

“ACOUSTIC BLUES”

SPRING 1994

NO. 7

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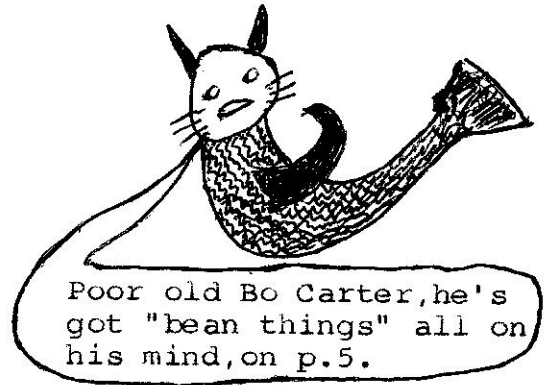
EDITORIAL

Well hello there,blues-lovin' people. I'm afraid that the mag. has "lost weight" and is back down to 16 pages! It was either that or,due to rising printing costs,an increase in price. I'll keep it "doun' to a poun'" for as long as possible. My apologies to our graphics expert,Rich 'T'. Of course the excellent drawing of Lucille Bogan on p.5 of the last issue was by him,also.

On a 'good news' note,acoustic blues is definitely moving into top gear,in this country anyhow. For instance,the 6th. National Burnley Blues Festival(31st.Mar.-4th.Apr.)have extended acoustic sessions into late-night spots,from 1st.Apr.-4th.Apr. Starting at 10.00 thru' til two. I booked three of the support acts and am running the Acoustic Stage(1st.Apr.-3rd.Apr.)in the afternoons from 12.00-6.00.

And as well as the blues clubs I mentioned last time,there is one in central London run by Kevin Hillier called "AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT" at 20,Kingley St. W1R 5LB. He's putting blues (mostly acoustic) on nearly every night of the week (see Gig Guide on p.11). On top of that,bluesman Alamo Leal,president of the Bristol R'n B Society,is opening a "Home of the Blues" centre at the Kings Arms pub in Bristol on 7th.Apr. Electric blues will be downstairs and the "ALLEY CAT BLUES CLUB" for acoustic-lovin' felines is upstairs. The opening night will feature the ALAMO LEAL BLUESVILLE BAND and upstairs in the ALLEY CAT will be KENT DUCHAINE,famous dobro player from New Orleans - well, great googly-doo!!

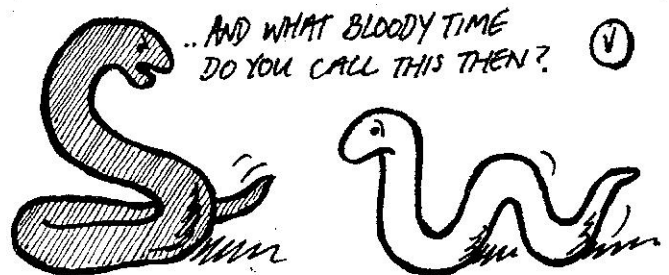
From then on it will be every Tuesday nite at the "Home of the Blues in the Kings Arms. This is by way of a "STOP PRESS" report and a much more comprehensive one is even now winging its way to me fo' No.8! Look forward to seeing you,Alamo(you mean slide-guitar playing fool!!)at Burnley +all you other blues fans. YEAH!



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Answers to Professor No-Hair's puzzles in No.8 -"goin' down to the crosswords,tryin' to flag a clue"!!!



Black Snake moan - by Rich T.

"BABY PLEASE DON'T GO" - Pt.2
(Origins of a blues)

Although the song is "...ex-
tant in many versions" (1), it was, sur-
prisingly, rarely recorded before
1942; the pre-war blues era. Some of
the prolifically recorded artists
who could easily have adapted the
song for black urban tastes in the
1930s, such as Memphis Minnie, Big
Bill, Jazz Gillum or Tampa Red, seemed
to ignore the song; at least on their
recordings. However, a couple of
"covers" did crop up on wax between
Joe Williams's 2 recording dates al-
ready discussed (1935 and 1941) which
included the first version of the
song on disc.

The first one occurred almost
a year after "Baby Please Don't Go"
hit the record stores. In September,
1936, a singer known only as "Tampa
Kid" cut the song under the same
title (unheard by me) in Chicago for
Decca Records. Constituting one-
half of his recorded output, the
only detail we know is that "This
singer gives a passable imitation of
Tampa Red" (2). Perhaps this is why
he disappeared into obscurity so
quickly.

An artist who is better known,
Leonard Caston, recorded his "Baby
Please Don't Go" incorporating the
"walk the log" verse into his title,
some 18 months prior to Joe Williams
second version of the song. Caston,
usually a guitarist and pianist as-
sociated with the 'slick' harmonising
blues with the Five Breezes (whose
recording session in 1940 marked the
debut on wax, of bass man/songwriter
Willie Dixon) and the Big Three Trio
in post-war years, is surprisingly
'raw' and unsophisticated. An unde-
ntified washboard player supplies a
choppy rhythm to Caston's guitar and
vocal:

1. "Gonna walk your log,
Gonna walk your log;
If I ever get you back to
rolling fog,
I'm gonna walk your log."
2. "Oh! your bread ain't done.
Oh! your bread ain't done;
Well, I like them ways you

cook your cabbage greens,
But your bread ain't done."

3. "You down in Natchez town,
You down in Natchez town;
Well the girl I love she love
to run around,
She down in Natchez town."
4. "Gonna cut 'er head,
Gonna cut 'er head;
I mean that man's about to
lie down here,
I'm gon' cut 'er head."
5. Repeat verse 1.
6. "Down in New Orleans,
Down in New Orleans;
Well the girl I love she take
the cold ice cream,
She down in New Orleans."
7. Repeat verse 1.

(3)

Although Caston as "Baby Doo"
omitted the title verse of "Baby
Please Don't Go" he retains Joe's
opening verse from the 1935 record-
ing. He further establishes links
with this version by his use of a
washboard player, and leaving out
all references to the county farm,
long chain, etc. Caston concentra-
tes on the mistreating woman. This
includes the culinary symbolism
for her art at making love in
verse 2. While reference to Natch-
ez reminds the listener of his
Mississippi origins (he was born
near Hattiesburg, Miss. in 1917 and
died "22 August 1987, Minneapolis,
Minnesota", (4)).

« **B**aby, Please Don't Go" is oft-
en associated with Poor/Big Joe
Williams (in 1963, Paul Oliver cred-
ited him with composing it) who
recorded several post-war versions
of the song. But both he and "Baby
Doo" Caston drew on a group of
earlier blues songs: "Alabama
Bound"/Elder Greenè's In Town"/
"Don't Leave Me Here". Oliver re-
ports that a Texas collector "pub-
lished...an "Alabama Boun'" with
Elder Green verses, which he dated
from 1908." (5). As Oliver notes,

in 1925,banjoist Papa Charlie Jackson's "I'm Alabama Bound" showed the links between all three titles. "Elder Greene" would be featured on later recordings by Blind Lemon Jefferson,Charlie Patton,(1920s) and in 1958 by Mississippi singer/guitarist "Cat-Iron". "Alabama Bound" was recorded by Leadbelly in 1935 and 1940 and cropped up c.1956 by Lonnie Donegan during the British skiffle craze! Whilst "Don't Leave Me Here" was first recorded in 1927 by a Mississippi group who were sometimes billed as "Sunny Boy And His Pals" or "Long Cleve Reed" and "Little Harvey Hull". Tampa Red and Georgia Tom backed each other's vocals on "Mama Don't Leave Me Here"(1931) and "Don't Leave Me Here"(1932), respectively;but are 2 versions of an unrelated blues.



LONG CLEVE REED and LITTLE HARVEY HULL—The Sunny Boy Band
Recorded the classic "Song of Bluesy Old Woman"

Washboard Sam recorded "Don't Leave Me Here" in 1938, again unheard by me, but is probably an urbanised version of the Long Cleve Reed title or of "Baby Please Don't Go". The melody from this group of songs was utilised and speeded up with a more aggressive approach to the vocal. In deed, Big Joe William's first post-war version of "Baby Please Don't Go" was titled "Don't You Leave Me Here", made in 1947. Though the string bass of Ransom Knowling and the drums of Judge Riley have been added to Sonny Boy's harp, giving a 'Chicago blues' feel to the song, Joe himself, curiously, harks back to many of the lines of his 1935 recording with fiddle and washboard. These include the reference to "his long chain on" and "my baby's done lyin'". Joe substitutes the phrase 'don't

you leave me here' for 'baby please don't go' and changes the Southern locale of New Orleans for the more relevant one of Chicago, where he cut this track.

But it was not the Chicago blues giants like Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf, Little Walter, Elmore James, etc. who kept the song alive in the earlier post-war years. It was left to singers of the older rural blues styles. Like Delta bluesman Bukka White who first recorded in 1930 but didn't cut "Baby Please Don't Go" until 1963 for John Fahey's Takoma label. In the same year, Big Joe re-recorded it as "Don't You Leave Me Here" in Copenhagen, with just his nine-string guitar, on Storyville. Both of these were on album(L.P.) releases. In the late 1970s, Georgia



Big Joe + 9-string 'axe' on cover of Arhoolie L.P. 1961.

blues singer, William Robertson recorded (also on L.P.) a dark and intense "Baby Please Don't Go" with bottleneck guitar for Flyright. This was one of Robertson's "unique adaptations of commercial recordings," (6). On the same album, Bastin informs us that John Lee Ziegler, some 7 years younger than Robertson (b.1929), "performed...BABY PLEASE DON'T GO in 1951," (7). This was at an annual Fort Valley Ham and Eggs Festival held in southern Georgia

featuring black sacred and secular music from 1940 to the middle 1950s. It was incorporated into a rural agricultural show run by the local black teachers' college, which had been going since 1915. Not until British groups in the 1960s (the Stones, etc.) picked it up, did "Baby Please Don't Go" become a popular vehicle for contemporary blues and r'n b bands.

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For Beauty of Polish, Saving Labor, Cleanliness, Durability & Cheapness, Unequaled. MORSE BROS., Prop'rs, Canton, Mass.

From a U.S. advert. in 1881. This trade name for black stove/range polish could

add another layer of meaning to "My Black Mama" (1930) when Son House sang:

"My black mama's face shines like the sun,

Oh! lipstick an' powder, it sure won't help 'er none."

SOUTHERN RECIPE BLUES-2

For all you blues gourmets here are 2 more delicious Southern dishes popularised in an area of Louisiana from Baton Rouge along the Mississippi River to New Orleans, "a section famous for good cooking." ("River Road Recipes". The Junior League of Baton Rouge, Inc. Baton Rouge, La. 1971.).

This section is known as the River Road. These dishes have travelled all over the South, often used by people on low incomes, including blues singers.

1. LOUISIANA RED BEANS AND RICE

- 1 cup red beans, washed and drained
- 3 cups of water
- 1 clove of garlic, chopped, 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 rib celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 1 large bay leaf, crushed

Cook beans in water. Season with salt and bacon drippings, ham or other seasoning meat. Cook for 1½ to 2 hours. Add onion, garlic, celery, and bay leaf. Continue to cook over low heat for ½ to 1 hour. If beans become too dry, add heated water. 2 tablespoons of sugar improve the whole effect. Serve on mounds of rice. Serves 4. A Louisiana treat!

MRS. LEWIS C. PETERS.

("River Road Recipes". Ibid. p.51.)

Subject of blues by diverse singers such as Gladys Bentley "Red Beans And Rice" (1929) from Pennsylvania and the same title by Kokomo Arnold (1937), a guitarist from Georgia.

2. NAVY BEANS

- 2 cups navy beans
- 6 cups cold water
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ pound salt pork, cubed (or left over ham)

Wash and pick over beans. Combine all ingredients in a large covered saucepan. Cook for 2½ to 3 hours. Serves 8. Slice baked ham and serve as a main course. (ibid. p.52.)

Celebrated? by Bo Carter, his "Beans" from 1934 appears to be unique in specifying navy beans. Like many of Carter's blues, this contains facets of his ribald humour, but also has a strong element of protest.

"I don't want no more navy beans,
Boys, I don't want no more;
I don't want no more navy beans,
They're about to make my stomach
sore,
I had 'em last night an' the night
before;
When I got through I couldn't shut
my door, boys I don't want 'em no
more."

Reflecting the plight of many an impoverished black (and white) family during the Great Depression of the 1930s, who were forced on a diet such as navy beans every day of the week. As Bo Carter sings in a later verse of "Beans", this resulted in running to "the lil' house at the back, I couldn't shut the door."!!



Despite the above, both dishes are traditional meals in the South and should be well-worth trying out.

Well, not all contemporary white acoustic performers are British or American. Here's one from Sydney, Australia. How he came to the U.K. and what his ONLY recording is like, I hand you over to Bazil to tell it like it is.

"GYPSY DAVE SMITH: ALIVE IN
LANCASTER"

When Jim Murry and Martin Fletcher first met Gypsy Dave Smith, they, like him, were doing the rounds (amongst other things) in the port of Amsterdam. They got it together, (an amazing feat in itself, considering their geographical location) and went from one little brown bar to another, playing the Blues. This unlikely trio enjoyed each other's company so much, that Jim said "Hey! Dave, why don't

you come over to England with us, and we can play some gigs together in an around Newcastle. You'll love it!" "Sounds like a ripper idea to me mate"; was Gypsy Dave's retort, and the three of them set sail for good old Blighty.

Well, that was nearly four years ago, and the Dynamic Down-under slide guitarist is STILL here. And who's complaining? Gypsy Dave Smith has been billed alongside the best at most of the major Blues Festivals, as well as extensively touring the length and breadth of the country. He is one of the leading exponents of the slide guitar in Britain today. His talent is unsurpassable, and his style is unique. This coupled with a seemingly endless repertoire - from Robert Johnson to Woddy Guthrie, Ida Cox to Jelly Roll Morton, as well as his own compositions - makes for a highly entertaining musical experience!

Now, for the first time, The Gypsy Dave "Experience" can be yours to "Experience" in the safety of your home. This unique opportunity comes in the form of an official "Bootleg" cassette. This high quality C90 cassette (TDK or BASF, it depends which I pick up first) is the only commercially available recording of the man himself on this planet today! (There may be other recordings held by life forms more advanced than ourselves, well it makes sense doesn't it!!!)

It was recorded live at Max's Blues Club in Lancaster, and it can be bought from HEDGEHOG RECORDS in Lancaster Market Hall, for the princely and ever so accessible price of £4.00. This once in a lifetime opportunity can also be realised by sending £5.00 (this includes p&p) TO:

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55, Primrose Street,
Primrose Hill,
Lancaster LAL 3BN.

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Children are
CONSTIPATED**



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**GYPSY DAVE SMITH
ALIVE IN
LANCASTER!**

You can call me on 0524-388617,
and I'll play you a bit of it
down the phone. Cheques and PO's
will be tolerated, and should be
made out to M. Barrett.

I THANK YOU. Basil.

P.S. I found this in a national
newspaper! All I
can say is "ain't
that the Blues!"
They've been list-
ening to Gypsy
Dave Smith again!

**DUCKS GET
THE BLUES**

BIRD-LOVERS feed-
ing ducks on the Lan-
caster Canal couldn't
believe their eyes when
plumage on the mal-
lards turned bright blue
— probably caused by a
dye in the water.

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Take the **LEHIGH VALLEY**
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PHILADELPHIA, PA.
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1906 advert.
aimed at the
wealthy (and
white) poten-
tial passen-
gers. The
best-selling
1927 sermon
by the harsh
voiced Rev.
A.W. Nix has
layers of
meaning (as
with many

blues). His "Black Diamond Express
To Hell" was the first of six he
recorded by 1930. The Lehigh Vall-
ey R.R. was also an extensive coal
carrier serving the Pennsylvania
coalfields. Coal was known as
"black diamonds" and the obvious
analogy between the depth and
horrific working conditions of
some coal mines and the Hot Place,
would not have been missed by Nix
or many of his black listeners.

"SPOTLIGHT ON LUCILLE BOGAN--4"

Ms. Bogan's ambition in "Whis-
key Selling Woman" (see Part 1 in
"A.B." No.4) to "have a still on
every street in this town" and no
police allowed "15 miles around",
seems to have previously been re-
alised in Birmingham, Ala. (her
home town) some ten years prior to
her being born. Due to the growing
industries in pig iron and coal,
particularly, the city attracted
many farm workers off the land in
Alabama and other Southern states.
The population, in fact, grew so
rapidly that "neither the police
force nor the fire department
could possibly do an adequate job"
(1). This growth surpassed that of
any other Southern city, in the
1880s, and Birmingham had a "Wild
West" reputation with a "saloon and
brothel on almost every street in
the downtown area. The carrying of
firearms was a common practice, be-
cause police protection could not
be counted on." (2). To be fair,
this was due in part, to the small
size of the force; in 1885 with a
population of nearly twenty thous-
and "there were only 20 policemen
within the city." (3).

The situation grew worse in
the next 13 years. A picture taken
in 1898 outside Birmingham police
station depicted a group of just
22 police officers! The population
in the mean time was around 38,000
in the city and at least another
20,000 in the suburbs; such as Bess
emer and Pratt City. The fire dep-
artment must have been in a similar

sorry state as houses often burned down because of insufficient fire-fighting facilities. Meanwhile, "Certain curiously-named places developed in the city, like Pigeon's Roost and Scratch Ankle, which were so named because they were hotbeds of vice and crime." (4). The last-named 'hotbed' probably alludes to the leg-irons worn by black prisoners trapped in the horrific convict-lease system. Starting in the 1880s, "There were still about fifteen hundred convicts in Birmingham mines..." (5) in the period 1900-1920. Alabama finally abolished convict leasing in 1928; the last state to do so.

Lucille Bogan and lawlessness seemed to be pre-destined to be always linked. The town of Amory, Miss. where she was born (see Part 1), "was established when the railroad between Memphis and Birmingham was being surveyed." (6). A camp was built in 1887 at a spot halfway between the two cities. "Many settlers, drawn by the railroad and the fertile soil made their homes here. There were also many transients which were of the worst element and much lawlessness and vice were common, with five saloons in operation." (7). By the time

the "better element" had asserted itself with churches, schools, etc. Bogan was Birmingham-bound. But she was headed for the city sometimes known as "Bad Birmingham, the murder capital of the world", (8), and "the dirtiest city on earth." (9).

Sounding a lot like Chicago in Al Capone's hey-day, shady businessmen and gangsters who owned powerful liquor interests, gambling houses and brothels, had some members of the city council on their payroll; and "seemed too powerful to control" (10). This state of affairs was reflected in Oklahoma before statehood in 1907. The state was then known as "The Nation", "Indian Territory" or the "Territo'". As Eavenson relates, in the latter part of the 19th. century, the Territory had "no towns and few settlements..." (11). Even if, as a generalisation, this was not 100% accurate, the few towns that certainly did exist before 1900 were largely run by native Americans (usually half-breeds), outlaws and greedy white land speculators. Any civic disputes were



Booze sold in downtown (city centre) Birmingham, Ala. c.1910 on 2nd. Avenue N. "Old Joe Whiskey" at 25 cents a $\frac{1}{2}$ pint; "Turkey Gin" & "Jefferson Club Whiskey" at 1 dollar a full quart.

usually settled with a gun rather than through a court. Existing outside the control of the U.S. federal government and free from local white (and racist) legislation, Indian Territory attracted many blacks from Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, and other Southern states. Among them would be included transients, criminals and prostitutes. The Nation often cropped up in the early blues, including Ms. Bogan's. In 1927 she recorded an "Oklahoma Man Blues", and included these lines:

"When I leave here, daddy, pin crepe on this town. (x2)
An' you know by that, me an' my man is Oklahoma bound." (12)

With an obvious eye on a more lucrative market for her "wares" (bootleg booze and prostitution) in the lawless "Nation". Bogan's opening lines refer to an extension of the Southern black custom to pin black crepe over the front door indicating a death in the house. As far as racist Alabama was concerned, she and her man were dead, because they will never be seen in that state again.

This lawlessness is reflected in many of Lucille Bogan's blues, already quoted. Her attitude to life seems to have been that while she had to conform to "establishment" rules a lot of the time, she sought and needed the excitement of the rounder's life with sex, booze, gambling and dancing.

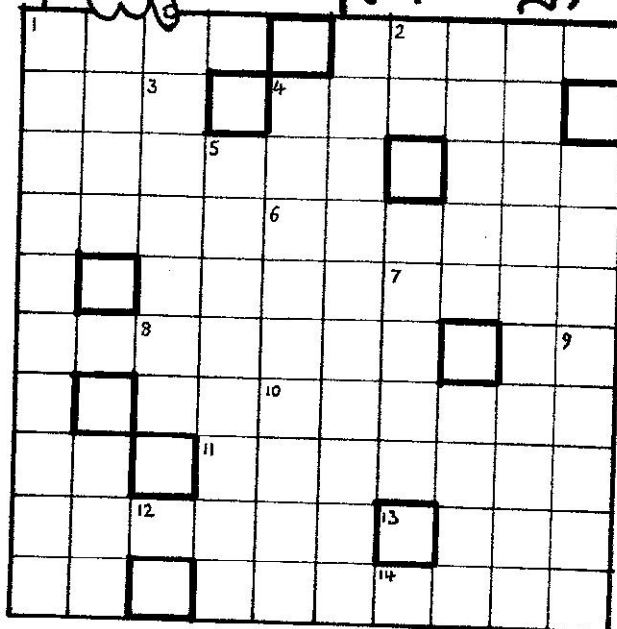
"A workin' man is my livin', but a gambler is all I crave,
Workin' man is my livin', gambler is all I crave.
These gamblin' men is gonna drive me to my grave."

"A workin' man is my livin', Lord,
rounder is what I crave,
My man is gone in the war-time,
an' brought up like a slave.
Fussin' and fightin', are my gambler's ways." (13)

She rejects the established social mores and Protestant 'work ethic' imposed by the white, and therefore

(cont'd on p.9)

Professor No-hair's AMAZING Cryptic Blues Crossword (type thing)



HELLOO THERE! PROFESSOR NO-HAIR
HERE WITH A FAB NEW CRYPTIC CROSS-
WORD FOR ALL YOU BLUESOLOGISTS!!
FILL IN THE ANSWERS HORIZONTALLY FROM
LEFT TO RIGHT. HERE'S YER CLUES :-

1. HE MAKES CLOTHES FOR HOUND DOGS (6)
2. GOOD SOIL FOR GROWING WHEAT, STRAW
ETC. (6) 3 & 12. MEDICAL HARMONICA
BOSS (2-4). 4. THE GREAT TEXAS
BLUES SINGER (9) 5. INVENTOR OF THE
FOTDELLA (5-6) 6. CULLING A LOBE, A
WOMAN WHO SHAVED? (7-5). 7. MILTON,
WALTER & RICHARD (6) 8. WHERE THERE'S
A PARK HANDY (7) 9. HAIRSTYLE OF A
WEAVER (5) 10. MEMPHIS HARPSTER
KEEPING OUT OF THE SUN (4-5)
11. THE JUG STOMPER WHO GOT FIRED (3-6)
13. DID HIS BIG BROTHER FIGHT ROMMEL? (10)
14. HARP PLAYING MILLER, OFTEN FOUND
IN THE CURRY HOUSE (4)

THE BOLD SQUARES FORM AN ANAGRAM
OF A SHADY FELLOW ALREADY MENTIONED
AND THE DIAGONAL SHOULD SPELL OUT
A MODE OF TRANSPORT FAMILIAR IN
THE BLUES WORLD. SO DATS YER CLUES
FOR DE BLUES! SEE YOU NEXT TIME
FOLKS!! Prof. No-Hair.

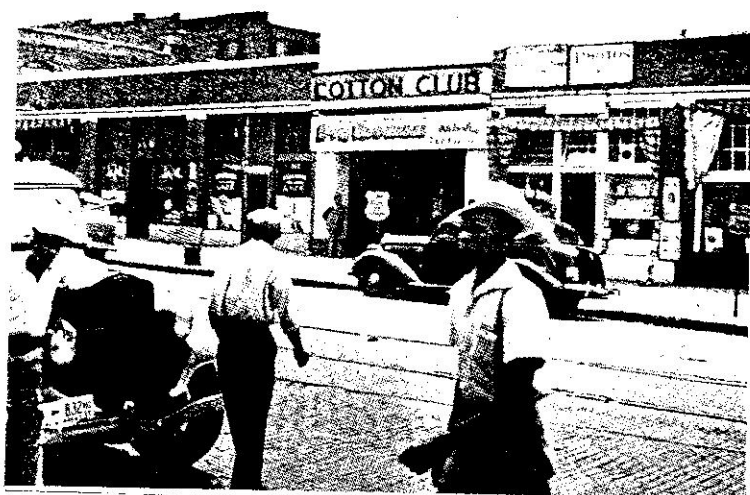
the black, middle-classes. Her partner is enslaved to them and as a 'reward' is allowed to take part in World War I on behalf of the U.S.A. But her "gamblin' man" stays home and gets all the "fuss-in' and fightin'" he needs. Bogan not only rejects the whites' social controls but their "moral standards" as well.

"What make a woman have the blues, she knows that some tommy's got her man;
What make a woman have the blues, when she knows that some * tommy's got her man.
Just get you four or five good men, woman, and do the best you can." (14)

This amoral/immoral streak runs through most of Bogan's blues which included references to prostitution such as "Tricks Ain't Walking No More" and "Stewmeat Blues". (see Part 1). "I'm evil an' mean as I can be", and "I ain't nothin' but a mistreater, baby", she declared on "Pig Iron Sally" (see Part 3), swallowing her industrial- & y polluted environment and spitting it right back out. Rarely, does she attempt to distance herself from this "anti-establishment position as she does on "Reckless Woman" (Pt.3).

Together with the theme proclaiming her strong sexuality, as in the unexpurgated "Shave 'Em Dry" (Pt.3) and her preference for "struttin' it in the rough" on "Strutting My Stuff" (Pt.3), you get the definite impression of a woman who has a strong sense of 'self' and her own worth as a human being. As a black feminist has noted "the assertion of individuality and the implied assertion - as action, not mere verbal statement - of self is an important dimension of the blues." (15). Williams was referring to female blues but her observation is just as true for the male singers. In the case of Lucille Bogan her self-assertion was not so much implied - but actual.

*a 19th.c. term for a young woman.



In the black section of town, in the city's Harlem on Eighteenth St. Birmingham, Ala. 1937. It's easy to speculate that Lucille Bogan sang her blues in the Cotton Club!

She did not sound, either vocally or by the contents of her blues, like someone to be messed with. Her sense of involvement with illicit liquor and prostitution would seem to support this. She had the same tough attitude towards men. At least one of her relationships points to her husband/partner being a railroad man, who worked as a fireman, probably on the M.&O. or the T.&N.O. RR. She had at least 2 marriages or serious relationships and possibly 2 or more affairs; one involving another blues singer, Will Ezell, and an unknown man who lost his life in a cyclone. Although a tough and extrovert character, Lucille had her vulnerable side, as shown in "Black Angel Blues" (Pt.3), when she fell deeply in love.

(next time-final part of conclusion!!)

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13. "Wartime Man Blues". Lucille Bogan vo., speech; Papa Charlie Jackson bjo. c. -/6/27. Chicago, Ill.
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"Early in the mornin', late at night,
The way I push that thing is bound
to be all right."

Refrain: "Tell I'm a good stem winder,
Yeah! a good stem winder;
Said, I'm a good stem winder,
please bring your work to
me."

The address on State St. is on Chicago's Southside (the black section) and is featured on many blues by Big Bill, Cow Cow Davenport, etc.

GIG GUIDE

Lancashire
MAX'S BLUES CLUB, at the YORKSHIRE HOUSE, 2, Parliament St., Lancaster LA1 1DB. (0524-64679)

- Mar. 4th --- JOHN DIXON.
- 12th --- SAM PAYNE.
- 18th --- PETE OAKLEY & ROBIN WALTON.
- 25th --- THE BLUESMEN.
- Apr. 1st --- GYPSY BILL WILLIAMS.
- 9th --- AL DICKINSON.
- 15th --- JIVEASS.
- 22nd --- RAY STUBBS.
- 29th --- HELLHOUND BLUES.
- May, 6th --- GYPSY BILL WILLIAMS.
- 14th --- PETE OAKLEY.
- 20th --- SMITH & McGRATH.
- 27th --- ROOT SAP.

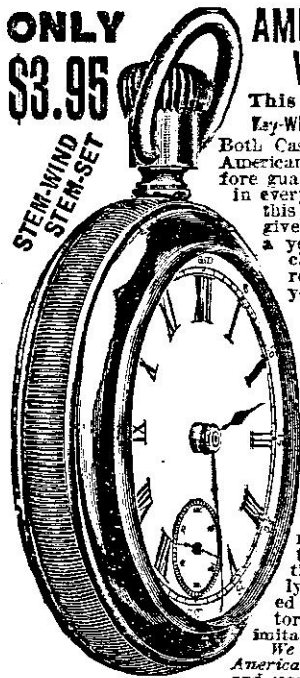
THE BIG EASY. North Shore, Blackpool. (0253-24900)

- Mar. 18th --- HOT LICKS COOKIES.
- 25th --- GYPSY BILL WILLIAMS.
- Apr. 16th --- JIVEASS.
- May, 28th --- ROOT SAP.

BURNLEY MECHANICS, Manchester Rd., Burnley B11 1JA. (0282-30005)

6th. National Blues Festival:

- Apr. 1st --- BLUES TRAVELLER.
- HELLHOUND BLUES.
- LYNN BREEZE.
- Apr. 2nd --- LUTHER HEAVISYDES.
- Z.Z. BIRMINGHAM & CARMEN PIRAHNA.
- GYPSY BILL WILLIAMS.
- BETTY'S BLUES.
- DANIEL HEARN.
- Apr. 3rd. --ANGIE SCARR.
- THE BLUESMEN.



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An advert. c.1886, for a new style of watch, the "stem-wind", which gradually replaced the "key-wind" type. Nearly 55 years later, N. Carolina bluesman Blind Boy Fuller, could use the new watch when employing sexual

symbolism in his blues "I'm A Good Stem Winder". He could be sure his listeners knew what he meant when he sang:

GIG GUIDE (cont'd)

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---HARRY SKINNER & DAVE SAUNDERS(12.15).
- Apr.2nd.---GYPSY BILL WILLIAMS(10.00)
---BLUES SHOUTER(12.15).
- Apr.3rd.---RAPHAEL CALLAGHAN & CHRIS TINE PURNELL(10.00).
---STEVE PHILLIPS(12.15).
- Apr.4th.---ROOT SAP(10.00).
---HELEN WATSON(12.15).

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- 17th.---GILES HEDLEY.
- 22nd.---PIGMEAT PETE SMITH.
- 23rd.---BIG JOE LOUIS & LITTLE GEORGE.
- 24th.---ALABAMA AL & T-BONE TAYLOR.
- 29th.---BIG LES WRAIGHT & BOB DAVIS.
- 30th.---BIG JOE LOUIS & LITTLE GEORGE.
- 31st.---GILES HEDLEY.
- Apr.1st.---GORDON SMITH.
- 8th.---GORDON SMITH.
- 14th.---GILES HEDLEY.
- 15th.---GORDON SMITH.
- 20th.---DAVE PEABODY + Special Guests.
- 22nd.---GORDON SMITH.
- 27th.---DAVE PEABODY.
- 28th.---GILES HEDLEY.
- 29th.---GORDON SMITH.
- May,4th.---DAVE PEABODY + Guests.
- 6th.---GORDON SMITH.
- 11th.---DAVE PEABODY + Guests.

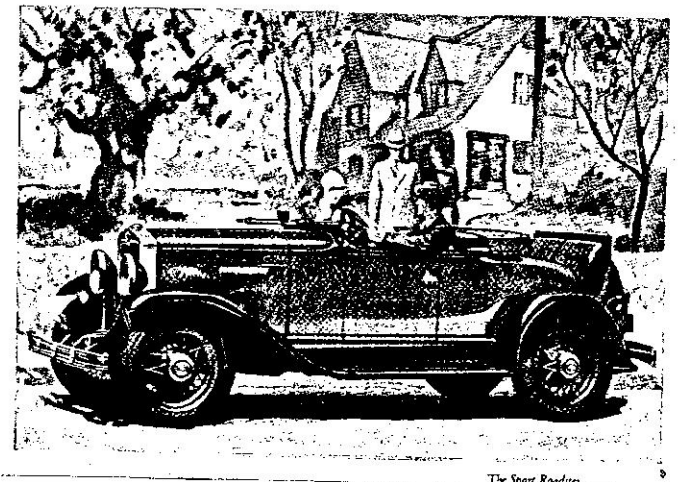
- May,13th.---GORDON SMITH.
- 18th.---DAVE PEABODY + Guests.
- 20th.---GORDON SMITH.
- 25th.---DAVE PEABODY + Guests.
- 27th.---GORDON SMITH.

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Part of a 1930 ad. when 6-cylinder cars were becoming popular. One of the low-priced models, the Roadster (not illustrated) was \$495.00 and probably the "big six Chevrolet car" that Charlie Patton refers to on his "34 Blues" in 1934, shortly before he died.

"CAN'T STOP THE BOOGIE"-Big Man Clayton & The 44's.

on Hot Fox HF-CD-003.

ROOM HOUSE BOOGIE/YOU'RE THE ONE/FLIGHT #201/BLUES 'N MISERY/KEEP YOUR HANDS OUTTA MY POCKETS/TINA'S BOOGIE/I AIN'T FOOLIN'/CAN'T STOP THE BOOGIE/DOCTOR WRITE ME A PRESCRIPTION FOR THE BLUES/C.C.RIDER/PINETOP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE.

(43min.34sec.)

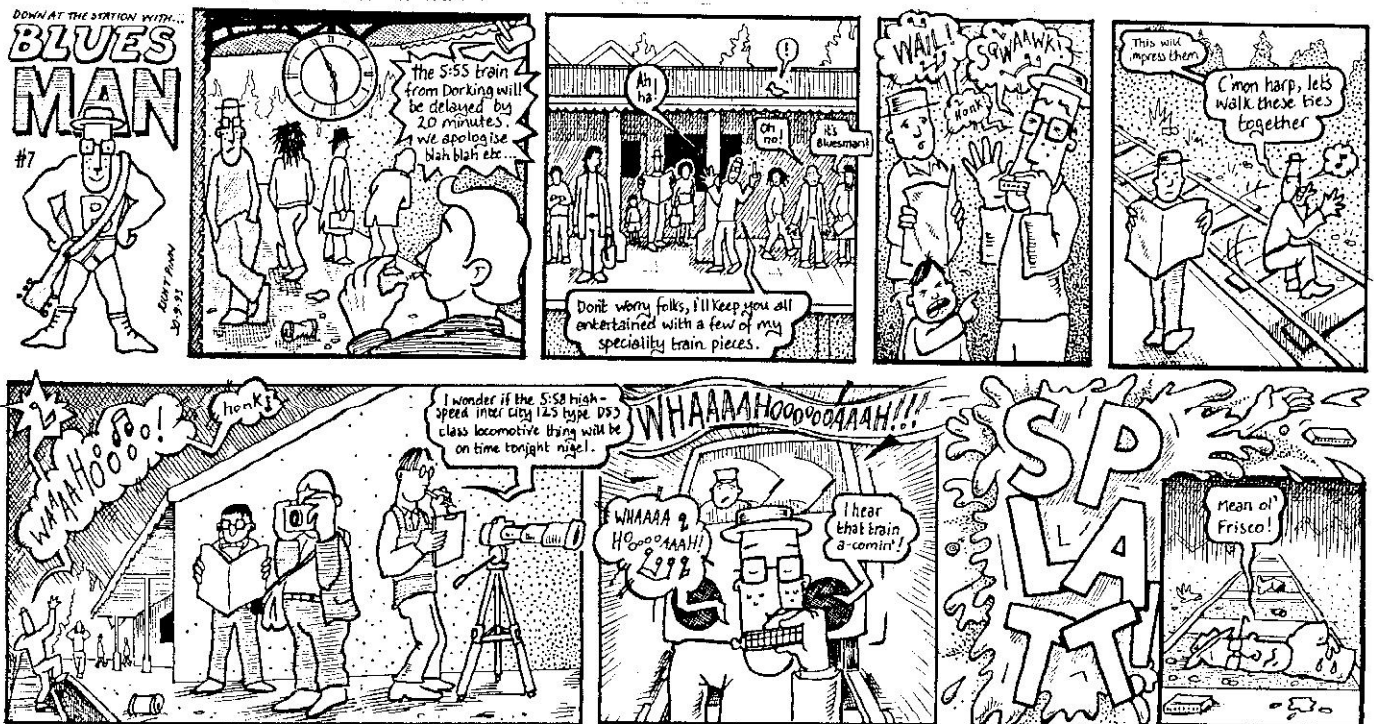
Although an electric guitar is featured on 5 of the titles included, the 44's are essentially an acoustic sound on this, Big Man Clayton's first C.D. The normal line-up being vo.pno.; double bass and drums.

There are some fine rocking boogie numbers including "Keep Your Hands" which has guitarist Howard Gregory switching to some hot fiddle-playing - coming on like a latter-day Stephane Grappelli! A self-penned item "Flight 201" is one of 3 instrumentals on this set, and has a slow almost classical opening before Steve jumps into boogie rhythms in top gear. With another Howard (Smith this time) on drums and Bob Boucher slapping the bass, giving perfect sympathetic support. The band here reminds me of Fats Domino's recording (c.1955) of Little Willie Littlefield's "Swanee River Hop".

But one of the highlights of the album is "Tina's Boogie" (dedicated to

Steve's good lady). Another instrumental that keeps up the almost frenetic pace with classically left-hand piano from the man that sounds like rolling thunder clouds, while his right stabs out shafts of musical forked lightning - beautiful piano my man! The bass and drums blend in so perfectly as almost to become one; just like it oughta.

By way of contrast "Blues 'n Misery" is a slow blues with tasteful guitar and an expressive vocal by the piano man who employs a fine, if sparse, falsetto on his vocal and we get an extended sleazy piano solo from our hero. In like mood is another high spot "Prescription For The Blues". This opens with a great piano intro, before the Big Man commences to singing from way down deep inside. Then the lone piano is joined by Gregory with some delicious fiddle and takes a blues-dripping solo. Incidentally, and Steve won't thank me for this! "Prescription For The Blues" was written by Porter Grainger (a pianist/arranger who accompanied many early vaudeville-blues singers, including Bessie Smith) and recorded by Clara Smith (no relation) in 1924, using this title. Grainger played piano in





Steve "Big Man" Cleaton

company with Elmer Chambers and Don Redman on cornet and clarinet respectively. Little Brother Montgomery was to recall this track on his 1960 version. Ah! well.

But our man carries on rocking and a raunchy back-beat pushes Steve's version of the traditional "C. C. Rider" along at a hard clip. He fairly belts out the lyrics and there is some fine blowing from special guest Ernie Chataway on harp. The latter is also present on another number composed by the Big Man, "I Ain't Foolin'". The sound on this track (hca., pno., bs. & drms.) reminds me of some post-war sides by Jazz Gillum on Victor records. Though Chataway's harp achieves a tone which has his personal stamp on it - no mean feat with so many great players on disc already.

The last track is Steve's tribute to Pine Top Smith, being instrumental of course, and the piano man pulls out all the stops on this one. Although the guitar solo is a good one, I found it intrusive, on this classic boogie number first recorded by Smith in 1928.

Could have done with one (or two!) of Steve's beautiful vo./pno. outings such as his version of Leroy Carr's "Midnight Hour Blues". But this is a personal moan and this C.D. is nothing but red-hot rockin' blues; recorded in Redditch, Worcs. Dec. 1992. Boogie woogie and piano blues at its best!



"FRISCO BOUND"-Ray Stubbs & His Amazing One Man Blues Band. on Delta Records DTA C2 (Cassette)

SAN FRANCISCO BOUND/BROWNSVILLE/GEORGIA CRAWL/BRING IT TO JEROME/ CUCKOO/HEY PORTER/LEAVING MAMA/ EVERYBODY'S IN THE MOOD/K.C. RAILROAD BLUES/BIG ROAD BLUES/FRISCO LEAVING BIRMINGHAM/CAN'T BE SATISFIED/RAILROAD WORKSONG.

(58min.09sec.)

Continuing the black one-man band tradition from the Southern states (I'm still waiting for that article, Ray!!) Ray is featured on vocals, 12-string guitar, harmonica, kazoo and jug. The last-named instrument does not get a mention in the notes by Steve Phillips. Hardly surprising as the jug is only featured on one number. One of my personal favourites is the old Henry Williams/Eddie Anthony item from 1928 called "Georgia Crawl" (a dance), featuring great jug blowing and early-style harp. "Do it now" says Ray and really boots it - you gotta record/feature mo' of that mess - and how. Peg Leg Howell & his 'Gang' (Williams, Anthony, etc.) would have been proud of this "Crawl".



While on "Railroad" we are treated to some fruity kazoo and low-register harp, backed by the 'lickety-split' rhythm of his hi-hat cymbals. The refrain: "carry this hammer to the Captain; rec-calls "Spike Driver Blues"

by Mississippi John Hurt in 1928, again. The only other track which includes kazoo, is the opening one with a rocking intro. but a vocal which sounds a little subdued or "too satisfied" as Big Bill would have put it. This is the only low spot on the album. However, on "Brownsville" the 'gravel-throat' is beginning to work with bottleneck guitar & harp played in unison. One of the "Roll And Tumble/44 Blues" family

this finishes with a rhythm like an express train.

The only track that doesn't have harp is "K.C.Railroad" which is a great 12-string bottleneck instrumental with subtle percussion. Reminiscent of the guitar work of Sylvester Weaver, although this title was originally a vocal one by A.&J.Baxter from N'rth Georgia, in 1927. The other non-vocal performance included here, is Ray's great interpretation of the George "Bullet" Williams' "Frisco Leaving Birmingham". Even if his 'caterwauls' come out more like Sonny Terry's whoops! A great train blues, my man.

The remaining sides all feature guitar, harmonica and drum. The latter is used sensitively on "Leaving Mama" with a laid-back vocal from Ray and some mean harp-sucking! On Bo Diddley's "Jerome" (c.1955), Ray gives out with a 'Chicago beat' on his 12-stringer and adapts his harp to this more urban sound and yet retains that 'down home' flavour - nice one. In contrast, "Everybody's In The Mood" is a fine rocking dance number which would have gone down well in a juke joint in Arkansas and rocks up the atmosphere in Max's Blues Club!

On Tommy Johnson's classic "Big Road Blues", there is sympathetic and superb use of his guitar in maintaining a 'walking rhythm', while that gravel sure is working now, Ray. "Cuckoo" is an adaptation of an old English folk song which found its way to the U.S., and a variant of Ray's opening lines was recorded by South Mississippian, John Byrd, a blues singer who recorded it in 1930. So the song returns to its roots! It starts out with 'folksy' guitar only and then he brings in foot-stomping bass drum and cymbals together with some scorching harp. Ray has a great sense of involvement and a sensitive approach to the blues which should be noted and inwardly digested by many other white blues singers. Together with his naturally 'gravelly' singing voice, this makes for an authentic

sound to his blues and this is one album you definitely need to check out. (Ring Ray on 091-4770717).

Right! Now we have a Top Twenty blues listing from Rich Pinn, our great cartoon-drawing cat.

Hi there, Max, so for starters here's my carefully compiled list, in no particular order, of my top 20 blues tracks of all time.

"RICH'S TOP TWENTY BLUES"

1. "HOW BLUE CAN YOU GET?"
B.B.King.
2. "ANNA LEE"
Elmore James.
3. "FEEL LIKE GOING HOME"
Muddy Waters.
4. "DIRTY DOZENS"
Kokomo Arnold.
5. "NO ROLLIN' BLUES"
Jimmy Witherspoon.
6. "TRAVELIN' BLUES"
Blind Willie McTell.
7. "AIRPLANE MAN BLUES"
Helen Humes.
8. "K.C.MOAN"
Memphis Jug Band.
9. "DIVE BOMBER"
Pete Johnson.
10. "I'M A BLUESMAN"
Juke Boy Bonner.
11. "COFFEE HOUSE BLUES"
Lightnin' Hopkins.
12. "MIGHTY LONG TIME"
Sonny Boy Williamson (No.2)
13. "STOP THAT THING"
Sleepy John Estes & Hammie Nixon.
14. "STACK O' LEE"
Mississippi John Hurt.
15. "CAN'T BE SATISFIED"
Muddy Waters.
16. "PREACHING BLUES"
Robert Johnson.
17. "MAD MAN BLUES"
John Lee Hooker.
18. "SEND ME SOME LOVING"
Little Richard.
19. "TURTLE BLUES"
Janis Joplin.
20. "C BLUES"
Jimi Hendrix.

Bit of a mixture of blues styles there!! Apologies to Howling Wolf, Professor Longhair, Fred McDowell, Leadbelly, Buddy Guy, etc. for not

(cont'd on p.16)

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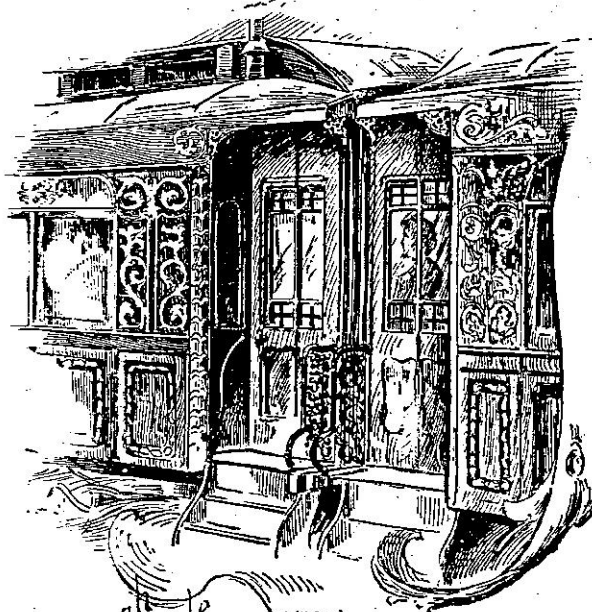
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getting a mention. Sorry I haven't listed any recording dates either. (Don't mention it, Rich - Ed.)

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