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## Southern Syncopated Orchestra: The Roster

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## SOUTHERN SYNCOPATED ORCHESTRA: THE ROSTER

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HOWARD RYE

In this section appear basic biographies for all musicians known to have worked with the Southern Syncopated Orchestra in Europe, although without repeating information on major figures which may easily be recovered from standard reference sources on jazz or African-American music. In many cases these biographies are extremely sparse, and in a few cases nothing is known of the musicians' origins and career beyond their involvement in the SSO. The length of the biographies does not reflect either the relative or absolute importance of the performers, but the amount of information available and whether it has previously been available in an accessible format.

As a general rule, personal relationships are mentioned only when relevant to professional activities or when marriages were contracted or children born while the artist was in Europe. It must be emphasized that SSO engagements listed are those at which the artist's presence can be demonstrated from contemporary sources. It will be evident from the main text that for many engagements only the names of principals are known. Wherever the words "member of SSO" appear they should be construed as "confirmed as member of SSO."

The most important sources and record series used in the compilation of this data are listed in the list of record series consulted, which appears at the end of this article. Otherwise sources are noted only when they are not obvious public records series or contemporary newspapers and/or reliability is in doubt or sources are in conflict.

**Allen, David Cornelius.** Banjoist, vocalist. Nationality unknown. Member of SSO for five weeks. Dismissed in Glasgow, January 1920.

**Archer, Frederick (real name: Akinlawon Olumuyiwa).** Vocalist. Nigerian. Reportedly a former medical student at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, London. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921.

**Baker, George N.** Vocalist. Born Louisville, Kentucky, August 16, 1875.

Came to Europe in September, 1908 as an actor. Registered as a U.S. national at the consulate in Edinburgh, March 21, 1915. Wrote music and lyrics for and performed in 1916 touring show *Dark Town Jingles*. Described himself as a music-hall artiste when he registered for the draft in London in 1918. Member of SSO in London at Philharmonic Hall, 1919; Kingsway Hall, 1920.

**Bates, Frank (Allan Fitzgerald).** Vocalist. Born St. Michael, Barbados, July 14, 1889, according to his apparent birth certificate, or November 19, 1892, according to his U.K. Seamen's Identity Certificate. Served as able seaman in the British Merchant Marine. Gave his profession as actor in July 1919. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster, October 9, 1921. Married Fanny Vivian, London, December 31, 1918; living descendants in Great Britain.

**"Battle Ace."** Drummer. Recalled as working with SSO at London Coliseum, December 1919. Not securely identified. Benny Peyton was by his own testimony the drummer on this engagement. Drummer Carl Kenny, formerly of Jim Europe's band, was nicknamed "Battle Axe," but there is nothing to connect him with this engagement or to suggest he was in Britain at this time.

**Bechet, Sidney** (often "Sydney" in contemporary sources). Clarinetist and soprano saxophonist. Born New Orleans, Louisiana, May 14, 1896, according to a 1917 draft registration signed by a second party, but May 14, 1897, according to his baptismal certificate, his 1918 draft registration, which bears his own signature, and his passport application of May 13, 1919. By his own account played with the New York Syncopated Orchestra in New York City in 1919. Recruited for Louis Mitchell's abortive trip to Paris. Went to England with SSO *Carmania* party. Played with SSO in London June to December 1919. From December 31, 1919 until September 1, 1922, member of Benny Peyton's Jazz Kings, with interruptions, including an engagement in Belgium with (Louis) Mitchell's Jazz Kings in June 1920. May have rejoined the SSO for engagements in the London area. Deported from Britain on November 3, 1922, after conviction for an alleged assault on a prostitute. Bechet's distinguished career is covered in detail by John Chilton (1987), his own autobiography (Bechet 1960), and many other works. Died Paris, May 14, 1959.

**Bersham, Robert.** Violinist. Recalled by Bertin Salnave as an American but not traced in any records. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, and in Bristol, 1920. Accompanied George Lattimore to Paris to recruit Salnave.

**Blake, Cyril (Macdonald).** Vocalist, possibly guitarist. Born Trinidad, October 22, 1897, according to his U.K. Seamen's Identity Certificate. Served

in Merchant Navy 1914–1918, said he came to Britain immediately after the war but was still a seaman in 1920. Member of SSO in Glasgow 1921, survived the Rowan disaster and took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Married Olive Douglas in Manchester, November 7, 1923. By 1926 performing in clubs in London. Moved to Paris in 1927 or 1928 and took up the trumpet. Played with Thompson's Negro Band for summer season at La Baule, France, 1928, and then on international tour in winter 1928–29. Also worked in Paris with Josephine Baker. Returned to England in March 1930 with African-American violinist Leon Abbey to work at the Deauville Restaurant, London. Worked in London clubs, often in the bands of his brother George ("Happy"), also with Rudolph Dunbar (1933–34), Leslie Thompson (1937), Ken Johnson, and others. From July 1938 to April 1941, leader or sideman at the Havana Club. From May 1941, bandleader at Jig's Club, where his band was recorded for Regal-Zonophone in December 1941 in a pioneering experiment with location recording. Led at other London clubs before returning to the Havana Club (December 1942 to May 1943). Leader at the New Malcolm Club (1943), Chesterfield Officers' Club (1944), Goose and Gander Club (1945 and 1947), Panama Club (1946), Blue Lagoon (1948), Scheherazade (1949). Increasingly featured Latin music alongside jazz. In 1950 recorded with calypsonians Lord Kitchener and Lord Beginner. In 1951 toured with Kitchener to Germany. Died St. Pancras Hospital, London, December 3, 1951. His wife believed he was aged 51, which is consistent with the age he gave when he married her in 1923, but the birth date on his Seamen's Identity Certificate also appeared on the passport he used to enter Denmark with Thompson's Negro Band in 1929. Living descendants in Great Britain.

**Blake, George (Lionel) "Happy."** Drummer. Born Trinidad, 1895 (the exact date does not appear on his Seamen's Identity Certificate). Brother of Cyril Blake. Served in Merchant Navy 1918–1920. Member of SSO in Glasgow 1921. Injured in Rowan disaster but recovered in time to take part in Survivors Sacred Concert. In 1925 with Victor Vorzanger's Savannah Band at East Ham Palais de Danse, London, broadcasting extensively. In Europe in the later twenties. Known to have broadcast from Latvia in 1927. In Paris by 1933, when he came to Britain to lead a band at the Pavilion Club, Datchet. From 1934 led bands in London clubs including the Shim Sham (1935). Resident bandleader at the Cuba Club from October 1935 until April 1936. Briefly returned to Merchant Navy in 1940. Leader at the Cuba Club 1941, l'Auberge de France, 1942. From the 1940s, owned and managed the Trade Winds Club in Jane Street, London until his death on December 16, 1960 at Willesden General Hospital, London, of the consequences of a traffic accident. Living descendants in Great Britain.

**Boucher, James Horton.** Violinist. Born London before 1906 according to family members, though his birth record is untraced. His maternal grandfather was the Sierra Leonian nationalist Surgeon-Major James Africanus Beale Horton, author of *West African Countries and Peoples: A Vindication of the African Race* (1867). His paternal grandfather was Reverend Henry Boucher from St. Lucia. His father, William Henry Boucher, was a merchant who met and married Nanette Horton in Sierra Leone. Member of the SSO, Brighton, Glasgow, Ireland, 1921. Signed petition against the deportation of Sidney Bechet, October 1922. From 1923, toured with his sister Ena (Nanette Eugénie Dorothea Boucher, born London June 23, 1906), singer and dancer, including appearance in Scheveningen, Netherlands, July 1923. With Julian Fuhs Follies Band at Mercedes-Palast, Berlin, early 1925 and wrote music for revue *Wildwestmödel* at Theater am Zoo. Member of Sam Wooding's band March to June 1926, left in Berlin after tour to USSR. Played at Reval's Café Marcelle, Berlin, fall 1927. Led fifty-seven-piece band at flood relief concert, Paris, 1930. Led white bands in Paris ca. 1930. Recorded in Paris, 1930–31, including a session with sidemen from Sam Wooding's band. In band at Ciro's, London with Ellis Jackson, December 1930. Led band at Delphi Palast, Berlin, 1931. Led British band in Copenhagen early 1931, returned to Paris by June, leading at Ciro's, Paris, October/November 1931. Continued as bandleader in Paris including residencies at Bal Tabarin (1932–33) with a band 30 percent French, and the Côte d'Azur. Summer season 1932 at Casino Bellevue, Biarritz. In 1933–34, worked in tango band, Orchestre Ingles. During the thirties worked at Bricktop's Le Grand Duc, Paris, with Alain Romans accompanying Mabel Mercer (Goddard 1979, 278). In January 1937 leading at the Coliseum, Paris. From November 1937 to March 1938 leader at Chez Nous, Davos, Switzerland. Returned to France, but the war forced him to relocate to Switzerland, where he settled (and is recalled as Swiss by some contemporaries). Recorded in Zürich on reeds with Hazy Osterwald and His Orchestra in late 1945 and early 1946, also (on drums) with Fred Böhler in Geneva, 1951. Believed to have died in Geneva in 1973, but the year has not been verified.

**Boucher, Mabel.** See Mabel Wadham.

**Briggs, James Arthur.** Trumpeter. Born St. George's, Grenada, April 9, 1899. Moved to New York City November 22, 1917. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Took part in Coterie of Friends concert, Wigmore Hall, London, December 7, 1919. For subsequent career, see Horst P. J. Bergmeier and Rainer E. Lotz, "James Arthur Briggs" (in *Black Music Research Journal* Spring 2010, pp. 93–181). Died Chantilly, France, July 6, 1991.

**Brown, Vallie.** Trumpeter but role in SSO not confirmed. Born Philadelphia, February 1, 1864. By his own account, member of 10th U.S. Cavalry at Galveston, Texas, at about age 18, but he has not been traced in any documentation of this unit. Though he subsequently said he left the United States in 1906, he applied for a passport in Berlin on August 24, 1904, to include his wife Alice and daughter Nellie, born Baltimore, September 1900. He gave his profession as "virtuoso." He is believed to have been in Germany from 1893 at latest and toured throughout Europe in the following years. He was in Copenhagen in January 1897, Prague in 1898, Scandinavia, Austria (at the Kaisergarten, Vienna), Hungary, Poland in 1902, Austria and Switzerland, 1905. He was in Amsterdam in September 1907, Copenhagen in June 1910, Bucharest in December 1911, Petrograd (now St. Petersburg) in December 1916, Stockholm in September 1918, Christiania (now Oslo) in March 1919. In Petrograd he gave his profession as "bandmaster." During these years, he was also in South America in 1903 and from August 1909 to January 1910. Member of SSO in Glasgow, October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster October 9, 1921.

**Bruce-James, (Lushington) Wendell.** Pianist. Born Antigua, February 9, 1891. Moved at a young age to the then-British Guiana, where his father became a head teacher and hence often reported as Guyanese. Educated at Queens College, Georgetown, and at fifteen became organist at Christ Church, Georgetown. In 1910 won British Guiana Scholarship and attended Keble College, Oxford, graduating in 1912. Served in the University and Public School Corps of the Royal Fusileers, 1915–16, with British Expeditionary Force in France, April 13 to May 18, 1916. Discharged September 13, 1916. He wrote the program notes for the Coterie of Friends Coleridge-Taylor concert on December 7, 1919. Member of SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, 1920. Studied music in England and in Budapest. Joined Thompson's Negro Band in Paris for its Danish tour in March 1925 but fell ill before the tour began. Made debut as a concert pianist 1926. In the later twenties was organist at various cinemas and theaters in Greater London, including Mile End Palladium in 1928, Kensington Kinema in 1930, Leicester Square Theatre, 1932–33, Stratford Rex, 1934, also outside London at Slough, Windsor, both 1933, and Maidenhead, 1934. He reportedly acted as recording organist with Jack Hylton's band in the late 1920s. He left Dover on November 30, 1935, for Trinidad for a concert tour with singer Zorina (Ekaterina Dann-Zorina) on which he was billed as Bruce Wendell. They appeared in Trinidad, Tobago, Barbados, Surinam, and Venezuela during 1935–36 after which he moved to New York City, abandoning his British family, to follow a career as a concert pianist. In 1939 he appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and in 1940 he played at a memorial service

for the first anniversary of Arthur Schomburg's death. Died New York City, August 13, 1968. Living descendants in Great Britain. See Bowes 2006.

**Burns, William Dennis.** Vocalist. Born Denver, Colorado, June 5, 1889. When he registered for the draft in 1917, he was a singer employed by Mrs. Hann, 3224 Vernon Avenue, Chicago. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919, Edinburgh, January 1920, at Bristol and Liverpool, April 1920, Kingsway Hall, London, 1920. With Abbie Mitchell's Harmonic Quartet, 1921–22. Rejoined SSO in Paris, 1922, and in Vienna, 1922. Returned to Chicago in September 1922 and was working there as an actor in 1938. Died Illinois, November 1966. His last known residence was Chicago.

**Carlish, Dick** (real name: Richard Henry Wienskowitz, also known as Richard Henry Berg). Probably vocalist. Born London, August 14, 1892. Jewish. His father, whose professional name was Harry Berg, was a concert pianist, his mother an actress. Their son recalled them as Polish and Viennese respectively but official records show German ancestry. They are said to have married in New York City and come to Britain before 1889. Made his stage debut at the age of six and later formed a song-and-dance act with a school friend to play working men's clubs. Joined Fred Karno's troupe as an understudy at age seventeen and later toured with an acting company playing small venues. In 1911, he married a thirty-four-year-old widow and began to give his birth year as 1886, claiming this age even for his Great War military service, which was performed with the Royal Rifle Corps at Belton Park Training Camp, Grantham, where for a time in 1917 he was Acting Mess Sergeant with entertainment responsibilities. On November 10, 1917, he was sentenced to a year's detention for desertion but returned to his unit before sentence was completed. He was discharged on January 27, 1919, and shortly thereafter teamed up with Harry Wellmon (q.v.) in an act based on their own compositions for which he used the pseudonym "Carr" Carlish. They appeared together with the Hebrew Synco-Symphony in November 1921. Member of SSO at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, February 1922. According to Carlish's later recollections they continued to work together in Paris with engagements at Zelli's and other cabarets. After the act broke up, became manager of Mrs. Kate Meyrick's club at 43 Gerrard Street, London, through various changes in its name and was several times fined for aiding and abetting her unauthorized sale of liquor. In the later 1920s he ran Mrs. Meyrick's Paris club, the Gaiety. In 1930, Dick Carlish and His Brooklyn Boys were performing at The Roadhouse, Leicester Square, London. In 1932, he was managing Mrs. Meyrick's latest club when he was again charged with liquor offences and forced to give an undertaking to leave the club business to escape a prison sentence. He was also managing



a dancing club in the basement said to be popular with African students. In 1933–34, partner in the Frolics restaurant, Trafalgar Square, London. Traveled to New York City October 1935, where he played an English gentleman opposite Dorothy Gish on Broadway and ran Chez René on 52nd Street. Returned to Britain in March 1936 and was for four years part owner and manager of Le Grand Jeu in Paris until forced to return to London where he became manager of the Roxburghe House Club for the duration of the war. In the mid-1940s he was briefly manager of the Hotel Jaragua in Ciudad Trujillo (now Santo Domingo), Dominican Republic and in the later 1940s and 1950s he managed restaurants in the United States in Miami, Dallas, and New York City. Published an autobiographical memoir (Carlish 1962). Died London, October 10, 1964. His death certificate gives his true age, which is confirmed by his enumeration in the 1901 census.

**Caulk, Joseph (Archibald).** Bandolinist and vocalist. Born Middletown, Delaware, June 11, 1893. Raised and began musical career in Baltimore. He said he had worked for about ten years with Robert D. Williams (q.v.). Member of Dixie Serenaders with Robert J. Young and Joseph Porter, Baltimore, 1911. Member of Robert J. Young's Royal Poinciana Sextette, 1915. Recruited for Louis Mitchell's abortive French trip. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, on 1920 Scottish tour, at Bristol and Liverpool, April 1920. Joined The Jazz Kings for Hammersmith Palais de Danse opening October 1920, member until December 1922. With The Crackerjacks in Paris and Berlin, 1924–25. With Bricktop in Madrid, 1925. With Kid Cole and George Archer in Madrid and Paris, 1926. With Bobby Jones's band at Palermo, Paris 1927. With Jones's Crackerjacks, Paris, 1928. Again with Kid Cole and George Archer, Cannes, France, early 1930s. At Zelli's, Paris, mid-1931. In band at Bricktop's, Paris, in November 1931. Member of Bricktop Quintette performing for Gold Star Mothers and Widows, Hotel Splendide, Paris, July 1932. From 1933 to 1936 sang and played guitar with a French orchestra at the Caprice Viennois, Paris. Committed suicide in Paris on or shortly before July 10, 1936.

**Certain, Elmer (William).** Vocalist. Born Jacksonville, Florida, August 20, 1887. Recruited for SSO by Hattie King Reavis in March 1921. Probably traveled to France with Farley Graden. Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow, August/October 1921. Did not sail on *S.S. Rowan* because he missed the boat, remained in Glasgow, and took part in Survivors' Sacred Concert. With SSO in Ireland, October/November 1921. Again with SSO in Vienna, summer 1922. Appeared in *Midnight Shuffle Along* presented by Palmer Jones and Louis Douglas at The Seymour, Paris, summer 1924.

**Chancy, Emile.** Reeds. Haitian. Member of SSO at the Dome, Brighton, August/September 1921, reported as "Chauncy." Probably to be heard



on 1931 Paris recordings by Notte and His Creole Band. Member of the Orchestre de la Coupole de Montparnasse, Paris, 1932.

**Chivers, Charles Henry.** Bassist and vocalist. Born Brooklyn, New York City, November 9, 1858. By his own account, left the United States for Europe on July 20, 1882. Married Marie Roche in London, December 19, 1885. Their son, also Charles Henry, was born in London on September 6, 1886. Performing at Hamburg concert halls when he applied for a passport for himself and his family in 1891. With troupe led by Will Garland in Berlin 1909. Member of SSO at Glasgow, October 1921. Survived *Rowan* disaster and appeared at Survivors' Sacred Concert.

**Clapham, George Ruthland.** Pianist. Born St. Kitts, September 26, 1888. Left St. Kitts for New York City, August 1904, to stay with an aunt. Undertook Red Cross work in World War I. Said he had been an army musician when he married Rose Payansky (née Silberberg) in London October 7, 1919. Member of SSO in Edinburgh, January 1920. Led bands at Mayol, Oslo, November/December 1921, Embassy Club, London, January 1922. Arrested with Sidney Bechet, September 2, 1922, and convicted of assault but not deported because a British national. Led Jazz Champham Band at Alhambra Filmpalast, Berlin, May 1924. G. Ruthland Clapham Neger-Jazz-Orchester recorded in Berlin about July 1924. (The resulting disc is not known to collectors and may never have been issued.) In Britain in June 1926, he was charged with criminal damage to a plate glass window, but was discharged. With Benny Peyton's Jazz Kings at the Apollo, Rome, November/December 1926. In 1928 performed as piano accompanist for the Southern Trio (John Payne, Clinton Rosemond, Mable Mercer, all q.v.). In 1929 composed score for George Foster's *Best of the Batch* and wrote modern suite, *Rhythmics*. Led bands at Pop's Club, London, December 1929 to May 1930 and Romano's, London, July/August 1931. In late 1931 became coach and accompanist to singer Paul Robeson. Recorded with Robeson, 1932 and 1933. Left Britain March 3, 1937 for Trinidad en route to St. Kitts. On November 2, 1937 on platform of meeting addressed by Marcus Garvey in Basseterre. Gave recitals in Barbados (April 1938) and Trinidad (May 1938) and continued to tour the West Indies. He expected to return to Britain but nothing has yet been discovered about his subsequent career.

**Clover.** Trombonist. Origin unknown. Arrived Dublin from London October 10, 1921 to join SSO. Nothing further known.

**Cook, Marion Abigail.** Dancer and singer. Born New York City March 22, 1900, daughter of Will Marion Cook and Abbie Mitchell. To England with SSO *Carmania* party, but there is no evidence she ever performed with the SSO. On August 15, 1919 at Grimsby, England, she married the dancer

Louis Douglas, and their child Abbie Louise was born in London on May 21, 1920. She and Louis subsequently performed together throughout Europe (see Lotz 1997). Her appearance in *La Revue Nègre Harlem Black Birds* 1936 at the Palais de la Méditerranée, Nice, France, is the last traced before illness led to her return to the United States in March 1937. Her husband followed in July. The family settled in Atlanta, Georgia. Louis Douglas died in New York City, May 19, 1939. His wife is referred to in some later sources as "Marion Douglas of London" but no trace of her has been found in British records.

**Cook, Will Marion.** Conductor. Born Washington, D.C., January 27, 1869. For full biography see standard sources. Studied music at Oberlin Conservatory, Ohio. Studied violin with Josef Joachim in Berlin and by his own account lived there from 1889. Studied at the National Conservatory of Music, 1894–95. Married to Abbie Mitchell 1899 to 1908. Marion Abigail Cook is their daughter. In 1898 collaborated with Paul Laurence Dunbar on musical comedy *Clorindy, or the Origin of the Cakewalk*. After 1899, musical director for the Bert Williams/George Walker company, including *In Dahomey* (1904), which went to Europe. Brought Ernest Hogan's Memphis Students to Europe, 1905. Published numerous songs including "Swing Along, Exhortation," and "Rain Song" in 1912, which figured in the repertoire of the SSO. Conducted the New York Syncopated Orchestra from October 1918 to June 1919. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Conducted SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, until late October 1919. On November 13, 1919 returned to the U.S.A from Le Havre and proceeded to Portland, Oregon, to conduct the American Syncopated Orchestra. Returned to Britain on January 20, 1920. Led versions of the SSO in opposition to George Lattimore's management in London March/April 1920 and on provincial tour April to May 1920, then at the Coliseum, London, June 1920. Also responsible for smaller groups using the SSO name at the Trocadero Restaurant, London, March to July 1920 and the Crystal Palace, London, July to September 1920. Formed act with ex-wife Abbie Mitchell to tour British variety halls, August 1920. Last advertised as actually present at engagements by Abbie Mitchell's Harmonic Quartet in February 1921 and returned to the United States on March 3, 1921. Returned to Britain August 8, 1921, but reported in Paris by mid-1922. He made what was probably a private visit to Vienna in 1922 while the SSO was there but is not known to have had any involvement with them. Returned to United States from Le Havre January 27, 1923, led Clef Club Orchestra in Baltimore and New York City in March 1923. Composed and conducted the Lafayette Theatre, New York City, production of *Negro Nuances* featuring Abbie Mitchell, 1924. Collaborated with Will Vodery on *Swing Along* 1929. Died New York City, July 19, 1944.

**Covington, (Joseph) Edwin.** Vocalist. Born Americus, Georgia, June 9, 1893. When he registered for the draft in Berkeley, California, on June 4, 1917, said he was a student at University of California, Berkeley. By January 1920 employed as a post office clerk in New York City. Recruited by Robert P. Lattimore to join the SSO, April 1920. His passport was issued on April 29, 1920, and he arrived at Southampton on May 17 on *S.S. Lapland*. Member of the SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920. Member of Abbie Mitchell's Full Harmonic Quartet during 1921. In Britain in March 1922, when he applied for a new passport. On January 6, 1923, traveled to Australia as a member of the Royal Southern Singers. Returned to England on September 2, 1923 and proceeded to the United States from Plymouth on September 24 aboard *S.S. Paris*. He returned to England on September 30, 1924, and resided first in London and then in Paris. He studied in Italy in 1928 and undertook vocal studies in Vienna in 1929. He was evacuated from Le Verdon, France on the *President Harding* on October 21, 1939, but apart from this nothing is yet known of his activities after 1929.

**Coxcito, Manfred (Ferdinand) "Fred."** Saxophonist. Born San Domingo, Haiti, September 1, 1885. By his own account, he was in the United States in 1896 or 1897 and from 1910 to 1918. When he registered for the draft as an alien on September 12, 1918, he was band director at the Cask Inn, 136th Street, Bronx. To England with SSO *Northland* party, reported as Haitian on entry. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Played with Portman Syncopated Orchestra from mid-September 1919 to December 20, 1919, then with The Jazz Kings from December 31, 1919, until 1922, with lay-offs including a two-week visit to New York City in April 1921 to visit his daughter Esmay. He was logged as Haitian leaving Britain and as British on arrival in New York City, though his birth place is given as St. Thomas, United States. Member of band led by Frank Withers on tour to USSR, 1926. Made further short trips to the United States in May 1927 and June 1928 to visit his mother in Harlem. By 1928, resident in Paris. Member of Benny Peyton's Jazz Kings, Nice and Brussels, 1929.

**De Cruz, Joseph A.** Role unknown. Origins unknown. He may be the twenty-nine-year-old waiter of this name who arrived in Britain from Cape Town on November 12, 1904. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921, injured in *Rowan* disaster but took part in Survivors Sacred Concert.

**De Caillaux, Pierre (Lionel Jones).** Pianist. Born Lorain, Ohio, November 7, 1897. Adopted by Nelson A. Jones of Cleveland, Ohio, who named him Lionel, but did not formally adopt him until 1904. In 1922, he claimed that his true father was a jeweler in Lorain named Raoul De Caillaux and that he had discovered this from the adoption papers. After he had graduated from the Sterling School, Cleveland, in 1910, the family moved to Columbus,

Ohio, where he attended high school and performed in school concerts as Pierre De Caillaux. This was apparently provoked by his adoptive father's remarriage. Began musical career in Columbus around 1913, in Chicago, December 1914 to June 1915, performing classical repertoire. On June 5, 1917, he registered for the draft in Detroit, claiming to be a French national born at Chantilly on November 7, 1889, and stating that he was a pianist employed at the Frontenac Cafe. There is no doubt that the signature on this draft card is that later used by the erstwhile Lionel Jones. In October 1917 joined the Canadian forces and in April 1918 was attested in Montréal to serve for one year overseas, swearing allegiance to King George V. He was still claiming birth in Chantilly in 1889. In England he served in the Royal Flying Corps as an instructor and accompanied the singer Elsie Janis on her engagements for the British forces. Demobilized in June 1919 he joined Gordon Stretton's band at the Albert Rooms, London, replacing ailing African-American pianist Billy Dorsey. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London by September 1919. On October 15, 1919, describing himself as a former RAF Captain, he married violinist Angelina Rivera at St. Giles Register Office, London. Anthony Rivera and dancer Louis Douglas were the witnesses. De Caillaux said that his father was Nelson De Caillaux, wine merchant. From December 31, 1919, member of The Jazz Kings. In October 1921, traveled to France for an engagement. Advised that in view of his previous declaration of allegiance to the British crown a U.S. passport could be issued only after reference to Washington, he used a pass issued by the U.K. authorities in lieu of a passport, in recognition of his wartime service. In March 1922 in Paris he applied to register as an American citizen and in September applied for a U.S. passport giving his permanent address as that of Nelson Jones. Angelina and their daughter Dolores (born London, June 12, 1920) went to the United States in January 1923. De Caillaux returned to England, performing at the Quadrant Club, London in 1923–24 and recording for Imperial in March 1924. By October 1925 he was leading English dance bands and in 1926–27 worked in Sweden, where he became well regarded as a conductor for revues. He conducted Ernst Rolf's revue orchestra on record in 1928. Made several BBC broadcasts of light classical material in the later 1920s. Recorded piano accompaniments to Melville Gideon for Duophone in London, May 1929. Orchestra conductor for *The Co-Optimists* revue at Vaudeville Theatre, London and on film, 1929. Musical director at other London theaters 1930–31. Again conducted Ernst Rolf's orchestra in Norway and Sweden, 1931–32. Led and conducted at the Cinema Rex, Paris, 1933, including for a revue starring Jeanette McDonald that opened on February 3. Chef d'Orchestre for *The Triumph of the Waltz* starring Josephine Baker at Prince Edward Theatre, London, opening October 3, 1933. Composed and led *Paramount Presentations* for the British Paramount cine-variety chain, 1934. In April to May 1934 performed with Pat Asa's Super Cabaret

at the Garrick Theatre, Southport, England. In Sweden 1936–37, mainly as Kapellmöstare for Karl Gerhard. He recorded four titles as conductor of Karl Gerhard's orchestra in Sweden in 1936. He claimed he was musical director at the Deutsches Theater, Munich, for eight months in the 1930s. Unfavorable comments appeared in the African-American press about his "passing" and pretensions to French ancestry. He was recalled in Sweden as a French-Canadian. Returned to the US from Lisbon in July 1940. Worked as pianist at Paris Qui Chante, New York City, 1943, created revues for the RAF in Canada, and became a music therapist at Bellevue Hospital, New York. Moved to Hollywood where he conducted auditions for the USO and worked as voice coach. Died United States March 16, 1956.

**Dennie, Frank.** Saxophonist and vocalist. Born Great Bend, Kansas, June 9, 1884. Raised in Oklahoma. In 1910 a musician in Salt Lake City. Member of the California Jubilee Quartet, 1914–15. Member of the 8th Regiment Band under George Dulf, discharged at Camp Grant, Illinois, February 24, 1919, after which the band, now known as the 370th Infantry Band (the Black Devils), went on tour with Mme. Anita Patti Brown. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Member of the Royal Southern Singers on British tour, September 1920 to July 1921. Member of SSO at Brighton, August/September 1921, billed as vocalist. Again touring with the Royal Southern Singers from October 1921 and on January 6, 1923, left with them for Australia. Did not return to England with the other members. In January 1934, he was reported sick in Auckland, New Zealand.

**Deruez, Alix.** This name appears on early versions only of the list of *Rowan* survivors as a member of the SSO. This is probably a misunderstanding, possibly a misreporting of Joseph A. De Cruz.

**Dove, Evelyn (Mary)** (married name: Evelyn Luke, also known as Norma Winchester). Vocalist and pianist. Born London, January 11, 1902. Her father, Francis Thomas Dove, was originally from Sierra Leone but practiced law in Ghana (then Gold Coast) and had been called to the Gold Coast Bar in 1897. Her mother Augusta (née Winchester) was from London. From 1917, studied singing, piano and elocution at the Royal Academy of Music. Married Milton Alphonso Luke in London, September 27, 1919, at which date she was living in Hove, Sussex. Member of SSO at Glasgow, September/October 1921, using the name Norma Winchester. Photographic evidence that "Norma Winchester" is Evelyn Dove is conclusive. Survived *Rowan* disaster to appear at Survivors Sacred Concert, where she is billed as "Miss E. Winchester". Evelyn Dove was reported as a *Rowan* survivor by the magazine *West Africa*. Member of SSO in Vienna, summer 1922 (as Evelyn Luke). Member of Chocolate Kiddies company in Berlin, Ham-

burg, Stockholm, and Copenhagen, May to September 1925. Performing spirituals at the Mile End Empire, London, in June 1926. Evelyn Dove and Her Plantation Creoles “the only singing and dancing act of its kind in Europe” appeared at Wintergarten, Berlin, November 1926. Her revue appeared in the Netherlands (February 1927) and Paris (March–April 1927) before returning to Berlin at the Palais de Danse in May 1927, where Ralph Grayson (q.v.) was a member of this act. She was managed by George W. Lattimore at this time. They were expected to go to Italy for the summer season. Replaced Josephine Baker as star attraction at the Casino de Paris. In Vienna from December 15, 1932, arriving from Bucharest, to February 10, 1933, when she left for Budapest. Traveled to United States from Naples in December 1935 giving her names as “Evelyn Augusta Dove Luke,” to appear at Connie’s Inn, New York City. To India in 1937 to perform at Harbour Bar, Bombay (now Mumbai). From 1939 to 1949 made many BBC broadcasts including with Trinidadian singer Edric Connor in *Serenade in Sepia* (1945–47). In *Calypso* with Connor and African-American dancer Mabel Lee at Wimbledon Theatre and The Playhouse, London, May/June 1948. Left March 11, 1949, for cabaret engagements in India, then Paris and Spain. Returned to Britain at the end of 1950, appeared in show *London Melody* in 1951. Finding it increasingly difficult to get work, she was for a time employed as a telephone operator but began to work as a television actress in 1956. Cast member of the London production of Langston Hughes’s *Simply Heavenly*, opened Adelphi Theatre, May 20, 1958. Admitted to a nursing home 1972. Died Horton Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, England, March 7, 1987, registered as “Evelyn Dove, otherwise Brantley,” the name of her third husband. Living relatives in Great Britain.

**Duncan, Mabel.** Vocalist. Member of SSO at Nottingham, April 1920. It is possible but not confirmed that this is a misreporting of Mabel Wadham, later known professionally as Mabel Mercer.

**Essien, (William) Frank.** Violinist. Born Sunderland, England, October 16, 1902. His father was William Essien, son of Frank Essien, a manager of gold mines in the former Gold Coast (now Ghana). His mother, formerly Ethel Grossé, was the daughter of Edward Grossé, hairdresser, a Polish citizen of Russia who came to Britain ca. 1870 and was naturalized in 1878. Bert Marshall was his cousin. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921, survived *Rowan* disaster to appear at Survivors Sacred Concert. Died of tuberculosis, London, December 19, 1923.

**Fernandez, Juan.** Bassist and violinist. Said to be Martiniquan. Member of SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, July 1920. On August 5, 1920, appeared at Bow Street Police Court charged with assaulting George Lattimore on July 26 in a dispute over wages after he allegedly left the orchestra without per-



mission. Said to have "returned to Paris." In October 1921 member of Seth Weeks's band at Trouville Casino, France. Recorded with Maceo Jefferson in Paris in 1933. Member of Freddy Johnson's Orchestra in Paris, Brussels, and Haarlem in the Netherlands, 1933–34, including recordings. According to Arthur Briggs, died in unexplained bomb explosion at Compiègne Internment Camp, France, during World War II.

**Forrester, John Baptist.** Trombonist. Born Washington, D.C., October 11, 1893 (according to his 1917 draft registration), 1895 (according to the 1900 census), or 1896 (according to his passport and Social Security files). Musician with the Drake and Walker Company 1917. Joined U.S. Army October 5, 1917 as musician, demobilized May 12, 1919. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, in Bristol, 1920. Described himself as a musician with the SSO when applying for a passport in May 1921. In Paul Wyer's band at Moody's, London, 1921. Led band at Acacias Dance Pavilion, Paris, ca. September 1921. Possibly with Hughes Pollard's Orchestra, Brussels, May 1922. Probably recorded with Gordon Stretton's Orchestre Syncopated Six in Paris, April 1923. Left with Stretton on May 17 for Buenos Aires for appearances at Buenos Aires Casino, opening June 7 and in Montevideo, July 1923. It is not known whether he was still with the band in Rio de Janeiro in August or at Mar del Plata, Argentina for the summer season. It is unlikely he recorded with Orchestre Pollard's Six in Paris in July as has been suggested. Returned to France and traveled back to United States from Cherbourg on April 2, 1927. Reportedly a member of Eleuterio Iribarren's band in Argentina, 1928. Member of Benny Peyton's Orchestra in Brussels and Nice 1929. Returned to the United States permanently May 1933. By 1938 working for the Crowell Publishing Company. Died May 9, 1966. His last known residence was Dayton, Nevada.

**French, Al.** Banjoist. By his own testimony while he was serving in the British Merchant Navy, member of the SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921 (*Melody Maker* 1941). He claimed to have been aboard the *Rowan* but appears on no list of survivors under this name.

**Fykes, Jimmy (James Samuel Lynch Fykes Jr.).** Alto saxophonist and clarinetist. Born Hattiesburg, Mississippi, July 6, 1895 by his own account (*Chicago Defender* 1934) or possibly June 1897 (according to the 1900 United States census). By 1916 living in Pontypridd, Wales. Left Britain for India 1917, continuing to Africa and South America before returning to Britain. Said he was a member of SSO ("Collector's Corner" 1942). Said he played in the US in a pit band led by Edgar Hayes before returning to Europe to join Arthur Briggs, then traveled throughout Europe and Middle East. In Vittorio Abdullio Villa's Michigan Jazz Band at Weihburg Bar, Vienna, 1926. Settled



in Turkey 1928 until obliged to leave in 1934. His band in Constantinople (Istanbul) included Antonio Cosey. Moved to Egypt in February 1934 and wrote to the *Chicago Defender* on September 8 from Port Said to make contact with his family (1934). Said he worked in the Netherlands with the Ramblers Dance Orchestra, late 1930s. Formed act Jim and Veney with his Maltese wife Veney. They were working at Casino Canari, Teheran, May 1938, the Lido, Damascus from June 1, 1938, and in Baghdad in August 1938. They moved to Malta with their son James Fykes III in October 1938. Toured North Africa with a trio comprising dancer Levy Wine, violinist Juice Wilson, and drummer Joe Jones. By 1942, running Jim's Bar in Floriana, Malta, as nonplaying host. After being bombed out he opened Jimmy's Chicken Shack with violinist Juice Wilson as cook. This was reported by British servicemen stationed in Malta. After VJ Day he reopened Chez Jim at Floriana as a restaurant, bar, and grill and was still running it in April 1947.

**Gaskin, Rupert.** Role unknown. Born Port of Spain, Trinidad, June 10, 1894. His Seaman's Identity Certificate shows his name as Robert Gaskin but other records confirm that Rupert is correct. Working in Liverpool as a printer in 1919 when he married waitress Cecilia Jones. Went to sea in 1920 as second cook on the *Bernil* and *Edfon* of Liverpool. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. *Rowan* survivor, took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Back at sea in 1924 as a cook on the *Woodville*. Died of tuberculosis, Liverpool, March 5, 1926, when his age was given as 29 and his profession as ship's cook.

**Gee, Lottie (Charlotte M.)** (married name Lottie G. Kyer). Vocalist. Born Millborough, Virginia, August 17, 1886. Living in Newport City, Kentucky, in 1900. Member of American Jubilee and Williams and Walker companies. Toured double act with Effie King, 1912–19. Married musician Wilson Harrison Kyer, born Charleston, South Carolina, August 21, 1888, in Philadelphia, October 13, 1913. They separated in 1919 and were divorced in May 1924. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, on tour to Scotland and Liverpool, 1919–20, Kennington Theatre, London, Bristol, Liverpool, Sheffield, and Coliseum, London, March to June 1920. On July 12, 1920, applied in London for passport for theatrical work on behalf of Will Marion Cook's Syncopated Orchestra. Returned to the United States on *S.S. Aquitania* from Liverpool, July 18, 1920, appeared at New York City and Philadelphia theaters August–September 1920 before returning to Britain on *S.S. Mauretania*, arriving October 7, 1920, for untraced engagements. Returned again to New York City from Southampton on *S.S. Aquitania*, November 20, 1920. In *Shuffle Along* opening at 63rd Street Theater, New York City, May 23, 1921. "Prima donna" in *Chocolate Dandies*, 1924–25. Traveled with Chocolate Kiddies to

Hamburg, Germany, arriving May 17, 1925, appearing with them in Berlin and Hamburg. Returned to United States from Cherbourg on *S.S. Majestic*, August 12, 1925, but was persuaded to return to Europe to rejoin Chocolate Kiddies in October 1925. With the company in Vienna. On December 9, 1925 she moved to London to receive treatment for inflammation of the lungs. After her recovery she appeared with John C. Payne and Clinton Rosemond as the Southern Trio, performing spirituals in concert. A report in the African-American press that she partnered Eubie Blake at an engagement in Birmingham, England, in March 1926, substituting for a sick Noble Sissle, is not borne out by British sources. Returned to the United States from Southampton on *S.S. Aquitania*, April 24, 1926. Appeared with Adelaide Hall at Smalls Paradise, New York City, July 1926. In fall 1926 show at the Cotton Club, *The Creole Cocktail*, directed by Henry Creamer. Out of show business from January 1927 and reported intending to retire, but resumed her career in *Hit Bits from Africana* at the Lincoln Theater, New York City, November 1927. Appeared in *Harlem Vanities*, Lafayette Theatre, New York City, September, 1930. Had residency at the Showboat Cafe, Los Angeles in April 1932 when she married Thomas Hurd. Went to Shanghai in act with Allegetta Anderson and Edith Spencer in January 1933 but was obliged by illness to return to the United States leaving Shanghai on April 15. Reported to be "about recovered" in January 1934, she remained in California for the remainder of her life. Married Burrell Moy, a retired stage manager, ca. 1967. Died Los Angeles, California, January 13, 1973.

**Gilmore, Buddie (or Buddy) (Charles William).** Drummer. Born Raleigh, North Carolina, July 18, 1880. He himself appears to have used, or at least approved, the alternative spelling "Gilmour" from time to time. Buddy Gilmore [*sic*] is reported (Brooks 2004, 150) as a member of Sam Cousins' Colored Comedy in 1903. Reported to have been a member of Ernest Hogan's Memphis Students in 1905 (Egan 2004, 17) but not listed as a member in September (Badger 1995, 251 n.28). When he applied for a passport in 1919 he denied having previously left the United States so was probably not with those members of the troupe who came to Europe as The Tennessee Students under the leadership of Will Marion Cook. In 1906 married Martha Brown (see Mattie Gilmore). Formed trio Gilmore, Kinky, and Gilmore, also known as the Buddy Gilmore Trio, with Martha and Ethel (Kinky) Caldwell, 1909, who toured Canada, 1910. Recorded with Europe's Society Orchestra, December 1913, February and October 1914. Reported playing piano in Memphis in 1916. When he registered for the draft in September 1918 he was employed by Frank Barbura at the Lafayette Hotel, Long Beach, New York. With the New York Syncopated Orchestra, February/March 1919. Came to Britain to join SSO in September 1919. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and

Coliseum, London, 1919, on tour to Scotland and Liverpool, 1919–20. Under contract to George Lattimore and appeared with his SSO at Nottingham, April 1920 and Kingsway Hall, London, July 1920. He announced his severance from the SSO in August 1920. Led the band at Ciro's Club, London probably from September 1920 until at least January 1921. By April 1921 leading at Hammersmith Palais de Danse, London. Again with SSO at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, May 1921, after which he led a band at the Clover Club, Paris, June 1921. He was reported by the *Chicago Defender* to be forming a booking agency in New York City in September 1921 but there is no evidence he returned to the United States at this time and he was leading a band at Ostend Casino in late 1921. With SSO at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, February 1922, and in Vienna, May to October 1922. Leading band at Alhambra Theatre, Brussels, January 1923. He applied for a new passport in Brussels in mid-May 1923 but is known to have been in Paris by the end of the month. In May 1924 was leading Gilmore's Ritz Orchestra in Paris. Appeared with the International Five in Paris, June 1924. In Paris at least until December 1925, in Berlin and the Netherlands in 1926 (Openeer 2004), then traveled to Argentina and Brazil returning to New York City from Rio de Janeiro on the S.S. *Western World*, arriving on January 4, 1928. In January 1929 playing in Cuba entertaining American vacationers. In 1930 he was living in Jamaica, New York City. He is believed to be the drummer on the December 1931 recording session by The Gilmore Sisters. During the 1930s Buddy and Mattie Gilmore played various society engagements and benefit concerts in New York. In 1937 he was hired to play at a private reception for the Duke of Windsor during a visit which was in the event cancelled. It was reported that he had played eighteen command performances for the Duke as Prince of Wales and Duke of Windsor ("Buddie Gilmore's Drumming" 1937). He was still under the management of George Lattimore and is said to have just returned from a tour to Europe and South America but no other trace of this trip has been found. On December 28, 1938, he appeared at a twelve-hour Bandfest Benefit held in Brooklyn, New York City, on the tennis courts of the Howland Studio, described as "the most-famed of old-time drummers" (Ima Jitterbug 1938). He appeared on an NBC *We, The People* broadcast in the early 1940s (Fletcher 1984 [1954], 191). Died Jamaica, New York City, December 6, 1944 after a long illness.

**Gilmore, Martin F.** (real name: Martin F. Bundy). Vocalist. Born Berryville, Virginia, June 26, 1878 (1879 in some sources). Lived for eight years in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and seven years in Atlantic City, New Jersey. In 1918, working at Hotel Chelsea, New York City, as a waiter when he registered for the draft as Martin Gilmore. Became seaman and was a crew member of the *Lapland* (as Martin Bundy) on its voyage from Southampton to New

York City, August 1 to 11, 1919. Returned from United States August 30, 1919 and lived in England from September. Described himself as “seaman (now theatrical profession)” when he applied for a passport in London on March 23, 1920 as Martin Gilmore. He appears on the passenger list of the *Aquitania* returning to New York City in April 1921 but is apparently deleted from the arrival list. Named in undated program as an SSO member at Kingsway Hall, London, from after Buddy Gilmore’s departure in August 1920. In 1942, he was living in New York City and was unemployed.

**Gilmore, Mattie** (birth name: Martha E. Brown). Pianist. Born New York City, November 5, 1888. Wife of Buddy Gilmore. Brown is the name of her widowed mother in the 1920 and 1930 censuses. Mattie Brown and Buddy Gilmore [*sic*] are reported (Brooks 2004, 150) as members of Sam Cousins’ Colored Comedy in 1903. She married Buddy Gilmore in 1906 and worked with him in the trio Gilmore, Kinky, and Gilmore (see Buddy Gilmore). Came to Britain to join SSO in September 1919. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. She is believed to have worked on all the SSO engagements in which her husband participated but has only been confirmed from contemporary sources at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, May 1921. She was absent from the orchestra for some weeks in 1920 for an operation and convalescence (Smith 1920b). With Buddy at Ostend Casino in late 1921. Her passport was amended for Austria in Paris in May 1922, which supports the belief she was a member of the SSO in Vienna. She was in Paris later in 1922 and applied for a new passport in Brussels in January 1923. She was a member of Gilmore’s Ritz Orchestra in Paris in May 1924, with her husband in Berlin and the Netherlands in 1926 (Openeer 2004), and traveled to South America with him (see Buddy Gilmore). Recorded for Victor as one of the Gilmore Sisters, December 17, 1931. She played society engagements in New York City with her husband during the 1930s. After Buddy Gilmore’s death in 1944 she continued to provide music for local functions and is reported doing so as late as 1954. She died in New York City in February 1965.

**Gordon, William.** Banjoist. Origin unknown. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. *Rowan* survivor, took part in Survivors Sacred Concert.<sup>1</sup> Bertin Salnave recalled that he died in Belgium as a consequence of injuries received in the *Rowan* disaster.

1. Gordon’s wife was also a member of the party. In the course of an interview she related, “My husband and I decided, after the *Rowan* was struck the second time, that the safest plan would be to jump into the sea, as we were both wearing lifebelts. Hand in hand we leapt over the taffrail. My husband told me to let go, as he was being sucked under, and because the water was choking me, I let go. We were separated, and you can imagine our joy when we were reunited in hospital in Greenock” (“27 Missing” 1921).

**Graden, Farley Berry.** Vocalist. Born Ocala, Florida, July 30, 1892. Working as an elevator operator when enumerated for the 1920 census. Recruited by Hattie King Reavis to join SSO, March 1921. Member of SSO, Paris, May 1921, and in Brighton and Glasgow, August to October 1921. *Rowan* survivor, took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Member of SSO in Ireland October/November 1921. In March 1922 applied in London for a passport to replace one lost in the sinking of the *Rowan*. Said he required it as a singer with the SSO. Returned to United States from Southampton, November 15, 1924. In 1927 member of W. A. Hann's Emperors of Harmony including trip to Australia. Later married to Madeleine "Dickie" Boucher, sister of Jimmy Boucher (q.v.), also known as Princess Musudee. Living in California in 1929. Died New York City, July 4, 1938. His name is consistently misspelled "Grayden" in coverage of the SSO's Irish trip, presumably reflecting a typographical error in the programs or publicity material.

**Grayson, Ralph.** Role unknown. Born Cincinnati, Ohio, April 18 or 22, 1897 or 1899. He gave the earlier year on his 1915 passport application and the later on his 1918 and 1922 passport application and used the April 18 birthday but his mother swore an affidavit in 1918 to his birth on April 22, 1897. Came to Britain in 1911 as a child dancer in the act Belle Davis and Her Crackerjacks. Said he toured Russia, Germany, and Denmark, 1912. Still working with Belle Davis in 1918. In London on March 13, 1922 when he renewed his passport to fulfill a contract with Will Marion Cook for an engagement in Paris beginning on March 22. Assumed from contemporary records to be a member of SSO in Vienna, 1922. Left for Prague, September 18, 1922. In Prague, April 28, 1923, when he applied for a passport extension. He was in Vienna again in March and April 1925. Appeared with Evelyn Dove's revue under George Lattimore's management at Palais De Danse, Berlin, ca. May 1927. They were expected to go to Italy for the summer season.

**Greer, John (Herbert).** Trombonist. Born Portadown, Co. Armagh, Ireland, March 30, 1886. White British. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster, October 9, 1921.

**Grundy, (H.) William.** Vocalist. Born Little Rock, Arkansas, January 21, 1880. Formed act, Grundy and Young, with Albert Young (q.v.). They arrived at Liverpool July 27, 1919 for a music hall tour, sometimes billed as "two coloured chauffeurs" but sometimes reported as a "black and white" turn. Member of SSO under Will Marion Cook's direction at Kennington Theatre, London, and Bristol, March/April 1920. Grundy and Young dissolved their act in 1922 after a season in Nice with Seth Weeks. In October 1921, he played drums with Seth Weeks's band at Trouville Casino, France, after which he reportedly went to Egypt. He returned to the United States

from Le Havre on September 24, 1922. He was a cast member of *Chocolate Dandies* in 1924–25.

**Hall, Joseph C.** Vocalist. Born Fort Gaines, Georgia, July 24, 1892. Employed as a clerk when he registered for the draft on June 5, 1917. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. In February 1921 traveled to Nice, France, where he applied for a new passport in March. Working in Paris with Mazie Mullins (Withers) circa September 1921. Leading band at Bricktop's, Paris, May 1924. Died New York City, November 1976.

**Harris, Joseph H. W.** Role unknown. Origin unknown. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. Injured in *Rowan* disaster and convalescent at Sailor's Rest, Greenock; took part in Survivors Sacred Concert.

**Harvey, Donald.** Vocalist. Origin unknown. Member of SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, 1920. Reported as member of Abbie Mitchell's Full Harmonic Quartet in April and October 1921.

**Heath, Ted (George Edward).** Trombonist. Born London, March 30, 1902. White British. By his own account in his autobiography *Listen to My Music* (1957) first worked as a street musician, 1919–21. Member of SSO in Vienna, summer 1922. With Jack Hylton's Kit Kat Band, 1925–27. Extensive freelance recordings. Joined Ambrose, 1928. After playing with Geraldo's band during World War II, formed his own band in May 1945. See Chilton 1997 and other standard sources on jazz for a detailed account of his career. Most sources quote his birth year as 1900 but in his autobiography he states his birth date as 1902 and this is confirmed by his birth certificate. Died Virginia Water, Surrey, England, November 18, 1969.

**Highsmith, Joseph.** Vocalist. Born Wilmington, North Carolina, September 29, 1869. In Europe by August 24, 1891 when he married (Laura Fanny) Josephine Steer, born London, January 28, 1870, known professionally as Josephine Morcashani and often billed as "the Creole baritone," at Nottingham, England. The couple had one son, Joseph John Augustus Highsmith, born London, December 29, 1894, through whom he has living descendants. He is believed to have worked with the Fisk University Jubilee Singers, but his principal professional activities remain to be researched. His marriage certificate describes him as a "comedian." He returned to the United States on May 30, 1903 and was joined by his wife and son the following year. However, he returned to England and remarried to Ann Hindle. When their first child was born in December 1908 in Clifton, Lancashire, England, he is described as a laborer in a timber yard. By 1911 the family was established in Bradford, England, where he lived for the remainder of his life. He registered his citizenship with the U.S. Consulate there in Febru-



ary 1918. He is described as a music hall artiste in official documents from this period. Member of the SSO in Vienna, summer 1922. Died Bradford, England, March 30, 1926.

**Hines, George "Bobo."** Drummer. Born Jersey City, New Jersey, November 9, 1885. In May/June 1914 worked in Paris in a band with William Carroll, Joseph Meyers, and Edward Ransom. Member of Clef Club Orchestra 1919 and soloist on "syncopated drum" at their Carnegie Hall concert, February 22, 1919. His passport application of November 28, 1919, was sponsored by the New York Syncopated Orchestra but by his own account he did not leave the United States until June 1920. He was recalled by both Bertin Salnave and Bert Marshall playing with the SSO under George Lattimore's management but no contemporary reference has been found. A passport application made in London on January 19, 1921, refers to his membership in The Jazz Devils and he was a member of The Five Jazzing Devils at the Hotel Bristol, Oslo, from January 25 until late March 1921. In January 1922, he was a member of Murray's Black Dragoons Band in London and attended the funeral of their pianist Mope Desmond who was killed in a rail accident en route to an engagement. In November 1923 he had his passport amended for visiting Austria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. He appeared in Vienna with the Bo-Bo Jazzband in May 1925 and with Arthur Briggs in the film *Das Spielzug von Paris* in that year. Nothing is known of his subsequent career.

**Hopkins, Sadie.** Vocalist. Origin unconfirmed but recalled as English by cast members of *La Revue Nègre*, and by other contemporaries as Phillip-pino. Member of SSO at Nottingham, April 1920, Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920, Philharmonic Hall, London, November 1920, and in Paris, May 1921. By 1924, she was in Paris and was a member of the chorus of *La Revue Nègre* in 1925. In the late 1930s she was a member of Fela Sowande's Swing Chorus at the Florida Club, London. In the chorus of *The Sun Never Sets*, Drury Lane Theatre, London, which opened on June 19, 1939. In February 1940, reported singing with the band of Trinidadian bass player Al Jennings at the Ritz, Tonbridge, Kent, England.

**Hughes, Alston "Al."** Banjoist. Born Trinidad, April 15, 1885. Migrated to the United States in his teens, according to an obituary ("*Obituary*" 1956) but traced arriving from Port of Spain only on August 29, 1916. When he registered for the draft in September 1918 he was working as a heater for the Port Newark Ship Building Corporation. He was contracted for Louis Mitchell's aborted Paris contract in 1919 and is reported by the cited obituary as a member of the SSO but no contemporary reference has been found. He was in London in April 1921 when he planned to return to New York City on the *Aquitania* but did not sail. He later played in Buddy and Mattie



Gilmore's band on Brussels in 1923, with Arthur Briggs at l'Abbaye, Brussels, from September 1924 and at the Weihburg Bar, Vienna, 1925–26. He was registered as a Vienna resident from April 30 to July 1, 1925 and from September 11, 1925 to May 2, 1926. He went with Briggs and Earl Granstaff to Istanbul in 1926. In Royalty Orchestra at Milonga, Paris, late 1925. Resident in Paris until World War II which he spent in London. Returned to Paris after the liberation and died there, April 1, 1956, after a long illness.

**Jackson, Ellis Thompson.** Trombonist. Born Newark, New Jersey, April 29, 1891. His father, also Ellis Thompson Jackson, known professionally as Capt. T. Jack-Ellis, was a multi-instrumentalist and vaudeville performer. His first professional appearance was at the age of six in his father's act. He himself had a multi-instrumentalist act around New York City clubs around 1904. Came to Britain with his father in a singing and dancing act, 1907, for an extensive music hall tour. Appeared in stage versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Britain. By the late teens, ubiquitous on the music halls as a blackface comedian. Member of the SSO in mid-1921 until recruited by Paul Wyer to replace John Forrester in Wyer's band at Moody's Club. He was engaged at Moody's Club until 1925, sometimes leading the band, and also working in bands led by violinist Victor Vorzanger, with whom he recorded extensively during 1922, and trumpeter Max Goldberg. In late 1925, formed a music hall act, Jackson and Blake, with English trumpeter Jack Block, who had also worked at Moody's. In the act, often called *B'have Yourself*, Jackson tap-danced and played the trombone. During 1926 the act was engaged at Moody's as part of the band but was allowed to accept out-of-town engagements. From July to September 1927 both men toured with the Dixie Devils Band of African-American drummer Amos Howard (born Philadelphia, April 12, 1886). Jackson and Blake continued touring until 1930, sometimes as a stand-alone act, sometimes interpolated into shows including 1930's *Spades Are Trumps* with The Musical Spillers. In December 1930 Jackson led a band at Ciro's Club, billed as consisting of black British musicians though it included Jack Blake/Block, playing opposite Billy Cotton's band. Jimmy Boucher (q.v.) was a member of this band. Later reports state that Jackson was poached by Billy Cotton during this engagement to become his second trombonist doubling as tap dancer, but in mid-1931 he was working at Sovrani's restaurant in Jermyn Street, London, in a band with Jamaican trumpeter Leslie Thompson and Jamaican reedman Joe Appleton. He reportedly first recorded with Cotton in July 1931 and remained with Cotton's band until February 18, 1950. In January to May 1936 he was featured in a series of recordings by Billy Cotton's Cotton Pickers both as a trombonist and tap dancer. After leaving Cotton, he appeared in the musical *Kiss Me Kate*, ran a tap dance school, and

made occasional music hall tours. A projected tour of Iceland in 1954 was cancelled. In 1956, led band in Pakistan which included Trinidadian pianist Clarie Wears. Died Twickenham, London, December 17, 1989. Living descendants in Great Britain.

**Jaeger (Gustave) Albert (Arthur).** Violinist. Born London, March 31, 1877. His father, Gustave Jaeger, a professor of music, is noted in the 1881 census as French, but in 1891 as German, which may mean that he was from Alsace-Lorraine. His mother was English. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster October 9, 1921. In December 1921 the *Daily Mail* paid £1,000 to his widow who was left with eight young children.

**Jeffer, Odette** (real name: Lavinia Elizabeth Jeffs). Vocalist. Born Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire, England, April 26, 1893. Ancestry unknown: both her father and her maternal grandfather are recorded as "father unknown." Gave her profession as dancer when she married Harry Wellmon (q.v.) in London, April 16, 1919. Noted (Mrs. H. M. Wellmon) as a member of the Hebrew Synco-Symphony, directed by H. M. Wellmon at the People's Palace, London, in November 1921. Member of SSO at Vergnügungspark, Vienna, summer 1922. With Wellmon as the Wellmon Duo in Vienna, where she was described as a "creole soubrette," Prague, Bratislava, Zagreb, 1923, in Scheveningen and Rotterdam, 1927, on tour to Brazil and Argentina, 1928. They appeared at the Olympia, Paris, May 1928 and the Jardin d'Acclimation, Paris, July 1928 where Mrs. Wellmon was again described as "creole." They toured southern France with Joe Boyd's Darktown Follies, winter 1928–29, then worked Paris cabarets. Harry Wellmon returned to the United States without his wife in 1935.

**Johnson, Lonnie (Alonzo).** Banjoist. Born New Orleans, February 8, probably 1894, but a wide range of other dates is quoted, ranging from 1889 to 1909, given by Johnson himself on his 1937 Social Security application. Died Toronto, June 16, 1970. Claims made for Johnson's membership of the SSO are discussed elsewhere. Other details of his career can be found in standard jazz and blues sources.

**Jones, Robert Lee "Bobby."** Trumpeter (doubling alto saxophone). Born Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, April 10, 1898. His 1918 draft registration, at which date he was employed by a venue called Uncle Tom [*sic*] Cabin in San Francisco, gives his birth year as 1899. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. In Wilson's band at La Gaieté, Brussels, and Chez Pan, Ostend in 1921–22. Also worked in Paris with Mazie Mullins (Withers) in mid-1921. Member of The Crack-erjacks in Paris, mid-1924. When he applied for a new passport in Paris

in February 1925 he was a saxophonist at a “night café.” With Bricktop in Madrid, 1925. Led band at Palermo, Paris, 1926–27, which included Bertin Salnave and Joe Caulk. Directing *The Crackerjacks*, Paris, 1928, with Joe Caulk. Appeared at concert, American Hospital, Paris, late 1928. Married Lucienne Rossu in Paris. Their son Michel was born in 1929. Worked and recorded with Freddy Johnson’s band, Paris, 1933. Also played Antillean music with Sam Castandet’s band. Returned to the United States with his wife and son on the *Siboney* from Lisbon, January 17, 1941. Member of Luckey Roberts’s International Symphonic-Syncopated Orchestra at concert at Town Hall, New York City, May 28, 1941. Returned to France after the war. Died Paris, July 4, 1954.

**Kennedy, Frank (Obediah).** Tympanist. Born Sierra Leone, circa 1882–86. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921, injured in *Rowan* disaster and hospitalized at Greenock Infirmary. Appeared at Survivors’ Sacred Concert and was a signatory of the Relief Fund Appeal.

**Kyer, Lottie G.** See Gee, Lottie.

**Lacton, Frank.** Vocalist, pianist, organist. Born London circa 1889, according to his death record. No birth record has been located. Sierra Leonian. Organist at St. George’s Cathedral, Freetown, Sierra Leone. Organist at Cathedral Church of Christ, Lagos, Nigeria, before 1914. In London by December 1919 when he attended the inaugural dinner of the African Progress Union. Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow, August to October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster, October 9, 1921. His body was washed ashore at Lagg on the Isle of Arran, October 18, 1921.

**Lattess, Edwin Samuel.** Role unknown. Born St. Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands, September 28, 1885. White British. His grandfather, George Lattess, was an Italian seaman. Member of SSO at Glasgow, September/October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster, October 9, 1921. His death record gives a London address.

**Layton, E. C.** Vocalist. Origin unknown. Member of SSO at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, May 1921.

**Macdonald, Charles (Henry).** Banjoist. Born London, February 11, 1877. His father, Charles Macdonald, was an acrobat, banjoist, and street conjuror, born in South Africa and described as Zulu in the English 1911 census. His mother Emma (née Ryall) was English, the daughter of a parchment maker. By 1895 the family was living in Brighton. Charles is recorded as a music hall artist in the 1901 census. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster, October 9, 1921. Living relatives in Great Britain.

**McKinney, Earl James.** Vocalist. Born Fultonville, New York, March 6, 1880.

By 1918 an actor in vaudeville. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra in New York City, 1919. Obtained passport in May 1919 to participate in Louis Mitchell's abortive Casino de Paris engagement. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, and at Kingsway Hall, London, 1920. Claimed membership of the SSO when he applied for a new passport in London in November 1920. Member of SSO at Brighton, August/September 1921, and in Vienna, summer 1922. In Budapest in January 1923. He obtained a passport in Berlin on June 24, 1941 and returned to the United States from Lisbon on the *Drottningholm* on June 22, 1942 giving his last permanent residence as Berlin, Germany. His claims to U.S. citizenship were initially regarded as suspect and he was detained at Ellis Island "for Special Inquiry" from June 30 until August 24, 1942.

**Marshall, Bert** (real name: Albert Duke-Essien). Vocalist. Born Hornsey, London, July 14, 1899. His father was a Ghanaian merchant. His mother, who died when he was seven, was the daughter of a London greengrocer and the widow of an Italian waiter. Enlisted in King's Royal Rifle Corps September 14, 1916, injured in service, discharged May 8, 1919. Member of the SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920, and at Brighton and Glasgow, summer 1921. Survived the *Rowan* disaster and took part in the Survivors Sacred Concert, afterwards performing in Ireland. Took up drums. In the 1920s led his own bands at Marine Gardens, Edinburgh, for several years, and at Southsea (1925). Visited Norway with the Versatile Three and led his own band there. Drummer with Thompson's Negro Band on European tour, 1928–29. Performed at flood relief concert, Paris, early 1930. At Zelli's, Paris, mid-1931. Appeared at Ciro's Club, London, with Noble Sissle and Billy Cotton, 1930. Member of Bricktop Quintette performing for Gold Star Mothers and Widows, Hotel Splendide, Paris, July 1932. Drummer in Joe Smith's band at Ciro's Club, London, 1933. With Freddy Johnson's band at Bricktop's, Paris, late 1933. Recorded as vocalist with Delaunay's Jazz (including Django Reinhardt), Paris, September 1934. Vocalist in BBC *Rhapsody in Black* broadcast, August 13, 1940. Worked as a clerk in later years. Died Davyhulme, Manchester, England, September 2, 1983.

**Martins, Gay Bafunke.** Banjoist. Born Lagos, Nigeria, October 29, 1894. Worked in the treasury in Lagos and described himself as a civil servant on his arrival in Britain on June 9, 1919, when he gave his age as twenty-seven. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921, survived *Rowan* disaster and took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Moved to France. Member of Thompson's Negro Band, 1923–1929. He was interned with Arthur Briggs from 1940 until August 1944.

**Mason, Billy (William Alexander).** Pianist. Born Edinburgh, October 4, 1899.

White British. By his own testimony he was recruited in Glasgow to replace a *Rowan* victim and took part in the SSO Irish tour, October/November 1921. Pianist and director at the Plaza Palais de Danse, Glasgow, April/May 1925. Moved to London mid-1920s. Member of Victor Vorzanger's band at East Ham Palais de Danse, London, late 1925. With Fred Elizalde at Savoy Hotel, London, late 1920s. Bandleader at Cafe de Paris, London, in 1930–31. Led own band at Carlton Hotel, Amsterdam, late 1931. Recorded with Spike Hughes and His Orchestra, 1931. Fronted band accompanying Louis Armstrong at London Palladium, July 1932, and formed band to accompany remainder of Armstrong's 1932 tour. Led band accompanying Valaida Snow on record January to April 1935. Returned to Glasgow to take over family hotel business, 1938, but continued to broadcast as a solo pianist. Also took part in tours entertaining both British and American troops in the mid-1940s. Occasionally led bands in the late 1940s and 1950s. Died Glasgow, December 22, 1960.

**Mercer, Mabel.** See Wadham, Mabel.

**Mickens, Cyril Burley.** Cornetist. Born Key West, Florida, May 13, 1894. His father, Cubell Mickens, was from Tallahassee, Alabama. When he registered for the draft in 1917, he was a musician employed by the Amsterdam Association in New York City. Served in the U.S. Army with the rank of Musician 1C, February 16, 1918 to April 8, 1919. He was a bandsman with the 350th Field Artillery Band. He is reported playing at the Alhambra Theatre, Philadelphia in December 1919. Recruited for SSO early 1920. His passport application of March 4, 1920 included his wife Marie, also a performer. Member of SSO at Nottingham, April 1920, Kingsway Hall, London, 1920. Marie Mickens had returned to the United States in August, Cyril Mickens returned in December 1920. Traveled to Asia with Hagemann's Syncopators, 1926. Led mainly Philippino band at Palace Cafe, Shanghai, 1927, returned to San Francisco in April. In 1930 was a musician in New York City. In 1935, trumpet soloist with the Monarch Symphonic Band, directed by Fredrick W. Simpson. In 1942 employed by the U.S. Aluminum Company. Died April 30, 1947. His last address known to the Veterans' Administration was Farmingdale, New York.

**Mitchell, Abbie.** Vocalist. Born New York City, September 25, 1884. In France, October–November 1898. Married to Will Marion Cook 1899–1908. In London with *In Dahomey* 1903–04. Toured United States and Europe with Her Memphis Students/Tennessee Students, 1905–06. In Paris in November 1905. Headlined at opening of Howard Theater, Washington, D.C., August 23, 1910. Performed in *The Singer and the Composer* with Will Marion Cook 1913. Cast member of *Darktown Follies of 1914*. Performed in 1914 with The National Negro Orchestra and the Clef Club Orchestra in New York City. In Will Marion Cook's *Jazz Land* at the New Standard Theater, Philadelphia, August 1917. Member of the Lafayette Stock Players, 1918–19. Featured in

*Her Thingum Bob* at the Lafayette Theatre, New York City, June 30 to July 2, 1919, in *Lilac Time* at the same theater September 1919. Took lead role in Quality Amusement Corporation film *Eyes of Youth* released 1920. It was claimed that Will Marion Cook induced her to break her contract with the Quality Amusement Corporation in early 1920. Came to Britain on *S.S. Carmania*, arriving on March 16, 1920. Member of SSO at Kennington Theatre, London, March–April 1920, Bristol and Liverpool, April 1920 and London Coliseum, May–June 1920. Toured Britain with Her Full Harmonic Quartet, August 1920 to October 1921. Member of SSO in Vienna, 1922. Returned to United States from Cherbourg, June 23, 1923. She was said to have spent three months each in Berlin and Budapest. Her first U.S. appearance after her return was at the Lafayette Theatre, New York City for the week commencing July 23, 1923. Appeared in DeForest Phonofilm sound short *Songs of Yesterday*. With Will Marion Cook's Philharmonic Orchestra in *Miss Calico* at Lafayette Theatre, New York City, October 1926. Her resumed theatrical career included the lead part in Tallulah Bankhead's *Little Foxes* in 1939. Died New York City, March 19, 1960.

**Morgan, Carroll.** Bandolinist and vocalist. Born Washington, D.C., December 19, 1880. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra in New York City, February 1919. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, London Coliseum, December 1919, Edinburgh and Liverpool, January/February 1920, Nottingham, April 1920, Kingsway Hall, London, 1920, Brighton, August/September 1921. After the initial Philharmonic Hall engagement he is noted only as a vocalist. Became engaged to Bert Marshall's sister in 1920, was unemployed in Edinburgh for a long period but eventually secured work. He was admitted to Colney Hatch Hospital, London, December 28, 1922, with general paralysis of the insane and died there June 9, 1923.

**Morris, Lawrence Milton.** Bandolinist and vocalist. Born Washington, D.C., February 23, 1879. On his 1918 draft registration described himself as a self-employed musician working at 134 W. 53rd, Rochelle, New Jersey. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, and on tour to Scotland and Liverpool, December 1919 to February 1920. By his own account, took part in the SSO "strike" in Liverpool. Living in London, April and October 1920. Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow 1921. Did not sail on the *S.S. Rowan*. Played Ostend Casino, Belgium, with Buddy and Mattie Gilmore, possibly late 1921. Member of Murray's Black Dragoons Band, January 1922. Returned to United States from Le Havre, May 20, 1922. In 1930 still employed as a musician in Roselle, New Jersey. Unemployed in 1942.

**Mullins (Withers), Mazie.** Saxophonist. Born Denver, Colorado, December



17, 1888. Married Frank Withers (q.v.) at unknown date; toured in vaudeville with him as Withers and Withers. Settled in New York City to work at the Libya and other cabarets. In Will Marion Cook's *Jazz Land* at the New Standard Theater, Philadelphia, August 1917. Reported playing saxophone at Siloam Presbyterian Church, October 1917. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra, in which she also participated in trombone duets, February/March 1919, reported at Baltimore, Washington, and New York City. Her passport of April 25, 1919 was supported by the New York Syncopated Orchestra, but she travelled to Paris and applied for an amendment to her passport to join the SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, August 27, 1919. Member of Portman Syncopated Orchestra at the Portman Rooms from mid-September 1919. Confirmed as member of SSO at Glasgow and Edinburgh, December 1919–January 1920, and at Bristol, April 1920. By September 1921, running Tempo Club, 16 rue Fontaine, Paris, and working with Dooley Wilson, Bobby Jones, and Joseph Hall. Died of appendicitis, American Hospital, Paris, October 14, 1921.

**Ofori, William Martin.** Role unknown. Ghanaian. Born circa 1891 (aged twenty-six in 1917). Arrived in Britain from Accra on August 26, 1917 giving the address King's College, Taunton, though the alumni group there has so far failed to trace him. Member of SSO in Glasgow, September/October 1921. Injured in *Rowan* disaster and treated at Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow. Took part in Survivors Sacred Concert.

**Parker, Herbert Eugene.** Vocalist. Born Ocala, Florida, March 24, 1896. When he registered for the draft in 1917, he was an unemployed bellhop. Recruited for the SSO by Hattie King Reavis, applied for passport May 2, 1921. Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow, August/September 1921. Survived *Rowan* disaster and appeared at Survivors' Sacred Concert. Member of SSO in Dublin and Belfast, October/November 1921 and in Vienna, summer 1922. In 1927 studying singing in Paris, where in 1928 he attended Bricktop's Christmas party. Performed with other African-American acts at concert at Hotel Imperator, Paris, August 1930 for Gold Star Mothers and Widows. In April 1942 he was a patrolman at New York Port of Embarkation in Brooklyn.

**Patrick, Edward Robert.** Trumpeter. Born Charleston, South Carolina, November 25, 1893 (according to his 1919 passport) or 1896 (according to his 1917 draft registration, as Edward Rockefeller Patrick). Enumerated for the 1910 census at Jenkins' Orphanage, Charleston. Member of Jenkins Orphanage band at the Anglo-American Exposition, London, May to September 1914. In 1917 still working as a musician at Jenkins' Orphanage, Charleston. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Living in London in November 1920 when he and Earl McKinney witnessed one another's passport applications. His passport



was amended in Bucharest on May 27, 1922, for travel to Rumania and Serbia, and again on June 27, 1922, for travel to Italy, but the purpose of these travels is undetermined.

**Patrick, Jacob E. "Trombonesky."** Trombonist. Born Charleston, South Carolina, August 18, 1897. Enumerated for the 1910 census at Jenkins' Orphanage, Charleston. Member of Jenkins Orphanage band at the Anglo-American Exposition, London, May to September 1914. When he registered for the draft in 1918 he was living in Newark, New Jersey and was a member of the Steeple Chase Park Band at Coney Island, New York City. Recalled by Arthur Briggs as a member of the 368th Infantry Band with Tim Brymn. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, and at Colston Hall, Bristol, April 1920. When he applied for a new passport in London on January 21, 1921, he said he was a member of the SSO and the "Jazz and Devil Orchestra" [*sic*], presumably meaning "Jazzin' Devils." Member of Hughes Pollard's band in Ostend, 1922. On October 8, 1922, his passport was amended in Paris for travel to Spain and Switzerland. In Paris on February 18, 1924, he applied for a further passport for travel that day to Spain to take up an eight-month engagement with Michel Padreano's Orchestra at the Palais de Glace, Madrid. Said (Chilton 1987) to have been in Sidney Bechet's band at Club Basha, New York City, ca. August 1925, but documentation of his return to the United States has not been located. Arthur Briggs recalled that he had died in late 1922 or early 1923 of the consequences of a fight in Ostend and his subsequent treatment by the Belgian police, but his memory was evidently at fault, though Patrick's eventual fate is undiscovered.

**Paul, Oscar.** Vocalist. Born circa 1871 (aged thirty-seven in 1908). Came to Britain with *Sunny South* company in 1908. Member of SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920. Member of Abbie Mitchell's Full Harmonic Quartet during 1921. In company of Stockwell Productions' revue *Still Going Some* at Warrington, England, in August 1926. One of the Mississippi Chorus and Dancers in the London production of *Show Boat* at Drury Lane Theatre, 1928–29.

**Payne, John C.** Vocalist, chorus master. Born Montgomery, Alabama, June 26, 1872. With the California Jubilee Quartet, 1914–15. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra in Chicago and New York City, February/March 1919. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919 and in Glasgow, January 1920, Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920. Member of Royal Southern Singers touring Britain September 1920 to May 1921. Again touring with Royal Southern Singers, July 1921. Member of SSO at Brighton, August/September 1921. With Royal Southern Singers October 1921 to at least January 1923. The patronage of Lady

Mary Cook, wife of businessman and art collector Sir Herbert Cook, enabled him in 1921 to buy a home at 17 Regent's Park Road, London, which became a focus for the African-American community in London. Toured United States from November 1923 to June 1924. Recorded spirituals in London in 1923 and 1924, accompanied by Lawrence Brown at the piano. In 1925 formed vocal group The Southern Trio with Evelyn Dove and Clinton Rosemond, which made several broadcasts under the direction of "F. Lattimore" according to BBC files. Evelyn Dove was replaced by Mabel Mercer by September 1925 and this group toured to Copenhagen and Hamburg, 1926. Lottie Gee played the female role in the trio at a recital of spirituals at Wigmore Hall, London, in early 1926. In October 1926 the trio with Mabel Mercer was added to the London cast of *Blackbirds of 1926* and took part in the 1927 *Blackbirds* provincial tour. Continued to tour into 1928 often billing themselves as The Royal Southern Three. Trained and led the chorus for the London production of *Show Boat* at Drury Lane Theatre, 1928–29. Studied singing with Theodor Lierhammer, in Vienna and at a summer camp at Mondsee, Austria, 1929. Trained and led the chorus for the film *Sanders of the River*, starring Paul Robeson and Nina Mae McKinney, 1934. Contributed to Nancy Cunard's anthology *Negro*, 1934. Played "King Walamaloo" in a black-cast pantomime version of *Robinson Crusoe* at Lewisham Hippodrome, London, at Christmas 1934–35. His Negro Chorus, which recorded in 1935, accompanied Alberta Hunter in the film *Radio Parade of 1935* and broadcast in 1938. Also worked as a vocal coach. After the outbreak of war he retired to Lady Cook's home at Talland near Looe, Cornwall, where he organized concert parties to tour the area in aid of the war effort. Formed a spiritual choir from African-American troops stationed at nearby Doublebois House during the preparations for D-Day. Died Looe, Cornwall, England, October 7, 1952, his profession recorded as "music teacher (retired)." His second name is expanded as "Charles" on the death certificate but appears as "Clarence" on a 1923 passenger list; this is not resolved.

**Peyton, Benton Ellsworth "Benny."** Tympanist. Born Washington, D.C., July 20, 1888. "Clef Club Prize Drummer" at Clef Club Carnival, May 21, 1915. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919. From December 31, 1919 until December 1922, leader of The Jazz Kings. Thereafter, toured bands of this name across Europe. Was in Frank Withers's group on the USSR trip in 1926. Engagement in Madrid with Withers later in 1926. With Bobby Jones, Joe Caulk, Walter Kildaire at Palermo, Paris, mid-1927. Directed *The New Yorkers*, Paris, 1928. He ran an agency from the rue du Chevalier de la Barre in Paris, booking African-American bands (Driggs and Lewine 1982, 213, 236). Leading band at Ciro's, Paris, November 1932. Led band in Buenos

Aires, October 1934 to June 1935. He accompanied Adelaide Hall in Zürich in 1935 with Joe Turner on piano. His band played at rally for Ethiopia, Salle Pleyel, Paris, December 1935. Engagements in Netherlands, spring 1936; at Municipal Casino, Biarritz, Easter 1936; in Prague, June–July 1936 followed by summer season at Deauville, France. Six-month engagement at Royal Hotel, Budapest, November 1936 to April 1937; summer season 1937 at Biarritz, France. Returned to Royal Hotel, Budapest from November 1, 1937, for two months, after which the band toured to Belgrade, Sofia, and Istanbul. Led band at Le Boeuf sur le Toit, Paris, 1939. Returned to the United States on the evacuation ship *St. John* from Bordeaux, October 14, 1939 (Rye 2007). Member of Luckey Roberts's International Symphonic-Syncopated Orchestra at concert at Town Hall, New York City, May 28, 1941. Died New York City, January 24, 1965.

**Porter, Joseph T.** Cellist. Born Savannah, Georgia, September 26, 1874. Graduated from Atlanta University. Married Mamie Cole, sister of comedian Bob Cole. Toured with Cole and Johnson companies in *The Shoo-Fly Regiment* and *The Red Moon*. Member of Gotham Jubilee Singers in Baltimore, Maryland, 1911. Member of Robert J. Young's Dixie Serenaders, including at Reisenweber's New York City, in early 1913. In 1915 playing banjo-mandolin and cello in Eubie Blake's Orchestra. Still residing in Baltimore, 1919. His second wife was Phoebe Young, sister of Robert J. Young (q.v.). To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, in Edinburgh, January 1920, and at Bristol and Liverpool, April 1920. In March 1921 was in Nice, France when he witnessed the passport application of Joseph Hall (q.v.). Playing saxophone with John Forrester's band at Acacias Dance Pavilion, Paris, mid-1921. Returned to the United States from Cherbourg, September 8, 1921, accompanied by his wife, who had joined him in England in December 1919. He appeared in vaudeville and as an entertainer at suburban resorts around Baltimore. Fell ill in August 1925 but was able to continue working. Died Baltimore, Maryland, May 11, 1926.

**Ray, Wesley J.** (also known as Ray Westley). Violinist. Born Newark, New Jersey, June 25, 1896. When he registered for the draft in 1918 he was working for Shirman and Miller in Newark. To England with SSO *Lapland* party, but returned to the United States from Le Havre on August 16, 1919. He led his own band in Newark, New Jersey in the 1920s. Enumerated in the 1930 census working as a musician in Newark but later in the year reported with Wright's Orchestra in Columbus, Ohio. Died New Jersey, August 1975. His last known residence was Red Bank.

**Reavis, Hattie King** (real name: Hattie Beatrice Reavis). Vocalist. Born Woodsworth, North Carolina, November 18, 1890, according to her 1919 passport. In various official sources the place of birth appears alternatively as Noodswarsh

and Middlesburg, and the year of birth as 1889, 1891, or 1893. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra in New York City, March 1919. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919, Edinburgh and Liverpool, January/February 1920. Reported in March 1920 to be contracted to George Lattimore. Member of SSO at Nottingham, April 1920, Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920, Margate, August 1920, and Philharmonic Hall, London, November 1920. Applied for a passport in London, November 22, 1920 as an employee of the SSO. Returned to United States from Liverpool, January 15, 1921 to recruit for the SSO. Recruited Elmer Certain, Farley Graden, Herbert Parker, Robert Williams. Arrived back at Liverpool, March 7, 1921. Member of SSO in Paris, May 1921, Brighton and Glasgow, August to October 1921. Survived *Rowan* disaster and appeared at Survivors' Sacred Concert. Member of SSO in Ireland, October–November 1921 and in Vienna, summer 1922. In September 1922 appeared in Prague billed as a Malayan singer. Returned to United States from Southampton on December 13, 1922. Was expected to join cast of Eddie Hunter revue *How Come*, January 1923, but she is not advertised subsequently. Gave recitals at churches during 1924. She arrived back in Britain on December 8, 1925. In Louis Douglas's revue *Black People*, Berlin, July 1926 and on tour to Zürich, November 1926. Performed in Creole Revue which visited Norway, Sweden, Russia, Italy, Greece, Egypt before she returned to the United States from Gibraltar on S.S. *Conte Grande*, April 7, 1930. Worked as an actress including a touring company of *Show Boat* and an appearance in *On Strivers Row* by Abram Hill at Harlem Branch, New York Public Library, January 1940. In 1949 she was acting as personal manager to opera singer Urylee Leonardos. She died in New York City, August 1970. The Social Security Death Index gives her date of birth as November 18, 1887.

**Rivera, Angelina A. "Angelita"** (married name: Angelina De Caillaux) Violinist, vocalist. Born Arecibo, Puerto Rico, October 28, 1900, according to her 1919 passport. 1901, 1903, and 1906 also appear on passenger lists as her birth year. Daughter of Anthony Rivera (q.v.) and sister of Santos Rivera (q.v.). To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Married Pierre De Caillaux (q.v.), London, October 15, 1919, daughter Dolores De Caillaux born London, June 12, 1920. Arrived in Dublin, October 10, 1921 to join SSO in Ireland. Prominent in Pathé film footage of post-*Rowan* reunion. Later in 1921 moved to Paris to join her husband. Requested emergency passport in Paris, November 17, 1922, to visit her ailing mother, sailed from Le Havre, January 27, 1923. Returned to Europe, recorded in Paris with Spencer Williams, accompanying Josephine Baker, November 1926. Returned to United States, from Southampton, September 14, 1927 (as Angeleta De Caillaux). Returned again to Europe and

returned to United States from Southampton, February 22, 1930, by which time she had reverted to her birth name. Attended a breakfast party for Duke Ellington at Smalls, New York City, in May 1930.

**Rivera, Anthony.** Clarinetist. Born Juncos, Puerto Rico, October 9, 1877 or 1878. His mother swore an affidavit to 1877 for his 1919 passport application and to 1878 for his 1921 passport application; the birth year 1883 appears on later passenger lists. In a Vienna Police Registration from June 1926 his date of birth appears as October 8, 1878, but in October 1926 it was registered as October 8, 1880. Emigrated to the United States, May 15, 1905, and settled in New York City. Father of Angelina Rivera and Santos Rivera. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, and on tour to Scotland and Liverpool, December 1919 to February 1920. Took part in the SSO "strike" at Liverpool. Returned to United States from Plymouth on June 10, 1920. Came back to Europe in December 1921 "to visit daughter in London." In November 1922, living in Paris, where he applied for his passport to be amended for travel to Spain. Applied for new passport in Antwerp, October 29, 1923, and for an extension in Berlin, July 20, 1925. Member of Vittorio Abdullio Villa's Seven Michigan Jazz in Brussels 1925–26, Vienna, 1926–27. Probably joined Louis Douglas after Villa's death in an accident on January 10, 1927 (Lotz 1997, 330). He left Vienna for Budapest on February 21, 1927. Recorded in the 1930 U.S. census as a theater musician, living in the Bronx, though no return to the United States has been traced until his sailing from Antwerp, Belgium, December 11, 1931. He evidently came back to Europe as he returned again to New York City from Marseille, France, October 30, 1936.

**Rivera, Santos "Santita."** Bassist. Born Arecibo, Puerto Rico, March 29, 1898 or 1899 (the later year appears on her 1919 passport). Daughter of Anthony Rivera (q.v.) and sister of Angelina Rivera (q.v.). To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, but returned to the U.S. from Le Havre on November 13, 1919. Attended a breakfast party for Duke Ellington at Smalls, New York City, in May 1930. In 1936–37 she made several return journeys between Britain and the United States giving her profession as musician and her birth date as March 29, 1900.

**Robbins, Harry, Jr. (Henry Charles).** Drummer. Born Chatham, Kent, England, May 1, 1902. White British. His father, Henry William Robbins (Harry Robbins Sr.), a military musician at the time of his son's birth, was a drummer who played and recorded in 1915 with Murray's Ragtime Trio and Savoy Quartet. Harry Robbins Jr. took up drums at age four and made his professional debut at the London Pavilion, aged nine. Played at St. James Palace Hotel, London, 1915. Later performed in a Rag Time Trio at Tag's Island, Hampton Court, London, and at the Popular Cafe, Piccadilly, London, with

the Willoughby Squire Ragtime Octette. Played at the Criterion Roof and Savoy Hotel, London with Joe Wilbur. With the first British band to play in Belgium after the Great War, also at Cologne, Germany. Member of SSO at Kingsway Hall and Philharmonic Hall, London, most likely in July and October 1920 respectively. Married ballerina Violet Kemplen in 1923. Played at the Savoy Hotel and recorded with the Romaine Five, 1926. His own band at the Riviera Club was taken over by Percival Mackey, 1927. Then joined the Savoy Orpheans under Reg Batten (1928). Joined Jack Hylton's band in 1929 until 1932. Many recordings with studio bands. Recorded with own band, Harry Robbins and His Redbreasts, in 1936. Died Folkestone, Kent, England, March 8, 1983.

**Robinson, Pete** (real name: Harrison Robinson). Drummer. Born Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, March 4 or 24, 1888 (the first date from his 1915 passport, the second from his 1919 passport). In 1915, he said he had left the United States in 1911, in 1919 he said in 1902. He was in Berlin when he was issued with an emergency passport on September 23, 1912. He was living in Brixton, London, when he applied for a new passport on June 11, 1915, prior to which he married Florence Martin (English). Their children, Norris Henry and Vivian Doris, were born on July 26, 1915, and October 19, 1917, respectively, with their father's name entered as Henry Robinson in 1915 and Harry Robinson in 1917. Led The Original Philadelphia Coon Band in London, circa 1920. Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow, August/September 1921. Died October 9, 1921, in *Rowan* disaster. Living descendants in Great Britain. See Kester 2003.

**Rogers, George Vincent.** Trombonist. Born about 1892 (his age was given as twenty-eight in August 1920). Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. In August 1920 he was convicted at Bow Street Police Court, London, of stealing clothes and other items from Will Marion Cook and with failure to comply with the aliens' registration procedures. He was sentenced to five months' imprisonment with hard labor and recommended for deportation. Though noted by the court as an American citizen he has not been located in any U.S. records.

**Rosemond, Crescent Clinton.** Vocalist. Born Seneca City, South Carolina, November 1, 1882. Original member of the Exposition Four. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra in New York City and Chicago, February/March 1919. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919; Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920. Toured Britain with Royal Southern Singers, September 1920 to May 1921. Again touring with Royal Southern Singers by mid-July 1921. Member of SSO at Brighton, August/September 1921. Touring with Royal Southern Singers from October 1921, including concert at Wigmore Hall, London, May 23, 1922. Sailed to



Figure 1. *The Original Philadelphia Coon Band, London. Pete Robinson at the drums. Photo courtesy of Suzy Kester by inheritance from Pete Robinson. Photo restoration by Tony Jones.*



Melbourne, Australia from Southampton with the Royal Southern Singers, January 6, 1923. Returned to England on September 2, 1923, worked, including touring and broadcasts, with John Payne and Evelyn Dove, who was later replaced by Mabel Mercer, in the Southern Trio, also known as The Royal Southern Three, 1925 to 1928. They toured to Copenhagen and Hamburg, 1926. Lottie Gee played the female role in the trio at a recital of spirituals at Wigmore Hall, London, in early 1926. In October 1926 they were added to the London cast of *Blackbirds* of 1926 and took part in the 1927 *Blackbirds* provincial tour. Married Corinne Meaux, music hall artist, at Lambeth, London, September 22, 1928. The witnesses were Mabel Wadham (Mercer) and Amos Howard. Ms. Meaux, born Lebanon, Kentucky, March 13, 1904, was one of the dancers in the London production of *Show Boat*, which opened on May 5, 1928. Their daughter Eleanor Corinne was born in London on January 30, 1929. The family returned to the United States from Southampton on May 2, 1929 and were living in Los Angeles in 1930 when he described himself as a "professional singer, theatre." Gave a spiritual concert at Los Angeles



Tabernacle, November 1933. He was unemployed when he applied for a Social Security number in 1936, but later worked as an actor. He appeared in Mervyn LeRoy's anti-lynching film, *They Won't Forget*, 1937. He played "Coachman" in Jacques Tourneur's 1943 film *I Walked with a Zombie*. Died Los Angeles, March 10, 1966.

**Russell, John George.** Clarinetist. Born, Kingston, Jamaica, December 10, 1888 (according to police registrations in Vienna, Austria). Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. With The Jazz Kings in January 1920, replaced by Sidney Bechet. Member of Granstaff's Six Manhattans in Vienna, 1927. Billed in Vienna in 1931 as "Negerkönig des Saxophons" and said to be the son of an English doctor and a Spanish mother. He was recalled by Harry Francis (*Crescendo* 1982) in a dance hall at Stamford Hill, London, making his own reeds out of matchboxes.

**Salnave, Bertin Depestre.** Flautist (1919–20), saxophonist (1921). Haitian. Born Port au Prince, Haiti, September 5, 1892. Moved to France in 1913, studied at Paris and Montpellier. Played at Café Mayol, Paris, 1915 to 1917. Toured France for the Y.M.C.A., 1918. Worked in a tango band at the Apollo, Paris, 1918–19. Recruited for SSO in Paris by George Lattimore and Robert Bersham. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919. Principal flute at the Coterie of Friends concert at Wigmore Hall, London, December 7, 1919. Member of SSO in Scotland and Liverpool, December 1919 to February 1920 and at Nottingham, April 1920. Member of SSO at Brighton, August 1921. Left SSO at close of Brighton engagement, September 18, 1921. In George Ruthland Clapham's band at Mayol, Oslo, November/December 1921, and Embassy Club, London, 1922. Attended funeral of Mope Desmond (Caleb Quaye), London, February 1922. With the Creole Five in Liège, Belgium, from October 14, 1922. With Arthur Briggs's Savoy Syncops Band, from early 1923 in Brussels, Vienna, and in Austrian film *Das Spielzeug von Paris*, 1925. Returned to France May 1926 after end of Briggs's engagement at Weihburg Bar, Vienna. Joined Bobby Jones's band at the Palermo, Paris. Played in Spain in band led by Crickett Smith which included Frank Withers (q.v.). Led own band at La Coupole, Paris, from December 20, 1927. Led band at Princesse Hotel, Nice, and Beau-Site Hotel, Cannes during winter 1927–28. Led regularly at La Coupole, Paris, in early 1930s, may be on the records by Notte and His Creole Band Jazz De La Coupole made in 1931. Recorded with his own Coupole band, including Emile Chancy (q.v.) in 1933. Appeared with Benny Peyton's band at Biarritz and Deauville, 1937–38, then joined Leon Abbey's band for trip to Zürich and Bucharest. Returned to Haiti. Died Port au Prince, early 1970s.

**Saparo, Henry P.** Bandolinist and vocalist. Born New Orleans, April 6, 1884. His father, Pouncho Saparo, was born in Cuba. In the 1910 census he is re-

ported an actor. Act with Bennie Jones, Saparo and Jones, *Two Classy Coons*, 1910–11. Toured with Sidney L. Perrin and Goldy Crosby as *The Pumpkin Colored Trio*, 1911–12. Act with Claude Winfry, 1913. Chief entertainer at Plaza Grill, Asbury Park, New Jersey, mid-1916. In 1918 in vaudeville act Saparo and Lemonier with Tom Lemonier. Learned banjo in 1919 at the age of thirty-five. When he applied for a passport on April 25, 1919, he presented a supporting affidavit from bandleader Charles Elgar. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, also of Portman Syncopated Orchestra, November/December 1919. With *The Jazz Kings* from December 31, 1919. Returned to the United States from Southampton on *S.S. New York*, August 7, 1920. He was expected to return to Europe in October and is reported as a member of the SSO in Glasgow, September 1921 but is nowhere mentioned in connection with the *Rowan* disaster and it is suspected that his name was inserted by Glasgow newspapers after reference to files relating to earlier engagements. In act with Dyke Thomas, the Chauffeur and the Valet, 1920–21. In *Strut Miss Lizzie*, Winter Garden Theater, New York City, mid-1922. Applied for a new passport in New York City in February 1923 saying he had been in the United States since October 1920. Appeared at Clef Club Concert, Douglass Theater, New York City, March, 1923. Leading band at Owl Cabaret, New York City, mid-1925. Bandleader at Bamboo Inn, New York City, 1925–28. Member of Benny Peyton's Blue Ribbon Orchestra at Palais de la Méditerranée, Nice, France, from January 1929. He returned to New York City from Le Havre on May 22, 1929. In July he was performing at Naragansett Pier as "Pancho Saparo." Living in New York City in April 1930. Worked with Opal Cooper, late 1930. From 1942 to 1947, a bartender at a succession of Harlem bars. Died Lutheran Memorial Hospital, Newark, New Jersey, October 13, 1951.

**Smith, Ambrose.** Pianist. Born Baltimore, Maryland, March 3, 1900. Studied piano and organ with local teachers and was a member of Robert J. Young's Orchestra while still in high school. When he registered for the draft in September 1918 he was a musician employed at the Herman Hotel, Baltimore. Recruited for Louis Mitchell's abortive trip to Paris. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. He was enumerated in the 1920 U.S. census at 1205 Etting Street, Baltimore, on January 7, 1920, but only returned to the United States, giving that address, from Le Havre on January 10, 1920. Became pianist in Josh (Jack) Saddler's Plantation Orchestra/Serenaders and was co-leader by 1926, playing around Baltimore and Philadelphia. Also worked as accompanist to singer George Bias and was leading his own Harmony Boys in 1929. In the 1930 census, he was enumerated as a musician in a Baltimore restaurant. Led band at Sherry's Night Club, Baltimore, 1930–32, sometimes fronted by Zerita Stepteau, and His Five Cotton Pickers at the Baltimore Cotton Club. Broadcast over local radio stations

from the Cotton Club and in duets with pianist Rivers Chambers, billed as "Twenty Harlem Fingers." Died Baltimore, Maryland, February 1970.

**Smith, George Mitchell.** Violinist. Born New York City, July 17, 1890. In 1910 he was enumerated as a musician in a dancing school. Recorded with Europe's Society Orchestra, 1913 and 1914. When he registered for the draft in 1917 he was employed by Jim Europe at Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts. Recruited for the SSO by George Lattimore's brother and came to England on *S.S. Lapland*, October 1919. Appears in programs for the SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, but by his own testimony only worked with the Portman Syncopated Orchestra, October–December 1919. Member of The Jazz Kings from December 31, 1919, until December 1922. He settled in Britain permanently, abandoning his American family including his daughter Marjorie, later Margot Webb of the dance act Norton and Margot (Gottschild 2000). She was told that he had come to see her perform when she appeared in London with the *Cotton Club Revue* in 1937, though he did not introduce himself. May have recorded with Rector's Paramount Six, February 28, 1922, but the records were not issued and the source of the reported personnel is not established. Billy Mason claimed that he worked with the SSO after the *Rowan* disaster but there is no contemporary evidence for this. Member of The Melody Mixers Band in revue *Still Going Some*, 1926. Member of orchestra for *Blackbirds of 1926/1927* in London and on tour. Member of George Ruthland Clapham's trio at Pop's, London, December 1929 to May 1930. Acted as personal manager for Louis Armstrong on his 1933–34 visit to Britain. Member of orchestra for *Blackbirds of 1934/1935* in London and on tour. His subsequent career has defied investigation partly because of the commonness of the name "George Smith." He may be the George Smith who was leading at the Cafe de Paris, London, in 1954, but proof is lacking.

**Smith, Joe (Joseph I.)** Trumpeter. Jamaican. Place and date of birth unknown. Solo cornetist with the 1st Battalion West India Regiment Band. Member of SSO, Glasgow, 1921, survived the *Rowan* disaster and took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Lived in Paris in the 1920s, member of Benny Peyton's Jazz Kings at the Paris Apollo, late 1926. Led band at the Paris Monseigneur, late 1931, and at the Tower of Babel Club, Paris, mid-1933. Led band at Ciro's Club, London, from September 1933. By May 1934, member of Freddy Johnson's band at Pschorr Dance Hall, Rotterdam. Appeared at Mascotte Bar, Riga, Latvia, with Wayman "Ray" Stokes and Snow Fischer, September to December 1934. In August 1936, reported with Dutch band The Bright Sparks at Groot Badhuis, Zandvoort.

**Smith, Norris.** Vocalist. Born Columbia, Missouri, February 18, 1883. Arrived in Britain May 8, 1903, as member of the cast of *In Dahomey*. By his

own testimony in a 1918 passport application, he made annual visits of six to seven months to Germany from 1905 up to 1914 to engage in music hall work. In about February 1913 he recorded two duets with Walter Dixon (born St. Joseph, Missouri, March 17, 1869) in London for Edison Bell Winner. Living in London by 1915. Act McAllister and Smith toured Britain and Ireland, 1917. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, and by his own account at Liverpool, February 1920. Formed act The Ink Spot and The Chocolate Drop with Russell Brandow, formerly of Brandow and Wylie, which toured Britain into 1921. Led band at Hammersmith Palais de Danse, London, 1925. In 1926 formed the Southern Serenaders with Connie Smith and Ed Wallace, broadcasting and appearing in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at the London Pavilion in 1928. One of the Mississippi Chorus and Dancers in the London run of *Show Boat*, 1928–29 and also Paul Robeson's understudy in the production. He recorded Robeson's *Old Man River* for British issue because Robeson's contracts prevented him from doing so. Formed cabaret act with Marino Barreto (Marino Barreto y Casanova, born Havana, Cuba, June 11, 1907), which as Marino and Norris appeared in London, Paris and Brussels, and undertook British variety tours through the 1930s. They performed at flood relief concert, Paris, early 1930 at which James Boucher was bandleader. He later worked as a character actor including an appearance in the 1943 film *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (Bourne 1998, 61). Died London, October 21, 1959. Living British descendants.

**Smith, Tommy (Thomas Frederick).** Trumpeter. White British. Born London, November 11, 1902. He was recalled by his associate Ted Heath (q.v.) as the son of a bass player in Wandsworth, London, but his father is described as a "general labourer" on his son's birth certificate. May have recorded with Rector's Paramount Six, February 28, 1922, but the records were not issued and the source of the reported personnel is not established. Member of SSO in Vienna, 1922. With Jack Hylton's Kit Kat Band, 1925–26 (many recordings). Also recorded with Bert Firman, 1927. Later with Al Starita's Kit Kat Band. Joined Jack Payne's band about 1931. On June 21, 1931 he jumped in front of a train entering Victoria Station, London, and died later that day at Westminster Hospital, London. The inquest held on June 23 recorded a verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind," after hearing that he had serious financial worries ("Noted Musician's Terrible End" 1931).

**Spencer, Natalie** (birth name: Natalia Paca Ballou). Pianist. Born Paddington, London, May 26, 1885. Her father, George Michael Ballou, was a barrister-at-law from Gibraltar. Her mother, Lavinia Jane Fuller, was the daughter of an American merchant based in Hackney, London. In the census taken on March 31, 1901, mother and daughter were lodging at Maidenhead. George Ballou had returned to Gibraltar but was present at his

wife's death in Maidenhead in 1905. On July 28, 1904, Natalie, as she now called herself, married Harold Spencer, professor of music, of Cookham, Bucks, and the elder brother of the future painter Stanley Spencer. In the census taken on April 2, 1911, she is described as a "teacher of Music and Dancing." Subsequent divorce papers reveal that her marriage had broken down by early 1919 and she began a relationship with Kenneth Courtenay Bater in May 1919. Member of the SSO in Bristol and London, April to June 1920. Leading own trio, the Natalie Spencer Three, in February 1921. Her final divorce from Harold Spencer in January 1923 was followed by her marriage to Kenneth Bater in March. Though described in the marriage records as a civil engineer, Bater was playing drums in their co-led band at their own school of dancing in Cork Street, London in December 1925. Natalie Mary [*sic*] Bater died Hammersmith, London, October 26, 1965.

**Tate, Frank G.** Violinist. Born Richmond, Indiana, February 1, 1887. Living in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1900. In January 1911 reported in the band at Phoenix Theater, Chicago, with pianist Hattie Mae Patton and drummer Charles Mitchell. Later in 1911, with Dave Peyton's Orchestra at the New Grand, Chicago. In August 1914 reported in Prof. E. W. Bailey's States Theatre Orchestra. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. In May 1920, applied for a new passport in London. The application was witnessed by Paul Wyer (q.v.). In John Forrester's band at Acacias Dance Pavilion, Paris, circa September 1921. Returned to the United States from Cherbourg, France, on November 1, 1922. In 1942, employed by the New York Central Railroad at Grand Central Terminal, New York City.

**Tatten, William Robinson.** Vocalist. Born Norwich, Connecticut, March 10, 1884. Living in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1900, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, in 1910, when he was a grading contractor. Began professional career with the Dixieland Comedy Four, 1911. When he registered for the draft in 1917, he was living in Ansonia, Connecticut and was an actor employed by the United Booking Agency. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919, Edinburgh and Liverpool, January/February 1920, Bristol and Liverpool, April 1920. By his own account, left the SSO in September 1920 and from then until April 1922 he did a little concert work but was mostly without employment. In April 1922, he was engaged to do concert work with Will Marion Cook in Europe and applied for a new passport in London to be sent to him in Paris. Member of the SSO in Vienna, also appeared there as a "Nigger Comic" in January 1923, after which he spent several years in Budapest. His passport was later amended in Budapest for use in Romania and Yugoslavia and he also appeared in Basel and Zürich. In 1925 he was in Germany. In June

1927 he was reported playing drums with an otherwise white orchestra in Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně in the Czech Republic) and in 1930 organized a band which appeared in Berlin at Haus Vaterland and Hotel Esplanade. He was leading at the Princess Restaurant, Berlin, when he was expelled by the Nazis in March 1933. He then returned to Budapest where he led a band of eight Hungarians, notably at the Bar Arizona. In 1936 they played an engagement in Vienna, from where, as a result of illness, he returned to the United States, sailing from Hamburg on October 28, 1936. He returned to Ansonia, Connecticut, where he was employed in 1942 by National Press.

**Taylor, William (Billy).** Vocalist and bones player. Born Manchester, England, January 31, 1898. (This birth date is taken from Danish Immigration File, V76420; the birth record which would give details of his ancestry has not been located in consequence of the commonness of the name.) Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow, 1921, survived the *Rowan* disaster and took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Member of SSO at Londonderry and Belfast, October/November 1921. Member of Thompson's Negro Band touring Europe 1923–28. One of the Mississippi Chorus and Dancers in the London production of *Show Boat*, Drury Lane Theatre, 1928–29. Drummer with band led by Arthur Briggs and Freddy Johnson, Paris, 1933, including recordings, and with Freddy Johnson's Orchestra, Paris, October 1933, including recordings, Haarlem and Rotterdam, Netherlands, 1934. Member of Orchestre Sigismund Beck, which included Freddy Johnson and "Big Boy" Goudie, at its concert at Salle Lafayette, Paris, February 4, 1934, which was Django Reinhardt's first reported public appearance. Drummer with Harry Cooper and His Rhythm Aces, Le Ponton 2, Paris, late 1934. In band accompanying Coleman Hawkins at Salle Pleyel, Paris, 1935. Played at the Sihlporte in Zürich for four weeks in summer 1935. Arthur Briggs believed that he returned to England before World War II, where he opened a filling station and was killed by a bomb in the early years of the war. This is not verified.

**Thompson, Egbert Emmanuel.** Trumpeter and conductor. Born Sierra Leone, January 27, 1883. Raised in Jamaica. Joined the 1st Battalion British West India Regiment in 1896, aged 13. It is said that he attended the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, London, around 1899, but he has not been traced in their records. He played solo cornet with the 1st Battalion British West India Regiment Band at the Crystal Palace (London) Exhibition in 1905, and was discharged in Jamaica. Emigrated to the US from Jamaica, August 1907, and lived in New York City until 1919, where he played with the New Amsterdam Musical Association, Tempo Club, and Clef Club. He was assistant conductor of The National Negro Orchestra at Manhattan Casino on April 8, 1914. He reportedly studied at the Institute of Musical Art under Walter Damrosch.



Naturalized as a U.S. citizen in New York City, November 22, 1916, he became a bandmaster in the U.S. 15th Infantry, but resigned, taking up his commission again at the outbreak of war. He became bandmaster of the 367th Infantry (the Buffaloes), serving in France, 1918–19, achieving the rank of lieutenant on November 5, 1918. He returned to New York City with his regiment and was discharged on March 8, 1919. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall and Coliseum, London, 1919, becoming director after the departure of Will Marion Cook in late October 1919, and on tour to Scotland and Liverpool, December 1919 to February 1920. In March 1920, he was reported under contract to George Lattimore. Member of SSO at Nottingham, April 1920; Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920; London Palladium, December 1920; Brighton and Glasgow, August/September 1921. Survived the *Rowan* disaster and took part in Survivors Sacred Concert. Member of SSO in Londonderry and Belfast, October/November 1921. Led Thompson's Negro Band, touring Europe, 1923–27. He appears in Danish official records with the forename "Egberth" but this appears to be no more than a linguistic misunderstanding. Died Paris, August 22, 1927.

**Tunstall, Nelson.** Vocalist. Born Parkersburg, West Virginia, March 17, 1874. Toured with Cole and Johnson companies, including *The Shoo-Fly Regiment*. In their *The Red Moon*, 1909 (Abbott and Seroff 2007, 78). Enumerated in the 1910 census as an actor in Baltimore, Maryland. Baritone soloist at St. Francis Roman Catholic Church, Baltimore, for eighteen years, at St. Barnabas Church, Baltimore, for eight years, at Grace Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, for six years. Appeared at many Baltimore churches as soloist and a member of The Lyric Quartet. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, but had left by September 26, 1919. Returned to the United States from Le Havre on November 13, 1919. Resumed performing at church services and functions in Baltimore. In the 1920 census he is enumerated in Baltimore as a musician. In April 1926 he left to join the Dixie Jubilee Singers, but was again soloist at Grace Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, at the time of his death. Died Hot Springs, Virginia, October 24, 1928.

**Vargas, Pedro.** Bassist. Born about 1894 (aged twenty-five on arrival in the United Kingdom in 1919). Apparently from the Dominican Republic (he is inconsistently noted in U.K. records as an alien from Dominica). To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919.

**Vernar, Felix.** Pianist. Haitian. Date and place of birth unknown. Recalled by Bertin Salnave as "Verna," as a member of SSO at Liverpool, February 1920. Returned to Paris, early 1920. In Wilson's Band at la Gaîté, Brussels, and Chez Pan, Ostend, unknown date.

**Wadham, Mabel** (later known as Mabel Mercer, also known as Mabel Boucher). Vocalist. Born near Burton-on-Trent, Derbyshire, England, February 3, 1900. Her mother was Emily Wadham, music hall artiste, daughter of the painter Benjamin Braffet Wadham. Her father was an African-American musician or entertainer whose identity is not securely known and is not revealed by Mabel's birth certificate. She believed her father was Benjamin "Ben" Mercer, who traveled to Britain as a merchant seaman in late 1898 and became a member of a tumbling act called The Jiminy Crickets (Cheney 2000, 121). This is not verifiable. Raised by her grandmother and attended a convent school in Blackley, Manchester. Began stage career as a dancer with her aunt Rhoda King's Romany Five. This act broke up in 1916 and she joined another troupe which brought her to the attention of Nanette Horton Boucher, mother of James Boucher (q.v.), who took her into her household where she associated for the first time with others of African descent. Dancer with Will Garland's show *Coloured Society*, 1917–19. Member of SSO at Kingsway Hall, London, July 1920, and specifically noted at the Sunday concert at Margate, August 1, 1920. Subbed for Abbie Mitchell at a concert at Wigmore Hall, London, July 8, 1921. Had act with Ralph Grayson (q.v.), 1921, and also worked in a double act called Kay and Mercer which toured to Belgium and Luxembourg later in 1921. Appeared in Paris, 1924–25, at Le Grand Duc and Chez Florence, and at The Seymour Cabaret, where she appeared as "Mabel White" using the name of her current partner, the drummer Harvey White. Member of The Southern Trio with John C. Payne and Clinton Rosemond touring to Copenhagen and Hamburg, 1926. In October 1926 they were added to the London cast of *Blackbirds of 1926* and took part in the 1927 *Blackbirds* provincial tour. Continued to tour into 1928 often billing themselves as The Royal Southern Three. Appeared with Sam Wooding's Orchestra. One of the Mississippi Chorus and Dancers in the London production of *Show Boat*, 1928–29. In 1931, worked at Chez Florence, Paris, with the band of her then-partner, African-American drummer Harvey White. Joined Bricktop (Ada Smith) in the management of her new Paris club, singing at tables and becoming a favorite with high society including visiting royalty. Jimmy Boucher (q.v.) worked there as her accompanist (Goddard 1979, 278). Member of Bricktop Quintette performing for Gold Star Mothers and Widows, Hotel Splendide, Paris, July 1932. Appeared in British film *Everything Is Rhythm*, 1936. In February/March 1938 appeared in Amsterdam with the band of violinist Eddie South. Moved to the United States, November 1938 for six-month engagement at the Ruban Bleu. To the Bahamas 1940 for a holiday but stayed when denied readmission to the US, performing frequently at private functions for the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Married Kelsey Pharr of the Delta Rhythm Boys, who was homosexual, to regain U.S. right of residence. Though they

never lived together they remained married until his death in 1964. Numerous club engagements in the New York area. Naturalized U.S. citizen, as Mabel Mercer Pharr, March 3, 1952. Revisited Europe, 1977, playing the Playboy Club, London, and making television series *Miss Mercer in Mayfair*. Died Pittsfield, Massachusetts, April 20, 1984.

**Walker, Mollie.** Vocalist. Origin unknown. She claimed in 1951 to have toured Europe with Will Marion Cook's band. No contemporary evidence located. In 1951 she had recently sung with Bazz Wilby's Usawon Jazz Band at the Apollo Club, Malta (Asman 1951).

**Warren, Milford (Frederick) "Horns."** French horn player. Born Rockville, Maryland, March 24, 1880. In 1900, living in Dayton, Ohio, with no profession noted. In 1918 residing in Columbus, Ohio. He said he was an unemployed musician. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Recorded in London with Vorzanger's Band, July 1922 to April 1923. Returned to United States, September 8, 1923. Member of Sissle and Blake's *Chocolate Dandies* company, 1924-25. Died Bellevue Hospital, New York City, June 24, 1929.

**Wellmon, Harry Malcolm or Malcom or Mallon.** Conductor. Born Shelley, North Carolina, May 15, 1883. His second name appears variously in contemporary sources, none of them authoritative, and his second initial also appears as "W." In 1898 he was MC at Sulzer's Harlem River Casino, New York City. By 1906 he was established in London as a composer, writing songs for leading music hall artistes including Jessie Preston and Victoria Monks, for whom he wrote *The Good Old British Isles*. He had also written a sand dance for Frank Cumming, a special march *The Hicks March* for the opening of the new Hicks Theatre, and the music for a juggling act, Drawee, Frisco and Hambo. His studio was at 47 Oxford Street and he also had a presence with Shapiro Van Tilzer Music Co. at 100 Charing Cross Road. He returned to the United States by his own account from September 1909 to November 1910. A son, Malcolm Harry Wellmon, was born in Southsea, England, on November 1, 1911 to Lilian Riley, confectioner's assistant. He returned again to the United States in January 1913, when he claimed to be a West Indian born in Bermuda en route to visit his brother in New York City. On the returning passenger list he is entered as "Henry Wellman, composer." After his return, he formed the act Carlisle and Wellmon with G. H. (George Horace) Carlisle, born Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 11, 1883, who had previously toured Britain with the act Carlisle and Baker. Carlisle and Wellmon recorded ragtime piano duets for English Columbia. It appears they sometimes claimed to be from Trinidad. Their last engagement was at Lewisham Hippodrome, London, for the week of December 13, 1915; the following weeks find Wellmon appearing as a single at Richmond

Hippodrome, London. By this time his studio was at 2 Gosfield Street. He was reported singing and playing his own compositions. On March 1, 1916, Wellmon registered as a US Citizen at the Consulate in London. From March 1916 he toured in a double act with L. C. Glass, formerly of the act Crumbley and Glass. They were described as "two coloured comedy comedians" and Glass as "a typical black-faced minstrel." Harry Mallon Wellmon registered for the draft from 7 New Turnstile, London, on October 10, 1918, giving his profession as composer. By August 1919, he was described as "established as a music publisher" at 1 Denmark Street, Charing Cross Road, in the heart of London's "Tin Pan Alley," where he remained until 1921. Dissolution proceedings in September 1922 reveal that this business was a partnership between Wellmon and V. Swift, music publishers trading as "H. M. Wellmon." The African-American group the Versatile Three was among those taking up his songs, but he also claimed a varied selection of numbers for pantomime. On April 16, 1919, at St. Giles Register Office, London, married Lavinia Elizabeth Jeffs (see Odette Jeffs), giving his name as "Harry Malcolm Wellmon," but signing "H. W. Wellmon." Member of SSO in Paris, May 1921. He directed the Hebrew Synco-Symphony at the People's Palace, London, in November 1921. Conducted SSO in Paris, February 1922, and in Vienna, May to October 1922. Mr. and Mrs. Wellmon left Vienna for Budapest, October 18, 1922, and are known from Vienna advertisements and police registrations to have been in Vienna, Prague, Bratislava, and Zagreb during 1923. Conducted Maurice Bandman opera company in Bombay (now Mumbai), India. Said he had performed in China and Africa (Rogers 1928a, 1928b). The Wellmon Duo appeared at Pavilioen Pier, Scheveningen, Netherlands, June 1927; Luxor Theatre, Rotterdam, August 1927, billed as "Indian American entertainers"; toured South America, 1928; and appeared at the Olympia, Paris, billed as "the Big Chief Wellmon Duo," May 1928 and the Jardin d'Acclimation, Paris, July 1928. Expected to lead a mixed band at Biarritz, summer 1928. The Wellmon Duo toured southern France with Joe Boyd's Darktown Follies, winter 1928-29, then in Paris cabarets. The act included operatic selections at the piano as well as Mrs. Wellmon's dancing. He worked in the Netherlands, 1933-35, and returned to the United States from Antwerp, Belgium, on March 1, 1935, not accompanied by Odette Jeffs.

**Williams, Robert Dowing.** Vocalist. Born Jacksonville, Florida, March 25, 1882. When he registered for the draft in 1918 he was employed as a stevedore in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Later a member of *The Smarter Set* and *Patti's Troubadors* companies. Member of New York Syncopated Orchestra in Chicago, February 1919. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919, Kingsway Hall, London, summer 1920. Member of the Royal Southern Singers on British tour, September 1920

to July 1921. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, November 1920. Again touring with Royal Southern Singers, July 1921. Member of SSO at Brighton, August/September 1921. Touring with Royal Southern Singers from October 1921, including concert at Wigmore Hall, London, May 23, 1922. Sailed to Melbourne, Australia from Southampton with the Royal Southern Singers, January 6, 1923. Returned to England on September 2, 1923. His subsequent history is unknown.

**Williams, Walter Bernard.** Vocalist. Born Columbia, South Carolina, January 3, 1888 (according to his draft registration) or 1890 (according to his March 4, 1921 passport application). When he registered for the draft on June 5, 1917, he was a porter employed by Frank Schwartz at 145 West 28th Street, New York City. Corporal in the 367th Infantry Band (Buffaloes) performing in the enlisted men's quartet and as a soloist. At the time of the 1920 census he was working as a gentleman's valet. Became a post-office clerk and reported in January 1920 singing at a meeting of the postal workers' Elijah P. Lovejoy Club. Soloist at Mother A.M.E. Zion Church, West 136th Street, New York City, 1921. He was granted a year's leave of absence from the post office when he was recruited for the SSO by Hattie King Reavis, and applied for a passport on March 4, 1921. Member of SSO at Brighton and Glasgow, August/September 1921. Died in *Rowan* disaster, October 9, 1921.

**Williamson, Leon.** Vocalist. Born Flemington, New Jersey, July 24, 1868. He said that he had been in England from June 1904 to February 1905. To England with SSO *Lapland* party. Presumed member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, but returned to United States from Le Havre, August 16, 1919.

**Winchester, Norma.** See Evelyn Dove.

**Withers, Frank (Douglas).** Trombonist. Born Emporia, Kansas, October 19, 1880. In Wesley Fields's band in San Francisco, 1907–08. Living in Oakland in 1910 with wife Della, but in the teens toured in vaudeville with Mazie Mullins (q.v.), whom he married at an unknown date, as "Withers and Withers." He obtained a passport in April 1915 but did not use it. In Will Marion Cook's *Jazz Land* at the New Standard Theater, Philadelphia, August 1917. In September 1918 he was employed as a musician by Rock and White at 47th and Broadway, New York City, and told his draft board his nearest relative was Mrs. F. D. Withers in Oakland. He claimed a role in the founding of the New York Syncopated Orchestra and is confirmed as a member at Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and New York City, February and March 1919. Recruited for Louis Mitchell's abortive trip to Paris, April 1919, traveled with Mitchell's reduced group to France, arriving at Bordeaux, June 12, 1919, and

opened with them at the Casino de Paris, July 4, 1919. On August 27, 1919, his passport was amended in Paris for a contract with "American Southern Syncopated Orchestra" at Philharmonic Hall, London. He led the Portman Syncopated Orchestra at the Portman Rooms. Announced for the Coterie of Friends concert at Wigmore Hall, London, December 7, 1919. Joined SSO for tour to Scotland and Liverpool, December 1919 to February 1920, and took part in the "strike" in Liverpool. Member of SSO at Bristol, April 1920. In Wilson's band at la Gaîté, Brussels, and Chez Pan, Ostend, ca. 1921–22. Reported in Paris, mid-1922. He applied for new passport in September 1922, giving his address as the Alhambra Theater, Brussels. Played and recorded in Paris with Mitchell's Jazz Kings, 1921–23. Member of Crickett King Jazzers in Paris, May 1924. In March 1926, described as the *Chicago Defender* Paris correspondent. Led band in USSR, February to May 1926. Engagement in Madrid with Benny Peyton later in 1926. Traveled widely in Europe. Withers' Stomp Jazzers appeared at the Parisian Grill and Royal Orpheum, Budapest, 1927. Bandleader at Carlton Hotel and Capitol Cabaret, Paris, May 1928. Appeared at concert, American Hospital, Paris, late 1928. In the later 1920s was musical director of Harry Cofie's Colored Cracks and is confirmed with them in Madrid in August 1929 and in Switzerland and southern France into 1930. Led own band in Paris, 1930. In mixed band accompanying revue starring Adelaide Hall in Switzerland, February 1936. Led the band for Louis Douglas's *Harlem Black Birds* in Paris and Nice, 1936, Italy, 1937 (Lotz 1997, 377–80). Also played with Arthur Briggs orchestra. Playing at Adelaide Hall's Big Apple club, Paris, May 1938, soloing with a French band. Evacuated from Bordeaux, October 14, 1939, on the *St. John* (Rye 2007, 18). His subsequent application for a Social Security number, filed on November 9, 1939, shows he had a wife, née Vera Napier, reportedly an Englishwoman whom he married before 1925, but for whom he could not secure entry to the United States (Mazie Mullins had died in Paris, October 14, 1921). He settled on the West Coast in 1940. Premiered his own composition *March of the Legions*, composed at the request of the American Legion, at veterans service in Los Angeles, November 10, 1940. Died San Francisco, January 7, 1952.

**Withers, Mazie Mullins.** See Mazie Mullins.

**Wyer, Jennie.** Vocalist. Born New York City, February 12, 1895. Wife of Paul Wyer (q.v.) To England with SSO *Northland* party. Though a member of the SSO party, described as a singer, there is no contemporary evidence that she actually performed with the orchestra. However, when she applied for a new passport in London on July 12, 1921, she cited employment by the SSO, Kingsway Hall, London. On July 20, she traveled to the United States on a visit to Milwaukee. On September 15, 1922, her passport was amended in Genoa for Austria and Holland in connection with SSO contracts. It was



again amended in Paris on April 25, 1923 for travel to Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. She emigrated to Argentina with her husband in 1923.

**Wyer, (John) Paul "The Pensacola Kid."** Violinist and clarinetist. Born Pensacola, Florida, February 17, 1890. Husband of Jennie Wyer (q.v.). Led band at Phoenix Theater, Chicago, 1914–15. Member of W. C. Handy's Memphis Blues Band in the mid-teens. When he registered for the draft in 1917 he was still single and described himself as an unemployed musician. Jelly Roll Morton remembered The Pensacola Kid as "the champion pool player of the world." By spring 1921 he had reportedly won \$85,000. To England with SSO *Northland* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Member of Gordon Stretton's band in Paris, December 1919 and at the Savoy, Nice for the winter season. Living in London in May 1920 when he witnessed a passport application for Frank Tate (q.v.). Leading seven-piece band at Moody's Club, London, circa May 1921. Reported in Paris en route from London to Italy, circa February/March 1922. Appeared at Le Grand Duc, Paris, with Louis Mitchell, circa January 1923. Recorded in Paris, April 1923 with Gordon Stretton's Orchestre Syncopated Six. Left May 17, 1923, with Stretton's band for Argentina. En route, Wyer sent a postcard to the *Chicago Defender* from the Canary Islands. The band opened at Buenos Aires Casino, June 7, 1923, and on June 22 joined Mistinguett's revue *C'est la Miss . . .* at Buenos Aires Opera House, then to the Solis Theatre in Montevideo and the Lyric Theatre in Rio de Janeiro. The band also played its own gigs and worked the winter season 1923–24 at Mar Del Plata, Argentina. Paul Wyer y su Red Hot Orquesta recorded Buenos Aires, 1925. Member of Eleuterio Iribarren's band, 1928. Co-directed the Dixy [*sic*] Pals with Argentinian pianist Adolfo Ortiz, 1930s, including long residency at Alvear Palace Hotel, Buenos Aires, and appearances in three films. Left 1938 with singer Elsie Day to form new band for the Alvear Palace. Opened his own club 1939. Became a substantial landowner in Argentina. Died Buenos Aires, February 6, 1959.

**Young, Albert.** Drummer. Born Lawrence, Kansas, April 15, 1879. Formed act called Grundy and Young with William Grundy (q.v.), working Loew's Circuit December 1918 to April 1919. In May 1919 obtained contracts for British tour through Harry Burns Agency. Arrived at Liverpool, July 27, 1919, on American Line's *Northland* from Philadelphia. Toured August/September 1919, described as "two coloured chauffeurs" and reported as "black and white turn" which in the show business parlance of the day meant that one of them performed in blackface. Member of SSO at Bristol, April 1920. Grundy and Young continued to tour until 1922, when the act broke up. Grundy was working in Nice, France for Silas S. (Seth) Weeks,

when he applied for a new passport in February 1922, later went to Egypt and returned to New York City from Le Havre on September 24, 1922. Young remained in London, working as a drummer. He recorded with Vorzanger's Band, July 1922 to April 1923. He returned to New York City from Le Havre on October 6, 1923.

**Young, Robert J.** Drummer. Born Huntingtown, Calvert County, Maryland, January 27, 1886. Raised in Baltimore and in 1910 working there in real estate. Member of Gotham Jubilee Singers with Joseph Porter (q.v.), 1911. Formed Dixie Serenaders, including Joe Caulk and Joseph Porter, Baltimore, 1910, which appeared at Kernan's Hotel Rathskeller, Baltimore for four years, also at Riverview Park and four-week engagement at Reisenweber's, New York City, early 1913. Present at a reception in November 1912 at which Nelson Tunstall (q.v.) sang. Led Royal Poinciana Sextette, which included Joe Caulk (q.v.), at Royal Poinciana Hotel, Palm Beach, Florida, during the season, 1915–18. The Sextette also appeared in Baltimore. Also led Robert J. Young's Society Orchestra in Baltimore. Manager of Colonial Theatre, Baltimore, 1916. To England with SSO *Carmania* party. Member of SSO at Philharmonic Hall, London, 1919. Returned to United States from Southampton, September 20, 1919. Reported (*Chicago Defender* 1919) to be returning to London on October 25 with a band for the Savoy Hotel, but this engagement does not seem to have taken place. He applied for a passport renewal on December 9 to sail to England on December 10, but does not appear to have made the trip. On January 7, 1920, he is enumerated by the census living with his brother in Baltimore. Bob Young's Orchestra is reported at St. Mary's Hall, Baltimore on May 13, 1921. By 1930 he was again working in real estate in Baltimore. Died Maryland, July 1975, his last known residence was Baltimore. Brother-in-law of Joseph Porter (q.v.), who married his sister Phoebe.

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