

**The**  
**ALTOSAX**  
**of**  
**GEORGE DORMAN CARRY**  
**“SCOOPS CAREY”**

Born: Little Rock, Arkansas, January 23, 1915  
Died: Chicago, Aug. 4, 1970

*Introduction:*

Scoops Carry is primarily known for his fine altosax playing with Roy Eldridge and also for contributions with Earl Hines. His original style and fine tone make him easy to identify. He should have had more opportunities for recordings and would then certainly have been considered one of the better altosax players of the swing era.

*Early history:*

His brother Ed (guitar) was a bandleader in Chicago, their mother was a music teacher. Studied music from the age of eight, spent several years at the Chicago Music College. During the 1930s attended Iowa University. Worked with Cassino Simpson at the Garrick Theatre, Chicago, with the Midnight Revellers (May 1930), on tour with Boyd Atkins' Firecrackers (summer 1930), toured R.K.O. circuit with Lucky Millinder (autumn 1931), then worked with brother Ed's orchestra from 1932. With Zutty Singleton in 1936, briefly with Fletcher Henderson, then joined Roy Eldridge in Chicago (1937), brief spell with Art Tatum quartet in 1938. With Horace Henderson in early 1939, later that year in Darnell Howard's quartet. Briefly with Bob Shoffner early 1940, then several months with drummer Floyd Campbell's Gangbusters before joining Earl Hines in October 1940. Remained with Hines until 1947. (ref. John Chilton).

*Message:*

Storyville No. 33 (Feb. – March, 1971) has an excellent article on Scoops Carry by Johnny Simmen!

## SCOOPS CARRY SOLOGRAPHY

**FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA**      **Chi. March 27, 1936**

Bigband personnel including Scoops Carry (as).  
Four titles were recorded for Vocalion but no altosax.

**MILDRED BAILEY**      **Chi. Jan. 19, 1937**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Scoops Carry (as), Herbie Haymer (ts), Teddy Cole (p), John Collins (g), Truck Parham (b), Zutty Singleton (dm), Mildred Bailey (vo).  
Four titles were recorded for Vocalion, no altosax on 1752 "Trust In Me" and 1753 "Where Are You" but:

C-1751-2    My Last Affair      Solo 8 bars. (SM)  
C-1754-2    You're Laughing At Me      Solo 16 bars. (M)

SC's first recorded soli are with Roy Eldridge's band, backing white singer Mildred Bailey, a lovely session as such! They are exciting and quite original, in particular "... Laughing ..." shows that SC is a new and personal altosax voice, nobody has made anything similar to this before!

**ROY ELDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA**      **Chi. Jan. 23, 1937**

Roy Eldridge (tp), Scoops Carry, Joe Eldridge (as), Dave Young (ts), Teddy Cole (p), John Collins (g), Truck Parham (b), Zutty Singleton (dm).  
Three titles were recorded for Vocalion, two have SC:

C1793-1    Wabash Stomp      Solo 8 bars (2<sup>nd</sup> (as)-solo). (M)  
C1793-2    Wabash Stomp      As above. (M)  
C1795-1    Heckler's Hop      Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (F)  
C1795-2    Heckler's Hop      As above. (F)

**Chi. Jan. 28, 1937**

Same plus Gladys Palmer (vo-1796, 1798).  
Three titles, no altosax on 1796 "Where The Lazy River Goes By" and 1798 "After You've Gone" but:

C1797-1    That Thing      Solo 16 bars (1<sup>st</sup> (as)-solo). (SM)

These Roy Eldridge sessions are the main reasons for a SC solography, at least here I discovered him and learnt to enjoy his original smooth-toned, slightly modernistic style with good use of the instrument's lower register. His thrilling performance on "... Hop" in uptempo should be noted in particular. Note that both altosax players are present on "That Thing" and probably also "Wabash ...", in fact, JE is also a prominent altosax player, and it is possible to mix them up with so little reference material. Give your opinions please! Postscript: With the appearance of an alternate take of "... Hop", I enjoy SC's music even better, the variations he creates here are just signs of a great improviser!

**ROY ELDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA**      **Chi. prob. Feb. 1937**

Personnel as Jan. 23, 1937.  
Privately recorded at the Three Deuces.  
Eight titles, issued on Jazz Archives, six have altosax soli, five probably have SC:

Minor Jive      Solo 16 bars. FM)  
Little Jazz (Crazy Rhythm)      Solo 8 bars. (M)  
After You've Gone      Solo 36 bars. (FM)  
Swing Is Here      Solo 8 bars (2<sup>nd</sup> (as)-solo). (F)  
Heckler's Hop      Solo 16+8 bars, (p) on bridge. (F)

Invaluable broadcasts by an immensely swinging Roy Eldridge group! Also here there are altosax soli by both performers, not always so easy to detect the difference, but the above seems reasonably certain, or what? Note in particular "... Hop", almost as an alternate take from the Vocalion session above!

**ROY ELDRIDGE & HIS ORCHESTRA**      **Chi. 1937/1938**

Personnel similar to above.  
Probably from the Three Deuces. Of the titles on Jazz Archives, (cl)-soli only.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA**      **Chi. Aug. 3, 1938**

Bigband personnel possibly including Scoops Carry (cl, as).  
Broadcast from Grand Terrace Ballroom, ten titles, one may have SC:

## Limehouse Blues

Possibly solo 32 bars. (F)

Some sources held that Scoops Carry replaces Budd Johnson temporarily, and that the fast altosax solo on "Limehouse ..." is played by SC. There is nothing to which this statement can be compared, so for the moment let his presence be taken as "possibly".

**FLOYD CAMPBELL & HIS GANG BUSTERS** **Chi. Aug. 1, 1940**

Personnel including Scoops Carry, Gordon Jones (as).

Four titles were recorded for Bluebird, two issued, no altosax on 53254-1 "Blow My Blues Away" but:

53252-1 What You Want Poor Me To Do? Solo 16 bars. (SM)

This one has a really nice and elaborate altosax solo!

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Hollywood, Dec. 2, 1940**

Harry "Pee Wee" Jackson, Rostelle Reese, Leroy White (tp), Joe McLewis, John Ewing, Edward Fant (tb), Scoops Carry, Leroy Harris (cl, as), Willie Randall, Budd Johnson, Franz Jackson (ts), Earl Hines (p, ldr), Hurley Ramey (g), Truck Parham (b), Alvin Burroughs (dm), Billy Eckstine, Madeline Greene (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Bluebird, one has SC:

55180-1 Jelly Jelly Solo 12 bars. (S)

A fine blues solo solo as one of only two opportunities with the Hines band.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **NYC. April 3, 1941**

Personnel similar to above.

Five titles were recorded for Bluebird, but no altosax soli (SC takes (cl)-solo on "South Side").

**London, Ontario, Canada, 1941**

Same/similar. Date also given as Oct. 1940.

Thirteen titles recorded at Wonderland Park, of the six issued on Alamac, "Number 19", "Call Me Happy" and "Pick-A-Rib" have altosax soli, but they don't sound like SC.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Hollywood, Aug. 20, 1941**

Harry "Pee Wee" Jackson, Tommy Enoch, Freddy Webster (tp), George Dixon (tp, as), Joe McLewis, John Ewing, George Hunt (tb), Scoops Carry, Leroy Harris (cl, as), Willie Randall, Budd Johnson, Franz Jackson (ts), Earl Hines (p, ldr), Hurley Ramey (g), Truck Parham (b), Rudolph Taylor (dm), Billy Eckstine, Madeline Greene (vo).

Six titles were recorded for Bluebird, one (or possibly two) has SC:

61544-1 Swingin' On C Possibly solo 16 bars. (FM)

61545-1 Yellow Fire Solo 40 bars. (F)

It is a mystery why Hines did not use SC more, this is the second and last of his soli on the many Bluebird sessions. "Yellow ..." shows that SC has technique, no problem with a very high tempo, and originality, so why not use him more? He might also be involved in "... On C", please give your opinion!

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Chi. Oct. 28, 1941, NYC. Nov. 17, 1941, March 19, 1942**

Similar. Three recording sessions for Bluebird, twelve titles but no altosax soli by SC. However, he takes possibly the (cl) solo on "Somehow", another candidate is Budd Johnson.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Hollywood, Oct. 1944**

Bigband personnel similar to Jan. 12, 1945, including Scoops Carry (as).

AFRS Jubilee No. 105 & 106, eight titles, two have altosax soli:

105 Scoops-Carry's-Merry Solo 8 bars. (FM)

106 Keep On Jumpin' Solo 8 bars. (FM)

Most likely SC takes these two brief altosax soli, competent although they are rather anonymous. He is known to be featured on "Keep ..." at the Club El Grotto in 1945 (ref. Leif Bo Petersen), and the altosax solo on "... -Merry" is in the same place as the clarinet solo on the Bluebird recording below.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **NYC. Jan. 12, 1945**

Bigband personnel including Scoops Carry (as).

Three titles were recorded for Bluebird, "Scoops-Carry's-Merry" has a (cl)-solo by SC, but no altosax soli.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **NYC. LA. ca. Sept. 1945**  
 Fats Palmer, Willie Cook, Arhur Walker, Billy Douglas (tp), Benny Green, Richard Harris, Clifton Small, Pappy Smith (tb), Scoops Carry, Lloyd Smith (as), Wardell Gray, Kermit Scott (ts), John Williams (bar), Earl Hines (p, ldr), Rene Hall (g), Eugene Thomas (b), Chick Booth (dm), Bill Thompson (vib)  
 Four titles were recorded for ARA, three issued, but no altosax soli.

**LA. April 1946**

Same. Dolores Parker (vo). Four titles, one has altosax:

1180 Now That You're Mine Solo/straight 4 bars. (S)

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Hollywood, May 1946**  
 Bigband personnel similar to above, including Scoops Carry (as).  
 AFRS Jubilee No. 194 & 195, eight titles, but no altosax soli.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **NYC. LA. ca. June 1946**  
 Personnel as Sept. 1945.  
 Seven titles were recorded for Sterling, two have altosax:

1222 Let's Get Started Solo 8 bars. (FM)

1252 Bamby Solo 16 bars. (FM)

Although it is not known how SC sounded when he got "modern", it seems quite natural that he should have made these competent soli, the sound is quite similar. Most likely they are also SC's last altosax recordings, too bad, he had a much greater potential.

**DIZZY GILLESPIE & HIS ORCHESTRA** **NYC. Nov. 12, 1946**  
 Bigband personnel including Scoops Carry (as).  
 Two titles were recorded for Musicraft but no altosax soli.

**DIZZY GILLESPIE & HIS ORCHESTRA** **1947**  
 Bigband personnel including Scoops Carry (as).  
 Broadcasts and film soundtracks, altosax soli by SC not very likely, but can anyone supply information?

**EARL HINES QUINTET / ORCHESTRA** **NYC. late Nov. 1947**  
 Scoops Carry (cl), Earl Hines (p), Clifton "Skeeter" Betts (g), Oscar Pettiford (b), Rudy Taylor (dm).  
 One title, "Sweet Honey Babe", was recorded for MGM, has (cl)-soli (FM) by SC. Another title, "Midnight In New Orleans" has large orchestra and Johnny Hartman (vo) added but no SC.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Chi. Dec. 1947**  
 Bigband personnel including Scoops Carry (as).  
 Five titles were recorded for Sunrise; "When I Dream Of You", "Louise", "Ain't Misbehavin'", "Black And Blue" and "I Need A Shoulder To Cry On" but no SC.

**EARL HINES & HIS ORCHESTRA** **Hollywood, Jan. 1948**  
 Bigband personnel including Scoops Carry (as).  
 AFRS Jubilee No. 268, five titles, "One O'Clock Jump", "Fatha's Idea", "Blue Keys", "Throwing The Switch" and "Boogie Woogie On The St. Louis Blues", but no SC.

No further recording sessions.

*Late history:*

Left full-time music in 1947, studied law and later established his own practice in Chicago, subsequently he became a state attorney in Chicago.