

Ton Verhiel

# A LITTLE STORY OF THE C TENOR SAXOPHONE

**To Ted Hegvik and Leo van Oostrom,  
two of the finest C Melody players**

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(in Dutch, in preparation)

**SAXOPHONE HISTORIES V:**

**Jean Baptiste Singelée- His life and work**

(in English, in preparation)

*This booklet had not been possible without the information I got from so many kind and friendly people, being saxophonist, composer or non-musician.*

*Many, many thanks for all your help in having this booklet grow to a unique source on the so beautiful sounding C melody saxophone.*

*A special thank you is for Dr. Paul Cohen, who was so kind to have a critical look at my use of the English language.*

## INTRODUCTION

We saxophonists all know that Adolph Sax developed two saxophone families. One that is in use today and best known is the E flat, B flat group, the other is the F, C-family.

From this last family, consisting of different types including soprano in C, alto in F, tenor in C, baritone in F and bass saxophone in C, the C tenor saxophone is the only family member that has had some serious role in saxophone history. It is an instrument, that forms a link between the alto in E flat and the tenor in B flat. Its sound is softer and less brilliant, therefore smoother and more introverted. There exists the myth that they cannot be played in tune, but C tenor saxophones from first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had the same intonation problems as all the other saxophone types. It is important to realize that the C tenor was always handled in just the same way as the other saxophones in those days.

The C-tenor was even the most popular saxophone between 1915 and 1930 and almost all the great names in saxophone production, American as well as European firms, build C tenor saxophones. So, there are still a lot instruments for sale and incidentally you will hear some recordings played on this instrument today most times called C melody saxophone.

This story will explore the history of this saxophone type. It will focus on classical music, but it is not possible to write this story without some excursions into the popular field and even the jazz world.

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## THE STORY

The first saxophone came into the world around 1840 and was probably a low sounding instrument tuned in C. It is said to be an instrument that was a combination between what we now know as the baritone sax and the bass saxophone. Sax's first idea was to produce an instrument that had a louder sound and could play more in tune than the ophicleïdes, serpents and bassoons that were used in military band music in that time. But soon after, he developed a complete range of saxophones, which already was mentioned in his first patent from 1846. Not all these saxophones were produced immediately and also the name of the several types was not really clear in those first years. In the early years the name tenor is often coupled to the alto saxophone. Kastner mentions in his "Traité général d' instrumentation" (1844) an "Alto ou Ténor en Mib/en Fa". In his saxophone method from 1846 we find a "Contralto ou Ténor en fa/en mib". In the brevet from March 1846 Adolph Sax mentions an "en mib ténor" as does Kastner in 1848. In 1846 the Saxophone Method by bassoonist Jean Francois Barthélémy Cokken, who teaches the saxophone at the Gymnase musical Militaire, the same "Contralto ou Ténor en mib" is mentioned. This instrument has a range comparable to our baritone saxophone. In Sax's company catalogues from 1848 and 1850 we read of the existence of a "baryton tenor en mib", which is probably the same instrument as before.

The first time the C tenor saxophone (as well as the B flat tenor saxophone!) is mentioned is in 1855 in Hector Berlioz' famous book on

orchestration. Both instruments are also in the 1867 list of Sax' own catalogue.

One can conclude that Sax developed the saxophone family during a longer period, or perhaps it is better described as saying that Sax needed some 10 years (1844 to 1854) to develop the two balanced families of saxophones.

From that time on, there existed a production of types from both families. One of the earliest evidences is an advertisement in a Dutch newspaper from 1874 in which a tenor saxophone in C produced by Adolph Sax is offered for sale.



The success of the E flat/B flat family, caused by the re-organization of the military bands, which had to include the saxophone and the saxhorns in their orchestration, was probably the reason that the C/F-

family was build some ten years later<sup>1</sup>. But there was another reason for the lack of interest in the “symphonic” family. Although Adolph Sax got a position as a saxophone teacher at the Conservatoire, it was not the same as what we know now as the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris. No, it was a musical institution for military musicians who received lessons in music and instrumental technique for two years<sup>2</sup>. All these students found work in the military bands and they all had to play the B flat/E flat saxophone family. So, Sax needed to have his factory produce more E flat alto saxophones then F-altos and much more B flat tenor-saxophones then C-tenors. Here we also find the reason, why composers as Demersseman and Singelée only wrote for the E flat/B flat family and did not write anything for the symphonic group. Examinations, the “concours”, were held for E flat and B flat Saxes, so there had to be competition pieces for those instruments. Because musicians had to serve the army bands, it is reasonable to say that the F and C saxophones were not taught at the Gymnase Musical Militaire.

This complete success in band music, which followed the winning of the musical match on the Champ du Mars, and the impossibility for the saxophone to gain a structural place in the symphony orchestra, which

<sup>1</sup> How many C and F instruments were build and/or by Sax is not known. According to Malou Haine, who wrote a large and interesting book on Adolph Sax in 1980, the information about Sax's transactions is not delivered. (mail Gery Dumoulin, Brussels, 1. October 2010)

<sup>2</sup> According to Malou Haine there never was a saxophone class at the Paris Conservatory. Adolph Sax did teach in the same building but was paid by the military department.

had its standard instrumentation since Beethoven's time, overwhelmed all possibilities and impeded the evolution of the symphonic saxophone. Another effect of the reorganization of military bands was, that all saxophone methods were written on behalf of the E flat/B flat saxophones. Most pedagogical and instrumentation books do give some information on the history of the saxophone and give a list of the most common types. Especially in some early methods we can find some information on the F/C family.

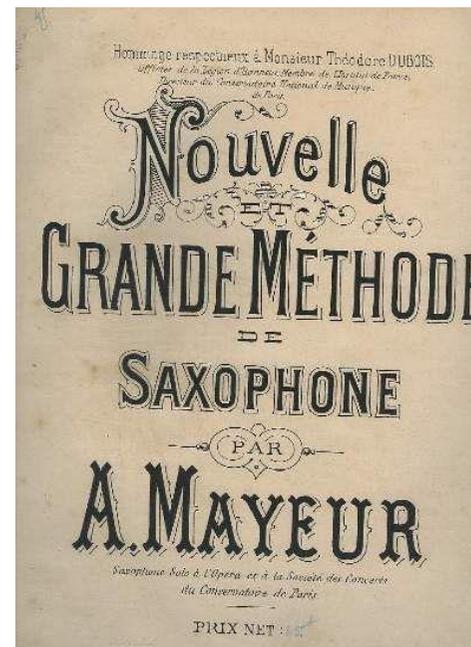
Nevertheless, our C tenor saxophone is the one that is most mentioned as a still existing member of the C/F-family. Belgium composer and head of the Brussels Conservatory Francois August Gevaert (1828-1908) mentions the saxophone extensively in his 1885 instrumentation book. Also, the "saxophone tenor en ut" gets a place:



Carl Fischer's "New and revised Edition of Celebrated Tutors" from 1889, the saxophone-book tells us: "

*"There are other saxophones made in C, E flat and F, both large and small; the one in C known as the "C-Melody" (tenor) saxophone, is a non-transposing instrument, enabling the performer to play from songs, 'Cello or piano music as written."*

Maybe we can conclude that the C-tenor saxophone was known as C-melody as early as 1889 and that the name was an idea of some publishers! It also makes clear that the name C-melody was given because it was possible to play melodies written for C instruments and transposing was not necessary anymore.



Louis Mayeur, one of the first concert saxophonists composed several solo pieces for saxophone. Being an alto player himself all these

compositions are written for the (Eb!) alto saxophone. Mayeur also wrote a saxophone method as early as 1868. It was republished several times and the Carl Fischer edition<sup>3</sup> does mention the C tenor saxophone (but not the other members of the C/F family). An English version published in 1898 by Hays in London mentions C soprano, F alto and C tenor but states that they are “very little used”.

Paul de Ville in 1907 based his Universal method on the Klose and Mayeur books and mentions the complete C/F family as meant for orchestral use. De Ville, as the Fischer edition of Mayeur’s work, does not mention the C tenor as C melody saxophone. In the famous 1917 “Foundation to saxophone playing” by saxophonist Ben Vereecken (who was soloist with the John Philip Sousa Band) the C-tenor saxophone is the only member of the C/F-group that is mentioned. As the other types, the C-tenor “is used with brilliant effect”, thus Vereecken.

Also, in Europe the C tenor saxophone is regularly mentioned. In 1890 Jules Philipot writes a book on instrumentation. In this book the whole saxophone family is named except de sopranino in F. The “tenor saxophone en ut” is not called C melody.

In 1920 the German Curt Sachs (1881-1959) writes his “Handbuch der Instrumentenkunde”. He also mentions all the saxophone types in Bb/Eb and in F/C. Dutch conductor Willem Hutschenruyter (1859-

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<sup>3</sup> My copy of this Fischer edition does not bare a publishing date.

1943) copies this list in his 1926 book on musical instruments, but adds

*“The reader will notice that most saxophones are in two pitches. The lower (Eb/Bb) is most often used in France, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands. The C/F saxophones are mainly found in Germany.”*



*An English saxophone ensemble from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*

In 1919, French saxophonist Raymond Briard writes in his “Nouvelle méthode pour l’étude de tous les saxophones”:

*“Independent from these saxophones (= E flat/B flat) there exist two models that are tuned in C, a tenor and a soprano, which can, by a special adaption, be used in reading without transposing.”*

This Briard method has some other curious items. Spectacular is the tablature on the first page that gives fingerings for harmonics up to G<sup>'''</sup>!

This gives evidence that Briard was familiar with harmonics at a time as these notes were barely known.

Gustav Bumcke, famous German saxophone pioneer who visited the son of Adolph Sax in Paris and got lessons from Victor Thiels, writes in his 1926 saxophone-school, that

*“Until now, one can hear saxophones tuned in C and F, but they are quite rare. Just the tenor saxophone in C is heard more often, mostly called “Melody-Saxophone”, and can be heard in jazz-music.”*

Bumcke is one of the few European authors to name the C tenor saxophone as “C melody”. Another early German saxophone method by A. Wagner from the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century mentions the “Tenorsaxophon in C” and famous French player and successful recording artist Jules Viard lists in his method from 1935 “le saxophone tenor en Ut” and even the alto and baritone in F, although he adds that they are “peu utilisé” (not frequently used).

In “The saxophone. A comprehensive course” from 1932 by British saxophonist Ben Davis we find a little chapter on de the C melody saxophone. Davis writes:

*“Before I proceed to the next member of the family, I must pause to consider a saxophone which, although identical in shape and fingering to the tenor, is seldom used by the professional orchestral player – the C Melody. This instrument is a little smaller than the tenor, and really comes between the alto and the “standard” tenor. Its only difference from the “standard” tenor, in fact, is that it is pitched*

*one tone above it. This is done to obviate the necessity of transposing, for the C Melody reads from the same music as the piano or the violin, whereas the “ordinary” tenor has to transpose, unless specially written parts are used. This is the main reason for its existence, although the “standard” tenor has the better tone and is of more contrast to the alto. Although the C Melody is very rarely used in band playing, it is extremely popular for home purposes where proper orchestrations are not used and the player wishes only to “pick out the tune” from the piano part. This instrument is the complete answer to the enquirer who has no desire to play in a band, professional or otherwise, but merely to amuse himself (or herself) and entertain friends in the home circle.”<sup>4</sup>*



Saxophonist Ben Davis

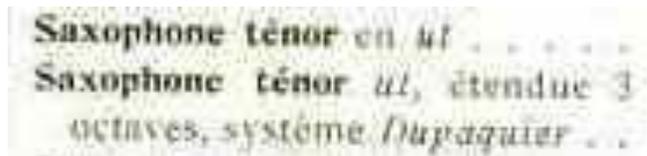
The C tenor saxophone was more often mentioned than really used. Nevertheless, these instruments were produced from about 1855. Also, the first compositions with C and F saxophones date from about

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<sup>4</sup> From: Ben Davis – The saxophone. A comprehensive course. 1932

the same time and some instruments are still extant.

There are original Adolph Sax C-saxophones in several collections in the world and most French firms did produce the instruments during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century C and F saxophones are mentioned in catalogues of the most important German instrument builders. Stays the question: who did play these instruments in those days?



*From a Couesnon catalogue from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*

That there was still interest in C saxophones is shown by an experiment by the French firm Couesnon. A saxophone player from the Garde Républicaine, one of the most famous military bands in France, called Dupaquier, developed a C tenor saxophone with a compass of three octaves.<sup>5</sup> This instrument is mentioned in a catalogue from the year 1906 and even the press took some interest in this new saxophone model.<sup>6</sup> In April 1909 Felix Boisson published two articles in *Comoedia*, a French newspaper. He writes that the “saxophone en

<sup>5</sup> Jay Easton gives a very short demonstration of this saxophone on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOYcyPnZFwI>

<sup>6</sup> Read also: <https://www.brassandwinds.com/blogs/news/giving-life-to-the-triebert-brevete-systeme-dupaquier-c-melody>. Also there were some articles mentioning this saxophone in the Paris Newspapers.

ut” is meant for an important role in a string orchestra and that this instrument is most suited for performing cello solos. A couple of instruments were produced but this line was not very successful and did not have a long life.



*The Couesnon Monopole tenor saxophone in C (model Dupaquier)*

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century most people entertained themselves at home with playing popular songs and melodies and drinking their own brandy. Radio's and records were still expensive and sheet music was cheap and easily obtained. After World War I a period of economic growth began and in this growing market the saxophone rose to immense popularity. Vaudeville groups as the Six Brown Brothers, the Columbia Saxophone Sextet and other saxophone groups travelled the country. There was also the rising star Rudie Wiedoeft whose records sold in tremendous numbers. The sax was a relatively easy to learn instrument, which made a perfect link with

making music at home. The C tenor saxophone was especially well suited for this home entertaining because of its non-transposing character.

The repertoire ranged from light classics by Godard, Tchaikovsky and Dvorak, fantasies and variations on popular classical themes as is *Wagneriana, Grand Fantasie on Richard Wagner's Work* by Hermann Hand over folk-songs as composed by the famous Stephen Foster and vaudeville hits to more swing-like pieces as the new songs by George Gershwin and Cole Porter. A lot of composers also wrote relatively easy to play pieces in the successful style of the Rudy Wiedoeft hits. As said, the C-melody saxophone was very suitable because of the non-transposing character. With all that instruments tuned in C, the complete family could read the music from just one piece of sheet music! Famous saxophone manufacturers advertised with an emphasis on the easy to play-character of the saxophone while an article in Music Maker magazine mentioned the C melody as being most suitable to start your saxophone playing. The Buescher firm knew perfectly how to perform in this market. Slogans as "Music that charms", "Be the Tom Brown of your town", "Learn at home without a teacher", "Never too old to learn" and even that you could make money as a saxophone teacher of your local town in a few weeks, highlighted their advertising.

A lot of the musical magazines in those days provide articles on the C melody saxophone. Already in 1917, an article in Musical Messenger on orchestration mentions:

*"Regarding the C melody saxophone, I do not think it would be any improvement over the alto as a substitute for cello, but as a substitute for bassoon both it and the baritone are acceptable."*

In "Jacob's Band Monthly" in 1921 the question "Which saxophone is easiest to learn without a teacher?" is answered. The author writes:

*"A fair answer to the question cannot be given in a word. Yet taking all the factors into consideration it may be said that a C-melody probably affords the "shortest cut" to a reasonable proficiency for the absolute beginner who is so situated that the help of a good teacher is not available".*



An author in The Musical Messenger follows this statement by writing: *"I know a lady who was an excellent piano player. She got a C melody sax and in just sixteen days was playing a fairly good dance job on it."*



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Already in 1919 W.H. Bryant writes in his "Elementary procedure in orchestration":

*"Some publishers, viewing the saxophone as a mere fad soon to become obsolete, have suggested that the oboe part, be given to the C melody saxophone, from which instrument it differs as much as the piccolo and bassoon differ. Again, second violin parts to orchestra folios have been sold for, and marked C melody saxophone, regardless of the fact that the second violin has A's and G's below the staff. Think of a B flat tenor saxophone playing a second cornet part, for the only reason that they are pitches in the same key. With proper*

*treatment there are no instruments of sweeter tone and blending, and as connecting link between reeds and brass, new effects may be developed by which the orchestra may be brought to resemble a great pipe-organ."*

The emerging prominence of the saxophone occurred for a number of factors. The brilliance of Rudy Wiedoeft with his impressive saxophone performances as well as the new idiom of jazz that started to get famous, all combined with the easy to get gramophones and recordings. Saxophone artists as the Six Brown Brothers and other well-known vaudeville musicians (who often acted as saxophone soloists, quartets or larger ensembles) stimulated sales of both saxophones and millions of recordings. From 1915 to 1920 more C-melody saxophones were sold than B flat tenor saxophones.



This popularity of the saxophone also built a strong starting point for the classical saxophone in the USA. We see that in these years and cultural atmosphere Jascha Gurewicz could make a name as a more serious saxophone player. Cecil Leeson and Larry Teal became

important exponents of the American classical scene and would build careers as promoters of the saxophone as being a part of the classical world.

Many saxophone players began their playing on a C-saxophone. Clyde Doerr, Benny Krueger, Gil Ventura and even Cecil Leeson, America's foremost classical saxophone pioneer, started on this instrument. Leeson went to Dana's Institute with a C-melody saxophone!<sup>7</sup> The blind Brazilian saxophonist Ladarius Teixeira (1895-1964) spent some years in France. On 7 December 1929 he performed a complete classical program in Salle Gaveau in Paris playing alto saxophone and "saxophone tenor en ut". Some of the pieces he performed were:

- *Arcangelo Corelli – Sonata*
- *Hans Sitt - Serenade op. 33 (originally cello)*
- *Franz Drdla – Dialogue op. 27 (originally violin)*
- *Miska Hauser – Hungarian Rhapsody op. 43 (violin)*
- *Friedrich Kuhlau – Divertissement op. 68 (flute)*



<sup>7</sup> Hulsebos: Cecil Leeson, the pioneering of the concert saxophone in America

And also works by Popp, Saint Saëns, Boëlmann and Glazunov.

A very special program! Teixeira is one of those few artists of this time that performed classical music on the C melody saxophone.

But most musicians did not hold to the C instrument. Some wanted a darker sound and changed to a B flat tenor-saxophone, others that liked a more brilliant sound switched to alto saxophone. Gil Ventura, for example, first switched to alto, but later concentrated on the tenor. So, by 1930 there were not many players that took the C tenor saxophone as their favorite.

In Europe the popularity of the C saxophone was not as extensive as in the USA. There were some performers who did hold the instrument as a secondary instrument, but there were no such exponents as Trumbauer and Wiedoeft.



*Billy Max Stiklens on the left*

In France there was the Billy Max Stiklens Orchestra led by the Belgium born Charles van der Stichlen. Stiklen performed on baritone saxophone, but also on C melody saxophone. With his orchestra he

performed in a seven-piece saxophone orchestra. (Jules Viard, a famous saxophone player in France, was a member of his orchestra for a short time.)

Another performer was the Danish classical trained violinist Marno Sorensen. He left the symphonic world to perform in circus and dance bands and wrote in 1924 the first Danish saxophone method.



*Marno Sorensen around 1920*

The popularity of the saxophone lasted until about 1927 until interest and growing popularity of radio and the gramophone diminished the craze-like appeal. Saxophone manufacturers tried to keep up the market by producing odd saxophone types as the F-mezzo soprano saxophone and the straight alto saxophone or by coupling a famous name to a saxophone model line as did Conn with Chu Berry and Holton with their Rudy Wiedoeft-models. Selmer produced a Model 26

with low A for Teixeira, which, according to some sources, had some better results in performing altissimo. Nevertheless, none of these attempts really worked; at the beginning of the 1930ties there was no longer a market for the C-tenor-saxophone.

Firstly (and this problem could already have been seen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) because of the somewhat softer sound, the C tenor saxophone could not match the stronger volume of the E flat/B flat instruments which made their entrance in dance music and big bands, Secondly, listening to radio and gramophone took the place of home music-making. A third reason is that the C-melody was known as an instrument for the amateur. Despite its popularity it could not lose itself from the hit-music of that period and performers did not explore the instrument in other musical styles or as a member of musical ensembles. As a consequence, almost all of the instrument manufacturers removed the C-saxophones as well as all the other experimental models from their production and most instruments disappeared into the cellars. For almost thirty years the C-tenor saxophone did not play any part in the musical world.

Around 1960 the French saxophone builder Leblanc took up the C-melody saxophone again. This instrument, build by the Beaugnier-firm, was not a success. Only some 120 instruments were built and about 20 were sold. There was no market, no music and there were no players. It was not a success and again the C-melody vanished from the musical scene<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> A very nice video on the Beaugnier Vito C Melody saxophone can be found on



Since the 1970ties some incidental and above all individual actions of saxophonists have brought the C-tenor saxophone back on the platform. Two saxophone players must be mentioned: American virtuoso Ted Hegvik, who is a specialist on C melody saxophones and the history around Rudy Wiedoeft and the very musical and flexible Dutch player Leo van Oostrom, who performed a complete recital with Wiedoeft's music during the 1976 World Saxophone Congress in London. Because of their importance in bringing the C melody saxophone to the concert stage again and their immense musicality we will focus on them further in this booklet.

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Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8dOewmS9k4>

In the last fifteen years the saxophone world has shown a new interest in its history. There are more books written on the use and history of the instrument and the world even knows some real saxophone-historians, such as the American Paul Cohen. After the 1980ties, a time that brought us a very contemporary repertory, which made the saxophone often only heard by a very small group of specialists and a select audience, saxophonists now have discovered the "old" music. The competition works by Singelée and Demersseman are frequently recorded as are the works from the Elise Hall collection. And, most importantly players have rediscovered the Roaring Twenties and the music of Rudy Wiedoeft and Frankie Trumbauer. Music that is not that easy to play at all and which, as many saxophone players think, has to be performed on original instruments from those days.

All this has led to a renewed interest in the C-melody saxophone. Jazz players as John Dankworth, Joe Lovano, Scott Robinson, Dave Pietro and others are taking up the C-tenor again and bring out recordings almost entirely played on this saxophone.

Also, in the world of the "classical" saxophone players there is a renewed interest in the C-melody. Scott Granlund and Ted Hegvik performed duets by Händel and Lamb<sup>9</sup> on C-melody. Granlund also performed (on C-melody) Wiedoeft's "Rubenola" with the Foss High school band as an encore after a performance of Mark Watters' baritone concerto, and Scott plays the instrument in the Black Cat Orchestra, which produced numerous CD's. Also, American

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<sup>9</sup> David Lamb's Dances are recorded on the CD Bon Appetit.

saxophonist Jay Easton is frequently performing on C-tenor and Dutch classical performer Hester Cnossen plays a program on this saxophone. Leo van Oostrom inspired several of his students at the Conservatory of The Hague, Netherlands. For example, Dutch saxophonist Ineke Wentink forms the Duo-C with pianist Frans Heldoorn. They perform the novelty music of the twenties on a Conn C-melody with an original mouthpiece. Another example is Ronald Jansen Heijtmajer. He is very interested in the novelties of the Wiedoeft era and even produced a CD with this music. He also regularly performs on a C-melody saxophone. Italian saxophonist Gilberto Monetti presents concert programs exclusively on the C melody saxophone. On his Aquila C melody saxophone, he performs the Golden Era music as well as transcriptions of classical pieces for saxophone.<sup>10</sup>

On the Jazz side a lot of saxophonists are performing on the C melody and through merchandise-sites as eBay there is a lively buying and selling of those instruments. Following this development for some years, one must conclude, that prices for a good instrument are rising. 500 to 800 dollars is quite normal for an instrument in fine condition. For the original C melody saxophone of Rudy Vallee, a price of \$ 10.000,- was asked for!<sup>11</sup>

There even are new models of C melodies built nowadays. In New

Zealand, China and Germany firms are offering modern types of C melody saxophones. These saxophones are made in the style of modern instruments and do not have the narrow boring of the older saxophones.

Nevertheless, it's obvious, that during the years I am following the C melody scene, prices of "traditional" C melody saxophones are rising. Especially some of the Conn models, Buescher True Tone and the King saxophones are quite popular.



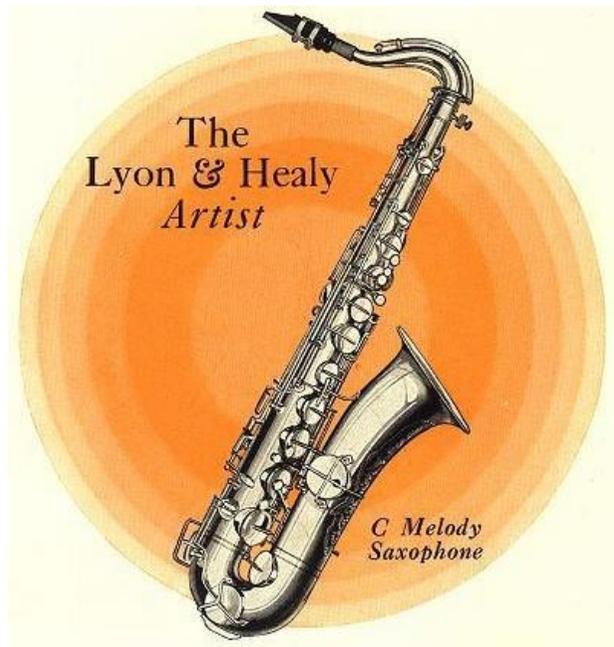
*Aquila C Melody saxophone from New Zealand*

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<sup>10</sup> See further on

<sup>11</sup> December 2013

Maybe, a new life for this saxophone has started?



## ADOLPHE SAX AND THE C, F SAXOPHONES



It is clear, that Adolph Sax talked about his symphonic family and also that he produced F and C saxophones. C saxophones could blend with flute, oboe, bassoon but also viola and cello. The F alto and baritone are linked at the F English horn and the French horns. Both families were mentioned in Kastner's method and in Berlioz' instrumentation book. In a prospect from about 1855 the F and C saxophones are not mentioned, but in 1868 this saxophone group is present. Nowadays there are still some instruments in existence. A C-soprano dates from 1854 and is in the Horniman Museum in London. An alto saxophone in F, also dated 1854, is in a private collection in Canada.<sup>12</sup>

The oldest known C-tenor instrument is probably a "tenor saxophone

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<sup>12</sup> There is a recording of Paul Brodie playing "The Swan" by Saint Saëns on a F-alto-saxophone and Belgian composer Victor Kühn (1863 Liege, Belgium-1913 Cordoba, Argentina) composed a "Concierto pour saxophone alto en Fa" (with orchestra)

en do” that lies in the Interlochen Arts Academy<sup>13</sup>. It bears the number 17401 and dates from 1858. Another “saxophone ténor en ut, breveté” is in the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. With number 20669 it dates from 1860. Two other instruments from 1878 and 1907 (the latter made by Sax' son Alphonse) are in Leningrad, USSR, and Bordeaux, France. Overall one can say, that the production of C and F saxophones was not very large and Sax probably stopped this line because of financial problems, factory re-organizations and lack of time and interest.<sup>14</sup>

There is not much known how Adolph Sax saw the function of his F and C instruments, but a letter he wrote to Ambroise Thomas, director of the Conservatoire, in 1883 shows that he had some clear principles on how to handle the two families and that he even had some modern ideas on doubling on several saxophones.

He wrote:

*“The family of saxophones does not exist exclusively of the 4 types that we know through military music. There are 16 members of the saxophone family and the teacher should stimulate his students to play all of them, at least more than one.”<sup>15</sup>*

One can ask if Adolph Sax did practice this statement during his career as a teacher. During the concours the students always played on one instrument. There is no evidence, that Sax encouraged his pupils to

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.galpinsociety.org/gdsl.html>

<sup>14</sup> You can see a demonstration of a saxophone tenor en Ut build by Adolph sax on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yezhhjmgoX8>

<sup>15</sup> Malou Haine – Adolph Sax

perform also on the F and C instruments. There were separate competitions for soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophone, but only for the Eb and Bb instruments and even there we do not see any doubling on an instrument from the same family. Probably there is a practical explanation: Sax had to bring his students to an adequate level in just two years. There was no time involving an aspect as doubling in the study program!

Nevertheless, Sax made a clear statement concerning the role of the saxophones in F and in C:

*“For me the saxophone in F is the most suited to be adopted in the symphonic orchestra. I had the possibility to demonstrate this instrument to Saint-Saëns and Massenet and they both were charmed by the sound. Massenet included the instrument in one of his Symphonic Pieces and Saint-Saëns composed a solo for his Henri VIII. But both composers have changed this solo for other instruments as the saxophone player was keeping to his E flat instrument and not willingly or capable to perform on the F-saxophone.”*

Sax states that Massenet rewrote the solo for clarinet as Saint Saëns orchestrated the solo in Henry VIII for oboe.

It may be clear, that Adolph Sax was quite fond of his F and C instruments. Nevertheless, these instruments did not really come to the front of the musical world. It seems that Sax himself did not pay as much attention to this saxophone as he did to the Eb/Bb group, probably caused by “business follows market” and looking for chances

to make the most financial progress. Another reason is already mentioned above. After just two years of study most military musicians took their place in the local military bands. There were almost no classical trained musicians who took up the saxophone seriously and when this happened, as clarinet player Henri Wuille (1822-1871), the Dutch cellist Emil Dunkler (1838-1871) and Louis Adolph Mayeur (1837-1894) for example, they preferred the Eb Alto saxophone and not the F alto saxophone.



Ali Ben Sou Alle was not only one of the first saxophone soloists who toured the world, he also was a remarkable artist. His "turcophone" was probably a kind of alto saxophone in F or G which was not further developed and which looks as a straight mezzo-soprano from the 20ties<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Leo van Oostrom – 100+1 saxen

## MUSIC IN THE 19TH CENTURY

**LA SAINT-JULIEN DES MÉNÉTRIERS**

Paroles d'Édouard THIERRY.      Musique de Georges KASTNER.

Allegretto. M. M. ♩ = 100.      OUVERTURE.      a tempo.

Petite Flûte.  
Grande Flûte.  
Hautbois.  
Clarinettes en LA.  
2 Saxophones en UT.  
2 Saxophones Altos en FA.  
Bassons.  
Cors à Cylindres en MI.  
Cors à Cylindres en LA.  
Cornets à pistons en LA.  
Saxhorns Soprano en UT.  
Trompettes à Cylindres en MI.  
Timbales en MI SI LA.  
3 Trombones.  
Saxhorn basse en UT.  
2 Harpes.  
Violons.  
Altos.  
Violoncelles.  
Contre Basses.  
Tambourin ou Tambour de basque.  
Triangle.  
Tambour.  
Cymbales et Grosse Caisse.

Original from  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The first composer who took interest in the saxophone was Georges Kastner. A close friend to Sax but also to Hector Berlioz and many other prominent figures in musical life in Paris at that time. Kastner did not only write the first method for the instrument, he also used it frequently in his works.

Georges Kastner was born in Strasbourg in 1810. He learned to play the organ and his parents saw a religious career for Georges. The boy was more interested in music and wrote some operas before he was 25. Then the town-council sent him to Paris, where he studied among others with Reicha. He wrote a lot of didactical material as methods on singing and a method for tympani. He was a very studied man, who was active in musical life and who was interested in all musical subjects. He wrote articles in French and German, was very much interested in band music and Officer of the Legion of Honor. Georges Kastner died on December 19<sup>th</sup> 1867.

The C-tenor saxophone got a place in a work called *Polka Carnavalesque*. According to Edwin Fridorich<sup>17</sup> Kastner used a quartet of two F alto and two C tenor saxophones in this work, which was composed in 1857. This Polka is part of the “Symphonie humoristique “Les cris de Paris” for soloists, choir, orchestra and military bands and is a piece for the orchestra alone in the third part of this work<sup>18</sup>.

*First page from the score of La Saint Julien des Ménétriers*

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<sup>17</sup> Edwin Fridorich – The saxophone in symphonic and operatic literature.

<sup>18</sup> Hermann Ludwig – Johann Georg Kastner – Sein Werk und sein Leben

Studying the score of this one-movement piece in A major we see that the “saxophones en ut” are placed above the “saxophones en F”. This can only lead to the conclusion, that not the tenor saxophone in C is meant, but the soprano in C. Looking at the harmonies further justifies the conclusion. The work was published in Brussels with Jules Renouard et Co. If this piece was ever performed is not known. A performance was not mentioned in the literature I found about this work.<sup>19</sup>



*Georges Kastner*

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<sup>19</sup> It is worth to mention the interesting part of the Eb alto saxophone in this work.

Some years later, in 1866, Kastner wrote “La Saint-Julien des ménétriers”, a symphonic cantata for large orchestra, soloists and choir. The piece, which contains parts for two C saxophones, two F-alto saxophones and one E flat-alto saxophone was published by Brandus et Dufour, publishers in Paris, in the year it was composed. The F and C saxophones were used in the Overture and the Scenes I and IV and are especially in the overture they are extensively used. It is not quite clear if Kastner does mean 2 soprano saxophones in C or two tenor saxophones in C or even both. In the Overture the C saxophones are placed above the altos which may give the indication, that two soprano saxophones are meant. Also, their frequent playing together with oboes and clarinets gives evidence about the specific instrument intended. Strange is, that in the following chorus the C saxophones are placed beneath the trumpets, which might indicate otherwise, but studying the instrumentation, we finally must conclude, that Kastner means to use two soprano saxophones in C and no tenors. Worth mentioning is the opening Eb alto saxophone solo in the beginning of the 5th act. For those days a highly virtuosic solo!



*Alto saxophone solo in Saint-Julien des Ménétriers (fragment)*

The work was probably well received by Kastner’s colleagues as it was written as an example to Kastner’s treatise on language, but I have no evidence of any performance of this work. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to know, if, and when yes, was this piece performed with C/F saxophones or E flat/B flat?



*Saxophone tenor en ut made by Adolph Sax*

We must conclude, that Kastner was the only composer who extensively used saxophones in his works, but that none of these works contains a part for the tenor saxophone in C. As far as I could research, there also were no other pieces written during the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a part for the C tenor saxophone, nor for the other instruments of this family. Even Kastner did write his most interesting

parts for the Eb alto saxophone. The fact that not one of the composers (Singelée, Demersseman, Savari and others) around Sax did write anything for the C instruments or mentioned a possible performance on a C or F instrument and that there were no compositions present in Sax' own editions may show, that Sax concentrated full on the success of the B flat and E flat saxophones (and not to forget the saxhorns!) and that he lost interest or did not had the time to investigate much energy in his own F and C instruments.



*Performing on a (C melody) saxophone was, as today, also an interesting hobby for ladies*

Just before the end of the century, in 1898, Carl Fischer published a set of Ten Duos by A. Mayeur and although Mayeur did not write for C saxophones, these duets were brought out for "two Eb or Bb or C melody saxophones."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> This publication can be found in library of the University of Iowa.

## MUSIC IN THE 20TH CENTURY

### Compositions in the classical pallet

Before the saxophone craze of the 1920s broke out, there were not a lot of compositions containing the C tenor saxophone. One of the first composers who scored for saxophones in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Richard Strauss. His *Sinfonia Domestica*, which was given its first performance in 1904 in New York calls for a C-soprano saxophone, an F-alto saxophone, an F-baritone saxophone and a C-bass saxophone. A very strange saxophone quartet in which the tenor-saxophone in C is missing! The role of the saxophones is not very significant and it is not sure at all if the European premiere was played with saxophones. Sigurd Rascher once stated, that Strauss had told him he had used the saxophones only on persistence of his publisher. Until today this work is most times played without the saxophones, but it is stated that the American premiere was played with a quartet of saxophones lead by H. Benne Henton. Not mentioned is, if this performance was played with the C and F saxophones or that the parts were transposed to E-flat and B-flat instruments.



Some years later there was an opera by Gustav Charpentier. The opera *Julien*, composed in 1913, has, as mentioned by Edwin Fridorich

in his study<sup>21</sup>, parts for the E flat alto saxophone and a C tenor saxophone. This work was premiered on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1913, shortly after, in February 1914, it was performed for the first time at the Metropolitan Opera and although it was well received, it did not have the same success as its predator *Louise*. Critics acclaimed that the story was vague and that it did not give an opportunity for interesting music.

As Fridorich mentions, the saxophones are used in the 3d and 4<sup>th</sup> Act as a frequent companion to brass and strings. The written compass, G-sharp to B flat', is below the range of the saxophone. It is of course possible that in the score the B-flat tenor saxophone is notated in C. G-sharp is transposed A-sharp, so the lowest tone on the B-flat tenor, but in a mail from Mrs. Claire Heudier from the Librarie "Historique de la

<u>C Melody Saxophone and Piano</u>	
<b>BRDLA, FRANZ</b>	
Souvenir .....	.75
<b>LABATE, B.</b>	
Villanella .....	1.00
<b>LAKE, M. L.</b>	
Among the Roses.....	.60
<b>VERECKEN, BEN (Original Concert Pieces)</b>	
Happy Moments, Fantasia.....	.75
Juanita, Bolero .....	.50
Love's Wandering, Fantasia.....	.60
The Dashing Coquette, Valse.....	.50
Woodland Echoes, Valse.....	.75
<b>WIEDOEFT'S SAXOPHONE SOLOS</b>	
Saxema .....	net 1.00
Saxophobia .....	net 1.00
Valse Erica .....	net 1.50
Waltz Llewellyn .....	net 1.00

<sup>21</sup> Edwin Friedrich – The saxophone. A study of its use in symphonic and operatic literature

ville de Paris” she writes that there is no mentioning of any part for saxophone in this opera!<sup>22 23</sup>

Also, an orchestration found at the website of Ricordi in Munich does not mention the saxophones, nor in the orchestra, nor in the stage music. Based on facts is, that Charpentier did make use of a soprano and alto saxophone in his *Impressions d'Italie* from 1892.

So we may conclude that there was very little music for the C tenor saxophone in the classical palette. Nevertheless, some scores can be found.

In 1921 Carl Fischer published two pieces composed by Bruno Labate (1883-1968), principal oboist of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra from 1920 to 1943. According to some sources his *Tarantella* and *Villanella*, romantic pieces for oboe and piano were brought out as to be played on the C melody saxophone. My copy of the *Tarantella* does not mention this alternative instrumentation and I did not find an original copy of the *Villanella* to verify the alternative instrumentation, but the backside of the publication by Fischer of Gurewich's "*Classical and Jazz saxophone album*" does mention the *Villanella* as solo for C melody saxophone.

One could ask how it was possible that just these two pieces and none

<sup>22</sup> Mail from Claire Heudier to the author - 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012: "Nous avons bien localisé la partition de l'opéra "Julien" dans nos collections , mais elle ne fait pas mention de partie musicale pour le saxophone."

<sup>23</sup> The vocal score I studied, did not give any indication of the orchestral instrumentation

of the many other works by Labate were published to be played on C melody saxophone. Probably popularity (selling success) was the reason.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless this two-movement composition works as a nice recital duo for the C melody sax.

*Villanella:*

The Villanella is composed in an ABACA-Coda “poco piu mosso” form and works as a Rondo. Composed in G major and a 2/4-time, sixteenth-triplets are building the musical material. With a compass from low B to high D it suites perfect the compass of the C melody saxophone.

*Tarantella:*

An “Allegro molto” in 6/8-time and written in G and C major. The compass is two octaves from E tot e" and there are no real technical problems as the desired fast tempo.



*Bruno Labate*

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<sup>24</sup> The archive of copy rights mentions also an “Intermezzo-Polka” by Bruno Labate as published for C Melody Saxophone.

In addition to these two pieces, originally for oboe, I want to mention the transcription of Charles Colin's 1<sup>st</sup> Solo de Concours opus 33 for C melody and piano by Paul Wehage. This piece also was written for the oboe but works well as a 19<sup>th</sup> century concert piece for the C melody. Colin (1832-1881) wrote some of his solos for the conservatory for oboe as well as for saxophone, probably the C soprano. So, these pieces also form some good repertoire works for the C saxophones.<sup>25</sup>

The Londeix' bible<sup>26</sup> gives us one real solo-piece for this instrument. French composer René Brancour (1862-1948) wrote a three-part work “pour saxophone tenor en Ut et piano”. This work was dedicated to saxophonist Raymond Briard, one of the soloists on tenor saxophone of the Garde Républicaine. It is not clear is if Briard asked for the work or if it was an initiative of composer having heard Briard perform on a C tenor saxophone.

According to Marcel Mule, Briard played very well, but in the old style, without vibrato.<sup>27</sup> Already in 1913, he is mentioned as a soloist on tenor saxophone in the Band of the Garde Républicaine. He wrote a Method for saxophone, reviewed some studies by Demerseman and composed a “Pastorale et Tarantella” for alto saxophone and piano. Not only Brancour, but also Francois Combelle, fellow saxophonist, composed a work for Briard, called “Barcarole sur L'Essone”. Briard performed in the

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<sup>25</sup> The Solo de concours no 1 to 8 can be downloaded from [http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Colin,\\_Charles](http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Colin,_Charles)

<sup>26</sup> J.M. Londeix – 150 Years of music for saxophone.

<sup>27</sup> E. Rousseau – Marcel Mule biography

first European performances of the Quator and the Nonet (both in 1924) by Villa Lobos and had an own saxophone line called Lyríst. For some years Briard performed on the Couesnon saxophones and in 1924 he played a Couesnon Serie Monopole C tenor saxophone. His comment on this saxophone: "I am very happy with the tenor saxophone "Melody" Monopole which I have played at Magic-City for three years now. It is easy to play and has a very fine intonation. Completed with the Briard Jazz Mouthpiece it is a very fine instrument."

René Brancour composed his *Suite opus 99* in 1922. The piece has three movements:

1) *Improvisation*

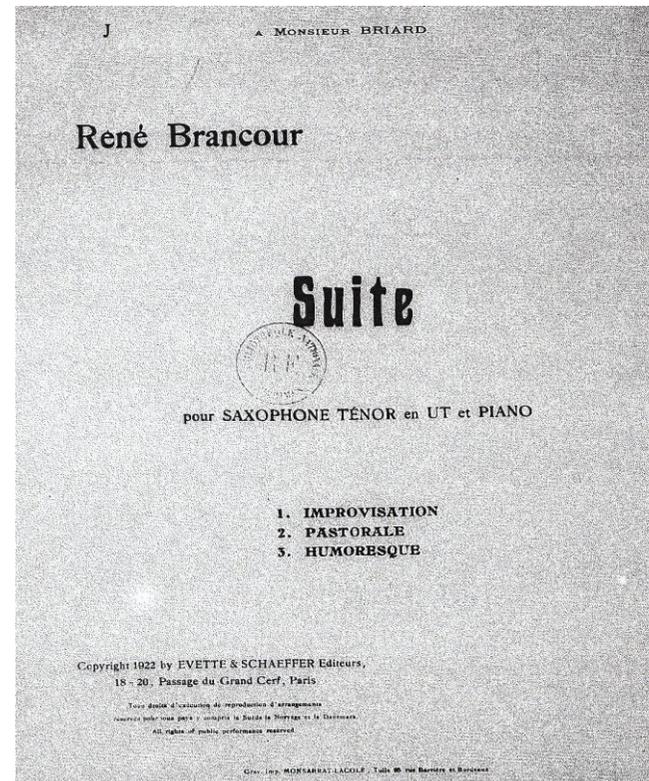
Andante quasi Allegretto (4/4) leads to an Allegro Moderato (6/8) and back to the Andante – F major and d minor – low C to high D

2) *Pastorale*

Andantino moderato (9/8), piu lento, Allegro vivo (2/4), Tempo primo (9/8) – C major, F major, a minor, C major – low C to high C

3) *Humoresque*

Allegretto giocoso (2/4), Tempo primo – g minor, F major (leggiero), g minor - G to high D



Front cover of the 1922 edition of the *Suite* by René Brancour

The *Suite*, which is a charming piece of music with no reminiscences to ragtime music was published by Evette and Schaeffer in 1922 and came recently available in a new edition by Jeanne Incorporated, an American publisher. It even was performed in its original setting, on C melody saxophone, in December 2011 at the Queen's College Saxophone Studio by a student of Paul Cohen, John Kelly and recently (2013) the *Humoresque* was recorded by Christian Debecq on the second volume of the CD-series "A guide to musical instruments".

Brancour (1862-1948) was more a music critical and author on famous composers than a composer himself. He wrote books on composers as Massenet, Méhul and Offenbach and a history of musical instruments, was curator of the Museum of the Paris Conservatory and composed many songs and chamber music as a Sonata for violin, a suite Romantique for clarinet and Suites for English horn, oboe and trombone.

In 1928 composer Franz Schreker (1878-1934) wrote his *Kleine Suite für Kammerorchester*. In the fifth movement, Intermezzo, the C-tenor saxophone is playing a unison melody with the B flat clarinet which is accompanied by a harp. This work, completed in January 1929 was premiered on the 17<sup>th</sup> of that month by the Breslau Radio Orchester under Schreker. Shortly after he recorded the Suite with the Berliner Philharmonic. This composition is quiet frequently played until recent times. There even exist a few recordings.



An important recording can be heard on a CD-Collection that is brought out by the Schreker-Foundation. It contains a performance of

this work under the baton of the composer from about 1931. This one could perhaps have been recorded with a C-saxophone instead of the nowadays used B flat tenor-saxophone.

Another historical recording dates from 1928. Hans Georg Ratjen conducts the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra.<sup>28</sup> I am not sure but believe that this is a performance with Bb tenor saxophone.

Franz Schreker's *Kleine Suite* (Little Suite) is composed for the Breslauer Rundfunk and consists of six movements. In the orchestration an alto saxophone is mentioned. Nevertheless, the fifth movement calls for a "Tenor Saxophon in C". This Intermezzo is 43 measures long and has a tempo quarter equals 58. After three measures introduction by the harp the saxophone plays for seven measures in unison with the B flat clarinet with an accompaniment of the harp. A second entrance in measure 20 goes along with bassoon and horns. This leads to a unison melody with the cello, which is taken over by the horns and leads to the climax of this movement. In measure 38 and 39 the sax takes the upper line in chords with the two trombones. The saxophone part goes from low C-sharp to high C and is well playable by a B flat tenor saxophone, but cannot be replaced by the alto saxophone, which has an important part in movement 1, 4 and 6.

Paul Hindemith's Trio opus 47, called the Heckelphone-Trio, was composed in 1928 (the same year as Schreker's Suite). This piece has an alternative part for tenor saxophone in C or B flat. The story is told that Hindemith wrote this piece after visiting the shop of Heckel, where

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS0QmJquq8>

he was introduced to this instrument.<sup>29</sup> The substitute role for the saxophone could have been only for editing reasons as it was not so that

- 1) this piece was not published until the 1950ties and
- 2) Hindemith did mention the heckelphone as a substitute for the tenor saxophone part in his opera Cardillac (1926), but he added "the effect, as intended by the composer, will not be attained as a result thereof", thus preferring the saxophone.<sup>30</sup>



*Paul Hindemith about 1923*

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<sup>29</sup> <https://bretpimentel.com/paul-hindemith-and-the-trio-op-47-steps-toward-a-mature-style/>

<sup>30</sup> Dr. Paul Cohen was told, that Hindemith wrote the piece for both heckelphone and saxophone, as there were so few heckelphones made that the work might never be played.

Hindemith's Trio is built on two movements. The first one, called "Solo, Arioso, Duett" can be divided in three sections. Solo is for the piano only, Arioso is just played by the saxophone (scored for C tenor saxophone) and the piano and in the Duett the viola joins the duo from the Arioso.

The second movement is called "Potpourri" and is written for the trio throughout. It is divided into four sections:

- Schnelle Halbe
- Lebhaft. Ganze Takte – the saxophone is ordered "hervortreten", which means "come out".
- Schnelle Halbe
- Prestissimo



The Hindemith work normally is played with a B flat tenor saxophone, but at least one performance with a C tenor saxophone was found. On the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2002 David Kweksilber on C tenor sax, Gijs Kramer on alto and Paolo Giacometti performed the work in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. The newspaper De Volkskrant wrote:

*“The C melody saxophone and the viola do form a remarkable equal duo in the stormy but well-constructed Trio by Paul Hindemith”*

*(Frits van der Waa)*

David Kweksilber used a Conn C Melody (serial M179214) with a red hard rubber/nickel Henton Melody mouthpiece no1 with a Beau Ideal reed nr. 2.<sup>31</sup>

Also, Ted Hegvik mentioned he once did perform the Trio on C tenor saxophone, but exact dates were not known anymore.

March 1937; Henry Cowell (1897-1965) completed his song *Chrysanthemums*. It is written on a poem by Dora Hagemeyer for soprano or tenor voice with small ensemble and bears the number HC 526. The ensemble asks for three violins, a cello, a piano and two saxophones specified as a C Melody saxophone and an Eb alto saxophone. In the same month the piece is sent to Dene Denny to be performed during a New Music Festival in Carmel-by-the-sea, a little town on the Californian coast. If the song was performed in that year is not clear.

In 2004 the Canadian premiere is given by an ensemble conducted by saxophonist Jeremy Brown. The sax parts were performed by Mark Michalak on C Melody and Brian Vance on alto saxophone<sup>32</sup>. In 2016 Ulrich Krieger recorded this composition a CD with the work of Percy Grainger and Henry Cowell. Krieger performs the C Melody-part on a

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<sup>31</sup> Mail from David Kweksilber March 7, 2018

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftFLKpQTug0>

Buescher True Tone C melody and an older Buescher tenor saxophone mouthpiece.<sup>33</sup> and Steven Feller the alto saxophone.

*Chrysanthemums* is a curious piece. Three violins that perform in a very high register, a violoncello which performs in dialogue with the voice and two saxophones which replace the violas playing a kind of bourdon-figure. The C melody, which sounds lower than the alto saxophone is placed above the alto saxophone and both saxophones mainly are playing in the low register, the C melody even goes down to low A (?!).<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless this is an interesting, exciting and unique work in the repertoire of the C Melody saxophone.

Dutch composer Matthijs Vermeulen (1888-1967) wrote seven symphonies. It took a long time before they were performed, because of their complexity. Vermeulen regularly used saxophones in these symphonies and it were always the F and C instruments.

In the fifth symphony, composed during the war years 1941-1945 and which has the title “Les lendemains chantants” he writes for a sopranino saxophone in F, a soprano saxophone in C and a tenor saxophone in C (“en ut”). At the beginning of the second movement the tenor saxophone has a wonderful, melancholic solo, which is perhaps one of the finest orchestral parts for the saxophone at all.

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<sup>33</sup> Mail Ulrich Krieger April 2018

<sup>34</sup> One could assume, that Cowell has thought of a soprano saxophone in C, which sometimes was called “C melody soprano saxophone”.

Deuxième Partie

Composition de l'Orchestre:

2 Petites Flûtes	
2 Grandes Flûtes	
3 Hautbois (dont le 3 <sup>me</sup> prend Cor Anglais)	
1 Petite Clarinette en mi b	
3 Clarinettes en ut	
1 Clarinette basse en si b	
1 Clarinette contrebasse en si b	
1 Saxophone Soprano en fa	4 Cors en fa
1 Saxophone Soprano en ut	2 Petites Trompettes en re
1 Saxophone Ténor en ut	2 Trompettes en ut
3 Bassons	3 Trombones
1 Contrebasson	1 Tuba
	2 Harpes
	Quintette à Cordes

Adagio  
♩ = 96 (♩ = 48)  
Tout dans un ton chaud  
et très expressif

Beginning of the second movement of Vermeulen's 5<sup>th</sup> symphony <sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Courtesy by Mrs. O. Vermeulen – mail from April 2018

The work was premiered on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 1949 by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam conducted by Edouard van Beinum and I am sure that it was not with the original intended saxophones but with the normal Eb/Bb instruments. The editor, Donemus, mentions that these parts are added.

As far as I could investigate, there was no other music written for the C-tenor saxophone from this point until today, with perhaps just one exception that could be of interest. According to the earlier mentioned Edwin Friedrich, Arthur Honegger's *Serenade pour Angélique*, composed in 1945, asks for a C-tenor saxophone<sup>36</sup>. A study of the score shows that Friedrich is wrong here. The complete score is written non-transposed and the saxophone part is meant for an alto saxophone or English horn.

Some new works containing C-tenor saxophone date from our days. In the Music and Papers-collection from composer Paul Martin Zonn (1938-2000) the original score of his *Three American Dances* was found. This three-movement piece was written in 1998 for Oboe, C Melody saxophone, Mandolin, guitar, viola and accordion. The three movements are "Lowdown Dirty Blues", "Too slow for Arthur Murray" and "Another Undanceable Waltz". The above-mentioned collection contains also a sound recording of this work. Studying the score of this piece shows that there is a part for "clar/sax" which is notated in C. It is

<sup>36</sup> Edwin Friedrich - ibid

well playable on a C tenor, but also on clarinet and Zonn does not explicitly mention the part as being written for a C melody saxophone. It is not known if one of the performances of this work was played with a C melody saxophone.

Also, the young composer Matthias Kadar, who studied in France (with Christian Lauba) and in the Netherlands (with Theo Loevendie), wrote in 2003 his *Fantome- Pensee a vous- Fantome for C- melody saxophone and piano* for Hester Cnossen and pianist van Frans van Ruth who also played the first performance in the Uilenburger Synagoge in Amsterdam on May 3thd, 2003. It is a lyrical piece in a contemporary language. There are three sections where sections I and III are the same with the difference that III has to be played “un petit peu plus lentement que I”. This work asks for the complete range of the saxophone with even an altissimo G. It is a real contemporary work for the C tenor saxophone!

Kadar did compose some other pieces with C melody. *Luzeleafde* was composed in 2001 for recorded voice, C melody and piano and *Cyrano* on words by Edmond Rostand for two voices, c-melody, string trio and piano dates also from 2001. Both pieces were premiered in 2001 with Hester Cnossen as saxophonist.

Then there exists a piece called *A Godaxa des Chouquenias*. It is set for C melody saxophone and harp and is composed by composer Jose Perez, originally from Uruguay. The piece was composed for the final

saxophone examinations of the soloist. The performance by Hanneke Coolen-Colsters, for whom this piece has been written, on a Conn straight neck C melody sax with a Buescher mouthpiece and alto saxophone reeds<sup>37</sup> and Valerie Rijckmans on harp can be seen and listened to on “You Tube”<sup>38</sup> This saxophone player performs regular on C melody in her concerts but sticks then to the Wiedoeft repertory.



Hanneke Coolen-Colsters (foto: Jostijn Ligtoet)

*A Godaxa des Chouquenias* is an eight-minute-long fantasy-piece for C melody and harp. The composition can be divided in three parts. There is a slow introduction, a middle Allegro Muiñeira in 6/8 time and, after a break by a Cadenza for the saxophone, a final movement in changing 5/8 time with some 2/8 time. The work changes from C major to c minor with a strong accent on the minor scale. Lowest tone is a low C

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<sup>37</sup> Facebook-chat with Hanneke Coolen Coolstra, March 2018

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6CFQNHur0g>

and with the exception of an incidental high E and high F sharp it goes up to high D.<sup>39</sup> Not very difficult, but an interesting concert-piece for the instrument.

Remarkable is the work of “Der Club der Visionäre”. This in Berlin, Germany, settled group of musician’s works under the direction of composer Rolf Sudmann. Sudmann composes new music for old movie pictures. This group performed new music for the famous German picture “Metropolis” of 1927. Sudmann wrote a score that asks for mixed Choir, Trautonium, two C-melody saxophones (!) and percussion. The first performance of this music took place in 2005 at the Film and Music festival in Bielefeld, Germany. Jazz musician Ruth Schepers played C-melody and C-Soprano saxophone and Dirk Steglich performed on C-melody and percussion. Schepers also played the mentioned instruments in Sudmann’s music at “The man with the camera” an experimental film from 1929 by Dziga Vertov.<sup>40</sup>

Special also is a composition by English composer Ian Steward for C melody saxophone and organ. *Slant Rhymes* is in three sections: Moderato (quarter = 116) – Allegretto (quarter = 124) – moderato and is of a moderate difficulty. The saxophone goes from low C to high E and is constantly in dialogue with the organ. Although there are not that many technical problems, there could be some intonation

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<sup>39</sup> I got the saxophone part from Hanneke Coolen Colsters. The composer did not give any reaction on several attempts to reach him.

<sup>40</sup> To my regrets, I did not find a recording of this music.

difficulties because of the frequent unison between saxophone and right hand in the organ part.

The piece was premiered on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2011 by British saxophone player Kyle Horch on a Bb tenor saxophone and organist Peter Yarde Martin but has not yet been performed on a C tenor saxophone.

On the question how the composer came to write for the C tenor saxophone, he answers:

*“I love most instruments; however, I am aware of the problem surrounding the less common ones. Players do not specialize in rare instruments because there are few works written for them, and classical composers don’t compose for these instruments because there are so few players – a vicious circle. There are many instruments I should like to see more frequently, oboe d’amore, flauto d’amore, heckelphone, baritone violin, mandola, ukulele, banjo, electric guitar, melodica and many others.*

*Because I think music should be played, I only write for instruments that players I know own and play. Kyle Horch told me that he had bought a C melody saxophone, so I suggested that it would be a good idea if he played it in my new work = for saxophone and organ – that I was writing for an upcoming concert we were both involved in.”<sup>41</sup>*

Although Ted Hegvik did remarkable work to bring new life to the C melody, there was just one new work composed for him. Harrison Roper composed *El caliente del sol*, a piece for C melody saxophone with brass quartet (2 trumpets, horn and trombone) and percussion (maracas, bongos). The piece is composed in f minor which later on switches to F major and the saxophone part shows quite some

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<sup>41</sup> Mail from Ian Steward, January 23 2012

technical challenges and goes frequently up to high F. Ted arranged the piece for small band and performed it several times.

Margriet Ehlen, Dutch composer, wrote as a part of a large composition project in which I was involved a piece for counter-tenor (altus) and saxophone called *The iron lady of Maastricht*. Studying the score, I proposed the composer to perform the saxophone part on C tenor saxophone. We listened the differences between alto, tenor and C melody saxophones and I demonstrated the possibilities of the C melody with different mouthpieces. The combination worked extremely well. The composer calls this three-minute mini-opera a parody on the Händel counter-tenor aria's and it really is an enjoyable piece for both performers. I played this piece with a Buescher True Tone C tenor sax with an old Dolnet tenor saxophone mouthpiece.



Engraving of a Horace C melody saxophone

In 2012 American composer Craig Mason from Wisconsin composed a five minutes long *Introduction and Waltz* for C melody (or tenor) saxophone and piano. Well suited for the C melody it gives a good effect when performed and that makes this piece a wonderful concert piece for the C melody saxophone.

A quite introduction opens with chords build on fifths and strong dynamics do give an exciting and powerful entrance. The title Waltz is misleading then this movement has almost no three-quarter measures. It more gives the idea of a Balkan dance with its Presto performed seven-eighths measure. The saxophone part goes from low B to a thrill on high E.

One can mention some other, incidental performances on C melody, which belong to this chapter. French saxophonist Serge Bertocchi did a performance of John Thompson's originally for basset horn and narration composed *Music with mistakes* on C melody during a concert in 2013 in the conservatory of Luxemburg. The piece was first performed in Reims and Bertocchi plays on a Horace C melody with a Babbitt mouthpiece. The piece can be listened on Bertocchi's website.<sup>42</sup>

A conclusion is easy to make: the collection of original compositions in a classical setting for C melody saxophone is very small and it does not seem that there will be a change in the coming years.<sup>43</sup> Reasons

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<sup>42</sup> [http://saxophonemes.fr/eng.saxophonemes.fr/C-melody\\_tenor.html](http://saxophonemes.fr/eng.saxophonemes.fr/C-melody_tenor.html)

<sup>43</sup> I wrote three works for the c melody: an Aria, that was originally composed for Bb

for this are clear: in the twenties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as the C melody saxophone was popular, there was a very small amount of classical compositions for all the saxophones. As the classical world got some interest in the saxophone, about half way the 1930ties by the works of Cecil Leeson, Marcel Mule and Sigurd Rascher, the C tenor saxophone had disappeared from the scene and only was used at the sideline of the jazz.



*Rudy Vallee was an admirer of Rudy Wiedoeft.  
Here a photograph with C Melody saxophone*

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tenor saxophone and piano, an Impromptu with piano accompaniment, which I dedicated to Ted Hegvik and a Trio for C melody saxophone, tenor saxophone and cello (or baritone saxophone). These pieces are available on [www.tonverhiel.nl](http://www.tonverhiel.nl)

### Compositions from the ragtime era

In the classical scene very few compositions that make use of the C instruments were found in the period 1900 until today. So now is the time to make a jump to the lighter music, then special attention must be made to the music of Rudy Wiedoeft and some of his followers. Comparing his saxophone pieces to the music that was written for saxophone before, there is an immense evolution in the use of the possibilities of the saxophone. Not only some show-effects are frequently featured, also the complete range of the saxophone is used and technically these pieces are much more brilliant than most pieces that were previously performed in the United States.



*Wiedoeft made a lot of recordings with his own solos*

A lot of the compositions by Rudy Wiedoeft are nowadays published for alto saxophone. Nevertheless, some of his pieces are still available in their original form, as a work for C melody saxophone<sup>44</sup>.

Wiedoeft did not exclusively perform on the C saxophone. He also

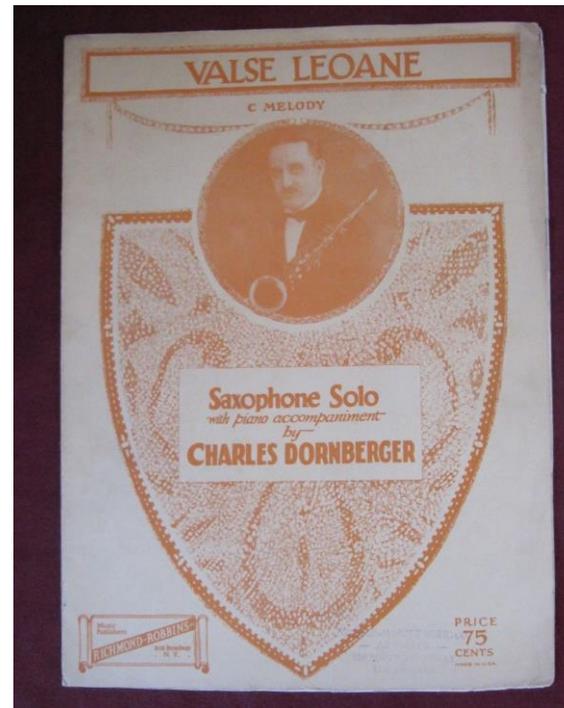
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<sup>44</sup> You can look for this originals on [www.freehandmusic.com](http://www.freehandmusic.com)

played a great part of his compositions on alto saxophone, but according to some sources his most important instrument was his (Selmer marked) Buescher True Tone C Melody with an alto saxophone mouthpiece, which gave his sound the typical Wiedoeft character. The use of the alto mouthpiece allowed him to develop his exceptional technique on double and triple staccato, a technique he frequently used in his works. An example of this technique can be found in *Saxophobia* (double staccato) and *Sax-O-Trix* (triple staccato). Other frequent techniques Wiedoeft used were slap tongue, the “laugh-effect” and glissandi. A song as the famous *Sax-O-Phun* is based on these effects. Also, many of Wiedoeft compositions, which are waltzes and ragtime, are built on a ragtime-like rhythm. Exception is perhaps *Dans L’Orient* which has a very strong melodic character. A final remark can be made in concern of the scope of Wiedoeft’s compositions. As was already stated, almost all of these pieces do use the complete range of the saxophone and do go up to high F. Comparing with earlier music we can see, that the works by Singelée more often have a high E as a limit and that, except perhaps the Gilson Concerto’s and the Florent Schmitt *Légende*, most works for Elise Hall do have a limited range. Although also performing on the alto saxophone, Wiedoeft scored his greatest hits with the pieces played on the C Melody Sax. Starting with *Valse Erica*, which was one of the first hits about 1918, he continued to be one of the most popular artists until 1930. In that time, he produced some top songs as *Saxophobia*, *Sax-O-Fun*, *Sax-O-Doodle* and of

course his *Valse Vanité*, which was played all over the world by saxophonists as Freddy Gardner from Great-Britain, who played a very romantic interpretation and the Austrian virtuoso Rudolph Jettel (1903-1981), first clarinet player of the Vienna Symphonic Orchestra, who had an even faster tonguing than Wiedoeft and who also wrote a saxophone school, several studies and concert pieces in different styles.

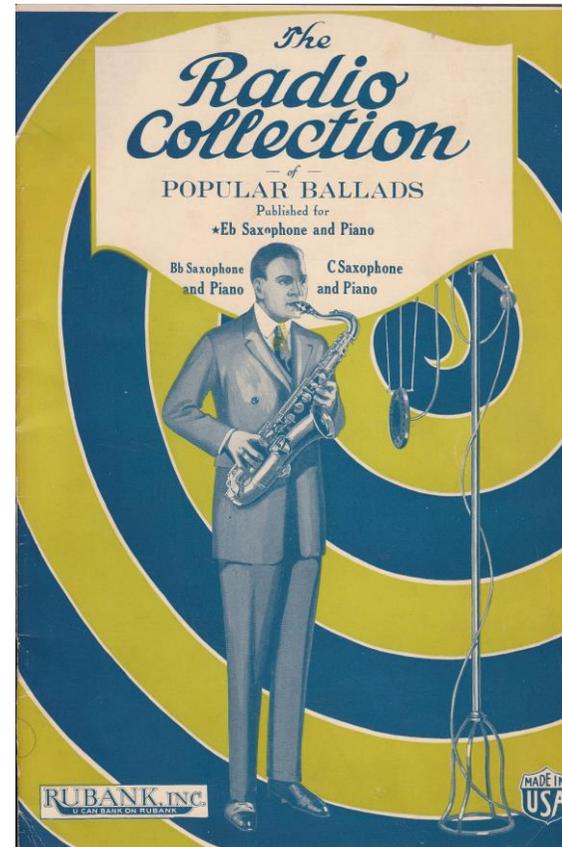
#### Following Wiedoeft’s success



A lot of composers and saxophonists tried to lift upon the Wiedoeft success.

During the 1920ties a lot of popular music was also edited for C-melody saxophone. Not only the Wiedoeft compositions were published for E flat alto saxophone as for C-melody as well, also Clyde Doerr's hits as *Saxanola*, *Valse Hilda* and *Saxophone Classique* were available for C-melody saxophone. Both Doerr and Merle Johnston, another famous performer and teacher in those days, wrote a *Valse elegante* for the saxophone, which was playable by an alto, a tenor as well as a C Melody Saxophone. Another interesting Waltz titled *Claire de Lune* was composed by Quinto Maganini and several ragtime's, for example *Flapperette* by Jesse Greer were nice solo pieces for the instrument, that even did require some advanced technique mostly because of the scales they were written in. For example, *Claire de Lune* by Maganini was written in A flat and D flat major and *Flapperette* contains a passage in E flat major!

The Fox Company published collections of popular songs and folksongs for all the popular saxophone types: E flat alto, B flat tenor and C-melody. The editor Leo Feist in New York brought out his "NU-Style" Multi-part Edition. Popular songs that could be played as solo or as duet. All of these editions contained a part for the C-melody saxophone. Several dance band arrangements also took the C saxophone in their instrumentation and the Buescher Company stated in an advertisement that "hundreds of small dance orchestras have been formed, composed of one C melody saxophone, piano and drums."



The Wiedoeft-craze led to all kind of new compositions in that style. Most of them were also composed for C melody saxophone. Although Jascha Gurewicz was perhaps a more "serious" saxophonist than Wiedoeft, he nevertheless tried to have some success with his "jazz encore's *Slaptonius*, *Maqueda* and *Laughing Gas*. Also, some of his more classical compositions as the *Fantasy in f minor* were published for C melody sax.

Publisher and saxophone shop Finner & Urbanek in Chicago published "Something to play that is "different". Titles were Jack Craig's *Slip-n Sax* and *Slap-n Sax* and E.C. Barroll's *Laf 'n Sax* and *Tong'n Sax*. The latter was described as being "the only triple-tongue saxophone solo in print". These songs were bound together in a nice album in 192?



Even today some of this publications for C melody are available. It is possible to buy some Smith and Holmes' pieces as *Theme and variations on Silver threads among the gold* and *Life's lighter hours*, a Gavotte-Caprice are available as C melody solo with piano and as C melody duet with piano accompaniment.

In the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Dutch composer Vincent van den Bijlaard wrote his *Potje* and *Cinderella* in the style of the 1920ties. He

performed them with saxophone player Sander Germanus.

Saxophonist and composer Paul Wehage composed two pieces as a preparation on his three-act opera on the life of Rudy Wiedoeft which will be named *Light unto Ashes* and will be a "musical allegory" on the life of Wiedoeft. The *Valse-Sophie*, a work in the style of the typical Operetta-style Waltz as was composed by Franz Lehar and other composers is dedicated to Madame Sophie Tournemeule. The piece frequently goes up to high F.<sup>45</sup>

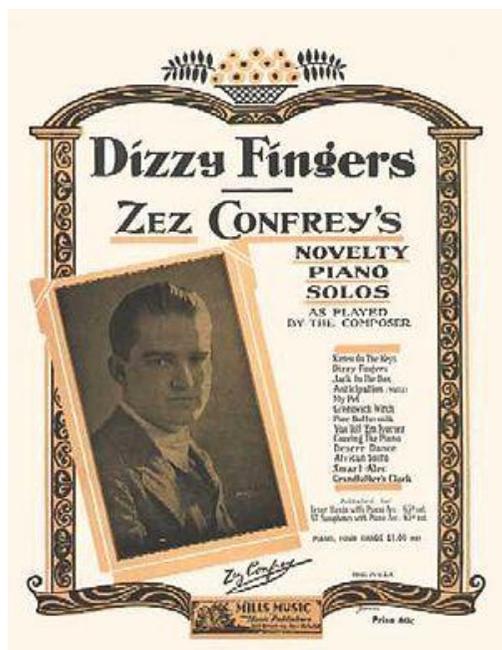


A nice picture of father and daughter (?) with their C melody saxophones

Wehage also composed *Ti-bo Rag*, a piece in the "Wiedoeft-era Tin-Pan Alley ragtime work". It requires an up-tempo (half note = 120) and should have "a great deal of energy"<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Introduction in the score of the *Sophie-Waltz*

<sup>46</sup> from score of the *Ti-bo Rag*, [www.classicalmusicnow.com](http://www.classicalmusicnow.com).

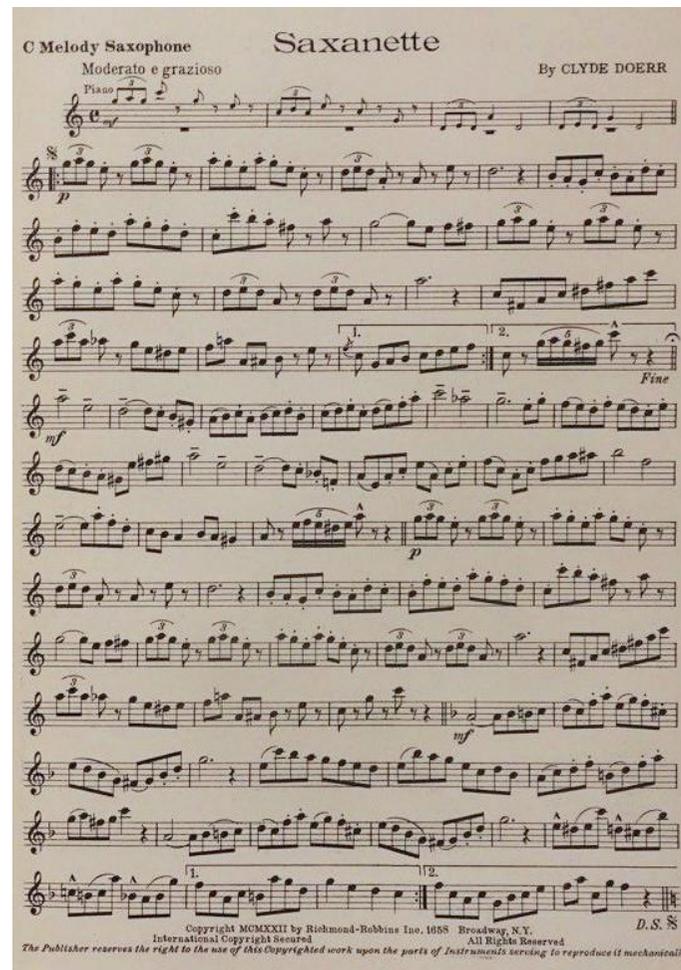


Many of Zez Confrey's pieces were also available for (C Melody) saxophone

In the period 1920 to 1930 a lot of publishers and composers wanted to deal in the success of the popularity of the saxophone. The C melody was not treated different from the alto saxophone and so many compositions were suited for alto saxophone and C melody saxophone as well. A little list:

- Zez Confrey: Kitten on the Keys, My Pet, Coaxing the piano, Poor Buttermilk and other pieces.
- Donald E. Clark: Valse Vanity, Pep, Fantaisie Cécile
- Clyde Doerr: Valse Hilda, Saxanola, Ma Favourite, Saxophone Classique, Saxanette and others

- Quinto Maganini: Stars (Valse caprice), Clair de Lune
- Jascha Gurewicz: Slaptonius, Heart-Breaking
- Henri Klickmann: Valse Romantique
- Don Parker: Saxomania, Crazy kapers
- Ben Vereecken: Juanita,



Most of these pieces were also edited for the other saxophones (alto and/or Bb tenor). The compositions by Sousa saxophonist Ben Vereecken are an exception. First, this are pieces really written for the C melody. Comparing the advertisements, we can see that none of the titles written for the C melody are mentioned in his composition list for the alto saxophone. Another fact can be found in the copyrights archives. Most works by Vereecken are edited for violin or C melody saxophone, whereas the greatest amount of songs is edited for several saxophones.

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C MELODY SAXOPHONE & PIANO  
By BEN. VEREECKEN

These solos will be welcomed by every "Real Saxophonist," as they are especially composed for this particular instrument by the Best Soloist and Composer for the Saxophone.

Love's Wandering (Fantasia) .....	\$0.60
Woodland Echoes (Valse) .....	.75
Juanita (Bolero) .....	.50
Happy Moments (Fantasia) .....	.75
The Dashing Coquette (Valse Caprice) .....	.50
Autumn Life (Fantasia) .....	.60

DISCOUNT 50%

From: *Jacob's Orchestra monthly 1920 vol 11*

Special is the *The Banjo-Saxo Folio* by Lloyd Loar, published in 1924. This folio contains six songs that are set for alto saxophone, C melody saxophone and tenor banjo.<sup>47</sup>

In 1959 Ascherberg Hopwood & Crew in London brought out their "Double Stave Series" for solo instrument and piano. The first staff was for instruments in C (also mentioning the C Melody Saxophone), the

<sup>47</sup> Information and copy of the music from Paul Cohen (mail March/April 2018)

other staff was for Bb instruments. The arrangements were made by Guy Desslyn, one of the nicknames of organist and conductor Frederick James Baycock. This series contained only transcriptions of famous classical compositions. In it were among others: *Intermezzo* from Mascagni, an *Alleluia* by Mozart, *Who is Sylvia* by Franz Peter Schubert and *Bist du bei mir* and *My heart ever faithful* by Johann Sebastian Bach. All classical pieces!

MY HEART EVER FAITHFUL  
Bach

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FAMOUS MELODIES FOR SOLO INSTRUMENTS  
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For CLARINET, CORNET,  
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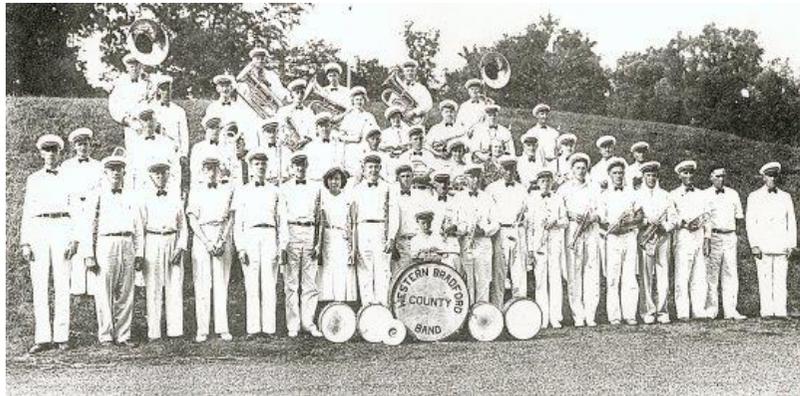
**ASCHERBERG HOPWOOD & CREW LTD.**  
16, Mortimer Street, London W.1

Made in England

## THE C MELODY SAXOPHONE IN ENSEMBLES

### *Bands and orchestras*

Strange enough the C-melody did not find its way into modern band orchestrations. Starting students did use the C sax as easy to learn in the beginning but most times switched to the E flat and B flat instruments. Also, in saxophone ensembles the C-melody did not find a place. Nevertheless, several band and orchestra-arrangements contained parts for C saxophones. As an example, Jacob' Loose Leaf Collection of Standard Marches published by Walter Jacobs, Boston contained parts for C Melody Saxophone.

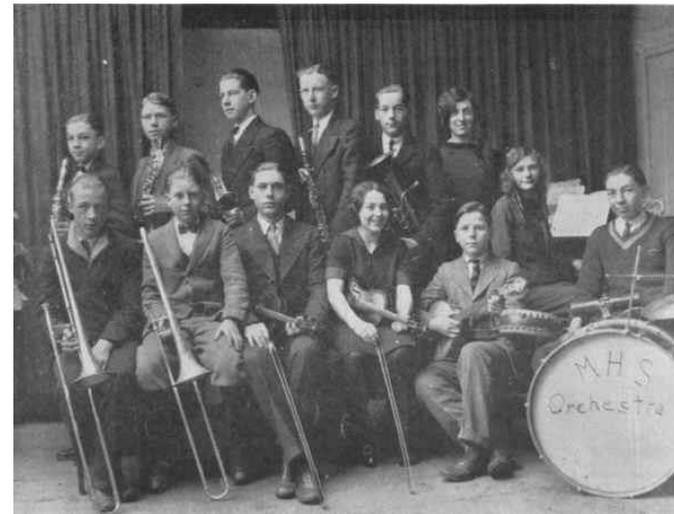


*The Western Bradford County Band had alto, tenor and baritone saxophones as well as two C melody saxes and one soprano saxophone.*

It also was not unusual to have C melody saxophones in the junior bands. The Bradford County band contained at least two C

saxophones from 1937(!) on. Also, a photograph of the Mercer band shows some boys with a C melody saxophone. It may be clear, that a lot of bands had C saxophones in their orchestra, but they could not hold their place in times to come.

More unusual is the instrument combination of the Mercer High school Symphonic Orchestra, which also contains a C melody saxophone and a banjo!



*The Mercer High school Symphony Orchestra in 1926. The C melody player is William Osborne*

Also, Barnhouse publishers brought out compositions and transcriptions including the C Melody saxophone. In the series The Melodie Orchestra Folio the work of Karl King contained the C melody sometimes as a separate voice and sometimes doubling the oboe part. The saxophone sounding an octave lower was not considered a problem.

## *Chamber music*

What was the place of the C melody saxophone in chamber music?

As mentioned before, it does exist several trios for two C melody saxophones and piano, but as a member of the saxophone-ensemble the C tenor is not often found. Nevertheless, there exist some photographs and ads, where the C tenor saxophone is part of the saxophone quartet. We must conclude, that the C Melody was involved in playing in saxophone ensembles.

A Wurlitzer catalogue does not mention the C-melody as part of a quartet, sextet or octet. This in contrary to a Lyon and Healy catalogue which says: "A saxophone sextet usually has:

*2 E flat Altos, 1 C Melody, 1 B flat Tenor, 1 E flat Baritone, 1 B flat Bass*"



*The "Six Brown Brothers" with a C melody saxophone on the left*

Also, the famous "Six Brown brothers" performed their sextet music with a role for the C melody sax. The same Lyon and Healy catalogue mentions: "A saxophone octet usually has:

*1 B flat Soprano, 2 E flat Altos, 1 C Melody, 1 B flat Tenor, 2 E flat Baritones, 1 B flat Bass*"

Clear is that in both ensembles the C melody takes the part of the first tenor saxophone, which can give a nice alternate tone-color to the ensemble.



*This quartet clearly shows an ensemble with a C melody saxophone as a replace for the tenor saxophone.*

Buescher states in its booklet "The story of the saxophone" from 1923:

### **The Church Choir**

*The rich resonance of the saxophone, its softness, its wonderful human voice quality, its volume, make it ideal for church music. With a C Melody Buescher saxophone to lead congregational singing, it is wonderful to what an extent the interest in this singing can be developed."*

And further on in the same ad:

*"An excellent combination for church or choir work without transposition is as follows: C Soprano for Soprano parts, C melody for Alto parts, Alto for Tenor parts, baritone for Bass parts. TRY THIS! We will lend you every assistance possible."*



Also, there are some Buescher ads which show the C-melody as part of the ensemble and a few old photographs show the C-tenor saxophone as member of a saxophone quartet. This means that arrangements for combinations containing a C tenor saxophone must have been available. It surely would be an interesting experiment to form a quartet with E flat alto, C-tenor, B flat tenor and E flat baritone saxophones as this nice photo shows.

For the 1920s we have to mention Guy Earl Holmes. He was very active in composing and arranging for saxophone ensembles from duets to 12 saxophones with piano accompaniment. For the piano accompaniment it said that it "should always be used with solo, duet or trio, but is not necessary with any of the larger combinations." For large ensembles the instrumentation is:

- Solo B flat soprano or tenor (Lead)
- Solo E flat alto (Lead)
- Solo C Melody (Lead)
- 1<sup>st</sup> E flat Alto
- 1<sup>st</sup> C melody (substitute for 1<sup>st</sup> Alto)
- 1<sup>st</sup> B flat Tenor
- 2<sup>nd</sup> C Melody (substitute for 1<sup>st</sup> B flat Tenor)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> B flat tenor
- 3<sup>rd</sup> C Melody (substitute for 2<sup>nd</sup> B flat Tenor)
- 1<sup>st</sup> E flat baritone
- B flat Bas
- 2<sup>nd</sup> E flat Baritone (Bass Part)
- Piano accompaniment

From this instrumentation it is possible to form ensembles from solo, duet or trio with piano to sextet, octet and large ensemble of a minimum of 12 saxophones.

In 1981 Dorn Productions published some transcriptions by saxophonist Harley Rex. His transcription of the overture to *Armide* by Jean Baptiste Lully mentions the C melody saxophone as an alternative for the 3th alto saxophone part.

Sax Ensemble  
(Concert Pitch)

Overture to Armide Jean Lully (1692)  
Arr. H. Rex

Slow

In the 1970s Michael D. Nascimben transcribed some of the Wiedoeft solos (*Saxophobia*, *Sax-O-Doodle*, *Valse Erica*, *Saxema* and *Sax-O-Phun*) for a saxophone quartet with soprano, C melody, tenor and baritone saxophones.

As an exception nowadays, some arrangements for quartet or quintet including parts for C melody are published. As an example: “Exclusive Noten” publishes quartet and quintet arrangements in a series called “for friends of C melody saxophones” several popular pieces as “House of the rising sun”, *Silent Night*, *The Little Brown Jug* and more. This series also contains original compositions by German composer Bernd Frank. These are *The Race*, *Salsa Fresca* and *Blues for sax*. In these arrangements the C melody substitutes for the second alto saxophone or for the first tenor saxophone.<sup>48</sup>

Saxophone Quartet, Sonderausgabe C-Melody:

*The Race*

C-Melody Sax (subst. for Alto 2) composed by Bernd Frank

♩ = 300 (or as fast as possible, even eighths)

On a CD called “Kites over Havana” from 2017 and performed by Paquito D’Rivera and the Vitral Saxophone Quartet Dr. Paul Cohen

<sup>48</sup> Music example with courtesy of Bernd Frank

joins the ensemble in a septet for saxophones called *Berceuse* by Alejandro Garcia Caturla (Cuba 1906-1940). In this septet for 2 sopranos, 2 altos, 1 C melody saxophone, 1 tenor saxophone and 1 baritone saxophone he performs his part on a Selmer Paris Modele 22<sup>49</sup> C tenor saxophone from 1924 with a Buescher tenor saxophone mouthpiece.<sup>50</sup>

As, during the 1970s an F-baritone saxophone was found, there shortly was an idea to form a saxophone quartet with the C and F instruments, but this historical interesting event did not, as far as I am informed, ever take place.



*Holding a Buescher C Melody Saxophone*

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<sup>49</sup> Dr. Cohen has several C melodies in his collection, including a very rare Selmer Paris C Melody Modele 26 (c. 1928) with a range to low A, built in the Selmer factory.

<sup>50</sup> Mail Paul Cohen March 27, 2018

## PERFORMERS AND RECORDINGS

With perhaps a lonely, unknown exception, performers of the C-melody can be found in the jazz and popular music. That is not very remarkable, in that this saxophone had its popularity in these musical worlds.

### Early jazz performers

In the early years some known artists were Paul “Stump” Evans, Jack Pettis, Jack Crawford and **James “Slap Rags” White**. The last one played C melody saxophone with the Brown Brothers and was famous because of his slap-tongue, which can be seen in his nickname. White made several recordings with the Brown Brothers Saxophone Sextet and also had a contribution as a composer. Two of his pieces were *My favorite Rag* and the *Pussyfoot March*, which were also recorded by the Brown Brothers.

**Jack Pettis** (born 1891) was self-taught on C melody. From 1922 to 1923 he recorded with the New Orleans Rhythm Kings and from 1923 on with Ben Bernie’s Orchestra. From 1926 he had some of his own bands as Jack Pettis and his Petts. Pettis was a good player with some impressive technique.<sup>51</sup> He was called to be “a thoughtful and agile performer”<sup>52</sup>. After 1940 he left the musical world.

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<sup>51</sup> Several recordings of Jack Pettis and his Petts can be listened on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

<sup>52</sup> John Robert Brown in “Rise and fall of the C melody Saxophone”



*The New Orleans Rhythm Kings with Jack Pettis on saxophone*

**Jack Crawford** was called one of the “few exponents of the C melody saxophone, an instrument usually disdained by professionals”. He was a showman and entertainer and he had given himself the nickname “The Clown Prince of Jazz”, which he really earned through his acting in front of the band. As a musician he played all the types of saxophone and clarinets. His band was quite popular during the 1930s and he traveled from coast to coast. Jack Crawford did have some equality to band leader Paul Whitemann and he capitalized on Whiteman’s successes.

### Two important exponents

### Rudy Wiedoeft and Frank Trumbauer

Rudy Wiedoeft:  
(1893 – 1940)



*Rudy Wiedoeft*

Starting from 1915 many compositions for the C saxophone in a lighter style were composed. One person was almost alone responsible for this new repertoire and the enormous popularity of the C-tenor saxophone. This man was Rudy Wiedoeft.

Wiedoeft cannot be seen as an exponent of the classical saxophone, although he did play some transcriptions of popular classical pieces in

his programs. Nevertheless, his popularity, which lasted from approximately 1915 to the beginning of 1930s, was enormous and a great deal of the saxophone craze took place because of him. Early in his career he took up the saxophone, because he saw some possibilities in its novelty, and it worked. Wiedoeft knew how to make money with the saxophone and found a way to transform the popular music of his time to a virtuoso playing style on his instrument. Compared to his predecessors he set a new standard in how to handle the saxophone, showing all the possibilities the instrument had with an incredible technique and tone, but above all an instinctive feeling for showmanship and performance. His musicality and work to get the saxophone popular gave him the honorable name “Kreisler of the saxophone”.

More serious musicians were less enthusiastic. Cecil Leeson, who had admired Wiedoeft’s performances and played his Valse Erica a thousand times, told that he was shocked as he met and spoke to Wiedoeft. He heard him play live and “in fact his tone was quite reedy”.<sup>53</sup>

On April 17, 1926 Wiedoeft gave a concert in the famous Aeolian Hall. This concert was not that “serious” as Jascha Gurewich’s recital some weeks before. Gurewich performed his own, more than fifteen minutes long *Saxophone Concerto in E minor op. 102* and music by Mendelsohn, Puccini, Kreisler, Glinka, Verdi and Albeniz. Wiedoeft,

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<sup>53</sup> Hulsebos – Cecil Leeson *ibid.*

who opened his concert with Bach’s famous *Air* performed by his saxophone ensemble set the tone in his concert with his most famous hits on the C-tenor saxophone. Gurewich only used the alto saxophone and performed a classical recital with piano, where Wiedoeft, who was much more prominent, won the audience with a varied, popular program. Wiedoeft’s performance as the “World’s Premier Saxophonist” contained eight solos on the C melody Saxophone. In the first half he played *Danse Hongroise* by Ring and Hager, his own *Mazanetta* and *Vanité* waltzes and Drdla’s famous *Souvenir*. After the intermission *Valse Erica*, *Dans L’Orient*, *Saxophobia* and *Sax-o-phun* were on the program. As is with every artist, Wiedoeft’s popularity did not last long. In the beginning of the 1930s people’s interest in Wiedoeft’s style vanished and Wiedoeft was not able to change his marketing and follow the newer trends. For a short while he stayed in Europe, where his music was still popular, but after returning to the United States he spent the last ten years of his life digging in a gold mine. Marriage and drinking problems had a bad influence on his life and he rarely touched the saxophone again. He died in 1940. Remarkable is that the interest in the C-melody saxophone died with the popularity of Rudy Wiedoeft, which indicates how strong this saxophone-type was bound to his “own” musical style.

In the first place the recordings of Wiedoeft himself must be seen as historical documents of saxophone playing. For that time Wiedoeft’s playing set standards for all saxophonists to come.

Wiedoeft made a lot of recordings for every major company during his

artistic career. Although he did not exclusively use the C tenor saxophone (he also played the alto saxophone), his greatest hits were performed on C melody. *Valse Erica*, one of his earliest successes, and *Saxophobia* were recorded many times and sold very well.



These records are available again for collectors who still have an old phonograph, but an important collection can be found on a CD published in 1998 which is called "Rudy Wiedoeft. Kreisler of the saxophone".

The pieces Rudy Wiedoeft performed on C Melody saxophone: *Valse Marilyn*, *Valse Erica*, *Saxophobia*, *Waltz Llewellyn*, *Saxema*, *Stella Tarantella*, *Bitter Sweets*, *Rubenola*, *Dans L'orient*, *Velma*, *Saxarella* and so on.

Some of these pieces are nowadays arranged for C melody sax and saxophone quartet by Erik-Jan de With.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <http://ejdewith.wixsite.com/erik-jan-de-with/arrangementen>

Frank Trumbauer:

(1901 - 1956)

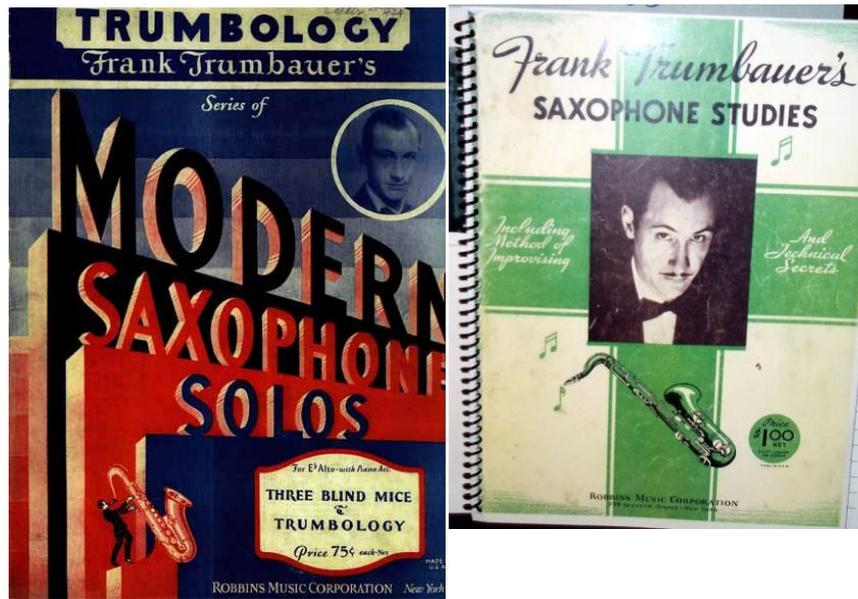
*Trumbauer probably played a Buescher C melody with a Goldbeck mouthpiece. Nevertheless, he is mentioned in a Selmer catalogue from the thirties as being a performer on Selmer instruments.*



Frank Trumbauer, also known as "Tram" was born in Illinois. He was capable of playing several instruments including bassoon and trombone. Trumbauer played in several bands. Important was his performance with the Bix Beiderbecke band and his own band. Although he also played on alto saxophone, his most famous tunes are performed on C melody.

Trumbauer also composed pieces that were inspired by Wiedoeft's music. Perhaps the most famous piece is *Trumbology*, where we hear a triple staccato, which was also one of the technical styles of Wiedoeft. Also, the hit *Singing the Blues* (which was not composed by Trumbauer and has an interesting guitar accompaniment and a nice

melody) and another hit *Three Blind Mice* must be mentioned, as well as a set of Saxophone Studies.

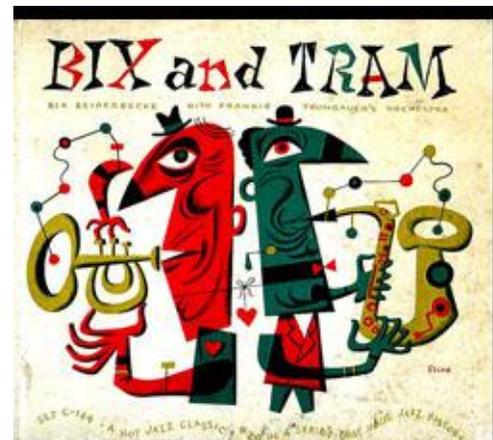


Covers of the sheet music of *Three blind mice* and *Trumbo logy* for Eb alto saxophone and piano and Trumbauer's *Saxophone Studies*

In 1927 Frank Trumbauer joined the Paul Whiteman Orchestra. He stayed until 1932 when he left to form his own band. In 1933 he again played with Whiteman and later on with Charlie and Jack Teagarden. After those years he led his own band in California. During World War II he left the music business and worked as a test pilot. After the war he played in the NBC Orchestra and worked for the Civil Aeronautical Authority. He played occasionally for the remainder of his life, but after 1947 he made his living outside of music.



Ted Lewis on C melody saxophone



### Three performers in the classical hemisphere

Ted Hegvik (1932)

Ted Hegvik is a classical trained saxophonist and clarinetist<sup>55</sup> and the fact that he took interest in the music of the Wiedoeft era does not make him a vaudeville or jazz saxophonist. That is why I am including this tremendous saxophonist in this chapter.

Ted Hegvik was one of the first, if not the first, saxophonist who took a new interest in the old music. He contributed a large amount of his



career to the music of Wiedoeft and other pioneer saxophonists such as Andy Sanella, Chester Hazlett and Clyde Doerr and especially the C-melody saxophone. Hegvik studied the old recordings as no one

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<sup>55</sup> Ted Hegvik studied saxophone with Larry Teal and is also a professional clarinetist.

else was interested in them and recorded this music in 1976 on two albums for the Golden Crest label, (a label which brought out much more interesting saxophone recordings during the 1970s).

His performances of Wiedoeft's music were reviewed in Antique Phonograph Monthly as:

*"A brilliant saxophonist with a lovely tone, unlimited technique, and unbelievably fast staccato, his performances of Wiedoeft favorite's technique, and unbelievably fast staccato, his performances of Wiedoeft favorites will leave you breathless."*

(From [www.tedhegvik.com](http://www.tedhegvik.com))

Through the efforts of Ted Hegvik, Wiedoeft's music got into popularity again. He concertized, played recitals and gave lectures (some complete with old films) on Rudy Wiedoeft, his music and his life. But his interest did grow beyond Wiedoeft and the ragtime era and he experimented with his C tenor saxophone in other musical styles. Therefore, he collected some 30 C melody saxophones, tried out several mouthpieces and had to solve some intonation problems of the C saxophone by having to cork some tone holes.<sup>56</sup> Ted Hegvik performed the Hindemith Sonata for alto saxophone on C tenor sax and it sounds great.<sup>57</sup> He also tried some arrangements of baroque music by Angelo Corelli on the C tenor saxophone. Having so much success in performing on the C tenor saxophone it is strange that just

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<sup>56</sup> mail from Ted Hegvik to Ton Verhiel, March 6, 2010

<sup>57</sup> Ted was so kind to sent me his recording of the Sonata

one composition for this instrument was written for him. Harrison Roper composed *El caliente del sol* for C tenor saxophone, brass quartet and percussion and Ted performed it several times in his own, larger orchestration.

In 1978 Gunter Schuller composed his *Tribute to Rudy Wiedoeft* (which was in effect not more than an arrangement of three famous Wiedoeft tunes). Ted Hegvik played the first performance of this work in 1978 under baton of the composer himself. In 1995 the two earlier records were reissued on a CD, which was titled “The legacy of Rudy Wiedoeft”. This CD also contains a live recording of the premier performance of the Gunter Schuller piece.

On an in 2005 issued CD with the music of John David Lamb (Bon Appetit) Ted Hegvik performs Lamb’s *Three Antique Dances* on C melody, such with a percussion accompaniment, which makes these pieces sound more medieval.

Ted Hegvik performed on a Conn C melody saxophone with an old Gregory alto saxophone mouthpiece with donut chamber. Some of his students could work very well with the Vandoren alto saxophone mouthpieces also with donut chamber.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> mail from Ted Hegvik to Ton Verhiel, March 6, 2010

Leo van Oostrom (1942)

Van Oostrom started his “Saxophobia” with pianist Eddie van Dijken in 1969. His interest in the music of Wiedoeft led to a performance during the World Saxophone Congress in London, which was an enormous success. The complete recital was brought out on a LP titled “Ragtime saxophone”. It contains compositions by Rudie Wiedoeft, Louis Alter, Frank Trumbauer and Jimmy Dorsey. This LP was reissued on CD in 1991 (then called: Vaudeville “Saxophone” Novelties) and is still available through the website of van Oostrom. Until now it is, together with the Hegvik recordings, the best what is available in C melody playing. For this recording van Oostrom played on a King C-melody saxophone with a Woodwind 4 mouthpiece.<sup>59</sup>



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<sup>59</sup> Letter from Leo van Oostrom to Ton Verhiel

Van Oostrom is the soprano player of the Netherlands Saxophone Quartet. He is a versatile and flexible musician who is not only a great performer of classical saxophone music, but who feels happy in jazz and many other musical styles. He was soloist in the saxophone concertos of Alexander Glazunov, Tristan Keuris, Jack Kat and others. In 1993 he performed the *Ballade* by Frank Martin with the Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam under Ricardo Chailly, but he also played in experimental jazz ensembles as the Loek Dikker Quartet. He was professor for saxophone at the conservatory in The Hague for many years, was lead saxophonist of the famous Metropole Orchestra and gave masterclasses all over the world.

In later years van Oostrom regularly is soloist on several “strange” saxophones with the Beau Hunks, an ensemble that has been specialized in the music of the roaring twenties and that has a Beau Hunks Saxophone Quartet as a part of the ensemble. Also, his ragtime program with pianist Eddy van Dijken still is around and in 2012 he was soloist in Schuller’s Tribute to Rudy Wiedoeft. Besides being a great player, van Oostrom also owns a huge collection of saxophones containing several C melody instruments.

Taking interest in the C melody saxophone I once called van Oostrom to ask where he had found the music for his ragtime CD, because transposing the alto piano parts was a bug of work. His answer was as easy as can be. He said: “Look for a piano player who is able to transpose at sight”.

Leo van Oostrom still regularly performs on the C melody saxophone

as member of the Beau Hunks orchestra and in the solo program Saxophobia which also contains solos for several special saxophone types as the F mezzo soprano and the Swanee saxophone, but he has not produced any new recordings just performing on the C melody sax. Comparing van Oostrom with Hegvik is difficult. Both are versatile and virtuosic musicians. Their sound is different caused by the instruments and mouthpieces they use, but the real difference is in the repertory they perform. As far as I know, Leo van Oostrom never played the C tenor saxophone in other than the roaring twenties music. Hegvik also looked for other musical styles to be performed on the C tenor saxophone.

Gilberto Monetti  
(19??)



Gilberto Monetti is from Bologna, Italy and he studied classical saxophone with F. Salima. He teaches the saxophone at the conservatory G.B. Martini in Bologna and was the alto player of the Nuovo Quartetto d'ance, which produced a LP-record in 1980. In 2000 he formed the duo Vaudeville Cafè with pianist Alberto Linari. This duo focused on the music form the 1920s but later expanded their repertoire to other pieces, which were performed on the C tenor saxophone. In 2002 this duo produced a CD completely devoted to the C tenor saxophone. On this CD, called "The golden era of the C melody saxophone"<sup>60</sup> Monetti performs some Wiedoeft (*Sax-o-doodle*, *Manhattan Serenade* and *Saxofobia*) and Trumbauer pieces, but has also made transcriptions of works originally for alto saxophone as Leon Chic's *Solo sur la Tyrolienne*, the *Deuxieme Solo* by Jules Demersseman, Singelee's *Solo de concert op 77* and Itturalde's *Pequena Czarda*.

The duo Cafe Vaudeville came together "for their love for the music of that century" and did produce a second, live, CD "The Fantastic '900" in 2006. On these CD's Monetti performs most authentically. For the recordings he uses a C melody mouthpiece on an Evette C tenor saxophone. In the last few years Gilberto Monetti has devoted himself completely to the new Aquila C melody saxophones and does perform exclusively on those instruments. Several examples of his playing can be found on the popular website "You Tube".

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<sup>60</sup> This CD was reviewed in Saxophone Journal Volume 27, no 6 (2003)

Of course, there are more saxophonists who incidentally perform on the C tenor saxophone. Scott Granlund played and recorded with the Black Cat Orchestra for a long period, mostly using the C melody, with some Bb soprano also. He was soloist in Wiedoeft's *Rubenola* for C melody saxophone and band and performed in 2006 together with Ted Hegvik a duo-recital with music by Georg Friedrich Händel and John David Lamb. He did a lot of performances as an orchestral saxophonist and is the leader of the Belltown Saxophone trio. His equipment on C melody saxophone is:

1924 Conn "straight neck", silver C melody  
Buescher C melody mouthpiece  
Vandoren Traditional tenor reed #4<sup>61</sup>

Also, the popular You Tube site gives some nice examples of C melody playing. One is a performance of Dutch bass saxophone specialist Andreas van Zoelen<sup>62</sup>. He performs Kreisler's *Liebesfreud* with a very nice, sweet sound on his Conn C tenor saxophone.

One of the most special recordings was released in January 2018. Dutch player and saxophonist of the famous Calefax wind quintet, Raaf Hekkema, transcribed the six Bach violoncello suites for historic saxophones. The first Suite is performed on a Conn C melody New Wonder Series I (1922) with a modernized Conn Eagle mouthpiece, restored to its original state. It really sounds great!

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<sup>61</sup> Mail from Scott Granlund to Ton Verhiel, 9 March 2012

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOeaQ3J3viU>

## CONTEMPORARY JAZZ PERFORMERS

Although I originally planned to keep this story about classical music, during the research of this booklet some wonderful jazz performers came to me and it is due to their musical qualities on the C melody saxophone, that I decided to step a little outside my original plans and give a little chapter to these jazz performers who devoted themselves to the C melody saxophone. I will mention them in alphabetical order and they all filled at least one album exclusively with performances on the C Melody saxophone.

### GIANNI BEDORI (1930-2005)

Playing on a Conn straight-neck C Melody saxophone, Bedori's CD Contro Tempo was the last he brought out. Classically educated he found his way in jazz and lighter music. For a while he was known as Johnny Sax.

### HAYES GREENFIELD

Performs with his quartet on a CD called "Light shade shadow" (2010). The sax he uses is a Buescher, probably with a Link mouthpiece and a Vandoren Java 2 ½ alto (!) reed. <sup>63</sup> Hayes states: *"One of the things I love about the C Melody is that as you know it has sound qualities of both the alto and tenor but in one horn. I often like to refer to it as Bi-Saxual."*

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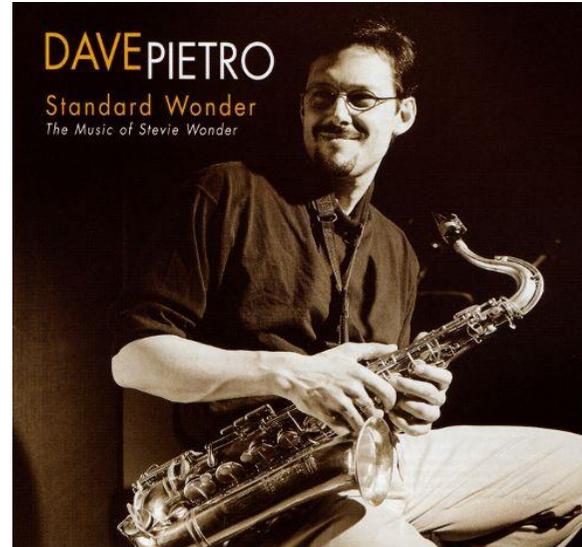
<sup>63</sup> <http://csax.net/2011/06/10/hayes-greenfield-new-album-featuring-c-melody-sax/>

### BENJAMIN HERMAN

Dutch saxophone player Benjamin Herman plays a special style on his C melody Saxophone. His CD Psychodixie contains some real experiments in jazz. Herman performs on a Conn saxophone from 1921.

### DAVE PIETRO

Pietro's performances on his Stevie Wonder music CD are performed on a Selmer Modele 22 C Melody sax<sup>64</sup> with a Beechler #7 mouthpiece and Vandoren Java no 3 alto saxophone reeds. Not only his CD "Standard Wonder" but also the Latin inspired CD "Embrace" contains some very fine C Melody playing.



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<sup>64</sup> Website David Pietro

## SCOTT ROBINSON

Robinson devoted himself to the C Melody Saxophone. On his CD "Melody from the sky" (2000) he even performs the famous "Le Cygne" by Camille Saint-Saëns. Robinson performs on a Conn C melody.

Besides these performers, there are many, many players in the jazz and folk (world music) field that make use of the C Melody saxophone. Some of them I want to mention here:

Dan Higgins: I found three videos from this virtuoso on YouTube. He performs on a Buescher C Melody<sup>65</sup> in duet with his son guitarist Dustin Higgins. Very fine handling of the C melody and lots of fun.

Dan Levinson: from origin clarinet performer, this versatile musician does some very nice work on the C Melody. On a CD called "Celebrating Bix" he forms in the song Blue River together with Scott Robinson and Pete Martinez a very smooth sounding C Melody Trio.

British saxophone player John Dankworth (1928-2010) was performing on C Melody saxophone with his Generation Band. Dankworth had a 1921 Hawkes C Melody with a Lawton mouthpiece and tenor sax reeds. On the C Melody he said:

*"the C-Melody doesn't sound like an alto, nor does it feel like the smaller horn. It feels like a tenor. He says that makes him solo in a*

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<sup>65</sup> Probably with an ebonite Otto Link tenor saxophone mouthpiece.

*more Getz-like style. John believes that the sound of a saxophone section led by the C-Melody makes for a better blend in the typical Basie/Nastic scoring style, where the first saxophone is scored in unison with the lead trumpet. John also points out that being in C, the saxophone places one more frequently in the flat keys than is normal for a saxophonist. While this isn't a problem for someone with John's technique and experience, it is nevertheless strange when busking or improvising, to be constantly playing with cross fingerings. There are also mechanical disadvantages common to early saxophones, such as knobby keys, and the lack of a top F sharp."*<sup>66</sup>

Michael Ausserbauer: this German jazz/pop saxophone player produced a CD completely performed on an Aquila C Melody Tenor saxophone and on an Aquila C soprano saxophone. On the C Melody he uses a Lebayle 9 tenor saxophone mouthpiece with a Rico Plasticover reed no. 4. The CD is called "Klassik Pur" and contains easy listening transcriptions of works by Bach, Satie, Ravel, Pachelbel, Gershwin and others.

Also, German is Mulo Francel. He performs on all clarinets and saxophones. His handling of the C melody is most sensitive. On his Conn from 1916 with an Otto Link rubber (narrow channel) mouthpiece and a Vandoren Java 3 ½ tenor saxophone reed he does surprising things.

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.john-robert-brown.com/c-here.htm>

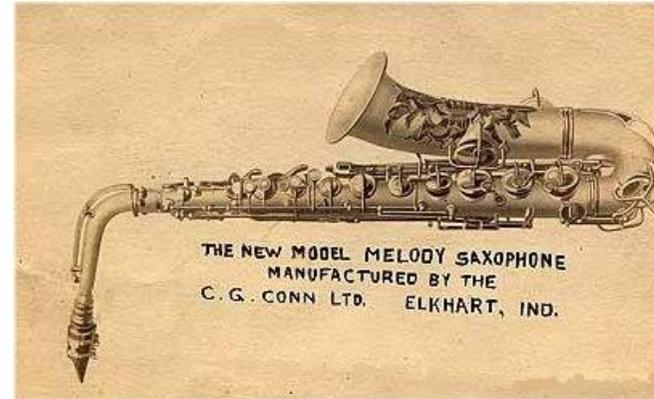
## C-TENOR SAXOPHONES IN PRODUCTION

C-tenor saxophones were in production from about 1855 until World War 2. Especially during the 1920s, as the saxophone gained an enormous popularity as an easy and fast to learn the instrument most well-known firms had one or more types of C-tenor saxophones in their production. C saxophones were produced in the same finishing styles, varying from three to six different finishes, as the other saxophones. Most famous were the Conn, Buescher and Martin instruments, but also Selmer and Buffet Crampon, famous European saxophone manufacturers, made C saxophones.

In France not only Adolph Sax produced C-saxophones. Also Buffet and Lecomte did make C-tenor saxophones as early as 1880. These saxophones were also brought to the USA, where the important companies started to build them. But also, the German instruments found their way into the States. Kohlert and especially Adler had relations with American music companies as Carl Fischer in New York, who also published a lot of music for (C melody) saxophone.



## Conn



The firm Conn, settled in Elkhart, Indiana, has the honor having produced the first American saxophone. With the Dutch born Edward Lefevre as adviser Henry Buescher, who later founded the Buescher firm, developed the first American saxophone model.



Conn started to produce a C-melody saxophone as early as 1907. An advertisement from that year shows all the models Conn was producing at that time, including a C-tenor saxophone. Most C-melodies had a so called “swan-neck, which often led to a little complicated way of holding the instrument. So Conn developed a C-melody with a straight neck which gave the new problem where the player had to hold the instrument further away from his body, what gave other balance problems. This model was first made in 1922. Another typical Conn item was the micro-tuner neck (from 1917). It was developed to tune the instrument without touching the mouthpiece so avoiding poor mouthpiece placement on the neck.



Conn produced the Wonder-line and from about 1920 the “New Wonder-line. Some models got specific names, such as the Chu Berry model.

After the New Wonder-series Conn produced for some years the model Transitional and after that, from about 1934, the “Naked Lady” model. Both these models had the C melody saxophone in their repertoire. There exists a C melody with serial number 284937 which dates from about 1938. Conn built C melodies on special order for many years.



Conn one handed C melody<sup>67</sup>

Linked to the Conn instruments, there are two interesting facts to mention:

<sup>67</sup> Source: Saxophone Journal volume 10, no 2 summer 1985. Article by David J. Gibson

- A collector in New England, Richard Hurlburt, has a one-handed Conn C melody saxophone from about 1920. This special and unique instrument has a compass from low B-flat to high d-flat.<sup>68</sup>

- During the thirties Ohio musician Billy True performed as a one-man saxophone section on three saxophones at once. He used a Conn alto saxophone and two Conn C melody saxophones.<sup>69</sup>



<sup>68</sup> Saxophone Journal Vol 10, no. 2 (1985). Article by David J. Gibson

<sup>69</sup> Sources: Paul Cohen: Vintage saxophones revisited (Saxophone Journal Vol 22, no 2, 1997) and Michael Segell, The Devil's Horn page 184

## Buescher

Around 1894 Henri Buescher left Conn and started his own musical instrument manufacturing. Already in a 1906 catalogue the "Melody Saxophone" is mentioned. Buescher was probably one of the first American firms that produced these saxophones.

Producing C-melody saxophones was a normal thing in those days and the famous True Tone (the name referred to the quality of tone of these instruments) series had a C-melody saxophone too. Good instruments that were handled in the same way as the altos and tenors and which had the same quality. Mick Boudreau notes that "The True Tone model was the most popular saxophones of the 1920's and one of the few saxes of its day with very good intonation".

The C-melody saxophone was produced in the same finishes as the other saxophones. In 1926 Buescher notes on the C-saxophone:

*"The C melody saxophone is essentially a melody instrument. Properly it should be called the C tenor saxophone."*

Another advertisement refers to someone's popularity in town:

*"If you want to be the center of the crowd get a Buescher C melody saxophone."*

Buescher produced True Tone C melodies and some Aristocrats. The last ones are not often seen. The True Tones are well available.

# Thousands Now Find It EASY to Make Their Own MUSIC



with a  
**BUESCHER** True-Tone Saxophone

Everyone has a perfectly normal desire to produce music, but the average person has not the time nor patience to spend months or years in learning to play. Heretofore, the making of music has been the privilege of the talented few. But now it is different. With this wonderful new saxophone, Buescher has made music a universal accomplishment, and has placed it within the possibility of practically everyone.

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whose portraits are shown—are and recommend Buescher True-Tone Saxophones. Almost without exception, the great Professionals use Buescher Instruments exclusively. They are so flawless in make, so perfect in tone and so accurate mechanically that more than 75 per cent of the popular Phonograph Records are played with them.



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Director  
The Brown Brothers  
Instruments Store  
Victor Records



**BEN KELVIN**  
Director  
Solilo's Orchestra  
Austian-Vocalion  
Records



**DAN HUBBO**  
Director  
Orlando Orchestra  
Brunswick Records



**JASCHA GUREWICZ**  
Former Soloist  
with "The Star"  
Blasie's Records



**CLYDE C. DOERN**  
Director  
"Clyde Doern's" Orchestra  
Victor Records



**BENNIE KRUESEN**  
Director  
Bennie Kruesen's and  
His Orchestra  
Brunswick Records



**NATHAN GLANTZ**  
Director Nathan Glantz  
and His Orchestra  
Edison and  
Columbia Records



**KEITH PITMAN**  
Manager  
J. B. Lovitch's Orchestra  
Victor Records

The new Buescher Saxophone is a marvelous instrument. It is one of the most beautiful of all musical instruments—by the range and wealth of its tones it takes the place of almost every other instrument—yet it is so perfected and simplified that it is the easiest of all instruments to play.

With the aid of the first three lessons, which are sent free (upon request) with each new Saxophone, the scale can be mastered in an hour; in a few weeks you can be playing popular music. Practice is a pleasure because you learn so quickly. You could even take a place in a band or orchestra in 90 days, if you so desired.

### Wins a Welcome Everywhere

You are always welcome with a sweet-toned Buescher Saxophone. Thousands of men and women, of all ages, have found it an infallible key to social popularity. For home entertainment, for church, school or lodge affairs, the Saxophone is the most popular and adaptable instrument. Saxophone players enjoy, also, many opportunities of earning money. They are always in demand for dance orchestras.

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We have prepared a very interesting book on the history and development of the saxophone. It tells which saxophones take violin, cello and bass parts, and many other things you would like to know. Also illustrates first lessons. It is sent free, on request. Just send a postcard or clip and mail the coupon.

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Gentlemen:  
I am interested in the instrument checked below:  
Saxophone..... Cornet..... Trombone..... Trumpet.....  
Mention any other instrument interested in  
Name.....  
Street Address.....  
Town..... State.....  
.....

## Martin

Also, the three Martin brothers worked with Conn. In 1904 they left, as Buescher did, and started their own company. From about 1914 they also produced saxophones, including C melody saxophones, which were available in five finishes varying from 95 to 250 dollars.



A Martin Home-model C melody saxophone

Martin only produced C melody saxophones in their “Handcraft” and “Master” series. This last one got the nickname “Typewriter”, while all the keys were round and pearled, which gave considerable technical problems. The Master series was built from 1929 to 1932, the Handcraft models knew a much longer history, from 1907 to 1931. That means it came to an end for the Martin C melodies about 1932.



*Fragment of a Martin C melody saxophone, Typewriter series*

About five years later, as the interest in saxophones decreased and the C melody was no longer built, they brought out their “Home Model” C-melody. This instrument, build from about 1935 to 1937, was specially made for the amateur player. It has fewer keys than normal

saxophones and the range extended only from low C until high C, so just two octaves! Martin decided to sell this instrument only by mail order and not through music stores.

The Martin saxophones were quite popular and were known as very fine instruments. They were played by famous performers. A rarity is this picture on which virtuoso Dick Stabile playing a Martin C Melody Saxophone.



*Dick Stabile<sup>70</sup>*

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<sup>70</sup> Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dick\\_Stabile](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dick_Stabile)

## King

Around 1908 King, which was founded by H.N. White, started importing Evette et Schaeffer saxophones to the US. Later on, they switched to the German maker Kohlert and made these saxophones up to King-standards. Around 1916 then King started to produce their own saxophones and had a line that also included C-melodies. They were not produced in the same amount as the Buescher and the Conn instruments, but were known as very fine saxophones. King was one of the first firms that brought out C melody saxophones with the additional front fingering for high F. Leo van Oostrom calls them to be the finest C melodies ever made.<sup>71</sup> Some of the King stencils were produced under Lyon and Healy and Cleveland, the last one also was started by NH White.



*Bell of a King C Melody Saxophone*

In one of their advertisements King gives following description of the C melody saxophone:

*“The C melody saxophone is the “all purpose” instrument, best adapted to all uses in the home or in band or in orchestra. It permits direct reading without transposition of any music written for piano, violin, voice, flute, oboe or cello. In the band you can play the flute or oboe parts: in the orchestra the violin and cello parts are most effective.*

*The tone quality of the C Melody is the nearest approach to the human voice of any of the saxophones. It is not too loud but has plenty of volume and the true mellow saxophone timbre. The tonal coloring of the “King” differs greatly from ordinary saxophones. It has all the richness of the voice and blends harmoniously with any other instrument. It has all the brilliance necessary for a solo instrument and in this capacity is ideal.”*

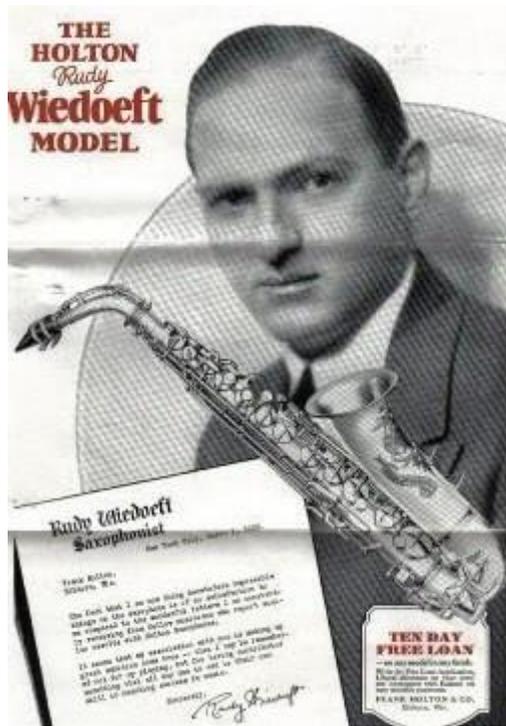
King did produce C saxophones until 1934. That is the last year I find them in the catalogues. Their company firm Cleveland did take on the production for a couple of years.



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<sup>71</sup> Leo van Oostrom – 100+1 saxen

## Holton



Holton produced some stencil-instruments, probably imported from Europe (Koehler) but had also its own saxophone line, the New Revelation saxophone. In their 1925 catalogue Holton writes about their C melody saxophone:

*“The depth and richness of the tone makes it especially adapted to solo playing and has caused it to be in greater demand than any other saxophone”*

The New Revelation also had a front F key.

At the end of the 1920s Holton produced the Rudy Wiedoeft model. This saxophone model appeared around 1928 as interest in saxophones was already declining. For Holton the relation with a famous performer was their solution to promote their instruments and they of course awaited a stimulation for their selling accounts. Wiedoeft, who was quite involved with the Selmer manufacturers, probably had no influence on the production of this instrument and it is questionable if he even played it. It also is not clear how many C melodies of this type were produced. For Wiedoeft the amount of money he got for lending his name to an instrument was the most important thing. Holton mentions C melody saxophones in their catalogues until 1936.



*A Couturier C melody saxophone*

## Lyon & Healy

The company of Lyon and Healy was in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. Besides some Buescher and Martin stencils they had their own lines of saxophones. Their Artist C-melody saxophone was for “those wishing to take up the saxophone principally for personal enjoyment” and was promoted as a “very desirable instrument”.

During that time Lyon & Healy produced the C melody in three finishes. Just as highly polished brass for 95 dollars or “Triple silver plated, satin finish and keys hand burnished; inside of bell heavily gold plated and hand burnished” for 135 dollars and most expensive, 220 dollars, a “heavily gold plated, satin finish, keys and inside of bell hand burnished: bell elaborately engraved”.

One of the other series was the Couturier saxophone. The firm of Couturier was settled in Laporte, Indiana, but from about 1924 Lyon & Healy produced a Couturier-line. The Couturier C melody saxophone was one of the first to be built in this series.

## Wurlitzer

The Wurlitzer instruments were all made by Conn, Buescher or Martin. They had no saxophone line of their own manufacture. The instruments were available in several finishes and prices. One of their most famous series was the Wurlitzer American saxophone. Wurlitzer made some very nice advertisements for their saxophones

and in a 1925 catalogue they wrote on the “Melody-saxophone in C”:

*“Music written for the Piano, Violin, Organ or Voice can be played on this “C” Melody Saxophone” without transposing. Popular music, Hymns, etc., can be played with Piano accompaniment, or it is splendid to use in a chorus of any kind.”*

**WURLITZER**  
**“C” MELODY**  
**SAXOPHONE OUTFIT**  
No. 200

The Wurlitzer “C” Melody Saxophone in this outfit is the most popular choice. It is an instrument you will be proud to own—with all the latest mechanical improvements and the finest workmanship. It is a fine solo instrument, and plays, without transposing, any music written for piano, organ, violin or voice. It is splendid for use in church choirs or small orchestras. Its tone is clear and true.

**One-Fourth Down Payment**  
**Balance, Easy Installments**

This Saxophone Outfit (No. 200) is absolutely complete. Besides the Saxophone, it includes a velvet-lined case of beauty and quality, and all necessary accessories.

Brass Outfit, complete . . . . . **\$100.00**  
Silver Plated, with Gold Bell . . . . . **\$140.00**

WURLITZER

POPULAR  
THE SOLOS

This image © 2007 by Glen Richards

## J.W. York and Sons

York and Sons manufactured their instruments in Grand Rapids, Michigan. They started producing their instruments under the name York and Son in 1887 and some eleven years later the "s" was added and it became York and Sons. Accordingly to some sources they produced an own series of saxophones until 1920, but the fact that the York firm was awarded two saxophone patents concerning tone holes in the later part of the 1920s: 1690862 and 1673195 speak against that statement. The York alto saxophone 92259 is reported to have unusual tones holes, and the marking "pat. appl. for". These patents were applied for in 1925 and 1926 and granted Nov 6, 1928, and June 12, 1928, respectively.



*The production house of York and Sons in Grand Rapids*

In 1914 York and Sons produce some curved bell sopranos and

already in the same year a list mentions the productions of a tenor saxophone in Bb/C. The C Melody with number 60881 dates from 1920 and the 62000 series from 1921. A last C Melody in mentioned in 1927 and from 1935 there were many fewer saxophones produced. Most of the saxophones were probably stencils by Conn and Buescher.

There were many more names for saxophone stencils and it was normal that those series did hold a C tenor saxophone. Most other stencils were produced by the famous firms and sold to some local dealers, who put their name in it.

## C TENOR SAXOPHONES IN EUROPE

The C melody saxophone made its musical career in the United States. Nevertheless, the great saxophone companies in Europe produced C and F instruments some decades before the saxophone craze in the United States.

From the tradition of the Adolphe Sax companies, the instrument manufacturers tried to build saxophones and develop them. One of the oldest, still active company, is Buffet-Crampon. Already in 1858 Sax went to court because of problems with the other manufacturers, which included Goumas and Buffet. In 1860 Sax again had a problem with his competitors. In both cases Sax won!

## FRANCE

It is quite obvious, that concerning Europe the emphasis on production lies in France. The brand names that we know nowadays did produce saxophones from a very early stage and they also made C melody instruments. The most important were Buffet and their predecessors and Selmer, who came relatively late to the C melody market.

Couesnon and several smaller firms also produced a “saxophone tenor en ut”.

### Buffet-Crampon



*The double octave mechanism of an old Evette tenor saxophone in C*

The earliest name of the firm Buffet Crampon was Buffet-Auger. In 1865 the name was changed to P. Goumas and Co and in 1885 there was another change into Evette and Schaeffer. From 1929 on the firm again bears the name Buffet Crampon.

In the Evette and Schaeffer period this firm experimented a lot to significantly improve the saxophone. They produced very good instruments that were taken by soloists as Jean Moeremans and Edward Lefebre in the United States as they performed in the Sousa and Gilmore bands. These instruments were the link between the European instruments and the first American saxophones<sup>72</sup>.



*Detail of a C tenor saxophone Model Apogee.*

Even under the name P. Goumas C-tenor saxophones were built. An order for an industrial exposition from 1877 calls for a tenor saxophone in C New System. This system included the little B flat button as we know it today. Also the catalogue from 1907 shows several models including C-tenor saxophones (and also C-sopranos and F-altos). Nevertheless, we might conclude that the C tenor saxophone was not

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<sup>72</sup> Leo van Oostrom – 100 + 1 saxen

involved in the newest series D, E and further (after 1907) as this builder worked under the name Evette & Schaeffer, then a C tenor saxophone from 1921 is still delivered with a double octave mechanism! Evette did include the C tenor in their Apogee series. The mechanism allows the performer to play the low B also with the little finger of the right hand. These manufacturers produced C-tenor saxophones until the 1930s. There is a C melody sax known from 1938, a time that most instrument builders did not produce C tenor saxophones anymore.



*|From a 1924 Couesnon catalogue*

## Couesnon



*Bell of a Couesnon C Melody Saxophone*

In France Couesnon had already produced a C-tenor before 1900. There are even instruments known with a double octave mechanism. They were very good instruments. Marcel Mule worked several years as consultant with this firm before he changed to Selmer.

It is not known how many C tenor saxophones were produced, who sold them and when the production was stopped, as the Couesnon firm was destroyed by a great fire in the 1970s and the whole archive was burned. After that date Couesnon no longer manufactured saxophones.

## Selmer

The first known Selmer model, the Modelle 22, also was designed as a C-melody saxophone.



*Selmer C Melody Saxophone*

Selmer made C-saxophones until the beginning of the 1930s. In a catalogue of 1935 we see Merle Johnston with a Selmer C-melody saxophone Model 53. Not alone we learn the four finishes Selmer produced for its C-saxophones, Merle Johnston also gives “A few words of advice to saxophonists”, which handle tone, mouthpiece and intonation.

*Merle Johnston (1897-1978) was a well-known saxophonist and teacher in the New York area. One of his students was Larry Teal. For a while Johnston lead an own orchestra and somewhere during the twenties he formed a saxophone quartet with two alto saxophones. With this quartet, that probably featured Arnold Brilhart, who also*

*played with Wiedoeft he produced a few recordings with titles as “Baby, where can you be?” and “Do something” (1923).*

Also the following series contained a C tenor model. So are there Modelle 24 and Modelle 26 and 28 as a Cigar Cutter C melody saxophone. According to the information belonging to a video by James Carter on YouTube, Selmer also produced a very limited amount C tenors in the Balanced Action Series (only 4 are known) and in 1957 only 5 instruments in their Mark VI Series.<sup>73</sup>

As with Holton Selmer tried to couple famous artists to their saxophones. Besides Merle Johnston, Selmer paid star saxophonist Andy Sanella in 1931 to compose a “*Valse Selmer*” which was published for alto and C Melody saxophone with piano accompaniment.

## **WANTED AND FOR SALE**

**Continued from page 14**

**WANTED TO BUY** — Music suitable for motion picture theatre; large or small amounts. Address K. W. Bradshaw, Majestic Theatre, Bloomington, Ills.

**FOR SALE** — Selmer C melody saxophone, latest model, low pitch, silver-plated gold bell, in case. Practically new, \$110. Will send C. O. D. subject to examination upon receipt of \$4.00 to guarantee express charges. Address F. H. Hurley, Box 210, Bismarck, N. D.

**WANTED** — A-1 cornet soloist for band in southern New England factory with 4,000 employees. Year's contract to the

*An early ad: Selmer C Melody for sale.*

*From Jacob's Band Monthly 1919 volume 4.*

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<sup>73</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zc9Y9aMgmKQ>

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE

**JEDSON SAXOPHONES** stand for beauty of finish, unapproachable value, guaranteed intonation, and ease of blowing, in short, the highest degree of excellence. The key system is most conveniently arranged and extremely easy to keep in adjustment. Specially manufactured by A. Rampone and B. Cazzani of Milan. They possess a musical and mechanical superiority which every musician instantly appreciates, and which actually enhances their performance. Guaranteed acoustically and mechanically perfect.

All instruments can be supplied in either high or low pitch and are supplied branded as above. An additional charge of *1s. 0d.* upwards is made for handsomely engraved bell. Every instrument is unreservedly guaranteed to be perfectly adjusted and perfectly in tune.

**"De Luxe" Class.** The finest saxophone it is possible to obtain. Heavily silver plated, frosted finish, gold plated and engraved bell, pearl mounted burnished keys, screw-on pads, complete with every improvement, including additional F Sharp shake key, cadence B Flat, double E Flat and double F Sharp, trill for F Sharp and G Sharp, descending to low B Flat, automatic octave key, etc.

3201	E Flat Soprano, straight model only	.. .. .	£26 10 0
3202	B Flat Soprano, straight model	.. .. .	£26 10 0
3203	B Flat Soprano, curved model	.. .. .	£30 0 0
3204	C Soprano, straight model	.. .. .	£26 10 0
3205	C Soprano, curved model	.. .. .	£30 0 0
3206	E Flat Alto	.. .. .	£32 0 0
3206a	E Flat Alto, straight model	.. .. .	£35 0 0
3207	C (Melody) Tenor	.. .. .	£37 0 0
3208	B Flat Tenor	.. .. .	£37 0 0
3209	E Flat Baritone	.. .. .	£50 0 0
3210	B Flat Bass	.. .. .	£70 0 0

See pages 65 and 85 for Imitation or Toy Saxophones

**Rampone and Cazzani, Class A**

Specification similar to above, but nickel-plated finish. Guaranteed in tune.

2564a	E Flat Soprano, straight	.. .. .	£20 0 0
2564	B Flat Soprano, straight	.. .. .	£20 0 0
2566	B Flat Soprano, curved	.. .. .	£23 15 0
2565	C Soprano, straight	.. .. .	£20 0 0
2567	C Soprano, curved	.. .. .	£23 15 0
2570	E Flat Alto	.. .. .	£25 10 0
2573	C Melody Tenor	.. .. .	£27 10 0
2574	B Flat Tenor	.. .. .	£28 0 0

**PAUL CAVOUR (PARIS) SAXOPHONES**

**"Invicta" Model**

A very fine model, extremely well made and absolutely unequalled in value. Complete with all improvements, including additional F Sharp trill key for right hand, plate for first finger of left hand for a new B Flat, extra key for low B Flat, B to C trill keys, double C and B Flat keys, automatic single octave key, a patent G Sharp, 7 rollers, pearl topped keys, drawn sockets and heavily guarded, etc.

7998	B Flat Soprano, straight, nickel plated	.. .. .	£17 0 0
7999	B Flat Soprano, straight, silver plated, gilt bell	.. .. .	£18 18 0
8000	E Flat Alto, nickel plated	.. .. .	£19 15 0
8001	E Flat Alto, silver plated, gilt bell	.. .. .	£22 10 0
8002	C Melody (Tenor), nickel plated	.. .. .	£26 0 0
8003	C Melody (Tenor), silver plated, gilt bell	.. .. .	£29 0 0
8004	B Flat Tenor, nickel plated	.. .. .	£26 0 0
8005	B Flat Tenor, silver plated, gilt bell	.. .. .	£29 0 0
8006	E Flat Baritone, nickel plated	.. .. .	£32 0 0
8007	E Flat Baritone, silver plated, gilt bell	.. .. .	£35 0 0
8008	B Flat Bass, nickel plated	.. .. .	£52 10 0
8009	B Flat Bass, silver plated, gilt bell	.. .. .	£58 0 0

Number in black type signifies illustration.



No. 8000/1

No. 3206

No. 3207

No. 3206a

No. 3208

J. E. D. & S., Ltd.

Not only Selmer and Buffet produced C-instruments. The Parisian firm of Paul Cavour shipped their model "Invicta" to Jedson in London. Another French firm with connections to Great Britain was Jerome Thibouville Lamy. He won prizes in 1878, 1889 and 1900 and produced lots of instruments. According to a 1931 catalogue they only worked from Great Britain, but still produced a C melody sax from their "Regal"-line for the price from 21 to 27 pounds.



Vito Leblanc C melody saxophone from the 19-sixties

Then there is the trademark Pierret, that sold C melodies. A quite old example, with double octave mechanism, comes from A. Lecomte from Paris which was seen in an advertisement on the web,. Old means ---- before 1888, because in that year Lecomte patented the single octave-key.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Source: Saxophone History Timeline 1840-1995

Another instrument “saxophone en do” from Lecomte, dated around 1880, can be found in the collection of the university in Tübingen, Germany. A lot of other, smaller firms did make C tenor saxophones such as René Guenot, Halari (= Jean Hilaire Asté) et Sudre, and Albert Douchet.

A special place in the making of C melody saxophones must be credited to Vito Leblanc. In the 1960s they tried to give the C tenor saxophone a new life. They gave an order to Beaugnier in Mantes, France (which was owned by Leblanc) to build a new type C melody saxophone<sup>75</sup>. The experiment was not a success. From about 120 instruments built, there were just about 20 to 50 sold,<sup>76</sup> despite the high quality of the instrument. According to a German saxophone player, there were some significant differences between the Beaugnier saxophone and vintage C melodies.<sup>77</sup> Length (without bow about 64 cm, vintage 61 cm), weight (Beaugnier 2,7 kg, vintage between 2,1 and 2,6 kilos) and the measurements of the bell do make this instrument a real modern saxophone.

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<sup>75</sup> See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8dOewmS9k4>

<sup>76</sup> On <http://www.saxophone.org/forum/thread/id/5788> Steve Goodson writes that Vito Leblanc told him, that “the C melody horns were a very difficult sale to make, then that less than 50 were actually sent to dealers.”

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.simplysax.mynetcologne.de/Vito.htm>

## GREAT BRITAIN

In Great Britain C melody instruments were found in the catalogues of Jedson, Hawkes & Son and John Grey and Sons.



*John Grey and Sons C melody saxophone. Build in Italy.*

Jedson listed three different types of saxophone. There was a line under their own name (but probably produced by Rampone), another line were the Italian Rampone instruments and the third line was the French “Invicta”-line by Paul Cavour. For all these types also C melody saxophones were mentioned. Especially Hawkes and Son, which was founded about 1860 as a music publisher, made a name for their

building of band instruments. British jazz-player John Dankworth (1927-2010) played a 1921 Hawkes C melody for a while. One example of the Hawkes C melody saxophone, an instrument from about 1925 with 20 keys, can be seen in the Edinburgh University Collection of historical musical instruments. Nevertheless, it is probably true, that Hawkes also did import saxophones. An internet-source says, that Martin exported several of their lines to the United Kingdom and that they were sold there under the Hawkes name.<sup>78</sup>

Then there is John Grey and Sons. Not clear is if they produced their own line or just distributed French and Italian instruments under their own name. The picture of the bell from one of the Grey instruments says that the instrument was made in Lugano, the Italian part of Switzerland.

## GERMANY

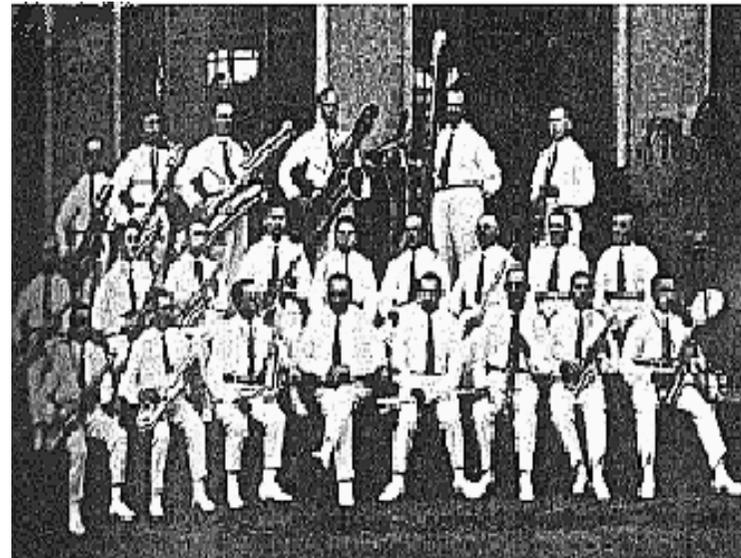


It took a long time before the saxophone was introduced in Germany

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<sup>78</sup> Alan ?? on Csax.net

and it is said, that the company of Oscar Adler around 1901 produced the first saxophone in Germany. The Adler buildings were situated, as the most of the instrument builders in those days in Germany, in Markneukirchen, Vogtland, in an area in the east of Germany, close to the Czech borders. It is remarkable that the main part of German instrument building was settled in that same area and most of the catalogues I have seen do mention the C melody instruments.<sup>79</sup>



*The Kohlert company saxophone orchestra.*

In a catalogue dated 1932 the firm describes itself as “the first and oldest saxophone manufacturer in Germany”. They also mention, that before WW I they did deliver a great deal of their instruments to the USA! In the 1932 catalogue they present seven series of saxophones:

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<sup>79</sup> Photo from: <http://www.cmelodysax.co.uk/saxophones/oa-cmel.htm>

the “Ocu”, “Relda”, “Racso”, “Gloria”. “Eterna”, “Sonora” and “Triumpf”. All these series do contain a “Tenor in B oder C” in two or three finishes. The Triumpf-serie knows a high F-sharp and G, which have to be played with the left-hand second and third finger!

Another important saxophone manufacturer is Victor Kohlert. Although not German but Czech were the buildings of this company in Graslitz less than 10 km from the companies in Markneukirchen. Kohlert had a large production and even founded a company saxophone orchestra. They made sopranos in C and B flat, altos in F and E flat, tenor saxophones in C and B flat, baritone, bass and contra-bass saxophones. For their C Tenor saxophone, they mention that the instrument is very well suited to the amateur-player and that “it can replace all C instruments and the cello”. All saxophones can be bought in six finishes.



Kohlert catalogue from the seventies

Kohlert did produce C melody saxophones until the 1970s. Their Regent-model was still mentioned in their catalogue in those years. Kohlert was also the saxophone manufacturer who had the longest line in building C melody saxophones.

Wer ein vollkommenes vorzügliches Saxophon wünscht, wähle mein Modell „Cea“

No.	Stück RM.	Ausführ. I stark vernickelt, hell poliert	Ausführ. II stark halb- matt versilbert, Becher innen vergoldet u. hellpoliert	Ausführ. III 4-fach sandmatt versilbert, Klappen und erhabene Teile hellpol., Becher innen vergoldet und hellpoliert	Ausführ. IV 4-fach sandmatt versilbert, Klappen und einzelne Teile erhabene Teile hellpol., Becher innen vergoldet und hellpoliert	Ausführ. V 4-fach sandmatt vergoldet, Klappen und erhabene Teile hellpol., Becher innen hell- poliert
19a Es-Sopran	270.—	306.25	320.—	375.—	423.—	
20a C-	270.—	306.25	320.—	375.—	423.—	
21a B- " gerade Form	270.—	306.25	320.—	375.—	423.—	
22a B- " gebog. " wie Es-Alto	336.50	386.—	402.—	468.—	508.50	
23a Es-Alto	348.—	407.50	425.—	510.—	565.—	
24a B-Tenor	382.50	466.50	485.—	585.—	638.—	
24 <sup>1/2</sup> a C-Tenor (C-Melody)	382.50	466.50	485.—	585.—	638.—	
25a Es-Bariton	478.75	560.—	580.—	723.—	813.50	
26a B-Baß	848.—	948.—	975.—	1185.—	1365.—	
27a Es-Contra-Baß	1623.—	1944.—	2186.—	2450.—	2610.—	

C.A. Wunderlich – finishes in 1938

Also, the company of Gottlob Hermann Hüller in Schöneck, Germany produced a complete saxophone line from about 1921. A C-tenor saxophone from about 1925 from this company lies in the Bate Collection of Musical Instruments.

C.A. Wunderlich from Siebenbrunn, Germany, showed in its 1938 catalogue five different finishes of their C melody instruments which had prices from 382 to 638 Reichsmark.

Then there was Johann Gottfried Dunger from Erlbach. He produced three models:

- the model Dilettant which went down just to low B
- the model Chiara which was meant for professional players and that went down to low B flat
- the model Elite, which had a “künstlerisch gravierte Becher”



*Adler C melody saxophone no 2183*

A nice story came from the Heckel-firm. Mrs. Reiter<sup>80</sup> from Heckel. She wrote me that Heckel built saxophones from 1889 until 1909. That means first, that they made a saxophone before Oskar Adler! In that time about 30 saxophones were built and sold, mainly to military bands. Just one tenor saxophone was sold in 1897 and that was an instrument in B flat. Most remarkable is that Mrs. Reiter sent me a copy of a Heckel catalogue from 1931 and that catalogue does mention, in three languages, saxophones and even “Saxophon Melodie in C”! That

<sup>80</sup> Mail-correspondence with Heckel from 2 to 15 april 2013

could lead to a conclusion, that several German manufacturers did list saxophones in their catalogues, but did not or not any more produce them?

In the book “Faszination Saxophon” written by Günter Dullat and published by the friends of the Museum for Musical Instruments in Markneukirchen a complete chapter is dedicated to the German C melody saxophones. The author of this chapter, Klaus Hoffmann, states, that “the European C melody saxophones are real C instruments. They do not try to compete with the full-sounding Bb tenor or the clear and dominant sound of the Eb alto but do cultivate a complete individual character of sound.”



**Saxophone in Ausführung A**  
 Einlath, mit B- und C- (Alt und Tenor mit D-) Triller.

**Saxophones Class A**  
 Plain, with B<sup>b</sup> and C, Alto and Tenor with D trill.

**Saxophones de la Série A**  
 Instruments simples, cadence de sib et ut (Alto et le ténor out en outre la cadence de ré).

No. 943 **Tenor in C oder B** Das C-Melodie- oder Tenor-Saxophon ist das gebräuchlichste der Hausmusik-Instrumente. Sein Ton ist weich und weittragend. Die Singstimme kann ohne Transponieren gespielt werden.

**Tenor in C or B<sup>b</sup>** The C Melody or Tenor Saxophon is the popular one of the family for home playing as it requires no transposition when playing the Voice parts and its tone is peculiarly rich and mellow and especially desirable when playing the melody.

No. 943 **Tenor en ut ou sib** Le saxophone Tenor en ut ou sib est très mélodieux, son timbre se lève merveilleusement à celui des instruments de cuivre, qu'il renforce.

No. 947 **Bariton in F oder Es** Das B-Tenor, Bariton- und Bass-Saxophon wird in Saxophon-Orchester, Quartett oder Quintett verwendet.

No. 947 **Bariton in F or Eb**  
 No. 950 **Bass in B<sup>b</sup>** The B<sup>b</sup> Tenor, Bariton and Bass-Saxophone is used for Band, Quartet and Quintet Music.

No. 947 **Baryton en Fa ou M<sup>b</sup>** Le saxophone Baryton en Fa ou M<sup>b</sup> fait parti du quatuor, il prolonge l'étendue dans le grave en donne l'impression d'une bonne basse chantante.

No. 950 **Basse en sib** Le saxophone basse en ut ou sib remplace avantageusement la basse de cuivre, la pureté des sons et le timbre sont des plus agréables et l'effet est semblable à celui des tuyaux d'orgues.

No. 947 **Bariton in F oder Es**

Page from a catalogue from F.X. Hüller (1922)

**feinste Ausführung** **Saxophone** **Reine Stimmung**  
 Neuestes System mit allen Verbesserungen

Wir absolut reine Stimmung, leichte Ansprache in allen Lagen und solide Bauart übernehmen wir volle Garantie. Die Preise der Saxophone verstehen sich einschließlich Notenhalter, Tragriemen und mit Schutzkapsel im Stimmzug gegen Beschädigung der Oktavklappe. Die Bariton-Saxophone werden mit abnehmbaren Mundrohr geliefert.

Besondere Wünsche wegen Klappenlage werden gern berücksichtigt.

**Erstklassige Saxophone**  
 mit B- und C-Triller, doppeltes B für rechten u. linken Zeigefinger, Alt und Tenor bis hoch F gehend, Holzmundstück-Messing vernickelt.

Nr. 1365 **Sopran** in B, C od. Es, Messing vern. Mk. 160.— Irko.  
 Nr. 1366 **Allform**, in B od. C . . . . . 205.—  
 Nr. 1367 **Alt** in Es . . . . . 250.—  
 Nr. 1368 **Tenor** in B oder C . . . . . 270.—  
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**Solisten-Instrumente**  
 von hervorragender Qualität mit den gebräuchlichsten modernsten Verbesserungen

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 von tief B bis hoch F gehend, im Mechanismus wie die modernsten amerikanischen und französischen Instrumente ausgestaltet, doch extra mit unseren Erfindungen hoch C-D-Trillerklappe (man greift C und trillert mit der D-Trillerklappe) gleichzeitig sicheres Bindung H-B, 7. Rolle für leichte Bindung B-H (großer Vorteil bei Saxophon-Solist), Alt- und Tenor-Saxophon mit Stimmregulierschraube, Permulierfingerplatten, schwarzes Kautschuk-Mundstück, feine Gravur am Schallbecher, Messing vern.

Nr. 1805 **Sopran**, gerade Form, in Boder C Mk. 265.— Irko.  
 Nr. 1805 1/2 **gebogene Allform**, in B od. C . . . . . 320.—  
 Nr. 1806 **Alt** in Es . . . . . 350.—  
 Nr. 1806 1/2 **Tenor** in C (C-Melodie) . . . . . 370.—

Nr. 1807 **Tenor** in B . . . . . Mk. 385.— Irko.  
 Nr. 1808 **Baryton** in Es . . . . . 460.—  
 Nr. 1809 **Baß** in B . . . . . 620.—

In starker Versilberung und Vergoldung erhöhen sich die Preise um ca. 30%.

**Fis-Klappe, bis tief B gehend, Sopran, Alt, Tenor, Baß u. Bariton bis hoch F, doppelte Es-Klappe für rechten Mittelfinger, hoch F-Hebel-Mechanik für linken Zeigefinger, Orpheus-Bepolsterung, Schallbecher mit Verzierung graviert, Permulierfingerplatten, Holzmundstück, Messing vernickelt.**

Nr. 5805 **Sopran**, gerade Form, in B, C od. Es, Mk. 215.— Irko.  
 Nr. 5805 1/2 **gebogene Allform**, in B od. C . . . . . 270.—  
 Nr. 5806 **Alt** in Es . . . . . 285.—  
 Nr. 5806 1/2 **Tenor** in C (C-Melodie) . . . . . 320.—  
 Nr. 5807 **Tenor** in B . . . . . 335.—  
 Nr. 5808 **Baryton** in Es . . . . . 410.—  
 Nr. 5808 1/2 **Baß** in B . . . . . 570.—

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Falls Alt oder Tenor mit **Stimmregulierschraube** ausgestattet mehr . . . . . Mk. 13.—

**Futterale und Bestandteile, für Saxophone**

Nr. 39	Futterale, Kofferform, Kanstleder bezogen	Alt	35	Tenor	48	Bariton	60	Baß	98
	Tuch gefüllt	Sopran	19		35		35		50
	Tragriemen, Leder	Stück	3,50		3,50		3,50		3,50
	Mundstücke, ohne Zubehör	Dutzend	12,20		12,20		12,20		12,20
	Blattschrauben	Stück	4,80		2,20		2,50		2,80
	Polster	Stück	2,80		4,80		5,50		10,50

There were many more German instrument builders that had the "Tenorsaxophon in C" in their production. Remarkable is, that the firm of Husberg in Westfalen also produced curved soprano saxophones.

## OTHER COUNTRIES

It is known that the Italian Rampone and Cazzani produced C melody saxophones. That they were in cooperation with the British Jedson becomes clear on a picture of a Rampone C melody, which shows on the bell the name of the Jedson firm. Rampone could not give more information on their C Melody saxophones. They meant, about 50 saxophones were produced between 1920 and 1930.<sup>81</sup>



*Bell of a Rampone & Cazzani C melody. Pay attention to the name of the British Jedson-firm*

There was just a very small production of C tenor saxophones in Belgium and the Netherlands. Famous in those days in Belgium was the company of Charles Mahillon, which produced some fine instruments. According to Dr. Ignace De Keyser Mahillon just produced

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<sup>81</sup> Mail from Rampone & Cazzani, March 2018

saxophones for band work and built only the Eb/Bb series<sup>82</sup>. There was one builder that also made a C tenor model. Jacques Albert Fils whose grandfather studied clarinet with Adolph Sax and invented the Albert-system for the clarinet, made saxophones under the name "saxosolophone" and had also a "saxophone tenor en ut" in their line.



One of the first, if not the first, company in the Netherlands that made saxophones was Kessels in Tilburg. As Mahillon they produced for the developing amateur windbands. As far as I could investigate, they never produced C instruments or had them in their catalogues. Then we make a step to Brazil. I found a Scavone C Melody saxophone which equals the Aquila instruments and found out that the

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<sup>82</sup> Mail from Dr Ignace De Keyser from April 29, 2018

firm Weril builds saxophones, that were mostly for the Brazilian market. Weril stated that they made C melody saxophones from 1948 to 1982 and in those years about 2000 instruments were built. They could not mention what the differences were between the early models and the newer ones and did not give information on the musicians who bought a C Melody saxophone.<sup>83</sup>

In 2007 an Australian company announced to produce a new series of C tenor saxophones. Aquila Sax is led by Steve Wedgwood and brought out the first instruments in 2009 and found Italian player Gilberto Monetti as one of its promoters.

The C mel of Aquila is a bit longer than the vintage Conn to provide space for the high F fingering. It is made in several finishes and it is possible to get mouthpieces for classical and jazz music. The website of Aquila sax gives much information to this new, modern type of C Melody saxophones.

Also, in China a new model C melody is produced. In Shandong the manufacturer Lonkou East Star Musical Instruments are producing the “East Star” instruments. They offer a gold-lacquer instrument for about \$ 300-500 and a brush silver finish for maximum \$ 800.<sup>84</sup> For some time they expanded their c melody line with several other finishes as black nickel and black nickel gold, Antique and Electrophoresis Gold.

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<sup>83</sup> Mail from Weril to Ton Verhiel, March 2018

<sup>84</sup> [http://www.alibaba.com/product-gs/552187143/c\\_flat\\_saxophone.html](http://www.alibaba.com/product-gs/552187143/c_flat_saxophone.html)

All these saxes have a high F-sharp and some of them are sold with two necks.<sup>85</sup>

Since 2012 a melody saxophone is available from the German Musichouse Thomann. They offer two types: the Thomann CMS-600 S, a silver-plated instrument and the Thomann CMS-600 L, a clear lacquered instrument. Of both types Thomann says: “neck with tuner screw, high F# key, adjustable thumb hook, sax pad with disc of metal, incl. Zinner 62C Ebonite Thomann 4 C- Melody Tenor Sax mouthpiece, neck strap and light case with backpack straps.”<sup>86</sup>



*Neck of the Thomann C melody saxophone*

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<sup>85</sup> A test of this instruments can be seen on:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zl4FsMDFk1o>

<sup>86</sup> [http://www.thomann.de/nl/thomann\\_cms600\\_l\\_c\\_melody\\_sax.htm](http://www.thomann.de/nl/thomann_cms600_l_c_melody_sax.htm)

## MOUTHPIECES

Mouthpieces from early days:

One of the great discussion points today is the use of the mouthpiece with C tenor saxophones. Some sources indicate that Rudie Wiedoeft probably used an alto saxophone mouthpiece on his sax and it is supposed that Frank Trumbauer did the same, at least for a while.

Original vintage mouthpieces are still in existence. Conn and Buescher instruments are often sold with their original mouthpiece. One of the popular Conn mouthpieces in those days was called "Eagle".



*The Eagle picture on Conn mouthpieces*

Also, some other mouthpieces are still available and searching the popular selling sites you can find examples of the Chicago produced Goldbeck mouthpieces (also in metal), which was said that Wiedoeft used them one for a while. Not just Wiedoeft lent his name to instruments and mouthpieces also Benne H. Henton produced his own mouthpiece series in the 1920s. Henton was one of the most famous soloists of the Sousa band. He was one of the first saxophonists to play in the altissimo register. The Henton mouthpiece, I found an example in red, was available in three facings.

**HENTON Mouthpiece**  
NOW WORLD-FAMOUS

REDUCED PRICE (Clarinet, Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone, Melody Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone) **\$7.50** EACH

1) Dental Hard Rubber (Patented) 2) Nickel Silver Facing Plate (Patented) 3) Henton Curve Facing (Patented) 4) Perfected Tone Chamber (Patented) 5) Hard Rubber Vibration Tip (Patented) 6) Choice of Three Different Facings 7) Adopted and Recommended by the World's Greatest Artists



**HENTON-KNECHT**  
MADE IN U.S.A.

Order direct thru your dealer



*A King C melody mouthpiece*

Also, Holton and King had their own mouthpieces. Holton of course produced a Rudy Wiedoeft model and King produced some very beautiful looking, deep red mouthpieces with a gold metal ring at the end.



*A Rudy Wiedoeft model mouthpiece*

Other special mouthpieces were the Naujocs McLaughlin mouthpieces and the Penn mouthpiece from Los Angeles. The first ones were made from ebonite but had a metal shank. The Penn mouthpiece was completely white!

Then there are the Goldbeck, metal mouthpieces, which are highly sought-after. There was one for sale recently on Ebay and the price

was 349 Euros! Also, a Chedeville C melody mouthpiece from the twenties was sold for about \$ 100.

It is fact that the ideas about sound and tone quality have changed during the decades. Early mouthpieces had a short shank and did not have the volume that is expected today. The discussion on what mouthpiece should be used on the C melodies is a very personal one and depends on the sound the player wants to achieve. There are many discussions to find on the internet talking about mouthpieces for C melody saxophones and you will wonder how many different combinations are used by all these saxophone players.



*A Goldbeck C Melody mouthpiece*

Mouthpieces from this days:

C melody saxophones, with the exception of the above-mentioned instruments, have not been in production for some 70 to 80 years. It is therefore remarkable how many contemporary firms do still produce mouthpieces for the C melody saxophone. Some of them are interesting enough to take a closer look.

### Babbitt

The J.J. Babbitt mouthpieces have been made since 1919. They have their home in Elkhart, Indiana (USA)

For the C melody they produce black, sculptured plastic mouthpieces with medium, medium open and open lays. One of the players in a contemporary, classical hemisphere who plays a Babbitt mouthpiece is French saxophonist Serge Bertocchi.

### Beechler

Elmer Beechler started in 1942 to produce mouthpieces for clarinets and saxophones. Until now, they also manufacture mouthpieces for C melody saxophones and they produce them in the facings #2 until #10<sup>87</sup>. According to the Cybersax website the Beechler mouthpieces are “perfect for smooth jazz, praise & worship”.<sup>88</sup> Price of these

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.beechler.com/tipopenings.htm>

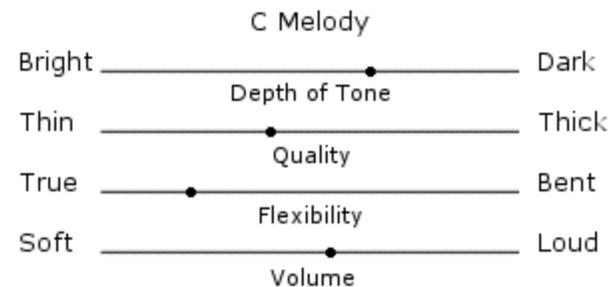
<sup>88</sup> <http://www.cybersax.com/4Sale/Saxophones/Tenors/CmelTurnkeys.html>

mouthpieces is about \$ 100<sup>89</sup>. Saxophonist Dave Pietro uses a Beechler #7 mouthpiece on his Selmer C melody saxophone.

### Morgan

Ralph Morgan started to make his own mouthpieces in the 1980s. His C melody mouthpiece, which costs between \$ 265 and \$ 340, is described as made with a “hard rubber formula similar to the hard rubber used to make mouthpieces in the 1920s – 1950s.”<sup>90</sup> Morgan claims his C melody mouthpiece is “easily the best C-Melody mouthpieces on the market and possibly the best ever made. If you are a serious C-Melody player, this is the mouthpiece for you.”

### Runyon



*Sound Chart for the Runyon C melody mouthpiece*

<sup>89</sup> In 2013/2014

<sup>90</sup>

[http://www.morganmouthpieces.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Store\\_Code=mm&Screen=PROD&Product\\_Code=RMCM](http://www.morganmouthpieces.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Store_Code=mm&Screen=PROD&Product_Code=RMCM)

The Runyon firm is located in Lafayette, Louisiana, USA and is founded by saxophonist Clinton "Santy" Runyon (1907 - 2003). In 1941 he started to make mouthpieces and did so until now.

As I started to gather information for this booklet, the Runyon website did mention their C melody mouthpieces. They were available in several facings as is #4 - #7 and did come with a spoiler to increase volume. The site even provided a Sound Chart for the C melody mouthpiece that was for Jazz Combo, Sax Quartet, Concert Band, and Wind Ensemble. They were sold for \$ 109 to \$ 126 (with spoiler)

In September 2013 the C melody mouthpieces were not mentioned anymore on Runyon website.<sup>91</sup>

### Woodwind

These mouthpieces were produced by the French Libelant factory. As far as I could investigate, they are not in production anymore. Leo van Oostrom played this mouthpiece on his King C melody.

### Zinner

The Zinner mouthpieces are quite often used. Hans Zinner handcrafted mouthpieces are settled in Markrodach, Bavaria, Germany. They produce two types of C melody mouthpieces, one for classical music (# 62C) with parallel sidewalls and one for jazz (# 78C). The classical mouthpiece knows several facings from number 2 (1,55 mm) to

number 7 (2,15 mm). Best available are the numbers 4 (1,80 mm), 5 (1,95 mm) and number 6 (2.05 mm). Prices are about 150 Euros

Ronald Caravan, FAXX and Bill Street all produce mouthpieces for the C melody saxophone. Aquila sax offers several possibilities. Metal and ebonite and that all with several tip openings and facings. So... make your choice.



*An Aquila sax metal mouthpiece for C melody*

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<sup>91</sup> <http://www.runyonproducts.com/index.html>

## REEDS

It is very well possible to use modern alto- or tenor saxophone reeds on C melody mouthpieces, but there were and are reeds especially for this saxophone. Here are some examples:



*These once were at a price of 40 cents. On the right C melody reeds from Rico, Italy. Beneath a box with reeds from Buffet predecessor Evette & Schaeffer.*



It is possible to think of a great many combinations of C melody sax, mouthpiece and reed. Here are a few I found on the web:

- Buescher stencil Wurlitzer C Melody saxophone with a Morgan #5, C melody mouthpiece and a Fibracell 2.5, Bb tenor reed
- Conn Chu Berry silver plated C melody with a Rico Metalite M7 (tenor) mouthpiece and a Rico Royal 3 reed
- Buescher True Tone Gold-plated C Melody saxophone with a Metal link 6 (tenor) saxophone mouthpiece and a Rico Royal 3 reed
- Rudy Wiedoef Holton: silver body/ gold keys C Melody saxophone with a Goldbeck C mouthpiece and a Vandoren bass clarinet #3 reed
- Conn C-melody with straight micro-tuner neck in matte silver with a Yamaha 4C alto mouthpiece and a Legere plastic reed
- Conn straight neck with metal reflector pads fitted C melody saxophone with an Aquila sax Curved-neck, a Berg Larsen Tenor Duckbill 120/0 mouthpiece and a Rico Jazz Select 2H reed
- Silver Buescher C-melody saxophone with a vintage Brillhart EboLin tenor piece and a Legere 3.5 tenor reed.



## THE FUTURE OF THE C SAXOPHONES

It is clear that there is a growing interest in the C tenor saxophone. Especially jazz players are devoting themselves to this instrument. Also the huge quantity of discussion forums and the amount of sold saxophones on the most famous selling sites on the World Wide Web indicates that there is a lot to do around C saxophones. In the last few years prices are getting higher. In 2010 you could buy a used C melody saxophone for about \$ 400. Now, 2017, you have to pay at least \$ 600 to \$ 700 for a good instrument and prices are still going up. The company Aquila sax sees new possibilities for C instruments and has produced a complete new series of C tenors and will come out with a new C soprano saxophone during 2009. Also, American craftsman Jim Schmidt did build a type of saxophone in C, which he calls a "saxophone contralto in C".

It would have disappointed Adolph Sax that his C/F family did not win the position in classical music he had in mind, but maybe he would be happy to know that at least one member of this exceptional saxophone family has a future in musical life. Not especially in classical and military music, but in styles Adolph sax did not know: jazz, easy listening and world music. And ending this excursion I must conclude:

The C melody saxophone is a saxophone just as all the other saxophones and it was always treated in that way!



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