tpt); Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris (tbn); Tab Smith (alt); Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (gtr); John Williams (sbs); Lester Nichols (dms); Chappie Willett (arr); Lucky Millinder (dir)*

- *Rust*3: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison -t; Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris -tb; Tab Smith -as; Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold -ts; Billy Kyle -p; Danny Barker -g; John Williams -sb; Lester Nichols -d -vib; Chappie Willett -a; Lucky Millinder -dir;*

unknown -v

- Rust*4,*6: *Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison -t; Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris -tb; Tab Smith -as; Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold -ts; Billy Kyle -p; Danny Barker -g; John Williams -sb; Lester Nichols -d -vib; Chappie Willet -a; Lucky Millinder -dir; Chuck Richards -v*

- *Storyville 109, MBRB: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison, t; Al Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris, tb; Tab Smith, as/ss; Eddie Williams, cl/as/bar; Harold Arnold, Ben Williams, ts; Billy Kyle, p; Lawrence Lucie, g; Hayes Alvis, sb; O'Neil Spencer, d; Chuck Richards, Lucky Millinder, v.*

- *Storyville 128, Frank Driggs: "'Jammin' For The Jackpot' is Eli Robinson's composition and arrangement and, by the way, he ought to be shown on trombone for the April and July 1937 dates, so there still some work has to be done on this band. Arrangements for the February 1937 date are all by Chappie Willett."*

Soloists ad-lib:

- M-429-1: BK pno intro 4; BK pno 2+16; DB grt 8; BK pno 6; HA ten 8; BW clt 8; HE o-tpt 16; LN dms 4; TS alt 16

- M-430-1: BK pno fills intro 4; TS alt 8; CS o-tpt 4

- M-431-1: LN dms intro 4; TS alt 10 + 16; CS o-tpt 16; ER o-tbn 8; BK pno 8; LN dms 2 + vib 2

006 MILLS BLUE RHYTHM BAND

New York,

Jul. 01, 1937

Carl Warwick, Charlie Shavers, Harry Edison – tpt;

Alfred Cobbs, Eli Robinson – tbn;

Eddie Williams – alt, clt, bar; Tab Smith – alt, sop; Ben Williams, Harold Arnold – ten, clt;

Billy Kyle – pno; Danny Barker – grt; John Williams – sbs; Lester Nichols – dms;

Judy --- – voc (2); band musicians – voc (4); Eli Robinson – arr (1); Andy Gibson – arr (3)

M-545-1 Jammin' For The Jackpot

Vri 634,

Chronological Classics 731

M-546-1 The Image Of You

Vri 604,

Chronological Classics 731

M-547-1 When Irish Eyes Are Smiling

Vri 624,

Chronological Classics 731

M-548-1 Camp Meeting Jamboree

Vri 624,

Chronological Classics 731

Composer credits: M-545 (Robinson); M-546 (Young - Ahlert); M-547 (Ball); M-548 (Foster – Kern - trad.)

The first title obviously is a composition of trombonist Eli Robinson, and features some nice tenor work and some sky-scraper trumpet at the finish. 'The Image Of You' has an un-known girl singer who seems not to be recorded after this session. She is not convincing at all.

Young Charlie Shavers plays the theme chorus in his own individual version. Very nice. It is Harry Edison then and Tab Smith on soprano sax - and typically flowing Billy Kyle on piano in the out-chorus. Four of the band's musicians then make a vocal quartet for the last title of this recording session. There is little room for the band, 24 bars only to finish the title.

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography 1948: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison (tp); Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris (tb); Tab Smith (as); Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (g); John Williams (b); Lester Nichols (dm); Chappie Willett (arr)*

- *Rust*2: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison (tpt); Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris (tbn); Tab Smith (alt); Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold (ten); Billy Kyle (p); Danny Barker (grt); John Williams (sbs); Lester Nichols (dms); Chappie Willet (arr); Lucky Millinder (dir)*

- *Rust*3,*4: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison -t; Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris -tb; Tab Smith -as; Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold -ts; Billy Kyle -p; Danny Barker -g; John Williams -sb; Lester Nichols -d -vib; Chappie Willet -a; Eli Robinson -a; Lucky Millinder -dir; unknown -girl v*

- *Rust*6: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison -t; Alfred Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris -tb; Tab Smith -as; Eddie Williams, Ben Williams, Harold Arnold -ts; Billy Kyle -p; Danny Barker -g; John Williams -sb; Lester Nichols -d -vib; Chappie Willet -a; Lucky Millinder -dir; Chuck Richards, unknown female -v; Eli Robinson -a.*

- *Storyville 109, MBRB: Charlie Shavers, Carl Warwick, Harry Edison, t; Al Cobbs, Wilbur de Paris, tb; Tab Smith, as/ss; Eddie Williams, cl/as/bar; Harold Arnold, Ben Williams, ts; Billy Kyle, p; Lawrence Lucie, g; Hayes Alvis, sb; O'Neil Spencer, d; Chuck Richards, Lucky Millinder, unknown girl (Judy ---),v. "(The last title) is a medley of 'Swanee River', 'Ol' Man River', and 'Gomny Rise A Rukus Tonight'. Johnny Williams stated that thr vocalist on M-546 was a girl called 'Judy', but her surname cannot be recalled."*

Soloists ad-lib:

- M-545-1: TS alt 15; BK pno 1+24; ER o-tbn 3; HE o-tpt 16; HA ten 14

- M-546-1: CS m-tpt 4 + 8; BK pno 4; TS alt 8

- M-547-1: BK pno intro 4; CS m-tpt 30; HE o-tpt 14; TS sop 2+14; BK pno 8

- M-548-1: BK pno intro 4

007 DON REDMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

Mar. 23, 1939

Don Redman – alt, sop, dir;

Tom Stevenson, Robert Williams, Sidney de Paris – tpt;

Gene Simon, Quentin Jackson – tbn;

Carl Frye, Edward Inge – alt, clt; Gene Sedic – ten, clt; Eddie Williams – ten, bar;

Nicholas Rodriguez – pno; Bob Lessey – grt; Bob Ysaguirre – sbs; Bill Beason – dms;

Don Redman – voc (2,3); Laurel Watson – voc (3,4); The Three Little Maids – voc (1); Eddie Williams – voc (2)

035079-1 Three Little Maids

BB B-10305,

Chronological Classics 574

035080-1 The Flowers That Bloom In The Spring

BB B-10305,

Chronological Classics 574

035081-1 Jump Session

Vic 26206,

Chronological Classics 574

035082-1 Class Will Tell

Vic 26206,

Chronological Classics 574

The first title bears a silly vocal by three male "maids", and Rodriguez drags terribly, supported by Bill Beason's bass-drum on one and three. I have attributed the baritone sax on these sides to Eddie Williams who is known as an alto player rather than tenorist and who thus would be the logical baritone saxophonist.

There are no solos by Sidney de Paris and Edward Inge anymore and it has to be asked whether these two stalwarts of the Redman band were still with them anymore. This is rather commercial big band stuff and the band has lost their special Don Redman sound of 5 years ago. A pity! And there is no solo-playing whatsoever by Eddie Williams! Another pity!

Notes:

- *Ch. Delaunay, New Hot Discography, 1948: Tom Stevenson, Robert Williams, Sidney de Paris (tp); Quentin Jackson, Gene Simon (tb); Don Redman, Eddie Williams, Edward Inge, Carl Frye, Gene Sedic (s); Nicholas Rodriguez (p); Bob Lessey (g); Bob Ysaguirre (b); Bill*

Beason (dm)

- Rust*2: Tom Stevenson, Robert Williams, Sidney de Paris (tpt); Quentin Jackson, Gene Simon (tbn); Edward Inge, Carl Frye (clt, alt); Gene Sedic, Eddie Williams (ten); Nicholas Rodriguez (pno); Bob Lessey (gtr); Bob Ysaguirre (sbs); Bill Beason (dms); The Three Little Maids (vcl-trio)

- Rust*3: Tom Stevenson -Robert Williams -Sidney de Paris -t; Quentin Jackson -tb -v; Gene Simon -tb; Don Redman -cl -ss -as -v -ldr; Carl Frye -Edward Inge -cl -as -bar; Eddie Williams -ts -v; Gene Sedic -ts; Nicholas Rodriguez -p; Bob Lessey -g; Bob Ysaguirre -sb;

Laurel Watson -The Three Little Maids v

- Rust*4,*6: Don Redman -cl -ss -as -v -dir; Tom Stevenson -Robert Williams -Sidney de Paris -t; Quentin Jackson -tb -v; Gene Simon -tb; Carl Frye -Edward Inge -cl -as -bar; Eddie Williams -ts -v; Gene Sedic -ts; Nicholas Rodriguez -p; Bob Lessey -g; Bob Ysaguirre -sb;

Laurel Watson -The Three Little Maids v

Solos ad-lib:

035079-1: DR sop 5, NR pno 8, DR sop 1

035080-1: GS ten 1

035081-1: GS ten 8, DR sop 4 + 12, GS ten 2

035082-1: GS ten 2

008 DON REDMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA

New York,

May 18, 1939

Don Redman – alt, sop, voc (1,4);

Tom Stevenson, Robert Williams, Sidney de Paris – tpt;

Gene Simon, Quentin Jackson – tbn;

Tapley Lewis, Buster Smith – alt, clt; Gene Sedic – ten, clt; Eddie Williams – ten, bar;

Nicholas Rodriguez – pno; Bob Lessey – gtr; Bob Ysaguirre – sbs; Slick Jones – dms;

Don Redman – voc (1,4); Laurel Watson – voc (1,2); Quentin Jackson – voc (3)

036962-1 Chew-Chew-Chew (Your Bubble Gum)

Vic 26258,

Chronological Classics 649

036963-1 Igloo

Vic 26258,

Chronological Classics 649

036964-1 Baby, Won't You Please Come Home

Vic 26266,

Chronological Classics 649

036965-2 Ain't I Good To You?

Vic 26266,

Chronological Classics 649

Composer credits are: 036962 (Ella Fitzgerald – Chick Webb – Buck Ram); 036963 (Irving Taylor – Vic Mizzy); 036964 (Warfield – C. Williams); 036965 (?)

There are some reminiscences to the McKinney's Cotton Pickers days in the last two titles, yet in a more modern way.

There are no solo outings by Eddie Williams, and he seems to be mainly occupied by playing the baritone sax in the four-part saxophone section – not enclosing the band leader. The fourth title recorded is better known under the title 'Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good To You?'. No recognisable solo outing by Eddie Williams on these sides.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948*: Tom Stevenson, Robert Williams, Sidney de Paris (tp); Quentin Jackson, Gene Simon (tb); Don Redman, Eddie Williams, Henry Smith, Tapley Lewis, Gene Sedic (s); Nicholas Rodriguez (p); Bob Lessey (g); Bob Ysaguirre (b); Slick Jones (dm)

- Rust*2: Tom Stevenson, Robert Williams, Sidney de Paris (tpt); Quentin Jackson, Gene Simon (tbn); Henry Smith, Tapley Lewis (clt, alt); Gene Sedic, Eddie Williams (ten); Nicholas Rodriguez (pno); Bob Lessey (gtr); Bob Ysaguirre (sbs); Slick Jones (dms); Quentin Jackson (vcl)

- Rust*3: Tom Stevenson -Robert Williams -Sidney de Paris -t; Quentin Jackson -tb -v; Gene Simon -tb; Don Redman -cl -as -v -ldr; Buster Smith -Tapley Lewis -cl -as -bar; Eddie Williams -ts -v; Gene Sedic -ts; Nicholas Rodriguez -p; Bob Lessey -g; Bob Ysaguirre -sb; Slick Jones -d; Laurel Watson -v

- Rust*4: Don Redman -cl -ss -as -v -dir; Tom Stevenson -Robert Williams -Sidney de Paris -t; Gene Simon -tb; Quentin Jackson -tb -v; Carl Frye -Edward Inge -cl -as -bar; Eddie Williams -ts -v; Gene Sedic -ts; Nicholas Rodriguez -p; Bob Lessey -g; Bob Ysaguirre -sb; Bill Beason -d; Laurel Watson -v

- Rust*6: Don Redman -cl -ss -as -v -dir; Tom Stevenson -Robert Williams -Sidney de Paris -t; Gene Simon -tb; Quentin Jackson -tb -v; Buster Smith -Tapley Lewis -cl -as -bar; Eddie Williams -ts -v; Gene Sedic -ts; Nicholas Rodriguez -p; Bob Lessey -g; Bob Ysaguirre -sb; Slick Jones -d; Laurel Watson -v

Solos ad-lib:

036962-1: GS ten 15, DR sop 6 + 2, NR pno 4, GS ten 2

036963-1: BS alt 15, DR sop 6, GS ten 2 + 2, NR pno 6

036964-1: DR sop 24

036965-2: no solos

009 JELLY ROLL MORTON SEVEN

New York,

Jan. 04, 1940

Henry Red Allen – tpt; Joe Britton – tbn;

Albert Nicholas – clt; Eddie Williams – alt;

Jelly Roll Morton – pno, voc; Wellman Braud – sbs; Zutty Singleton – dms

R-2582 Sweet Substitute

Gnl 1703,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2583 Panama

Gnl 1703,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2584 Good Old New York

Gnl 1704,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2585 Big Lip Blues

Gnl 1704,

Chronological Classics 668

Composer credits are: R-2582 (Morton), R-2583 (Tyers), R-2584 (Morton), R-2585 (Morton)

John Chilton in his book 'Ride, Red, Ride' The Life of Henry Red Allen', says about this session: "His (Jelly Roll Morton's – KBR) first choice trumpeter was Red Allen, who was delighted to be reunited with the veteran pianist. Other than the old New Orleans favourite 'Panama', all the compositions were by Morton (some are his adaptations of traditional themes). Unfortunately, not all of the musicians on the dates were accustomed to playing New Orleans music." In fact, only two of these seven musicians are not of New Orleans origin. And one of them, Eddie Williams with his whole-step phrases is quite out of order in this context when soloing in his very special own style. (But I – KBR – love him for his very individual and thrilling performances.)

In 'Sweet Substitute' Williams solos playing the tune's verse in a rather common manner, yet ad-libbing the composed melody in a pleasing way. 'Panama' has him only filling the background sounds. 'Good Old New York' has Williams ad-libbing over the ensemble in the verse

after the vocal and – later - in the modulation back to the basic key, where he uses his very own “gambling” with whole-step practices. In ‘Big Lip Blues’ he is a tasteful – i.e. ordinary - part of the ad-lib ensemble, not using his whole-step mode. The other not-NOLA musician in the band is Britton. As we know from Britton’s other recordings of the time, he is deeply founded in the blues (think of his two years with the Bessie Smith bands). In the 1930s he worked with several Harlem big bands where he developed into some sort of a work-horse for section playing, as many musicians had to do. There was no place in Harlem for New Orleans music. But still, Morton chose him for this session. And he plays some well-chosen phrases behind the front men, culminating in his beautiful solo chorus in ‘Big Lip Blues’. This is not New Orleans trombone, but swing oriented playing with great taste, and it owns a different quality of playing than New Orleans style. It is a pity only that the bandleader takes a vocal chorus while Britton solos, what obviously makes the trombonist insecure, and makes him lose his direction.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Henry Allen (tp); Joe Britton (tb); Albert Nicholas (cl); Eddie Williams (as); Jelly Roll Morton (p, vo); Wellman Braud (b); Zutty Singleton (dm)*
 - Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Henry Allen (tpt); Joe Britton (tbn); Albert Nicholas (clt); Eddie Williams (alt); Jelly Roll Morton (pno, vcl); Wellman Braud (sbs); Zutty Singleton (dms)

010 THE MORTON SIX

New York,

Jan. 23, 1940

Henry Red Allen – tpt; Albert Nicholas – clt; Eddie Williams – alt;
 Jelly Roll Morton – pno, voc; Wellman Braud – sbs; Zutty Singleton – dms

R-2621 Why?

Gnl 1706,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2622 Get The Bucket

Gnl 1706,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2623 If You Knew

Gnl 1707,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2624 Shake It

Gnl 1707,

Chronological Classics 668

Composer credits are: R-2621 (Ed Werac - Morton), R-2622 (Morton), R-2623 (Ed Werac - Morton), R-2624 (Morton)

This session does not enclose a trombone like the former one.

In ‘Why’ Williams plays the melody in the first chorus, followed by a background part to Allen’s trumpet solo. Behind Morton’s vocal he plays set harmonic lines. ‘Get The Bucket’ has him in two ordinarily improvised alto choruses. In ‘If You Knew’ Williams delivers a nice counter-melody to the first chorus plus a customary solo chorus in common harmonics. He is a retained ensemble player in ‘Shake It’, while he takes one of his special harmonised middle-breaks in Red Allen’s trumpet solo. He – Williams – certainly is the most advanced musicians in this band, what sounds like a failure in this New Orleans context, but to me he sprinkles some surprising glitter on top of the proceedings.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Henry Allen (tp); Albert Nicholas (cl); Eddie Williams (as); Jelly Roll Morton (p, vo); Wellman Braud (b); Zutty Singleton (dm)*

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Henry Allen (tpt); Albert Nicholas (clt); Eddie Williams (alt); Jelly Roll Morton (pno, vcl); Wellman Braud (sbs); Zutty Singleton (dms)

011 THE MORTON SEVEN

New York,

Jan. 23, 1940

Henry Red Allen – tpt; Claude Jones – tbn;
 Albert Nicholas – clt; Eddie Williams – alt;
 Jelly Roll Morton – pno, voc; Wellman Braud – sbs; Zutty Singleton – dms

R-2632 Dirty, Dirty, Dirty

Gnl 1711,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2633 Swinging The Elks

Gnl 1711,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2634 Mama’s Got A Baby

Gnl 1710,

Chronological Classics 668

R-2635 My Home Is In A Southern Town

Gnl 1710,

Chronological Classics 668

Composer credits are: R-2632 (Morton), R-2633 (Morton), R-2634 (Morton), R-2635 (Morton)

For this third session in the series, Morton obviously had found a suited trombonist in Claude Jones, section player and soloist with the McKinney’s Cotton Pickers, the Fletcher Henderson band, and most of the other leading big bands of the 1920s up to the 1940s. And the band’s sound again gains in volume.

‘Dirty, Dirty, Dirty’ starts with Nicholas and Williams in unisono. The third chorus has beautiful trombone by Jones, and Morton contributes a nice piano chorus. The last chorus then has a different key and ends with a crazy one-bar long modulation Bb to Eb. Williams is hidden in the ensemble for this title. ‘Swinging The Elks’ Williams contributes a beautifully singing chorus starting with a short dexterous modulation from C to Bb and ending with a short by-way into whole-step terrain. ‘Mama’s Got A Baby’ has very tasteful Claude Jones on trombone and hot Red Allen in the choruses. But Williams’ only task is to deliver some background notes. In ‘... Southern Town’ he presents an expert half-chorus in swinging and tasteful jazz manner – without any whole-step outings. ...unfortunately!

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: Henry Allen (tp); Claude Jones (tb); Albert Nicholas (cl); Eddie Williams (as); Jelly Roll Morton (p, vo); Wellman Braud (b); Zutty Singleton (dm)*

- Rust*2,*3,*4,*6: Henry Allen (tpt); Claude Jones (tbn); Albert Nicholas (clt); Eddie Williams (alt); Jelly Roll Morton (pno, vcl); Wellman Braud (sbs); Zutty Singleton (dms)

K. – B. Rau
 13-04-2023
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