

The
TROMBONE
of
CLAUDE JONES

Born: Wheeling West Va., July 30, 1900
 (not Boley, Oklahoma, Feb. 11, 1901 as previously believed)
 (ref. "Remembering Claude Jones", Chris Barry 2019, Crown Records)
 Died: Offshore, Jan. 17, 1962

Introduction:

We hate to say it, but Oslo Jazz Circle was not so well educated about trombones and particularly not those of the twenties. Thus Claude Jones was not a name for us. Shame.

History:

Brother-in-law of Quentin Jackson. Trombone at 13, played in town band, then at Langston High School where he also doubled on trumpet and drums. Attended Wilberforce College, also served as a musician in the Students' Army Training Corps. Quit law studies at Wilberforce and subsequently joined the Synco Jazz Band in Springfield, Ohio (1922). This band later became McKinney's Cotton Pickers, remained with McKinney's until spring 1929. Joined Fletcher Henderson in May 1929 (originally for production of the show 'Great Day' – during Henderson's short stay with the show Claude Jones doubled on trombone and fourth trumpet). With Henderson in 1930 (also played occasionally in Chick Webb's Band). Joined Don Redman c. September 1931, left in September 1933 to rejoin Fletcher Henderson. Left Henderson (ca. September 1934), played in Chick Webb's Band until joining Cab Calloway in late 1934 (occasional vocal features with Cab's band including "Jes Naturally Lazy"). Left Cab in January 1940 to join Coleman Hawkins' Big Band, with Zutty Singleton Band in New York (March-May 1940), then again with Hawkins before playing with Joe Sullivan's Band (November – December 1940). Briefly with Fletcher Henderson (1941), then left full-time music to manage own sausage-manufacturing company. Continued to do regular 'gigs', including spells with Herman 'Humpty' Flintall (1941), Benny Carter (1942), Don Redman, Cab Calloway (1943). Resumed full-time playing to join Duke Ellington (on valve trombone) in spring 1944. Left Duke in ca. October 1948, with Machito Orchestra in May 1949, then studio work and brief spell with Fletcher Henderson (1950). Brief return to Duke Ellington from January-March 1951. Left music to become an Officers' Mess Steward on the liner S.S. 'United States', in this employment made many visits to England (ref. John Chilton: Who's Who Of Jazz).

CLAUDE JONES SOLOGRAPHY

McKINNEY'S COTTON PICKERS

Chi. July 11/12, 1928

Langston Curl, John Nesbitt (tp), Claude Jones (tb), Don Redman, Milton Senior (cl, as), George Thomas, Prince Robinson (cl, ts), Todd Rhodes (p), Dave Wilborn (bjo), Ralph Escudero (tu), Cuba Austin (dm), Jean Napier (vo), vocal trio: Don Redman, George Thomas, Dave Wilborn.

Ten titles were recorded for Victor, nine issued, six have CJ:

46094-1	Put It There	Soli 12 and 2 bars. (FM)
46094-2	Put It There	As above. (FM)
46096-2	Milenberg Joys	Solo with orch 30 bars. (F)
46096-3	Milenberg Joys	As above. (F)
46098-2	Cherry	Solo 8 bars. (FM)
46098-3	Cherry	As above. (FM)
46099-1	Stop Kidding	Solo 6 bars. (F)
46099-2	Stop Kidding	As above. (F)
46400-2	Nobody's Sweetheart	Solo 14 bars. (F)
46401-2	Some Sweet Day	Solo 16 bars. (FM)

With this session an important new jazz trombone voice enters the scene. It is immediately clear that here is a player who is highly accomplished technically, with great flexibility and fine control of the fast tempos. Interestingly, he seems to be more influenced more by Miff Mole's style than by the black players like Jimmy Harrison, with a lot of fast scale movements and large leaps between different registers. Like many trombonists from this period he tends to sound a little too "busy" and restless, with a rather continuous flow of eight-notes, and one could wish for something a little more melodic, but at the same time it is really impressive technically. Note for instance the break in the middle of the solo in "Milenberg...". It is really virtuosic. We believe him when he tells how he went out in the woods to practice 6-8 hours a day when he was with the MKCP! (*John Chilton: McKinney's Music, 1978*). In the two last titles he sounds more relaxed. At this point, his soli does not show much difference between the takes, but this will change later as we shall see.

JEAN GOLDKETTE

Chi. July 12, 1928

Personnel possibly including Claude Jones (tb) and other members of McKinney's Cotton Pickers, while some sources give Pee Wee Hunt, Vernon Brown (tb).

Two titles were recorded for Victor, no trombone solo on 46070-4 "Just Imagine" but:

46097-3	That's Just My Way Of Forgetting You	Poss. solo 2 bars? (FM)
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This has been reported as being an amalgam of McKinney's Cotton Pickers and the Goldkette Band, who recorded on the same day in the Victor studios. This is difficult to confirm from aural evidence. The 2 bars solo in "... Forgetting ..." could possibly be by CJ.

THE CHOCOLATE DANDIES

NYC. Oct. 13, 1928

Personnel as MKCP above, but on the following title a smaller contingent from the band: Curl, Jones, Redman, Thomas, Rhodes, Wilborn and Austin.

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, one has trombone:

401221-A	Four Or Five Times	Solo with ens 16 bars. (M)
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Not a real solo, but a nice counterpoint to the arrangement.

McKINNEY'S COTTON PICKERS

Chi. Nov. 23, 1928

Personnel as July 11/12 except Jimmy Dudley or Joe Moxley (cl, as) replaces Senior.

Two titles were recorded for Victor:

48619-2	It's Tight Like That	Solo 12 bars. (FM)
48620-3	There's Rainbow 'Round MS	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (FM)

Good soli in the same “early” style as on the previous McKinney’s sessions. In “Tight Like That” we meet for the first time what was to become one of CJ’s trademarks, the “rip” or fast upward scale.

NYC. April 8/9, 1929

Same. Eight titles, seven issued, three have CJ:

51084-2	It’s A Precious Little TCL	Solo 32 bars. (F)
51204-1	Beedle-Um-Bum	Solo with orch 16 bars. (FM)
51205-1	Do Something	Solo 8 bars. (F)

Three good soli, one of the few times where CJ is allowed to record a full 32-bar chorus.

JEAN GOLDKETTE

Chi. July 27, 1929

According to Tom Lord, this is McKinney’s Cotton Pickers orchestra.
Two titles were recorded for Victor, one issued:

55516-2	Birmingham Bertha	Solos 1 and 1 bar. (FM)
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McKINNEY’S COTTON PICKERS

NYC. Nov. 5-7, 1929

Joe Smith, Leonard Davis, Sidney de Paris (tp), Claude Jones (tb), Don Redman (as, vo, arr), Benny Carter (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins, Ted McCord (cl, ts), Leroy Tibbs (p-57064,65), Fats Waller (p-57066-68,139-40), Dave Wilborn ? (bjo), Billy Taylor (tu), Kaiser Marshall (dm).

Seven titles were recorded for Victor, five have CJ:

57064-2	Plain Dirt	Solo 8 bars. (F)
57066-2	I’d Love It	Soli 4 and 6 bars. (FM)
57067-1	The Way I Feel Today	Solo with orch 16 + 6 bars, orch on bridge. (FM)
57068-2	Miss Hannah	Solo 4 bars. (FM)
57139-3	Peggy	With orch. Solo 6 bars. (FM)

Here we meet a MKCP full of substitutes (but very good ones!), as the regular band had an engagement in Detroit. In fact CJ already worked with Henderson at this point. Excellent soli from CJ, some interesting changes in his playing here: His sound seems lighter and more beautiful, more like we know it from the 30’s. His playing is also beginning to be more linear and more varied rhythmically.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Oct. 3, 1930

Probable personnel: Russell Smith, Rex Stewart, Bobby Stark (tp), Jimmy Harrison, Claude Jones (tb), Benny Carter (cl, as), Harvey Boone (as), Coleman Hawkins (ts), Fletcher Henderson (p), Clarence Holiday (g), John Kirby (b), Walter Johnson (dm).

Two titles were recorded for Columbia, one has CJ:

150857-1	Chinatown, My Chinatown	Solo 14 bars. (F)
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CJ has now moved on to the Fletcher Henderson orchestra, but makes his recording debut with them in an arrangement by John Nesbitt of MKCP. The contrast is really quite dramatic between the elegant and light swing of the MKCP and this powerful Henderson “flag-waver”, driven by the fantastic rhythm section with John Kirby and Walter Johnson, that great and underrated drummer. This must certainly qualify as one of the first swing-era records. Jones has no problems with the terrific tempo, and delivers a superb solo, sounding remarkably relaxed at this breakneck speed, his beautiful sound by now fully developed.

NYC. Dec. 2, 1930

Same. Two titles, no CJ.

NYC. Feb. 5, 1931

Same/similar. Four titles, three have CJ:

151274-2	I’ve Found What I Wanted	Straight 24 bars. (FM)
151276-2	My Pretty Girl	Straight 32 bars. (FM)
151277-2	Sweet And Hot	Soli 16 and 4 bars. (FM)

On the delightful “Sweet and Hot” with the lovely vocal of Jimmie Harrison (and more great drumming from Walter Johnson!), CJ offers an interesting cupmuted solo, which starts rather straight, but gets increasingly intricate as the solo

progresses. In many ways CJ was the most advanced jazz trombone soloist at this point.

NYC. March 19, 1931

Personnel including Benny Morton, Claude Jones (tb).
Four titles were recorded for Columbia, one has CJ:

151442-1	Sugar Foot Stomp	Solo 12 bars (muted). (F)
151442-2	Sugar Foot Stomp	As above. (F)

First in a series of speeded-up versions of Henderson's old hit "Sugar Foot Stomp", with CJ playing the first trombone solo every time. The first take is really quite perfect, with a smashing ending (echoed by Morton in his solo later on the same side). The second take is also very good and different in many details though not quite as perfect as the first.

NYC. March/April 1931

Same/similar.
Four titles were recorded for Crown, no CJ.

NYC. April 10, 1931

Same. Four titles were recorded for Melotone, three have CJ:

36454-A	I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby	Soli 16 and 8 bars (muted). (FM)
36455-A	Sugar Foot Stomp	Solo 12 bars (muted). (FM)
36456-A	Just Blues	12 bars 2/2 with (tp-BS). (SM)

Two great soli on this important session. His solo on "Sugar Foot ..." is a real gem. Note the interesting very chromatic opening, "worthy of a player from the bebop era" to quote another commentator (*David Baker: Jazz styles and analysis: Trombone, 1973*) and the beautiful glissando-effect some bars later, he has moved far from his somewhat stiff and rhythmically unvaried style on the first McKinney's sides. One of his best soli! "Just Blues" is (as implied by the title) just a string of blues choruses, but what a record! After the beautiful introduction, CJ opens the ball in duet with Bobby Stark, using his technique of rising legato scales (now in slower motion) to beautiful effect.¹ It makes a perfect contrast to Bennie Morton's hotter solo later on the same side. The partly straight solo on "I'm Crazy..." seems to be by CJ but is not very exciting.

This might be the place for some general comments about Claude Jones' style, in relation to the other trombone greats of the time: He has often been criticized for being too "academic" and polished. Indeed, in the autobiography of Dicky Wells (*The Night People. Wells/Dance, 1971*), Jones himself is quoted as saying "Yeah, that was a pretty solo you played, but there wasn't enough fuzz. Everything was too exact. Don't try to play like I play. I play too clean and I'll never be nothing". Well, I beg to differ, I think he really was something. Certainly, he does not have the special warmth of Harrison, and is not as hot as Morton or Higginbotham, or as exciting as the early Dicky Wells. But in my view he compensates for this to a large degree with his great imagination, beautiful sound and impeccable technique. His solos almost always contain some unusual and interesting ideas, and his sense of form makes the best of them seem like small compositions.

¹
For the technically minded: This technique, which consists of using alternative (outer) positions to obtain a legato scale movement, is sometimes referred to as "against the grain"-playing in trombone circles. The effect is that the slide moves outwards while the music moves upwards and vice versa, thus avoiding a glissando. It has been used by many players since (Sandy Williams for instance), but seldom with such fine control as by Claude Jones.

NYC. April 29, 1931

Same/similar. Four titles were recorded for Victor, one has CJ:

53066-1	Sugar Foot Stomp	Solo 12 bars (mute). (F)
53066-2	Sugar Foot Stomp	As above. (F)

Yet another version of "Sugar Foot ...", the first take at an even faster tempo (perhaps a bit too much of a good thing?). The two takes are remarkably different, showing what a creative artist Claude Jones was.

NYC. July 17, 1931

Same/similar. Four titles were recorded for Brunswick/Melotone, two have CJ:

36925-A	Low Down On The Bayou	Solo with orch 10 bars. (FM)
36927-A	Radio Rhythm	Soli 4 and 4 bars. (M)

Both these Nat Lesie tunes are rather boring and monotonous pieces, very static harmonically, which doesn't produce very interesting soli, but CJ plays well as usual.

NYC. July 31, 1931

Personnel including Claude Jones (tb).
Four titles were recorded for Victor, one has CJ:

70140-1 Oh, It Looks Like Rain Solo 8 bars. (F)

The Henderson band makes a heroic (and quite successful!) effort to make some good jazz out of this incredibly corny tune, nice 8 bars from CJ.

NYC. ca. Aug. 1931

Personnel including Claude Jones, J. C. Higginbotham (tb).
Four titles were recorded for Crown, three have CJ:

1432-1 Blue Rhythm Soli 8 and 16 bars. (F)

1432-3 Blue Rhythm As above. (F)

1433-3 Sugarfoot Stomp Solo 12 bars. (FM)

1434-3 Low Down On The Bayou Solo 12 bars. (M)

Henderson must have considered "Sugar Foot Stomp" to have great sales potential, this is the fourth company he records it for in the same year! Another excellent solo (even if he misses the final high Bb flat!), quite different from the other versions. In "Blue Rhythm" Jones' role is to present the theme at the beginning, which he does very nicely. "... Bayou" has not become more interesting since last time, and CJ's solo is not among his best.

DON REDMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA Sept. 24, 1931 – Aug. 2, 1933

Personnels including Claude Jones, Fred Robinson, Benny Morton (tb).
Numerous recording sessions for Brunswick (June 17, 1932 as **HARLAN LATTIMORE**). It seems that Benny Morton takes most of the trombone soli (see Morton for questionable items), but there are some definite CJ soli:

NYC. June 17, 1932

152218-1 I Heard Solo 8 bars. (FM)

NYC. Oct. 6, 1932

12447-A Nagasaki Solo 32 bars. (FM)

NYC. April 26, 1933

13286-A That Blue-Eyed Baby From Memphis Solo 8 bars. (FM)

From one great band to another, and it is nice to hear CJ be allowed to stretch out for 32 bars in "Nagasaki" with a brilliant solo, displaying all his virtuosity, including some Teagardenesque ornaments from the ninth bar and a remarkable scale up to high F in the last eight. But it is not mere technical display, the solo is musically coherent and it is too bad that he only a very few times had the opportunity to record full-length choruses. "Blue-Eyed ..." has an excellent bridge, full of ideas and very fluently played, while "I Heard" is more ordinary.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Sept. 22, 1933

Personnel including Claude Jones, Dicky Wells (tb).
Four titles were recorded for Columbia but no CJ.

HORACE HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Oct. 3, 1933

Russell Smith, Bobby Stark, Henry Allen (tp), Claude Jones, Dicky Wells (tb), Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson (cl, as), Coleman Hawkins (cl, ts), Horace Henderson (p), Bernard Addison (g), John Kirby (b), Walter Johnson (dm).
Six titles were recorded for Columbia, issued on British Parlophone, one has CJ:

65151-1 Rhythm Crazy Solo 8 bars (muted). (M)

On this wonderful session (one of Henderson's greatest in my opinion), CJ is left with just an 8-bar bridge for himself. Perhaps not surprising with a Dicky Wells at the height of his powers in the band! CJ's bridge is typically inventive and beautifully executed. The straight solo on "Ain't Cha Glad" is probably by Dicky Wells, judging from the sound.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. March 6, 1934
 Personnel including Claude Jones, Keg Johnson (tb).
 Four titles were recorded for Victor but no CJ.

HENRY ALLEN & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. July 28, 1934
 Henry Allen (tp, vo), Keg Johnson, Claude Jones ?? (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Hilton Jefferson (as), Horace Henderson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Melotone, some discos have Keg Johnson on two titles and Claude Jones on two, but the three trombone soli all belong to KJ.

CHICK WEBB & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 10, 1934
 Personnel given in discographies as including Claude Jones, Sandy Williams (tb), but the former's presence is quite unlikely, given that he is in the Henderson orchestra the following days. In any case, no solos to suggest his presence here.

FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Sept. 11/12, 1934
 Russell Smith, Irving Randolph, Henry Allen (tp), Claude Jones, Keg Johnson (tb), Buster Bailey (cl), Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson (as), Ben Webster (ts), Fletcher Henderson, Horace Henderson (p), Lawrence Lucie (g), Elmer James (b), Walter Johnson (dm).
 Eight titles were recorded for Decca, one has CJ:

38601-B Happy As The Day Is Long Solo 32 bars. (F)

NYC. Sept. 25, 1934

Similar. Four titles, two have CJ:

38723-A Wild Party Solo 16+8 bars, (as-HJ) on bridge. (F)

38724-A Rug Cutter's Swing Solo 16+8 bars, (as-HJ) on bridge. (FM)

The Henderson orchestra on these sessions does not have the same terrific drive as on the 1933 session, but there is plenty of good solo work, with CJ contributing three excellent soli in fast tempo. Again, one must marvel at his relaxed control in the very fast "Happy ...", but equally fine are the two others, in "Rug Cutter ..." I love the way he and Ben Webster handle the transition between their solos!

Note: The last (8-bar) trombone solo on "Rug Cutter's..." is played by Keg Johnson.

ALEX HILL & HIS HOLLYWOOD SEPIANS NYC. Oct. 19, 1934
 Alex Hill (dir, vo), Joe Thomas, Benny Carter (tp), Claude Jones (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl), George James (as), Gene Sedric (ts), Garnet Clarke (p), Eddie Gibbs (g), Billy Taylor (b), Harry Dial (dm).
 Two titles were recorded for Vocalion, one has trombone:

16142-1 Let's Have A Jubilee Straight 8 bars. (F)

A straight solo of no great interest.

CHICK WEBB & HIS ORCHESTRA NYC. Nov. 19, 1934
 Personnel probably as follows: Mario Bauza, Bobby Stark (tp), Taft Jordan (tp, vo), Claude Jones, Sandy Williams (tb), Pete Clark (cl, as), Edgard Sampson (as), Elmer Williams, Wayman Carver (ts), Joe Steele (p), John Trueheart (g), John Kirby (b), Chick Webb (dm).
 Four titles were recorded for Decca, two have CJ:

39138-A It's Over Because We're Through Poss. 2 bars solo in intro. (SM)

39140-A Don't Be That Way Solo 16 + 6 bars,
 (tp) on bridge. (FM)

"Don't Be..." has a typically elegant and relaxed solo, starting with a simple triadic phrase, another of his trademarks. "It's Over ..." has two tiny passages for trombone. My guess would be that the first is played by CJ, the second by SW.

This seems to be Claude Jones' only recording session with Webb. Rust has CJ in the following sessions up to (and including) April 7, 1936, but this is highly unlikely, since he was already working (and recording) with the Calloway orchestra in this period. There are no definitely recognizable CJ solos on these Webb records. Lord has for some reason CJ back with Webb for the transcription recordings of February 1936, no trace of CJ there.

CAB CALLOWAY & HIS ORCHESTRA 1935 - 1939
 Personnel including Claude Jones (tb).
 Many recording sessions for Brunswick/Variety/Vocalion, very few have CJ:

Chi. July 2, 1935

1055-A Nagasaki Solo 32 bars, break 4 bars. (FM)

NYC. Jan. 25, 1936

Shell Chateau broadcast, two titles have CJ:

Some Of These Days Solo 32 bars. (F)

Cotton Solo/straight 32 bars. (SM)

NYC. May 21, 1936

19306-1 Jes' Natch'ully Lazy Solo 4 bars. (SM)

NYC. Sept. 15, 1936

19876-1 Frisco Flo Straight 8 bars (mute). (SM)

1937

Movie "Hi De Ho", one title has CJ:

Some Of These Days Solo 16 bars. (F)

NYC. Aug. 24, 1937

606-1 Moon At Sea Straight 8 bars (mute). (SM)

608-1 She's Tall, She's Tan, She's Terrific Solo 8 bars. (FM)

CJ continues his journey through the top swing bands, now to the great Calloway orchestra, where he was to remain for five years. The important item here is of course "Nagasaki", his old hit with the Redman band five years earlier. This one is even more impressive, a real virtuoso tour de force. Most of it is quite different from the earlier version, starting with some delicious lip trills. He retains the last eight bars with the stunning rip up to high F, too good not to reuse! In addition an acrobatic 4-bar break and an elegant trombone trio toward the end. In "She's Tall..." CJ fills in the bridge of Chu Berry's chorus. He cannot match the intense swing of Chu, but delivers a nice bridge with a typically inventive chromatic ending. Postscript of Nov. 9, 2022: Three more items have been added above (thanks to Jean-Francois Pitet), with two versions of "... These Days". One has a full chorus, the other one only half, but very exciting as we see CJ on the screen while he is playing!!

NYC. Dec. 10, 1937

692-1 In An Old English Village Straight 16 + 8 bars, orch on bridge. Straight 8 bars to coda. (SM)

NYC. Jan. 26, 1938

745-1 Rustle Of Swing Solo 8 bars (mute). (SM)

745-2 Rustle Of Swing As above. (SM)

747-1 I Like Music Solo 20 bars. (FM)

NYC. March 23, 1938

791-1 At The Clambake Carnival Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Most important here is the very elegant chorus on "Clambake..." , a really well-constructed solo in the high register, beautifully executed. One of his best recorded solos. "I Like Music" also has some nice details but he seems a bit insecure here, with some missed notes for once.

Minneapolis, May 28, 1938

Broadcast, one title has CJ:

Nagasaki Solo 32 bars. (FM)

Another fine "Nagasaki", quite different from the studio version, not as spectacular but very coherent and relaxed.

NYC. Aug. 30, 1938

891-1 Miss Hallelujah Brown Solo 8 bars. (FM)

894-1 There's A Sunny Side To Everything Solo 8 bars. (M)

Just small bits for CJ, 8 bar solos seem to be the lot of trombone players in the swing bands! In “Miss Hallelujah...” he solves the somewhat unusual chord sequence rather elegantly.

NYC. Oct. 31, 1938

Broadcast, Bill Savory collection:

Miss Hallelujah Brown Solo 8 bars. (FM)

NYC. July 17, 1939

1054-A Trylon Swing Possibly solo 8 bars. (FM)

1057-A The Jumpin' Jive Solo 4 bars. (M)

NYC. Aug. 30, 1939

1066-A Twee-Twee-Tweet Solo 4 bars. (FM)

Even smaller space here, but two nice bits anyway, in “Twee-Twee ...” he manages to say a lot in a few bars! I'm not convinced that it is CJ who plays the bridge on “Trylon Swing”, perhaps Keg Johnson?

JELLY-ROLL MORTON'S

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MEN

NYC. Sept. 14, 1939

Sidney DeParis (tp), Claude Jones (tb, preaching), Albert Nicholas (cl), Sidney Bechet (sop), Happy Caldwell (ts), Jelly-Roll Morton (p, vo), Lawrence Lucie (g), Wellman Braud (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Victor/Bluebird:

41456-1 Oh, Didn't He Ramble In ens. (S/F)

41456-2 Oh, Didn't He Ramble? In ens. (S/F)

41457-1 High Society In ens. (F)

41458-1 I Thought I Heard BB Say Solo 6 bars. In ens. (S)

41459-1 Winin' Boy Blues Duet with (sop). (S)

41459-2 Winin' Boy Blues As above (S)

Here we find CJ in a completely different setting. Gone is the elegant high register soloist, here he modifies his style to fit in with the traditional New Orleans style. A simple but heartfelt solo in “I Thought ...”, but a high point of the session is the beautiful duet with Bechet on the two takes of “Winin' Boy ...”, where CJ plays a simple background to Bechet's wonderful embroideries, with the second take perhaps slightly better. And finally, enjoy his beautiful preaching on the first take of “... Ramble”!

DON REDMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. Jan. 17, 1940

Bigband personnel including Claude Jones, Gene Simon (tb).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird, but no trombone soli.

THE MORTON SEVEN

NYC. Jan. 30, 1940

Henry Allen (tp), Claude Jones (tb), Albert Nicholas (cl), Eddie Williams (as), Jelly-Roll Morton (p, vo), Wellman Braud (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).

Four titles were recorded for General:

2632 Dirty, Dirty, Dirty In ens. (M)

2633 Swinging The Elks Prom. in ens. Straight 16 bars. (FM)

2634 Mama's Got A Baby In ens. Straight 16 bars. (M)

2635 My Home Is In A Southern Town In ens. (M)

A less memorable session than the Victor one, and few opportunities for CJ to improvise. He puts in some nice ensemble work in “Swinging ...”, but the soli are just straight playing.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS ORCHESTRA

NYC. May 27, 1940

Louis Armstrong (tp, vo), Claude Jones (tb), Sidney Bechet (cl, sop), Luis Russell (p), Bernard Addison (g), Wellman Braud (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).

Three titles were recorded for Decca (a fourth one without CJ):

67817-A Perdido Street Blues In ens. Duet with (sop) 12 bars. (M)

67818-A	2:19 Blues	Obbligato parts. In ens. (SM)
67819-A	Down In Honky Tonk Town	In ens. Solo 16 bars. (F)
67819-B	Down In Honky Tonk Town	As above (F)

CJ is in illustrious company here. He later remarked "*I was the only one who was not from New Orleans*" (not quite true but almost). However, the recording producer seems to have been the biggest problem: "*Louis and Bechet were in peak form that day, but the recording manager just wore me down. He kept coming out of his sound-proof box and shouting, 'Give that horn more tailgate, Jones, more tailgate,' and he got me so mad in the end that I messed up my solo in 'Down in Honky Tonk Town.'*" (Interview in Jazz Journal, June 1962). Be that as it may, Jones manages to deliver some good playing. Unusually for him, he plays a real "bluesy" chorus on "Perdido Street Blues", the first part being particularly successful. He also has some nice bits behind Louis' vocal on "2:19 Blues" And what about "... Honky Tonk"? He does sound a little diffuse and lost on the first take, but hardly a disaster. On the second take he typically tries something completely different, a very elegant opening, but he doesn't manage to follow it up convincingly. Apart from the producer business, it can't have been easy to follow Bechet's explosive chorus!

COLEMAN HAWKINS & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 4, 1940**

Personnel as Okeh session below.

Broadcast from Savoy Ballroom, eight titles, three have trombone soli, all by CJ:

I Can't Love You Anymore	TID	Solo 16 bars. (SM)
Sweet Adeline		Solo with orch 8 bars. (FM)
The Sheik Of Araby		Solo 14 bars. (FM)

"Sweet ..." is rather forceful, OK but not quite the CJ we know from the preceding years. Perhaps it was necessary to play more aggressively in this rather noisy big band. The solo in "I Can't ..." also sounds like CJ, but is quite corny and insecure. The trombonist on "The Sheik ..." sounds neither like Claude Jones nor Sandy Williams, rough and rather unpleasant. If it really is CJ, one wonders what had happened to him during the broadcast. The third trombone player in the band is supposed to be William Cato, perhaps he is responsible?

COLEMAN HAWKINS & HIS ORCHESTRA **NYC. Aug. 9, 1940**

Tommy Stevenson, Joe Guy, Tommy Lindsay, Nelson Bryant (tp), Claude Jones, Sandy Williams, William Cato (tb), Eustis Moore, Jackie Fields, Ernie Powell (as), Kermit Scott, Coleman Hawkins (ts), Gene Rodgers (p), Gene Fields (g), Billy Taylor (b), J. C. Heard (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Okeh, one has trombone solo, by CJ:

27852-1	Rocky Comfort	Solo 2 and 2 bars. (FM)
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Recognizable as CJ, but too short to make any impression.

BENNY MORTON TROMBONE FOUR **NYC. May 30, 1944**

Benny Morton, Vic Dickenson, Bill Harris, Claude Jones (tb), Johnny Guarnieri (p), Al Hall (b), Sid Catlett (dm).

Four titles were recorded for Keynote (12"):

37-1	Where Or When?	Solo 20 bars. (M)
37-3	Where Or When?	Probably solo 8 bars. (M)
38-1	Liza	Soli 2, 8 and 2 bars (M)
38-2	Liza	As above. (M)
39-5	Once In A While	No solo
40-2	Sliphorn Outing (Avalon)	Solo 32 bars (muted). (F)

Lots of fine trombone playing on this date, but CJ plays a minor role. The only solo that can definitely be attributed to him is the muted solo on "Sliphorn ...", containing some phrases that we recognise as CJ, but it has to be said that the solo is not up to his previous standards, perhaps due to his having been out of fulltime playing in the preceding years. He seems less confident than he was, missing too many notes, and less inspired.

This session seems to be the last session featuring CJ as a jazz soloist. It is a pity that this fine and creative musician did not continue to give us jazz solos in his 1930's style. In the late forties he played in the Duke Ellington orchestra, filling Juan Tizol's chair on valve trombone, and was not given any jazz solo space it seems (see below). Later he left the music business altogether.

DUKE ELLINGTON & HIS ORCHESTRA **April 22, 1944 – Oct. 1948**

Bigband personnel including Claude Jones (tb?, vtb?).

Massagli & Volonte: The New Desor gives Claude Jones soloing on the following titles, not researched:

Bakiff / Chelsea Bridge / Come Sunday / Good Fishin' / Light / "REMINISCING IN TEMPO" / Transblucency

The Claude Jones solography has to make a stop here, possibly to be continued later. Nothing much expected to appear. Last session in 1952.

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