

# ACOUSTIC BLUES

SPRING 1997

NO. 13

£1.00



## "Jack o' Diamond Blues"

by "Blind Lemon" Jefferson

DEUCES are wild. Gimme two cards. I'll keep these. One-eyed Jacks are wild, too. Here's a great record for your phonograph, "Jack o' Diamond Blues", by "Blind Lemon" Jefferson, the famous down-home Blues singer from Dallas. Everybody who knows a Jack from an Ace will want this novel, popular Paramount Record No. 12373. At your dealer's, or send us the coupon.

### [ 12373 — Jack o' Diamond Blues and Cheek House Blues, by Blind Lemon Jefferson. ]

12375 — Up the Way Bound and Four-Eleven Forty-Six, by "Papa Charlie" Jackson.

12364 — Long Lamented Blues and Got the Blues, Blind Lemon Jefferson.

12367 — Black Horse Blues and Corral Blues, Blind Lemon Jefferson.

12374 — Bad Times Behind Blues and T.L. No. 1, by "Ma" Rainey and Her Georgia Band.

12363 — Do Lord Be and Night and Day Blues, Ida Cox, Ace, by Lovie Annan's Band.

12368 — Let's Get Along and Bury and Egg Man Blues, "Papa Charlie" Jackson.

12376 — Mamma! Arohed (Vocal Chorus Trillie Schitt) and Adam's Apple (For Dancing) both by Jimmy Byrnes and His Ragmuffins.

#### Spirituals

12316 — This Train is Bound for Glory and Lord, I'm Troubled, Wood's Famous Blind Jubilee Singers.

12370 — Lord, I Can't Stay Away and Oh Calvary, Wise-man Sisters with Orah.

12336 — Father, Preacher, I'm and My Lord's Gonna Move This Wicked Town, Norfolk Jubilee Quartet.

#### Send No Money!

If your dealer is out of the records you want, send us the coupon below. Pay postage 75 cents for each record, plus about C. O. D. fee when he delivers records. We pay postage on shipments of two or more records.

The New York Recording Laboratories  
110 Broadway  
New York, N.Y.

Send me the following records ( ) please 75 cents each:

- |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 12373 | 12374 | 12375 |
| 12376 | 12377 | 12378 |
| 12379 | 12380 | 12381 |

# Paramount

"ACOUSTIC BLUES"

SPRING 1997

No.13

£1.00

EDITOR---MAX HAYMES

Flat 12,  
54, Regent St.,  
Lancaster LA1 1SQ.  
U.K.  
Tel:(01524-389314.

EDITORIAL

Well, well, well. Look who's turned up. If it ain't that "Acoustic Blues" cat(fish?). I know, it's been around 12 months; but a whole lot o' stuff goin' on, including a CHANGE OF ADDRESS. (see above)! Also a change in the p.&p. charge in the U.K. This will now be £2.00. So 4 issues will cost £6.00 on the island - OK? Existing subs. will be honoured at old price-natch!

I am doing my 'thang' at the 9th. National Burnley Blues Festival(27Mar.-31Mar.) and straight after that I will be flying to Texas to present a paper on Blind Lemon Jefferson: "Blues Come To Texas Lopin' Like A Mule". This is at the Hardin-Simmons Uni. in Abilene, TX. on 4th. Apr. at a 2-day symposium "Mosaic of Texas Culture". Only, I'll be easin' in to Dallas on United Airlines - Have mercy, NOW! Report in "A.B." 14.

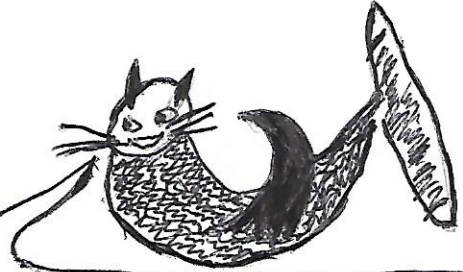
Following on from a great 1-day school "Blues With A Feeling" in Oxford, with Paul Oliver, Johnny Mars, et al. please note 21-22nd. Sep. in that city. Paul O. and I will be there and I will be presenting some live acoustic/electric blues in the cool of the evenin'--watch this space for further details. Hallo! waht's this just dropped outta of the sky?

"Did you get that letter?"

Dear Editor Max,

AS a new boy to the blues scene and "Acoustic Blues", I hope you don't mind me making a small addition to the references in Bob Groom's article "Dyin' Flu"(A.B. No.12.p.13).

The influenza pandemic must have had a strong effect on Blind Willie Johnson, because he



Blind Lemon, that black snake done crawled to Wichita Falls from his Saturday nite booger rooger. Huhh???

refers to it again on "God Don't Never Change"(Co 14490-D) in 1929, as well as a passing reference to the Titanic disaster.

Keep up the good work, "Acoustic Blues" can only spread the gospel of the blues.

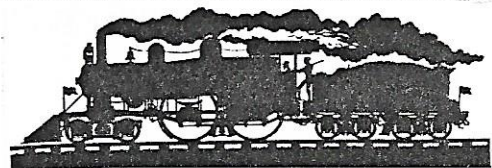
Chris Smith.

Lancaster.

(Well spotted, my man. Dish out them blues pencils, boy!)

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- 21--"LILLIAN/CHARLIE KYLE" by Richard Metson.



Introducing a fascinating exclusive interview, in 2 parts, of John Jackson, often erroneously titled "Mississippi John Jackson". (He is from Virginia). The location was Blues Collector, Paul Swinton's home in Fleet, Hants. and the time was 1st. Sept. 1995. I have kept the editing of my transcription of this interview to an absolute minimum and reproduced it in the order I heard it; with the odd footnote here and there! John Jackson (b.1924) is one of the finest, and the oldest living, exponents of East Coast/Piedmont blues guitar. Following in the tradition of Julius Daniels, Buddy Moss, Blind Boy Fuller, Brownie McGhee, and passed down to John Cephas and Michael Roach. This is John Jackson's story, as told to Paul Swinton--to whom heartfelt thanks.

"JOHN JACKSON'S BLUES--1995"

by Paul Swinton

P.S. "Just the first thing I heard you talking outside, you were talking about "Happy". Was it a convict who first taught you to...?"

J.J. "What's that?"

P.S. "Was it "Happy" or a...?"

J.J. "Yeah! It was "Happy" that..."

P.S. "Can you tell us?"

J.J. "I was born 1924. And they was buildin' this black top road from (1) Charlotte, you-all, up through Rappahannock (County), Virginia, yeah! An' they jus' had hundreds an' hundreds of convicts with mules an' sledgehammers an' dynamite. Buildin' the road by hand. An' they had this one particular convict was on the water boy (duties), totin' water from that spring. An' I noticed when he come down cross that field, he made so much noise when he walked. An' I said I gonna meet 'im at the spring

to see what kinda shoes that man was wearin'. (laughter) I don't know how 'e make that much noise when 'e walk-ed. An' when I got down there, he got a chain on 'is leg. So, when he got to talkin' to me, (he asked me) "wonder what you all do round here?" An' I told 'im my father worked here on the farm. He played that guitar, banjo, mandolin, the ukelele. An' Mom played the harmonica and the accordion. An' he said "Did you bring your Daddy's guitar down here? I'll play you a song." An' I would get the guitar an' meet 'im at the spring, an' he'd play me a song. Git 'is warden to search the prisoners; a little while he'd be back. An' it went on like that for about 6 months. An' they took the chain off 'is leg an' made a trusty out of 'im. Well, the convict camp was just over the hill and us loners? (i.e. us two alone) would go up on the hill (to) that convict camp an' he'd get off at six o' clock. Then we would (go) walkin' back to our house. An' (I'd shout) "Hey, Mom. Fix dinner for somethin' to be eatin'". An' he would stay til 9 o'clock. He had to be back in the camp by 9 o'clock. And us loners were walkin' back to the camp.

So, when he used to set me on my, on his knee an' tryin' to show me stuff all on the guitar. I can remember all the open tuning(s) but I couldn't learn some of the finger-pickin'. Oh! Some o' the stuff that he, you know, was tryin' to learn me. An' so when he was round? about 2 years, another 6 months, they set 'im free. An' he come an' stayed with us for a couple of days. An' said he had to go away for a few days. But he'd be back an' we'd foller 'im to the nearest little town. An' they? caught the mail truck an' we never did ever see 'im again. That was the end of it.



Well, pretty shortly after that, 2 furniture dealers come up, in it.

I think it was horse an' wagon. An' they had furniture an' these old record players you wind up by hand. An' they drove into the house (Yard) one day. An' told my Mom, said "We



From an ad. in the Sears-Roebuck mail order cat. of 1899. Not too different from the "music box" recalled by John Jackson in c.1930. Ed.

got furniture and a music box we wanna sell". An' my father was settin' on the porch, easy, an' said "We ain't got no money to buy nothin' with". (laughs). So, lately after I went back underneath some trees, with the horses an' wagon an' furniture, an' leave it down there. An' in a little while, they came back down with a record playin' on it (the music box). An' my Mom heard it. Said, "God Almighty! Mister Hume? What is that?" Well, he said, "This is this music box you had me runnin' me away with". She said, "Bring that thing on in here". You know. So, lately on, they brought it in an' left 2 or 3 records. An' soon, in they would come around, walk-in', every 6 weeks an' collect whatever we was able to pay 'em on it. An' then they would have all these big box of records to sell. When they would come around to collect what we were payin' on it. Well, my oldest sister was doin' day work an' washin' an' ironin'. An' I think the record 'bout new was either 10 cents a piece or a quarter (25 cents) a piece. (2). An' they would buy what records we was able, an' I put the records on the thing. (phonograph). An' I sometimes, it would, guitar, you could play with it (play along with the record). Most the times it would leave it clean out of pitch (tune). So, when I couldn't get the guitar with the

record, I trimmed me a stick like a pencil, an' to cut a rubber band out an' old inner tube. An' I put the stick over like that. Wrapped the rubber band on this end, an' 'old it tight. An' then I slide it right down til I got the same tone as the record; an' we called it a show an' played right behind the record. An' that's how I learned to play. Was listenin' to 78 records."

P.S. "Who were on the 78's. Do you remember?"

J.J. "What's that?"

P.S. "Who were on the 78's?"

J.J. "The 78's were by everybody whoever made a record, near before that time, right up til that time." (earlier discs as well as latest releases-Ed.)

P.S. "Blind Blake, big influence?"

J.J. "Blind Blake, Lemon Jeffers. (Blind Lemon Jefferson). Uh, Willie Johnson (the Texas guitar evangelist), Gus Cannon Jug Band, Frank Stokes. You name it, we had every kind of record ever was made. That's how we come by so many records. An' that's how I use to learn to play. Was listenin' to 78 records, an' gittin' the guitar the same tone (laughs) as the record."

P.S. "What was your favorite record, then?"

J.J. "Well, Jim-uh, Blind Blake was one. An' mind me, an' I learnt everybody, I really did. Well, back then the Carter Family (white country group) was makin' records. The old Jimmie Rogers (the white country guitarist) who recorded in '27 an' died 1933. An' uh, which everybody gone. Uh, Vernon Delhart (white hill billy/country), you know, he was another gone on? An' also, country, I, Western Swing, man. What was, what was his name? Bob Wills?"

P.S. "Bob Wills."

J.J. "They all was out there. Yessir. We had every kind of record as it was."

P.S. "An' you learnt to play the Jimmie Rogers stuff as well as the Blind Blake?"

J.J. "Yes, uh, that's true, too. Was, you know, it was a lot of Jimmie Rogers' fans. When Jimmie Rogers died. People hooted an' hollered an' cried. An' went on just the same as they did when Elvis Presley died. You wouldn't believe that. But I'm tellin' you the truth, they did."

P.S. "Yeah. Very popular, eh?"

J.J. "Yessir".

P.S. "So, when did you actually first move out of Virginia, then?"

J.J. "I didn't understand.."

P.S. "When did you first go out an' start playin' on your own, then?"

J.J. "I started to playin' around the neighborhood, friends an' neighbours, whilst I was at a house party. An' some of my kin folk was there."

P.S. "You 'ad a big family, didn't you?"

J.J. "Yeh! Fourteen."

P.S. "Fourteen?" (laughs)

J.J. "Brothers an' sisters."

P.S. "How many musicians in that lot?"

J.J. "Everybody played music. Everybody. Yessir. Everybody played."

P.S. "Right. So, were there many local musicians that were makin' records?"

J.J. "There were nobody make no records around, nobody. But a lot of good musicians around. On my mother's side in Virginia, the first musician that was ever in Virginia with a band was my Mom's first cousin. It was the

Greaves Brothers. They were playin' on Scarlan? Drive at the Panhandle, Ram's Hotel, for tourists, 1910."

P.S. "Yeah?"

J.J. "An' the day that they left the conference, nobody'd ever heard of 'em. Ever seen 'em again. It was Jesse Greaves, Eddie Greaves, and, uh, Frank Greaves."

P.S. "Greaves?"

J.J. "Grigason? You say it (to his wife?). "Grigason."

P.S. "Grigason."

J.J. "Yeah. Was my Mom's first cousin. They was first musicians within Virginia. An' they never did ever know where they went, uh."

P.S. "Did you ever meet up with any of the travellin' blues singers or when you were playin' in those early days? I read somewhere, that you'd met up with Luke Jordan."

J.J. "Did, in 1942."

P.S. "Where was that, can you remember?"

J.J. "A little joint. He came over from Prestonburg (Prestonburg in Eastern Kentucky) somewhere, playin' at a school.



Best-known record by the No.1 blues man, Luke Jordan-1927.

An' they pulled in to this little place, an' they said it was Luke Jor-dan.(3); and uh, what's his name? William Moore(4). He used to visit my father an' I never knew who he was until my Mom told me who it was. An' then she talk about Lemon Jeffers(on) playin' 3 days for an Old School Association. In the lower part of Virginia, one time. This was in the very early '30s.(5). I don't remember ever seeing him no more an' you know what she said, an' every reason to believe it was true."

P.S. "Sure, that's great. So, can you play us the first tune that really sort of got to you. The first blues thing you... When you listened to these phonograph (records), you didn't keep any of these phonographs by any chance, did you? Some of those old records, they're worth a lot of money, now."(laughs)

J.J. "I know I had 500 when I moved into Fairfax(Va.). An' the man moved me, Lord, broke up every one but one. An' I took that out the box an' stuck it on the bed, an' my wife sat on that an' broke it. (laughter). I was unlucky.(laughs). He run over every hole in the road. Destroyed every one of 'em".(laughs)

P.S. "You could-a retired if you'd kept them."

J.J. "Yes".

P.S. "Would you mind playing us a tune. What was the first tune that really...?"

J.J. "The first tune I learned on a guitar, in my life, you may not want to believe this, it, it was "Little Brown Jug".

P.S. "Yeah?"

J.J. "I swear it was. I ain't lyin' to you. That's the first tune I learnt on a guitar. I learnt to pick "Little Brown Jug". That's right. An' I don't remember, really the first blues tune I learned. I mean I was learnin' from, you know,

78 records."

P.S. "When did you start.. what age was that, or when you started hearin', listening?"

J.J. "I was about 4 maybe 5 or 6 years old (c.1928-30). Somethin' like that when I started. Yes, sir."

P.S. "Can you play us one of your early tunes?"

J.J. "One of my own ones? Sure... The first song I made up was "Boat's Up The River". An' I guess I was about 14 years old, then."

P.S. "Yeah!"

J.J. "Yes, sir. I'd be glad to do that, sure."

P.S. "I'd love to hear it."

J.J. (sings and plays a superb blues that uses traditional lyrics as well as his own, to a tune which is annoyingly familiar in blues, but I can't put my finger on it.-Ed.)  
(6)

J.J. (laughs)

P.S. "John Jackson. Can you tell us how you first got on record, John?"

J.J. "How I first got on record. I quit playin' in '46."

P.S. "You quit playin'?"

J.J. "Yes, siree. I quit playin' in '46. An' I never touched a guitar no more until '64. An' one day there was a bunch o' kids in my yard playin' ball. An' they got tired o' playin' ball, an' they wanna do this thing (song) of Elvis Presley, started with this..."Hula Dance" or something like that, they call it.(7). Well, anyway, Frank Sinatra's daughter wrote a song. She didn't write it, 'bout "Walk Right In, Let The Sweet Mind Roll On". An' I think she did that in '54, but which it was a big hit.(8). An' the kids wouldn't leave me alone to get the guitar out to play 'em that



Cannon's Jug  
Stompers-c.1928.  
They did the orig-  
inal "Walk Right In".

song "Walk  
Right In,  
Let The  
Sweet Mind  
Roll On",  
so they  
could  
dance this  
'Hula'(9)  
dance with  
this twirl.  
An' while  
I was play  
-in' that,  
the mail  
man brou-  
ght some

mail to the house. An' he heard me  
playin'. He threwed the mail bag  
down, an' asked me, would I learn him  
how to play it. Well, I knowed 'im  
pretty good. An' I told 'im. Says,  
I ain't had a guitar in my hands  
since '46. An' he said, "Man, that  
sound good to me". He said, "I bin  
tryin' to learn to play that song  
an can't". Said, "I got a part-time  
job pumping gas (petrol pump atten-  
dant) up here at this Amoco stat-  
ion. At nights, all you could do,  
just get the guitar an' come up  
there. Say, we get in the back room  
o' the station (garage), you learn  
me how to play it". Well, he kept on  
at me, an' so I went on up there.  
An' I was in back o' the station,  
learn 'im how to play it. An' this  
man drove in for gas. An' soon as  
him gettin' the gas, he come runnin'  
in the station, want to know what  
I'm playin'. An' I told 'im. Says,  
"I ain't playin' nuthin'". An' he  
said "You must play somethin', you  
gotta guitar!" (laughter). An' he  
wouldn't leave me alone. Just kept  
on.

I played 'im Mississippi John  
Hurt's "Candy Man". An' so when he  
asked me where did I learn it. An'  
I told 'im, off a 78 record. An' he  
said, "What else you play?" An' I  
said, "Nothin'". He said, "I know you  
play more than one song." Well, I  
played him a Blind Boy Fuller song,  
an' then 'e want to know where I  
live. An' I told 'im, "Just two  
blocks in that little house right  
down there". An' he got 'is gas an'

went on. I didn't think no more  
about it. Well, the next evenin'  
when I come in to work, he was sit-  
tin' on my porch. An' uh, told me,  
said, "I come over again. I'd like  
to hear you play a little more".  
Well, I got the guitar out an' play-  
ed 'im a whole bunch o' stuff. An'  
'fore 'e left, he asked me "How  
would I like to go in town to meet  
the man that wrote "Candy Man"? I  
said, "That man ain't livin' now. I  
bin playin' that song. Known it for  
25 or 30 years, an' I know he's push  
-in' up tulips". (dead). He said, "Oh  
no he ain't, it's Mississippi John  
Hurt. He's playin' at the Ontario  
Place." He said, "I tell you what  
I'm gonna do". He said, "I'm comin'  
over here Friday night, pick you up  
an' take you up to meet Mississippi  
John Hurt". Then said, "Now, I want  
you to be ready." An' I told 'im  
"Alright".

Sure enough, he drove in about  
7 o'clock on a Friday evenin' an'  
asked me was I ready? An' I told  
'im I wasn't. He said, "Look here".  
Said, "I want you to go over an'  
meet Mississippi John Hurt. He's  
playin' in Georgetown at the Ontar-  
io Place". Well, I went on an' throw-  
ed on a pair of britches. Jumped  
in the (car) an' went on over there  
with 'im. An' sure enough, I seen  
this little man settin' on the  
stage. It's no way that could be  
John Hurt. An' confound me, it was!  
The minute he played "Candy Man" I  
knowed he was the man.

Well, anyway, I got to meet him  
that night. Elizabeth Cotton an'  
Skip James, bunch of other people.  
Two weeks later, an' they brought in  
two more bluesmen. They came by to  
take me over there to meet them. It  
was Son House, Mance Lipscombe and  
one other bluesman. I can't remember  
who it was at the time. (10). Well,  
anyway, 'fore we got started, they ask-  
ed me would I play 2 songs, fore we  
got started, an' I did. An' this man  
jumped up out the audience, said, "I  
want to make a record by that man".  
An' it was the Arhoolie Record Com-  
pany from out-a California". (11).

P.S. "Chris Scarrett?"(12).

J.J. "Absolutely. An' the next day he come out to us at 11 o'clock an' started me playin'. An' I put it to 11 o'clock that night. An' played 90 songs. An' 1965, April (or) May, the record come out, an' I bin travellin' ever since. That's how it all happened."

P.S. "Yeah!"

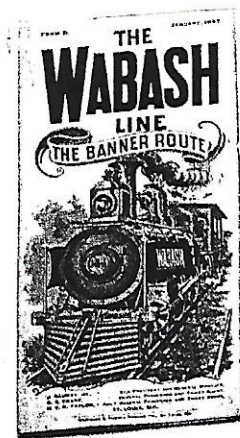
(Part 2 in A.B. No.14)

Footnotes

1. Now U.S. Federal Highway 211, joining Interstate Highway 81 at New Market, Va., then I. Highway 77, just south of Pulaski, Va., down to Charlotte, N.C.
2. According to a report in 1931, black womens' wages (sometimes as much as half of a white womans') for "kitchen helpers", could be as low as "\$2. a day and meals"; ("The Black Worker". Sterling D. Spero & Abram L. Harris. Atheneum. N.Y. 1931. Rep. 1974. p.171.). In Virginia in particular, the black womens' hourly rate could be as little as 13 cents per hour in 1928. They only got 25 cents and more in jobs such as meat packing in the abattoir or in the "Lime Cement, Limestone" industry, for example (Ibid. p.173.). Giving some idea as to how important the blues and blues records were, to their black audience.
3. Luke Jordan was born in West Virginia in 1892 and is remembered in Lynchburg, Va. as "coming to town around 1916". ("78 Quarterly". No.7. 1992. p.73.). My caption to the Jordan label pic. on p.4., refers to Jordan's status as a blues singer within the state of Virginia.
4. Moore owned 2 barbershops and was an excellent guitarist in the East Coast style, and a Paramount recording artist in the late 1920s.
5. Lemon died in Chicago in December, 1929.
6. Check out the John Jackson CD

- "Don't Let Your Deal Go Down" on Arhoolie ARHCD 378. Includes "Boat's Up The River". Rec. 1965-67. Try Red Lick Records.
- 7. "Rock-A-Hula Baby". A hit for Elvis Presley in 1961-62 and one of the many pop. discs pandering to the 'hula hoop' craze at the time.
- 8. "Walk Right In" was a popular jug band no. featured by Cannon's Jug Stompers in 1929 on Victor records and "covered" by the Rooftop Singers in 1963. It reached No.10 in the British charts. And yes, Gus Cannon got some royalty payments.
- 9. "Hula" & hula-hoops were a popular craze in the early 1960s.
- 10. Probably Bukka White, who was 're discovered' around the same time as Son House, Skip James, etc.
- 11. A large catalogue of blues, zydeco, and other ethnic music, recorded from 1960 onwards. The extensive blues section is nearly all early styles (i.e. acoustic) and brilliant, to boot!
- 12. Arhoolie is run by Chris STRACHWITZ. (Ed.)

Footnote 8 drew on a source "20 Years Of British Record Charts 1955-1975". Ed. by Tony Jasper. Queen Anne Press Ltd. London. 1976.



"Throw your hands way up high,  
Grab me mama, make me cry;  
Doin' that Rag, that Wabash Rag".  
"WABASH RAG" Blind Blake - 1927.

"You must want me to lay down an' die for you.(x2)  
I don't mind lyin', daddy, but dyin' will never do."

"BORN TO DIE BLUES"  
Moanin' Bernice Edwards - 1928.



# M ONDAY M ORNIN' B LUES

by SAM 'LITTLE MEAN MAMA' PAYNE

**T**his short 8 bar blues is to be played softly and slowly. Initiating those Monday morning blues feelings!

**I**t is important to create a 'just behind the beat' feel with the left hand. It should sound as if the left hand is being lazy and the listener should be left waiting in suspense for each beat.

'Blue Notes' are flats and sharps regularly used in Blues. Try sliding off an Eb onto an Eb. On the second to last bar, use blue notes to decorate the passage. eg,

= blue notes.

"AIN'T GOIN' DOWN THAT BIG ROAD BY MYSELF"  
(Highways & By-ways of the Blues)

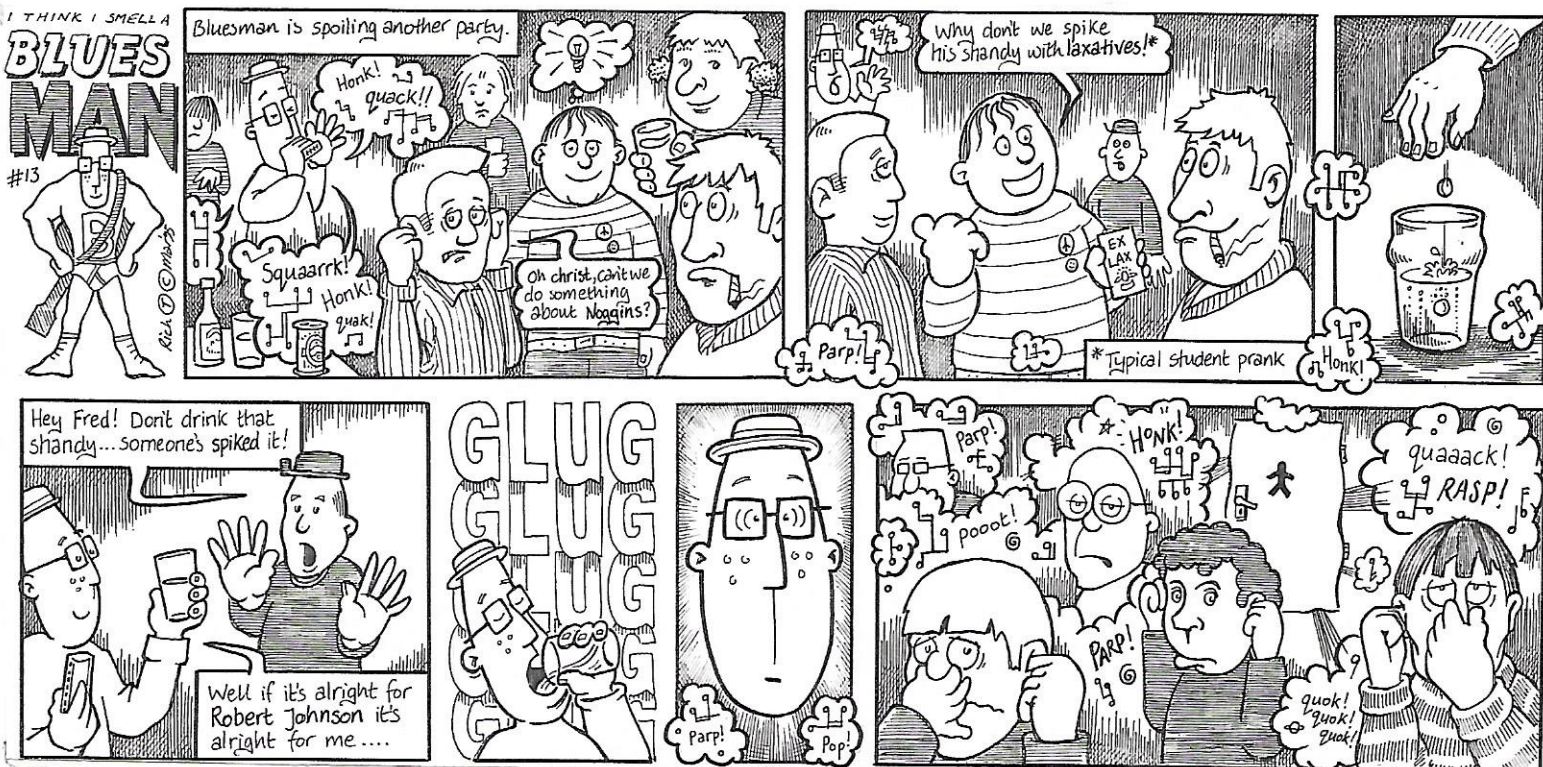
This is a series that is intended to explore different aspects of the Blues (including some discographical ones) from the earlier part of the century, and will include a transcription of a vintage blues recording on each occasion.

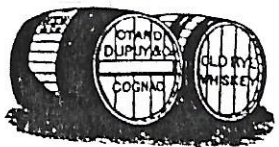
No.2-"Whiskey Straight Will Drive  
The Blues Away"  
(Booze an' Blues)

It seems that when the first boatload of Africans arrived in 1619 on the shores of the James River in the young English colony of Virginia they immediately entered a society either as indentured servants or slaves, in which "tea, coffee, and chocolate were almost unknown...their place being supplied by fermented liquors".(1). This was how things were in the colonials' native England. These "fermented liquors" in the early days of the American colonies would normally consist of wines, malt liquor and variations of corn and rye whiskey. Now, this whiskey would appear to be a milder form than the liquor available in pubs and clubs today. This was available

at least to the end of the War of Independence, and still prevalent prior to the Civil War in 1861. According to Albert Bolles, an industrialist/economist, writing in 1878: by 1770s "the distillation of whiskey from corn and other grains had begun, and was practised to a very wide extent".(2). He adds "The whiskey made was a purer article than that put upon the market at present, (that is, 1878) and could be drunk in greater quantity without danger. It was so cheap and so common that those who made it carried it about in pails to sell to men at work on buildings and public improvements, and handed it out in a dipper".(3).

Of course, Bolles was talking about legally produced, commercial products. I'll get to "moonshine" further on down the road. The manufacture of this "purer" whiskey must have continued to a lesser extent into the present century, alongside the stronger liquors. In his "Packing Trunk Blues" of 1935, Leadbelly includes the following advice to a friend whose wife is leaving him:





**W. T. WALTERS & CO.**  
IMPORTERS AND DEALERS.  
WINES AND LIQUORS.  
68 Exchange Place, Baltimore

A liquor ad, from 1854 in the Southern Business Directory.

latter was purchased by freedman, William Johnson, when he sent a couple of his workers to the "Swamp" which was part of his land. This was on 6th. July, 1847. "They went down in the wagon taking down two whiskey Barrells etc. two cross cut Saws and a Axe for Alfred to cut wood with".(6). The Swamp was "a partially wooded area containing a number of shallow lakes and located about six to eight miles southwest of Natchez". (7). Natchez lying some 40 miles south of the Delta on the banks of the Mississippi River.

"What would you do when your baby packin' up her trunk?  
What would you do when your baby packin' up her trunk?  
What would you do when your baby packin' up her trunk?"  
Spoken: "He looked at 'er, an' here what 'e told 'er".

"Get you half-a-gallon o' whiskey an' get on you'll be drunk.(x3)  
(4)

Leadbelly (b.1888) of course drew on a wide range of material: work songs, nursery rhymes, minstrel tunes spirituals, as well as blues. Back in 1904 he had first gone down on Fannin Street which was in the red-light district of Shreveport, La. Charles Wolfe and Kip Lornell in THE book on Leadbelly, comment that it was a rough and dangerous area, where bootleg whiskey flowed freely, situated next to the railroad track of the Texas & Pacific (T.P.). Even more explicit is this excerpt from a Kokomo Arnold record made in the same year:

"Says, I walked to the bar, put my foot on the rail;  
Give me some of that stuff, that you sell by the pail."  
Refrain: "'Cause I'm still drinking, says, I'm still drinking;  
'Cause I'm still drinking, I can't get enough of that stuff".(5)

Arnold's title now takes on two levels of meaning. The obvious one as a boast of someone who can drink enormous amounts of booze, or possibly, that it takes so long to get drunk on this purer whiskey! The

**B**olles relates that this whiskey was used for bartering in real estate transactions. Liquor was still in use for barter in the 1920s, where a blues singer offered his services (blues singing, that is!) in a brothel. But the 'landlady' was apparently not keeping up the agreed rate of flow:

"Gonna sing this verse, mama, ain't gonna sing no more;  
Gonna sing this verse, baby, ain't gonna sing no more.  
'Cos the landlady's liquor, Lordy, is comin' too slow."(8)

This comes across as almost pre-blues and Papa Harvey Hull sounds to be a bit older than many blues singers of the time. He may have been drawing on lyrics from the late 19th.c. even though the tune is the same (or virtually so) as Blind Lemon Jefferson's "That Black Snake Moan". But, then Paramount sometimes referred to Lemon's blues as "old-fashioned", in their ads., anyway. And Walter Roland in 1933, describes a similar situation where he'd been playing "the whole night long" for one drink "of the stuff I just now had". This was "House Lady Blues" which was later 'covered' by Big Joe Williams in 1947.

**W**hereas, the blues singer in the brothel was pitifully short-

# Whiskey Blues

by Elzadie Robinson

So sings Elzadie Robinson her low-down, intoxicating voice, as Will Eszell sympathizes and accompanies on the piano. Elzadie and Will, you remember, are the pair that "made" the famous "Saw Mill Blues". Now, as you hear them in this interesting, unusual "Whiskey Blues"—Paramount No. 12508—you'll say they've scored another big hit. Ask your dealer for it, or send us the coupon.

**[12508—Whiskey Blues and Buck Deer Blues, by]**  
Elzadie Robinson with Will Eszell at the piano.

12507—Fred! Drink! Drink and Drink! : 12475—Hot Dogs and Wavy Dogs Blues, Blues, "Mr. Robinson with Big Boykins." : Bird Lomas, Lydonna, Rita Oates, and His Feet.

12497—Thompson's Rhapsody and Water : 12494—She's in Our Shoes and Girth of Hered Blues, Alice Fontana, Piano : Dimpleton Stewart, "Papa" Charles Acn. by P. Corson. : Jackson and His Banjo.

12498—Everybody Help The Boys Come : 12477—Red Fanning Blues and That Will Home and When These Great Girls Never Happen No More, Wood West Brown, William and Vanny : Babin and His Guitars.

12499—Gandy Gandy and Tenderloin Act. : 12486—Will My Mother Know I'm There and The Royal Taborians, Head Gandy Gandy, Organ Act.

12496—Star, St. Louis and Merry Blues, : Rita Oates, Piano Acn. by Jessi Corson.

**Sacred Masterpieces**

12495—James' Gonna Shake My Eyes and Smoother The Living, Eddie and Quinones.

12494—He's The One and Too's Better Mind, Pete Jubilee Simpson. (Soloists: Eddie Parker and Mrs. James Simpson.)

12493—All I Want Is Your Pure Religion and I Want To Be Like You, Mrs. My Smart, Deanna L. J. Ross.

**SEND NO MONEY!** It's possible to get the records you want, sent to the nearest music store on 13 cents for each record, plus small C. & D. fee when the delivery comes in. No pay postage or shipment of record more records.

**Electrically Recorded!**  
Paramount Records are recorded by the latest way of electric method. Greater volume, sweeter clear tone, always the best music—Paramount!

**Paramount**  
The Popular Race Record

1927 ad.

-changed in his payment by shots of liquor, the prostitutes themselves had had presumably unlimited amounts, from satisfied clients and probably the landlady as well, on some occasions. Some of the women would become hopelessly addicted and spend all the money they earned, as well.

"I spent all of my silver, I spent all of my gold;  
I spent all of my silver, I spent all of my gold.

I was once pigmeat\*, but whiskey made me look old." (9)  
(\*=an attractive young woman

With the loss of her looks, the prostitute bemoans her declining popularity with her clients.

"So many nights, over whiskey bottle I'll cry;  
So many nights, over whiskey bottle I'll cry.  
Just to think how many good men used to pay to be my side"  
(10)

This becomes a vicious circle from which there seems no escape and Robinson's closing verse, with its aura of stark reality, drives home a message of chilling fear and conviction.

"I'm a whiskey-drinkin' girl, nobody don't want me around;  
I'm a whiskey-drinkin' girl, nobody don't want me around.  
I got nowhere to go but six feet in the cold, cold ground".  
(11)

The secular voice of bitter experience, equalling the religious message, warning of the evils of alcohol.

(Part 2 in "A.B." No.14)

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- 9."Whiskey Blues". Elzadie Robinson vo.; Will Ezell pno. c. July,1927. Chicago,Ill.
- 10.Ibid.

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Transcription No. 2:

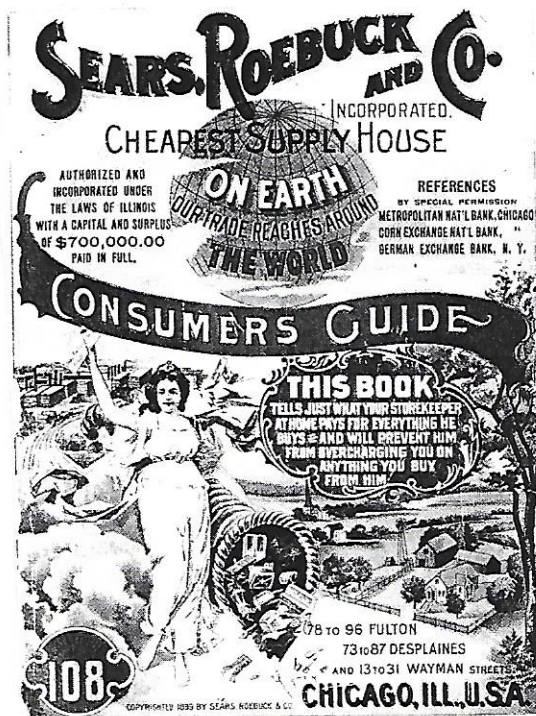
"IT'S TOO SHORT"

Leroy Carr vo.pno.,speech;Scrapper Blackwell gtr.;Josh White gtr. 17/12/34. New York City.

- "Now,I am down an' out,ain't got no friends around.(x2)  
I'm goin' from door to door,  
everybody turns me down."
- "Now,my woman treats me like I'm a motherless child.(x2)  
She's always squabblin',she don't give me a pleasant smile".
- "Now,here I am,people,out in the ice an' snow.(x2)  
My clothes all in pawn,ain't got nowhere to go."
- "She said she like my music,but my tune's too short.(x2)  
But if she gets along with the player,she's sure to get caught."
- "Now,babe,I can't help it,if I can't play long.(x2)  
I'm just a little skinny feller,and ain't very strong."

Spoken:"Play it,boy.  
Lay it down.  
Knock it on out,cats.  
Oh! it's a mess.  
Babe,I can't help it 'cos

my toon ain't long enough.  
If it ain't long enough,let  
me play it again".



Any-  
thing  
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a  
dress  
to a  
grand  
piano  
deliv-  
ered  
by  
rail  
any-  
where  
in  
U.S.  
c.  
1899

"Babe,got a heart like a piece of  
railroad steel".  
"RATTLESNAKE BLUES" - Charlie  
Patton. 1929.

"You know,mama,wearin' overalls,  
is against my health".  
"OVERALL BLUES" - Walter Roland.  
1933.

"I woke up this mornin',biting  
bug in my bed;  
I took my pistol and shot that  
bitin' bug dead."  
"BITIN' BUG BLUES" - Memphis Min-  
nie. 1935.

"Don't kid your mama,  
You ain't foolin' nobody but you  
-rself".  
"MIND READER BLUES" - Bertha Lee.  
1934.

"Everything I get a hold to,goes  
like snow in June" - "LOOKIN'  
UP AT DOWN" - Big Bill Broonzy.  
1940.

-----

"BLUES CONNECTIONS"

by Bob Groom

**T**here are several obvious ways to group blues songs. Songs that are thematically related, the subject matter might concern the unfaithful lover (a big category), wartime, the weather, or a specific incident (the Natchez Fire, 1927 Mississippi Flood, St. Louis Cyclone, California Mudslide for example). Songs that are lyrically related but melodically unrelated, and vice versa. This seems straightforward, but the situation is, in reality, extremely complicated with singers borrowing song phrases and incorporating them into their own material, perhaps using a trick of phrasing from another performer, some times even merging two songs into one. Instrumentalists may borrow a riff or melodic elaboration and use it in a different context.

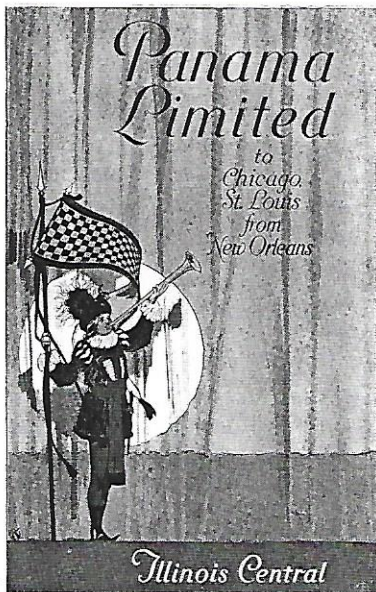
**L**ike language itself, songs tend to defy "rules"; the only real rule being what "works", i.e. understood, effective in conveying meaning and feeling. Grammatical rules and strict interpretations are not something your average blues singer worries about. What might annoy us in a newspaper article, we readily acclaim if delivered in the declamatory

tones of a Muddy Waters or Howlin' Wolf.

**B**ut it seems that human beings have an obsessive need to categorize, to organize material in an illusion of defying the real chaos of existence. So I will fall into line and attempt to establish some connections between songs and their singers. This time it's a nice straightforward melodic link.

**"G**ood Morning, School Girl" (Bluebird B-7059) not only provided its performer (and we assume, composer), John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson with a hit at his first recording session (5th. May, 1937), thereby cementing his reputation as the up-and-coming on the Chicago blues scene; but the melody was so attractive that other artists used it for their own purposes. Memphis Minnie and Little Son Joe set new lyrics to it, to produce their very popular 1941 recording, "Me And My Chauffeur Blues" (Okeh 06288). In February, 1960, Chuck Berry used the same melody for his space-age epic, "Our Little Rendezvous" (Chess 1767), an ingen-

Crack express train, the PANAMA LIMITED, was so re-named by the Illinois Central RR. in 1911, as a tribute to the great, and recently opened, U.S. civil engineering feat that was the Panama Canal. Celebrated in blues by vaudeville singers, Esther Bigeou & Ada Brown; \* Bukka White.



1916.



-ious novelty song which didn't sell as well as it deserved to have done. Around the same time, R'n B duo, Don & Bob actually revived Sonny Boy's original "Good Morning, School Girl" in a rocking version for Chess which sold well and influenced several British versions in the beat boom of the sixties. I'd be interested to hear of any other examples of this particular connection.

(BB8914) on July, 2, 1941; some 2 months previously. Arguably, Estes took his "Laura" from the earlier Williamson recording.

Perhaps Yank Rachell was the link between Estes and Sonny Boy? Rachell's "Gravel Road Woman" was recorded as "Skinny Woman" at the same time as Williamson's "School Girl" in 1937. Part of "Gravel" runs:

"I don't want no skinny mama,  
want one with plenty meat"  
(Yank Rachell & "Gravel Road Woman"--Vo.2649--6/2/34.).

Presumably, the unissued "Skinny Woman" (ARC) by Rachell, from a session on 5/2/34, is the precursor of this song. Rachell was backing Sonny Boy, by the time of the latter's first 2 1938 sessions; and of course, he was on Estes' "Whatcha Doin'?"

Well, O.K., Bob. Here are some of my thoughts on the subject. And for the benefit of readers who are unaware of the fact, we are discussing the first Sonny Boy, who was brutally murdered in 1948, some 3 years before Rice Miller (Sonny Boy No.2) started recording for Trumpet.

It could be that Williamson was inspired by "Stack O' Dollars" (Vi.23397) from Sleepy John Estes, at his 30/5/30 session in Memphis. If the Estes song is given more impetus, it would sound similar in tune. Interestingly, Estes was to use the Williamson melody for his own "Airplane Blues" (De7354) some 3 months after the harp player's recording debut. This was in August, 1937. Muddy Waters used lyrics from both 1937 recordings on his version of "School Girl" c.1965, for Chess, with Buddy Guy on acoustic gtr.; Willie Dixon on double-bass and Clifford James on drms. This was issued in the U.K. on the notorious? "Muddy Waters-Folk Singer" L.P. for Pye-International. I thought this album was great. But then I'm a blues man.

Intriguingly, Paul Oliver says of Sonny Boy's vocal & harp on the latter's "Skinny Woman" (BB B7012), that they were "so close to those of Sleepy John Estes and Hammie Nix (sic) as to provide someone the material to postulate a "Tennessee style"." (Paul Oliver Notes to "Sonny Boy Williamson. Vol.2" L.P. Blues Classics 20. c. 1969). (Ed.)

GIG GUIDE

Bristol  
THE NAVAL VOLUNTEER, King St., (0117-9291763).

- Mar. 20 --- SAM 'LITTLE MEAN MAMA' PAYNE.
- 27 --- PAUL JUDGE.
- Apr. 3 --- RAPHAEL CALLAGHAN & CHRISTINE PURNELL.
- 10 --- STEVE WHALLEY.
- 17 --- DICK WARDELL.
- 24 --- BETTY'S BLUES.

Following are subject to confirmation:

Williamson, it is worth noting, 'covered' other Estes songs. His "You Give An Account" (BB7756) from 1938, is Sleepy John's "Whatcha Doin'?" (Vi.38628), again, from 1930. While, the latter's "Little Laura Blues" (BB8871) was also done by Sonny Boy as "She Was A Dreamer"

May 1---RAY STUBBS.  
8---HELLHOUND BLUES(The ORIG-  
INAL ones!)

This is a trial period for this venue, so let's get plenty of blues fans from the south west supporting it. (A "Mississippi" Max Haymes Promotion!)

Lancashire  
MAX'S BLUES CLUB at the FARMERS ARMS, Penny St., Lancaster.(01524-36368).

Apr. 4---ANGIE SCARR.  
11---LYNN BREEZE & THE DEL RIOS.  
18---COLIN KIRBY.  
25---RAPHAEL CALLAGHAN & CHRISTINE PURNELL.  
May 2---BOB BINGHAM(U.S.A.).  
9---ROGER HIGGINS.  
16---KEITH DAVIS.  
23---STEVE BENNETT.  
30---DICK WARDELL.  
Jun. 6---DAVE SPEIGHT & SHOLTO.  
13---BLOODSHOT ROLLIN' RED.  
20---RAY STUBBS.  
27---GIN SAW.

RED TRIANGLE CAFE(licensed), 160, St. James St., Burnley.(01282-832314)

Jun. 15---SAM 'LITTLE MEAN MAMA' PAYNE + Support.

Humberside  
THE ROYAL WILLIAM, Hull.(01482-562745). Every Monday nite-ring for details.

Yorkshire  
MR. K'S COUNTRY BLUES CLUB, The Spa Hotel, Saltburn Bank, Saltburn. Ring Chris Snowdon on 01642-321559).

London  
"AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT", 20, Kingley St. W1R 5LB(0171-2870514). Every Mon. evening, jam sessions + blues thru' the week. Check with Kevin for details.

Acoustic venues, please send your blues gigs by 1st. June, for next issue of "A.B."

"HE AROSE FROM THE DEAD"  
(Some Roots of Blind Lemon Jefferson)

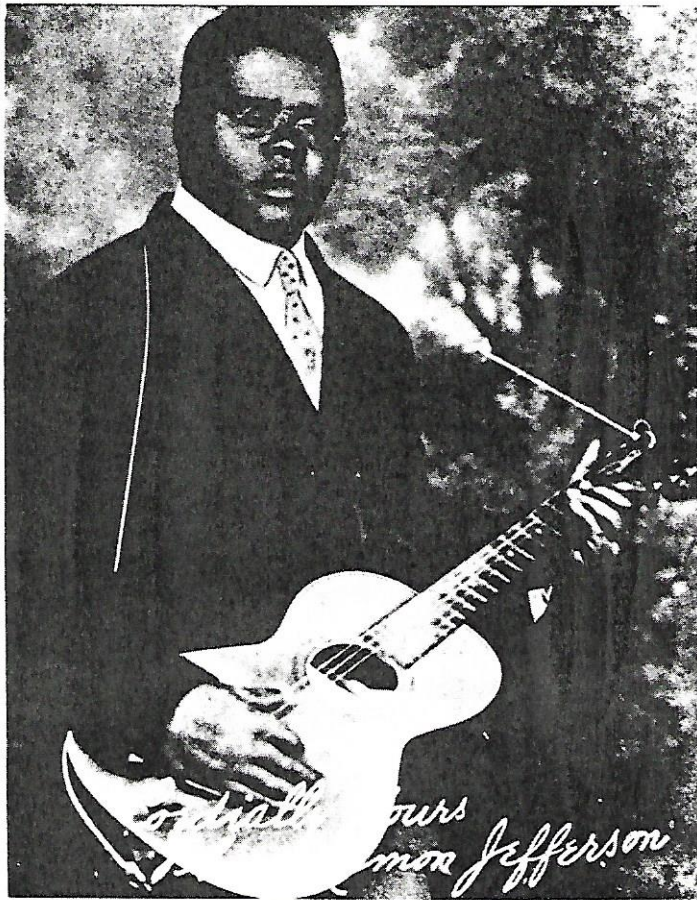
**B**lind Lemon Jefferson drew on various sources for his songs. Although he can be seen as a 1st. generation blues man (as opposed to a 'songster'), his legacy of some 100 songs on record, included sacred items hot dance and traditional numbers, as well as out-and-out blues.

**I**n fact his first efforts on Paramount were religious. Listed under the pseudonym of "Deacon L.J. Bates", these were "I Want To Be Like Jesus In My Heart"/"All I Want Is That Pure Religion" (Para 12386). Made at the tail-end of 1925 or in January of the New Year, "Religion" was to be recorded by many black artists such as the Norfolk Jubilee Quartette and Blind Gussie Nesbit, for example. While "I Want To Be Like Jesus" seems to have been 'covered' only once by a rural singer; in Sept. 1927, Crying Sam Collins cut it for Gennett in Richmond, Ind. Blind Lemon only recorded 4 religious sides out of a total of 102 numbers. His speciality was, after all, the blues. When singing gospel, he did not use any vocal ornamentation and kept his complex guitar style out of sight, relying instead on a simple rhythmic accompaniment.

**T**he one exception to this was his "Where Shall I Be?" (Para 12585) and recorded in October, 1927. This was to be the eventual "flip-side" of "He Arose From The Dead", made some 4 months earlier. In the case of the latter, there appears to be some clear-cut pointers as to its origins and probable date of inception.

**I**n his definitive book "Folk Song In England", singer and folklorist A.L. Lloyd discusses what he calls "A rare late production, perhaps the last English folk carol to be composed".(1). The carol in question, "Christ Was Born In Bethlehem", had turned up in parts of the Midlands





Only known pic. of Blind Lemon  
Jefferson - c.1926

and in Lancashire - some half-dozen versions in all. Said Lloyd: "The carol seems to have arisen quite early in the nineteenth century, perhaps in the years between 1816 and 1818 when revival excitement was at its peak in the Midlands".(2). In 1906, collector/composer "Percy Grainger heard the carol at Scotter, North Lincolnshire - his informant began at the third verse:

3.3. "Christ was born in Bethlehem,  
Christ was born in Bethlehem,  
Christ was born in Bethlehem;  
And in a manger laid.

Refrain: Oh, he arose, oh, he arose,  
Oh, he arose, went to heaven  
in a cloud".

4. "Judas he betrayed him, (x3)  
And sold him to the Jews".

Ref:

5. "The Jesus they crucified him, (x  
(x3)

And nailed him to a tree."

Ref:

6. "So Joseph begged his body, (x3)  
And hid it in a tomb."

Ref:

7. "So Mary she came weeping, (x3)  
And rolled away the stone."

Ref:

8. ("So go and tell each nation,  
(x3)  
And preach to honest men,  
That he arose, oh, he arose,  
Oh, he arose, went to heaven in  
a cloud.") (3)

Compare the Blind Lemon Jefferson  
recording from 1927:

Ref: "He arose, he arose, he arose  
from the dead;  
He arose, he arose, he arose  
from the dead;  
He arose, he arose, he arose  
from the dead.  
And the Lord shall bear us  
safely home."

1. "When angels came from heaven  
and rolled away the tomb. (x3)  
And the Lord shall bear us  
safely home."

Ref:

2. "Go tell to my disciples, meet  
me in Galilee. (x3)  
And the Lord shall bear us  
safely home."

Ref:

3. "Go tell to my disciples, go  
feed my tender lambs. (x3)  
And the Lord shall bear us  
safely home."

Ref:

4. "When angels came from heaven  
and rolled away the tomb. (x3)  
And the Lord shall bear us  
safely home."

Ref: "He arose, he arose, he arose  
from the dead. (x3)  
And the Lord shall bear us  
safely home." (4)

As can clearly be seen, the two have

enough similarities to be considered two versions of the same song. Indeed, Blind Lemon seems to have adapted the earlier version to suit his own artistic needs; in the true style of oral transmission of all folk song.

**F**irstly, the structure is very similar, with four-line stanzas in which the first line is repeated three times. In the second place, the subject matter is identical, if only the last 4 stanzas of "Christ Was Born In Bethlehem" are considered. This would make the length of the songs similar, also. The probable reason for this truncation include: all Lemon could remember at the time of his session (or even knew) and the constricting 3 minutes or so per recorded side that Paramount and technology imposed on all recording artists at the time. Finally, nearly identical phrases occur in both songs. Said Lloyd: "...in structure 'Christ was born in Bethlehem' seems as rudimentary as many Negro or backwoods-white spirituals though in fact it is no more primitive than some earlier pieces such as 'I saw three ships come sailing by'." (5).

**T**here is a 110-year gap between the suggested inception of the English "folk carol" and Blind Lemon's recording. In an effort to, partly at least, 'solidify' this gap, it is interesting to note an earlier recording by a black preacher who sometimes used the pseudonym "Steamboat Bill". The Rev. S.J. Worell (to give him his real name) is a biographical blank who had made 20 sides between 1st. Dec., 1926 and 18th. Mar., 1927. 14 of which were issued by Vocalion Records. One from his last session, which preceded Lemon Jefferson's song by 3 months, was "He 'Rose From The Dead" (Vocal 1089). Like most of his records this consisted of sermons with snatches

of song and vocal encouragement from his "congregation". One of the earliest black preachers to record, Worell was one of the "fire an' brimstone" school with a harsh exhorting style that increased in tension and excitement as the sermon proceeded. By contrast, the side opens with Worell, 2 Sisters and an unidentified (and unlisted!) male singer, offering a very subdued refrain, which lyrically is little different from the Blind Lemon version.

"He 'rose (he 'rose)  
He 'rose (he 'rose)  
He 'rose from the dead.(x3)  
And the Lord shall bear my  
spirit high/home." (6)

At least one of the singers is heard to phrase "home" at the end of the last line; utilised by Lemon on his version around June in the same year. Then "Steamboat Bill" begins his sermon:

Preaching: "Jesus Christ, the Son of  
the living God. (Mm-mm)  
??is dead an' buried. (Yes)  
While on the third day in the  
mornin'. (Mm-mm)  
While that he had to come up to  
because that's-a His Word was  
true. (Amen)  
While the Roman soldiers was  
stationed round the, the-Joseph's  
new tomb to watch 'im. (Yes)  
To keep the jackals from comin'  
in an' steal 'im away. (Yes)" (7)

The apparently mistaken reference to "Joseph's new tomb" is made more clear when fitted in the context of the 6th. stanza of "Christ Was Born In Bethlehem" from the early 19th. century.

"So Joseph begged his body (x3)  
And hid it in a tomb." (8)

**A**nother link with this early English "folk carol" lies in the

third verse (the opening one as collected by Grainger):

"Christ was born in Bethlehem, (x3)  
And in a manger laid." (9)

The Rev. Worell exhorts:

"Everlastin' Father (Amen)  
The Prince Of Peace (Amen)  
Mary's baby. (Amen)  
Born in a stable. (Mm-mm)  
An' cradled in a manger (Yeah)  
Came up to be the King of the  
Jews. (Ah! Lord)" (10)

The first line underlined above, is almost incomprehensible in its savage delivery. The earliest black recording of the song would seem to be "Jesus Rose From The Dead" by Rev. J.M. Gates (Vi. 35810), on 1st. Dec. 1926 (unheard by me). Gates was another one of the first black preachers to record, and was very popular, making over 200 sides between 1926 and 1941. Lemon almost certainly would have heard the Gate's version, either on the record or in person, in Chicago. A later "He Arose Them From The Dead" was made by Rev. D.C. Rice in 1930 (Vo 1520), also in Chicago.

Whether Blind Lemon Jefferson also heard the earlier record by "Steamboat Bill" or a form of the original, is open to question. While Lloyd claims English origins for "Christ was born in Bethlehem" in the 19th. century, he does allow that it could be rooted in the U.S.A. "George Pullen Jackson, the American revival-hymn specialist, notes that a version of the text was printed in 'The Christian Songster' (Dayton, Ohio, 1858) and one stanza with tune in the 1859 edition of the Georgia 'Sacred Harp'. So America has strong claim on the piece though not a clear title"; (11). Certainly, Paul Oliver refers to Lemon's "He Arose From The Dead" as an "old, ante-bellum spiritual" (12). And an old ex-<sup>er-</sup>troustabout calls the tune an "old slavery-time song" when talking to Alan Lomax in 1942 (13).

However, a "missing link" might be provided by a group of singers formed in 1871 at Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn. In an introduction to the 104 songs notated, in a book written in 1876, recounting the story of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, the writer states rather naively "Their origin is unique. They are never "composed" after the manner of ordinary music... They come from no musical cultivation whatever, but are the simple, ecstatic utterances of wholly untutored minds." (14). Song No. 88 is "He Rose From The Dead" (p.p. 208-209). The structure, with only 4 stanzas, is much closer to Blind Lemon's version than the earlier

No. 88. He rose from the Dead.

He rose, He rose, He

He rose, He rose, He rose, He rose, He rose from the dead, He

He rose, He rose,

rose, He rose, He

rose, He rose, He rose, He rose, He rose from the dead, He

He rose,

rose, He rose,

rose, He rose, He rose, He rose, He rose from the dead, And the

He rose,

Lord shall bear His chil- dren home. 1. The

Jews cru - ci - fied Him, and nail'd Him to the tree. The

Jews cru - ci - fied Him, and nail'd Him to the tree, The

Jews cru - ci - fied Him, and nail'd Him to the tree, And the

*D.C.*  
Lord shall bear His chil - dren home.

- 2 Joseph begged His body, and laid it in the tomb,  
And the Lord shall bear His children home.
- 3 Down came an angel, and rolled the stone away,  
And the Lord shall bear His children home.
- 4 Mary, she came weeping, her Lord for to see,  
But Christ had gone to Galilee.

From "The Story Of The Jubilee Singers". Ibid. 1876

English "folk carol", but obviously was influenced by the latter song from some 60 years previously. So Blind Lemon probably drew on the version by the Fisk Jubilee Singers for his own "He Arose From The Dead" in 1927.

**T**he Fisks in the early 1870s, included variations of the 5th., 6th., and 7th. stanzas from the English song, as well as the refrain. Although they changed the last line to "And the Lord shall bear His children home." Blind Lemon

retained a form of this and could only remember the Fisks' 3rd. stanza which he featured as 2 separate verses of his own. The "Galilee" stanza in Jefferson's song might have been his own interpretation, while the following one (his 3rd. one) was probably an extension of his own creation; or an undocumented verse which the Fisk Jubilee Singers featured in live performance. It is entirely possible that Lemon could have heard such a performance in his younger days in the 1910s, or earlier. The Fisks had toured extensively in the U.S. and twice visited Britain in the 1870s, and started a lengthy recording career from 1909-1940 (with changing personnel!). Although they never recorded "He Arose From The Dead" before Blind Lemon died in 1929, the Fisk Jubilee Singers, in the 1870s, can be seen as part of a continuous 'chain' of oral transmission from the early decades of the 19th.c. in the English Midlands, to black preachers like Revs. J.M. Gates and Worell from the Southern states in the U.S., and culminating in the East Texas piney woods in the shape of supreme Texas bluesman, Blind Lemon Jefferson.

**A**n interesting footnote regarding the melody of "He Arose From The Dead", if not the words, comes from a Swedish blues fan, who wrote in 1971: "Blind Lemon's 'He Arose From The Dead' is a laugh to a Swede - who immediately recognises it as identical to my ears at least, to the children's play-song 'Sma Grodorna' - which means 'Little Frogs'." (15). Indeed, the Lemon tune sounds very much like a children's party song or one picked up at school. The magazine recipient of this letter noted that "Peter (the writer) describes a typical ring-game inaugurating the imitation of frogs, gives the full words in Swedish... and comments 'go on

until exhausted, someone hurts a knee or the Christmas tree falls over'."(16). The last 5 words give the link with a religious song such as "He Arose From The Dead". Unfort-unately, B.U. did not indicate how old the Swedish "Små Grodorna" goes back in Scandinavian culture.

**C**onsidered as an extension to the foregoing preamble, is the following snippet written in 1984 by English author, Charles Kightly. Discussing an area known officially as "North Humberside", but still referred to by its inhabitants as the East Riding of Yorkshire, Kightly considers the latter's speech and physical appearance. "The distinctive accent and many dialect words used by its older country-folk - as well as their commonly ice-blue eyes - are a reminder of their Danish Viking origins: and the story goes that Scandinavian servicemen stationed there during the Second World War could easily communicate with them - 'They didn't speak English, but they could understand East Riding'."(17). The author noted that East Riding being "Bounded to the north and west by the Yorkshire Wolds, and to the east by the North Sea, this flat coastal plain is closer in spirit to Lincolnshire than to the mines and industry of the West Riding: for it is an entirely agricultural region, (with a) feeling ...of remoteness and timelessness."(18).

**T**his brings us full circle. Back to A.L.Lloyd's informant in 1906 in Scotter, Lincolnshire, who gave the folklorist the last 5 stanzas of "Christ was born in Bethlehem", of early 19th.c. vintage. From whence the song "He Arose From The Dead" evolved in Southern U.S.A. by 1870s, when it was adapted by the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

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"LILLIAN GLINN/CHARLIE KYLE"

by Richard Metson

**L**illian Glinn is amongst the best of the old-time blues singers. Yet her name is seldom mentioned. She had a powerful expressive voice, the equal of many of the universally acclaimed female giants, and was streets ahead of the rest of them. Her omission from "Blues Who's Who" seems unforgivable, but understandable in view of so little being known about her, yet blues historian Paul Oliver did get to meet and interview her just once, back in 1970, after much persuasion via letters and phone calls.

**F**rom this meeting with her, we learned that she was a tall, dark-skinned lady who joined the church around 1930 and was reluctant to speak of her earlier life as a blues singer. Though uncertain of her birthdate, 1902 would appear to fit the facts of her moving to Dallas in her early twenties from a small town just outside the city. Blues singer Hattie Burleson/Hudson befriended her after hearing her sing in a local church, and introduced her to Ella B. Moore who owned the Park Theatre on Central Tracks. She was cajoled by them into switching from spirituals to blues and vaudeville songs and after appearing at the Park, became a local celebrity. Managed by R.T. Ashford, she recorded over 20 songs in two years for Columbia, but then became disenchanted with the life and returned to the church.

145312-1 "All Alone And Blue"  
 145313-1 "Come Home Daddy"  
 145314-1 "Doggin' Me Blues"  
 145315-1,-2 "Brownskin Blues"

**H**er initial batch of recordings, outlined above, were fine examples of Miss Glinn's style, particularly the first two; a powerful voice punctuated with spurts of Octave "Oak" Gaspard's pumping

tuba, embroidered and woven together by the lightweight accompaniment of Willie Tyson's piano. From a female standpoint, I believe this typified Texas blues at near its best, and Lillian Glinn was one of its finest exponents.



**"D**oggin' Me Blues"/"Brown Skin Blues" constituted her first record and, for a newcomer especially, sales were good. Frank Stokes and Dan Sane re-jigged the former and recorded it as "Wasn't That Doggin' Me" some 15 months later for Paramount, and altered the lyric sufficiently to claim composer credits as well. But, in fact, it was Hattie Burleson who should feel aggrieved. She composed all four of Glinn's first recordings and received \$100, \$25 per side for release of the copyrights. (\*)

**"B**rown Skin Blues" is most interesting for a number of reasons. This was a popular number and Glinn a popular figure, enough for Atlanta singer, Barbecue Bob to refer to both her and the content of the song in his 1928 recording "Chocolate To The Bone".

"I'm just like Miss Lillian, I mean Miss Glinn, you see; She said, 'A brownskin man is just all right with me'."

Until now, the accompanying musicians' identities have been supported by file information which states Tyson (pno.) and Gaspard (tuba). But with "Brown Skin Blues" we are on new ground. The brass bass has been dropped, to be replaced with an unidentified guitarist. His vital stat



-istics do not conform to any of the Dallas crowd that are familiar to us from their records at the time, but I believe this man is known to us. I suggest this to be Charlie Kyle, who recorded a session for Victor in Memphis a year later, in 1928. That he was of Texas descent, is unquestioned and his style and sound are very consistent with the mystery Glinn guitarist.

Document have issued all Glinn recordings on CD DOCD 5184, except the elusive Tk.1 of "Brown Skin". Special thanks to Paul Swinton for checking the guitar parts and confirming the identity of Charlie Kyle as the guitarist on "Brown Skin".

(\*) Editor's Notes

Sippie Wallace had recorded "I'

"I'm So Glad I'm Brownskin" (OK8197) on 2/12/24, incorporating the 'chocolate to the bone' phrase. It also appeared on a disc by the Excelsior Quartette in 1922 (OK 4481/8033) "Kitchen Mechanic Blues". They asked their woman: "Ain't you glad you brownskin, chocolate to the bone?"

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