

THE RECORDINGS OF LEONARD FIELDS

An Annotated Tentative Personnel - Discography

FIELDS, Leonard, alto sax
No personal data known

born: Louisville, Kentucky, ??? ; died: ???

- *Storyville 101, p.176, Bobby Booker's Life Story*: "Leonard Fields was on alto; I never heard anybody play like him, he was really fast and used to do double and triple tongue work on the saxophone."
- *Storyville 139, p. 28, Leslie Carr Looks Back*: "We would go to cabarets and dances to hear the better players as Jimmy Harrison, trombone; Leonard Fields, alto sax;"
- *Rex Stewart, Boy Meets Horn, p. 208*: "Harlem had some giants playing alto saxophone then, and I recall Eugene Fields (Stewart named him Eugene Fields, but he certainly meant Leonard, as Eugene was a guitarist! – KBR), who was greased lightning (and I never knew what became of him), and others who have disappeared from public notice."
- *Rex Stewart, Jazz Masters of the Thirties, p.130*: "Then, there was Hilton Jefferson, another talented New Englander, who had come from Providence, Rhode Island, with the Julian Arthur burlesque band and stayed on to compete in New York alongside a flock of other up-and-coming tooters who were setting the pace in Harlem – Benny Carter, Eugene Fields (same as above – KBR), and Russell Procope."
- *Rex Stewart, Jazz Masters of the Thirties, p.172*: "Benny (Carter – KBR) was truly outstanding, although it was hard to believe that he was in a musical climate that produced such stalwarts as Eugene Fields (certainly Leonard, again – KBR) Ben Whitted, Fess Edmonds (probably Fess Williams – KBR) – all formidable exponents of the alto for their time."
- *H. Rosenberg, Eugene Williams, June Clark The Story of a Forgotten Giant*: "On Labour Day June (Clark – KBR) took the band back to Smalls', with Carter still on alto. When he left, after a few months, June and Jimmy (Harrison – KBR) sent ticket money to Louisville, Kentucky, for Len Fields, a promising sax man. The new six-piece outfit was the most exiting band in New York, and Fletcher Henderson, Louis, Don Redman, Hawkins, Buster Bailey and others from Smack's band, the Duke and his men and Charlie Johnson's boys used to come to Smalls' to hear it."
- *A. McCarthy, Big Band Jazz, p.50*: "The Dave Nelson Band used in the Mae West show included Leonard Fields (alto saxophone), Trent Harris (tenor saxophone), Lloyd Phillips (piano), Danny Barker (guitar) and Herbie Cowens (drums)." (c. 1930/31 - KBR)

STYLISTICS Leonard Fields

STYLE

Len Fields can be heard improvising scarcely only. He plays fluent and elegant flowing lines in an almost classic manner, not jazzy-hot but legitimate. He was famous for his more-than-everage technique. From what can be distinguished he was "modern" for his time (1925 – 1928).

TO NE

Fields owned a slim and elegant legitimate tone.

VIBRATO

Fields displayed a rather fast and narrow vibrato – the nanni-goat type.

TIME

His time is very exact, according to his legitimate approach, but also at the tip of the beat.

PHRASING

He generally performs long and horizontally structured lines, but sometimes uses to stay harmonically in the tonic when changes develop. In later times he also plays arpeggiated broken-chords.

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

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

- Documented, most certain and aurally absolutely obvious identifications are listed thus: Leonard Fields
- Probable, generally agreed, but not documented identifications are listed in italics, thus: *Leonard Fields*
- 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: (*Leonard Fields*)

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.

LEONARD FIELDS

001	GEORGE McCLENNON'S JAZZ DEVILS	New York,	May 07, 1925
	<i>(June Clark) – tpt; (Joe Williams) – tbn;</i>		
	George McClennon – clt; <i>(Leonard Fields) – alt;</i>		
	Eddie Heywood, Sr. – pno; <i>(Will 'Splivey' Escoffery) – bjo</i>		
73359-A	Home Alone Blues	OK 8236,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8022
73360-B	Anybody Here Want To Try My Cabbage?	OK 8236,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8022

For a long time now, I held the opinion that June Clark's band out of Smalls' Sugar Cane Club had been hired here to back McClennon. Later insights make me think that the band here is a mixture of the Clark and Heywood bands.

June Clark had ties with George McClennon, having worked with him in 1922 in show business, and I see the strong possibility of his presence here. June Clark was an extremely forceful player seemingly bursting with inner power and drive. He possessed a fat tone, very strong, loud and urgent. Probably resulting from his relationship with Louis Armstrong, he tried to get a similar quality of tone and thus later ruined his lip. He uses a rather wide irregular vibrato, which is a crucial criterion for Clark's playing. His vibrato starts immediately with the beginning of the tone and, not, as very often the case with other trumpet players, developing out of a straight tone, loosening up into a "terminal" vibrato. Furthermore, he always plays just a split second before the beat, thus sounding hectic and erratic.

- Trumpet/Cornet: Judging from the above-mentioned stylistics this could easily be a subdued June Clark. On "Anybody Here ..." this trumpet player attempts to play growl trumpet with astonishing results, providing proof that he really is a top rank man.

- Trombone: At times, the trombone player, although very much in the background, sounds faintly like Harrison (tone, attack, vibrato), but this man's 12 bar solo in "Anybody Here ..." is just too crude to be by Harrison! Repeated listening reveals a strong similarity to E. Heywood's trombonist on his Jazz Six session of October 1926, i.e. Jonas "Sweet Papa" Walker! Consultation with my listening friends supports my assumption here and makes Walker's presence very certain. Gunther Schuller in "Early Jazz" asserts that Jonas Walker from St. Louis was an important influence on Charlie Irvis and Tricky Sam Nanton and "to be the first to apply New Orleans 'freak' sounds to his instrument" (Schuller). ADDITION 25-01-2024: After frequent listening to these sides and those of the subsequent sessions, I now am convinced that the trombonist on these sides is not Jonas 'Sweet Papa' Walker as assumed before because of his relationship to Eddie Heywood, Sr. and his trombone style, but the enigmatic Joe Williams, documented only with his three sides made with Bessie Smith on August 24/25, 1928, where he can be heard and recognised with a somewhat evolved style.

- Clarinet: George McClennon He is the leader, and you hear his gas-pipe clarinet all the time. As he seems not to be a distinguished part of the ensemble, I assume, that he just hired part of the Clark band playing their own repertoire, with him participating somehow. He does not sing!

- Alto sax: No definite style discernible. But the sweet and singing tone seems to be the same as with the Blue Rhythm Orch., which made me think of Len Fields, but other characteristics of Fields (arpeggios, double tongue work, etc.) are lacking. However, in "Home Alone Blues" this musician starts a solo with a 3-bar sequence not obeying the changes but staying harmonically in the tonic, which can be heard elsewhere in Fields' playing and seems to be a characteristic though negative part of his style. Yet, Fields did not join the Clark band before the summer of 1925, replacing Benny Carter! I do not dare to think of Carter!

- Piano: Eddie Heywood Sr. His name is credited on the record label as the piano soloist. He is clearly the same man accompanying McClennon on earlier recordings (May 02, 1925). Listen to his octave runs which obviously are characteristic of his style!

- Banjo: unknown No suggestion as to the banjo player's identity! He plays a rather unusual and dated 6/8 style, not heard before on McClennon's recordings. He may thus be Will 'Splivey' Escoffery from June Clark's band – or possibly also Bernard Addison from the Seminole Syncopators, in case they had been in New York at this date.

There are no drums as given in Rust*6!

Notes:

- *Record Research 66, p.5: probably Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George McClennon (clt); unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (?) (bjo); unknown (dms)*

- *Rust*2: Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George McClennon (clt); unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (?) (bjo); unknown (dms); George McClennon (vcl)*

- *Rust*3,*4,*6: unknown -c; unknown -tb; George McClennon -cl, v; unknown -as; ?Eddie Heywood -p; unknown -bj; unknown -d*

002	GEORGE McCLENNON'S JAZZ DEVILS	New York,	Jun. 11, 1925
	George McClennon - voc;		
	<i>(June Clark) – tpt; (Joe Williams) – tbn;</i>		
	<i>(Leonard Fields) – alt, clt;</i>		
	<i>(Eddie Heywood) – pno; (Bill Benford?) - bbs</i>		
73425-D	Everybody But Me	OK 8337,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8022
73426-C	Bologna	OK 8337,	Jazz Oracle BDW 8022

George McClennon was adopted by the great comedian Bert Williams in his childhood. Consequently he also started a stage career very early. On these titles here he attempts some kind of a Bert Williams copy.

The band plays a rather subdued straight accompaniment, with some hot tones here and there. Therefore identification of the musicians is nearly impossible, but the overall sound is very similar to the sides of May 07, 1925, and I cautiously tend to ascribe these sides to Clark.

Furthermore, the accompanying trumpet player uses triple tongue at the end of "Bologna", which is also used on "Stolen Kisses" of the session of June 18, 1926.

Discussion of individual musicians seems to be useless here. So my suggestions in the discography must remain in italics!

Notes:

- Rust*3,*4,*6: *unknown -c; unknown -tb; George McClennon -cl -v; unknown -as; ? Eddie Heywood -p; unknown -bj; unknown -d*

Tune Structures:

73425-D *Everybody But Me* Key of Eb OKeh
(Intro 4 bars ens)(Bridge 2 bars ens)(A1 Verse 16 bars voc - ens)(B1 Chorus 20 bars AA' voc - ens)(B2 Chorus 20 bars voc - ens)(Coda 4 bars tbn / ens)

73426-C *Bologna* Key of Eb OKeh
(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 16+2 bars AABA' voc - ens)(A2 Chorus 16+2 bars voc - ens)(A3 Ch 16+2 bars voc - ens)(A4 Chorus 16+2 bars voc - ens)(A5 Chorus 16+2 bars voc - ens)

003 **BLUE RHYTHM ORCHESTRA**

New York, Oct. 29, 1925

June Clark - cnt; Jimmy Harrison - tbn;
Buster Bailey - clt; Leonard Fields - alt;
Charlie "Smitty" Smith - pno; Will "Splivy" Escoffery - bjo
106358 Keep Your Temper

PA 36364, Per 14545, Frog DGF 73

Composer credit: Willie Smith.

Because of the obvious correlation of this and the following session - the only ones under the 'Blue Rhythm Orchestra' name - I have taken my liberty to discuss both sessions together under the following date.

Please, note, that 'Keep Your Temper' on Frog DGF 71 does in fact play the 'Keep Your Temper' of the 'Gulf Coast Seven' session of Nov. 05, 1925. The 'Blue Rhythm Orchestra' 'Keep Your Temper' has then been correctly reissued on Frog DGF 73 as shown here!

004 **BLUE RHYTHM ORCHESTRA**

New York, c. Nov. 04, 1925

June Clark - cnt; Jimmy Harrison - tbn;
Buster Bailey - clt; Leonard Fields - alt;
Charlie "Smitty" Smith - pno; Will "Splivy" Escoffery - bjo
106381 Santa Claus Blues
106382 Hold 'Er, Deacon

PA 36350, Per 14531, Frog DGF 71
PA 36364, Per 14545, Frog DGF 71

Composer credits: Straight - Kahn (106381) / Will C. Skidmore - Marshall Walker (106382)

The quotations below urge us to conclude that the sides of the 'Blue Rhythm Orchestra' are in fact by 'June Clark's Creole Stompers', augmented by Buster Bailey on clt, if this is in fact he. The below mentioned characteristics of the alto player and the piano player are easily recognized on the records, so that the personnel have to be thus:

- June Clark: aurally the cornet player is the same man as on the Gulf Coast Seven and not ?--- Thomas or (presumably Big Charlie Thomas), as given in Rust, Jazz Records, all editions. Clark owns a fat tone and a very fiery approach and attack, although sometimes retarding the opening- notes of some phrases (lip trouble? or uncertainty what to play next?), whereas --- Thomas has a lighter tone, uses a more lyrical style with high interval-jumps, very much like L. Armstrong at that time. Furthermore, Clark owns a rather erratic approach to time/rhythm, which results in a kind of hectic succession of notes.

- Jimmy Harrison: It is most interesting to hear Harrison's new concept of trombone-playing, like a second cornet as cited below. And mind his tone, vibrato, and attack, completely unlike any other trombone player at that time.

- Buster Bailey: although there is no reliable source for this suggestion known to me, the style seems to be Bailey's. Bailey is not known to have been a permanent member of the group. But do we really know? There is no soprano-sax as given by all Rust editions to be heard anywhere.

- Leonard Fields: this man's playing is exactly as cited below in 'Sources'. Mentioning his name at the appropriate places in Tom Lord 'Clarence Williams' p. 146/147 seems quite reasonable!

- Charlie 'Smitty' Smith: Rust and all other discographies list Willie "The Lion" Smith as pianist. This pianist here shows nothing of "The Lion's" characteristics. The pno-breaks at the end of "Hold 'Er Deacon" with their simple "oom-pah" would exactly apply for "Smitty" Smith as quoted below. Therefore, and because Clark's piano player at the time was "Smitty" Smith, I think that "Smitty" is much more probable than "The Lion". Maybe "the Lion's" name was listed in early discographical times because "Keep Your Temper" is "the Lion's" tune and "Smitty" was practically unknown!

- Will 'Splivy' Escoffery: Rust and all other discographies list Buddy Christian. To me, Buddy Christian does not seem to be the banjo player on these sides, comparing this man's style to that more straight-forward approach of Buddy Christian on the Clarence Williams Blue Five or the Gulf Coast Seven session of Nov. 05, 1925 (see below). This man is said to be "Splivy" Escoffery (see below) - as mentioned in 'Jazz Information' No. II/16 of 1941 - as regular member of the June Clark band. He plays in that Ragtime derived banjo style common in Harlem in the early days as opposed to the straight 4/4 "Western" style of Buddy Christian. William "Splivy" Escoffery, who is not listed in Rust 6th ed., may yet be found in the Rust Artist index under "Spivey, -- (bj), having made recordings with Eliza Christmas Lee and with Lavinia Turner in 1921. He even is the same man, who played bjo/gtr in Duke Ellington's first group at Armstrong High School in Washington DC in 1916, although named William Escoffery here (Lawrence, D. Ellington and his World, p. 12). He is said to be of Portuguese origin.

The front page of this web-site 'Harlem-Fuss' presents a hitherto unknown photo of 'June Clark and his Creole Band' which shows exactly this Blue Rhythm Orchestra personnel, except for Buster Bailey missing, and Bill Benford, Jazz Joe Carson, and probably Harrison Jackson added, and completing the 'Creole Band' personnel.

Now, just look at the notes below re the personnels as listed in the various editions of Rust and other discographies! That's what I would call some development!

Notes:

- *VJM VLP 5 (LP) Cover text: probably Louis Armstrong and another (cornets); Charlie Irvis (trombone); Buster Bailey (clarinet and soprano saxophone); unknown (alto saxophone); probably Clarence Williams or Dan Parish (piano); Buddy Christian (banjo),*

- *Rust*2: June Clark ? (tpt); Jimmy Harrison ? (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, sop); Prince Robinson (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo)*

- *Rust*3: ? --- Thomas -c; Jimmy Harrison -tb; Buster Bailey -cl -ss; Don Redman -cl -as; Clarence Williams or Willie "The Lion" Smith -p; Buddy Christian -bj*

- *Rust*4: June Clark or --- Thomas -c; Jimmy Harrison -tb; Buster Bailey -cl -ss; Prince Robinson -ts; Willie "The Lion" Smith -p; Buddy Christian -bj*

- Rust*6: Charlie Thomas -c; Jimmy Harrison -tb; Buster Bailey -cl -ss -as; Prince Robinson -ts; Willie "The Lion" Smith -p; Buddy Christian -bj
 - Tom Lord, Clarence Williams: June Clark or --- Thomas (tpt); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, sop); Prince Robinson (ten); Willie „The Lion“ Smith (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo). „The following sessions (Blue Rhythm Orchestra – KBR) are tempting examples to list as Clarence Williams sessions because of the sound of the group and the fact that all three compositions are owned by CWMP (Clarence Williams Music Publication Company – KBR).

Tunes Structures:

Keep Your Temper Key of F / Bb / Eb / Bb Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
 (Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars ABAC LF alt + ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(B1 Chorus 16 bars AA' JH o-tbn 6 - reeds 2 – JH o- tbn 7 - ens 1)(B2 Chorus 16 bars BB clt 6 - reeds 2 - clt 7 - ens 1)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(C1 Chorus 32 bars AA' BB clt 28 - ens 4)(Vamp 2 bars ens)(B3 Chorus 16 bars ens 6 - reeds 2 - ens 8)

Santa Claus Blues Key of Eb Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
 (Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars ABAC JH o- tbn + ens, tbn middle break)(B1 Verse 16 bars ens)(A2 Chorus 32 bars LF alt + ens, alt middle break)(A3 Chorus 32 bars ens, JC o-cent middle break)

Hold'er Deacon Key of C Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
 (A1 Chorus 20 bars ens, BB clt breaks)(B1 Verse 16 bars ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(A2 Chorus 20 bars LF alt + ens)(A3 Chorus 20 bars ens, ens middle break, WSE bjo breaks)(A4 Chorus 20 bars ens, CSS pno middle break, pno breaks)(A5 Chorus 20 bars ens, JH o- tbn middle break, JC o-cent + JH o-tbn + LF alt breaks)

Sources:

- "The Sound of Harlem" Columbia C3L33 LPs, booklet: "Small's Sugar Cane Club: Pianist Charlie Smith had a band at the Sugar Cane in 1923. Cornetist June Clark took it over and featured Jimmy Harrison, trombone; Benny Carter, C-melody-sax; Jazz Carson, drums; Prince Robinson, sax; Will "Splivy" Escoffery, banjo; and a fellow named "Stone" on clarinet."

- Don Redman/Frank Driggs: Martin Williams, Jazz Panorama: "June Clark and Jimmy Harrison used to have a band uptown at Connor's on 135th street, and all of us used to practically live in there. June was very good, but he couldn't read. They used to play some great jazz together. When Jimmy was in Fletcher's band later on, he was the best around

- Rex Stewart, Boy Meets Horn, p. 65: "Most likely we met at Small's Sugar Cane on Fifth Avenue. That would be about right because I also met Jimmy Harrison and June Clark there. They were the only musicians in town playing "Western" style with the exception of Happy Caldwell, who had grown up under the influence of Joe Oliver and Louis Armstrong. Hap started teaching me the Western "get-off" style of playing, which had a heavy accented back beat on the second and fourth bars. When you soloed, it was called "taking a Boston".

- "The Sound of Harlem" Columbia C3L33 LPs, booklet: "Bamboo Inn: June Clark's Creole Stompers: Clark, cornet; Jimmy Harrison, trombone; Len Fields, alto sax; Harrison Jackson, tenor sax; Charlie Smith, piano; Buddy Christian, guitar; Bill Benford, bass; Joe "Jazz" Carson, drums, January 1926."

- "The Sound of Harlem" Columbia C3L33 LPs, booklet: "During the fall of 1925 the most exciting jazz band in Harlem, according to the many musicians who heard it, was June Clark's Creole Stompers at Ed Small's Sugar Cane Club (up until October 22nd when Small's Paradise opened on Seventh Avenue with Charlie Johnson's band). The main attraction was the brass duo of Clark and trombonist Jimmy Harrison, who modeled their choruses after the two-cornet style of King Oliver and Louis Armstrong."

- Freddie Skerritt, Storyville 95, p.183: „I remember that in the early 'twenties, "Smalls" was located on the south-west corner of 135th Street and 5th Avenue. Trumpeter June Clark was the band-leader and Leonard Fields (sax) and Jimmy Harris (sic) (trombone) were in the band, but I don't remember the other names. I do remember that Basie was across the street with a four-piece combo."

- Bobby Booker's Life Story, Storyville 101, p.176: "Leonard Fields was on alto; I never heard anybody play like him, he was really fast and used to do double and triple tongue work on the saxophone."

- Leslie Carr Looks Back, Storyville 139, p. 28: "We would go to cabarets and dances to hear the better players as Jimmy Harrison, trombone; Leonard Fields, alto sax;"

- Count Basie/Albert Murray, Good Morning Blues: "I used to go into Small's Sugar Cane Club quite often..... They had a piano player that they were just crazy about. His name was Smitty, and he was also known as Fat Smitty. He knew all the songs and all the keys and everything, and he played a lot of comp. No matter how much piano anybody else played, nobody could comp for June and Jimmy like Smitty could. So far as they were concerned, he was it. Smitty would just be there with that oompa, oompa, oompa right there behind those cats, laying it on heavy. Oompa, oompa, oompa. That's what made Smitty so great. That's why those guys liked to play with Smitty so much. Oompa, oompa, oompa. Beautiful. Just beautiful."

005 GULF COAST SEVEN

June Clark – cnt; Jimmy Harrison – tbn;
 Leonard Fields – alt; Harrison Jackson – clt, ten;
 Charlie "Smitty" Smith – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo; Joe "Jazz" Carson – dms
 141245-4 Santa Claus Blues
 141246-3 Keep Your Temper

New York, Nov. 05, 1925

Col 14107-D, Frog DGF 32
 Col 14107-D, Frog DGF 32

Comparing these titles to the Blue Rhythm Orch. titles above, this is the same band with a few changes.

- June Clark: same man as Blue Rhythm Orchestra above.

- Jimmy Harrison: same man as Blue Rhythm Orchestra above.

- Leonard Fields: same man as Blue Rhythm Orchestra above.

- Harrison Jackson: RUST and all other discographies list Prince Robinson. I hear alt and ten/clt on these sides. The style of the tenorsax player is rather pedestrian and shows nothing of Prince Robinson's style on the Washingtonians of Sep. 07, 1925 (4 forceful bars in middle of alto chorus) or of his playing later on. So, this man here, whose clarinet playing is a little better than his tenor playing, may be the said Harrison Jackson. He later became a lawyer.

- Charlie Smith: same man as Blue Rhythm Orchestra above.

- Buddy Christian: seems logical. This man's style is that more straight-forward and light approach of bjo playing on the Cl. Williams Blue 5 of Buddy Christian.

- I do not hear any tuba notes!

- Joe "Jazz" Carson: you hear the appropriate cymbal-crashes at the right places which could have been executed by any drummer. There is no reason to doubt "Jazz" Carson, though. There seems to be some confusion about this drummer's name. The first Rosenberg/Williams draft names him as: "Jazz" Carson Williams. This then is changed to "Jazz" Joe Carson in the second draft, possibly after rechecking the name with June Clark. (Louis Metcalf, RR46/4: "I remember Eddie Carson on drums (with Marge Creath in St. Louis! – KBR). He was Josephine Baker's father.")

As I have constantly observed during my/our large research project on the recordings of Clarence Williams (N&N 58 – 61) it was common among composers/publishers to hire musicians from working bands for their own units playing and recording their recent compositions/publications. But very seldom did they hire more than two musicians of one distinct band. Often partnerships of trumpet / trombone players were engaged as cited above. Maybe it was not wanted to transpose the distinct sound of a working band on to the recording unit with another leader's name?! Not so Bradford. He engaged complete bands, even containing the band's leader as a playing member. So, Bradford hired one of the hottest bands in Harlem of the year 1925, residing at "Smalls' Sugar Cane Club" on 2212 Fifth Avenue, forerunner of "Smalls' Paradise". He had a photograph made of this band with himself leaning on the piano ('Pictorial History of Jazz' p. 129 and 'Born with the Blues' p. 147) which obviously was intended as a promotional photo for further use as a Bradford recording unit. So, it seems that Bradford had future plans with them. But only a handful of records resulted out of this combination, as I have shown in my comprehensive article on June Clark, which will be issued in the FROG Yearbook Vol. 4 later this year. Yet, a most interesting point should appropriately be added here: The band – June Clark's! – recorded two titles of their very own repertoire in their own arrangement here. In all other instances of the Gulf Coast Seven output the tunes and titles are Perry Bradford's!

Notes:

- Rust*2: June Clark ? (cnt); Jimmy Harrison (tbn); Buster Bailey (clt, alt); Prince Robinson (ten); Willie "The Lion" Smith (pno); unknown (dms)

- Rust*3,*4,*6: June Clark -c; Jimmy Harrison -tb; Buster Bailey -cl -ss -as; Prince Robinson -ts; ;Willie "The Lion" Smith -p; Buddy Christian -bj; ? Bill Benford -bb; "Jazz" Carson -d.

Tune Structures:

141245-4 Santa Claus Blues Key of Eb Columbia

(Intro 4 bars ens)(B1 Verse 16 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars ABAC JH o-tbn + ens, tbn middle break)(A2 Chorus 32 bars LF alt + ens, alt middle break)(A3 Chorus 32 bars ens, JC o-cnt middle break)(C1 ½ Chorus 16 bars AC ens, HJ clt breaks)

141246-3 Keep Your Temper Key of F / Bb / Eb / Bb Columbia

(Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars ABAC LF alt + ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(B1 Chorus 16 bars AA' JH o-tbn 6 - reeds 2 – JH o-tbn 7 - ens 1)(B2 Chorus 16 bars HJ ten 14 - ens 2)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(C1 Chorus 32 bars AA' HJ clt + ens 28 - ens 4)(Vamp 2 bars ens)(B3 Chorus 16 bars ens 6 – HJ clt 2 - ens 8)(B4 Chorus 16 bars ens, JC o-cnt middle break)

006 SARA MARTIN	Clarence Williams' Blue Five	New York,	Nov. 23, 1925
Sara Martin – voc;			
June Clark – cnt; Jimmy Harrison – tbn; Leonard Fields - alt;			
Clarence Williams – pno, voc (1,2); Buddy Christian – bjo			
73773-B	I'm Gonna Hoodoo You	OK 8270,	Doc DOCD-5397
73774-B	Your Going Ain't Giving Me The Blues	OK 8270,	Doc DOCD-5398
73775-B	What More Can A Monkey Woman Do	OK 8270,	Doc DOCD-5398

This is a Clarence Williams session, and Clarence seems to have taken advantage of the Clark's Creole Stompers' popularity in engaging the frontline of the band for backing Sara Martin.

John R.T. Davies ascribes the cornet-playing on these titles on his otherwise marvelous CD (Timeless) to the mysterious "Big Charlie" Thomas. Although I must admit a certain similarity, I am absolutely positive that this is Clark and not Thomas. Furthermore, as to his own testimony in 'Jazz Information', June Clark recorded "Hoodoo" with Sara Martin.

Again, when comparing these musicians with the musicians of the sessions above, the following can be stated:

- June Clark: same man as Gulf Coast Seven 05. Nov. 1925 session. June Clark himself declared having made this recording with Sara Martin!

- Jimmy Harrison: same man as Gulf Coast Seven 05. Nov. 1925 session.

- Leonard Fields: same man as Gulf Coast Seven 05. Nov. 1925 session.

- Clarence Williams: see Tom Lord: 'Clarence Williams'

- Buddy Christian: see: Tom Lord: 'Clarence Williams'

This is one of the records found in June Clark's uncle's house ! The personnel is confirmed by June Clark himself !

Notes:

- Rust*3: --- Thomas -c; ? Charlie Irvis-tb; ? Buster Bailey -as; apparently Clarence Williams -p, definitely v where shown (1,2 – KBR);

?Buddy Christian -bj

- Rust*4,*6: --- Thomas -c; ? Charlie Irvis-tb; unknown -as; Clarence Williams -p -v; ?Buddy Christian -bj

- BGR*2: --- Thomas, cnt; poss Charlie Irvis, tbn; prob Buster Bailey, alt; Clarence Williams, pno, voc (1,2); prob Buddy Christian -bj

- BGR*3,*4: --- Thomas, cnt; poss Charlie Irvis, tbn; unknown, alt; Clarence Williams, pno, voc (1,2); prob Buddy Christian -bj

Tune Structures:

73773-B I'm Gonna Hoodoo You Key of C OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(Vamp 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 12 bars voc-duet + ens)(A2 Chorus 12 bars voc-duet + ens)(A3 Chorus 12 bars voc-duet + ens)(A4 Chorus 12 bars voc-duet + ens)(A5 Chorus 12 bars ens)

73774-B Your Going Ain't Giving Me The Blues Key of C OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 12 bars voc SM + ens)(A2 Chorus 12 bars voc CW + ens)(A3 Chorus 12 bars voc SM + ens)(A4 Chorus 12 bars voc CW + ens)(A5 Chorus 12 bars voc SM + ens)(A6 Chorus 12 bars voc-duet + ens)

73775-B What More Can A Monkey Woman Do Key of C OKeh

(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 16 bars voc + ens)(A2 Chorus 16 bars voc + ens)(A3 Chorus 16 bars voc + ens)(A4 Chorus 16 bars voc + ens)(Coda 4 bars ens)

Sources :

- "With Louis gone, Clarence looks around for another hornman. TKD (4) inserts a note, which should come at this time. At this stage something must be said about June Clark. It is clear from information received from a number of sources – including both Clark and Williams – that Williams used Clark on a number of sessions, often in company with Jimmy Harrison (the two men played together with a Bradford unit) (?), and that these sessions fall in the period between Louis Armstrong's leaving New York – between the 2nd and 9th of November 1925 – and early 1926. "(Tom Lord, 'Clarence Williams', p. 142)

- Tom Lord, Clarence Williams', p. 146: "An article by Herman Rosenberg (34) on June Clark (the 'Jazz Information' article!) states: There's the vocal duet by Sara Martin and Clarence Williams, with the accompaniment by Clarence Williams' Blue Five; "I'm Gonna Hoodoo You", and "Your Going Ain't Giving Me The Blues" on Okeh 8270. According to June (Clark), the band included himself on cornet, Jimmy Harrison, trombone, Len Fields, sax, and Clarence Williams, piano. A third side from the same session (but not identified by June) was released on Okeh 8283. It's "What More Can A Monkey Woman Do?" by Sara Martin, accompanied by Clarence Williams' Blue Five. The accompanying personnel has been open to question. The cornet has been given as June Clark by Rust (10) and Davies (6). He is the same man as on the session that follows this. Eva identifies him as ----- Thomas, a man older than the rest of the musicians, who had a lot of Louis Armstrong's licks. The trombone has been listed as Jimmy Harrison by Rust and Davies, however it sounds as if it might possibly be Charlie

Irvis. The alto has quite a prominent part in the ensembles. He has been listed as Len Fields (10,6) on this and the next session (C. W. Blue Five, Dec. 15, 1925 Shake T. Thing / Get It Fixed !). Eva was questioned, but had no recollection of the name. The source of his name is obviously the June Clark article quoted above. Buster Bailey is now considered as quite possibly the alto. However, I feel that the alto on this session is the same as on the following session, where the clarinetist is definitely Bailey, so this alto must remain unknown. He is a strong "correct" player, with arpeggios at his fingertips, but still unknown. The piano has been accepted as played by Clarence, however it's hard to tell."

Now, this is some irritating comment on this session! Why has the problem of personnel – if there really is one – been handled so complicated when it could have been handled very simply: June Clark tells Mr Rosenberg that he recorded "I'm Gonna Hoodoo You" and a second title with Sara Martin, Rust and Davies follow this assertion, and these quotations could simply have been counterchecked with the Blue Rhythm Band and the Gulf Coast Seven recordings and everything would have been cleared at once. Here we have the direct statement of a participant only 15 years after the recording, but this seems to be so much unreliable, that Tom Lord prefers to neglect it and so his personnel, and then Rust's own following him, is far off the mark. Just listen to the Blue Rhythm Orchestras and the Gulf Coast Sevens consecutively, and then these Sara Martins, and you will at once recognize and be convinced!

Nevertheless, there is a strong similarity between June Clark and Charlie Thomas. John R. T. Davies has been confused here when compiling his CD on "Big" Charlie Thomas on 'Timeless'.

Yet, by careful listening and comparing these two men, you will see (or hear respectively) that both men have a lot of Armstrong phrases and licks at their disposal, but Thomas has a rather light tone with little vibrato, whereas Clark owns a fat tone with much vibrato. His vibrato starts immediately with the beginning of the tone, not, as very often the case with other trumpet players, being developed out of a straight tone, loosening up into a "terminal" vibrato.

007	ALBERTA HUNTER	Perry Bradford's Mean Four	New York,	c. Dec. 11, 1925
	Alberta Hunter – voc;			
	June Clark – cnt; Jimmy Harrison – tbn; Leonard Fields - alt;			
	Perry Bradford – pno			
73830-B	Your Jelly Roll Is Good	OK 8268,	Doc DOCD-5424	
73831-B	Take That Thing Away	OK 8268,	Doc DOCD-5424	

It is very interesting to note, that Perry Bradford in his book 'Born With the Blues' does not mention anything in regard of June Clark or Jimmy Harrison. There is only the photograph of the band, together with Perry Bradford on it. So, as it is known, there has been some connection, and, obviously Perry - as he did with Jimmy Wade - engaged June Clark's band for some recording purposes. This session seems to be the prove.

Now under Perry Bradford's guidance we again find the three horn-men of the Creole Stompers, this time backing Alberta Hunter:

- June Clark: same as above session
- Jimmy Harrison: same as above session
- Leonard Fields: same as above session
- Perry Bradford: piano is very much in the background, and as P. Bradford's piano-style is not well-known and seems not to have been very marked I am following the discographies.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3,*4: unknown, cnt; unknown, tbn; unknown, alt; Perry Bradford -pno
 - Rust*3,*4,*6: prob Bubber Miley -c; Charlie Green -tb; Don Redman -as; Perry Bradford -p

Tune Structures:

73830-B	Your Jelly Roll Is Good	Key of Bb	OKeh
(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Verse 16 bars voc + ens)(B1 Chorus 32 bars AA' voc + ens)(B2 Chorus 32 bars ens 24 bars, voc + ens 8 bars))			
73831-B	Take That Thing Away	Key of F	OKeh
(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Verse 16 bars AB voc + ens)(B1 Chorus 18 bars AB voc + ens)(A2 Verse 16 bars ens)(B2 Chorus 18 bars voc + ens)(Coda 3 bars voc + ens)			

008	CLARENCE WILLIAMS' BLUE FIVE		New York,	Dec. 15, 1925
	Big Charlie Thomas – cnt; Buster Bailey – clt; Leonard Fields – alt;			
	Clarence Williams – pno; Buddy Christian – bjo;			
	Eva Taylor - voc			
73837-B	Shake That Thing	OK 8267,	Timeless CBC 1-030	
73838-B	Get It Fixed	OK 8267,	Timeless CBC 1-030	

This personnel is commonly accepted (Rust*6), with the exception of the alto player. But his identity is easy to recognize when listening to June Clark's recordings of 1925 (Blue Rhythm Orchestra, Gulf Coast Seven 05-11-25) where he is the documented alto saxophonist. He can be heard improvising using his common flowing horizontal lines with harmonic insecurity by using not harmonically destined notes. It is, yet, surprising that Fields is listed in the early editions of Rust and BGR, but later on dropped. I wonder who of Rust's informers might have had the right idea – and ear – to name Len Fields here. (See my Big Charlie Thomas list elsewhere at this web-site!)

Notes:

- BGR*2: - Thomas, cnt; Buster Bailey, clt; poss Len Fields, alt; Clarence Williams, pno; Buddy Christian, bjo.
 - BGR*3,*4: --- Thomas, c; Buster Bailey, cl; unknown, as; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj.
 - Rust*2: unknown (cnt); Buster Bailey (clt); Len Fields (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (bjo); Eva Taylor (vcl).
 - Rust*3,*4: ---- Thomas -c; Buster Bailey -cl; unknown -as; Clarence Williams -p; Buddy Christian -bj; Eva Taylor -v.
 - Rust*6: Charlie Thomas, c; Buster Bailey, cl; unknown as; Clarence Williams, p; Buddy Christian, bj; Eva Taylor, v.

009	MARY STAFFORD		New York,	c. Mar. 30, 1926
	Mary Stafford – voc;			
	June Clark – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;			
	Leonard Fields – alt; Harrison Jackson – ten, clt;			
	Perry Bradford – pno; unknown (Buddy Christian) – bjo			
106749	Ain't Got Nobody To Grind My Coffee In The Morning	PA 7502, Per 102,	Archeophone 6006	
106750	Take Your Finger Off It	PA 7502, Per 102,	Archeophone 6006	

Bradford had already recorded for this label with Mary Jackson and his P.B Jazz Phools in October 1923 leading a very competent unit of musicians from the West. His former association to this label might have led to a new recording contract as accompanist to this and the next blues lady. But it might easily have been June Clark's association to Pathe Actuelle Blue Rhythm Orchestra sessions of October/November 1925 that brought this unit into the recording studio.

Accordingly, we hear a contingent from June Clark's band of the time – June Clark and his Creole Band.

– June Clark: all Clark's characteristics clearly audible!

- Trombone: and Clark obviously has his new trombonist with him, namely the very famous – and rightfully so – but difficult and tough Charlie Green, who had just left the Fletcher Henderson band to go on his own. He did not stay long with Clark, but was soon on his way to his hometown Omaha because of marital problems. Green had a tremendous technique, great improvisational abilities connected with a certain earthiness, which made him a dream partner for Bessie Smith. Yet with her, he mainly displayed his roughness and earthiness, but should not be depreciated because of it. He could do much more than that on the slide-horn. For me this sounds very, very much like Green with his gruff tone and playing on the Hendersons and Bessies.

- Alto sax: Leonard Fields? Although Len Fields comes to mind, this might possibly not be him, this man here lacking part of Fields' "correct" and singing style and tone. On the other hand, he plays a lot of chordal arpeggios, which would suggest Fields. I am not certain at all but dare to name Fields because of his still belonging to the Clark band.

- Clarinet/tenor sax: I assume Harrison Jackson on the Bb pitched reeds here. For a short couple of months this otherwise obscure musician was tenor saxophonist and clarinetist with the Clark band in late 1925 and early 1926. He did not stay long with the band, and probably for musical reasons he left the music business for good to become a lawyer. He can probably be heard on the Gulf Coast Seven session of Nov. 05, 1925 (see N&N 69 p 16) and these two PA sessions here, but his performances are not at all convincing. Buster Bailey certainly is far off the mark for this mediocre reed playing, and I wonder how his name could creep into the Rust editions. The clt playing definitely is not Buster Bailey's style (Bailey was much more virtuoso!), but typical for a saxophonist's clarinet playing. Furthermore, it is rather pedestrian and reminds of the clt playing on the Gulf Coast Seven. So, Harrison Jackson comes to mind, who still was a member of Clark's Creole Stompers.

- Piano: on piano we certainly hear Bradford, recognizable from his treble figures which I call tinkle-tinkle-plink, very obvious at the end of the second title's verse. Yet, there are little recognizable and attributable characteristics of this pno player, except for some ninth chords, which are also used in some prearranged ensemble parts. (see next session of Caroline Johnson).

- Banjo: The banjo player plays straight four-to-the-bar no-nonsense banjo and might therefore be Buddy Christian, who was successor of Will "Splivey" Escoffery in the Clark band.

There is a strange moment in the clarinet solo of 'Take Your Fingers Off It': in bar 12 the clarinet plays two quarter-notes (Gb – F) which are immediately repeated by another player, probably the alto sax, that I had not on my list before. There is a great muddle of sound behind the singer, and it seems that there is not only a tenor sax cum clarinet in the personnel, but also a restrained alto sax, whose player then has to be Len Fields. And after close listening Mr. Field's arpeggiated playing becomes apparent.

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3: unknown c; unknown tb; Buster Bailey cl; unknown p; unknown bj

- BGR*4: unknown c; unknown tb; unknown cl; unknown p; unknown bj

- Rust*3,*4,*6: unknown c; unknown tb; Buster Bailey cl; unknown p; unknown bj

Tune Structures:

106749 *Ain't Got Nobody To Grind My Coffee In The Morning* Key of Ab Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
(Intro 4 bars ens)(Vamp 2 bars ens)(Verse 12 bars voc + ens)(Chorus A1 34 bars AA' voc + ens)(Chorus A2 34 bars AA' voc + ens)

106750 *Take Your Fingers Off It* Key of Eb Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
(Intro 4 bars ens)(Vamp 2 bars ens)(Verse 16 bars voc + ens)(Chorus A1 18 bars ABCA' voc + ens)(Chorus A2 18 bars ABCA' clt)(Chorus A3 18 bars ABCA' voc + ens)

010 **CAROLINE JOHNSON**

New York,

c. Mar. 30, 1926

Caroline Johnson (Alta Brown?) – voc;

June Clark – cnt; Charlie Green – tbn;

Leonard Fields – alt; Harrison Jackson – clt;

Charlie "Smitty" Smith or Perry Bradford – pno, voc (1); unknown (Buddy Christian) – bjo

106751 Georgia Grind

PA 7503, Per 103,

Doc DOCD-5514

106752 Mama Stayed Out The Whole Night Long (But Mama Didn't Do No Wrong)

PA 7503, Per 103,

Doc DOCD-5514

These two titles by Caroline Johnson – whose real name might be Alta Brown – with their matrix numbers consecutive to the session listed above were obviously recorded on the same day, what made me adapt the recording date of the latter session to the former.

The whole performance starts with a singer who undoubtedly is not Miss Johnson. After some careful listening it becomes apparent that this is Perry Bradford himself with his very own unsecure and frail pitch singing one chorus of "Georgia Grind" in Eb, the band then modulating to C for Miss Johnson's performance. The rest of the tune then stays in C.

Very clearly this is the same band/personnel as before. I would like you to hear and enjoy June Clark's heroic cornet playing. He certainly was one of the greatest cornet/trumpet players of the 1920s, and it is unbelievable that he could disappear into oblivion in the late 20s – at least as a musician.

- June Clark: All Clark's characteristics clearly audible again !

- Trombone: although the trombone player is more subdued than on the previous session, he nevertheless seems to be Green with his gruff tone and playing.

- Alto sax: although almost inaudible, there is an alto player here who has to be Leonard Fields.

- Clarinet/tenor sax: obviously same player as previous session, doubling ten on both titles, thus possibly Jackson

- Piano: as the singer in the first chorus of "Georgia Grind" is certainly Perry Bradford, it can be assumed that he is also acting as piano player. Bradford seems to have used a somewhat arpeggiated style, which can also be heard on Bradford's Gang of April 21, 1926.

But the pno break at the end (Coda) of "Mama Stayed Out" is very much in the kind of Charlie Smith's breaks heard in "Hold 'Er, Deacon" of the Blue Rhythm Orch., and "When The Jazz Band ..." and "Just Blues ..." by Thomas Morris' Past Jazz Masters. I therefore tend to assume it is Smith on piano here, just as on the Mary Staffords above. And, if I am right that it is the personnel of the Clark band of early 1926 here, Smith's presence naturally is of greater probability.

- Banjo: unknown, but very probably as above

- Male voc: this is certainly P. Bradford singing the first chorus with his characteristic frail and shaky intonation (compare with his session of his Jazz Phools of April 21, 1925).

Notes:

- BGR*2,*3: acc by either unknown c; unknown p; or, according to some sources: unknown c; unknown tb; unknown cl; unknown as; unknown p; unknown bj

- BGR*4: unknown c; unknown tb; unknown cl; unknown as; unknown p; unknown bj; unknown male voc(1)

- Rust*3,*4: unknown c; unknown p; or, according to some sources: unknown c; unknown tb; unknown cl; unknown as; unknown p; unknown bj

- Rust*6: ? Tom Morris c; unknown tb; unknown cl; unknown as; unknown p; unknown bj; unknown male voc(1)

Tune Structures:

106751 *Georgia Grind* Key of Eb / C Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
(Intro 4 bars ens - clt)(Chorus A1 12 bars voc (Bradford) + ens key of Eb, modulation to G7)(Chorus B1 12 bars voc + ens key of C)(Chorus B2 12 bars voc + ens)(Chorus B3 12 bars voc + ens)(Chorus B4 12 bars voc + ens)

106752 *Mama Stayed Out The Whole Hight Long (But Mama Didn't Do No Wrong)* Key of Eb Pathé Actuelle, Perfect
(Intro 4 bars ens)(Vamp 2 bars ens)(Verse 20 bars voc + ens)(Chorus A1 18 bars AABA' voc + ens)(Chorus A2 18 bars AABA' voc + ens)(Coda 4 bars pno - ens)

Sources:

Interview Harrison Smith: "I had the first ten Black Pattis that were rolled off the press, and I gave them to a girl named Alta Brown who recorded as Caroline Johnson. Her name was Alta (sic!) Brown, and she was an ex-member of the Dixie Jubilee Singers. She made a record with Fats (Waller) for Gennett called *Mama's Gonna Stay Out All Night Long*, or some crazy thing. (Caroline Johnson cut this title for Pathe-Actuelle 7503 backed by Georgia Grind - see Godrich-Dixon - no personnel given - D.S-B). But you see that was the aftermath of a session. They recorded these spiritual songs for a little church in Harlem called Little Mount Zion Baptist Church. So they recorded the spiritual selections, and afterwards Fats got the organ jumpin' because he was thirsty and wanted to get out and get a shower of booze, and she fell in line and cut the only blues she ever recorded. She was a girl from Panama ... A very beautiful girl." (STORYVILLE 47, p 169)
As can be seen above, the quoted title was not recorded with Fats Waller, but accompanied by the above named band. The Waller sessions were held on April 16th and April 24th, for Gennett. So Harrison Smith must have mixed the whole thing up. But now we know her real name and that she was a very beautiful girl!

011 **GEORGE McCLENNON'S JAZZ DEVILS**

New York,

c. Jun. 18, 1926

June Clark - cnt; Joe Williams - tbn;

George McClennon - clt; Leonard Fields or (Joe Garland) - alt, bar;

(Charlie "Smitty" Smith) - pno; (Will Splivey Escoffery) - bjo; (Bill Benford) - bbs

74177-A Stolen Kisses

OK 8329,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8022

74178-A While You're Sneakin' Out Somebody Else Is Eazin' In

OK 8329,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8022

And again, this seems to be June Clark, possibly with Joe Williams on trombone, who was his partner after Charlie Green left. This is a fantastic and inspiring band, when concentrating on the band and leaving Mr. McClennon aside, but his playing obviously was the taste of the day.

- Trumpet/Cornet: June Clark - There are a lot of Louis Armstrong's phrases and licks in this trumpet player's style, which makes me cite pianist Joe Turner: "Then I joined the red hot band of trumpeter June Clark, who was a carbon copy of Louis Armstrong. June and Jimmy Harrison were known as the greatest brass team of that wonderful period." If any record of this period is "a carbon copy of Louis Armstrong", then it is this one. For me June Clark in full flight.

- Trombone: Joe Williams - If this is the Clark band, the trombonist might be Charlie Green's successor in the Clark band, Joe Williams. We only know three documented recordings of his, accompanying Bessie Smith, but he was a trombone player with a good reputation in Harlem. He played with a series of name bands, i.e. Willie Gant's band at Smalls Paradise, Billy Fowler and others, and even subbed for Charlie Green with the Henderson band because of their similarity of style. The style seems to be more Williams' ("an extra touch of tension and nastiness" G. Schuller, Early Jazz) than Green's, judging from the Bessie Smith recordings, but they have often been confused (on Williams see also Storyville 87/98). However, it is not known when exactly Williams succeeded Green in the Clark band! We, yet, know that Green only spent a little time in the Clark band before returning to his home-town Omaha, out of family trouble, as is reported.

- Clarinet: George McClennon, who else.

- Alto sax, baritone sax: Leonard Fields or Joe Garland - probably this still is Leonard Fields, but no characteristics discernable, except for the tone and the smooth linear phrasing. Joe Garland played with June Clark, presumably after Fields left, and he is known to have played bar and alt before concentrating on ten.

- Piano: Eddie Heywood's characteristics (octave runs) are not discernible as before. If this really is the Clark band the pianist at this time could be Charlie "Smitty" Smith as on the Blue Rhythm Orchestra recordings.

- Banjo: the Jazz Oracle CD says "possibly Buddy Christian". Maybe there is a Buddy Christian specialist somewhere, who might comment? But because for stylistic reasons I tend to "Splivey" Escoffery, the Clark band's original banjo player with his ragtime-derived banjo style. Buddy Christian from New Orleans played a simpler 4/4 banjo style.

- Tuba: possibly Bill Benford who was tuba player for some time in the June Clark band.

Notes:

- Rust*2: Tom Morris (cnt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); George McClennon (clt); unknown (alt); Clarence Williams (pno); Buddy Christian (?) (bjo); unknown (dms)

- Rust*3,*4: unknown -c; unknown -tb; George McClennon -cl -v; unknown -as; ?Eddie Heywood -p; unknown -bj; unknown -d

- Rust*6: unknown -c; unknown -tb; George McClennon -cl -v; unknown -as; ?Eddie Heywood -p; unknown -bj; unknown -d

- Jazz Oracle CD BDW 8022, George McClennon, booklet: unknown (c), possibly Jimmy Harrison (tb); unknown (as); Eddie Heywood, Sr. (p); unknown (bj); unknown (d)

Tune Structures:

74177-A *Stolen Kisses* Key of G OKeh
(Intro 4 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars AA' alt - ens)(A2 Chorus 32 bars cnt - ens)(Bridge 8 bars alt)(B1 Verse 16 bars AA' ens)(A3 Chorus 32 bars bjo - ens)(A4 Chorus 32 bars ens)(Coda 2 bars ens)

74178-A *While You're Sneakin' Out Somebody Else Is Eazin' In* Key of F OKeh
(Intro 8 bars ens)(A1 Chorus 32 bars ABCA alt - ens)(B1 Verse 16 bars ens)(A2 Chorus 32 bars bar - clt)(A3 Chorus 32 bars cnt - ens - break alt)(A4 Chorus 32 bars (tbn - ens 16 bars, break clt, ens 16 bars))

012 **ALEX JACKSON'S PLANTATION ORCHESTRA**

New York,

May 07, 1927

Alex Jackson - voc, ldr;

Clarence Wheeler, Lee Golden - tpt; Joe King - tbn;

Harold Scott, Leonard Fields - alt; Raymond Martin - ten;

Lonnie Small - pno; Tommy Short - bjo; Bob Ysaquiere - bbs; Dick Ward - dms

E-4937/8

Plantation Stomp

Voc unissued

not on LP/CD

E-4939/40

The St. Louis Blues

Voc unissued

not on LP/CD

This session became apparent through the below notification in Storyville 74, but nothing more of it has appeared since, and it has to be assumed that no test of either side has been unearthed later on.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*
- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 5: unknown 2 tpt; tbn; 3 sax; p; g; tu; d.*
- Storyville 73: „The sleeve of *Arcadia 2007 (LP)* when discussing the *Alex Jackson Plantation Orch.* says that ,it was based in Cincinnati and toured as far East as New York‘. Among the personnel quoted is *Len Fields* on alto sax, a name which has cropped up in listings of Clarence Williams’s work. When *Eva Taylor* first visited us we played a number of items to her which supposedly included this said *Fields*, but the name meant nothing to her, and all she could tell us was that there was a bandleader whom Clarence admired who came into New York from time to time, and when he did, Clarence would use some of his men for recording purposes.“
- Storyville 74: „*Hans Larsen* sends details from the Vocalion New York file of an unissued *Alex Jackson* session which pinpoints one visit of the band to the city, but later than the period in question. It is shown as follows: *E4937w / E4938w Plantation Stomp (Alonzo Smalls and Lee Golden); E4939w / E4940w The St. Louis Blues (W.C. Handy) 10 men 3 hrs. Alex Jackson – leader.*“
- Rust*2,*3: not listed
- Rust*4,*6: *Alex Jackson -v -dir; Clarence Wheeler -Lee Golden -t; Joe King -tb; Len Fields -Harold Scott -as; Raymond Martin -ts; Lonnie Smith -p; Tommy Short -bj; Bob Ysaquarre -bb; Dick Ward -d.*

013 ALEX JACKSON’S PLANTATION ORCHESTRA

Richmond, In.,

Sep, 16, 1927

Alex Jackson – voc, ldr;
Clarence Wheeler, Lee Golden – tpt; Joe King – tbn;
Harold Scott, Leonard Fields – alt; Raymond Martin – ten, clt;
Lonnie Small – pno; Tommy Short – bjo; Bob Ysaquarre – bbs; Dick Ward – dms;
unknown – voc chorus (2)

13080 Chinese Blues

Gnt unissued

not on LP/CD

13081 Jackass Blues

Gnt 6249,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8008

Unfortunately, one of these sides had not been issued, and no test of it is known.

„Jackass Blues“ is the well-known mid-1920s tune, known recorded by King Oliver, Fletcher Henderson, Clarence Williams and others. The Jackson men have added an hitherto unknown 8-bars introduction, leaving out the usual trombone cadence. Soloistic performance is not exceptional, although the trombone player plays a solo with full-bodied sound. The clarinet solo might be by the tenor sax player, as the tenor sax is pitched Bb as well as the clarinet, and thus, most tenorists double on clarinet. The clarinet solo artistically is much below Len Fields’ possibilities.

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*
- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 5: unknown 2 tpt; tbn; 3 sax; p; g; tu; d.*
- Storyville 73: „The sleeve of *Arcadia 2007 (LP)* when discussing the *Alex Jackson Plantation Orch.* says that ,it was based in Cincinnati and toured as far East as New York‘. Among the personnel quoted is *Len Fields* on alto sax, a name which has cropped up in listings of Clarence Williams’s work. When *Eva Taylor* first visited us we played a number of items to her which supposedly included this said *Fields*, but the name meant nothing to her, and all she could tell us was that there was a bandleader whom Clarence admired who came into New York from time to time, and when he did, Clarence would use some of his men for recording purposes.“
- Rust*2: 2 unknown tpt; unknown tbn; 3 unknown reeds; unknown pno; unknown bjo; unknown bbs; unknown dms; *Alex Jackson* voc
- Rust*3: *Clarence Wheeler -Lee Golden -t; Joe King -tb; Len Fields -Harold Scott -as; Raymond Martin -ts; Lonnie Smith -p; Tommy Short -bj; Bob Ysaquarre -bb; Dick Wood -d; Alex Jackson -ldr -v.*
- Rust*4,*6: *Alex Jackson -v -dir; Clarence Wheeler -Lee Golden -t; Joe King -tb; Len Fields -Harold Scott -as; Raymond Martin -ts; Lonnie Smith -p; Tommy Short -bj; Bob Ysaquarre -bb; Dick Ward -d.*

Tune Structure:

13081 Jackass Blues Key of Bb (blues changes)

Gennett

(Intro 8 bars ens)(Chorus 1 12 bars ?LG o-tpt)(Chorus 2 12 bars ens)(Chorus 3 12 bars JK o-tbn 10 - ? tpt 2)(Chorus 4 12 bars ?RM clt)(Chorus 5 12 bars LS pno + ens10 – DW dms 2)(Chorus 6 12 bars ens 2 - ?LG m-tpt 4 – ens 4 – voc chorus 2)

014 ALEX JACKSON’S PLANTATION ORCHESTRA

Richmond, In.,

Oct, 27, 1927

Alex Jackson – voc, ldr;
Clarence Wheeler, Lee Golden – tpt; Joe King – tbn;
Harold Scott, Leonard Fields – alt, clt; Raymond Martin – ten;
Lonnie Small – pno; Tommy Short – bjo; Bob Ysaquarre – bbs; Dick Ward – dms;
Alex Jackson – kazoo (3,4)

13180 I Call You Sugar

Gnt 6296,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8008

13180-A I Call You Sugar

Ch 15402

not on LP/CD

13181 When Erastus Plays His Old Kazoo

Ch 15386,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8008

13181-A When Erastus Plays His Old Kazoo

Sil 5502

not on LP/CD

13182 Missouri Squabble

Gnt 6296,

Jazz Oracle BDW 8008

Note: Although the cover-notes of *Arcadia 2007 (LP)* pretend to carry ,When Erastus Plays His Old Kazoo‘ 13181-A, this take is identical with 13181 of the Jazz Oracle CD!

While the first session of Alex Jackson’s Plantation Orchestra was recorded in New York, but unissued, the second and third sessions were recorded in Richmond, Indiana. This band may be seen as part of the large group of „Territory Bands“ supplying the Mid-Western states with hot and swinging dance/jazz music. Obviously, Jackson and his band seem to be regular visitors to New York. They may the band *Eva Taylor* meant in later years when asked about the musicians of Clarence Williams and his Blue Moaners Edison sides.

Solistic performance is of a „rural“ quality, with a strong and hot solo trumpet player using different mutes, a trombonist with voluminous tone, a pianist recognizably from the West, and an alto saxophonist who may be Leonard Fields, but a bit sub-standard when compared with his renditions in the *June Clark* band. He also seems to be the clarinet soloist on ,When Erastus Plays His Old Kazoo‘:

Notes:

- Ch. Delaunay, *New Hot Discography, 1948: not listed*
- Carey, McCarthy, *Jazz Directory, Vol. 5: unknown 2 tpt; tbn; 3 sax; p; g; tu; d.*

- Rust*2: 2 unknown tpt; unknown tbn; 3 unknown reeds; unknown pno; unknown bjo; unknown bbs; unknown dms; Alex Jackson voc
 - Rust*3: Clarence Wheeler -Lee Golden -t; Joe King -tb; Len Fields -Harold Scott -as; Raymond Martin -ts; Lonnie Smith -p; Tommy Short -bj; Bob Ysaguirre -bb; Dick Wood -d; Alex Jackson -ldr -v.

- Rust*4,*6: Alex Jackson -v -dir; Clarence Wheeler -Lee Golden -t; Joe King -tb; Len Fields -Harold Scott -as; Raymond Martin -ts; Lonnie Smith -p; Tommy Short -bj; Bob Ysaguirre -bb; Dick Ward -d.

- John Wilby, Jazz Oracle CD BDW 8008, booklet: „Alex Jackson - While little is known of saxophonist/bandleader Alex S. Jackson, it is documented that he played in New York with Elmer Snowden’s group at the Bamville Club in 1924, and recorded with this group accompanying Mamie Smith on Ajax that year. (Close inspection of these sides have shown that there is only one trumpet present and that there is no alto saxophone. The only reed instrument is clarinet. – KBR) He also recorded with Ethel Waters in 1925 and 1927. Jackson had organized a band of his own by 1925, which played opposite Fletcher Henderson’s Orchestra at the Manhattan Casino in New York on May 30, 1925. The band was billed as ‘Alex Jackson and his Ten Dusky Broadcasters’. Jackson’s band was back at the same venue on May 2, 1927, with the ‘Amsterdam News’ reporting that Jackson had been “absent from Harlem for two years”. He was back on May 6, 1928 to participate in a “battle of the bands” at the Savoy Ballroom with Henderson, Lloyd Scott, Chick Webb, Charlie Johnson, and Fess Williams. Of the bands represented on this CD, Jackson’s seems to be the most regular visitor to New York, though it is thought that he was normally based in Cincinnati, Ohio. During his May, 1927 visit to New York he recorded two titles for Vocalion (May 7, 1927); regrettably, both were rejected. The two sessions for Gennett in 1927 produced his only other recordings, though he continued to lead a band until 1931. Jackson’s Plantation Orchestra had several well-known musicians pass through its ranks during its lifespan. Bassist Bob Ysaguirre, late of A.J. Piron’s New Orleans Orchestra, was a regular member of the Jackson band from 1926 until September, 1929, when he joined Fletcher Henderson’s band in Cincinnati. It is also reported that Rex Stewart and Edgar Sampson were members for a brief period in 1930.”

Tune Structures:

13180 I Call You Sugar Key of Eb Gennett

(Intro 2 bars ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA AJ voc 30 – ens 2)(Bridge 4 bars ens)(Chorus 2 32 bars AA ens)(Bridge 4 bars ens)
 (Chorus 3 32 bars AA ?LG m-tpt 16 – LF alt 14 – DW dms 2)(Chorus 4 32 bars AA ens 2 – TS bjo 2 – ens 2 TS bjo 2 – JK o-tbn 8 – ens 16)(Coda 6 bars ens)

13181 When Erastus Plays His Old Kazoo Key of Ab / Eb Champion

(Intro 8 bars ens 2 – ? kazoo 2 – ens 2 – ? kazoo 2)(Chorus 1 32 bars AABA ens 6 – TS bjo 2 – ens 6 – TS bjo 2 – ens 16)(Verse 16 bars AA ?LG m-tpt 6 – ens 2 – ?LG m-tpt 6 – ens 2)(Bridge 12 bars ens modulation)(Chorus 2 32 bars AABA ?RM clt 6 – ? kazoo 2 – ?RM clt 6 – DW dms 2 – ? kazoo 14 – ?LG m-tpt 2)(Tag 2 bars ?LG m-tpt)(Chorus 3 32 bars AABA JK o-tbn 16 – LS pno 8 – LF alt 8)(Chorus 4 32 bars AABA ens 4 – ?CW o-tpt 4 – ens 4 – ?CW o-tpt 4 – RM ten 6 – JK m-tbn 2 – ens 6 – ? kazoo 2)(Tag 2 bars ? kazoo 2 – AJ voc 2 – voc chorus 2)

13182 Missouri Squabble Key of F / D / F Gennett

(Intro 8 bars ?CW o-tpt + ens)(Chorus 1 32 bars AA’ ens)(Bridge 8 bars TS bjo)(Chorus 2 32 bars AA’ ?LG m-tpt 16 – ?LF alt 14)
 (Bridge 8 bars ens modulation)(Verse 1 16 bars saxes 8 – ?RM ten 6 – ens 2)(Verse 2 16 bars LS pno)(Verse 3 16 bars ?LG m-tpt)
 Chorus 3 32 bars AA’ ens)(Tag 2 bars ens)

In October 1927 Luis Russell was appointed leader of the former George Howe band at the Nest Club, New York and they remained resident there for a year. This was the band with Louis Metcalf on trumpet and Charlie Holmes on alto-sax, which recorded under the name of Luis Russell and his Burning Eight. A photograph of this band exists which allegedly shows Leonard Fields as alto sax player, kept by the Riverwalk Archive of Stanford University – Luis Russell collection. Unfortunately only, the photo’s right rim is cut off and only shows the alto saxophone’s neck and the player’s left foot. Very bad! But he is distinctly named as Leonard Fields.