

= Buster Smith =

Henry " Buster " Smith (August 24 , 1904 ? August 10 , 1991) , also known as Professor Smith , was an American jazz alto saxophonist and mentor to Charlie Parker . Smith was instrumental in instituting the Texas Sax Sound with Count Basie and Lester Young in the 1930s . Smith played saxophone for a range of musicians including Duke Ellington , Ella Fitzgerald and Earl Hines , though in his career only recorded one solo album in 1959 . Despite intending to release a follow @-@ up in the 1960s , Smith was injured in an accident leading to a follow @-@ up never eventuating .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

Smith was born and raised in Alsdorf , Texas , a small township near Telico in the outskirts of Dallas , where he attended school as a child . Smith earned the name " Buster " from his parents as a baby , as he was born as an overweight child . Buster was the third of five boys and had no sisters , though both of his older brothers died in childhood of measles .

Smith 's early musical influences were his mother , and his father , who played guitar . At the age of four years , Buster was playing the organ with his brother , pianist Boston Smith ; Buster played the keys and Boston stepped on the pedals . Soon thereafter , his grandfather gave away the family organ because he believed it would only direct Buster to a life of sin .

= = = Early career = = =

In 1919 , Smith picked cotton for a week to earn himself the money to buy a \$ 3 @.@ 50 clarinet . Smith learned to play several instruments by the time he was eighteen years old . In 1922 , Smith and his family moved to Dallas . He joined the Voodie White Trio , playing Alto saxophone and clarinet . In 1923 , he began his professional music career playing alto saxophone with the medicine shows , though he had to play very loudly to draw in more customers . This experience led to Smith defining his own musical style , known for being loud . The time with the medicine shows also led to Oran " Hot Lips " Page inviting Smith to join his group , the Oklahoma City Blue Devils , in 1925 . Over the next few years , Smith wrote much of the group 's music , learning from banjo player Johnny Clark , writing lyrics with co @-@ workers from the bank that he worked in .

= = = Peak success = = =

When Smith joined the Blue Devils , the line @-@ up consisted of Walter Page , Oran Page , Lester Young , Count Basie , Jimmy Rushing , and Emir " Bucket " Coleman . They toured the Kansas City area and the Midwest , playing jazz for a year , bringing all of its members into prominence . Basie and Page both left the group ; however Smith decided to stay on , though this was very short lived and soon after he left also . After leaving the group , he and Basie formed the Buster Smith @-@ Count Basie Band of Rhythm , where the two innovated a louder style of Jazz . Buster 's contribution to the unique sound was by using a tenor saxophone reed in his alto saxophone to achieve a louder , " fatter " sound . Lester Young also joined the band and , to complement Smith 's louder sound , he also opted for a heavier reed , using a baritone saxophone reed on his tenor saxophone . This sound was later labelled the Texas Sax Sound . Smith gained a great amount of influence in the Texan music community and industry . Smith mentored legendary saxophonist Charlie Parker during the 1930s , developing a " father @-@ son relationship " through mentoring Parker .

In 1941 , Smith decided to return to Dallas and to cease touring , though he remained active in the local music scene . In the following years , he wrote for jazz and blues bands , played often , and taught many young Texan musicians , including Aaron " T @-@ Bone " Walker and Red Garland

among others . He also performed session work with artists such as Pete Johnson 's Boogie @-@ Woogie Boys , Eddie Durham , Leo " Snub " Mosley , Bon and His Buddies , and the Don Redman Orchestra .

= = = Solo career = = =

In 1959 , Buster led his first solo recording session in Fort Worth , as prompted by Atlantic Records . From these sessions , released by Atlantic with the title The Legendary Buster Smith , Smith 's notable songs included " Kansas City Riffs , " " Buster 's Tune , " " E Flat Boogie , " and Kurt Weill 's " September Song . " For the sessions , Buster enlisted his brother Boston Smith to play piano , along with musicians spanning his career to date .

= = = Later life = = =

In the 1960s , Smith was involved in auto accident , in which he was injured and no longer able to play the saxophone . In order to continue playing music , he started to play the bass guitar throughout Dallas and continued to participate in the Dallas musical community . Buster led a dance music band until 1980 , and played in the Legendary Revelations in the mid @-@ 1980s . Smith died in Dallas on August 10 , 1991 of a heart attack .

= = Discography = =

The Legendary Buster Smith , Atlantic Records , 1959 (Reissued by Koch Records , 1999)