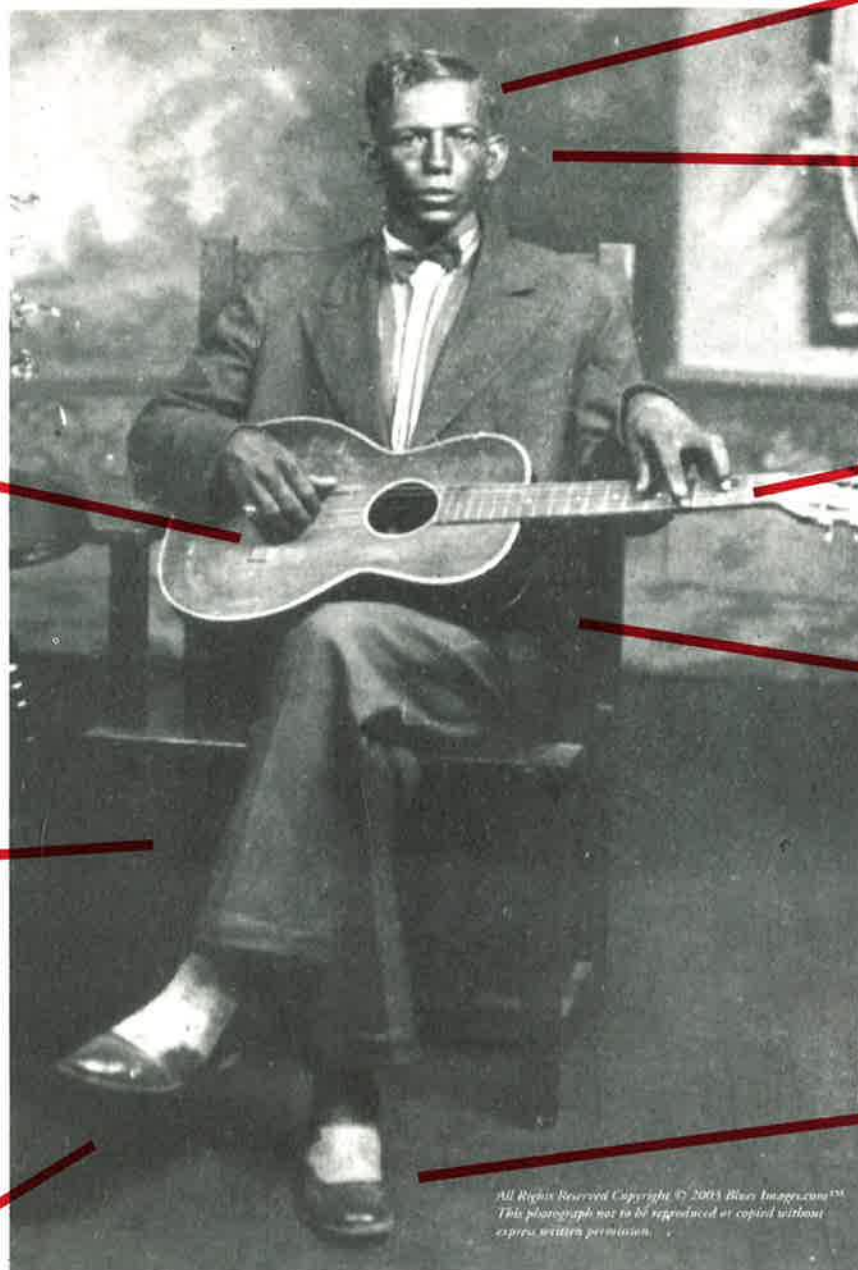


# 78 Quarterly

No. 12  
\$10



Brown  
Hair?

Piercing  
Grey  
Eyes?

Open-G  
Tuning?

Stella  
Guitar

White  
Flannel  
Spats

Finger  
Ring for  
Open  
Tuning?

Chair by  
Wisconsin  
Chair Co?

Ostrich  
Leather  
Shoes?

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## Charley Patton

KING OF THE DELTA BLUES



/// SUPER ELECTRICAL RECORDINGS ///





**CHARLEY PATTON**

Patton is a blues singer and one of the best in the South.

**12986**

**JOHN IN A BINGO BED MAJOR**  
I SHALL NOT BE  
NOTED—Vocal  
Accompanied  
Song by Charley Patton




**Charley Patton**  
Singer and Guitarist

**An impenetrable mystery?**




# 78 Quarterly

**No. 12**  
**116**  
**disturbing**  
**pages**

**TEXAS BLUES**



**13131**—Texas Blues Part II—Vocal  
The Street Alley Blues  
Jimmie Lee Marshall Owens  
**13117**—Texas Blues—Vocal  
Try Me One More Time  
Song by Marshall Owens—With Guitar Ann



**Paramount**  
ELECTRICALLY RECORDED  
1317-B  
**Try Me One More Time**  
(Over)  
Marshall Owens  
11240



"Ma Rainey's Jazz Band—1922"—Early history of the "Ma" Rainey at right.  
Illustration by Paul H. Paine



**Gennett**  
7080-A  
**WAILING BLUES**  
Lena Horne  
Lena Horne's Greatest  
Singing and Recording  
1934

- ③ **Letters To the Editor—Humiliating, base, illiterate, and tasteless**
- ⑫ **Gold in Grafton! Long lost Paramount photos, artwork, 78s surface after 70 years! (John Tettler)**
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# 78 quarterly (No. 12)

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Front and Back Cover photos  
courtesy of John Tefteller

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for information or  
credit card orders visit:

**78quarterly.com**

## Letters to the Editor?



Let's Have  
a civilized  
discussion  
about your  
Magazine's  
bleak future  
!!!

(Pioneer collector Ken Swerilas of El Cajon, California sends us the six previously unseen Black Patti photos shown here. One is the "no known copies" masterpiece BP 8002, "Gang of Brown Skin Women/Don't You Leave Me Here" by Long "Cleve" Reed & Little Harvey Hull. It's in E condition, but not for sale or trade. "My record collection will go with me to the graveyard," Ken says. "Every once in a while I'll open the coffin lid and sit bolt upright—when I'm awakened by a record like this.")



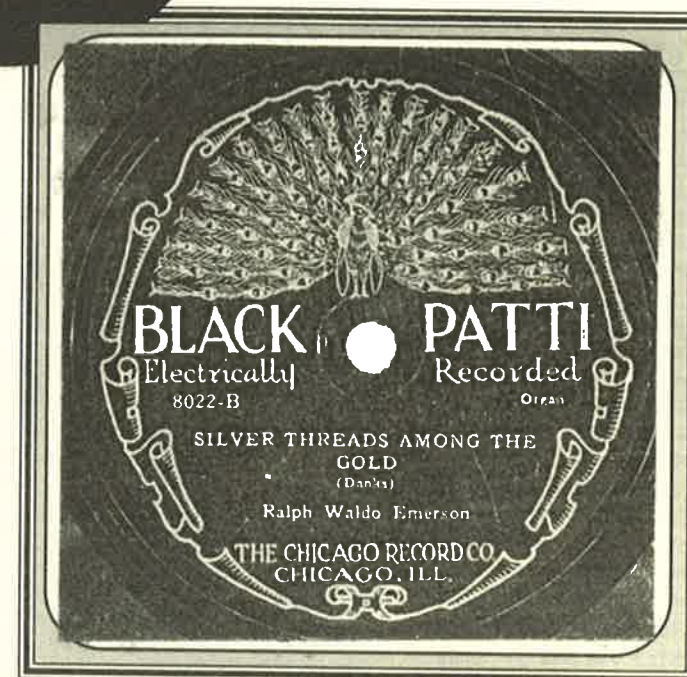
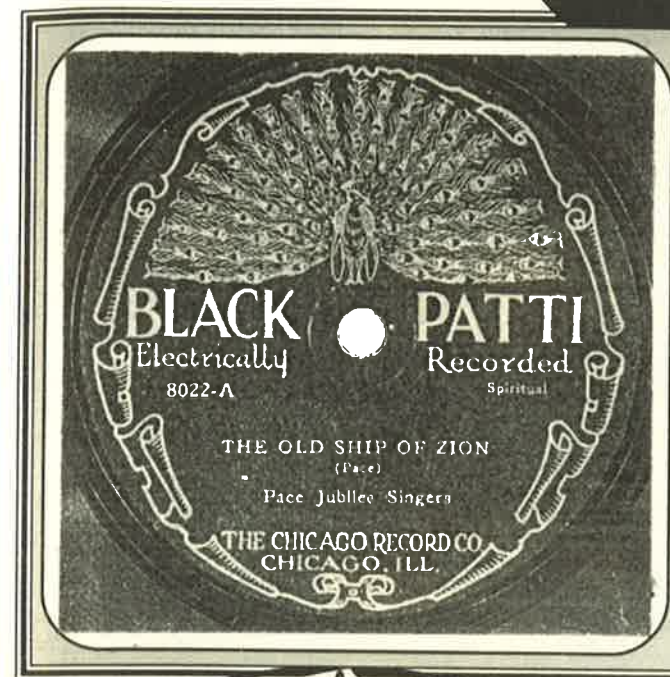




from the  
collection of  
Ken  
Swerilas



from the  
collection of  
Ken Swerilas



continues?

Dear Pete:

... [Spottwood's] suggestion in the box on p. 105 [Issue 12] should be followed. My own rule of thumb is if you can count them, use "fewer." If it is continuous, use "less." Fowler's examples are: less butter, less courage, but fewer opportunities, fewer people. And he goes on for another paragraph. That's the Fowler of *Modern English Usage* of course, not Lemuel Fowler.

In the same vein, but even pickier, too many quotation marks in the box on p. 13: Job status "envy" = job status envy; musicians at "studios" = musicians at studios; "Recording Director" = recording director.

And the box has "\$24 thousand" and "\$30,000." One or the other, \$24 thousand" being preferable. And your printer evidently had some extra "l's. Dick Raichelson comes out "Dick Raichelson's" on p. 10, and Groton, Mass comes out "Grolton, Mass," in the box identifying the owner of the painting on p.13.

I was sorry to see "Kutchner" on p. 106 of the obituary you wrote for Bernard Klatzko instead of "Kutcher's," and I was sorry to see that you wrote that he "was a former NYU wrestler with a CPA degree." You don't get a CPA degree, you get a license or a certificate—I don't know the details, but your accountant could explain them to you. What Klatzko probably had is a degree in accountancy (or

accounting) from NYU.

Of course, I was infinitely sorrier to learn that Klatzko had died. I never met Bernie, but since 1960, perhaps earlier, we in the Boston (?) collecting community, who thought we knew a thing or two about blues and gospel, began to hear about guys named Bernie Klatzko and James McKune and perhaps one of two others, who were into Charlie Patton, Son House, Blind Joe Taggart and certain others I guess we had never even heard of. My generation of collectors owes a debt we can never repay to Bernie Klatzko, to Harry Smith and his *Folkways* anthology, and to you also for showing us worlds we never would have discovered on our own.

Best,

Jerome Shipman (Potomac, Maryland)

Dear Art Kara/Pete,

...Now on to Black Patti: I don't know if you're interested in information on this subject, but I have three of them. BP 8005—Hattie Garland (now you know of three. Recently another one was offered for sale at Good Rockin' Tonight); BP 8006—Eloise Bennett (so now you know of TWO); BP 8011—Pace Jubilee Singers. All three are in good shape E-, though BP 8011 has a 1/2 -inch repaired her (NAP). 8006 is the best, may even be graded EE-, but plays with some rumble (train moving outside??).

Best wishes,  
Helge Thygesen  
(Svendborg, Denmark)

Dear Pete,

As always, read the new issue cover to cover, and I kept thinking, "Where were all those Black Pattis when I was going through those piles old 78s at the Sacramento Salvation Army Thrift Store?" 78 Quarterly continues to be a wonderfully idiosyncratic and personal voice in a world that's more and more preshrunk and Saran wrapped.

Last fall I gave my entire archives (except for the 78s) to the Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut here to establish a blues - ragtime - cakewalk - folk jazz - Caribbean music - archives. Many thousands of Lps, cassettes, sheet music, Cds. etc., along with all of my field notes, studio log sheets, interviews, posters, and the rest. Other people have added material—so if you know of anyone who has been doing the kind of research that is so helpful to us all and doesn't know where to deposit anything they don't know what to do with anymore perhaps you could suggest the archives here.

Regards,  
Sam Charters  
Mansfield Center, CT 06250

Dear Pete Whelan,

The story of Sisters Helga and Heidi von Thibold is—obviously a hoax—and a delightful one. Did you come up with it? If you did—congratulations! If you did not, I am sorry to tell you that a hoax has



been perpetrated on 78 *Quarterly*!

First, the purpose of the photo on the cover of No. 10 is to show off a certain lady's legs and more, not the Gennett. Would any dedicated collector let a Gennett play second fiddle?

Second, these two ladies were featured in "French postcards" in which the whole point is to please those who like fleshy legs, have a foot fetish, or like to see hints of hidden female parts! A German company has reprinted these. I have one of these reprints, a copy of both sides is enclosed, as well as a blowup of the photo.

(A) On my reprint postcard it says, in German, that this is a "French postcard of the twenties"—not "c. 1938" (a twenties date, by the way, is more consistent with a Gennett record cut in 1928). And the ladies are almost certainly French, and not Germans from East Prussia.

(B) The card also says that this is part of an "autoerotic" series, and that this card was number three out of a total of ten. I bet the picture on your cover was one of the other nine in this series!

(C) The picture I copied for you definitely looks like the "sisters" are sitting in a twenties car—not one from the late thirties!

Third, the more I stare at the cover of No. 10, the more it seems to me that the Gennett label may have been superimposed upon this photo. My hunch is that it was probably a Pathé! I suppose that it might have been an imported Gennett. If you perpetrated this wonderful hoax, then you will know!

Sincerely,

Eugene Kramer (Rochester, NY 14618)

(*excerpts from two letters*)

Dear Pete,

...I do have to "smile" when I read—again—a panel of specialists (experts in your language) listing the personnel of King Mutt and his Tennessee thumpers as Herb Morand (tpt or cnt), Frank Melrose (p), etc...when:

(i) "Mississippi Stomp" was originally recorded as "Blythe's Stomp" in the Gennett ledgers—copy, of which, I have—and credited to *Blythe*.

(ii) When other titles recorded are credited to *Blythe* "Shake Your Shimmy" (Supertone 9432 B) Graveyard Johnson and His Gang for instance...others?

(iii) When the piano introduction on "Good Time Mama" is note for note the one found on "Brown Skin Mama" by the State Street Ramblers and with Jimmy Blythe.

(iv) When there are unmistakably two (2) reeds playing at the same time during the ride out on "Maxwell Street Stomp," a clarinet and an alto-sax!!! (Bernie



(courtesy of Eugene Kramer)

**Central Königsberg, East Prussia [1938]: "Later, Sisters Heidi (left) and Helga von Thibold emerge from a 12 cyl. Horch limo at the Hohenzollern Summer Palace—for afternoon French lessons."**

Klatzko had agreed on this).

(v) When Arnett (Nelson) is named several times on "Nut House Stomp" along with Punch (Miller) on "Good Time Mama"? Do collectors listen to their records and bother to make comparisons?...Probably not!!!

Many thanks, by the way, for remembering Bernie Klatzko. What a nice guy this was. However, is "Chinese cuisine" a

"thing that really matters" when we have the French one?—All the best,

Michel Chaigne (Exeter, England)

(*excerpt No. 2*)

So, as a conclusion: Punch Miller (trumpet). Listen to his playing on Jaxon's "Take It Easy"; Arnett Nelson (clarinet) This is "Mutt," indeed (Thomas' Devils); unknown alto-sax. Not George James (compare the unissued

Vocalions Cobb E.C.); Jimmy Blythe (piano); Al Miller (mandolin or banjo-mandolin?, vocals, *probably* kazoo, where heard); —? Rodgers (guitar). "Play Mr. guitar man" says Al Miller on "Good Time Mama"; ? Tommy Taylor or Jimmy Bertrand (drums, cymbals, woodblocks, etc.). There are other shouts, comments. Unknown members?...All the best, Michel Chaigne.



courtesy of Kurt Nauck



Dear Pete,

I have now arrived. An irreverent letter made its way to your pages. It goes right into my literary scrapbook!

On a sad note, the pictures are indeed of Lulu [White], but they aren't that naughty. In fact, a couple of them were used on an NPR show, with a few things blotted out. Maybe I'll have to dig a little deeper.

On an even sadder note, the ranks seem to be thinning. I didn't know about Bernie, and then the notice about John Fahey came in a week or so ago. Please stay healthy, you've got a lot of work to do, but then again, Key West is a good place to stay healthy, unless your name is Carl Tanzler. Still the weirdest story I've ever read. Hurry up with #12!

Best regards,

Hank O'Neal, New York, NY 10003



courtesy of Kurt Nauck



To 78 *Quarterly*,

On May 24th I sent you a check for \$12 for the newest issue of 78 *Quarterly*. (You had sent me an announcement advertising its availability)

You cashed my check a week later. I waited. No issue came. I wrote you about a month later, asking what's up??? You never responded!

I'm upset! Please send me the issue or immediately refund my money. And please

respond to this letter to let me know what is happening???

This country has laws prohibiting the non-delivery of mail order subscriptions. It's called *fraud*!

Upset and disappointed,  
(name withheld)

I will contact Federal commerce consumer protection agencies if you do not respond!



Dear Pete,  
Thank you very much for the comp. copy of 78 *Quarterly* No. 11. Fine work on the Black Patti label. Please find enclosed:

...Chappie Willet Post Card...I was told by a collector in PA that this group DID record for Gennett in the early 1930s, but that to his knowledge, none of their discs ever turned up. Maybe one of your readers will know...

Sincerely,  
Christopher C. King



(courtesy of Chris King)

Dear Pete,

The new issue of 78 *Quarterly* is just great! Your publishing talent continues to amaze me. I also enjoyed the nice article on Bernard Klatzko. He was a prince of a fellow and a pioneer in the hobby. The appropriate treatment of the Legend of Joe Bussard's Black Patti Find was also a nice touch.

A couple of late comments on the rare stuff: I never thought the Sugar

Underwood record was a rarity. I have had four or five copies over the years, and they never caused a stir. There's also a beat plus copy of the Tampa Red "Boogie Woogie Dance" in my "too important to throw away" box. Also, I don't remember if I shared my Ragtime Texas Henry Thomas story with you...if I have, please disregard...my memory is not what it used to be!

Around 17-18 years ago, a headhunter

called me about a job in Raleigh, NC. I was not particularly interested; however, I did like to interview on a regular basis for practice, so I agreed to participate in the first round. My interview was to be over dinner in a club on the top floor of a downtown bank building; my hotel was just across the street. Since my interview was at 7.00 P.M., and I arrived at the hotel around 4.00 P.M., I figured I had time to go for a walk. Two blocks down the

street I came upon a comic book/baseball card shop run by a really bizarre older fellow. When I asked if he had any records, he informed me that he had 15,000 78s in the basement—but I could not see them. He did get a box from under the counter and said I would have to pick from them. There were about 20 records, all garbage, except for a copy of "Jonah in the Wilderness" by Henry Thomas. It was really nice. The bad news is that he wanted the outrageous sum of twenty dollars! I gave him a twenty-dollar bill plus the tax in change, hoping I was buying some goodwill that would get me into the basement. It seemed like a good idea to tell him that I was staying up the street at the hotel, and if he changed his mind, I could look at the records in the basement the next morning.

Back at the hotel, I was ready to head across the street for my interview 30 minutes early—and the phone rang. It was the old man from the shop. He sounded really excited. He said he needed for me to come back down to his shop at once. Was he ready to tell me I could see the records in the basement? Had he found another box under the counter? Should I go and possibly be late for my interview? I made a split-second decision. I did what Pete Whelan would do. I did what Joe

Lauro would do. I did what Russ Shor would do. I went to look at the records! Imagining a box of Black Patti's, I raced to the shop.

The old man met me at the door. Hurdled, he walked around the counter and opened the cash register. He pulled out a twenty-dollar bill and handed it to me. "Look, look," he said in a strained voice.

"Look at what," I asked.

He said, "Look at the money."

I gave up. "What am I looking for?"

"The twenty-dollar bill," he exclaimed, his voice now shaking. "The twenty you gave has the mark of the beast on it."

Sure 'nuf, there it was. The first three digits of the serial number on that twenty was 666. "What do you want me to do?" I asked.

"You have to take the twenty back," he said.

I put it in my wallet and started to walk out the door. My interview!...I was 15 minutes late and counting. He ordered me to stop. He wanted me to give him twenty dollars in some other form of currency. I told him that I only had about ten dollars in cash, and that I had to leave at once. He wrung his hands and pondered the question. Was it the twenty and the beast—or was it salvation and nothing. He took back the twenty and the beast. I dashed down the street to the interview

at the bank building.

The headhunter had come to the lobby to look for me. "Where in the hell have you been? He asked.

I said "I'm sorry I'm late...you wouldn't believe me if I told you."

Oh, about the records in the basement...A year later, a buddy of mine in NC charmed his way in and invested eight hours, only to find that the records were a well-picked juke box stock of mostly pop late '40s ditties.

I have also included a few things for you. A nice snapshot of the Avalon (Mississippi) sign from a not so recent trip to Greenwood. As a matter of fact, I was on my way to Greenwood to spend the weekend with my old buddy, Willis Brumfield. Turns out, Willis, who used to be Chancery Clerk (county civil court and recorder of deeds, etc.) is the court-appointed trustee of Robert Johnson's estate. As you might expect, he does a lot of business with [Steve] LaVere. Small world?

Also I'm including copies of a great photo of Jackie Jackson's Orchestra, an unknown white jazz band (found in Louisville...any ideas?), and a cute little promo card of a random 1930s black gospel group from Ohio.

Regards,

Ken (Ken Oilschlager) Frankfort, KY



Jackie Jackson and his Cotton Pickers Orchestra  
(courtesy of Ken Oilschlager)



Dear Sir:

Thanks very much for the splendid Black Patti issue. It's really a handsome work.

However, unless there is some sort of discographical in-joke that eludes me, what is there about the spelling of *Embarrassment* on Page 78 that you question or with the spelling or punctuation of *Waitin'* on Page 127?

You get stuff right and think it wrong, but still write *less than 10*, which is wrong, and think it right.

How idiosyncratic,

Charles Sveningsen (Edina, Minn.)

[Ed. reply: *Assoc. Press Stylebook*—"...However, *less than* is a current substitute for *fewer than* in headlines and tight 'capsule' summaries..."

Dear Pete,

...I noticed that some Howard Thomas Orchestra records made the "rarest 78s" list (quite justifiable). I have none of them, but do have a few dubs on tape. In case you are unaware of it, there is an article about the band, complete with discography, in *Storyville* 136, pages 123-137. It was researched and partially written by the late Howard J. Waters. Howard was too ill to continue and asked me to finish it, which I did, then Laurie Wright improved it a lot with some editorial "polishing." Regrettably, it didn't get published in time for Howard to see it.

If you are interested in reading it, but don't have access to *Storyville*, I would be happy to send you a photocopy of the article. Just give me the word!

Keep up your good work!!

Best regards,

Don Peak (Hollywood, CA)

P.S. There is a slight typo in the Thomas list, No. 11, Page 95. The second line from the bottom of the first column should read "Champion 16387." [Champion] 16380 is shown correctly above in the same column.

Dear —

My name is Pedro, and I would like to know—what is the time duration of one side of a 78 rpm? Could you please send me that information? Thank you so much,

Augusta Robelo da Costa

[Ed. reply: When asked how long his movies lasted, Alfred Hitchcock replied "they're timed to the endurance of the human bladder." Perhaps the mind has a shorter endurance and gets bored past a three-minute 78.]

## The Buckeye Harmonizers

Spiritual and Novelty Quartette Columbus, Ohio



Reading from left to right: Paul Butler, 1st Tenor and Treasurer; James Horton, Bass and Asst. Secretary; Garfield Carter, 2nd Tenor, Mgr., Director and Arranger; James Poole, Baritone and Secretary.

For Business call EV. 2317. 548 North 18th St. Columbus 3, Ohio

(courtesy of Ken Oilschlager)



Driving thru Avalon, Mississippi  
(courtesy of Ken Oilschlager)

Dear Pete:

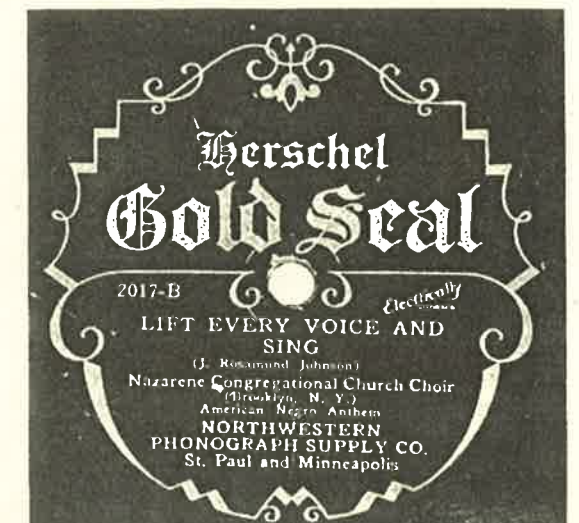
Loved the Black Patti issue. Enclosed are pictures of my copy of Herschel Gold Seal 2017, an alternate issue of Black Patti 8017...

Best wishes,  
Roger Misiewicz



(courtesy of Ken Oilschlager)

unknown jazz band (from Kentucky?)



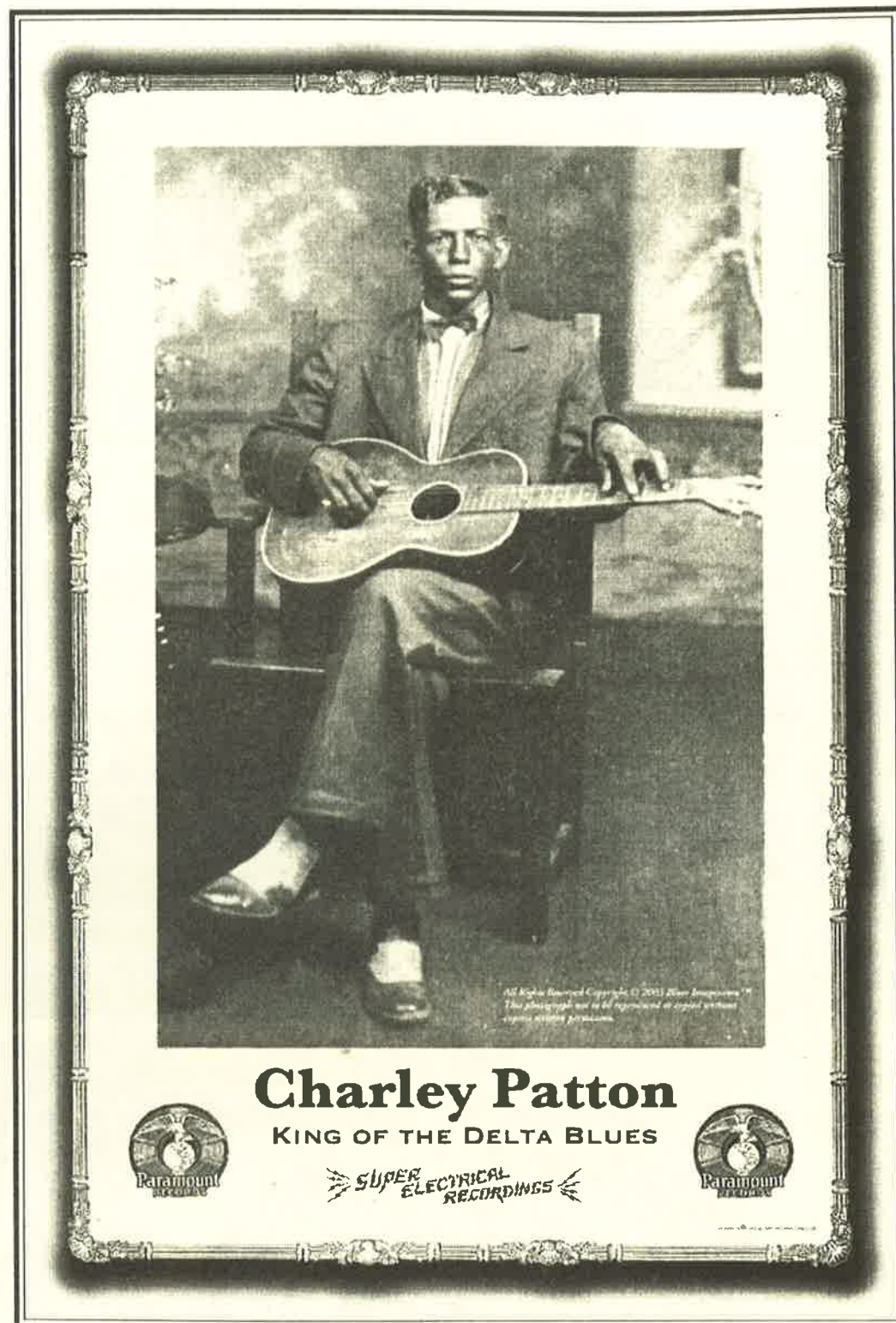
All three label photos courtesy of Roger Misiewicz

(thanks to Steve Abrams and Terry Tullos Wayland who also sent us labels of BP 8013 & 8012)



Keep reading!  
(or you'll be DOG FOOD!)  
!!!





**Gold in Grafton! Unknown Patton photo,  
Paramount artwork surface after 70 years!**

**—by John Tefteller—**



**Side One of the *only known copy* of Paramount  
13125, found in Grafton, Wisconsin • May 2002**



**2002 was the golden year...**(but now it's 2003...time to get everything down in print before memory hardens like carpenter's nails pounded in wet concrete, and before one's thoughts become two-dimensional fossils.

**How a cutoff head became a full-bodied singer, who sits in a chair and plays a guitar...**

During the early '60s, Maxey Tarpley discovered the only known photo of Charley Patton. It was inside a 1929 Paramount supplement, but it was crude—a two-square inch head composed of coarse dots. In it Patton wears a formal jacket—the kind you see at weddings—or funerals. It created a lot of specula-



**The other 90% of this photo awaited discovery**

tion by blues enthusiasts: somewhere in this valley of the unknown was the remainder of Patton, perhaps maybe even holding his mythical

Stella guitar. (Shanachie Entertainment owner Richard Nevins proclaimed it: *"the single most important photograph in blues history" waiting to be discovered.*)

Thanksgiving 2001, began as a warm, sultry morning in Los Angeles (in which a few turkeys may have been roasted by heat prostration) By afternoon, I was laboring over an elaborate turkey dinner. Late that evening I phoned home in Oregon and rang up my answering service for messages. One caught my attention. It was from a record-collecting friend: "while you were enjoying your sumptuous turkey dinner, a very interesting Paramount



**1923: End of summer at the Wisconsin Chair Co./Paramount headquarters in Port Washington. It is as silent and still as an Edward Hopper painting**

item sold on the Internet—*too bad you missed it.*" (There wasn't a computer at my in-laws' house in L.A. I had no way of finding out what he was talking about until I got back to Oregon three days later.) There, I turned on my computer and saw it *in color.*

It was a large poster of Blind Lemon Jefferson's "Oil Well Blues" (on Paramount 12771). The drawing resembled one of the *Chicago Defender* ads featured in Max Vreede's *Paramount 12000/13000 Series* book. It was by that familiar (unknown) Paramount artist (whose photo renditions resembled woodcuts). But this was a huge poster that belonged on the wall of a 1920s record store. There was color in it, and the artwork was clear and sharp—the ad itself hadn't appeared Vreede's book.

***Epecially intriguing was the seller's location:*** Port Washington, Wisconsin—the home of Paramount. I e-mailed the seller in Port Washington.

"Where did this poster come from?" I asked. Then, "Do you have any other Paramount posters?"

I pushed the "send" button on the computer. I hoped that there might be a second copy of the poster—or, posters of *other* Paramount blues singers.

**"I do have other Paramount material you might be interested in."**

The e-mail that came back was jolting: "I do have other Paramount material you might be interested in. I have a number of different posters and some smaller items as well. I found these some years ago and took them home, because they looked interesting. I like blues, but I have a lot material by singers I don't recognize. I can send you photographs

of some of the posters, if you'd like to see more examples." I realized I was on the trail of something important.

I had seen "woodcut" artwork like the Blind Lemon poster before. It was at Howard Berg's house in Hatfield, PA. Howard had sold me a 9" x 12" advertising flyer for Paramount 12531: "Half a Cup of Tea" by the Beale Street Sheiks. He said he had gotten it in a trade with Terry Zwigoff, who had obtained similar Paramount items from John Steiner maybe 10 years earlier.

***But now, in December 2001, I was talking to a man in Port Washington, and he was telling me he had dozens (and dozens) of Paramount posters, flyers and photographs.***

The voice on the other end of the phone seemed amazed that I knew all about Paramount and the jazz and blues records made in his hometown so many years ago.

I talked on and on about how important those records were to blues collectors and what an impact that this music had made on American culture and history, not to mention the whole world, and the generations of blues musicians leading to the Rock and Roll era and beyond etc.

I also told him "I had a large collection of Paramount 78s; I considered them the pinnacle of recorded blues performances."

He listened politely (*our phone conversation was punctuated by long silences*). I got the impression he thought I was a bit of a nut, and that maybe I was talking too much. So, after I laid in the groundwork, I started asking specific questions. That's when he told me the story of where all this Paramount material

came from, when it was discovered, how it all came about...

**Boxes of Paramount memorabilia were destined for the dumpster...**

Here's what my new Wisconsin friend (Steve -----) told me: In the early 1980s he and a woman, Janet, were working as reporters for a newspaper in Port Washington. Their boss gave them an address and assigned them to help clean out a building their newspaper had bought (the newspaper planned to move its new offices into the building).

When they arrived there (years before, the building had housed the offices of an out-of-business newspaper, the *Port Washington Pilot*), they found other co-workers already busy. *They were emptying old file cabinets and tossing piles of old junk into waiting dumpsters.*

The two reporters wandered around, surveying what had been done and what was left to do. Something about the boxes on the loading docks near the dumpsters caught their attention (*co-workers had already lined up boxes of refuse to be heaved into the dumpsters*). What came next had something to do with intuition, curiosity, and discovery...

**Inside were hundreds of old Paramount publicity posters, photographs, artwork, advertising images, letterhead, and publicity material—and they dated from 1924 to 1934!**

The two reporters didn't know the significance of what they were looking at. *They did know that the stuff looked "cool," and the idea of throwing those boxes into the crocodile mouths of dumpsters seemed very bad.*

Instead, they loaded the boxes into their car and took them back to the newsroom. As codiscoverers,



they divided the material equally on their work desks. Each took half home and stowed it away—they hadn't a clue to the importance of the artwork or photos.

As I listened to Steve narrate these events on the phone, I thought: **Where is that other reporter? Does each still have their half of the material?**

"What happened to Janet, the other reporter?" I asked.

"I really don't know," he said. "She left Port Washington about 10 years ago after a messy divorce."

I was thinking hard. "Can you find her and ask her about the posters and photographs, or can you tell me how to find her?"

There was a pause on the phone. He hesitated (*after all, I hadn't yet bought his material, and I was already asking about someone else's material*).

**I gave it another try:** "Can you recall, as you were dividing everything, was there anything (dramatically) different between what you got and what she got?"

His answer was a surprise: "Well, for some reason, she knew who Charley Patton was. At the time, I didn't. I had heard the name Blind Lemon Jefferson—but the name Charley Patton meant nothing to me. So, Janet took a whole bunch of Charley Patton material."

I asked him to describe exactly *what kind* of Patton material.

He said: "Well, I remember a bunch of ads for his records, a few poster-size ads, and a photograph."

**"Photograph—what kind of photograph? I know of a photo of Patton's head," I said. "It's well-known. Is that the one you mean?"**

"No, this one's a professional studio portrait of him sitting in a chair holding a guitar."

I asked again: "Are you sure it's a photo? Do you remember anything else about it?"

There was a long interval. Finally, he said: "I have something like it here...but it's a drawing. If I remember correctly, the photo is the same as my drawing, but I'm sure she had a photo, not a drawing."

"Can you dig out that 'drawing,' bring it to the phone, and describe exactly what you see?"

Steve put the phone down, came back a minute later and said: "O.K., I have it in front of me. It's an advertisement for the song 'Jesus Is A Dying Bed Maker,' and there's an artist's rendering of Patton seated in a chair holding a guitar."

I tried to figure out the situation: *Here I was, on the phone with a guy in Port Washington, Wisconsin, who now had what he describes as hundreds of Paramount advertising posters, publicity sheets, and photos. He's just told me that half that material is in the hands of someone else. He lost contact with the person 10 years ago. This person (supposedly) had—or has—the missing studio portrait photo of Charley Patton...*

**I asked. "Can you help me find this mystery woman who had the rest of the artwork?"**

*(I promised to buy all of Steve's posters, promotion sheets, and photos as soon as we agreed on a price).*

"I'll make it well worth your while if you help me find your old



**"Three weeks went by. Then the phone rang..."**



partner," I said (*adversity will make me wise, but not rich*).

**I waited...(and waited).** The days passed in slow-motion limbo. And the nights—I'd wake up suddenly between bouts of nightmares—then back to a feverish sleep—and finally, insomnia...

Three weeks went by. Then the phone rang. "John Tefteller," I said.

It was Steve. "I found her," he said. "She lives in Colorado...now, that's the *good news*... the *bad news* is that Janet's not sure if she still has the Paramount material..."

**Did her ex-husband throw all "that stuff" out?**

"Remember," he said. "I told you she went through a messy divorce and left Port Washington about 10 years ago. Well, apparently, she doesn't remember if she took the boxes of Paramount material with her—*sit down for this one*—or left them in Port Washington. She says that most likely her ex-husband just threw all that stuff out."

*The "Bad News" could be a Titanic disaster. I could see this ship was sinking fast. All aboard—artwork, photos, posters—would soon disappear...*



"When will she know for sure?" I asked.

"She said she'll get back to me after she has a chance to look, but, hey...it's winter in Colorado right now, and she really doesn't want to 'venture outside into a freezing garage and rummage through boxes.'"

I said: "Tell her I'll also make it worth her while to find the material—(if I don't have a 'nervous breakdown' in the next few weeks) and to please look for it as soon as possible."

**Were the boxes rescued from dumpsters—only to be dumped in local garbage cans?...**

I started thinking about how I could ask this woman to put me in touch with her ex-husband and how I was going to call him and see (*if by some miracle*), he hadn't thrown everything out.

More weeks went by. Then, January 24, 2002 brought a phone call from Wisconsin. Yes, Steve had news:

**"Janet has the material, and it's all in good shape! She's not sure if she wants to sell it, but she's**

**willing to discuss it."**

I got her phone number and made the call. I started by telling her "how glad I am that she found the material and how important it is that it wasn't thrown away." I thank her profusely for searching for it.

"And your foresight in saving it from the dumpster 10 years ago was a marvel," I said.

"Really?" Janet seemed cool to the whole thing—and much more matter-of-fact about it than her former fellow reporter from Wisconsin.

I found myself gripping the phone. "Do you have all the material in front of you?"

"Yes, it's here," she said. "Is there something in particular you'd like to ask about?"

I needed a moment to recover. "Yes," I said. "Steve mentioned...he remembered that you knew who Charley Patton was and that you had a photograph of Patton. Is that right?"

"Yes, I do."

I kept my voice even. "Could



you please pull out that photograph and describe it to me?"

I waited for what seemed an eternity (actually I think it was about five minutes, but it seemed like hours). I could hear her shuffling paper.

**"Here it is," she said. "He's seated in a chair holding his guitar, and there's a backdrop behind him. A table next to him has a vase with flowers in it."**

I felt stupid, but had to ask: "Are you sure it's a photograph—and not a drawing?"

She sounded annoyed. "I've been in the newspaper business for years. This is definitely a photograph. It measures just slightly less than the standard 8 x 10, and it has his name, 'Charley Patton,' and two Paramount Records logos at the bottom. It's a publicity shot—like what they would have sent to the newspapers."

*Better to be more "business-like," I thought.* I attempted a matter-of-fact voice and asked "Is there any damage to the photo?"

"No," she replied. "It looks great. It's been folded in half, but folding it didn't damage it. By the way, this isn't the only photo of Patton I have."

#### **Patton appears in lime green!...**

"Well, I'd have to look for it, but I know it's here. Actually, it's the pose and background, but it's in color—not full color, but in green—a kind of lime green."

This was stunning (almost incredulous) news. I asked: "I'm afraid I don't understand...How come you have this other photo of Patton in lime green?"

She was nonchalant. "He's on the cover of this calendar that way. What I'm talking about is a Paramount dealers' calendar. His

picture's on the front in this lime green color. It looks real cool that way, kind of a psychedelic."

*Better get back to "basics," I thought.* "Are you willing to talk about selling me this material? I have a deal to buy everything Steve has, and I would like to do the same with you. I'd like to put the collection back together—as it was when you both found it."

"I'll need time to think about it," she said. "I'll want to talk with Steve, but it is a possibility."

I asked her to make a basic list of everything she had and get back to me. The list arrived a week later. *I figured that we were indeed going to be able to come up with a deal that both of us could be happy with.*

So, I called Janet in Colorado and asked when I could look at the material and make an offer. She said she preferred to meet me in Port Washington, and that she would rely on Steve to insure that she got a fair price for the material. She said she'd book a flight from Colorado to Milwaukee. Then, she'd meet me at Steve's house in Port Washington in May, when the weather warmed up.

*It was late February, and now, I had to wait until May!...*

(What happened next? The fact is I can't discuss it. My "lips are sealed." I can't even tell you how much the collection cost. All I can say is, I spent a fortune: I took out a loan to pay for the whole thing. I did meet the two reporters in Port Washington, Wisconsin on May 8th, 2002, and I did purchase all the material—or so I thought.)

If all this Paramount material had escaped collectors and researchers for so long, what else might still be in Port Washington? I was determined to find out. (*Kurt Nauck had recently held an auction containing*

*about 30 Paramount tests that had been "found in an antique shop in Port Washington." Among those tests was the very first Paramount recording Tommy Johnson made. This two-sided test was historic and unique. It had been discovered a few months before the summer of 2001.*)

Paramount photographs, tests, and artwork had all shown up within a year in the same area (and where was the negative of that Patton photo?). I decided to bring a camera and explore Port Washington. I allowed myself 12 extra days for research and record canvassing. I had to spend the time wisely.

#### **I planned an intense trip to Port Washington...**

So I booked a flight to Milwaukee and a room at the Best Western in downtown Port Washington for those 12 days. Day one I'd buy all the material from the two reporters. After that, I was going to cram as much research and record canvassing as I could into the remaining 11 days. I would turn into a vacuum cleaner. I wasn't going to leave the area until I vacuumed up any leftover Paramount records, artwork, or photos.

**The flight to Milwaukee was bumpy and tense.** Even though it was May in Wisconsin, it wasn't warm. Forty to 45 degrees during the day, colder at night. It was chilly, and rain drizzled down during the 45 minutes I drove from the Milwaukee airport. Then, I got off the main highway into Port Washington. I kept thinking about why I was there and what I would find.

As I drove into downtown Port Washington, I saw off to the right, coal stacked in a huge mound and a big ancient looking smokestack—all hovering over Lake Michigan. I

had seen that smokestack somewhere before, but I wasn't sure where. Directly to the right, just before the lake, was the Best Western, and across the street at a right angle was an ancient restaurant, Smith Brothers' Fish House.

#### **Reminders of Paramount's last days...**

As I pulled into the parking lot of the hotel, I noticed the sign on the restaurant "since 1934." (*Across the street and back in time was a restaurant that began in The Depression during Paramount's final days!*)

I checked in and called my reporter friend, Steve, from the phone in my room. Yes, it was OK to come over right now, and yes, his former partner had made it in from Colorado, and she was there with all her material. I tossed my suitcase on the bed, grabbed my coat, and headed out the door—armed with directions to Steve's house.

#### **Original photos of Patton, Blind Lemon, Blind Blake lay in piles!...**

I arrived moments later, and there on a huge table was the Paramount material spread out in piles, according to size.

("Cool, calm, and collected"), I looked over each item. A careful examination brought out comments like "pristine," "wonderful," "what amazing condition." Once again, I thanked the two reporters for saving these important historical artifacts from the dumpsters.

**Then came the photos: Blind Lemon Jefferson—yes, it was the standard photo that's been seen for years, but this was crisp, clean, clear, and sharp—a first generation photograph.** Next: Blind Blake—crisp, clean, and clear. Third was the Norfolk Quartette. Then, it



**Earlier photo reproductions, like this one of Blind Blake, showed cut-off arms and legs (from *The Paramount Book of Blues*)**

appeared: **Charley Patton.** Just as you see him on the cover of this magazine. I felt as if I had discovered some lost amendments to the Constitution in Thomas (or maybe Blind Lemon) Jefferson's own handwriting. To a jazz collector, it was almost like finding the mythical cylinder recorded by the Buddy Bolden Band (not a blues, "a march," Willie Cornish had said). I knew that photo would have a place in blues history.

#### **Then I saw the "psychedelic masterpiece"!**

I stared at the Patton calendar for a long time. It was exactly as she had described it. A 1930 Paramount dealers' calendar with Charley's photo on front. (It was the same as the publicity shot—but in a psychedelic lime green.) Unreal?...

I posed a casual question to my hosts: "I wonder if these photos were taken in Port Washington?"

"Could be," Steve said, "but Grafton is more likely. In fact, there's a photography studio that's been there a long time. You might want to check it out while you're

here."

I said I'd really like to scrutinize the studio. I asked if he might be available to show me around Grafton and Port Washington. He said he'd be happy to: "I know several old timers in town that might be able to help you track down records or more information about Paramount." I closed the deal for all the material from both of them.

As I was packing it all up to leave, Steve had another surprise: "There's someone in Milwaukee who'd like to meet you. I told him you were coming here, and he really wants to meet you. He says, 'Come to Milwaukee tomorrow night.' You'll like this guy. **He collects Paramount records just like you,** and is interested in collecting everything connected to the company. You know, years ago, I gave him some of this material, and he still has it."

*I realized what this meant—more Paramount artwork and posters, and maybe some records! (More on this later...)*



Mail Order  
Record House

24 Hr. Service  
On All Orders

Satisfaction  
Guaranteed

**CHARLIE PATTON**  
(The Masked Marvel)  
Exclusive Paramount Artist

Compliments of  
**F. W. BOERNER CO.**  
Port Washington, Wis.

1930 JANUARY 1930						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**“psychedelic masterpiece”—the Charlie Patton  
Paramount 1930 dealers’ calendar**

# CHARLEY PATTON

Famous as a Blues  
singer and just as  
popular as a Gospel  
singer—Be sure to  
**ORDER**

## 12986

**JESUS IS A DYING  
BED MAKER  
I SHALL NOT BE  
MOVED—Vocal  
Spiritual with Guitar  
Accompaniment.  
Sung by Charlie  
Patton**

**Paramount Promotional Artwork for Charley Patton—1930**





**Paramount employees truck boxes of Paramount 78s to the front of the Grafton post office (1929)**

**Why these originals get special appreciation...**

Most longtime collectors of prewar 78s have seen reproductions of Paramount ads in the *Chicago Defender*. Max Vreede's *Paramount 12000/13000 Series* book used over 400 of them; most were blurry. The ads began in August 19, 1922 with Alberta Hunter's "Beale Street Mama" (Paramount 120001) and ended in April 12 and 16, 1930 with Charley Patton's

"High Water Everywhere" (Paramount 12909) and finally, Charlie Spand's "Got To Have My Sweetbread" (Paramount 12917). The last Paramount ad in Vreede's book was an F. W. Boerner mail order flier from October, 1930.

What makes this new material so special though, is the quality and the fact that much of it was unknown. The photographs are crisper and sharper than previously seen. Artwork and graphics are

originals—they're also clear, crisp, and sharp—not blurred or indistinct. These printing press masters are as good as one could get—unless the actual ink drawings exist somewhere (as far as I can tell, they don't). Most of the previously seen graphics and artwork cover the period 1921-1930. Precious little appears from 1930 on, since Paramount slowed, then stopped advertising in *The Defender* by late 1930. The Great Depression had already begun ravaging the company.



**1929: Paramount employees with no more boxes of Paramounts (after delivering them to the Grafton post office). The building behind them is the Grafton pressing plant.**

(left to right: Otto Just, Harry Diggerman, and Butch Heuer)

**F.W. Boerner comes to "the rescue"!**

Paramount went out of business in the summer of 1932, but the F.W. Boerner Company, with offices in Port Washington and Cedarburg, continued producing artwork to sell the remaining stock of Paramount records, as well as other "popular race records of the time."

**F.W. Boerner was responsible for Paramount's graphics and artwork from 1930-1934 (most of it unknown!)**

Boerner, had been an employee, then executive at Paramount. He also set up a separate business for individual mail orders—described

in the literature as "*The World's Largest Race Records Mail Order House*." Boerner also succeeded Paramount's largest wholesaler: the suddenly defunct St. Louis Music Co. (an Artophone Co. subsidiary that had produced Herwin Records). They had also advertised as "*THE WORLD'S Largest Distributors of Race Records BY MAIL*."

I believe it was Boerner who was in charge of publicity for Paramount: he created his "Mail Order House" as a thinly disguised way to publicize and sell Paramount Records and still look like an independent business.



### Why Grafton, Wisconsin?...

Today, both Grafton and Port Washington residents are predominately German. Their roots go back to early German settlers in the 1840s and '50s. No hot bed of blues, the town's specialty was to become furniture manufacturing. Founded by Fred A. Dennett in 1888, the Wisconsin Chair Company first produced spring mattresses. But, by 1892, it specialized in crafting chairs for offices, kitchens, schools, and auditoriums.

In 1914 the Wisconsin Chair Co. formed a subsidiary (the United Phonograph Corporation) that included the production of "phonographs and phonographic records." They began manufacturing windup victrolas and portable phonographs. By 1917 the Chair Co. incorporated the Paramount label as "The New York Recording Laboratories" (a 15th-floor "cubby hole" at Broadway and 27th Street in Manhattan). The music consisted of acoustically recorded Tin Pan Alley tunes by obscure artists. The records, crudely pressed in Grafton, sold poorly.

By 1922 Maurice Supper, a Chair Company executive, staved off bankruptcy by recreating Paramount as a "race" label. He then appointed Mayo Williams to find and record Black talent and supervise blues and jazz performances. Paramount's access to masters involved more than seven recording studios: Chicago's Marsh Laboratories and the Rodheaver Studio a few blocks away, and possibly the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Studio also in Chicago; use of Black Swan masters; the "cubby hole" studio fronted by Art Satherly in Manhattan until 1926; and QRS in Long Island City. By 1929 Gennett had begun recording Paramount masters in Richmond, Indiana, and finally, came Grafton:

in the autumn of 1929 (under Art Laibly) Paramount completed its own recording studio on the second floor of a brick-red wooden building. It was connected by viaduct to the Grafton pressing plant.

As I was soon to discover, the Best Western Hotel in Port Washington was sitting right next to what used to be the manufacturing plant for the Wisconsin Chair Company and the corporate headquarters/main offices of Paramount Records. The legendary Paramount recording studio and pressing plant were in nearby Grafton. The Chair Company building was gone (as were the Grafton recording studio and pressing plant). But, I went to where the studio once stood and saw the lay of the land.

The wooden building was located right on the Milwaukee River. Here, workers at the pressing plant would process clay directly from the river bank, mix it with shellac and river water in the basement, then bring the hardening "forms" up to the pressing machines on the first floor. These cheaply made pressings were among the worst in the recording industry ("too much clay and cotton filler"). My talks with locals who had played there as children revealed that they used to stack the defective pressings on rocks above the river banks. Both local kids and Paramount employees sailed many of these records into the Milwaukee River.

### The Grafton Hotel is still there...

The Grafton Hotel is a short walk from the recording studio. Previously, it had been "white only" (Ishmon Bracey and Tommy Johnson had to sleep over in a "colored" Milwaukee boarding house).

But, locals confirmed that as kids they remember seeing blues

singers carrying guitar cases and walking from the studio to the hotel and back. Paramount had a deal with the Grafton Hotel to put up the musicians before and after their sessions.

### Son House and Louise Johnson spend their nights in a front room overlooking the street...

May, 1930: Traveling north to Grafton in Wheeler Ford's Buick were Charley Patton, Willie Brown, Son House and Patton's soon to be ex-girlfriend, the pianist Louise Johnson.

Son House: "And so, they gets in an argument—her and Charley in the car. So she gets out of the front seat and come in the back where I was. That's when it went to happen, and I get to snortin'. She'd take one, kept on riding along. Charley, he's mad. He's sitting in the front. Ride along...

"I commence to leaning over talking trash to her. I say 'I really kinda like you gal.' And we take another big swallow.

"So when we got to Grafton, Charley didn't know that I done made her, see. So they have a little hotel there in Grafton, where the recorders stay at. And we's all out getting the grips and everything, and so the man come over what attend to the place and giving everybody their keys to the different rooms. So I come up, and they's telling me 'bout 'the man done been here and given us all the keys.'

I said 'Where did he go, 'cause he ain't given me no key.'

And so Louise say 'Yes he did.' Say, 'I got me and your key.'

I say, 'Oh, oh, that's it then.' Me and her stayed together in our

# "Dry Spell Blues"

Sung by  
SON  
HOUSE



DRY SPELL BLUES—Voc.  
PARTS 1 AND 2—Guitar Acc.

Paramount Promotional Artwork  
for Son House—1930



*little room...we had the one that's facing the street."*

I phoned the current owner of the hotel, a local lawyer, and asked if, by chance, the registration books for the hotel from 1929-1933 still existed (I tried to picture what those signatures —Charley Patton, Willie Brown, Son House, Skip James, et al.—would look like).

"No," he said. "When we renovated that place in the eighties, we threw those out." (*My God! They were still there in the 1980s! We'll never know if those books actually contained the signatures of blues singers and musicians who had stayed there...*)

Standing in front of the Grafton Hotel, I looked up the street: There, on the opposite side of the street, less than a block away, was that old-time photography studio that Steve had talked about.

As I walked toward it, I saw the sign "Photography by Michael" on the front of the building. It certainly looked old enough, and, as I reached the door, I saw engraved on the door's old glass front: "Established 1872," and below that, the names of five different photographers who worked there during those 130 years. The most interesting name to me was "Walter Burhop," who took over the studio in 1926, and retired in 1975. I could see that the current

owner, Michael, was in—so in the door I went.

I showed Michael the Charley Patton photograph and asked him if it was taken in his studio. He looked at it long and hard and said: "it very well could have been."

I then asked: "Is there any chance any old negatives from the 1920s would still be anywhere in the building?"

**A "whole ton" of negatives sat in the attic!**

"Yes, indeed," he said. There are some in the basement and a whole ton of them in the attic."

## Grafton Hotel—2002



I felt like a lobbyist when I asked the all-too-familiar question: "Is there any way that I can make it 'worth your while' to let me search for the negative to this photo or anything else from Paramount?"

He paused before answering (*I detected "that fatal" lack of enthusiasm*). So quickly, I continued; I explained (*hurriedly*) that I had come a long way... "All the way from Oregon," I said...and that I was on a limited time schedule, and I would really make it "worth his while" if the negatives could be located.

There was dead silence while he thought about it. He said, "Well, there are so many negatives here, and there's no way you could look at all of them in less than a couple

of days, and I just don't have that much time to invest in this."

My heart sank, but I tried again: "Could I just have a few hours? Maybe I'll luck out and find it quickly."

He smiled and said, "Come back Tuesday (*this was four days later*), and I'll think about it." As I walked out the door, he added. "I know I've got a lot of pictures from the Wisconsin Chair Company up in the attic, so you just might be in the right place."

Then it was Tuesday morning, and I arrived early. Michael was in a good mood, and he agreed to show me what was in the basement. Here were stacks and stacks of large glass negatives in brown envelopes that

crumbled into chards as they were touched. All were dated, most arranged by day/month/year. However, everything I found there was from 1916 to about 1923.

**My search for the Patton negative persisted...**

**Three hours later and no negatives of Charley Patton found! (No negatives of any other musicians either!).** I was at a critical moment. If I was going to get out of that basement and into the attic, I had to give Michael some economic reasons to allow the search to continue.

Among the negatives in the basement were photographs of chairs from the Wisconsin Chair Company and Paramount phonographs. I had carefully set those aside from the others, then made my



**Photography studio, Grafton (1898)**



pitch to Michael.

"Sir," I said. "I'd like to purchase a number of these negatives from you. I haven't yet found the negatives of the musicians I was seeking, but these negatives of Paramount phonographs are interesting, and I'd be willing to pay you for them. Is it possible...Could I go into the attic and continue my search?"

Michael winced and told me how valuable his time was and how much work he was not getting done that day. But, since I would actually buy some negatives from him, he agreed to allow me to search the attic for at least a little while. I think

my quest and determination were so obsessive that *he was a bit afraid to turn me down!*

So, we went up old stairs past ancient back drops (which had been there for many years). No, I didn't see the one in background of the Patton photo—but Michael explained that he had indeed thrown some of oldest backdrops away when he took over the studio in 1975.

No, I never saw the chair that Patton sits on in the photo—nor the table next to him. But my research that day in the old Grafton photog-

raphy studio will prove that the Patton photo could have been taken there, as well as many other Paramount singers and musicians who recorded in Grafton's newly completed recording studio.

In Michael's attic were thousands and thousands of glass negatives neatly arranged on old, rotted wood shelving. I spent hours hunting, but to no avail. Around 3 P.M. Michael came up to the attic to see how it was going. I had found a few more photos of Paramount phonographs and, most interesting, a few photos of the main offices of

the Wisconsin Chair Co./Paramount Records—with that very same smokestack that was right outside the window of the Best Western I was staying in! (That's where I had seen that smokestack before. It was in an early, grainy photo of the Wisconsin Chair Company published in a blues history book.)

"Mr. Tefteller, I think I just remembered something. Everything in the basement and everything up here—they're all glass negatives, right? When I bought this place from Walter Burhop in 1975, there were tons more negatives up here than there are now. Mr. Burhop was concerned about them because they weren't glass negatives like these. They were nitrate negatives. As I remember, he worried that they were deteriorating rapidly. He kept saying 'they were a fire hazard.'

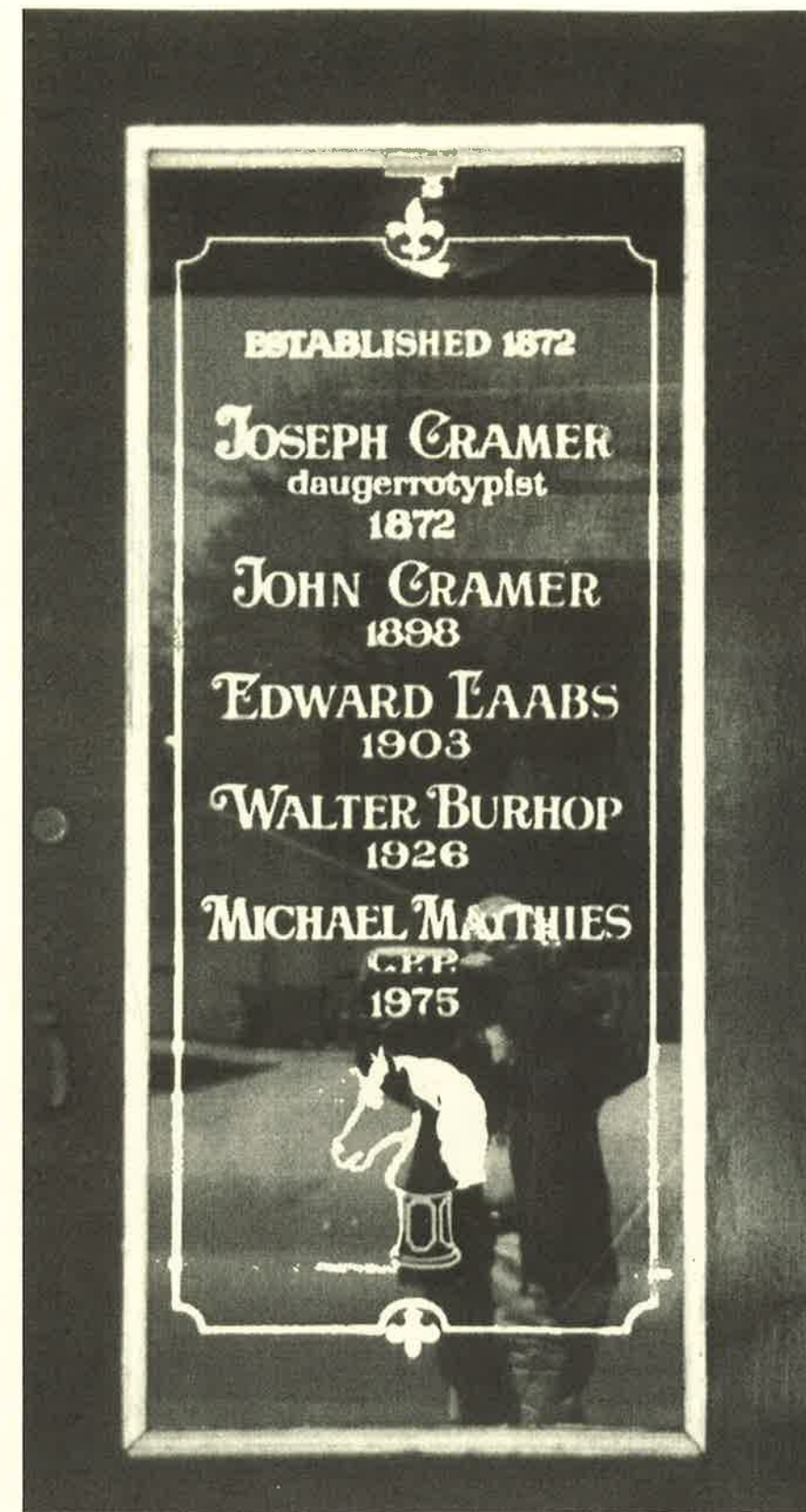
"One day, he came up here and carted out all those nitrate negatives. He destroyed them so they wouldn't ignite and burn the place down." I got this sinking feeling...

I realized what had happened: All the negatives in the basement dated from 1916 to 1923. The ones in the attic were from the early 1900s until 1923, as well. Photographers stopped using glass negatives about 1924. The new, less destructible (if you drop a glass negative, it shatters!) nitrate negatives came into common use.

It was certain that the photo of any singer who recorded in Grafton was shot on nitrate, then destroyed in 1975! Then, came a final shocking realization as I looked over the thousands of glass negatives that remained: They were portraits of the fine residents of Grafton, Port Washington, and the surrounding smaller communities.



Photography studio, Grafton (2002)



Front door of the photography studio in Grafton (lineage of photographers who owned it since 1872)



They were untouched by time and in exactly the same slots on the exact same rotting shelves that they had been so lovingly filed years before.

**Perhaps the saddest realization was that each man, woman, or child was photographed at 12 different angles and/or poses.** If Charley Patton and the others, whose negatives are missing, actually did go to the Grafton studio, they would have had 12 or more pictures taken. What could all the blues researchers who came into the area in the 1960s been thinking? (Was everything reduced to rubble during Paramount's final days?)—As we now know, *Burhop* didn't destroy

*the negatives until 1975!*

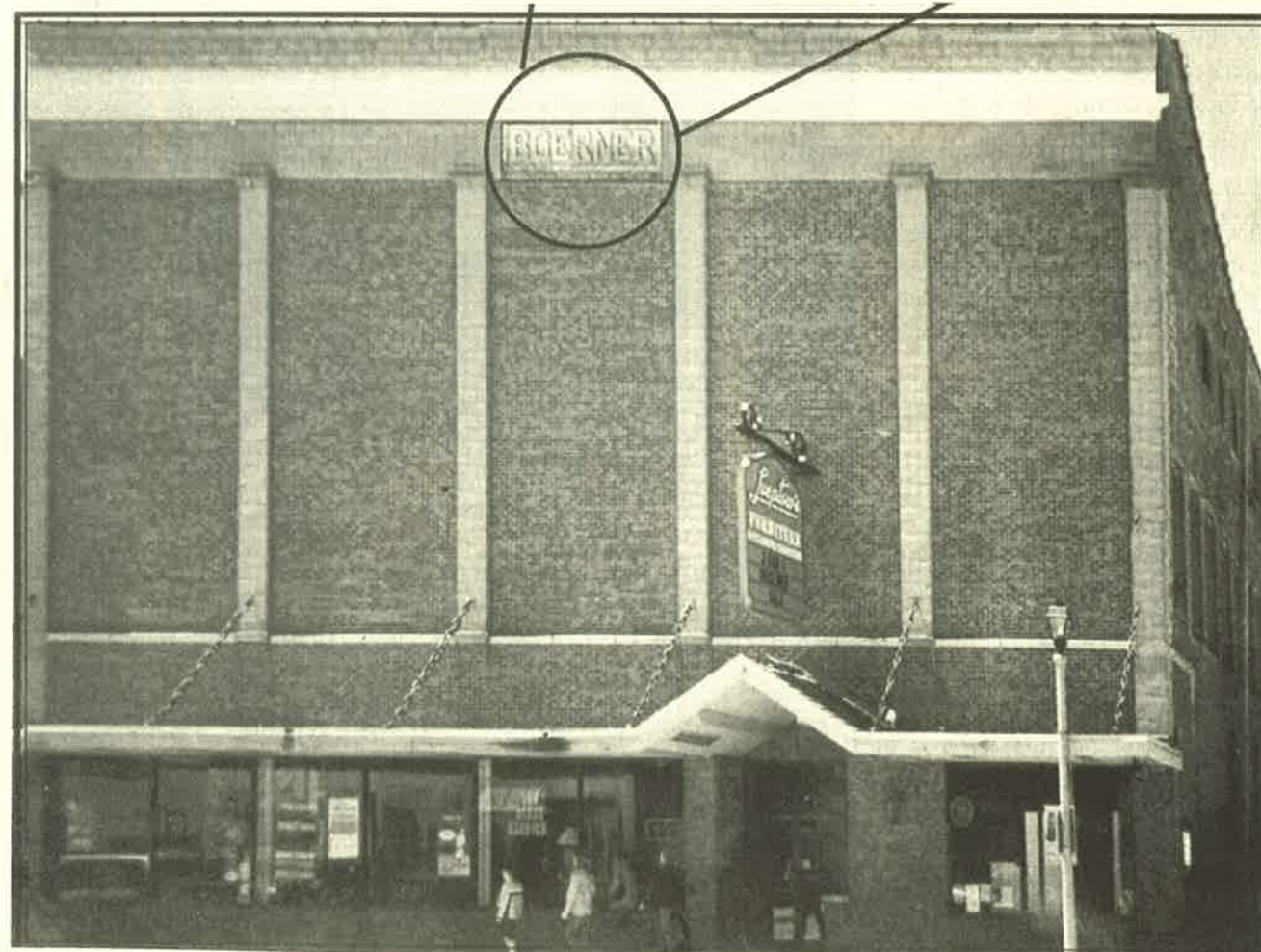
I paid Michael for his time and his negatives and I left the studio—totally depressed. It was bittersweet. It's been 75 years and this is the only complete Patton photo to surface (you'll learn why and how this lone photo did survive in the file cabinets of that old newspaper office in

Port Washington until it was almost thrown out).

I spent the rest of my days in Port Washington and Grafton talking to as many old timers in the area that I could find. Some had parents and grandparents who had worked for Paramount and the Wisconsin Chair Company. I met a few who



**Closeup of Boerner's plaque on what is now Leuptow's Furniture Store, Main Street, Port Washington. The top floor housed thousands of Paramounts in the late '20s!**



**2002: Leuptow's Furniture Store, Main Street, Port Washington (formerly Boerner's Department Store). The upstairs floor housed Paramount Records!**

worked there as young men and women. They are now in their nineties. What comes next I learned from listening to as many "old timers" as I could find:

**Fred W. Boerner had become a "partner" in Paramount Records.** In a deal/arrangement with the owners, Boerner helped set up a huge mail order operation to advertise and sell Paramounts and three other record labels (Okeh, Columbia, and Vocalion) by mail to individual buyers in the South—and to handle all of Paramount's distribution to stores/jobbers/wholesalers throughout the country.

**25 thousand Paramount mail-order customers...**

Boerner, who began at Paramount's plating department in 1920, formed the mail order company with his brother-in-law (and

Paramount's former Sales Manager) Maurice Supper. Its mailing list comprised 25,000 names and addresses that Supper amassed from Paramount's *Chicago Defender* ads.

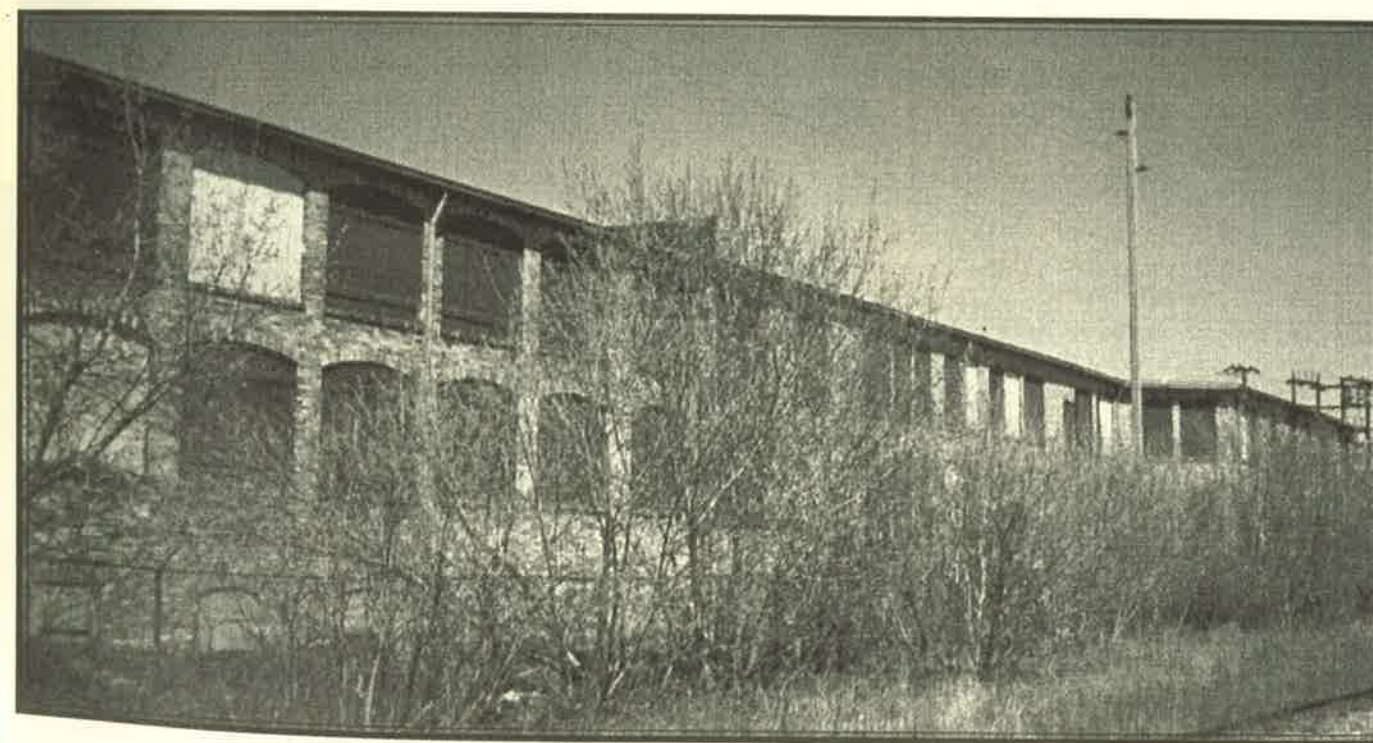
Boerner's family operated an immense department store on Port Washington's Main Street. Boerner first set up Paramount's distribution center in the upstairs part of the store (if you walked down Main Street in 1930, you could also stroll past Paramount's central offices at the Wisconsin Chair Company's chief manufacturing plant).

**In Port Washington today are the remains of yet another distribution site for Paramount Records.** Located just west of downtown Port Washington, an old factory building backs up to railroad tracks that run north from Chicago through Milwaukee into Port Wash-

ington, then still continue north (residents called it the "Inter-Urban Railway"). According to locals, musicians would have come north on the "Inter-Urban" from Chicago to Grafton to record. Heading south were thousands of Paramounts in crated boxes. They would regularly leave the depot to distribution points in Chicago (in fact, Paramount had yet another office at Wabash Avenue in Chicago).

I photographed the old building on the railroad tracks (now owned by Simplicity Manufacturing), and in the photograph you can see the building's loading dock from which the records were transferred to trains heading south to Chicago.

**Another sad aside: it was this building that housed what ultimately remained of the Paramount record inventory when the**



**2002: Paramount wholesale distribution center in Port Washington. Here, records were shipped on the Inter-Urban Railway to Chicago.**



Grafton pressing plant was finally shut down in 1934.

**They hauled off all the masters, metal parts, and remaining records...**

According to eye witnesses that I spoke with, after Paramount finally ceased pressing records, workers emptied the Grafton plant of all masters, metal parts, and finished product records.

**Four huge semi-trucks transported everything five miles up the road to Port Washington.** Employees unloaded most of it into the wholesale distribution building next to the "Inter-Urban Railway." (There was some overage, and those

were stored in what was called the "Old Mill Building." I tried to find that as well, but it had been torn down a year before my visit.)

I interviewed a number of Ozaukee County residents who grew up near this building on the railroad tracks. All of them said the records, metal masters, and boxes (and boxes) of empty Paramount sleeves "sat in that old building for years."

**As kids, they used to play in the building: they'd sail the records across the room or out the windows onto the railroad tracks.** No one cared. Chair Company em-

ployees encouraged them to take any records home they wanted. Many did, and gave them to their parents as presents. Most parents quickly discarded the records: mainly jazz and blues—not the popular music of the day in all-white Port Washington.

**World War II claimed the remaining metal masters...**

**One former resident** described how, just after World War II broke out, the Company hired him and several friends to go into that building and load all the metal masters and parts onto waiting box cars. The cars took all the metal down the railroad tracks to be unloaded and re-

cycled for the war effort!

**After John Steiner bought Paramount's remains** from the Wisconsin Chair Company's chief officer, Otto Moeser, in 1943, he located this same building. Here, in the middle of the War, he discovered a small stack of metal masters that somehow survived the WW II scrap drive and whatever Paramount records still existed (most were broken and scattered).

**Another (unknown) Paramount distribution center emerges...**

**The newly acquired advertising material revealed yet another location:** Cedarburg, Wisconsin, two miles south of Grafton. Cedarburg today resembles an ancient German town in pre-war East Prussia or perhaps Mecklenburg—chateaus and cottages, carefully preserved two-story buildings, im-

maculate streets. From late Spring on, many tourists wander around, inspect the buildings, check things out, buy chocolate, etc.

**The Rivoli Theater building** sits just off downtown Cedarburg. It no longer shows movies, but it did

from the 1940s until some time in the 1970s. Paramount advertising documents reveal that the Rivoli Theater building was at one time a Paramount distribution center run by the F. W. Boerner Company. The name "Boerner" is cut in stone along



**2002: Abandoned building and loading dock. Paramount distribution center, Port Washington.**



**2002: Closeup of Boerner Plaque on former Paramount Distribution center/offices, Cedarburg.**



**2002: Former Paramount Records distribution center, Cedarburg. The Boerner Company also owned the brick building behind the theatre.**



the top right side of the building. (A duplicate sits at the top of Boerner's former department store on Main Street, Port Washington.)

Meanwhile, I went to visit the previously mentioned Milwaukee collector (Mike) to whom Steve had given part of his Paramount paper collection. He gave Mike that material because Mike has a special passion for things Paramount—the music (the great blues), the records, researching the label, and everything that goes with it. Fortunately for me, Mike needed money and was open to selling me anything I needed.

**I bought just about everything** and now have reconstructed the entire collection pretty much as it was when the two reporters found it. There are a few more items given to the local historical society, but they have since vanished—probably into the hands of a Paramount collector somewhere (*if you're reading this, and you have them, please contact me—I won't turn you in! I just want copies of what you have to be able to finally complete the collection*).

**How did all this historic Paramount material remain in the offices of a newspaper that went out of business years earlier?** The answer is simple. Boerner (and Paramount) had an in-house publicity department which created all the ads for the *Chicago Defender* and all the posters and flyers for the record stores—but they didn't have a printing press. So, they contracted with the local newspaper who *did* have a printing press.

**Artwork and photos spend 50 years hiding in a file cabinets...**

The owner of that newspaper was quite meticulous. He made sure that one copy of everything printed

for Paramount went to a file cabinet for future reference (in case more copies were needed). He also carefully stored photographs and all the graphic art needed to produce future printed material.

**Those files remained in that newspaper office for over 50 years.** They were finally bundled up and set out to be heaved into the dumpsters on that fateful day. Then, the two reporters showed up and rescued all the material. Fortunately, the artwork, photos, samples, flyers, and posters had been perfectly preserved in dark, dry file cabinets.

Whether duplicates of the Patton photo or full halftone portrait prints were ever actually sent out to dealers and record stores is unclear. I realize that I have the only known surviving photo. You'd think that if Paramount sent out hundreds or thousands of "publicity" prints or photos, **at least one would have shown up** in the intervening 70 years. But *none* have. Perhaps they just weren't given away. Maybe all copies that left the printing press were somehow destroyed.

**Canvassing Paramounts in Port Washington and Grafton...**

Record canvassing in Port Washington and Grafton was quite fascinating. The parents and grandparents of many Ozaukee County residents had worked for either the Wisconsin Chair Company or Paramount. All these workers had access to thousands of blues, jazz, and country Paramounts from 1922 through 1932 (10 years of America's greatest improvised music).

**20 thousand "excess" 78s lay in wait...**

One person told me Paramount had stored at least 20 thousand "excess" records in the Port Washington warehouse/Distribution Center

by the railroad tracks. These "excess" 78s were the unsold inventory of all releases on Paramount, Broadway, Herwin, Puritan, and other labels pressed at the Grafton plant. Paramount gave hundreds of boxed-up records to the community.

**Stacks of white-label tests found!**

Along with issued 78s, stacks of test pressings wound up in the Port Washington/Grafton area. (I came across piles of white-label tests.) Unfortunately, all but one were German marches, operas, dance tunes, and polkas.

**The all-white communities in Ozaukee County** just didn't take home blues or jazz, and if they did, it was purely by accident. The only blues test pressing I found was a double-sided test of an early Ida Cox Paramount. (*On November 18, 1985, Mike Kirsling discovered an incredible batch of Paramount blues tests—Patton, House, T. Johnson, Bracey—in an attic in Waukegan, Illinois. Then, a week later, he found more on the street in a snow-covered garbage collection.*) How these L-series Grafton tests arrived in Waukegan is still a mystery, but I'm now pretty confident that no similar batch exists in Port Washington or in Grafton.

**The odd thing about the records I did find was the condition.** Most were E to new condition—well cared for and played very little, if any. Yes, I did find some blues, jazz, and country Paramounts. And, I did get one "stunner," but it all happened by accident.

I found no one in the area whose relatives had collected blues. Many residents had records (and there were boxes and boxes of them), but most were the wrong kind of music. Many were in Paramount "race" sleeves, but they weren't race



**DEVIL GOT MY WOMAN**

**13088—Devil Got My Woman**  
Cypress Grove Blues ----- 65c  
Vocal by Skip James with Guitar Acc.

**Paramount publicity artwork for Skip James—1931**



records. At the very best, they were country or dance 78s—with a few exceptions. And one notable, historic exception!

The day after my bittersweet look at all those negatives at the old photography studio in Grafton. I got a phone call at my hotel. "I hear you're in town searching for Paramount records," said a friendly woman's voice."

**"I inherited a whole trunk full of Paramount Records."**

"My Grandmother worked at the Grafton record plant, and I inherited a whole trunk full of Paramount records. If you're interested, I'd be happy to let you look at them. If there's anything you want, I'd be happy to discuss selling them to you."

Having spent almost five days looking at stacks of German polkas and marches, I was willing to look, but didn't expect much of anything. So, I asked, "Are there any blues records in the batch, or are they all polkas and marches?"

She laughed, then said, "Well, I don't really know. Most of them are in Paramount sleeves, and there's one with a funny sounding name and funny titles."

My heart raced just a bit. I asked if she could remember what it was. (*I knew that to white people in Port Washington or Grafton those "funny sounding" names and titles just might be a blues record.*)

Again, she laughed, as though recalling something. "I can't remember the name of the singer, but the song is something like 'My Buddy Blind Papa Lemon'—do you know what that is?"

(*I knew the record she was referring to.*) Without missing a beat

in the conversation, I said, "Yes, I do. It's a guy named King Solomon Hill, right?" *I held my breath for the answer I knew should be coming.*

She must have sensed a new excitement in my voice. "Yeah, that's it!" She said (*happy at the prospect of a mutual discovery*).

**Found! the missing King Solomon Hill...**

I said, "Can you go get that one out of the trunk, and carefully bring it to the phone? I'd be happy to wait. I just want to ask you a little more about it."

I sat on the bed in my hotel room and "prayed": *would she be able to find it? Would it be cracked or broken when she took it out of the sleeve?*

(The record was listed, but no copy had ever surfaced. No one had heard it since its release in February, 1932—King Solomon Hill's Paramount 13125 was near the end of the Paramount "race" series.

Five minutes later she was back on the phone. "I've got it right here—what do you want to know?"

I said, "Please, just very carefully take it out of the sleeve and tell me if it's cracked or broken—and how scratchy it looks."

"Well, sir," she said. "It's not cracked or broken, and it looks as if it's never been played. Grandma wasn't into the blues, as far as I know, and if that's what this one is, she would never have played it. She was a secretary at the record plant, and, I guess, just took this one home by accident."

It was after 9 PM at night. So I said, "Okay, please carefully place that one where it won't get broken—and what time in the morning can I come over and see it and the rest of the ones in the trunk?"

There was a pause. She said, "I'd prefer to meet you someplace—how about the parking lot of the Sentry Market in Grafton? That's right down from where the record plant was—10 AM okay?"

*I was scared of the record getting broken in the next 12 hours, but that's how she wanted to meet, and I was not going to rock the boat with alternative suggestions. Sleep was not a factor that night...*

I arrived at the parking lot at 9:55 the next morning, and she was waiting for me—along with three men who looked to be in their 60s. The men were her brothers and equal owners of Grandma's records. Each had a stack of 20 or so Paramounts—all in original sleeves and pretty much all in new shape. She wanted me to look at theirs first—just in case they had anything I wanted.

All their records were country or dance bands. Then I got to look at hers—all country and dance bands, except for the King Solomon Hill, which was indeed new and in its original Paramount sleeve. Quickly, the hundred dollar bills came spilling out of my wallet, and by 10:15 AM, I was on my way back to the Best Western in Port Washington with an all-time prize—a new copy of the unheard Paramount 13125.

The rest of the trip was less eventful, although I did get a fairly beat Patton (in fact, it was the only beat record I found; all others were E+ to new)—plus a few Blakes and Lemons, a Beale Street Sheiks, and a Blind Ben Covington.

I bought a big stack of empty Paramount sleeves from the locals (*I've been keeping my 78 collection in original sleeves*). I looked through hundreds of records from



**Side Two of the only known copy of Paramount 13125, found in Grafton, Wisconsin May 2002**



people whose parents, grandparents, uncles, or aunts had worked at Paramount. I also bought a large stack of mint Broadway dance bands, which I sold when I got home—and some interesting Paramount country records, which I also sold (*I collect only blues*). I did find a few more Paramount catalogs and advertising flyers, and I bought those.

#### **All traces of Paramount are vanishing...**

There are no markers, historical or otherwise, showing the exact site of the pressing plant or the Paramount offices. The Grafton Hotel still stands, as does the Rivoli Theater, along with the decaying building by the tracks, where the Company stored, then abandoned 20 thousand Paramounts and thousands of metal masters.

The local townsfolk who have memories of Paramount are now in their 70s or older. A handful of people who worked there are still alive—all in their 90s. Some of the younger residents (who have no knowledge of blues or jazz history) do seem pleased that long ago, before they were born, the earliest rock and roll began in their hometown. But more than 80 years have gone by since Paramount's inception, and it's all far away and remote.

On the last day, as I stood near the now invisible Paramount pressing plant and recording studio, I saw that the weather had turned. It was cold and windy. It looked like rain. The sky was a distant grey, and it matched my mood. I wondered if someday the "people who matter" in Grafton would pay homage to its history, or at least mark the area with a plaque or monument. I think there may be a handful of locals who understand what happened here—and how Paramount Records changed music forever.

#### **Documented! Paramount 13001! A second Willie Brown is missing...**

Promotional material I received confirms that there are not one, but two missing Willie Brown Paramounts. In addition to Paramount 13099—"Kickin' In My Sleep Blues/Window Blues" (which still hasn't been found), we can now start looking for Paramount 13001: "Grandma Blues/Sorry Blues"—by "Willie Brown—Vocal with Two Guitars." The second guitar on Paramount 13001 is surely Charley Patton. (On page 969 of the Dixon/Godrich/Rye *Blues and Gospel Records 1890-1943*, this Willie Brown listing appears: "The following Paramount title has been traced in the Columbia files! No artist credits are shown. Wednesday, 28 May 1930, Poss. Willie Brown, poss. v/ poss. g., L-415-2 'Grandma Blues' Pm unissued.").

#### **Documented! Paramount 13012! A third Jaydee Short is missing...**

Two Jaydee Short Paramounts are traditionally listed as still unfound: Paramount 13040: "Drafted Mama/Wake Up Bright Eye Mama" (as "Kaydee Short" (from a printer's label copy)—and an alternative issue to Charley Patton's "Circle Round The Moon/Devil Sent The Rain Blues," plus "Flaggin' It To Georgia/Tar Road Blues" on Paramount 13091. Now, a third discographical hole comes to light. Paramount 13012: "Steamboat Rousty/Gittin' Up On The Hill" by "Jaydee Short—Vocal with Guitar."

#### **Fliers reveal 5 other missing Paramounts!**

I also have song titles and artists' names for five other missing Paramounts. (When blues discographies are finally revised, this in-

formation could fill in some more holes.):

(1) Paramount 12908—An F.W. Boerner flier erroneously lists this release number as by Teddy Darby—"Lose You Mind Blues/What Am I To Do." However, existing copies (two?) are on Paramount 12907.

(2) Paramount 13011—Rev. Emmett Dickinson—"Dry Cleaning The Skunk/It's Your Time Now."

(3) Paramount 13025—Rev. Emmett Dickinson—"Christmas, What Does It Mean To You?/Numbers."

(4) Paramount 13027—Anna Belle Coleman With "Kingfish" Bill Tomlin—"Mean Water Man Blues/Signifying Blues"—"Vocal with Piano and Guitar."

(5) Paramount 13029—Roe-buck Ray—"Sweet Mama"/ (no title or artist listed on B side, accompaniment unlisted).

There are still Paramounts for which we don't know the artist, titles, or even if Paramount assigned the label numbers to real records.

#### **Close-up glimpses of late '20s/early '30s country blues spawn a unique calendar...**

As you'll see on the next page, my tortuous discovery of this historic and fascinating artwork gave birth to a 2004 calendar—and now, a new one—2005 (see back cover). "Classic Blues Artwork from the 1920's." It's a harsh view of Black America, but I think you'll find them both pretty gripping and maybe wondrous.

I hope blues aficionados, collectors, and historians will seize the moment and support the re-release of this material—If you decide to buy either calendar (\$19.95—in-

cludes shipping), it's likely you'll want two or three. *The calendars come with CDs of classic Paramount prewar blues (some previously unreleased)*. You might want to check out my monthly auctions, distilled from 75,000 78s and 200,000 45s, or the new full-length photos of Patton (white spats, Stella guitar) on T-shirts (\$14.95) and 24"x 35" posters (\$14.95 unframed or \$39.95 framed).

I realize this has been a long story, and I thank you for taking the time to read it. I also want to thank Pete Whelan for giving me this space in *78 Quarterly* to tell my story, a collector's odyssey with frustrations and rewards.

And I do welcome any comments, criticisms, or compliments that you might have. You can reach me by writing to: John Tefteller, P.O. Box 1727, Grants Pass, Oregon 97528-0200.

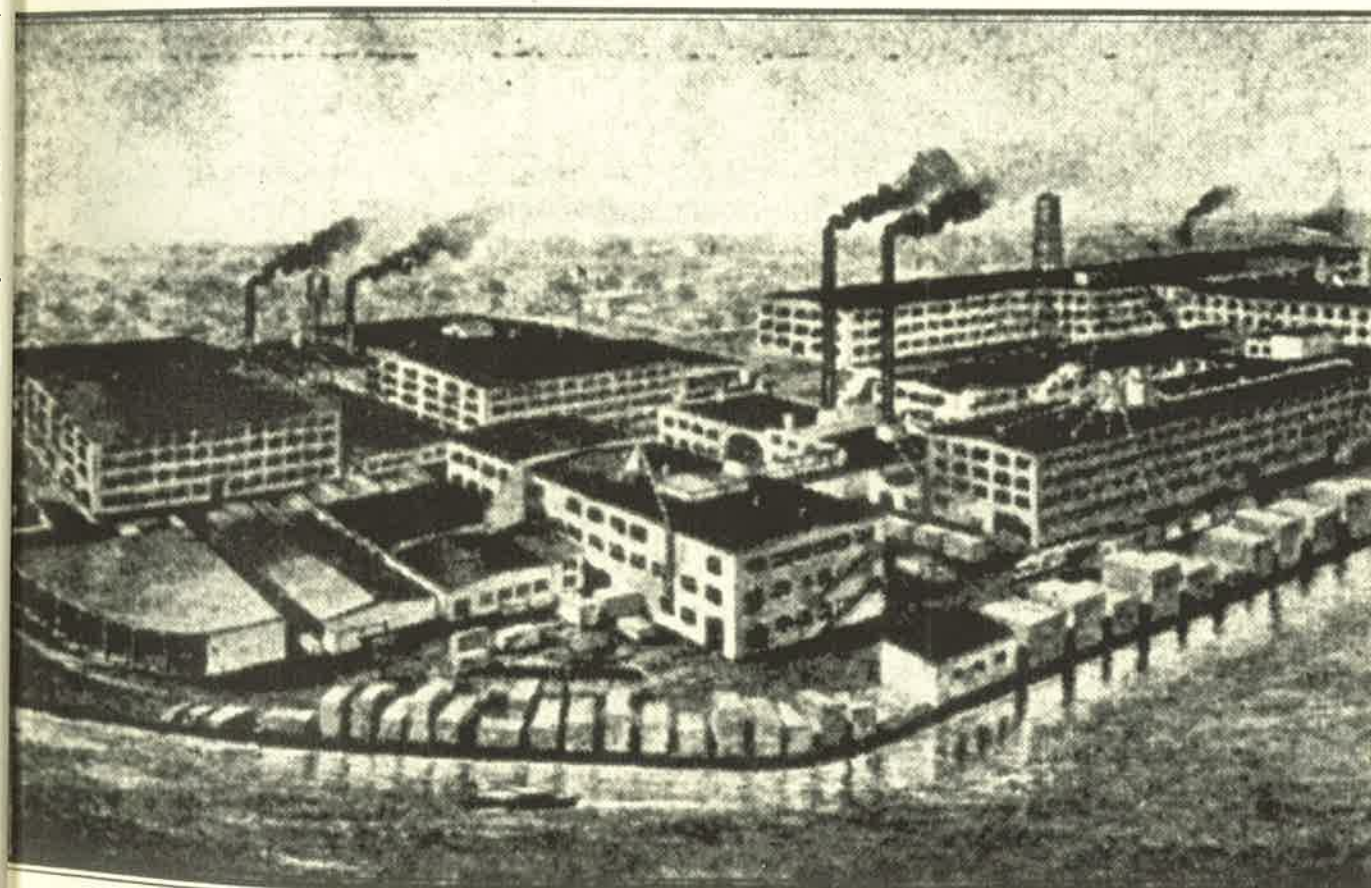
Or, phone me at 1-800-955-1326 or 541-476-1326; e-mail me at [teftellr@internetcds.com](mailto:teftellr@internetcds.com)

#### **POSTSCRIPTS:**

Nov., 1938 *Cedarburg News*—"The former chair factory in Grafton is being razed. A wrecking crew is now tearing down the building, which was owned for years by the Wisconsin Chair Co. of Port Washington Co. of Port Washington and was later used for the manufacture

of phonograph records." (*Cedarburg News*, Nov. 30, 1938)—courtesy of Gordon Simons.

Dec. 30, 1964 *News Graphic*—"Two of the remaining buildings of the former Wisconsin Chair Co.—the business which once dominated Port Washington's downtown—were sold at an auction Dec. 29. The high bid of \$73,500, submitted by the Thill-Alterndorf Co., was accepted for the chair company's four-story office on Pier Street and a portion of its factory building on Washington Street. The chair company closed in 1954." (*News Graphic*, Jan. 4, 1990)—courtesy of Gordon Simons.



**Aerial shot of Wisconsin Chair Company/Paramount Offices 1929. Now torn down.**





"Madam Rainey's Jazz Hounds—1922"—Troy Snapp at piano, "Ma" Rainey at right...  
(courtesy Jim Prohaska)

## Ma Rainey and Her Jazz Hounds

(in 1917/in 1922/in 1931)

by Jim Prohaska

with first-person accounts by trombonist Clyde Bernhardt  
and showman Thomas Fulbright...

**1917: "I never seen  
such a necklace  
before—\$100 gold  
coins all strung  
together..."**

Perhaps the poignant first-hand account of 12-year old Clyde Bernhardt in 1917 best describes the scene: "Everybody talked about her famous gold necklace. I never seen such a necklace before—\$100 gold coins all strung together with some \$50, \$25, and \$10 ones stuck in between. The smallest was five-dollar pieces. It was like a trademark for her..."

"...I was right down front in the colored section to watch the show. The tent was big and square, almost 200 feet long. Men selling popcorn and roasted peanuts in the shell.

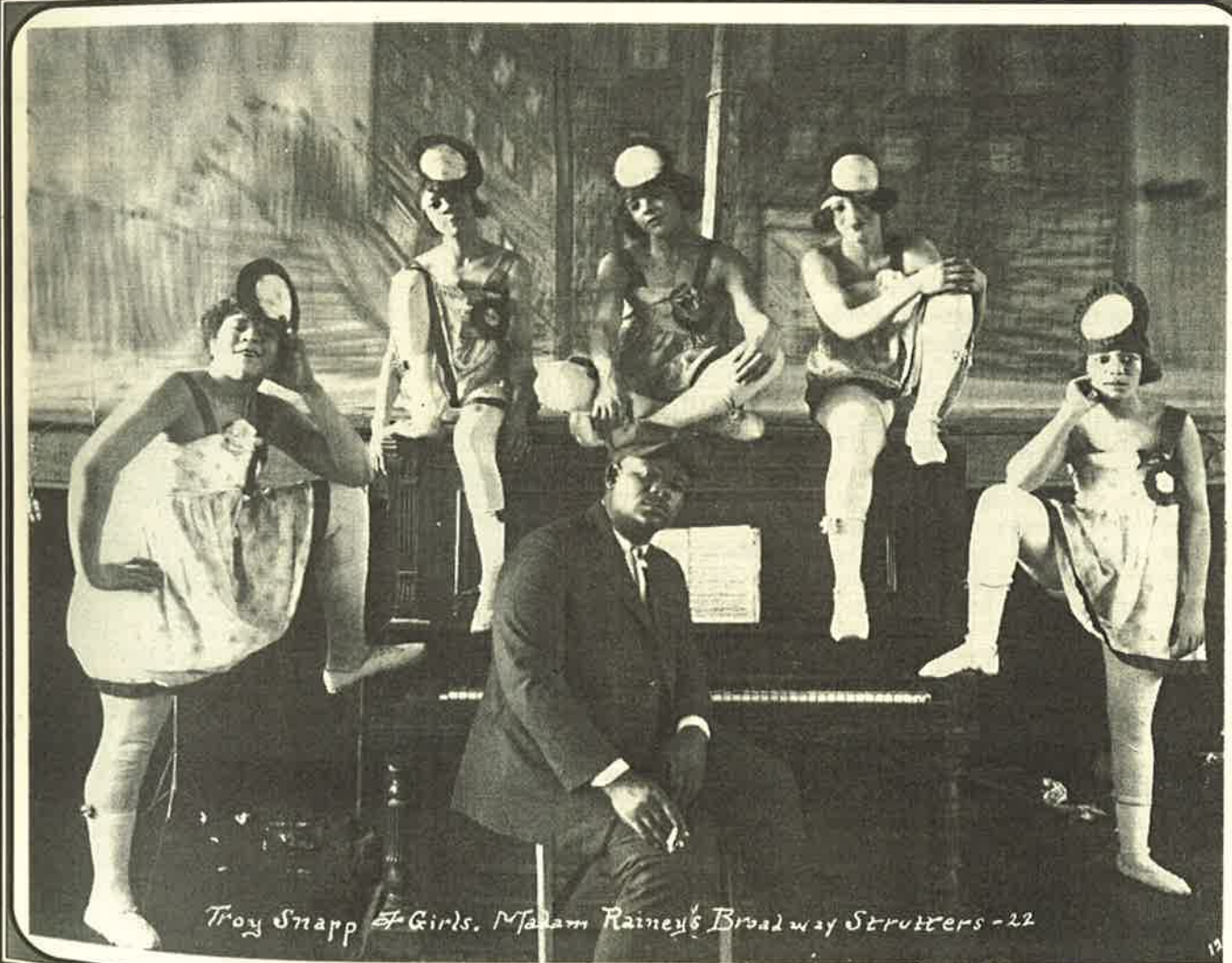
"After the band overture, the curtain opened and out dance eight long-

legged gals in short costumes. They weren't the prettiest I seen, in fact they were downright ugly. With light makeup, they were passable, but they sure could dance up a streak. Then the chorus boys came out and danced in the same line. The audience just loved the old gals and boys.

"As they danced off, the backdrop came down showing a large illustration of a cotton field...Ma Rainey closed the show. When she was ready to go on, the great lady started singing in the wings, and as the curtains opened, strutted out flashing those gold-plated teeth and her expensive gold necklace...when she got to center stage under those amber spotlights, the audience just went wild. She was all of what show business was supposed to be. She was show business.

"Her first song was *St. Louis Blues* in a slow-drag tempo. Then, maybe *Yellow Dog Blues* with a spoken introduction about her 'Easy Rider' and other problems. She closed with her own *See See Rider Blues* and for the big finale go into *Walkin' The Dog*, which was also called *Get Over Sal, Don't You Linger*. Then the whole chorus line come stepping out behind her and she dance along, kicking up her heels. The song had dance instructions in the lyrics, and as she call a step, everybody would do it. Soon, the whole cast was out on stage, jugglers, riders, singers, comedians, all dancing wild with Ma Rainey shouting and stomping. She call 'WALK!' and everybody froze. After many calls she finally holler 'SQUAT!' and the whole group squatted down with a roar. Including Ma Rainey..."

(Basil Clemons Photograph Collection, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries)



"Troy Snapp & Girls, Madam Rainey's Broadway Strutters—1922" (courtesy Jim Prohaska)





The Whitman Sisters Company, Dunbar Theatre, Philadelphia (courtesy Jim Prohaska)

### The discovery of two new photos confirms historical accounts...

A few months ago, I was looking through the pages of a book titled "Jazz-Age Boomtown," and there she was. I thought, "(My God) It's Ma Rainey!" I looked again—What does the inscription say? "Madam Rainey's Jazz Hounds - [19] 22." Page-boy haircut, gold-coin necklace, resplendent in a dark-colored gown, standing next to pianist Troy Snapp and the jazz band. There's a dirt floor, then a wooden stage with a canvas backdrop; she's performing with a circus in Breckenridge, Texas in 1922—captured by regional photographer Basil Clemons. But who is in the band?

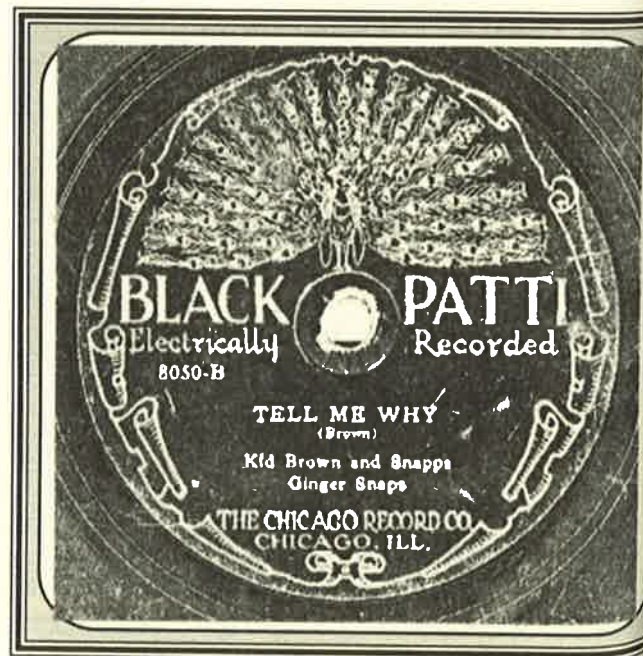
Another, different photo appears on the book's facing page: "Troy Snapp & Girls, Madam Rainey's Broadway Strutters - [19] 22." It does identify the piano player as the one and only Troy Snapp—this time surrounded by five chorus girls (not all THAT "ugly!"). They're poised on the same stage as "Ma" and her "Hounds." Again,

photo by Basil Clemons. According to *Mother of the Blues: A study of "Ma" Rainey* (by Sandra Lieb), Troy Snapp had worked with "Ma" for a couple of years in the early '20s—and here they are!

Besides being a stage performer in her early years, "Ma" Rainey performed in tent shows, car-

nivals, minstrel shows, and circuses. Before she performed with the famous Rabbit Foot Minstrels (home base Port Gibson, Mississippi), "Ma" toured with "Tolliver's Circus and Musical Extravaganza" from 1914 to 1916. It's believed that "Ma" first encountered Bessie Smith at "Tolliver's Extravaganza." It's also where "Ma"

July 22, 1927: the only band side recorded under Troy Snapp's name



(Left) Alice Whitman. Next to her is sister Bert (dressed as a man)—courtesy Jim Prohaska

and her husband Will were billed as: "Rainey and Rainey, The Assassina-tors Of The Blues." It seems that her stint with the Rabbit Foot troupe fol-lowed, and lasted into the early '20s. The Rabbit Foot Minstrels took "Ma" from Florida and the Caroli-nas to the Georgia South Sea Islands, Texas, Oklahoma, and even Mexico.

In a 1960s interview her onetime trombonist, Albert Wynn suggested that "Ma" may have even taken a brief retirement while in Mexico in 1921. That same year "Ma" Rainey and Al Wynn were photographed—live in a traveling tent show—at a small town in Texas.

Troy Calvin Snapp seems to have been performing in similar circles as "Ma" Rainey during the late teens and early '20s. He was musical director of the Louisiana Minstrels (part of Kaplan's Greater Shows) during the 1919 and 1920 season. In 1920 Snapp and blues singer "Little Lena Wilson" defected to "Happy Jack Hinton's Jazz Babies Minstrels" (part of the Gold Medal Shows). He became musical director for Gold Medal, and was with them at least through late 1920. How Troy Snapp and "Ma" Rainey came to-gether in Texas may never be known. Judging from both photos, one could deduce that Snapp was Ma's musical director. At this writing the musicians shown in the "Madam Rainey's Jazz Hounds" photo are unidentified. Ac-cording to 78 Quarterly, Snapp had a drummer named Harry (Single) Anderson, who played with him quite a bit. Could this be the drummer in the photo?

Snapp's experience ultimately led him to join the famous Whitman Sis-ters show, where he also became the

musical director. The 26-member group photo of the Whitman Sisters show was taken in 1928, six years af-ter the Rainey/Snapp photos. It's ac-tually a smaller group photo than the one on page 76 of Clyde Bernhardt's autobiography "I Remember."

In the photo shown here Snapp sits at the piano. Just above Snapp and one musician over to the left of the trumpet player is trombonist Clyde Bernhardt. To the immediate right of the trumpet player is Leo Watson holding a guitar (tippie?). Alice Whitman, sits on top of Snapp's piano with her legs crossed, while her sister, Bert (dressed as a man in bow tie and white suit), stands just to the right of Alice and the piano. Clari-netist Ernest Michall is part of the three-man reed section (top row right) and to the left of the sax player.

### Snapp recorded 8 sides with Whitman Sisters associates...

Troy Snapp's only recordings oc-cur with singers and musicians asso-ciated with the Whitman Sisters. In August, 1927, his very robust piano accompanied Mattie Dorsey (an adopted sister to the three "natural" Whitman sisters) on four Paramount sides. A month earlier, he also re-corded four band sides for Mayo Williams on Black Patti: Ernest Michall (Clarinet Band)—"Sidewalk Blues"/Ernest "Mike" Michall & His New Orleans Boys—"Toledano Street Blues"—BP 8046; Kid Brown and His Blue Band—"Bo-Lita"—BP 8049; and under his own name Kid Brown and Snapps Ginger Snaps—"Tell Me Why"—BP 8059. (Both BP 8046 titles also appear on Gennett and Paramount under pseudonyms.)

One wonders if Snapp ran into "Ma" Rainey during his stint with the Whitman Sisters. The Whitman Sisters traveled extensively during the 1920s, and had an affinity for hiring light complexion "high-yallers" for their troupe. According to Clyde Bernhardt, "Ma" would take the best dark-skinned black per-formers passed over by the Whitmans and would hire them in her show. Whatever the circum-stances, it's a delight to see "Ma" Rainey in her prime—performing for "her people" in a venue long van-ished, but now preserved.

### SOURCES:

*Mother Of The Blues: A Study of Ma Rainey* (1981) by Sandra Lieb.  
I Remember (1986) by Clyde Bernhardt  
Ma Rainey and the Classic Blues Singers (1970) by Derrick Stewart-Baxter.  
Jazz-Age Boomtown (the photos of Basil Clemons) (1997) by Jerry L. Rodnitzky and Shirley R. Rodnitzky.

Lynn Abbott and Doug Seroff

### PHOTO CREDITS:

"Madam Rainey's Jazz Hounds," Breckenridge, Texas, 1922—photo courtesy Jim Prohaska and the Basil Clemons Photograph Collection, Special Collections Division, The University of Texas At Arlington Libraries.

"Troy Snapp & Girls, Madam Rainey's Broad-way Strutters," Breckenridge, Texas, 1922—photo courtesy Jim Prohaska and the Basil Clemons Photograph Collection, Special Col-lections Division, The University of Texas At Ar-lington Libraries.

"The Whitman Sister Company, Dunbar Theatre (Standard Theatre?), Philadelphia, PA., Decem-ber 27, 1928"—photo courtesy Jim Prohaska.

### Showman Thomas Fulbright describes "Ma" Rainey's later career...

While I was doing re-search on "Ma" Rainey, I vaguely remember mention of an interview with someone who knew "Ma" dur-ing the latter days of her career. I thought that this interview was con-ducted in the '50s or early '60s. Then, while going through some recently acquired, old jazz magazines, I came across the article in the English Jazz Journal of March, 1956.

Fulbright's description of "Ma's" show falls in line with Clyde Bernhardt's description of a similar show almost 15 years before. Of greatest interest is his description of the "Midnight Ramble" put on by "Ma" and her troupe. Also, at this time, Fulbright did a water color painting of "Ma" Rainey. I've en-closed a copy of this (it's dated "31")—Jim Prohaska

### "Ma Rainey and I"

by Thomas Fulbright

"This story is about the greatest of all Blues singers, past or present, the woman who gave so many wonderful blues songs to the world and who, without regard to what might happen to her own career, sponsored another great singer, Bessie Smith. This story is about the woman who was the very essence of the word and era of New Orleans Jazz. Of course, I am speaking of Ma Rainey. As one who had



the good fortune of knowing her, it is my greatest satisfaction to see that her records are being reissued, and the jazz world at last places her name where it should be, at the top. Now, I can once again listen to her and recall many, many things.

"Before I go into the story of my friendship with Ma, let me say this: I have never been a particular student of jazz music, although, needless to say, being of the Theatre, I have always loved jazz—but as far as knowing, or even thinking of just who was such and such a musician, well, I just never gave it a thought.

### "Ma" Rainey inspired Louis Armstrong's mugging, facial expressions...

"When Louis Armstrong started to hit the high places in the theatre, I used to watch and listen to him for more than just his performance, for he reminded me so much of Ma Rainey. His facial expression; his singing; his very stage presence were all vivid reminders of Ma, but as she never mentioned to me the many musicians with whom she had worked, or those who had worked for her, I did not know at that time that Armstrong had accompanied her on many of her recordings. But when I learned, I knew this!

"Armstrong had known a good thing when he saw it, and he is as near to being a perfect description of Ma Rainey as one can give. He sounds like her, and when he opens his mouth and stretches his lips across his teeth in that certain way, he even looks like her. So, perhaps I am the first to realize that, as well as being a wonderful musician, singer, and performer, Louis is also a very shrewd mimic into the bargain. I can well understand Tullulah's [Bankhead] enthusiasm for 'Satchmo.' I had the same feel for Ma Rainey.

### 8-foot Scottish giant touts "Ma" Rainey as "The Black Nightingale"

"When I first met Ma we were both playing in our respective shows in East Texas oil-field towns. It was getting close to the time of year when the so-called theatres-under-canvas had to fold up for the winter. Mine was a Dramatic Stock Company; Ma had her Minstrel Show booked with the Donald MacGregor



"Ma" Rainey mugging

courtesy Jim Prohaska



Louis Armstrong mugging

Carnival. The owner of that Carnival was a former attraction in a Freak Show—he was well over eight feet in height, and to the day of his death, he wore the kilt! He had come over from Scotland to appear with the Ringling Brother's Circus, and had been billed as the Scottish Giant. Mac barked 'in front of Ma's Minstrel Show, for in the South, a colored show of any kind had to have white people sell tickets, or do any kind of work where contact with the public is made. White Southerners would not stand for any other arrangement.

### Imitation pearl had replaced her famous gold-coin necklace...

"So Mac did the talking on the front of Ma's Show. After he finished his spiel, extolling the merits of the show to be seen on the inside, he would introduce Ma to the audience. In doing so, he would call her 'The Black Nightingale,' and, in the most flowery terms, compare her to other great singers. Now vocally, Ma was anything but a Nightingale, but she loved him naming her that way. I can still see her with her gold teeth shining, earrings dancing, coat flopping open to show her flashy gown and the ever-present necklace, of which so much has been written. This was not the famous gold-coin necklace, for that had gone by this time, and had been replaced by a poor imitation pearl one.

"One night, when I was not working in my own show, I drove over to try and catch Ma's show in its entirety. I stood with the crowd in front of her 'Bally.' She had just been introduced. Smiling and nodding her head in response to the wild reception the colored population was giving her, she spied me. She held up her hand for quiet and pointing me out to the crowd said, 'You see how good my show is. He's done closed his own show and come clear over here to see Ma Rainey!' She looked down at me and continued, 'Ain't that so, Baby?' Of course, I nodded in agreement.

### Fulbright takes "Ma" Rainey shopping in Texas...

"Now down in Texas, Negroes really have a hard time, and it was for that one reason I visited her so much. I was a great help in many little ways, such as taking her shopping. It is

bad for a Negro to go into a store along (unless they are known to be shopping for some white person), for the shopkeepers will give them anything, and they will have to take it. Never the best cuts of meat or the freshest vegetables. Just things that no white person would buy. So my being with Ma helped ink that manner but thenmost white show people understand this and go out of their way to help their Negro compatriots. It is odd that Southerners accept show-people as being like that and do not resent it, but they do. Now, it was perfectly all right for Ma to call me 'Baby,' but when she, if she dared address a native in such a way, it is really a wonder that she did not, for everyone was 'Baby' to Ma.

"My taking her around soon became quite a usual thing throughout those little East Texas towns. Of course, my being rather well-known to most of the people gave Ma a lot of pleasure, as many people would stop us on the street. I am sure that in most cases, they really wanted to meet and talk to Ma, and with me along, they could do so without losing face, or to speak. I hate to think of such things, and frankly, whenever I do, I get so infuriated, I can't even stand myself for being from Arkansas. How I wish Ma could have lived long enough to see that at last, things are changing for the better all over. North, East, South, and West, for Negroes have taken a beating everywhere. However, the South loved Ma; and she loved the South, seldom going above the Mason-Dixon line. She sang her songs for the people and reflected their lot in her songs—at least most of her songs. They would weep with her and laugh with her. Ma might not have been the most religious person, but believe me, anyone who put what she did into song, must most certainly be very close to God.

### Fulbright goes to a "rough" Midnight Ramble...

"Here is another story which shows what a problem the racial situation was at that time. Ma never did get to see many of the plays given in my show, although she always wanted to see me do 'Charley's Aunt'—mostly, I suspect, to laugh at me and kid me about playing the part of an old maid. Well, as she could never get to see the show, I decided that at least she could see me in the makeup and wardrobe for the role. So, one Friday night, when I knew she would be working late, giving a Midnight Ramble, which is the highlight performance of any weekly engagement for a Minstrel, a few of my performers and I drove over in makeup. A Ramble is a rather rough show and is given late, just as the Carnival Midway is closing down. Most of week-long customers come back for these shows, as they are really lots of fun, even if they did as Ma used to say, 'Make the old men young, and the young men have ideas they shouldn't have in the first place.'

"When we got there, the tent was crowded, the only place for us was standing room at the back. Close to where we stood was a group of very tough-looking oil-field workers, who had been drinking. Now, one would

think that these rough-looking men would enjoy the risqué performance and scant costumes of the chorus girls, but not this bunch. They wanted a special song from Ma and kept yelling for it. I remember the number that was in progress at the time. It was a production number with the entire company on stage. The music was that old number 'It's Tight Like That,' and each member of the company would sing a chorus, and then dance a fast time-step or two. Of course, Ma was the last to sing her part, and the words of the chorus she did, went like this: 'See that spider crawling up the wall; He's going up there to get his ashes hauled; Oh, it's tight like that; Be De Um Bumm, I say it's tight like that.' Then she danced. Now take my word for it, Ma could dance. She would pull her skirt up and step-to. The crowd went wild.

"Meanwhile, back where we were standing, one of our rough-looking neighbors noticed me. Being more than befuddled with drink, he obviously did not realize that I was in stage makeup. He edged over to me and whispered loudly in my ear, 'It's a little rough for you in here, Grandma. You'd better get someone to take you home.' With which advice, he pushed back to his buddies.

### He approached the stage—fired a pistol with one hand, held a quart of whiskey with the other!

"My crowd almost popped with laughter, but luckily, we held ourselves in. Ma finished her number, and over the roar of the audience, the rough group started yelling once more for the number they wanted her to sing. When she gave no notice, my would-be protector pulled a pistol out of one pocket and fired it straight up through the top of the tent, whilst from another pocket he pulled a quart bottle of whiskey (very good whiskey too, for that matter, as Mr. Roosevelt had not become President at that time). The man pushed his way up the aisle toward the stage, whiskey and pistol in hand. Ma stood alone by this time, for at the shot, the performers had all rushed from the stage, not knowing what the man would do. I had in the meantime, started after him, though, what I was going to do if I caught him, I still don't know! However, I did not want to have Ma face that man alone. When he reached the stage, he looked up at Ma and in a very meek, plaintive voice begged, 'Now come on Ma, please sing 'Careless Love.' At that, the tension broke, and the audience again roared with laughter.

"By this time I had reached the stage, and so I called to Ma to go ahead and sing. When she recognized me, it broke her up. She too, roared with laughter and reaching down, she pulled me on stage with her. I walked over to the man and picked the bottle from his hand, saying as I did so, 'Young man, if you consider me old enough to be your Grandmother, I'll just have to manage this for you.' Seeing through my makeup, he shook my hand, and turning to Ma, he again asked in his meek tone, 'I don't give a damn for those half-naked gals, Ma—

won't you please sing 'Careless Love'?" He then apologized for creating a disturbance and went back to his crowd, leaving his bottle with us.

"Quick-thinking-Ma started an old Vaudeville routine with me. She examined the bottle closely, and said, 'This sure looks like whiskey.' Taking her cue, I took the bottle and opened it and smelled it, replying, 'It sure smells like whiskey.' I then passed the bottle back to Ma, who looked at it, smelled it, and with perfect timing, raised it to her mouth, and took a big swig. Smacking her lips, she now handed it back to me saying, 'and it sure tastes like whiskey.'

### "Drink it down, Grandma!"

"As I raised it to take a drink, the meek oil-field worker from the back of the tent yelled, 'Drink it down, Grandma!' That sent Ma into peals of laughter again, but finally she got around to singing 'Careless Love.' I know that Bessie Smith is famous for her rendering of that song, but you really should have heard Ma sing it. It is a shame that she did not make a record of it, for I would give my entire record collection for just that one. As she neared the end of the song, she nodded to me, and I reached up and pulled off my wig, with the little attached 'Charley's Bonnet.' Well, I have never seen an act anywhere, anytime get the ovation that we got. Ma told me later, 'You know, Baby, if I had to die and had my choice of just when, I would have died right that moment, while the crowd was lovin' me so.'

"A happy thing to add to this story about the Texas gunman and 'Careless Love,' is that it caused both of our shows to do extra good business. People who were there told of what happened, and word-of-mouth advertising is such a good medium, that business surely picked up. Mine, perhaps more than Ma's, since so many colored people wanted to see the man who had worked with their beloved Ma Rainey.

"I had many good times with Ma, as well as sad ones, and one other night stands out vividly in my memory. This was the night of the fat woman from the Freak Show and the mule—the Texas Mule—a night when Ma almost had a heart attack from laughing so hard.

"I had gone over with some food and drinks to visit Ma and 'Yellow.' Yellow was Ma's lover, for she was never without one, and I have heard her say many times, that it is very necessary to have a man around.

"Well, Yellow, Ma, and a young lady from my show, and I were just finishing out midnight snack, when we heard the noise of flapping canvas just outside Ma's house-trailer, which happened to be parked just behind the Circus Side Show tent. Ma had been unable to park behind her own tent, due to the terrain, and when she heard this flapping noise and some very harsh breathing, she at once realized what it was. She put her finger to her lips for quiet and whispered, 'Blanche has to go.'

### A mule interrupts 550-lb Blanche who had to "go"...

"You know, Carnivals do carry portable toilets for their employees, but late at night for minor emergencies, one just steps outside. And this was what Blanche was about. The hard breathing was her effort to be as silent as possible, for she weighed 550 pounds, and any exercise at all was very hard on her. Now, close to the show grounds lived a man who hated to see the Carnival setup so close to his place, and to be spiteful and to cause as much damage as he dared, he would leave the gates to a corral around his place open at night. In the corral he kept about a dozen big Texas Mules, and during the night out, they would come to trample around the Carnival grounds. This night, one of the animals decided to see what was behind the Side Show tent. So around he came, clumping his big feet. Now, if it had not been for the big ropes by which Blanche was crouched down, the mule would probably have trodden on her, as she could not move fast enough to get out of the way.

"As it was, she was scared witless and started shrieking blue murder! Mr. Mule was scared, but he could not run, as he was jammed between the tent and Blanche, so he just stood there pawing the ground and kicking his back legs into the air. With each kick, the mule let forth a volley of sound like an out-of-tune tuba. It is doubtful who was the more scared, the mule or Blanche. Later, Ma gave her impression of the mule by using the jug which was used in her band to accompany her blues songs. It was a very accurate imitation!

"Of course, we had to go out and chase the mule away from Blanche, who by this time was down. It took us almost half an hour to get her on her feet, for everyone was well nigh hysterical with laughter. The poor woman suffered for a long time afterwards from the teasing show folk, who from then on called her 'Miss Mule.'

### "Ma's" house-trailer—built on a car chassis, with a lumber floor and sides, and a canvas top

"Ma's house-trailer was as crude as one can imagine, but of course, the present day dream caravans were not even imagined at that time. A few of her performers had got together and built this one. They had taken the chassis of an old car, had used the toughest of lumber for the floor and sides with a top of waterproof canvas. She had a small camp-cook gasoline stove, and believe it or not, she made wonderful meals on that tiny nightmare. One day I arrived for a visit and found her canning fresh green beans. A local colored woman had wanted to give her a gift and had brought two bushels of beans from her garden. Ma went on a canning kick. My, how that poor trailer stood such a load she put into it, was a miracle!



"Don't ever believe any of the writers who tell you Ma was ugly, for surely, they can never have known her. If they had, they would say just what I say: she was beautiful! For all she had to do was smile and sing, and she became beautiful. Of course, Ethel Waters is an example of what most people call a beautiful Negro woman, but to me, she sometimes makes herself ugly when she sings, not Ma. She made herself beautiful. It was an illusion of course, but one could see her heart and soul when she sang, and how she could catch the mood of a song! It is a shame and great loss to the world that she did not record more of the numbers she sang.

**Her favorite was "Travelin' Blues" and she couldn't refrain from singing along with the record**

"It may interest jazz lovers to know Ma's own favorite blues was 'Travelin' Blues.' She loved telling about her production of it. 'Baby, I come out on that stage, dressed down! I had on a hat and a coat and was carrying a suitcase. I put the suitcase down, real easy like, then stand there like I was thinkin'—just to let 'em see what I was about. Then I sing. You could jes' see them Jiggs wantin' to go someplace else.' Ma had broken many of her records, but she held on to 'Travelin' Blues,' and would play it at the drop of a hat, and could never refrain from singing along with the record.

"I did a water color painting of Ma about this time, and she did love posing! She told me later that she liked it better than any photo or painting she had ever seen of herself. 'Baby, you sho' must love me. You've made me plum pretty. Look at them teeth!' Needless to say, I loved doing the portrait, and it is one of my most prized possessions.

"Ma had more sex appeal in her lower lip than Marilyn Monroe had in her entire body (judging from the well-known Monroe Calender), and believe me, she never had to look for a lover. When I knew her, she had 'Yellow' (she called him Baby, I never did know his name), who was a concessionaire with the Carnival, and as good-looking a man as you will ever hope to see. This was in the late '20s and early '30s, and I am happy to say he brought her a lot of happiness.

"I have often been accused of having been attracted to Ma, and this I will not deny. Of course I was attracted to her, but not for the implied reason. I consider it a great privilege, just having known her, and I only wish she could know that her records are not forgotten and that her memory lives on. For one, I shall never forget that short, fat, ugly, beautiful, gold-toothed, warm hearted, haughty, bootlegging Ma Rainey."



1886-1939

**"MA" RAINY**  
by Thomas Fulbright (1931)

**"I did a water color painting of Ma about this time... She told me later that she liked it better than any photo or painting she had ever seen of herself"**



(Grafton, Wisconsin, November, 1931—Two known copies)

**TRY ME ONE MORE TIME**  
(Marshall Owens *spiced* with a bit of Curry)

by Alex van der Tuuk



## INTRODUCTION:

Ask a collector about a memorable prewar blues recording session, chances are fair that the 1930 Charlie Patton/Son House/Willie Brown/Louise Johnson session in Grafton, Wisconsin will be mentioned, its importance reinforced by recent reissue programs of Charley Patton by Catfish Records (KATCD 180) and Revenant Records (Album No. 212).

A second best, in my opinion, is the recording session that included King Solomon Hill/Marshall Owens/Ben Curry/Famous Blue Jay Singers of Birmingham, which occurred in November 1931, as will be seen later on.

There are several reasons why the Hill/Owens/Curry/Blue Jays session is intriguing. The main reason lies in the controversy over the identity of one of these artists: King Solomon Hill. Hill has been identified by collector and researcher Gayle Dean Wardlow as being Joe Holmes. Wardlow's identification of Holmes as King Solomon Hill is listed in discographies, and has been accepted by some researchers, although there is still scepticism.<sup>2</sup>

Biographical information on Owens and Curry is even sketchier, enlarging the myth of their recording sessions. The fact that not all their recordings have been unearthed expanded the myth further.

Collector Don Kent was the first to come up with information on Marshall Owens. This was published in *Living Blues* #26.<sup>3</sup> Some nine years ago, Kent was approached by Pete Whelan to write a series of articles on Alabama artists, including Owens. However, Kent's computer crashed, locking in the information on the hard disc. When *78 Quarterly* announced Issue No. 10 on the internet, it included a presumed article on Marshall Owens.<sup>4</sup> However, it will never appear. This, I learned from Don when I contacted him.<sup>5</sup> Things became even more complicated when Don's 1975 fieldnotes went astray after some arduous house moving. In May 2002 a telephone interview with Don helped redconstruct Marshall Owens' life, together with the discovery of some official documents.

The following is a compilation of some old and new information on some of these artists:

### Marshall Owens

Owens' family thought Marshall was born around 1880, but recently discovered information, his Social Security number and death certificate, give several different options. Collector Don Kent discovered that Owens died in May 1974 at a nursing home in Bessemer, Jefferson

County, Alabama.<sup>6</sup> The first time Kent started to look for Marshall Owens was in 1968 or 1969. "I was just looking through these old phone books in Grand Central Station (NYC), which covered all the major cities throughout the United States. I happened to look in the (Birmingham) phonebook, and Owens was listed. I tried to call him up, and it was disconnected."

During intervals of several years, Kent made several calls. Finally, in 1975, he got Marshall Owens' nephew on the phone. The nephew had been raised by Marshall Owens. Kent explained he considered making a field trip to Alabama, and the nephew said to come by and see him. When Kent met with Owens' nephew "he told me he was in this nursing home." Kent went over to the nursing home only to find out that Owens had died the previous year. The nephew didn't even know he had died!<sup>7</sup>

Based on Owens' month and year of death, I checked the www.ancestry.com web page for the Social Security Death Index. The following information on Owens came to light:

**SSN: 417-26-9283**  
**BORN: December 2, 1890**  
**DIED: May 1974**  
**RESIDENCE: 35020**  
**Bessemer, Jefferson, AL**  
**ISSUED: Alabama**  
**(before 1951)**

I requested a copy of Owens' application for a Social Security number, and it revealed date-of-birth information that was different from the Social Security Death Index.

### Was Owens 10 years younger than earlier estimates?

Owens had applied for a Social Security number on September 26, 1944. On this application he listed his date of birth as July 11, 1892, but he also listed his age at his last birthday as 49 years. This would mean he was born in 1895! Yet, a still different date of birth is found on his death certificate: March 15, 1890. An "informant," listed on the death certificate as Mrs. Louise M. Ward of 936 Center Place, S.W., in Bessemer, Alabama, may have provided this information. Although Owens was being treated by a doctor for the last months (or even years) of his life, he may well have given the 1890 birthdate himself—all of which reveals that Owens was much younger (by at least 10 years) than was earlier surmised.

His father's name was listed on the 1944 Social Security application as Tom Owens and his mother's name as Sallie

Love. Their names were unknown at the time of Marshall Owens' death (the Death Certificate listed his parents as "unknown").

Marshall Owens listed his place of birth as Talboton [sic Talbotton], Talbot County in Georgia. Talbotton lies 100 miles north of Atlanta, and today, it has a population of around 1000. When Owens filled in his application, he was at least able to write his name. He also wrote down the names of his parents himself, as well as the town where he was living. All other information appeared in a different handwriting.

Unlike Owens' father (Tom), his mother (Sallie) is listed in the 1900 Georgia census (microfilm records). However, a Tom Owens was listed in the 1900 Alabama census microfilm records. No information was found on Marshall. It's possible he lived with another relative at the time.

As a young man, Marshall Owens left Georgia and moved to Mobile, Alabama around 1900. According to Don Kent, people matured much faster in those years. Initially, Owens played banjo in the Mobile area. Then, during World War I, he picked up the guitar. It was at this time that he moved to Jefferson County, just outside of Birmingham. Don Kent: "He didn't live in Birmingham until the 1920s or later, but it's possible he lived in the area, probably moved around, but still stayed close to Birmingham."<sup>8</sup>

Owens obviously had at least one sister, since he raised a nephew, who was born in the 1920s. Although Kent visited the nephew in 1975, his name was unlisted and later, couldn't be traced. He was about 50 years of age.<sup>9</sup>

### A note on the Grafton recording sessions:

At the time (November, 1931) The Famous Blue Jay Singers of Birmingham, Ben Curry, Marshall Owens, and King Solomon Hill recorded in Grafton, it was Paramount's policy to house Black musicians in Milwaukee's Black district, around Third Street. When they were needed for recording in Grafton, the musicians took the interurban from Milwaukee to Grafton. Pressing foreman Alfred Schultz would take them back to Milwaukee by car.<sup>10</sup>

According to Dick Mushlitz, who visited the main plant in Port Washington in 1949, he met a janitor who had worked for Paramount. Since there was no hotel for African-American musicians to stay at,\* they had to stay with one of the few black families that lived in or near Grafton.<sup>11</sup>

# "TEXAS BLUES"

**VOCAL WITH GUITAR ACC.**



No. 13117

**13131**—Texas Blues Part II—Vocal  
Guitar Acc. .... 7th Street Alley Strut  
Marshall Owens ..... 50c

**13117**—Texas Blues—Vocal  
Try Me Once More ..... 50c  
Sung by Marshall Owens—with Guitar Acc.

(Despite this F.W. Boerner ad,  
**Paramount 13131 still hasn't been found!**)  
(courtesy of Port Washington Research Center and Alex van der Tuuk)



When African-American musicians arrived at the Grafton studio building to transact business, they weren't allowed to climb the front stairs to the office. They had to use the freight elevator to the second floor where the office was.<sup>12</sup>

The total amount of recordings for their November, 1931 session would take several days.

Their recordings were allotted matrix numbers in the so-called L-Matrix series, L-1230 to L-1266. Some matrix numbers are still untraced, although the missing King Solomon Hill record, Paramount 13125, was found in Port Washington recently.<sup>13</sup> It's open for speculation whether the missing matrix numbers belong to any of these artists. It's well possible another band or artist recorded in between these sessions, as had happened with Tommy Johnson and Ishmon Bracey (L-225 to L-250). Two German titles, located at the Mills Music Archive and with matrix numbers L-235 and L-238, had been sandwiched into that session.<sup>14</sup>

### They didn't record in January, 1932!

Matrix numbers L-1270 to L-1284 were recorded on November 22, 1931. This date has been established by Alfred Puls, who played tuba in a polka band, called "The South Side Orchestra of Two Rivers" (a town in Wisconsin).

Matrix numbers L-1206 and L-1207 are recordings by Sig Heller. Heller has an October 16, 1931 letter from the New York Recording Laboratories, signed by Henry Stephany, to record four titles, including the ones for L-1206/7. Heller recalled that he recorded a week or two after receiving the letter. The session would have been on a Saturday or Sunday, because the band members were going to college at that time.

Therefore, the Birmingham group that included Owens, Hill, Curry, and The Famous Blues Jay Singers of Birmingham, recorded before November 22, 1931—not the January, 1932 date given in *Blues and Gospel Records*, fourth edition. It certainly rules out a Spring date, referred to by Mrs. Roberta Allums for the Joe Holmes/King Solomon Hill session in *Blues Unlimited* #148/149.<sup>15</sup>

### Owens' Songs...

In Grafton, Owens recorded three sides on his own, accompanying himself on guitar.<sup>16</sup> His "Texas Blues" incorporated Charley Patton's "High Water Everywhere" musical theme. Coincidentally, the Mississippi-based artist William Harris recorded "Keep Your Man Out Of Birmingham" (a Harry Charles song listed in the Gennett files as "Jefferson County Blues") during an October 9,

1928 field recording in Birmingham for Gennett. Don Kent: "If you listen close to it, it's a stripped down version of 'Texas Blues.' It's got the same descending bass, and it's very skeletal. But if you listen to 'Texas Blues,' if it's not the same song, it's closely related. When William Harris was living in Birmingham, he may have seen Marshall Owens or heard a very similar song played then."

"Try Me One More Time" resembles "Tired Of Being Mistreated" by Clifford Gibson. Kent: "That may have been a melody that was around, adapted by musicians for their own purposes."<sup>17</sup>

According to David Evans, "Owens sounds like he plays a 12-string guitar, or perhaps there are two guitars."<sup>18</sup> After carefully listening to Marshall Owens' "Texas Blues" and "Try Me One More Time," Paul Swinton reached the following conclusions: both titles are played on the same guitar, and there is only one guitar being played. There are certain single-run passages that do sound as though they could be played on an instrument that has been "double strung." But I'd say that if it's a 12-string being played, then it hasn't been conventionally strung (i.e. with octave strings on G D A and the Bass E). Perhaps it was "double strung" or partially "double string"—a practice used by several old bluesmen on occasion, including Barbecue Bob.<sup>19</sup>

### Owens was bitter: (his song "Red Cross Store" was stolen...)

Owens also claimed to have written "Red Cross Store," and he was bitter about those who stole it from him. Owens never recorded the song. However, other blues singers did—and got composer credits. It's possible that Owens based "Red Cross Store" on a series of events that began in Birmingham in 1931. That year, the American Red Cross opened three stores in Birmingham "to distribute large quantities of vegetables canned during the Food Conservation Campaign." Three more Red Cross stores opened in 1932. However, the distribution of food and clothes was uneven, and it was criticized as discriminatory. A year later, blues singers in the Birmingham area had begun focusing in on the Red Cross's discriminatory attitude. On July 17, 1933, Walter Roland and Lucille Bogan (as "Bessie Jackson") became the first to use the subject for recordings (as "Red Cross Blues" and "Red Cross Man," respectively).<sup>20</sup> Others who recorded "Red Cross Blues" included Walter Davis, Sonny Scott, Washboard Trio, and Leadbelly.

Owens' "Texas Blues-Part II" on Paramount 13131 remains unfound. The other side, "Seventh St. Alley Strut," features an instrumental duet with Ben Curry. (Seventh Street runs Northwest to Southeast on the fringes of downtown Birmingham. The adjacent districts are Graymont and East Thomas. Lucille Bogan reportedly lived in East Thomas for awhile.<sup>21</sup>)

Although *Blues and Gospel Records* lists Curry as the guitarist and Owens as the banjo-mandolinist, a 1932 Hollywood Premium Record Guide gives the accompaniment for Paramount 13131 as "Mandolin-Banjo and Guitar Acc. by Ben Curry and Marshall Owens," indicating the correct accompaniment. Vreede gives the accompaniment for the instrumental on Paramount 13131 as "Mandolin-Banjo and Guitar Acc. by Ben Curry."<sup>22</sup>

According to Don Kent, Owens spoke frequently about his recording session. Owens' nephew knew he had made records. Owens had had copies of the Paramounts when the nephew was very young, but they were lost about 30 years before Kent spoke to the nephew. The records were broken or misplaced, possibly when Owens was moving out of the Birmingham area.<sup>23</sup>

Further information from Owens' Social Security application reveals that his last full-time job ended in the midst of the Depression: December 15, 1934. It was a construction job at 40 cents per hour for eight hours a day, which at that time was considered pretty good money. (That same year, Wisconsin Chair Company employees were paid 35 cents an hour!) A possible explanation for Owens' relatively high wages may be that he worked on one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal projects. This was three years after his recording session. The implication is that he was not then a self-supporting musician because of the Depression.

Ten years later, at the time of his application, Owens was living in Hayneville, Lowndes County, Alabama. The application lists him as being single (checked as [V] from five options—married, single, widowed, divorced, or separated). Today, Hayneville, about 100 miles south of Birmingham, has some 970 inhabitants.

As a musician, Owens moved with the times; he bought an electric guitar after World War II and played it regularly throughout the 1950s.

From his Death Certificate we learn that at some point Owens got married. However, at the time of his death, he was widowed, according to his Death Certificate. No marriage certificate was found.<sup>24</sup>

Later, he moved back to Birmingham,



(c. October, 1929)



(October 9, 1928)

**Owens' songs show cross-influences  
with Charlie Patton,  
William Harris, and Clifford Gibson...**

**"Owens' 'Texas Blues' encompasses Patton's 'High Water' and Harris' 'Keep Your Man Out of Birmingham' musical themes (above). 'Try Me One More Time' resembles Gibson's 'Tired Of Being Mistreated' (right).**



(c. June, 1929)



where he worked as a miner for the U.S. Pipe Company for most of his working life. At that time Owens lived at 3364 31st Street, North.<sup>25</sup>

In the late 1950s Owens was still playing guitar until a "cerebrovascular accident" incapacitated him completely.<sup>26</sup> According to his nephew, he remained fairly active and lucid up to that point. His nephew put him in a nursing home, the Ruby Hill Nursing Home, just outside of Bessemer. Owens was becoming more senile as the years progressed.<sup>27</sup> Owens' senility probably led to less frequent visits from his nephew. This may have been the reason the nephew didn't know Owens had died in 1974. It would also explain why the nephew's name isn't listed on the death certificate.

### Owens dead at 84!

From December 21, 1973 until his death on May 1, 1974, Owens was under the care of a Dr. R. Ingram, who was treating him (possibly for a heart condition) at the Ruby Hill Nursing Home. The physician visited him for the last time on

April 28. Owens died on May 1, 1974 at 1:35 A.M.. The immediate cause of death was listed as Cardio-Pulmonary Arrest. No autopsy was done.

Marshall Owens was buried on May 5, 1974 at Woodlawn Cemetery, 1110 Seventh Avenue, North, in Birmingham.

There was no information on Mrs. Louise M. Ward, the Death Certificate informant. When Don Kent visited Marshall Owens' nephew, he asked if there were any photographs. "The nephew said there had been some, but they were all thrown away for one reason or another. He didn't have any on hand. In fact, he didn't even let me in the house, and I sort of interviewed him on the stoop. Amenable, but he wasn't like, hospitable. He seemed a little wary."<sup>28</sup>

Currently, the Ruby Hill Nursing home is unlisted. This makes it problematic in trying to trace Owens' nephew (if he's still alive!). When I contacted the U.S. Pipe Company's main plant for Owens' employment file, yielded nothing. He wasn't listed in the files, which had been computerized since the 1970s.<sup>29</sup>

## Census Reports:

The 1920 and 1930 Census reports yield no direct information on Marshall Owens. However, a Sallie Owens, possibly his mother, was listed in the 1920 Census of January 10, 1920. She was living on a farm at 526 Ninth Avenue, Birmingham City. She was 45 years old, widowed, and had been born in Georgia, as had her parents. She lived with her son-in-law, Eliot Crawford, who owned the farm. In 1920 Crawford was 31 years old, and his wife, Robie Crawford (Marshall Owens' sister), was 24. (Jessie Banks, "cousin," female, and 21 years old, was another member of the household.)<sup>30</sup> Is it possible that the nephew raised by Marshall Owens was named Crawford?

One reason for not finding Marshall Owens may be that his name was undecipherable. Another could have been that, as a traveling musician, he missed the census.

The U.S. Postal Service still gives a zip code for the address where Marshall Owens and his nephew lived. However, a letter sent to the current residents of the same address was returned.

Form 500-5  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
(Revised June 1949)

APPLICATION FOR SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER  
REQUIRED UNDER THE FEDERAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS ACT  
READ INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK BEFORE FILLING IN FORM

EACH ITEM SHOULD BE FILLED IN. IF THE INFORMATION CALLED FOR ON ANY ITEM IS NOT KNOWN, WRITE "UNKNOWN"

PLEASE PRINT WITH INK OR USE TYPE WRITER

1. Marshall (None) Owens 520  
WORKER'S FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME OF YOU HAVE NO MIDDLE NAME, GIVE A LAST NAME LAST NAME

2. Marshall Owens Haynes 1770 Alabama  
FULL NAME UNDER WHICH YOU WORK, IF DIFFERENT FROM NAME ABOVE IN ITEM 1 WORKER'S PRESENT HOME ADDRESS (STREET AND NUMBER) (CITY) (STATE)

3. 49 July 4, 1890 Tallapoosa Alabama  
AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH) (DAY) (YEAR) PLACE OF BIRTH (CITY) (COUNTY) (STATE)

4. Female White Single Never Married Widowed Divorced Separated  
SEX (M or F) COLOR (W or C) MARRIAGE STATUS (M, W, D, S, V, or R) (CHECK ONE)

5. Louise M. Ward Haynes Louise Ward  
BUSINESS NAME OF PRESENT EMPLOYER ADDRESS OF PRESENT EMPLOYER (CITY) (STATE)

6. James Owens Sallie Love  
FATHER'S FULL NAME, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER LIVING OR DEAD MOTHER'S FULL NAME, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER LIVING OR DEAD

7. December 15, 1934 Construction Job 40 cents per hour for 8 hours  
DATE LAST FULL TIME JOB BEGAN LAST OCCUPATION—LAST MONTH (SEE INSTRUCTIONS) WEEKLY (EXAMPLE) DAILY WAGE "SALARY" "CONTRACT" "PIECEWORK"

8. September 26, 1944 Marshall Owens  
DATE SIGNED APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE (PRINT NAME) (LAST NAME)

RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: ON SECURE INFORMATION ON HOW TO FILE IN APPLICATION FROM NEAREST SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD FIELD OFFICE. THE ADDRESS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM LOCAL POST OFFICE.

## Marshall Owens' Social Security Application

(courtesy Alex van der Tuuk)

## ALABAMA Center for Health Statistics

2366 STATE OF ALABAMA CERTIFICATE OF DEATH 123367

10 53 0007

DECEASED—NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST  
Marshall Owens

RACE & COLOR Black SEX M AGE—LAST BIRTHDAY (YEARS) 84 UNDER 1 YEAR (MONTHS) 15 DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH) (DAY) (YEAR) 3/15/90 COUNTY OF DEATH Jefferson

CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF DEATH Bessemer 37XXB INSIDE CITY LIMITS (SPECIFY YES OR NO) no HOSPITAL OR OTHER INSTITUTION—NAME (IF NOT IN EITHER, GIVE STREET AND NUMBER) Ruby Hill Nursing Home

STATE OF BIRTH (IF NOT IN U.S.A.) Georgia CITIZEN OF WHAT COUNTRY U. S. A. MARRIED, NEVER MARRIED, WIDOWED, DIVORCED, SEPARATED Widowed SURVIVING SPOUSE (IF WIFE, GIVE MARRIAGE NAME) None

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 417-26-9283 USUAL OCCUPATION (GIVE KIND OF WORK DONE DURING MOST OF WORKING LIFE, EVEN IF RETIRED) Miner KIND OF BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY U. S. Pipe Company

RESIDENCE—STATE Alabama COUNTY Jefferson CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION Birmingham INSIDE CITY LIMITS (SPECIFY YES OR NO) Yes STREET AND NUMBER 3364-31st Street, North

FATHER—NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST Unknown MOTHER—MAIDEN NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST Unknown

PREDECESSOR'S NAME (IF ANY) R. Ingram INFORMANT—NAME Mrs. Louise M. Ward

17A ADDRESS Ruby Hill Nursing Home 17B ADDRESS 936-Center Place, S. W.

PART I. DEATH WAS CAUSED BY: (ENTER ONLY ONE CAUSE PER LINE FOR (1), (2), AND (3))

1. Cardio-Pulmonary Arrest 2. 1/272 3. Immediate

CONDITIONS, IF ANY, WHICH GAVE RISE TO IMMEDIATE CAUSE IN STATING THE UNDERLYING CAUSE LAST

PART II. OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS: CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH BUT NOT RELATED TO CAUSE GIVEN IN PART I (1)

Cerebrovascular Accident 1/272 2

ACCIDENT, SUICIDE, HOMICIDE, OR UNDETERMINED (SPECIFY) DATE OF INJURY (MONTH, DAY, YEAR) HOUR 1/272 1 135A

INJURY AT WORK (SPECIFY YES OR NO) PLACE OF INJURY AT HOME, FARM, STREET, FACTORY, OFFICE, SHOP, ETC. (SPECIFY) LOCATION (STREET OR R.F.D. NO., CITY OR TOWN, STATE)

CERTIFICATION—MONTH DAY YEAR MONTH DAY YEAR (AND LAST SAW LIVING) 4 28 1974 4 28 1974

CERTIFICATION—SIGNATURE OF HEALTH OFFICER (TYPE OR PRINT) R. Ingram, M.D. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR Dorothy S. Harshbarger

MARRIAGE—STATE, CITY, OR TOWN, DATE Alabama Birmingham 5/5/74

BURIAL, CREMATION, GENERAL (SPECIFY) Burial CEMETERY OR CREMATORY—NAME Woodlawn LOCATION Birmingham, Alabama

DATE (MONTH, DAY, YEAR) 5/5/74 FUNERAL HOME—NAME AND ADDRESS Davenport-Harris, 1110-7th Avenue, N., Birmingham, Ala.

REGISTRAR—SIGNATURE William H. Harwell DATE RECEIVED BY LOCAL REGISTRAR MAY - 7 1974

I, Dorothy S. Harshbarger, State Registrar of Health Statistics, certify this is a true and exact copy of the original certificate filed in the Center for Health Statistics, State of Alabama, Department of Public Health, Montgomery, Alabama, and have caused the official seal of the Center for Health Statistics to be affixed. 2002-149-400-7

Dorothy S. Harshbarger  
Dorothy S. Harshbarger, State Registrar

February 22, 2002

## Marshall Owens died May 1, 1974 (courtesy Alex van der Tuuk)





(Grafton, Wisconsin, November, 1931—Three known copies?)

## Ben Covington alias Ben Curry?

According to Gayle Dean Wardlow, Ben Curry was originally from the town of Arcadia in northern Louisiana.<sup>31</sup> Sometime in the mid-1920s, he moved to Birmingham, Alabama. The 1900 Louisiana Census listed a "Benjamin Curry," and the 1910 Alabama Census also listed a "Ben Curry."

It's possible that Curry was drafted during World War I. Only one African-American Ben Curry was listed in the World War I Civilian Draft Registration

file. The file listed his birth date as April 19, 1890 and birth place as Velma, Yalobusha County, Mississippi.

In addition to the "harp" [harmonica], Curry played an instrument called the "mandolin-banjo." His recording output in *Blues and Gospel Records*, Fourth Edition (1997) indicates that Ben Curry, Blind (Bogus) Ben Covington, and Memphis Ben are the same person. Aural evidence shows the similarity of recorded material and the same kinds of

accompaniment. Instruments for the three artists are listed as banjo/mandolin, possibly own harp, harp/banjo, and guitar/harp. Both Paramount 12693 and its ad in the December 15, 1928 Chicago Defender list the accompaniment for Bogus Ben Covington as guitar and harmonica.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to the similarity of instruments, the following recorded titles overlap:

**BEN CURRY**  
Hot Dog  
(Paramount 13122)  
Boodle de Bum Bum  
(Paramount 13118)

**BEN COVINGTON**  
Adam And Eve In The Garden  
(Paramount 12693)  
Boodle-De-Bum Blues  
(Brunswick 7121)

**MEMPHIS BEN**  
Adam And Eve In The Garden  
Of Eden (unissued Vocalion)  
Hot Dog (unissued Vocalion)

In personal letters to this author, Kip Lornell, David Evans, and others, were inclined to agree that Curry, Covington, and Memphis Ben were the same person.

Paul Oliver, in his *Songsters and Saints*,<sup>33</sup> mentioned that Covington was "almost certainly the Ben Curry who recorded a less well-known version of Speckled Red's 'The Dirty Dozen.'" According to Oliver, Ben Covington/Curry performed, like Speckled Red, at the Red Rose Minstrel Show.

### "He was 'bogus' blind!"

Mississippi-based artist Big Joe Williams, remembered a musician named Ben Covington who was "bogus" blind, i.e. he was pretending to be blind "to earn more money" while playing on the streets. Gayle Dean Wardlow even stated that he may have worn sunglasses to strengthen this idea.<sup>34</sup> Big Joe Williams claimed Covington was from Mississippi.<sup>35</sup> As late as 1933, Williams played with Covington at the Century of Progress Expo in Chicago.<sup>36</sup>

\*Editor's Note: Paramount and the Grafton Hotel apparently (?) made a notable exception. According to a Son House interview by Steve Calt/Nick Perls (78 *Quarterly* No. 1, p. 61) House and Louise Johnson stayed in one room at the Grafton Hotel. Charley Patton and Willie Brown also stayed there, but in separate rooms.

If Covington/Curry was "playing on the streets" in Mississippi, it seems he also did a lot of traveling. He recorded for Paramount in Chicago circa September, 1928 as Bogus Ben Covington,<sup>37</sup> and if he is indeed Memphis Ben, he made another session for Vocalion in Memphis on November 23, 1928, producing only two titles, as trial recordings.<sup>38</sup>

The Memphis Ben title "Hot Dog" probably remained unissued because the flip side ("Adam And Eve In The Garden," Paramount 12693) had already been recorded, and couldn't be issued by Vocalion, because of copyright infringement. This left only one track with no flip side. The other [minstrel] act recorded by Vocalion in Memphis, Keghouse and Jaybird (whose real name was Thomas Jones) were from Clarksdale, Mississippi.<sup>39</sup> Is it possible that Ben Covington was discovered in Clarksdale and sent up for a recording session in Memphis—only two months after he returned from his Paramount recording session in Chicago?

The name, "Memphis Ben," may have been a convenient disguise for Covington/Curry (if he recorded for Vocalion, he would have broken his Paramount contract). The Memphis Ben alias may also have come from Harry Charles, the Birmingham talent scout who sometimes hid blues singers under aliases (in order to get them recorded by other record companies). Charles would then cash in on them twice or more. A Charles' protege, James (Bo Weavil) Jackson, originally recorded for Paramount in 1926, then for Vocalion as "Sam Butler."<sup>40</sup>

In October, 1929, Covington/Curry recorded another session in Chicago for Brunswick (affiliated with Vocalion)<sup>41</sup> as "Blind Ben Covington."

In the Autumn of 1931, Curry was

(re-)discovered, probably by Paramount executive Henry Stephany, when he and his wife had made several trips to Birmingham.<sup>42</sup> Curry was invited to come to Grafton to make records for Paramount. During this session, he recorded with Marshall Owens.

By then, both musicians were living in the Birmingham area. According to Wardlow, Curry moved to Birmingham in the mid-1920s, although no entries were found in the Birmingham city directories.

Marshall Owens had settled in Jefferson County,<sup>43</sup> west of Birmingham as early as World War I (around 1917). The two men may have met in Birmingham. Quite a few musicians were known to have lived in this area. According to Bob Eagle, "There is evidence of a strong blues piano tradition in Alabama. At first sight the obvious music center of the State is Jefferson County including the county seat of Birmingham and the mining center of Bessemer. Perhaps, because of the concentration of coal mining, the music of the area emphasized singing and particularly group singing. The populace leaned heavily towards religious music, and Birmingham was an early center for quartet singing groups."<sup>44</sup>

According to Wardlow, Curry knew of another artist whom he had played with in Monroe and other northern Louisiana towns. This blues singer was issued on Paramount as "King Solomon Hill," an artist identified as Joe Holmes. That November, The Famous Blue Jay Singers of Birmingham also made the trip to Paramount's recording studio in Grafton, Wisconsin.

(Thanks to Bob Eagle, David Evans, Don Kent, and Paul Swinton (May 24, 2003).

### BEST SELLERS

- 13119**—Sleep On Mother and I'm Leaning On The Lord...Blue Jay Singers.... 50c
- 13118**—Boodle De Bum Bum and Fat Mouth Blues—Vocal-Inst. Acc...Ben Curry 50c
- 13064**—I Don't Want It Now & I'm Gonna Moochy—Voc. Duet...Lewis-Hannah 50c
- 13125**—My Buddy Blind Lemon and Times Has Done Got Hard...Solomon Hill. 50c
- 13104**—Where Did You Stay Last Night and Come On In—Voc...Harum Scarums 50c
- 13122**—The Laffing Rag and Hot Dog—Voc. Mand.-Banjo-Harp Acc...B. Curry... 50c
- 13116**—Whoopee Blues and Down On My Bended Knee...King Solomon Hill (Blind Lemon's Buddy)..... 50c

(courtesy Port Washington Research Center)





**“A second best to the Patton, House, Brown, Johnson session was the one that included King Solomon Hill, Owens, Curry, and the Famous Blues Jay Singers of Birmingham...”**



**“A second best...”**



**THE GONE DEAD TRAIN**

**King Solomon Hill**

**13129—THE GONE DEAD TRAIN—Vocal**  
**TELL ME BABY—with Guitar Acc.**  
 Sung by King Solomon Hill, Blind Lemons Buddy 65c

**From the July, 1934 F.W. Boerner Co. catalog**  
 (courtesy Alex van der Tuuk)



## NOTES:

1 Reissued on Document DOCD 5036, DOCD 5165, DOCD 5166 and DOCD 5538 respectively.

2 For a full report on Hill's identification see: *Chasin' That Devil Music* (1998) by Gayle Dean Wardlow, pp. 2-7 and pp. 208-218. See also: *The King Solomon Hill Fiasco* by David Evans, *Blues World* No. 21 (October, 1968), pp. 17-20

3 *Living Blues*, Issue 26 March-April 1976): Obituaries: Marshall Owens, page 7

4 See: [www.bluesworld.com/78Q10.html](http://www.bluesworld.com/78Q10.html): *Marshall Owens in Alabama—and on Paramount*.

5 Telephone conversation with Don Kent, May 5, 2002

6 See *Living Blues* Issue 26, page 9

7 Telephone conversation with Don Kent, May 5, 2002

8 Ibid

9 Ibid

10 Interview with Alfred Schultz, August 2, 1969. Conducted by Gayle Dean Wardlow

11 Email from Konrad Nowakowski, February 4, 2003

12 Ibid

13 Jeff Cole and Nick Carter: *Long Ago, Our Own House Of Blues*. From *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. [www.jsonline.com](http://www.jsonline.com), May 9, 2002.

Discography: Pm 13125 - A: My Buddy Blind Papa Lemon (L-1 256-2); B: Times Has Done Got Hard (L-1255-2)

14 See: [www.](http://www.)

15 Alex van der Tuuk: (P)redating Grafton's L-Matrix Series, *VJM* Issue No. 127, pp. 4 - 8 (Autumn 2002.)

16 *Blues And Gospel Records*, Fourth Edition, page 695

17 Telephone conversation with Don Kent, May 5, 2002

18 Email from David Evans, May 17, 2003

19 Email from Paul Swinton, May 22, 2003

20 Guido van Rijn: *Roosevelt's Blues, African-American Blues And Gospel Songs On FDR*, page 44 a.o.

21 Email from Bob Eagle, October 30, 2002

22 Max E. Vreedc: *Paramount 12000/13000 Series*, Storyville Publications, 1971

23 Telephone conversation with Don Kent, May 5, 2002

24 Letter from Department of Public Health, State of Alabama, July 24, 2002

25 The following Birmingham, AL, city directories were checked for a listing of Marshall Owens: 1923, 1932, 1941, 1950, 1961 and 1968. Owens was not listed in one of these directories. Letter from Birmingham Public Library, November 20, 2002

26 In *Living Blues* Issue 26, page 9, Don Kent wrote that this occurred in the late 1960s. In my telephone conversation of May 5, 2002 and subsequent calls with Don he assured me it happened in the late 1950s since the nephew remembered that Owens had been living in the nursing home for some considerable time, when interviewed in 1975

27 Telephone conversation with Don Kent, May 5, 2002

28 Ibid

29 Letter from Gail R. Stewart, HRIS Manager for United States Pipe and Foundry Company, January 3, 2003

30 Email from Bob Eagle, January 30, 2003

31 Wardlow: *Chasin' That Devil Music*, page 212; personal letter from Gayle Dean Wardlow, May 29, 2001

32 Max E. Vreedc: *Paramount 12000/13000 series*, Storyville Publications, 1971

33 *Songsters & Saints, Vocal Traditions On Race Records* (1984.), Page 122

34 Personal letter from Gayle Dean Wardlow, May 29, 2001

35 *Blues World* 23, page 10 (1968)

36 Ibid

37 *Blues And Gospel Records*, Fourth Edition (1997), page 180

38 Ibid: page 611

39 Email from David Evans, November 13, 2001

40 Stephen Calt and Gayle Dean Wardlow: *Paramount Part 4 [The Advent Of Arthur Lalby]*, 78 *Quarterly* No. 6, pages 11 and 13 (1991)

41 *Blues And Gospel Records*, Fourth Edition, page 180

42 Wardlow: *Chasin' That Devil Music*, page 212

43 In Owens' obituary in *Living Blues* Issue 26, page 9, Don Kent wrote that by World War I he was already settled in Walker County, west of Birmingham. In my telephone conversation with Don in 2002, he recalled Owens had settled in Jefferson County.

44 Robert Eagle: *Encyclopedia Of Blues & Gospel, Alabama* on [www.document-records.co.uk/enclopaediaalabama2.htm](http://www.document-records.co.uk/enclopaediaalabama2.htm)

**Interested in new information about Alabama's pioneer blues singers?... 78 Quarterly suggests**

**Tributaries Issue No. 5, 2002**

141 pages include illustrated articles on Butler "String Beans" May, Ed Bell, "Jaybird" Coleman, and Vera Ward Hall.

(Available @ \$12.50 postpaid from the Alabama Folklife Association,

410 N. Hull St.,

Montgomery, AL 36104,

or go to [www.alabamafolklife.org](http://www.alabamafolklife.org))

## Tributaries

Journal of the Alabama Folklife Association



(Richmond, Indiana—June 7, 1930)

# Bayless? Bailey? A ROSE BY ANOTHER NAME

**By Christopher C. King**



## SUGGESTIONS ON THE IDENTITY OF "BAYLESS ROSE"...

Travelling over Wyoming and Mingo counties on Rt. 52, I recalled my Dad's description of this part of West Virginia as "frozen in time." I passed drive-in theaters that, though seemingly desolate and abandoned were stubbornly clinging to the road, inviting trucks and station wagons to pull off and rest. The pale hues of early fall corresponded with the worn paint and tenacious grip on gravity that the homes, mom and pop stores, and barns had on the landscape. This closer I got to West Logan the more the mountains shifted to the brown and bruised surfaces that the coal-mines had created. It was this rough and hard-living area that produced some of the finest old-time rural musicians to ever record in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

### Who influenced Dick Justice's style and songs?

I was following up on my research concerning the Williamson Brothers & Curry, a hard-driving old-time string band from Logan. Several months had elapsed since my last trip to Logan, and I had recently contacted a relative of the late Dick Justice, the superb guitarist and singer from around Logan who recorded for Brunswick in 1927. Justice, like the Williamson Brothers & Curry, was encouraged to record commercially, following Frank Hutchison's successful sessions for Okeh records. Also, Dick Justice, Hutchison, and the Williamson Brothers were friends and frequently swapped songs at local dances. Most of this information was well known among researchers of old-time music. However, what I was interested in was, *who* influenced Justice's style and song body.

Frank Hutchison's forceful finger-picking style contrasted sharply with that of Dick Justice. Hutchison normally played in the key of G (Coney Isle) or used an open tuning (often in G) to play slide "Hawaiian style" (Logan County Blues). Jus-

tice, however, preferred the key of C, but was known to play in a variety of keys and styles. Justice had a very light touch on the strings, whereas Hutchison was said to break strings often with the force of his picking. In general, Justice had a highly syncopated rhythm and a fluid, yet defined right hand picking pattern, not unlike West Virginia native David Miller. Conversely, Hutchison tended to incorporate different rhythms and picking patterns within the same song. Both men played blues, rags, ballads, and popular songs of the day. Hutchison is said to have learned his style from a crippled black man in the area but little was known about Justice's influences.

After arriving at my destination slightly north of Logan, I had the opportunity to meet and talk at length with Justice's daughter, Mildred. Though advanced in age, Mildred possessed an immediate and vivid recollection of the past. Describing her early childhood, Mildred apparently had devoted parents that worked hard to rise above the "hard-scrabble" life that was shared

among most in Logan and neighboring areas. She spoke fondly of her life with her parents and described many occasions when neighbors would visit to make music with her father. One such neighbor proved to be of tantalizing interest.

### 'That man's name was Bailey Rose'

When asked who played the most with her father, Mildred stated that two men frequented her house the most. Oscar Pendleton, a farmer who moved to Crows (on the far west side of Virginia) after the war, played guitar with her father, but was more of a "Jimmie Rodgers-type" and was more interested in playing records of the day on the family Victrola. Interestingly enough, she recalled both Jimmie Rodgers and black blues being played in their parlor. However, the person that "sounded the most like Daddy" was a "railroad worker that traveled from Wyoming and Wayne County, West Virginia up the Ohio line and over through Indiana."

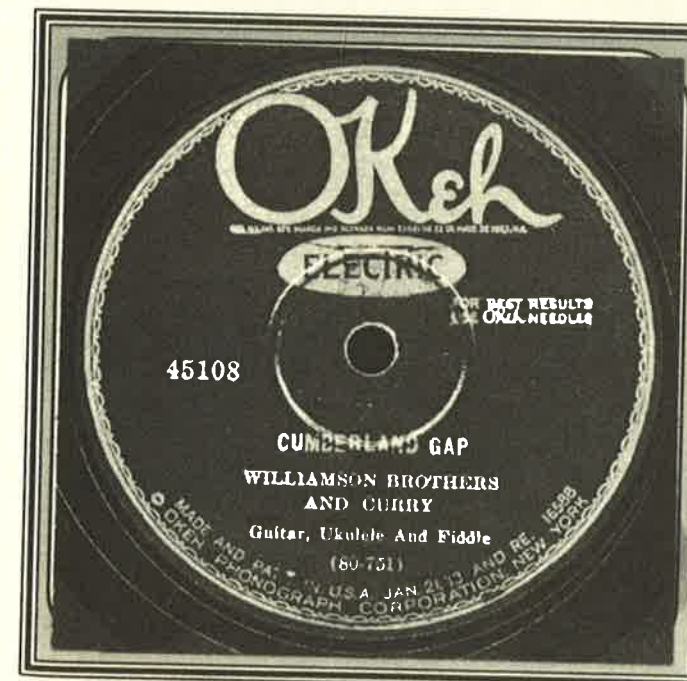


(Richmond, Indiana—June 7, 1930)  
'He taught Daddy how to play Brown Gap'



(courtesy of Chris King)

### Williamson Brothers and Curry (late 1920s) 'A hard-driving old-time string band from Logan, W.V.'



(from the collection of Chris King)



(from the collection of Chris King)





(from the collection of Chris King)

That man's name was Bailey Rose.

Upon hearing that name, I managed to stammer out "Was he ever called 'Bayless Rose'?"

Mildred responded that her father and everyone else referred to him as Bailey. In her own words, she

said: "Bailey was quite a bit older than Daddy. He taught him [Daddy] how to play *Old Black Dog* and *Brown Gal*... I remember them playin' those. They also played them "bawdy songs." He [Bailey] had a drawl but not a bad one...he was always chewing tobacco.

**Rose also taught Justice how to play *Old Black Dog***

After hearing the above comments, I asked Mildred if Bailey Rose was a black man. She replied definitively that he was not.

She said "he was kind of foreign-looking though."

**'Sort of short with dark, curly hair... sort of like an Arab...'**

Not knowing what this meant, I asked her to describe him. "You know, he was sort of short with dark, curly hair but with darker skin, sort of like an Arab, but he was no nigger!"

Pressing further about this man, I asked her if she could recall if he recorded, what he did exactly, if she knew where he had moved to...

She didn't know if he recorded, but she categorically affirmed that "he...was just as good as Daddy on the guitar."

About his railroad work, she knew that he rode the trains and that he didn't stay in one place for more than a couple of months. There was a local boarding house that put-up railroad workers when they stayed in town, and apparently, he would stay in Logan for a few weeks, then move up the line, only to return a couple months later.

She didn't know where he moved to, but he just stopped coming by before the war (WW II). She did think that he was originally from Wayne County.

Most of what I gathered from Mildred seem to suggest that this Bailey Rose *could be* the same man as Bayless Rose—the anonymous musician that recorded several sides for Gennett Records in 1930. On May 24th of that year, he recorded three songs, none of which were issued. According to the Gennett ledgers, two of the songs, "Salty Dog" (GE-16655) and "Frisco Blues" (GE-16656) were labeled as *Old-Time Playing* (Guitar Solos) and "Black Dog Blues" (GE-16654) was labeled as *Vocal Blues* (Race).

**Dick Justice (late 1920s)**

**'Bailey Rose' was the person who 'sounded the most like Daddy' (courtesy of Chris King)**



***Frisco Blues* reveals a guitar style and accenting similar to that on Big Boy Cleveland's *Goin' To Leave You Blues***



## 'Person not colored'!

Later, on June 7th of that year, he returned to record a total of five sides with four issued, probably between 1930 and 1934. Of those issued sides, "Jamestown Exhibition" (GE-16732) and "Frisco Blues" (GE-16739) were instrumentals. Curiously, written next to "Beale Street Blues" (GE-16737), the one unissued vocal side from this session, is the statement "*Person not colored*." The two vocal sides, "Original Blues" (GE-16735) and "Black Dog Blues" (GE-16733) contain no audible evidence that the performer was black, and the songs clearly belong to a "pre-blues" tradition. Both songs contain lyrics that have been collected from black and white sources.

## 'Bayless' Rose and Dick Justice sound similar...

Both "Bayless" Rose and Dick Justice sound *extremely* similar in style and in execution. Their recorded material, all in C, reflect almost identical picking patterns and syncopation, but also the same left-hand embellishments. In addition, both of their singing styles demonstrate a

tight, symmetrical phrasing between the vocal line and the guitar's melodic line. Their vocal inflections display more of a generally rural, backwoods character and less of definitively black or white pronunciations.

## Rose, Justice, Miller play almost identical guitar passages...

Another artist from the West Virginia/Ohio area who had a style similar to both "Bayless" Rose and Dick Justice is David Miller. I only mention Miller because of both his proximity to Dick Justice's area and also because of the strikingly close right-hand style that all three share. Miller's highly syncopated "Jail House Rag" and "Cannon Ball Rag" have passages and runs that are almost identical in execution to both Justice's "Brown Skin Blues" and Rose's "Jamestown Exhibition." It is doubtful that either Justice or Rose knew Miller, but it is remarkable that all three have a symmetrical approach to disparate tunes.

Though the record labels for Rose's issued sides clearly read "Race Guitar Solo" or "Vocal Blues," it was

not in the least bit unusual for a record company to err when attributing race to an artist. The white duo, the Allen Brothers, were mistakenly issued on the Columbia 14,000 race series, and the black guitarist Lemuel Turner was issued within the Victor hillbilly series. These mistakes were not common, but did occur with some frequency within most company's catalogues. Some artists were issued within *both* race and hillbilly series, but this was probably more of a marketing ploy to boost sales rather than a bona fide error.

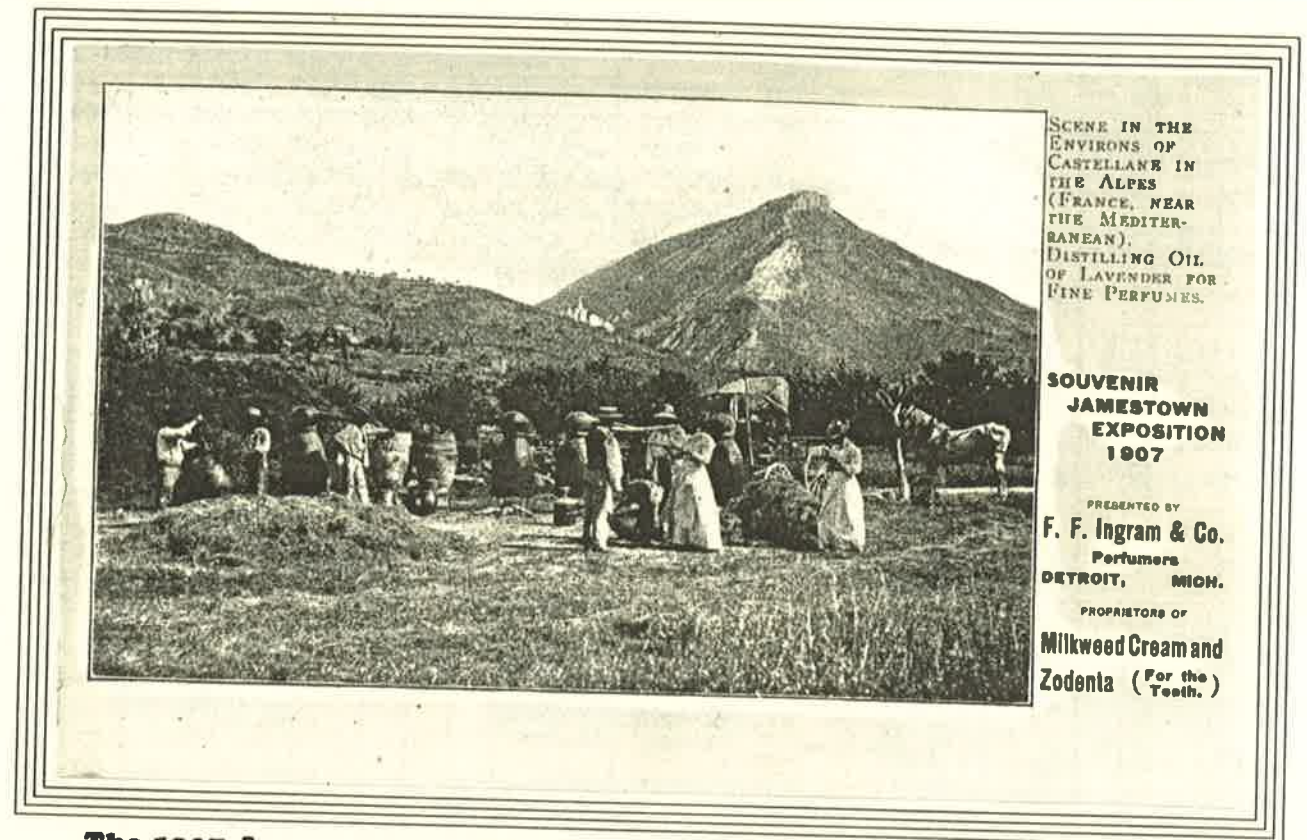
## Jamestown Exposition misnamed Jamestown 'Exhibition'

The ledger-keeper at Gennett may have erred regarding one song captured during "Bayless" Rose's session. The instrumental side, "Jamestown Exhibition," was, in all likelihood, intended to read "Jamestown Exposition." In 1907, a fair was held at Jamestown, VA celebrating the 300 year-old European colony that was established there in 1607. The Jamestown Exposition was an impressive event, with speeches by

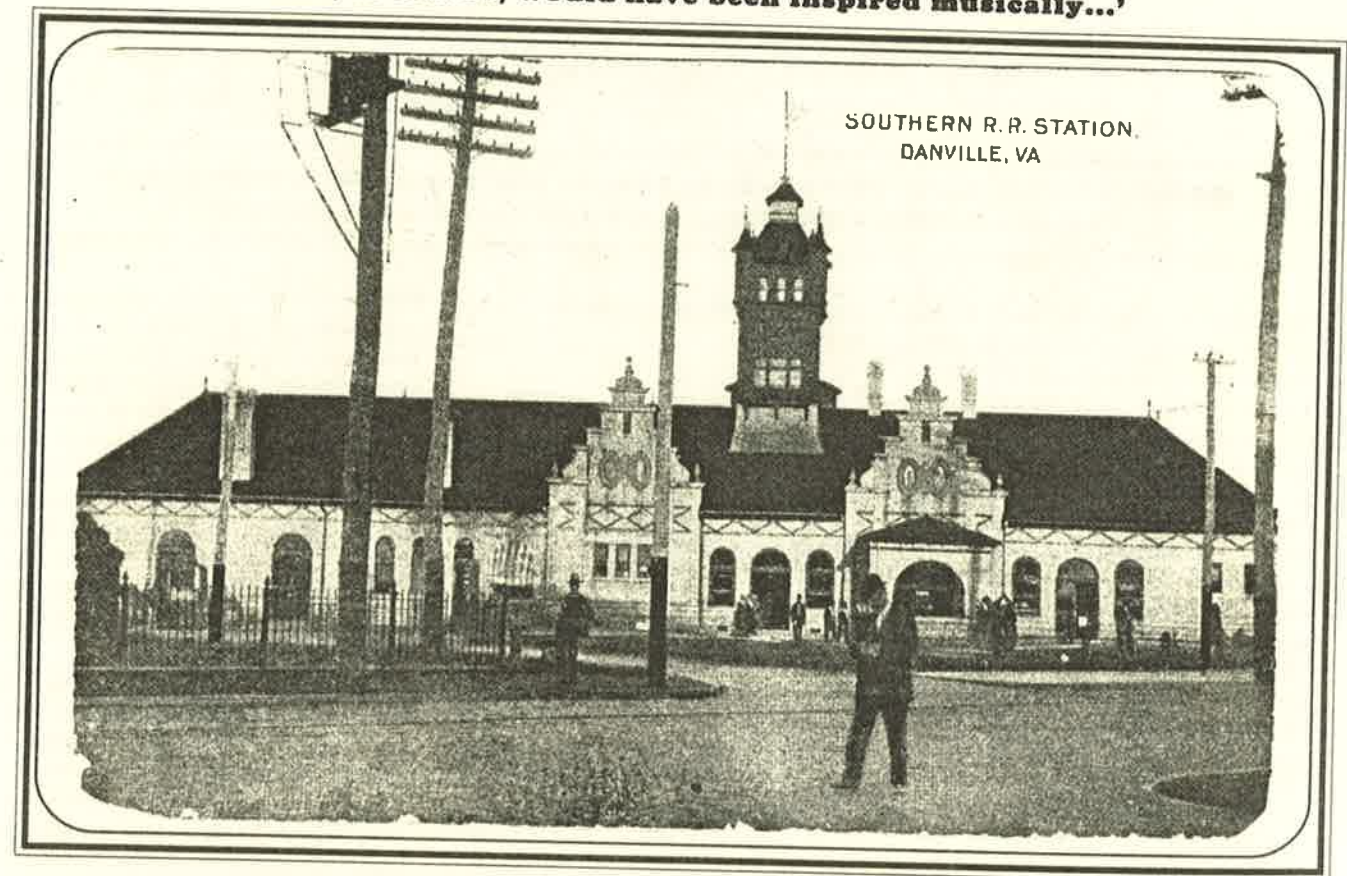


(from the collection of Chris King)

'Miller's highly syncopated guitar solos [above] are almost identical to Justice's *Brown Skin Blues* and Rose's *Jamestown Exhibition*...'



The 1907 Jamestown Exposition included 'speeches by Woodrow Wilson and Mark Twain, several hundred warships, cultural displays, protests, musical performances, poetry, narratives... Rose, or others, would have been inspired musically...'



Southern Railroad Station, Danville, VA (early 1900s): Bailey Rose 'was a railroad worker [who] traveled from Wyoming and Wayne County...up the Ohio line, and over through Indiana.'



1930		MASTER-TEST		OVERALL		CATALOG	
MASTER	TEST	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	TIME	NO.	NO.
✓ 13-17	GE-16729	KOKOMO BLUES By Walter Fennell Acc. Piano & Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	10:00	16729	16729
✓ 13-17	GE-16730	EVENING WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN By Walter Fennell Acc. Piano & Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	10:30	16730	16730
✓ 17-18	GE-16731	RAILROAD BLUES By Cow Cow Davenport Acc. Piano & Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	11:00	16731	16731
✓ 13-17	GE-16732	JAMESTOWN EXHIBITION By Bayless Rose	GUITAR SOLO	2/10	11:30	16732	16732
✓ 13-17	GE-16733	BLACK DOG BLUES By Bayless Rose Acc. Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	12:00	16733	16733
✓ 17-18	GE-16734	CASEY JONES BLUES By Cow Cow Davenport Acc. Piano	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	12:30	16734	16734
✓ 13-17	GE-16735	ORIGINAL BLUES By Bayless Rose Acc. Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	13:00	16735	16735
✓ 17-18	GE-16736	SHE KNOWS HOW TO SELL THAT STUFF By Iva Smith & Her Buddies Acc. Piano & Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	13:30	16736	16736
✓ 13-17	GE-16737	BEALE STREET BLUES By Bayless Rose Acc. Guitar	GUITAR SOLO	2/10	14:00	16737	16737
✓ 13-17	GE-16738	ALABAMA MISTREATED By Cow Cow Davenport Acc. Piano & Guitar	VOCAL BLUES	2/10	14:30	16738	16738

**GENNETT LEDGERS—JUNE 7, 1930 (Rose's 2nd recording session) show that Beale Street Blues was 'rejected' 'person not colored'**

Woodrow Wilson and Mark Twain, and maneuvers by several hundred warships from around the world. There were cultural displays, protests, and musical performances from all around. This enormous event prompted authors to compose poetry and narratives of the event, and it seems only natural that Rose, or others, would have been inspired musically. The tune itself is reminiscent of a parlor-guitar piece, like "The Siege of Sebastopol" that would have been popular in the late 19th century. Structurally, the three-part tune is a synthesis of "Bully Of The Town" and "Don't Let Your Deal Go Down." If indeed it was Bailey Rose that recorded this tune in 1930, then Mildred's description of Rose having a drawl would explain how the ledger-keeper mistook both Bailey's

name and also the title of the performance.

### Rose's race was a point of confusion

It's my contention though, that the employees who entered the information concerning Rose's session may not have made outright errors concerning his race. Rather, Rose's race was probably a point of some confusion. If the Rose that recorded for Gennett was the same Rose that Mildred recollected, then his "foreign" appearance coupled with his rural dialect may have resulted in an ambiguity that led to contradictory entries. In all likelihood, the decision to issue the recordings as "race records" was probably made by an

employee who listened to the tests and assumed that they would belong in the race catalogue. Otherwise, he may have referred to the ledger and noted that the sides he listened to were marked as "race" or "vocal blues," but did not note that "Beale Street Blues" was labeled "Person not colored." Regardless, confusion existed within the ledgers concerning "Bayless" Rose, and an ambiguous physical appearance may have been the root cause.

Still, there is only circumstantial evidence to suggest that Bailey Rose and "Bayless" Rose are one and the same. From their recordings, "Bayless" Rose and Dick Justice are very similar in style, and it wouldn't be a stretch to imagine that Dick Justice and his friend Bailey Rose would have tended to share aspects of their

playing. Also, if Gennett followed the practices of other labels, they would have tended to record people on a given day from a certain geographic area (making it easier to purchase railroad tickets and organize sessions). Welling & McGee, also from West Virginia, recorded two days after Rose at this first session. At Rose's second session, he recorded two days before Andy Patterson and Warren Caplinger, a mandolin and guitar duo from West Virginia that traveled between Tennessee and West Virginia. Rose could have traveled north, at the time of this session, with Patterson & Caplinger. "Cap & Andy" recorded several sides at that session (with only two sides being issued on Superior 2523 (GE-16743 & 16745), but later they formed a group with William Strickland, later known as "Flip," and recorded several sides on the FIRESIDE MEMORIES label, which was pressed for them by the Gennett plant.

If the Bailey Rose of Mildred's recollection is the same as the "Bayless" Rose who recorded for Gennett, then the question still re-

mains as to why he was mistakenly labeled as a "race" artist. Justice's daughter firmly denied that he was black, but that he was "foreign-looking." Were he a mulatto, it probably would have qualified him as a Negro to both Mildred and also the Gennett employees. One could speculate that he indeed was from a foreign stock, such as Middle-Eastern or Mediterranean (West Virginia was home to a variety of immigrants and their progeny). However, the immigrant groups who recorded music for release under different ethnic categories were clearly recognized and labeled as such. Rose certainly doesn't sound foreign but he does sound rural.

### Enter the Melungeons...

An intriguing possibility does exist as to why Rose could appear "foreign" but not black to Mildred. A separate ethnic group, known as the Melungeons, the "lost tribe of the Appalachians," range from Southeast

Kentucky to Southwest Virginia. Known variously as "Black Indians," "White Berbers," or "Brown Turks," the Melungeons claim to be a mixed race that originated in the 16th century. Their common ethnic foundation is American Indian, primarily Creek and Chickasaws.

### Many Black Creeks and Chickasaws are named 'Rose'

Indeed, both the Black Creek and Black Chickasaws share "Rose" as a common surname. Essentially, Melungeons define themselves as Indians that "absorbed" immigrant European, African, and Mediterranean groups. The "ethnic markers" of black hair, light brown skin, and Middle-Eastern facial features broadly, but not exclusively, characterize them as Melungeon. Only within relatively isolated areas were these people regarded as "black" by the surrounding white populations.

15951	Corrine Corinne—Taylor and Anderson	.....	(Mistreated)
S16798	Foraken Blue (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Piano)—Frank James	.....	(Snake)
S16809	Frank's Lonesome Blues (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Piano)—Frank James	.....	(Love)
16682	Gee, But It's Hard (Vocal Blues)—Georgia Tom	.....	(Voice)
16756	Good and Hot (Voc. Blues) (Acc. Fiddle-Piano-Guitar)—Clara Burton	.....	(Ain't)
S16629	Graveyard Blues (Vocal Blues)—Turner Parrish	.....	(Mister)
S16586	Highway 61 Blues (Vocal Blues)—Roosevelt Sykes	.....	(Sweet)
R16745	Humming Blues (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Instr.)—James "Big" Robinson	.....	(Gea)
16682	Levee Bound Blues (Vocal Blues)—Georgia Tom	.....	(Look)
16730	Lonesome Road (Spiritual) (Acc. Piano)—Deep River Plantation Singers	.....	(Lonesome)
16730	Look Away Into Heaven (Spiritual) (Acc. Piano)—Deep River Plantation Singers	.....	(Highway)
S16586	Mister Sykes Blues (Vocal Blues)—Roosevelt Sykes	.....	(Foraken)
S16798	Mistreated Blue (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Piano)—Frank James	.....	(Undertaker)
S16718	Mistreated The Only Friend You Had (Blues) (Acc. Instr.)—James Cole	.....	(You)
S16426	Mr. Conductor Man (Vocal Blues)—Big Bill Johnson	.....	(Windowpane)
S16696	Nobody's Business If I Do (Blues) (Acc. Guitar-Mandolin-Washboard)—Tommie Bradley	.....	(Frank's)
S16809	Snake Hip Blues (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Piano)—Frank James	.....	(Humming)
R16745	Sweet Poplar Blues (Vocal Blues)—Willie Dukes (Acc. Piano)	.....	(Where)
16171	Terrible Operation Blues (Vocal Blues) (Duet)—Jane Lucas & Georgia Tom	.....	(Where)
16782	That Stuff (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Guitar)—Sam Tarpley	.....	(Mistreated)
S16718	Undertaker Blues (Blues) (Acc. Instr.)—Buster Johnson	.....	(Good)
16756	Voice Of The Blues, The (Voc. Blues) (Acc. Guitar)—Irene Scruggs	.....	(Terrible)
16171	Where Did You Stay Last Night (Vocal Blues, Duet)—Jane Lucas and Georgia Tom	.....	(That)
16782	Where You Been So Long (Vocal Blues) (Acc. Instrumental)—Tommie Bradley and James Cole	.....	(Nobody's)
S16696	Windowpane Blues (Blues) (Acc. Guitar-Fiddle-Mandolin-Washboard)—Tommie Bradley	.....	(Mr.)
S16426	You Do It (Vocal Blues)—Steele Smith	.....	(Corrine)
15951	You Rascal You—Walter Taylor	.....	

Selections by Negro Artists—Instrumental

16828	Change (Piano Solo)—Sam Nowlin	.....	(So What)
R16772	Frisco Blues (Guitar Solo)—Bayless Rose	.....	(Jamestown)
R16772	Jamestown Exhibition (Guitar Solo)—Bayless Rose	.....	(Frisco)
16828	So What (Piano Solo)—Sam Nowlin	.....	(Change)

Piano Solo

16817	Holiday	.....	Lillian Crawford
	In A Mist	.....	Lillian Crawford

**Champion's last-issued filler (December, 1934) lists Bayless Rose under 'Selections by Negro Artists—Instrumental'**



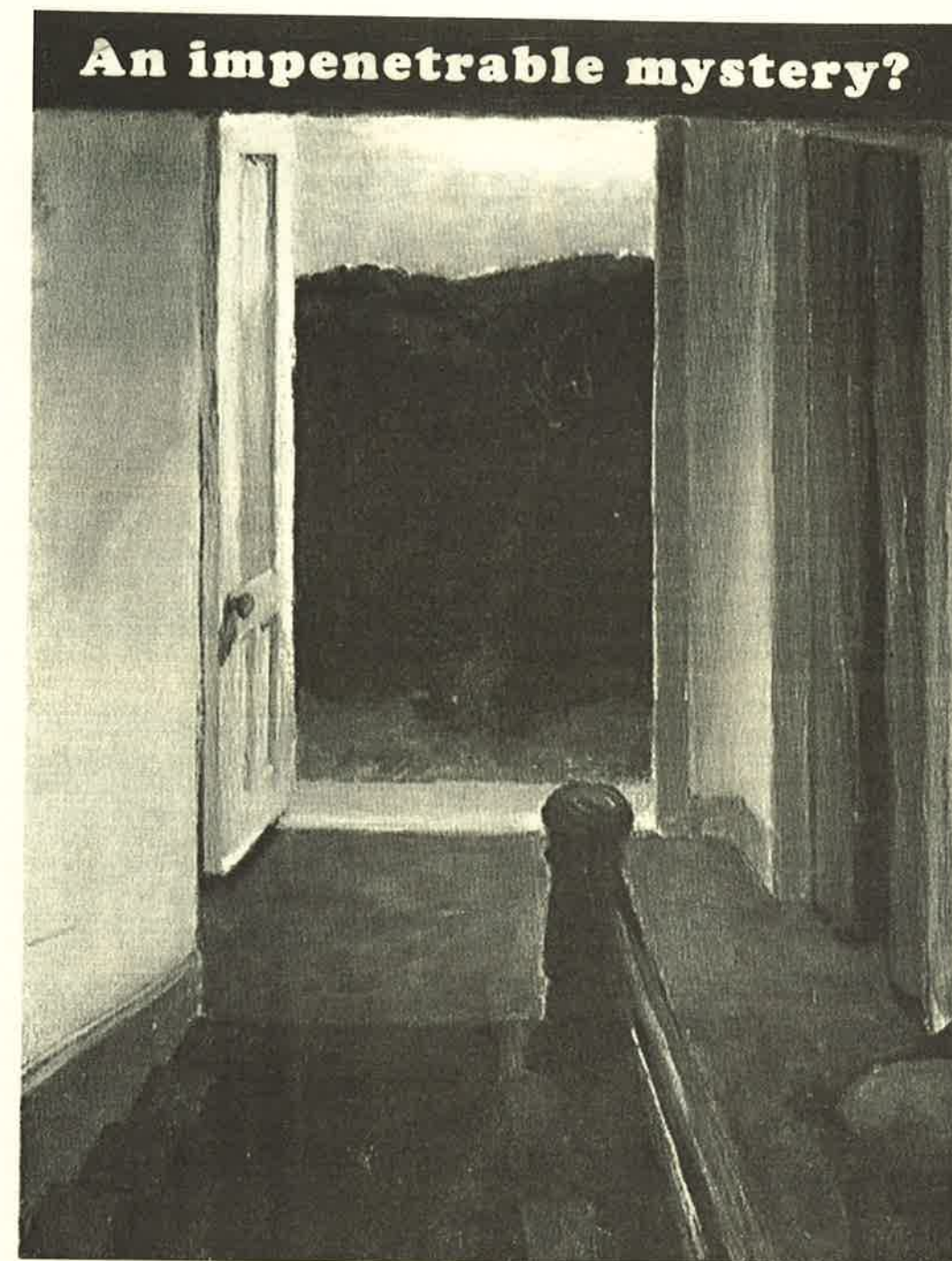
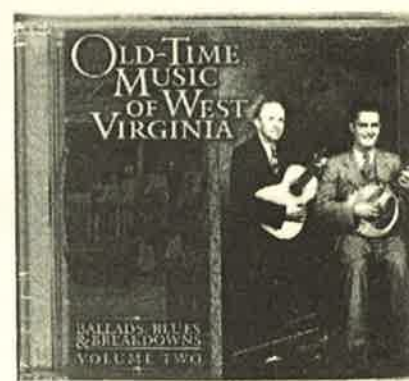
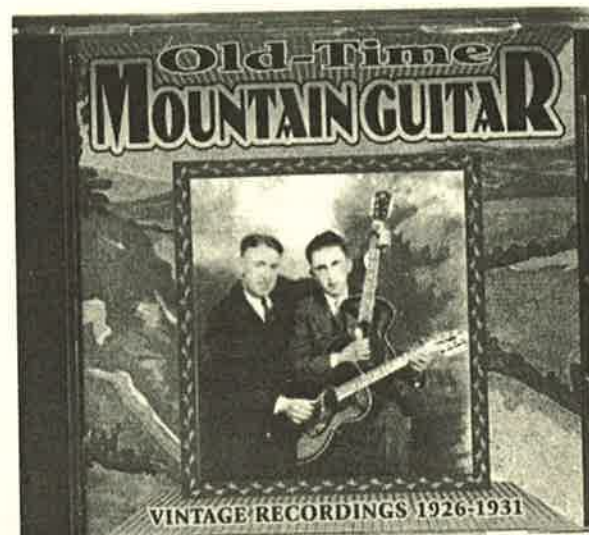
Only when Melungeons started to migrate and assimilate outside of these isolated pockets were they generally accepted as "white." However, some Melungeons continued to carry their "ethnic markers" and were variously labeled as "Indian," "Black," or "Arab." This very well may have been the case with Bailey Rose. Physically, he may have had ambiguous characteristics that would have appeared "Black" to some, but "Arab" or "foreign" to others. In all other respects, he would have just been another rural railroad worker that happened to be an outstanding musician.

**'Timelessly skillful and appealing'**

In conclusion, I have no definite answers but plenty of speculations and provocative suggestions. Certainly it makes no difference whether "Bayless" Rose was black, white or brown. His handful of recordings stand as masterpieces, like so many from that era, that are timelessly skillful and appealing. What is worthy of consideration is how any little bit of "otherness," be it as Indian, Middle-Eastern, or African ancestry mixed with a large part of "whiteness," resulted in being anything other than white. How would the historical music that we love have been changed, if it were put not into categories of "race" and "old-time," but rather into the dichotomy of "rural" and "uptown?"

Performances listed above can be easily obtained on the following *County* CDs:

- CO-CD-3 512 VARIOUS "Old-Time Mountain Guitar"
- CO-CD-3518 VARIOUS "Old-Time Music of West Virginia, Vol. 1"
- CO-CD-3519 VARIOUS "Old-Time Music of West Virginia, Vol. 2"
- CO-CD-3528 VARIOUS "Old-Time Mountain Blues"



(THE SUPERIOR 300 SERIES by Tom Tsotsi)



# Gennett's Mystery Label: THE SUPERIOR 300 SERIES

by  
**TOM TSOTSI**

**B**y the mid 1920s, the Gennett Records Division of the Starr Piano Company, Richmond, Indiana, had developed a profitable procedure of reissuing recordings that were originally pressed for issue on their Gennett label. The model for this was Gennett's own long-running Champion label (originally set up for the Kresge Department Store chain), wherein the identities of the performing orchestras and artists were usually masked behind pseudonyms so as to "protect" the 75-cent Gennett issue versus the 35-cent Champion copy (or "stencil," as the recording ledgers refer to these disguised "clones").

## Gennett contracts with Sears and W.T. Grant...

Gennett branched out by contracting with the giant mail-order catalog company, Sears, Roebuck, to press stencils for Sears own labels (Silvertone, Supertone, Challenge, and Conqueror); with the five-and-dime store, W.T. Grant Company (two short-lived Bell label segments within this longer running Grant Co. series), and other customers, such as the Elion Brothers in El Paso, Texas with the Discos Gennett label for the Mexican market. Here, the artist and band names are suitably shown (some pseudonymously) in Spanish. There were others, like the

early Buddy 8000 series. But, the Superior 300 series stands out because of the extreme rarity of these 78 issues.

The Superior 300 series consisted of 91 issues, all with pseudonyms for artist/orchestra credits. They, apparently, were distributed from late Spring to Autumn of 1928, a short span of six months. There is no evidence as to the identity of a contractor-company/-distributor (if this was not a solo venture by Gennett). Thus, the region of sale within the U.S., and possibly Canada, also remains a mystery.

The label, blue with gold lettering, was modeled on and patented after that used for Gennett's Herwin series (previously produced for the Artophone Company of St. Louis) with similar graphics. The label circumference was scalloped with dots in the circular dips and a handwritten style "Superior." Placed directly under this are an underlining end flourish and the words "Electrically Recorded." The bottom of the label shows: "The Superior Record Co., Richmond, Ind. U.S.A."

## MacKenzie: "These have never been seen..."

John K. MacKenzie, the pioneer in Gennett record research ("Electrobeam" era), wrote a column series, "Gennettics," in Don Brown's *Record Finder* from late 1959 to September 1964. Access to the Gennett re-

cording ledgers allowed MacKenzie to ferret out the existence of the Superior "three digit series." The label name was shown as "Supreme" in the ledger's early issue number entries. But, this was crossed out and replaced by "Superior." It would seem that Gennett became aware that the Supreme name was one of the Grey Gull family of labels at this time. MacKenzie wrote: "There are other series that contain Gennett electric masters. These, however, have never been seen, to my knowledge, by any collector. Their existence is noted in the Gennett ledgers but other than that...nothing!" Here, in May 1960, MacKenzie was referring to the Superior 300 and *Discos Gennett* 40100 series.

The expansion of the jazz, blues, and dance band discographies by Brian Rust, Bob Dixon, John Godrich, et al, in the early 1960s included some of the Superior 300 series issues, but, in many cases, those discographies didn't indicate the pseudonyms used. Les Docks' *Record Guide* does show some of these Superior 300s in his listing, but, in general, it reflects the data shown in Rust/Dixon-Godrich. The white country issues are listed under the true artists' names, indicating that the information was culled from the recording ledgers, rather than from the 78-issue labels.

Further indication of the obscurity of the Superior 300 series is the lack of



**The SUPERIOR 300 series  
was modeled on  
the Herwin label (below)  
("U.S.A." at bottom indicates a  
possible Canadian distribution)**



**HERWIN—(previously  
produced for the  
Artophone Co.  
of St. Louis)**

any mention in Brian Rust's *The American Record Label Book* (1978), Alan Sutton's *Directory of American Disc Record Brands and Manufacturers* (1994), and Alan Sutton and Kurt Nauck's *American Record Labels and Companies* (2000). It's noted that the later Superior 2500 series, which Gennett issued from December 1930 to September 1932, is well-documented in these reference books because of George W. Kay's complete coverage in *Record Research* (August 1961 to January 1963). Kay had access to the Phonograph Record Cost and Royalty Record sheets, which provided the true artist/orchestra name along with the pseudonyms to be used on the Superior 2500 series labels.

Another prime indicator of the scarcity and obscurity of the Superior 300s can be found in 78 *Quarterly's* casual sampling, *The Rarest 78s*, in which one copy each of issue numbers 306, 308, and 350, were reported. This led Pete Whelan to muse: "...this early, mysterious and seemingly untraceable series..." (78 Q, No. 5).

John K. MacKenzie wrote in *Gennettics No. 3 (RF, February 1960)* that it should be stressed that the Gennett catalog featured all types of music, many forms of which are of no interest to collectors nowadays; hence, these 78s have been overlooked and classified as "no interest" items, thus resulting in lack of data on these labels. This MacKenzie commentary applies, in spades, to the Superior 300s.

All of these Superior 300 series issues have been traced by searching the Gennett recording ledgers. Aside from business/distribution aspects, what remains to be determined are the pseudonyms used for many of these issues. Where known, these are shown on the following Superior 300-series numerical listing. Additionally, some of the corollary issues/stencils have undetermined artist/orchestra credits—again, predominantly pseudonyms. So, it remains for the collecting fraternity to search their files and shelves to help "fill in the blanks."

In January 2004, John Bell (Indiana collector), reported to Pete Whelan that he had found a Gennett-produced Supreme record sleeve (see illustration). It is noted that this sleeve has the very same graphics as the Superior record sleeve (see illustration)—except for the General Office (Richmond, Indiana) and New York Office (38<sup>th</sup> Ave. & 61<sup>st</sup> St., Woodside, L.I.)—addresses which have been removed along with the substitution of "Superior" for "Supreme."

The Gennett ledgers show that the original label name of "Supreme" was proposed for issue numbers 300 up to 326, but in each case, the handwritten "Supreme" was crossed out and replaced with "Superior" (these label identifications were made so as to separate the "Superior" issue sides from the concurrent Sears-Roebuck-contracted Challenge label three-digit series).

Inasmuch as the early issues in this series with label copies available (300, 301, 302, 306 & 308) all show the "Superior" name, it appears that the Starr Piano Company *did* react in time to avoid a legal problem with Grey Gull Records who had patented the "Supreme" label name (circa 1925). However, Gennett's prototype Supreme record sleeve survived.

John Bell told Pete Whelan that he would return to the same location where he found the Supreme record sleeve and search for a Supreme 300 series phonograph record. The Gennett ledgers and the existing Superior labels indicate that Supremes were never pressed or issued by the Starr Piano Company.





courtesy  
of John Bell

**SUPREME:** light tan sleeve with medium brown lettering  
("General Office: RICHMOND, INDIANA  
New York Office: 38<sup>th</sup> AVE & 61<sup>st</sup> ST., Woodside, L.I.")



courtesy  
of John Bell

**SUPERIOR:** light tan sleeve with dark blue lettering  
(no addresses given)



**Superior 301-A**  
**Club Folly Orchestra**

(courtesy of Richard Lagerman)



**Superior 301-B**  
**Club Folly Orchestra**

(courtesy of Richard Lagerman)



**Superior 302-A**  
**Willie Wilson's Wizards**

(courtesy of Russ Shor)



**Superior 302-B**  
**The Southerners**

(courtesy of Russ Shor)



**Superior 300-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-976 A) *The Song Is Ended (But The Melody Lingers On)*—Waltz, vc Cliff Williams (Richmond, IN, Nov. 25, 1927) **Gennett 6327-A—Emil Seidel & His Orch.**; Champion 15400-A "Jack Crawford & His Boys"; Bell 572 A as by (?).

**Superior 300-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-932 A) *Together, We Two*—FT., vc Cliff Williams (Richmond, IN, Nov. 11, 1927); **Gennett 6324-A—Emil Seidel & His Orch.**; Champion 15400-B "Jack Crawford & His Boys."

**Superior 301-A**  
*Club Folly Orchestra*

(GEX-991—) *Roll Up The Carpets*—FT. Blues (Richmond, IN, Dec. 5, 1927) **Gennett 6339-A—Bob Deikman & His Orch.**; Champion 15401-A "Grandview Inn Orch."; Discos Gennett 40105-A "Bob Deikman y su Orquesta (Contunto)."

**Superior 301-B**  
*Club Folly Orchestra*

(GEX-942—) *Among My Souvenirs*—FT., vc Kermit Simmons (Richmond, IN, Nov. 14, 1927) **Gennett 6325-A—Bob Deikman & His Orch.**; Bell 574-A as by (?); Challenge 755-A as by (?). NOTE: the June 28, 1928 Gennett ledgers state "use mx GEX 1414 (Van & His Orch.—'Among My Souvenirs') for Champion 15401-B instead of mx GEX 942" (Bob Deikman). This was done and the Grandview Inn Orch. B side is actually by Van & His Orch.

**Superior 302-A**  
*Willie Wilson's Wizards*

(GEX-966—) *Willie Wilson's Wizards—Bugs (The Gang)* (race; Gennett Ledgers: "white?") (Richmond, IN, Nov. 21, 1927) **Gennett 6326-A—Willie Jones & His Orch.**; Champion 15402-A "Pete Richards & His Orch."

**Superior 302-B**  
*The Southerners*

(GE 13180—) *The Southerners—I Call You Sugar* (Baxter-Bowles) (FT. vc) (Richmond, IN, Oct. 17, 1927) **Gennett 6296-B—Alex Jackson & His Plantation Orch.**; Champion 15402-B "The Plantation Serenaders"; Silvertone 5502-B "The Plantation Serenaders."



**Gennett 6326-A**  
*Willie Jones and His Orch.*



**Champion 15402-A**  
*Pete Richards and His Orch.*



**Superior 306-A**  
*The Southerners*

(courtesy of Randy Stehle)



**Superior 306-B**  
*Pennsylvania Serenaders*

(courtesy of Randy Stehle)

**Superior 303-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-975-A) *For My Baby*—FT., vocal ensemble (Richmond, IN, Nov. 25, 1927) **Gennett 6327-B—Emil Seidel & His Orch.**; Champion 15404-A as "Jack Crawford & His Boys."

**Superior 303-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-961-A) *Did You Mean It?*—FT., vc. Jimmie Fisher (Richmond, IN, Nov. 17, 1927) **Gennett 6324-B—Emil Seidel & His Orch.**; Champion 15404-B as "Jack Crawford & His Boys."

**Superior 304-A**  
*Dick Kent and His Band*

(GEX-1029-A) *Good News*—FT. (Richmond, IN, Dec. 19, 1927) **Gennett 6341-A—Kibbler's Kollegians**; Champion 15403-A as "Joe Moore & His Orch."; Discos Gennett 40106-B "Buena Noticias" as by "Richard y sus Orquesta."

**Superior 304-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-1033—) *Lady of Havana*—FT. (Richmond, IN, Dec. 20, 1927) **Gennett 6354-B—Hogan Hancock & His Orch.**; Champion 15403-B as "Metomkin Inn Orch."; Discos Gennett 40107-A "En Tus Brazos Habanera" as by "Hogan y su Orquesta."; Bell 577-A as by ?

**Superior 305-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-941-A) *Cobble Stones*—FT. (Richmond, IN, Nov. 14, 1927) vc. Kermit Simmons. **Gennett 6325-A—Bob Deikman & His Orch.**; Bell 575-A as by ?

**Superior 305-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX-936-A) *One Golden Hour*—FT. (Richmond, IN, Nov. 13, 1927). **No Gennett Electrobeam Issue—Art Payne & His Orch.** (written comment in Gennett ledgers: "I-U in pinch...Not Gennett...Dog...Play before using"); Bell 574-B as by ?

**Superior 306-A**  
*The Southerners*

(GE 13182-A) *Missouri Squabble—STOMP* (Richmond, IN, Oct. 27, 1927) **Gennett 6296-A—Alex Jackson & His Plantation Orch.**; Champion 15386-A "The Plantation Serenaders."

**Superior 306-B**  
*Pennsylvania Serenaders*

(GE 13077—) *Hot Lips*—FT., (Richmond, IN, ca. mid-Sept., 1927) **Gennett 6263-B—Henry Lange & His Orchestra**; Champion 15364-A "Bud Helms and His Band"; Discos Gennett 40102-B as by "Henry Lange and (sic) su Orquesta."

**Superior 307-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13069—) *Barbara*—FT., vc Charlie Barnes (Richmond, IN, ca. mid-Sept., 1927) **Gennett 6263-A—Lyst Reynolds & His Orch.**; Champion 15365-B "Logola" Inn Orch." (Mx. GE 13070 by Lyst Reynolds Orch. is titled "Logola Stomp"—unissued)





**Champion 15402-B**  
The Plantation Serenaders

**Superior 307-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 931-) Down South—FT. with vocal ensemble (Richmond, IN, Nov. 11, 1927) Gennett 6309-B—Emil Seldel & His Orch.; Champion 15383-A "Jack Crawford & His Boys"; Bell 567-A as by ?; Silvertone 5500-B as by ?

**Superior 308-A**  
Bob Kayser and  
His Orch.

(GE 13155-) Rain—FT., vc Les Backer (St. Paul, Minn. c. Oct 22, 1927) Gennett 6279-A—Walt Anderson & His Golden Pheasant Hoodlums; Champion 15365-A "The Northwest Melody Boys"; Bell 569-A "Bruce Bray & His Orch."; Challenge 756 "Marlborough Dance Orch." (Gennett ledgers list as "(Bell) Challenge 756 A")

**Superior 308-B**  
Dick Burton and  
His Orch.\*

(GEX 933-A) The Hours I Spent With You—Waltz, vc Cliff Williams (Richmond, IN Nov. 11, 1927) Gennett 6309-A—Emil Seldel & His Orch.; Champion 15382-A "Jack Crawford & His Boys"; Bell 573 as by ? (Note: Bell 573-B and Bell 572-B also use the Burton pseudonym)



**Superior 308-A**  
Bob Kayser and His Orch.



**Superior 308-B**  
Dick Burton and His Orch.



**Gennett 6263-B**  
Henry Lange & His Orchestra

**Superior 309-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 930-) The Best Things in Life Are Free—FT. vc Cliff Williams (Richmond, IN, Nov. 11, 1927) Gennett 6295-A—Emil Seldel & His Orch.; Champion 15384-A as "Jack Crawford & His Boys"; Silvertone 5500-A as by ?

**Superior 309-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 877-A) The Vanity Drag (from "Good News")—FT. vc Arthur Fields (NYC, Sept. 26, 1927) Gennett 6280-B—Johnny Ringer & His Rossmont Ballroom Orch.; Champion 15363-B as "Wally Spencer's Georgians."

**Superior 310-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 878-A) Gold Digger—FT. (NYC, Sept. 26, 1927) Gennett 6280-A—Johnny Ringer & His Rossmont Ballroom Orch.; Champion 15366-B as "Wally Spencer's Georgians."

**Superior 310-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13189-A) Friday Night—Stomp (with Hoagy Carmichael) (sic — crossed out in ledgers, but left in for mx Ge 13190—Gnt 6311-B) (Richmond, IN, Oct. 31, 1927) Gennett 6295-B—Emil Seldel & His Orch.; Champion 15420-A as "Malcolm Webb & His Gang."

**Superior 311-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 998-B) Together, We Two—popular vocal duet, Acc. piano & violin (Richmond, IN, Dec. 10, 1927) Gennett 6346-A—Maids of Melody of Station WSAI; Champion 15405-A as "The Judson Sisters."

**Superior 311-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 999-A) Our Bungalow of Dreams—popular vocal duet, Acc. piano & violin (Richmond, IN, Dec. 10, 1927) Gennett 6346-B—Maids of Melody of Station WSAI; Champion 15406-B as "The Judson Sisters"; Challenge 416-A as by ? (Note: entry for mx. GE 13393—Maids of Melody—Grace Donaldson, Hortense Rose.)

**Superior 312-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 985-A) Down Our Way—popular vocal duet, Acc. piano & violin (Richmond, IN, Dec. 2, 1927) Gennett 6330-A—The Monitor Boys; Champion 15406-A as "Lane & Harris."

**Superior 312-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13188-) Geel But I'm Lonesome Tonight—popular vocal duet, Acc. piano—Fred Roehr (Richmond, IN, Oct. 29, 1927) Gennett 6312-A—Louis John Johnson and Ben Alley—WLW Artists; Champion 15405-B as "Lane & Harris."

**Superior 313-A**  
The Banjo-Ker and  
The Songster

(GE 13123-B) One Sweet Letter From You—Banjo & Vocal Novelty (St. Paul, Minn., Oct. 7, 1927) Gennett 6262-A—Bailey & Barnum; Champion 15407-A as "The Banjo-Ker and The Songster."

**Superior 313-B**  
The Banjo-Ker and  
The Songster

(GEX 925-) I Told Them All About You—Vocal & Guitar Specialty, Acc. Piano (NYC, Nov. 5, 1927) Gennett 6313-B—Bailey & Barnum; Champion 15407-B as "The Banjo-Ker and The Songster."

**Superior 314-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13277-A) Among My Souvenirs—Popular Vocal, Acc. by Piano, Violin, Cello, Trumpet & Guitar (Chicago, ca. mid Dec., 1927) Gennett 6328-A—Les Backer; Champion 15408-A as "Happy Dick Evans"; Supertone 9023-A as "Jack Moran"; Silvertone 8000-A as by ?; Challenge 414-A as by ?

**Superior 314-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13275-) Are You Happy—Popular Vocal, Acc. by Piano, Violin, Cello, Trumpet & Guitar (Chicago, ca. mid Dec., 1927) Gennett 6359-A—Les Backer; Champion 15408-B as "Happy Dick Evans"; Supertone 9033-B as "Jack Moran"; Silvertone 8001-B as by ?



**Gennett 6359-A**  
Les Backer

**Superior 315-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13147-) My Blue Heaven—Popular Vocal, Acc. by Walt Anderson and His Golden Pheasant Hoodlums (St. Paul, Minn., ca. mid Oct., 1927) Gennett 6281-A—Les Backer; Champion 15370-A as Les Backer; Bell 571-A as "Chris Paterson"; Supertone 9033-A as "Jack Moran"; Silvertone 8001-A as by ?; Gennett (Personal) 20274-B as Les Backer.





courtesy  
of John Bell

**Superior 317-A**  
**The Radio Franks**



**Superior 317-B**  
**The Radio Franks**

courtesy  
of John Bell



**Gennett 20274-B**  
**Les Backer**

**Superior 315-B**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 12835-) Love Me—Acc. by  
Tenor Guitar (St. Paul, Minn., June  
10, 1927) Gennett 6162-B—Les  
Backer (Gennett Aristocrat);  
Champion 15311-A as Les Backer;  
Silverstone 5152-B as by ?

**Superior 316-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 12849-) Rain—Vocal, Guitar &  
Violin Acc. (St. Paul, Minn., June  
16, 1927) Gennett 6162-A—Les  
Backer (Gennett Aristocrat);  
Champion 15288-A as Les Backer;  
Silverstone 5155-B as by ?; Silverstone  
8013-A as by ?

**Superior 316-B**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 13149-A) Yesterday—Popular  
Vocal, Acc. Walt Anderson's Orch.  
(St. Paul, Minn., ca. mid Oct., 1927)  
Gennett 6281-B—Les Backer;  
Champion 15387-A as Les Backer;  
Silverstone 9023-B as "Jack Moran";  
Silverstone 8000-B as by ?

**Superior 317-A**  
**The Radio Franks**

(GEX 870-A) Bye Bye Pretty Baby—  
Vocal (NYC mid Sept., 1927) Gennett  
6251-A—The Radio  
Franks; Champion 15347-A as  
"Gordon & Glover"; Silverstone 5149-  
A as by ?; Challenge 373-A as by ?

**Superior 317-B**  
**The Radio Franks**

(GEX 869-B) Worryin'—Vocal (NYC  
mid Sept., 1927) Gennett 6251-  
B—The Radio Franks; Cham-  
pion 15367-A as "Gordon & Glover."

**Superior 318-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GEX 913-) A Shady Tree—Popular  
Vocal—Tenor Acc. by Orchestra  
(NYC c. Oct. 19, 1927) Gennett  
6297-B—Elliott Stewart;  
Champion 15388-B as "Harlow  
Ashley"; Silverstone 8005-A as Elliott  
Stewart; Superstone 9022-A as by ?

**Superior 318-B**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GEX 683-) Your Land and My  
Land—Vocal, Acc. by Gennett Min-  
iature Symphony (NYC, July 5, 1927)  
Gennett 6173-B—Elliott  
Stewart.

**Superior 319-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GEX 682-B) When Day Is Done—  
Popular Vocal—Vocal Solo, Acc. by  
Gennett Miniature Symphony (NYC  
July 5, 1927) Gennett 6173-A—  
Elliott Stewart; Champion  
15312-A as Elliott Stewart; Silverstone  
5150-B as by ?

**Superior 319-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GEX 912-A) Are You Lonesome To-  
night—Popular Vocal, Tenor; Acc. l  
by Orchestra (NYC c. Oct. 19, 1927)  
Gennett 6297-A—Elliott  
Stewart; Champion 15371-A as  
"Harlow Lashley."

**Superior 320-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 13148-A) Here Am I—Broken-  
hearted—Popular Vocal, acc. Walt  
Anderson & Orch. (St. Paul, Minn.,  
mid. Oct., 1927) Gennett 6298-  
B—Les Backer; Champion 15387-  
B as Les Backer; Silverstone 8019-A  
as by ?; Superstone 9029-A as by ?;  
Challenge 415-A as by ?

**Superior 320-B**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 13134-B) Magnolia—Popular  
Vocal, acc. pipe organ (Leonard  
Leigh) (St. Paul, Minn., Oct. 10, 1927)  
Gennett 6298-A—Les Backer;  
Champion 15370-B as Les Backer;  
Silverstone 8013-B as by ?; Bell 570-  
A as "Chris Paterson."

**Superior 321-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 12952-A) The Irish  
Washerwoman—Square Dance  
with Calls (Chicago, 1538 W. Chi-  
cago Ave., Aug. 1, 1927) Gennett  
6351-A—Tommy Dandurand  
And His Gang; Champion 15410-  
A as "George Thomas & His Music";  
Silverstone 5058-B as Tommy  
Dandurand & His Gang; Silverstone  
25058-B as by ?; Silverstone 8127-B as  
by ?; Superstone 9160-B as Tommy  
Dandurand And His Gang.

**Superior 321-B**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GE 12954-A) Leather Breeches—  
Square Dance with Calls (Chicago,  
1538 W. Chicago Ave., Aug. 1, 1927)  
Gennett 6273-A—Tommy  
Dandurand And His Gang;  
Champion 15410-B as "George  
Thomas & His Music"; Silverstone  
5059-B as by ?; Silverstone 25059-B  
as Tommy Dandurand & His Gang;  
Silverstone 8126-B as by ?; Superstone  
9159-B as Tommy Dandurand And  
His Gang; Challenge 406-A as  
"George Cline & His Boys."

**Superior 322-A**  
**(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)**

(GEX 710-) They Crucified My Sav-  
ior—Sacred Vocal Quartet (Birming-  
ham, July 13, 1927) Gennett  
6335-A—The Eva Quartette;  
Champion 15411-A as "Dixie Sa-  
cred Quartet"; Silverstone 5209-A,  
Silverstone 8172-A; Superstone 9268-  
A and Challenge 404-A as "Dixie  
Sacred Singers."



**Superior 322-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 806-A) *Tell Mother I'll Be There*—Sacred Vocal Quartet, Acc. Organ (Birmingham, August 15, 1927) **Gennett 6258-B**—*Woodlawn Quartette* (of Woodlawn, Ala.); Champion 15411-B as "Hamlin Quartette"; Silvertone 5071-B, Silvertone 8174-B, and Supertone 9270-B as "Hamlin Male Quartette"; Challenge 339-B and Bell 1184-A as "The Four Andersons."

**Superior 323-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 950-A) *He Keeps Me Singing*—Old Time Sacred Singing and Playing Duet—Acc. Guitar (Richmond, IN November 16, 1927) **Gennett 6334-A**—*John McGhee and Frank Welling*; Champion 15412-A as "Hutchens Brothers"; Silvertone 8166-A as Harper and Turner; Supertone 9262-A as "Harper and Turner"; Challenge 339-A as "Markham Brothers."

**Superior 323-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 885-) *Walling On The Streets of Glory*—Old Time Singing and Playing Duet (NYC c. September 25, 1927) **Gennett 6350-A**—*Roy Harvey and Bob Hoke*; Champion 15412-B as "George Runnels and Howard Hall"; Silvertone 5182-B and Silvertone 8173-B as "Three Kentucky Serenaders"; Supertone 9269-B as "Kentucky Serenaders"; Challenge 401-A as "James Ragan and Oliver Beck."

**Superior 324-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13201-) *Sweet Floella*—Old Time Singin' and Playin' Acc. Guitar (Richmond, IN November 4, 1927) **Gennett 6333-A**—*David Miller*; Champion 15413-A as "Oran Campbell"; Challenge 386-A as "Don Kutter."

**Superior 324-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13203-) *And A Little Child Shall Lead Them*—Old Time Singin' and Playin' Acc. Guitar (Richmond, IN November 4, 1927) **Gennett 6349-B**—*David Miller*; Champion 15413-B as "Oran Campbell"; Bell 1187-B as "Godfrey Barton"; Challenge 395-A as "Dan Kutter."

**Superior 325-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 947-A) *The Preacher and The Bear*—Old Time Singing and Playin' Acc. Guitar (Richmond, IN November 16, 1927) **Gennett 6403-A**—*John McGhee*; Champion 15414-A as "John Hutchens"; Silvertone 8162-A, Silvertone 5212-A as "Jess Oakley." Supertone 9256-A as "Jesse Oakley"; ---?--- 33014-A as by? Challenge 392-A as "George Holden."

**Superior 325-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 883-) *Poor Little Joe*—Old Time Singing and Playin' (NYC September 26, 1927) **Gennett 6288-B**—*Roy Harvey*; Champion 15414-B as "George Runnels"; Challenge 394-B as either "James Ragan"? or "David Foley"?



**Gennett 6302-A**  
**Lei's Royal Hawaiians**

**Superior 326-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13060-) *Hilo Hawaiian March*—Hawaiian (Richmond, IN August 29, 1927) **Gennett 6302-A**—*Lei's Royal Hawaiians*; Champion 15409-A as "The Kulani Trio"; Silvertone 5159-A as by? Silvertone 8118-A as by? Supertone 9092-A as by? Challenge 361-A as by?

**Superior 326-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13215-) *Hawaiian Waltz Medley*—Hawaiian Duet (Richmond, IN November 5, 1927) **Gennett 6331-A**—*Lei's Royal Hawaiians*; Champion 15409-B as "The Kulani Trio"; ---?--- 33072-B as by? Discos Gennett 40116-B as "Hawalanos Reales de Lei" ("Islos Escondidas"—Guitarros Hawalanos).

**Superior 327-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13304-) *Hollywood Shuffle*—Fox Trot Race (Chicago, December 15, 1927) **Gennett 6369-A**—*Wallie Coulter & His Band*; Discos Gennett 40113-B as "Colter y Su Orquesta" ("Holywood, Las De").

**Superior 327-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13303-B) *Good Stuff*—Fox Trot Race (Chicago, December 15, 1927) **Gennett 6369-B**—*Wallie Coulter & His Band*; Discos Gennett 40114-A as "Colter y Su Orquesta" ("Buena ; Cosa").

These sides made for Chicago Record Co./billed and paid for (see Ledgers)—note says "To be remade if not OK." Probably intended for Black Patti issue.



**Gennett 6369-A**  
**Wallie Coulter & His Band**



**Gennett 6353-B**  
**Watson's Pullman Porters**



**Gennett 6322-A**  
**Dunk Rendleman and  
The Alabamians**

**Superior 328-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 852-A) *Mean Dog Blues*—Slow Drag (Race) (Birmingham, August, 1927) **Gennett 6322-A**—*Dunk Rendleman and The Alabamians*; Champion 15399-A as "Down Home Serenaders."

**Superior 328-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12730-) *Barbecue Blues*—Instrumental ("F Sharp Blues"—This original title was crossed out in Ledger). (Richmond, IN April 20, 1927) Original entry in Ledger for this group: "By Henry Moon & George Thomas (Guitars), Henry Johnson (Violin), James Johnson (piano & Celeste). **Gennett 6353-B**—*Watson's Pullman Porters*; Champion 15437-B as "Hank Jones and His Ginger."



**Superior 329-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12861-) *Mississippi Shivers*—  
Novelty Piano Solo (St. Paul, Minn.  
June 20, 1927) **Gennett 6353-A**  
and **Gennett 2020-B**\*/(20339-  
B)\*—**Sidney Williams**; Cham-  
pion 15372-A as "Sid Williams."  
\*("Special for Bernstein").

**Superior 329-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 970-B) *The Jockey Blues*—Pi-  
ano Novelty (race) (Richmond, IN  
November 22, 1927) **Gennett**  
**6337-B**—**Sammy Brown**;  
Champion 15436-B as "Preston  
Lillard."



**Gennett 6337-B**  
**Sammy Brown**



**Gennett 6353-A**  
**Sidney Williams**



**Gennett 2020-B**  
(20339-B)  
**Sidney Williams**

**Superior 330-A**  
**Jim Foster**

(GEX 13035-) *Midnight Special Blues*—Vocal Blues (Richmond, IN August 26, 1927) **Gennett 6307-A**—**Sam Collins**; Champion 15397-A as "Jim Foster"; Bell 1181-A as "Big Boy Woods"; Conqueror 7266-B as "Bunny Carter."

**Superior 330-B**  
**Jim Foster**

(GEX 13034-A) *Pork Chop Blues*—  
Vocal Blues (Richmond, IN August  
26, 1927) **Gennett 6260-A**—**Sam**  
**Collins**; Champion 15359-A as  
"Jim Foster"; Supertone 9291-B as  
"Jelly Roll Hunter."

**Superior 331-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 766-A) *Tea-Rollin' Blues*—Vo-  
cal Blues, Race, Piano Acc. (Bir-  
mingham ("1820 3rd Ave.") August  
5, 1927) **Gennett 6243-A**—**Ber-  
tha Ross**; Champion 15360-A as  
"Aretha Martin."

**Superior 331-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 762-B) *Blues Rode Me All Night Long*—Vocal Blues, Race, Acc. by  
Bessemer Blues Pickers (Birming-  
ham ("1820 3rd Ave.") August 1,  
1927) **Gennett 6227-A**—**Bertha**  
**Ross**; Champion 15340-A as  
"Aretha Martin"; Silvertone 5129-A  
as "Aretha Martin."



**Gennett 6307-A**  
**Sam Collins**



**Champion 15360-A**  
**Aretha Martin**

**Champion 15340-A**  
**Aretha Martin**



**Superior 332-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 834-B) Funeral Sermon—Negro Sermon with congregation (Birmingham mid' August, 1927) Gennett 6323-A—Rev. J.F. Forest "of Roger William Baptist — Birmingham"; Silverstone 5144-A as "J.F. Forest."

**Superior 332-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 849-A) Revival For Sinners—Negro Sermon with congregation (Birmingham mid' August, 1927) Gennett 6277-A—Rev. J.F. Forest "of Roger William Baptist — Birmingham"; Champion 15454-B as "J.F. Forest"; Silverstone 5143-B as "J.F. Forest & Congregation."

**Superior 333-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1083-B) There Ain't No Sweet Man That's Worth The Salt of My Tears—Slow Fox Trot, Vocal Gloria Gray (NYC February, 1928) Gennett 6383-A — Harry Pollack's Blue Diamonds; Bell 585-A as "Hal Frazer & His Georgians."

**Superior 333-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13431-) What'll You Do—Fox Trot, (Richmond, IN February 9, 1928) Gennett 6380-A — The Cotton Pickers — Andy Mansfield, Director; Discos Gennett 40113-B as "Orquesta de Los Algodonero" ("Que Vos a Hacer?" "Charleston—Fox").

**Superior 334-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1061-A) Wob-a-ly Walk—Fox Trot, Vocal The Four Bachelors (NYC February 7, 1928) Gennett 6381-A — Gordon Howard & The Multnomah Chieftains; Champion 15441-B as "The Bucktown Bucks"; Bell 582-A as "Chuck Sawyer & His Syncopators."

**Superior 334-B**  
(unknown label credit for group/artist)

(GEX 1064-A) You Gotta Be Good To Me—Fox Trot, Vocal "Happy Blake" (NYC February 1928) Gennett 6398-A California Vagabonds.



**Gennett 6323-A**  
Rev. J.F. Forest



**Gennett 6380-A**  
The Cotton Pickers

**Superior 335-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1073-B) Moonlight On The Danube—Waltz, Vocal Jerry Macy (NYC February 11, 1928) Gennett 6382-A—The New Yorkers\*; Champion 15440-A as "Rex Gordon's Aces"; Bell 583-A as by? (Carl Fenton Orchestra)

**Superior 335-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 13326-B) She Wears The Pin of a Xi, Psi, Phi—Waltz, Vocal Chorus Cliff Williams (Richmond, IN December 28, 1927) Gennett 6367-B—Emil Seldel & His Orch.; Champion 15439-B as "Jack Crawford & His Boys."

**Superior 336-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1072-A) I Just Roll Along Havin' My Ups and Downs—Fox Trot, Vocal Jerry Macy (NYC February, 1928) Gennett 6382-B—The New Yorkers\*; Champion 15441-B as "Rex Gordon's Aces"; Silverstone 8034-A as by? Bell 584-A as by? (Carl Fenton Orchestra)

**Superior 336-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1052-A) What Do You Say?—Fox Trot, Vocal Wen Ferguson (NYC January 31, 1928) Gennett 6395-B—The New Yorkers (Carl Fenton Orchestra).

**Superior 337-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1063-A) If I Can't Have You—Fox Trot, Vocal Jerry Macy (NYC February 7, 1928) Gennett 6381-B—Gordon Howard & The Multnomah Chieftains; Bell 587-A as "Chuck Sawyer & His Syncopators."

**Superior 337-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1062-A) Golden Gate—Fox Trot, Vocal The Four Bachelors (NYC February 7, 1928) Gennett 6395-A—Gordon Howard & The Multnomah Chieftains; Bell 588-A as "Chuck Sawyer & His Syncopators."

**Superior 338-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1085-B) I'm Always Smiling—Fox Trot, Vocal Jerry Macy (NYC c. February 18, 1928) Gennett 6384-B—Mack Finkel's Clover Gardens Orch.; Bell 586-A as "Sunnyside Inn Orch."

**Superior 338-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1084-) Danger (Look Out For That Gal)—Fox Trot, Vocal Jerry Macy (NYC c. February 18, 1928) Gennett 6384-A — Mack Finkel's Clover Gardens Orch.; Champion 15442-A as "Bill Ragen's Vagabonds"; Bell 581-A as "Sunnyside Inn Orch."

**Superior 339-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1090-) Lovely Lady—Fox Trot, Vocal Frank Marvin & His Uke (NYC c. February 20, 1928) Gennett 6429-B — Vic Price & His Orch.; Bell 593-A as "Andy Richards & His Orch."; Silverstone 8052-B as by?

**Superior 339-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1081-A) Shepard of The Hills—Fox Trot, Vocal Gloria Gray (NYC c. February 18, 1928) Gennett 6383-B — Harry Pollack's Blue Diamonds; Champion 15440-B as "The Alabama Serenaders."

**Superior 340-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13297) My Ohio Home—Popular Vocal (Ballad) Acc. Piano—Carl Hoelle (Chicago, December 14, 1927) Gennett 6358-A — Carroll & Grady; Champion 15445-A as "Morrison & Reeves"; Challenge 387-A as by? Silverstone 8005-B as "Jack & Gene"; Superlone 9022-B as by? Bernstein 20315-A as by? (possibly Bell 611?)

**Superior 340-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12977-A) Katy Did—Popular Vocal—Piano & Guitar Acc. (Chicago 1538 W. Chicago Ave.) c. August 9, 1927) Gennett 6236-B — Gene Carroll & Al Grady; Champion 15445-B as "Morrison & Reeves"; Silverstone 5055-B as by? Silverstone 25055-B as by? Challenge 377-B as by?

**Superior 341-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13339-A) Beautiful—Popular Vocal —Acc. Emil Seldel Ensemble (Richmond, IN January 9, 1928) Gennett 6359-B — Les Backer; Champion 15424-B as "Happy Dick Evans"; Silverstone 8004-B as by? Superlone 9037 as by?



**Gennett 6359-B**  
Les Backer

**Superior 341-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13279-) Kiss and Make Up—Popular Vocal —Acc. Violin—Cello—Piano (Chicago December 9, 1927) Gennett 6345-A — Les Backer; Champion 15444-A as "Happy Dick Evans"; Bell 580-A as by?



**Superior 342-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13346-) *Strange Isles Medley—Hawaiian Fox Trot—Duel* (Richmond, IN January 12, 1928) **Gennett 6392-A—Sam Ku, Jr. Acc. Jos. Ikeole**; Champion 15450-A as "Keole Brothers"; Bell 1165-A as by? Challenge 410-A as by? Supertone 9339-B as by? Supertone 9328-B as by? Discos Gennett 40120-A as "Sam Ku y Jose Ikeole ("Aloha Oe") Duo de Guitares Hawaianas.

**Superior 342-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13357-) *Waiatae—Hawaiian Guitars, Waltz Duel* (Richmond, IN January 12, 1928) **Gennett 6377-B—Sam Ku, Jr. Acc. Jos. Ikeole**; Bell 1165-B as by? Supertone 9339-B as by? Discos Gennett 40119-B as "Sam Ku y Jose Ikeole ("Amor de Mar") Serenata.

**Superior 343-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12846-) *Gypsy Love Song—Standard Ballad, Piano Acc.* (St. Paul, Minn. c. June 13, 1927) **Gennett 6224-A—Gold Medal Four**; Champion 15327-A as "The Gold Medal Four"; Challenge 347-A as by? Bell 1166-A as by?

**Superior 343-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12866-) *Love's Old Sweet Song—Quartet* (St. Paul, Minn. c. June 18, 1927) **Gennett 6299-A—Gold Medal Four**; Champion 15309-B as "Gold Medal Four"; Challenge 347-B as by? Bell 1166-B as by? Silvertone 5120-B as by? Silvertone 8252-B as by? Supertone 9152-B as by?

**Superior 344-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13333-) *The Marian Parker Murder—Old Time Singin' & Playin'*, Acc. Guitar & Harp (Richmond, IN December 30, 1927) **Gennett 6362-B—John McGhee**; Champion 15427-B as "John Hutchens"; Challenge 385-B as "George Holden"; Bell 1167-A as "Henry Graham."

**Superior 344-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13330-) *The Wreck of Virginia Train #3—Old Time Singin' & Playin'*, Acc. Guitar & Harp (Richmond, IN December 30, 1927) **"Nat Gennett"—(John McGhee)**; Champion 15467-B as "John Hutchens"; Challenge 389-B as "George Holden"; Bell 1167-A as "Henry Graham"; Silvertone 5203-B, Silvertone 8163-B and Supertone 9257-B as "Jess Oakley."

**Superior 345-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13373-) *Praise The Lord, It's So—Old Time Sacred, Acc. Guitar & Harp* (Richmond, IN January 18, 1928) **Gennett 6389-A—John McGhee & Frank Welling**; Champion 15464-A as "Hutchens Brothers"; Bell 1168-A as "Belford & Rogers"; Challenge 400-A as "Markham Brothers"; Silvertone 5206-A, Silvertone 8170-A, and Supertone 9266-A as "Harper & Turner."

**Superior 345-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13376-) *I Am Resolved—Old Time Sacred, Acc. Guitar & Harp* (Richmond, IN January 18, 1928) **Gennett 6435-A—John McGhee & Frank Welling**; Champion 15485-B as "Hutchens Brothers"; Bell 1168-B as "Belford & Rogers"; Challenge 399-B as "Markham Brothers."

**Superior 346-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13407-) *If Can't Be Done—Old Time Singin' and Playin'* (Richmond, IN January 28, 1928) (**Owen Gray and Otto Gray's Oklahoma Cowboy Band**)\*; Champion 15446-A as "McGinty's Oklahoma Cowboy Band"; Bell 1169-A as "Will Pickett"; Silvertone 8157-B as by? Supertone 9242-B as "Otis Stewart." (Same title by this group (Mx 13365) issued on Gennett 6376-A with note in ledger: "Can't be used on stencil with fake name, use mx. 13407 for stencils").

**Superior 346-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13409-) *Bury Me On The Lone Prairie—Old Time Singin' and Playin'* (Richmond, IN January 28, 1928) **Gennett 6405-A—Fred Wilson with Otto Gray's Oklahoma Cowboy Band**; Champion 15482-B as "McGinty's Oklahoma Cowboy Band"; Bell 1169-B as "George Talbot"; Silvertone 8159-A and Supertone 9244-A as "Gus Unk."

**Superior 347-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 861-) *When The Moon Shines Down Upon The Mountain—Vocal, Acc. by Violin & Guitar* (NYC c. September 12, 1927) **Gennett 6374-B—Vernon Dalhart**; Champion 15375-A as Vernon Dalhart; Bell 1170-A as by? Silvertone 5062-A as by? Silvertone 25062-A as by? Herwin 75569-B as by? Silvertone 8140-A as by? Supertone 9237-A as by?

**Superior 347-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 862-A) *Cindy—Old Time Vocal* (NYC c. September 12, 1927) **Gennett 6289-A Vernon Dalhart**; Champion 15393-A as Vernon Dalhart; Challenge 405-A as by? Silvertone 5062-B as by? Silvertone 25062-B as by? Herwin 75569-A as by? Silvertone 8140-B as by? Supertone 9237-B as by?

**Superior 348-A**  
*Fiddlin' Frank Nelson*

(GEX 13055-) *And The Cat Came Back—Old Time Playin' Acc. by Guitar* (Richmond, IN August 27, 1927) **Gennett 6390-A—Fiddlin' Doc Roberts**; Bell 1171-A as "Fiddlin' Bob White"; Challenge 307-B as "Fiddlin' Frank Nelson" (or "Fiddlin' Dave Neal?"); Silvertone 8179-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke"; Supertone 9165-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke."

**Superior 348-B**  
*Fiddlin' Frank Nelson*

(GEX 13043-) *Cripple Creek—Old Time Playin' Acc. by Guitar* (Richmond, IN August 26, 1927) **Gennett 6336-A—Fiddlin' Doc Roberts**; Champion 15396-B as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke"; Bell 1171-B as "Fiddlin' Bob White"; Challenge 303-A as "Fiddlin' Frank Nelson"; Silvertone 5078-A, Silvertone 8182-A, and Supertone 9168-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke."

**Superior 349-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12632-A) *Over The Waves—Harmonica & Guitar* (Chicago March 14 1927) **Gennett 6102-B—Walter C. Peterson**; Champion 15279-A as "Abner Burkhardt"; Bell 1172-A as "Uncle Frank Templeton"; Silvertone 5126-A as by? Silvertone 25126-A as by? Silvertone 8206-A as by? Supertone 9198-A as "Walter Peterson"; Challenge 409-A as Jess Jenkins. (Both sides of Superior 349 were later released as "Walter C. Peterson (The Kentucky Wonder Bean)" on Decca Champion 45018-A/45000-A, respectively).

**Superior 349-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12631-) *Medley: After The Ball/ Peek-a-Boo/In The Good Old Summertime / The Kentucky Wonder Bear with His Double-Barreled Shot Gun—Harmonica & Guitar* (Chicago March 14, 1927) **Gennett 6078-B—Walter C. Peterson**; Champion 15261-A as "Abner Burkhardt"; Bell 1172-B as "Uncle Frank Templeton"; Silvertone 5009-B as "Walter Peterson"; Silvertone 25009-B as by? Silvertone 8204-B as by? Supertone 9196-B as "Walter Peterson"; Universal 4002-B as by?

**Superior 350-A**  
*Jim Foster*

(GEX 13033-) *Hesitation Blues—Vocal Blues Acc. by Guitar* (Richmond, IN August 26, 1927) **Gennett 6379-B—Sam Collins**; Champion 15472-A as "Jim Foster"; Bell 1173-A as "Big Boy Woods"; Silvertone 5131-B as "Jim Foster."



**Superior 350-A**  
*Jim Foster*



**Superior 350-B**  
*Jim Foster*



**SAM COLLINS**  
**August 1887-1949**



**Gennett 6379-B**  
**Sam Collins**



**Champion 15338-B**  
**Hank Jones & His Ginger**

**Superior 350-B**  
**Jim Foster**

(GE 12737-A) *Devil in The Lions Den*—Race Record, Vocal Blues Acc. by Guitar (Richmond, IN April 25, 1927) Gennett 6181-A—Sam Collins (Ledgers show: "By Shine (crossed out) Sam Collins"); Champion 15359-B as "Jim Foster"; Bell 1173-B as "Big Boy Woods."

**Superior 351-A**  
**(unknown label credit for group/artist)**

(GE 12725-A) *Down Home Special*—Instrumental. Crossed out in Ledgers "By Henry Moon & Geo. Thomas (Guitars) & Henry Johnson (Violin) (Richmond, IN April 20, 1927) Gennett 6378-A—Watson's Pullman Porters; Champion 15509-A as "Hank Jones & His Ginger"; Bell 1174-A as "Bud Warner & His Red Caps." Ledgers: "Not used by Artophone" (=Herwin).

**Superior 351-B**  
**(unknown label credit for group/artist)**

(GE 12726-A) *Neck Bones and Beans*—Instrumental Blues. "By Henry Moon & Geo. Thomas (guitars), Henry Johnson (violin) & James Johnson (Piano)" (Richmond, IN April 20, 1927) Gennett 6181-B Watson's Pullman Porters; Champion 15338-B as "Hank Jones & His Ginger"; Herwin 92025-B as "Henry Moon & Geo. Thomas."

**Superior 352-A**  
**(unknown label credit for group/artist)**

(GE 13448-A) *My Father's House*—Negro Spiritual Acc. Piano (Chicago c. February 20, 1928) Gennett 6394-A *Pace Jubilee Singers*; Champion 15473-A as "Dixie Jubilee Singers"; Bell 1176-A as by?

**Superior 352-B**  
**(unknown label credit for group/artist)**

(GE 13321-) *Give Away Jordan*—Spiritual Race Acc. Piano (Chicago December 20, 1927) Gennett 6365-A *Pace Jubilee Singers*; Bell 1176-B as by?



**Superior 353-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1134-) *Rain or Shine*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—The Four Bachelors (NYC March 8, 1928) **Gennett 6410-A The New Yorkers** (= Carl Fenton Orch.); Champion 15457-A as "Rex Gordon's Aces"; Bell 596-A as by? Silvertone 8065-B as by? Supertone 9010-B as by?

**Superior 353-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1135-A) *Forever and Ever*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—The Four Bachelors (NYC March 8, 1928) **Gennett 6410-B The New Yorkers** (= Carl Fenton Orch.)

**Superior 354-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1136-A) *Ol' Man River*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Emil Cole (NYC c. March 15, 1928) **Gennett 6420-A The New Yorkers** (= Carl Fenton Orch.); Champion 15459-A as "Rex Gordon's Aces"; Bell 597-A as by? Silvertone 8035-(?) as by?

**Superior 354-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1099-B) *Indian Cradle Song*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Johnny Morris (NYC February 23, 1928) **Gennett 6412-A Jardin Royal Orchestra of New York**; Bell 590-A as "Jack Sharp's Playboys."

**Superior 355-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1089-A) *When*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Frank Marvin & His Uke (NYC c. February 20, 1928) **Gennett 6411-B Vic Price & His Orch.**; Bell 594-A as "Andy Richards & His Orch."

**Superior 355-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1147-) *Waitin' For Katy*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Jud Brown (NYC c. March 28, 1928) **Gennett 6426-B California Vagabonds** (Ramblers?); Bell 589-A as by?

**Superior 356-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1155-A) *The Dance of The Blue Danube*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Charles Hart (NYC c. April 2, 1928) **Gennett 6425-A Franchial's South Sea Serenaders**.

**Superior 356-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1101-A) *When You Played The Organ and I Sang The Rosary*—Waltz, Vocal Chorus—Johnny Morris (NYC c. March 1, 1928) **Gennett 6412-B Jardin Royal Orchestra**; Bell 598-A as "Jack Sharp's Playboys." (?)

**Superior 357-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1159-A) *In The Sweet Bye and Bye*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Starr Trio (NYC c. April 2, 1928) **Gennett 6425-B Jardin Royal Orchestra**; Bell 608-A as "Jack Sharp's Playboys"; Silvertone 8070-A as by?

**Superior 357-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1149-) *Collegiana*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Jud Brown (NYC c. March 28, 1928) **"Reject for Gennett Issue" California Vagabonds**; Bell 592-A as as by?

**Superior 358-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1158-B) *Together*—Waltz, Vocal Chorus—Johnny Morris (NYC c. April 2, 1928 (c. March 27, 1928?)) **Gennett 6427-A Jardin Royal Orchestra**; Bell 607-A as "Jack Sharp's Playboys"; Silvertone 8036-A as by? Supertone 9020-A as by?

**Superior 358-B**  
*Al Morris and  
His Playmates (?)*

(GEX 1152-B) *In A Little French Cafe*—Waltz, Vocal Chorus—Al Lynch (NYC c. March 28, 1928) **Gennett 6473-B Ruby Green and His Manhattan Madcaps** (= Carl Fenton Orch.); Bell 598-B as by? Supertone 9044-B as "Manhattan Madcaps."

**Superior 359-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1160-B) *I'm Wingin' Home*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Johnny Morris (NYC c. April 2, 1928) **Gennett 6429-A Jardin Royal Orchestra**; Silvertone 8049-B as by? Supertone 9003-B as by?

**Superior 359-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1148-) *Say "Yes" Today*—Fox Trot, Vocal Chorus—Jud Brown (NYC c. March 28, 1928) **Gennett 6426-A California Vagabonds**; Bell 591as by?

**Superior 360-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13598-A) *Sunshine*—Popular Vocal, Acc. Piano by Katherine McDevitt (Chicago March 23, 1928) **Gennett 6431-B John A. Monahan**; Silvertone 8006-B as by? Supertone 9034-B as by?

**Superior 360-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13487-A) *Together*—Popular Vocal, Acc. Piano & Violin (Chicago February 29, 1928) **Gennett 6399-B Les Backer**; Bell 600-B as by? Silvertone 8004-A as by? Supertone 9037-A as by?

**Superior 361-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13593-C) *Waitin' For Katy*—Popular Vocal, Acc. by Hoefle Trio (Chicago March 23, 1928) **Gennett 6415-A Carroll and Grady**; Champion 15461-A as "Morrison & Reeves"; Silvertone 5236-A as "Jack & Gene"; Silvertone 8236-A as by? Supertone 9213-A as by?

**Superior 361-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1115-A) *There's Something About A Rose*—Popular Vocal, (Duet, Piano Acc.) (NYC c. March 8, 1928) **Gennett 6400-B Monoff and Gifford**.

**Superior 362-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13599-) *So Long*—Popular Vocal, Piano Acc. Art Gronwall (Chicago March 23, 1928) **Gennett 6416-A Les Backer**; Champion 15462-B as "Happy Dick Evans"; Bell 599-A as by?

**Superior 362-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1114-A) *Let A Smile Be Your Umbrella*—Popular Vocal, (Duet, Piano Acc.) (NYC c. March 8, 1928) **Gennett 6400-A Monoff and Gifford**; Champion 15463-A as "Nip and Tuck"; Challenge 413-A as by?

**Superior 363-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1106-) *Lip-Stick*—"Banjo Speciality, Instrumental Acc." (NYC c. March 3, 1928) **Gennett 6421-A Lou Calabrese and His Hot Sketches**; Angelus 3022-A as "Lou Silver."



**Gennett 6421-A**  
**Lou Calabrese & His Hot Sketches**

**Superior 363-B**  
(unknown label credit for group/artist)

(GEX 1107-) *Let's Misbehave*—"Banjo Speciality, Instrumental Acc." (NYC c. March 3, 1928) **Gennett 6421-B Lou Calabrese and His Hot Sketches**; Champion 15468-B as "Babe Woods & His Pals"; Angelus 3022-B as "Lou Silver."



**Gennett 6421-B**  
**Lou Calabrese & His Hot Sketches**



**Superior 364-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1102-B) *Willow Tree*—Two Piano Speciality Featuring Starr Gillisando Keyboard" (Acc. The New Yorkers) (NYC c, March 1, 1928) Gennett 6402-A Wm. Reinhart and Al Goodhart At The Starr Gillisando Grand.

**Superior 364-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1103-A) *Got Myself Another Jockey Now*—Two Piano Speciality Featuring Starr Gillisando Keyboard" (Acc. The New Yorkers) (NYC c, March 1, 1928) Gennett 6402-B Wm. Reinhart and Al Goodhart At The Starr Gillisando Grand.



**Gennett 6402-A**  
Wm. Reinhart and Al Goodhart

**Superior 365-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 781-A) *Working For The Master*—Sacred Vocal Quartet, Acc. by Piano (Birmingham c. August 8, 1927) Gennett 6269-A MacDonald Quartette; Champion 15330-B as "Goodman Sacred Singers"; Challenge 342-A as by? Silverstone 5176-A as by? Silverstone 8261-A as by? Herwin 75581-A as by? Superstone 9140-A as by?

**Superior 365-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 713-) *Bringing In The Sheaves*—Sacred Vocal Quartet, Organ Acc. (Birmingham c. July 13, 1927) Gennett 6335-B The Eva Quartette; Champion 15448-A as "Dixie Sacred Quartette"; Bell 1180-A as by? Challenge 402-A as "Ellington Sacred Quartette"; Silverstone 8175-B as by? Silverstone 8261-B as by? Herwin 75567-A as by? Superstone 9140-B as "Hamlin Quartette"; Superstone 9271-B as "Brockman Sacred Singers."

**Superior 366-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13312-) *The Fatal Wedding*—Old Time Singin' & Playin', Acc. Guitar (Chicago December 19, 1927) Gennett 6363-A Bradley Kincaid of WLS; Champion 15428-A as "Dan Hughey"; Bell 1178-A as "John Carpenter"; Silverstone 5086-A as by? Silverstone 8217-A as Bradley Kincaid; Superstone 9211-A as Bradley Kincaid.

**Superior 366-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13478-A) *Sourwood Mountain*—Old Time Singin' & Playin', Acc. Guitar (Chicago February 28, 1928) Gennett 6417-A Bradley Kincaid of WLS; Champion 15361-A as "Dan Hughey"; Bell 1178-B as "John Carpenter"; Silverstone 5189-B as Bradley Kincaid; Silverstone 8220-B as by? Superstone 9210-B as Bradley Kincaid.

**Superior 367-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13615-B; A take "I use" crossed out; "B= 2nd use") *Breaking of The St. Francis Dam*—Old Time Singin', Acc. Guitar & Organ (Chicago February 28, 1928) Gennett 6419-A John McQuee; Champion 15467-A as "John Hutchens."

**Superior 367-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

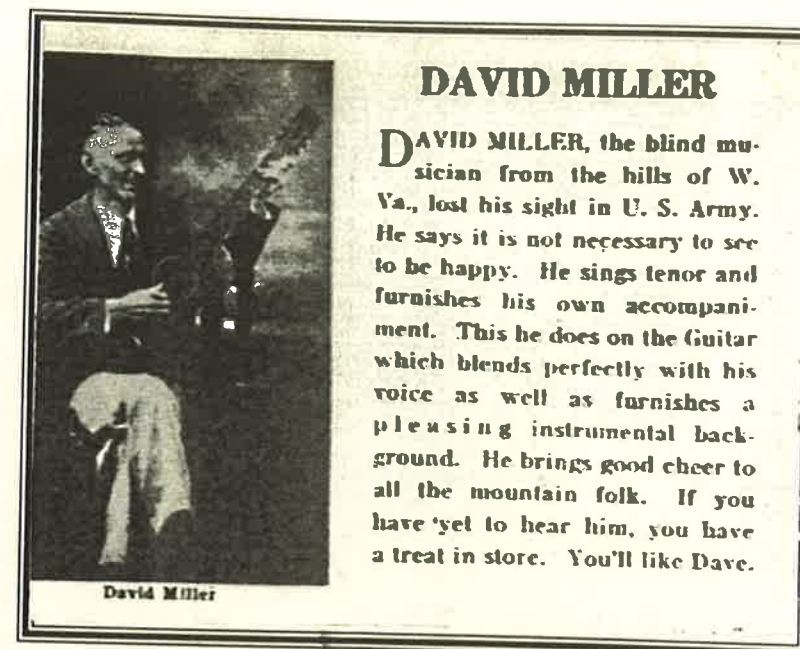
(GE 13329-A) *The Sinking of The Submarine S-4*—Old Time Singin', Acc. Guitar & Harp (Richmond, IN December 30, 1927) Gennett 6362-A John McQuee; Champion 15427-A as "John Hutchens"; Bell 1177-A as "Henry Graham"; Challenge 389-A as "George Holden"; Silverstone 5203-A and Silverstone 8163-A as "Jess Oakley"; Superstone 9257-A as "Jesse Oakley."

**Superior 368-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13207-) *You'll Find Her With The Angels*—Old Time Singin' & Playin' Acc. Guitar (Richmond, IN November 4, 1927) Gennett 6349-A David Miller; Champion 15429-A as "Oran Campbell"; Bell 1170-B as "Godfrey Borton"; Challenge 386-B as "Don Kutter"; Silverstone 5204-A, Silverstone 8164-A, and Superstone 9259-A as "John Ferguson."

**Superior 368-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13204-) *Give My Love To Nelly, Jack*—Old Time Singin' & Playin' Acc. Guitar (Richmond, IN November 4, 1927) Gennett 6388-A David Miller; Champion 15502-A as "Oran Campbell"; Bell 1177-B as "Godfrey Borton"; Challenge 392-B as (probably) "Don Kutter."



DAVID MILLER

DAVID MILLER, the blind musician from the hills of W. Va., lost his sight in U. S. Army. He says it is not necessary to see to be happy. He sings tenor and furnishes his own accompaniment. This he does on the Guitar which blends perfectly with his voice as well as furnishes a pleasing instrumental background. He brings good cheer to all the mountain folk. If you have 'yet to hear him, you have a treat in store. You'll like Dave.

(from *New Electrobeam*  
Gennett Records of  
Old Time Tunes)



**Gennett 6307-B**  
Sam Collins

**Superior 369-A**  
Jim Foster

(GEX 13050-A) *Do That Thing*—Vocal Blues, Acc. by Guitar (Richmond, IN August 27, 1927) Gennett 6307-B Sam Collins; Champion 15453-B as "Jim Foster"; Silverstone 5131-A as "Jim Foster."



**Gennett 6260-B**  
Sam Collins

**Superior 369-B**  
Jim Foster

(GEX 13032-) *Dark Cloudy Blues*—Vocal Blues, Acc. by Guitar (Richmond, IN August 26, 1927) Gennett 6260-B Sam Collins; Champion 15397-B as "Jim Foster"; Bell 1181 as "Big Boy Woods."



**Superior 370-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1133-A) Shake A Little Bit—Vocal Blues—Race (NYC c. March 15, 1928) Gennett 6439-A Alberta Jones, Acc. by Corky Williams & His Blackbirds; Champion 15471-A as "Bessie Sanders"; Supertone 9290-A as "Sweetie Wallace."

**Superior 370-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1132-A) Dying Blues—Vocal Blues—Race (NYC c. March 15, 1928) Gennett 6424-B Alberta Jones, Acc. by Corky Williams & His Blackbirds; Champion 15490-A as "Bessie Sanders"; Supertone 9284-B as "Sweetie Wallace."

**Superior 371-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13302-) Why Should I Grieve After You're Gone—Race Record—Vocal Blues, Acc. by Piano & Guitar—(Chicago, December 14, 1927) Gennett 6423-A George Jefferson; Champion 15452-B as "George Jefferson"; Conqueror 7267-A as "Sam Flowers."

**Superior 371-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13290-) When Man Is Treated Like A Dog—Race Record—Vocal Blues, Acc. by Piano—(Chicago, December 13, 1927) Gennett 6366-B George Jefferson; Champion 15472-B as "George Jefferson"; Conqueror 7267-B as "Sam Flowers."



**Champion 15471-A**  
Bessie Sanders



**Gennett 6424-B**  
Alberta Jones Acc. by  
Corky Williams &  
His Blackbirds



**Gennett 6423-A**  
"George Jefferson"  
(pseudonym for Lonnie Johnson  
on the original Gennett issue)



**Gennett 6366-B**  
"George Jefferson"  
(pseudonym for Lonnie Johnson  
on the original Gennett issue)



**Conqueror 7267-A**  
Sam Flowers  
(pseudonym for Lonnie Johnson)



**Conqueror 7267-B**  
Sam Flowers  
(pseudonym for Lonnie Johnson)



**Superior 372-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12932-B) *Embarrassment (sic)* Blues (original Black Patti issue as Sidewalk Blues)—(Chicago, July 20, 1927) **Gennett 6246-A** Ernest Michall (Clarinet Band); Gennett 6393-B as "King Brady's Clarinet Band"; Champion 15491-A as "King Brady's Clarinet Band."

**Superior 372-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 838-A) *Chicken Supper Strut*—Instrumental Stomp—Race (Birmingham c. mid' August, 1927) **Gennett 6275-A** Triangle Harmony Boys; Champion 15398-B as "Alabama Harmony Boys"; Silverstone 5139-A as "Alabama Harmony Boys."

**Superior 373-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1183-B) *Speedy Boy*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Arthur Fields (NYC April 5, 1928) **Gennett 6443-B** Vic Price & His Orchestra; Champion 15478-A as "Glenn Roberts & His Orch."; Bell 604-A as "Andy Richards & His Orch."; Silverstone 8057-B as "Sherman Sundodgers"; Supertone 9006-B as by?

**Superior 373-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1179-B) *Lauretta*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Norman Wallace (NYC April 4, 1928) **Gennett 6442-A** The New Yorkers; Champion 15474-B as "Jack Penny & His Orch."; Bell 602-A as "Ted Parker & His Troubadours"; Silverstone 8037-A as by?

**Superior 374-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1178-A) *Sunrise (Will Bring Another Day)*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Norman Wallace (NYC April 4, 1928) **Gennett 6441-A** The New Yorkers (= Carl Fenton Orch); Champion 15474-A as "Jack Penny & His Orch."; Bell 601-A as "Ted Parker & His Troubadours"; Silverstone 8035-A as by?



**Gennett 6275-A**  
Triangle Harmony Boys



**Superior 2510-B**  
The White Way Revelers  
(the only group issued on both  
Superior 300 and 2500 series.)

**Superior 374-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1185-A) *Happy Go Lucky Lane*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Arthur Fields (NYC c. April 5, 1928) **Gennett 6440-A** Vic Price & His Orch.; Champion 15476-B as "Glenn Roberts & His Orch."; Bell 606-A as "Andy Richards & His Orch."; Silverstone 8057-A as "Sherman Sun-Dodgers"; Supertone 9006 as by?

**Superior 375-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1196-) *Memphis Bound*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, King & Griffith (NYC c. April 18, 1928) (No Gennett issue) **The Golden City Eight**; Superior 2510-B as "The White Way Revelers"; Bell 604-B as "Moreno's Vagabonds."

**Superior 375-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1197-B) *Don't Try To Cry Your Way Back To Me*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, King & Griffith (NYC c. April 18, 1928) (No Gennett issue) **The Golden City Eight**; Superior 2548-B as "The White Way Revelers"; Bell 605-B as "Moreno's Vagabonds."

**Superior 376-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1184-A) *I'm More Than Satisfied*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Arthur Fields (NYC c. April 12, 1928) **Gennett 6440-B** Vic Price & His Orch.; Champion 15494-B as "The Dixie Ramblers"; Bell 605-A as "Andy Richards & His Orch."; Silverstone 8059-B as "Sherman Sun-Dodgers."

**Superior 376-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1180-) *O, Ya, Ya*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Norman Wallace (NYC c. April 9, 1928) **Gennett 6443-A** The New Yorkers (= Carl Fenton Orch); Champion 15476-A as "Rex Gordon's Aces"; Bell 603-A as "Jimmy Peltzer & His Boys"; Silverstone 8034-B as by?

**Superior 377-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1156-A) *There Must Be A Silver Lining*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Charles Hart (NYC c. April 2, 1928) **Gennett 6437-B** Franchini's South Sea Serenaders; Champion 15478-B as "Don Gray & His Collegians"; Silverstone 8058-A as by?

**Superior 377-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13512-) *So Long*—Fox Trot—Vocal Chorus, Al Hurl (Chicago, March 7, 1928) **Gennett 6413-A** Hogan Hancock & His Orch.; Champion 15458-A as "Metomkin Inn Orchestra."

**Superior 378-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13579-) *She's A Great, Great Girl*—Popular Vocal, Acc. Piano & Violin (Chicago March 20, 1928) **Gennett 6431-A** Larry Vincent; Champion 15481-A as "Raymond Sperling"; Supertone 9067-A as by?

**Superior 378-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1188-B) *You'd Rather Forget Than Forgive*—Popular Vocal Solo, Instr. Acc. (NYC c. April 12, 1928) **Gennett 6445-A** Charles Hart; Champion 15498-A as Charles Hart; Bell 610-A as by? Silverstone 8009-B as by?

**Superior 379-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13585-B?) *Ramona*—Popular Vocal, Acc. by Hoefle String Trio (Chicago March 21, 1928) **Gennett 6430-A** Ned Miller; Champion 15481-B as "Homer Morris"; Silverstone 8006-A as by? Supertone 9034-A as by?

**Superior 379-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1186-B) *Just Across The Street From Heaven*—Popular Vocal solo, Instr. Acc. (NYC c. April 13, 1928) **Gennett 6445-B** Charles Hart; Silverstone 8009-A as by?

**Superior 380-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13486-A) *Strollin' In The Moonlight*—Popular Vocal, Acc. Piano & Violin (Chicago, February 29, 1928) **Gennett 6399-A** Les Backer; Champion 15462-A as "Happy Dick Evans."

**Superior 380-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13505-B) *My Baby Came Home*—Popular Vocal, Acc. by Piano, Violin, Clarinet (Chicago, March 5, 1928) **Gennett 6416-B** Les Backer; Bell 609-A as by?

**Superior 381-A**  
Irving West

(GEX 1203-B) *Giggling Gertie*—Popular Vocal, Instrumental Acc. (NYC c. April 23, 1928) **Gennett 6446-A** Jack Kaufman; Champion 15479-A as Jack Kaufman; Silverstone 8002-B as by? (the latest Gennett GEX master number (c. April 23, 1928) used in the Superior 300 series.)

**Superior 381-B**  
Billy Cullen

(GE 13650-A) *Thing-A-Ma-Jig*—Popular Vocal, Acc. by The Musical Kings (Richmond, April 6, 1928) (No Gennett issue) **Billy Cullen**; Other issue(s)? First ledger note: Royalty for "Bell 1/4 c." Second note: "Don't use on Bell."

**Superior 382-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13359-) *Happy Heine March*—Hawaiian Guitars—Duet, Acc. Jos. Ikeole (Richmond, January 12, 1928) **Gennett 6377-A** Sam Ku, Jr.; Champion 15450-B as "Keole Brothers"; Bell 1189-A as by? Challenge 410-B as by? Supertone 9339-A as by?





**Superior 381-A**  
Irving West

(courtesy of Randy Stehle)



**Champion 15489-A**  
Washington Thomas



**Superior 381-B**  
Billy Cullen  
(no Gennett issue)

(courtesy of Randy Stehle)



**Gennett 6471-A**  
Buddy Burton

**Superior 382-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13355-) Aloha Oe—Hawaiian Guitars (Duel), Acc. Jos. Ikeole (Richmond, January 12, 1928) Gennett 6392-B Sam Ku, Jr.; Bell 1189-B as by? Silvertone 8110-A as by? Supertone 9084-A as by? Supertone 9328-A as by? —? 33021-A as by? Discos Gennett 40120-B as "Sam Ku y J. Ikeole."

**Superior 383-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13374-) I'm On The Sunny Side—Old Time Sacred, Acc. Guitar & Harp (Richmond, January 18, 1928) Gennett 6389-B John McGhee & Frank Welling; Champion 15485-A as "Hutchens Brothers"; Bell 1185-B as "Belford & Rogers"; Challenge 401-B as "Markham Bros."; Silvertone 8166-B and Supertone 9262-B as "Harper & Turner."

**Superior 383-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13375-) Meet Me There—Old Time Sacred, Acc. Guitar & Harp (Richmond, January 18, 1928) Gennett 6435-B John McGhee & Frank Welling; Champion 15464-B as "Hutchens Brothers"; Bell 1184-B as "Belford & Rogers"; Silvertone 5206-B, Silvertone 8170-B, and Supertone 9266-B as "Harper & Turner."

**Superior 384-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12793-) Don't Forget Me Little Darling—Old Time Singin' & Playin', Guitar Acc. (Richmond, c. mid' May, 1927) Gennett 6175-A David Miller; Champion 15298-B as David Miller; Bell 1186-B as "Godfrey Borton"; Challenge 326-B as "Don Kutter"; Silvertone 5094-B and Silvertone 8154-B as "John Ferguson"; Supertone 9258-B as "Dave Miller"; Herwin 75558-B as "Oran Campbell."

**Superior 384-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12792-) Two Little Orphans—Old Time Singin' & Playin', Guitar Acc. (Richmond, c. mid' May, 1927) Gennett 6188-A David Miller; Champion 15317-A as David Miller; Bell 1187-A as "Godfrey Borton"; Challenge 326-A as "Don Kutter"; Silvertone 5094-A and Silvertone 8154-A as "Dave Miller" (?); Supertone 9258-A as "Dave Miller"; Herwin 75558-A as "Oran Campbell."

**Superior 385-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12749-A) True and Trembling Brakeman—Old Time Singin' & Playin', Guitar Acc. (Richmond, April 27, 1927) Gennett 6129-A Aulton Ray (or "Shine"); Champion 15277-A as Aulton Ray; Bell 1186-A as "Carl Bunch"; Challenge 269-B as by? Herwin 75552-A as Aulton Ray.

**Superior 385-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 12744-) The Dixie Cowboy—Old Time Singin' & Playin', Banjo & Guitar Acc. (Richmond, April 26, 1927) Gennett 6177-A Aulton Ray (or "Shine"); Champion 15277-B as Aulton Ray; Challenge 355-B as "Charlie Prescott"; Silvertone 5084-B as by? Silvertone 8150-B as by? Supertone 9250-B as by? Herwin 75552-B as "Aulton Ray."

**Superior 386-A**  
Fiddlin' Frank Nelson

(GEX 13040-) Black Eyed Susie—Old Time Playin', Acc. by Guitar (Richmond, August 26, 1927) Gennett 6257-A Fiddlin' Doc Roberts; Champion 15396-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke"; Silvertone 5077-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke"; Supertone 9164-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke."

**Superior 386-B**  
Fiddlin' Frank Nelson

(GEX 13054-) Billy In The Low Ground—Old Time Playin', Acc. by Guitar (Richmond, August 27, 1927) Gennett 6390-B Fiddlin' Doc Roberts; Champion 15500-A as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke"; Bell 1188-A as "Fiddlin' Bob White"; Silvertone 8178-A and Supertone 9176-B as "Fiddlin' Jim Burke."

**Superior 387-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GEX 1128-) Papa, You're Too Slow—Vocal Blues (Race), Acc. by Piano (NYC c. March 13, 1928) Gennett 6424-A Louise Anderson; Champion 15471-B as "Lucy Rose"; Supertone 9288-A as "Dot Clarke."

**Superior 387-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13608-) Satisfied Blues—Vocal Blues (Race), Acc. by Piano (Chicago, c. March 23, 1928) Gennett 6439-B Mae Matthews (in ledgers as Johnnie Mae Matthews—with first name crossed out); Champion 15490-B as "Maxine Harris."

**Superior 388-A**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13610-) Time Enough—Vocal Blues (Race), Acc. by Piano (Chicago, March 23, 1928) Gennett 6453-A Buddy Burton; Champion 15489-A as "Washington Thomas."

**Superior 388-B**  
(unknown label credit  
for group/artist)

(GE 13685-) It's No One But You—Vocal Blues (Race), Acc. by Piano (Richmond, April 18, 1928) Gennett 6471-A Buddy Burton; Champion 15511-A as "Washington Thomas." (the latest Gennett GE master number used in the Superior 300 Series.)





**Gennett 6337-A**  
Sammy Brown



**Champion 15381-A**  
Rev. J. F. Forest

### Superior 389-A (unknown label credit for group/artist)

(GEX 969-A) *Barrel House Blues*—Vocal Blues, Race (Richmond, November 22, 1927) Gennett 6337-A Sammy Brown; Champion 15416-A as "Preston Lillard."

### Superior 389-B (unknown label credit for group/artist)

(GEX 1011-A) *The Worried Man Blues*—Vocal Blues, Race, Acc. by Guitar—Sam Collins (Richmond, December 14, 1927) Gennett 6352-A John D. Fox; Champion 15416-B as "Emory Brooks"; Bell 1190-A as "Alex Monroe."

### Superior 390-A (unknown label credit for group/artist)

(GEX 777-A) *I Am Running A Race*—What Are You Running For?—Negro Sermon with Sitem & Bretheren (Birmingham, c. August 8, 1927) Gennett 6308-B Rev. J. F. Forest; Bell 1191-A as by? Silvertone 5145-B as by?

### Superior 390-B (unknown label credit for group/artist)

(GEX 850-) *I'm On My Way To A Great City*—Negro Sermon with Congregation (Birmingham, c. late August, 1927) Gennett 6262-A Rev. J. F. Forest (of Roger William Baptist—Birmingham); Champion 15381-A as Rev. J. F. Forest; Bell 1183-A as by? Silvertone 9295-A as Rev. J. F. Forest & Cong.

## Superior 300 Series Sources of Label Credits for Groups/Artists:

1. Gennett Recording Ledgers.
2. Discographies:
  - Brian Rust (Jazz Records & American Dance Band Discography).
  - Bob Dixon/John Godrich/Howard Rye (Blues & Gospel Records).
  - Cary Ginell—(The Decca Hillbilly Discography 1927-1945).
3. Country Music Sources—Guthrie T. Meade, Jr., Dick Spottswood & Douglas S. Meade
4. George Blacker—Champion Numerical Listing (Record Research Magazine, Issues 169/170 to 179/180).
5. Richard J. Johnson—copy of Discos Gennett flyer with numerical listing.
6. Les Deeks—American Premium Record Guide.
7. Auction Lists: Mike Stewart; Kurt Nauck; Peter Mauro.
8. Label copies from 78 collectors: Pete Whelan; others—as credited.



(courtesy of Robert Crumb)

**The rarest  
78s  
(W thru Z)**  
**A spiritual journey into the  
realm of greed\*...**

\*(That's when an elusive longing solidifies into lust)



# JAZZ

**Jimmy Wade's Orchestra**—Original *Black Bottom Dance/All That I Had Is Gone*—Black Patti 8019. Less than five. Clint Wilson V “would be E, except that stripping causes some intermittent distortion.” Russ Shor “had Jimmy Wade Black Patti V-, got it from you and sold to Charlie Huber, I believe.” Doug MacClellan “local collector has unplayable (P?) copy.” Gennett 6105. Eight? Don Gray E-, Jim Prohaska V+ 1-inch hc. Whelan “Had 2 BPs, both distorted, stripping; Jake Schneider had 3 E+ Gennetts in the ‘vault.’”



(December 19, 1929)  
Hot enough to turn chocolate 'Whyte'

**Jimmy Wade and His Dixielanders**—*Gates Blues/Mississippi Wobble*—Vocalion 1236. Less than 15. Joe Lauro “N-, plus an original Vocalion test of Gates E.” Werner Benecke E+, Dick Spottswood E+, Wilson EE+, Robert Crumb E, Shor E-, Randy Stehle E-, Marty Alexander V+ **Eddie Walker and His Band** (Zack Whyte's Chocolate Beau Brummels)—*It's Tight Like That/West End Blues*—Supertone 9368. More than ten. Benecke E+, Wilson E+, Don Gray “E, alternate

take from Gennett!” Shor E “had 3 copies myself. Sold 2. I wouldn't say it's that rare.” Spottswood E, Tom Tsotsi E, Joe Bussard E-, Sherwin Dunner E- “must be 50 copies!” John R. T. Davies V+ “more than 20.” Lauro V+ “on EBay.” MacClellan V+, Keith Miller V+, Prohaska V+, Stehle V+, Jim Williams VV+

**Eddie Walker and His Band**—*Mandy/Hum All Your Troubles Away*—Supertone 9486. Less than five. Wilson EE+, Whelan E-, Keith Miller V+, Prohaska V+

**Eddie Walker and His Band**—*Good Feelin' Blues/Wailin' Blues*—Supertone 9685. Three? None reported!

**Alberta Washburn** (Mae Glover with trumpet acc.)—*Skeeter Blues/(Two Timin' Mamma)*—Superior 2668. One or

two. None reported.

**Alberta Washburn** (trumpet acc.)—*My Man Blues/Forty-Four Blues*—Superior 2783. One or two. Whelan V+ to E-.

**Alberta Washburn** (trumpet acc.)—*Hoboken Prison Blues/(Good Hearted Woman)*—Superior 2826. None reported.

**The Washingtonians**—*Rainy Nights/Choo Choo*—Blu-Disc 1002. Two? Three? None reported. Jerry Valburn's former copy?

**Chick Webb and His Orchestra**—*Heebie Jeebies/Soft and Sweet*—Vocalion 1607.

Less than 10. Prohaska V+, Grant Cairns “have this in E- with a 2 1/2-inch crack.” **Malcolm Webb and His Gang** (Hoagy Carmichael And His Pals/Emil Sidel And His Orchestra)—*One Night In Havana/Friday Night*—Champion 15420. Less than five. Dunner E-, Dick Raichelson V+ **Lew Weiner's Gold and Black Aces**—*Louisiana Bo Bo/The Merry Widow's Got A Sweetie Now*—Gennett 6540. Less than five. Gray E 1/2-inch hc “band was from Purdue Univ.”

**Lawrence Welk's Novelty Orchestra** (Pat Dollohan and His Orch.)—*Doin' The New Low Down/(Sweethearts On Parade)*—Gennett 6697. Three? John Bell V+.

**Lawrence Welk's Novelty Orchestra** (Alvin Roehr and His Hotel Alms Orch.)—*Spiked Beer/(Cross Roads)*—Gennett 6712. Two? *Spiked Beer/Shangai Honeymoon*—Gurney 20341 (black & gold Savoy motif [Gurney Seed & Feed Co.]). Two. Whelan E and an E- (auctioned by Kurt Nauck).

**Lawrence Welk and His Orchestra**—*Thrill Me/Smile, Darn Ya, Smile*—Broadway 1462. Less than five. None reported.

**Lawrence Welk and His Orchestra**—*I'm Just A dancing Sweetheart/I'm Through With Love*—Broadway 1484. Less than five. R. Crumb “Excellent band. This was the group that walked out on Welk in 1932, according to his autobiography ‘Wonderful, Wonderful.’”

**The White Way Revelers** (Golden City Eight)/(Ted Williams and His Music) **[Elmer Grosso And His Orchestra]**—*Memphis Bound/(Bye Bye Blues)*—Superior 2510. One or two. Whelan V to V+ “hot, white.” **Unknown Label Credit** (Golden City Eight)—*Memphis Bound/Don't Try To Cry Your Way Back To Me*—Superior 375. None known; also as

**Moreno's Vagabonds**—*Memphis Bound/(Andy Richards & His Orch. [Vic Price and His Orch.])*—*Speedy Boy*—Bell 604. At least one known?

**Zack Whyte's Chocolate Beau Brummels**—*Mandy/Hum All Your Troubles Away*—Gennett 6781. Two or three. Bussard E- to E, Whelan V-.

**Zack Whyte's Chocolate Beau Brummels**—*It's Tight Like That/West End Blues*—Gennett 6798. [Different takes than Supertone? Champion?] Keith Miller N-, Alexander V+, Mike Marsh V+, Bill Thompson V, Whelan G to G+. Chris King “VV+ sold.” Mark Berresford “E-on Champion.”

**Zack Whyte's Chocolate Beau Brummels**—*Wailin' Blues/Good Feelin' Blues*—Gennett 7086. Two? Whelan E- to E.

**Bill Williams and His Gang** (Jelly James' Fewicians)—*Make Me Know It/(Fred Sharp's Dixie Players [The Arabian Knights])*—*My Little Bunch of Happiness*—Champion 15215. Five or less.

Gray E+, Gene Miller E, Thompson E, Lauro E- “from Bob Mahio '02.” King “V+ sold.”

**Bill Williams and His Gang** (Fred Sharp's Dixie Players [Gowan's Rhapsody Makers])—*Georgia Bo Bo/(I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover)*—Champion 15216. Five or less. Lauro V+ “from Vreede.” King “V+ sold,” Shor “had E-, but sold when I got an E+ copy of the flip (Gowans).” Prohaska “sold V copy.”

**Clarence Williams' Blue Five**—*Coal Cart Blues/Santa Claus Blues*—Okeh 8245. Less than 25. Benecke E+, Alexander E+, Bussard E, Shor E “this is really rare. Even V copies don't turn up.” Berresford V.

**Clarence Williams' Trio/Clarence Williams' Blue Five**—*Santa Claus Blues/Squeeze Me*—Okeh 8254. Less than 25. Benecke E+, Bussard E, Shor E “this is also really rare. Even V- copies don't turn up.” Berresford V+, J.R.T. Davies V+, Brian Rust V+, Tom Kelly V/V+.

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*Shake Em Up/Jingles*—Paramount 12587. Ten or more. Bussard E+, Ate van Delden E+ “like factory new,” Whelan E+, J.R.T. Davies E, Rust V+, Prohaska V (“E+ copy in Columbus”).

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*Long, Deep And Wide/Speakeasy*—QRS R-7004. Less than 30. Dunner E, Shor E- Rust V+, Cairns “V-, groove damage B side.” Paramount 12884. Ten or more; Berresford V. Broadway 1347. Less than 10. Raichelson E+, Lauro E, Kelly E-/E, Williams EE-, MacClellan V+, Prohaska V+, Shor “sold V+ with hlc to Colin Bray.”

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*Squeeze Me/New Down Home Blues*—QRS R-7005. Less than 30. Wilson E+, K. Miller E, Stehle E-, Bussard V+, R. Crumb V/V-, Rust V-. Paramount 12885. Ten or more. Williams E-. Broadway 1348. Less than 10. Shor V+.

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*Wildflower Rag/Midnight Stomp*—QRS R-7033. Less than 30. Benecke N-, K. Miller E, R. Crumb E-, J.R.T. Davies E-, Rust E-, Dunner V+/E-, Ben Kaplan V. Paramount 12839. Ten or more. Ken Crawford E, Shor E “Paramount a different take than the QRS.”

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*Bozo/Bimbo*—QRS R-7034. Less than 25. Shor E+, Lauro E, K. Miller E, Rust V “I junked this in London in 1951, would you believe?” Crumb V-, “a crk which has been well-repaired, making it inaudible by some unknown genius somewhere along the way. All these QRSs from the collection of Sandy Smilowitz.” Kaplan V-, J.R.T. Davies G+.

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*I'm Through/Longshoreman's Blues*—QRS R-7040. Less than 30. Benecke N-,

J.R.T. Davies E+, Rust E+, Bussard E, Dunner E, Lauro E, K. Miller E-, Prohaska V+

**Clarence Williams and His Orchestra**—*Pane In The Glass/Saturday Night Jag*—Paramount 12870. About 15. Lauro N- “from Boris Rose '97.” Wilson E “Sat. Night Jag is a great classic!” Broadway 5067. Less than 15.

**Douglas Williams and His Orchestra**—*Louisiana Hop/Three O'Clock Blues*—Victor 38623. Less than 15. BMI file copy N-, Benecke N-, J.R.T. Davies E+, Thompson E+, Tsotsi E, Prohaska V+, King “E, sold.”

**Douglas Williams and His Orchestra**—*The Beale Street Sheik/Darktown Jubilee*—Victor 23264. Ten? BMI file copy N- Prohaska N-, Benecke E+, Berresford E+, J.R.T. Davies E+, Dunner E+, Lauro E+ “from Nauck.” Shor “sold E in 1991.”

**Douglas Williams and His Orchestra**—*Thrill Me/(Washboard Rhythm Kings—Boola Boo)*—Victor 23303. Less than 10. BMI file copy N-, Benecke E+, Gray E+, Whelan V+, Davies “just sold V copy.”

**Douglas Williams and His Orchestra**—*Clarinet Jiggles/(Washboard Rhythm Kings—All This World Is Made Of Glass)*—Victor 23337. Less than 10. BMI file copy N-, Benecke N-, Lauro E, Prohaska E, Raichelson E, Bussard E-, Kelly E-, Shor V+, Tsotsi V+.

**Douglas Williams and His Orchestra**—*Memphis Gal/Sister Ella*—Victor 23362. Less than 10. BMI file copy N-, Berresford E+.

**Douglas Williams and His Orchestra**—*Leaving Blues/Don't Treat Me Like A Dog*—Victor 23387. Less than five. BMI file copy N-. No others reported.

**Duke Williams and His Orchestra** (Mills' Blue Rhythm Kings/Don Redman) *Smoke Rings/Sophisticated Lady*—Vocalion 15892. Less than 10. Gray E+, Cairns “E, but a gold Vocalion, not cream square. One side is *Smoke Rings* (Mills B.R.B.), other, *Sophisticated* (Redman).” Williams V-V. Prohaska “sold E copy.”

**Fess Williams And His Joy Boys**—*Dixie Stomp/Drifting And Dreaming*—Vocalion 15690. Less than 10. Raichelson E+/E. Berresford E, J.R.T. Davies E, Lauro E “junked in New Orleans, this past April. Believe it was Lynn Abbott's copy. Pretty terrible orchestral approach.” K. Miller E, Dunner E-, Crumb V+ “Chicago, 1928. Fess was there for about a year, fronting the Dave Peyton Orch. *Dixie Stomp* is great.” Bill Frase “V+, lite needle run & 2 small digs.” Shor V+ “I've seen a number up for sale recently, but it is tough—and historic, being the only recording by Dave Peyton's band.” Prohaska: “I've had 3 copies, V, V+, E-.”

**John Williams Synco Jazzers**—*Down In Gallion/Goose Grease*—Paramount 12457. Less than 20. Lauro “Two copies one E+, one N-. Both originally came out of the late 1930s Paramount stock that turned up on 14th Street. First copy from old-time collector Murray Hampft, second from the Milt Gabler collection aka Altshuler early this year (Yes, Bot



January 22, 1929—Zack Whyte gets the Sears-Roebuck name change





Wingy Manone débuts on small-label Superior (but only 68 shipped out)



May, 1928—Bunny Berigan débuts on Paramount

Altshuler is still going strong!).” Cairns “My Paramount is N. The Herwin is a ‘wall hanger’ with a 1/2-inch bite.” Raichelson N-, Stehle N-, Alexander E+, Dunner E+, Kelly E+, Shor E+ “sold Herwin to Ken Swerilas.” Whelan E+, Spottswood E, Wilson E, Tsotsi E, Crumb E-. (The Jelly Whippers—*Goose Grease* /S.O.B. Blues\*—[Dixon’s Jazz Maniacs—\*DAD Blues]—Herwin 92018). Less than



‘One side: Don Redman/Other: Mills B.R. Kings’



(Vocalions courtesy Grant Cairns)

10. Helge Thygesen VV-, Prohaska V-, John Williams & His Memphis Stompers—*PeWee Blues/Now Cut Loose*—Black Patti 8009. About five. Whelan E+/E, Bussard E, John Bell V to V+. Kinney Rorrer “I had a Vish copy of this about 20 years ago.” Berresford “traded V with ef, 2001.” Gennett 6124 (as “Duke Jackson’s Serenaders”). More than five? Lauro E, Rich Nevins V+, Williams G. Champion 15285 (as “Bud Helms and His Band” [reverse side: The Galveston Serenaders—*Monte Carlo Joys*). Five or six? Discos Gennett 40109 (as “Duke Jackson y sus Trovadores” and titled *Arrastrado [Blues]*). [Reverse side: Walt Anderson y sus Faisanes Dorados—*Danza de Las Muñecas [The Doll Dance*—actually, this is by Willie Creager’s Rhythm Aces from Gennett 6083]). None known.

John Williams & His Memphis Stompers—*Sumpin’ Slow and Low/Lotta Sax Appeal*—Vocalion 1453. Less than 15. Benecke N-, Shor E+ “traded V+ to Joe Lauro.” Lauro E- “from Boris Rose ’97.” Dunner E-, Thompson V+, Tsotsi V+ *Speed Williams’ Orchestra* (Wingy Mannone’s Orchestra)—*Tin Roof Blues/Tar Paper Stomp*—Superior 2818. Two. Whelan “E-, repaired crk. From Kinney Rorrer.” Rorrer “I picked up 2 copies in the same box of records with 10 other Superiors. Both were cracked to label. I still have one copy.”

Wilson’s T.O.B.A. Band—*Steady Roll/Backyard Blues*—Paramount 12408. Less than 15. Lauro “Two copies: E+ from Vreede; had one with a wide crack in it that Russ Shor and I sent to John R.T. to possibly be closed up...came from a South Carolina collection.” Shor E-

Windy Rhythm Kings—*South African Blues/Piggly Wiggly Blues*—Paramount 12770. Less than 15. Benecke E+, Wilson E+/EE+ “jazz masterpieces!” Bussard E, Lauro E, K. Miller E, Stehle V+, Shor “sold V to a ‘New Jersey collector.’” Broadway 1294 (as *Lee’s Black Diamonds*) Less than 10. Prohaska E, Rust E-, Alexander V+, Crumb V+ “with some stripping—I got this from you, Pete.” George Paulus V, Andy Hale G+ *Wisconsin U Skyrockets, Jesse Cohen - Director*—*Slow Beef/It’s A Sin*—Paramount 12641. Less than five. Lauro E+ Whelan E+, Crumb V+. *Wisconsin U Skyrockets, Jesse Cohen - Director*—*Dizzy Corners/Postage Stomp*—Paramount 12642. Less than five. Bussard E, Lauro E, Stehle E-, Prohaska V++, Shor V. Paulus “Had. Traded.” *Wolverine Orchestra*—*I Need Some Pettin’/Royal Garden Blues*—Gennett 20062. Between 15 and 20? K. Miller E, Benecke E-, Lauro E- “from Vreede.” Shor V++, Prohaska “two V+,” Berresford V, Thompson V, J.R.T. Davies G. MacClellan “local collector has an E copy.”

*Wolverine Orchestra*—*Tiger Rag* (cracked one-sided Gennett test from 1924, dubbed on HRS 24 in 1939—[Steve Smith?] Owner now unknown). Then came 20 two-sided tests pressed in late ’40s from original stampers (reverse side: *Copenhagen*). Lauro “two copies. Got one from eBay 4 years ago, an 11-inch test from Gennett (no crack), then, an E+ test from Gennett stampers from Vreede. Sold 11-inch to Marty Alexander.” Alexander E+ *Wolverine Orchestra*—*When My Sugar Walks Down The Street/Prince Of Walls*—



Paris, November, 1929—“Blunderful”

(courtesy Robert Crumb)

Gennett 5620. Fifteen? Paulus E+, John Bell E- and V+ *The Red Caps (Wooding’s Grand Central Redcaps)*—*Nina/Niagara Falls*—Victor 23382. Ten or less. BMI file copy N-, K. Miller N-, Thompson E, Shor “Yecch! If ever a record deserved rarity, it’s this.” *Sam Wooding and His Orchestra*—*O Katharina/Shanghai Shuffle*—Vox 1883. Less than 10? *Sam Wooding and His Orchestra*—

*Shanghai Shuffle/Alabama Bound*—Voc 01890. Less than 10? Polydor 20691. Less than 10? Berresford E- *Sam Wooding and His Orchestra*—*Alabama Bound/By The Waters Of Minnetonka*—Vox 1891. Less than 10? *The Sam Wooding Band*—*Black Bottom/Behind The Clouds*—Deutsche Grammophon/Polydor 29689. Less than 10? *The Sam Wooding Band*—*Milenberg*



Clarence Williams’ best? (and most sought-after Paramount)



‘Superior’ performances (but only 140 shipped out by July 31, 1932)

*Joys/Tampeekoe*—Deutsche Grammophon/Polydor 20689. Less than 10?

*The Sam Wooding Band*—*Just A Cottage Small/Lonesome And Sorry*—Deutsche Grammophon/Polydor 20693. Less than 10?

Russ Shor: “You omitted *How An I To Know* on Polydor—one of his best (I have E).”

*Maestro Sam Wooding y Sus Chocolate Kiddies*—*Carrie/Tiger Rag*—(Spanish) Parlophone B-25420. Less than 10. Van Delden E+, Shor V+

*Maestro Sam Wooding y Sus Chocolate Kiddies*—*Sweet Black Blues/My Pal Called Sal*—(Spanish) Parlophone B-25421. Less than 10.

*Maestro Sam Wooding y Sus Chocolate Kiddies*—*Ready For The River/Mammy’s Prayer*—(Spanish) Parlophone B-25422. Less than 10. Shor V+ “(test, including alternate take on the flip), “Andy Hale “I had a V copy ...sold to Europe.”

*Maestro Sam Wooding y Sus Chocolate Kiddies*—*I Can’t Give You Anything But Love/Krazy Kat*—(Spanish) Parlophone B-25423. Less than 10.

*Maestro Sam Wooding y Sus Chocolate Kiddies*—*Bull Foot Stomp/Indian Love*—(Spanish) Parlophone B-25424. Less than 10.

*Sam Wooding and His Orchestra*—*Downcast Blues/Weary River*—(French) Pathé X-8684. Less than ten? Berresford E+, Van Delden E- “this record is not so rare,” Shor V+, Wilson “V+ (1/2-inch hc, NAP) These Woodings are fabulous discs. Why hasn’t someone put out the complete Wooding on CD? That would be a great and monumental project.” Cellodisc C-8684. Less than five?



**Sam Wooding and His Orchestra—She's Funny That Wag [sic]/I Lift Up My Finger And Say "Tweet-Tweet"**—(French) Pathé X-8693. Less than ten? Berresford E, Shor E, Van Delden E, Crumb V+ "Belgian Pathé X8693. First side is great, free-wheeling jazz. I acquired this gem in trade from a young, energetic German collector. These European Sam Wooding records are very rare, but who can venture to guess how many copies are in European collections? Virtually all the hot jazz in the '20s—early '30s in Paris & Berlin is quite rare, was not issued in large numbers, was favored only by a small, hip elite. In the case of Germany, their scrap drive during the War was very efficient, making all prewar German 78s rare. It's easier to find prewar records of all kinds in France, which seems not to have had any scrap drive at all. And, if you look at a German jazz discography, there was a lot of jazz recorded in Berlin in the late '20s on labels such as Polydor, Odeon, Tri-Ergon, Homochord, Vox, Ultraphone, etc., etc." MacClellan "I had, and traded a V+ copy."

**Sam Wooding and His Orchestra—Smiling Irish Eyes/Deep Night**—(French) Pathé X-8697. Less than ten? Van Delden V+ "this is hill/dale version of X-8707, equally rare I think."

**Sam Wooding and His Orchestra—Breakaway/My Sin**—(French) Pathé X-8707. Less than ten?

**Sam Wooding and His Orchestra—Le Pirate (Lover, Come Back To Me)**—(reverse

unknown)—(French) Pathé X-96058. Less than ten?

**Sam Wooding's Chocolate Kiddies—Singin' In The Rain/I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling**—Deutsche Grammophon/Polydor 22993, 521596. Less than ten?

**Babe Woods and His Pals (Lou Calabrese)—Let's Misbehave!**—(Miami Novelty Trio [The Haskell Novelettes]—



**A pungent Al Wynn—an inspired Punch Miller**

**She's A Great Great Girl**—Champion 15468. Less than five. Dunner E

**Albert Wynn's Gut Bucket Five—When/That Creole Band**—Okeh 8350 (Truetone only) Less than 10, but only two or three E or better. Benecke E+, J.R.T. Davies E+, Whelan V+/V, Lauro V, Shor V, Rust V-, Berresford G.

**Albert Wynn and His Gut Bucket Five—Crying My Blues Away/(The Midnight Rounders—Shake Your Shimmy)**—Vocalion 1218. Less than 25. K. Miller N, Alexander E+, Benecke E+, Lauro E, Thompson E, Whelan E, Bussard V+, J.R.T. Davies V+, Dunner V+, Stehle VV+, Kaplan V, Paulus V-, Rust V-, Williams G. Russ Shor "I had 3 copies—really a disappointing record." Berresford "V+, sold in 2002."

Tom Tsotsi: "Both sides of Vocalion 1218 were issued on Supertone S2234, each as by **The Midnight Ramblers**. This Supertone series (S2000 to S2263) was pressed for Sears Roebuck by Warner Bros. Pictures as Brunswick Radio Corp. This ties the period between April 1930 and December 1931."

**Wynn's Creole Jazz Band/Albert Wynn and His Gut Bucket Five—Down By The Levee/Parkway Stomp**—Vocalion 1220. Less than 15. K. Miller N-, Benecke E+, Lauro "E+ from Howard Berg, then an E from Gabler via Altschuler earlier this year (available for trade!)." Shor E+, J.R.T. Davies "crk nap," Rust E, Whelan E, Alexander E-, Dunner E-, Stehle E-, G. Miller V+, Paulus V+, Prohaska V, King "V+, sold."

**Wynn's Creole Jazz Band—She's Crying For Me**—(Lil Hardaway's Orchestra—

**Milenberg Joys**—Vocalion 1252. Ten or less. Benecke N-, Lauro E+ "from Vreede." Shor E+, Wilson E+ "received from Whelan as partial trade for Tommy Johnson E- Paramount." Alexander E, Dunner E, Rust E-. Lauro "A great record. I think this and the Okeh are the rarest Wynns." Paulus E-.

**Young's Creole Jazz Band/Anna Oliver and Young's Creole Jazz Band—Every Saturday Night/What's The Use Of Lovin'**—Paramount 12060. Less than 25. Berresford V-, Prohaska - "E- but 1/2-inch bite."

**Young's Creole Jazz Band—Dearborn St. Blues/(King Oliver's Jazz Band—The Southern Stomps)**—Paramount 12088. Less than 40. Benecke N-, Ron Brown E, Lauro E "from Vreede. I've had two other copies of this with different takes on the Oliver side." Rust E-, Shor E-, Berresford V, Rolf von Arx V.

**Young's Creole Jazz Band—Tin Roof Blues/(The Midway Dance Orchestra—Black Sheep Blues)**—Paramount 20272. Less than 40. Prohaska E. Claxtonola 40272. Less than 10. Berresford E+, Rust E+, Shor E+, Van Delden E+, Spottswood E, Thompson V+. Harmograph 863. Less than 10. Benecke N-, Puritan 11272. Less than 25. Williams E

**Billie Young (acc. by Jelly Roll Morton)—When They Get Lovin' They's Gone/You Done Played Out Blues**—Victor 23339. Between five and 10. BMI file copy N-Charles Huber? Alexander "two master tests."

**Clarence Young's Harmony Syncopators (Ollie Powers)/Clarence Young—Play That Thing (1505-5)/Jazzbo Jenkins**—Harmograph 874. Less than five. Kaplan G+?

Russ Shor: "You should add—**Washboard Rhythm Kings**—Columbia 14680. An incredibly tough record, and one of their best. I have E copy."

## Country Blues

**Uncle Bud Walker—Stand Up Suitcase Blues/Look Here Mama Blues**—Okeh 8828. Less than ten. Werner Benecke E+, Don Kent E to E+ "From Bill Thompson years ago. A real backwoods Georgia guy, not surprising it didn't sell at the time. Ten seems about right. Never turned up much." R. Crumb E, Helge Thygesen E "from Peter Brown way back. Still love that record." Whelan E, Matt Winter "had a clean copy of this traded it to you!" George Paulus V+, Ben Kaplan V.

**Willie Walker—Dupree Blues/South Carolina Rag (151065-1)**—Columbia 14578. Less than five. Sherwin Dunner E,



**Older and wiser?—(when it comes to women?)**

Russ Shor E- "take 1. One just turned up last year on the West Coast in a small collection Lauro, Tefteller and I divided." R. Crumb E- [take unknown], Paulus E-, Kent "about V+, Maybe E-. [take unknown] I think I got this from Bill Stolz (remember him?)."

**Willie Walker—Dupree Blues/South**

**Carolina Rag (151065-2)**—Columbia 14578. Less than five. John Tefteller N, Dunner E-, Frank Mare V+, Rich Nevins V [take unknown]

**Walter and Byrd—Wasn't It Sad About Lemon/(Rev. Emmet Dickinson—Death Of Blind Lemon)**—Paramount 12945. Less than 20. Tefteller N, Tom Kelly E+, Francis Smith E+, Joe Bussard E,

Joe Mare E, Kent "An Eish copy (from Olin Carver?) that plays moderately better than the mushy E that played V, I used to have 30 years ago. This still turns up." Shor E- "this is pretty common for a 12900 Paramount. Probably 50 or more." Nevins E, Paulus E-, Whelan E-, Kevin Cleary V+, Joe Lauro V+ "from Russ Shor." Roger Misiewicz V+ "I've had at least 2 or 3 lesser copies as I worked up to this." Paul Garon V to V+, 107



**13 copies reported—('fairly common but ...')**



**A surprisingly rare Truetone—only 7 reported!**





**Exquisite ragtime guitar (later copyrighted by Clarence Williams)**

Andy Hale V, Kinney Rorrer "have had 2 copies—one cracked." Chris King "V sold." Thygesen (V-with crk, sold to an American collector").

Alberta Washburn (Mae Glover)/Alberta Washburn and Papa Hall—Shake It Daddy/Gas Man Blues—Superior 2642. Less than five. Clint Wilson "V+, tremendous guitar-banging disc—none better." Whelan V-.

Alberta Washburn—Pig Meat Mama/I Ain't Givin' Nobody None—Superior 2739. Less than five. None reported.

Curley Weaver/Curley Weaver and Eddie Mapp—Dirty Deal Blues/It's The Best Stuff Yet—QRS R-7077. Less than five. Dick Raichelson G.

Curley Weaver/Curley Weaver and Eddie Mapp—Ta Ta Blues/No No Blues—QRS R-7082. Less than five.

Curley Weaver and Clarence Moore—Baby Boogie Woogie/Wild Cat Kitten—OKeh 8928. Less than five. Winter "V+ traded from you." Kent "I had an E-copy of this for years, mainly for the great guitar duets on both sides, due to Moore aka Fred McMullen. But the vocals tired me after awhile, and I traded it."

Weaver and Beasley—Bottleneck Blues/St. Louis Blues—OKeh 8530. Less than 20. Bussard N-, Kent E+ to N- "A lovely, sweet record, but probably fairly common, given the time and titles. I've seen it listed at least a dozen times." Lauro "had a V copy from Mike Marsh. Then an E turned up on EBay. Don't think this is a 'rarest of rare' item." Shor E- "not all that rare either. Nice ones are." Whelan E-, Winter E-, Garon V+/E-, Mare V+, Prohaska V+, Rolf von Arx V+, Raichelson E/V+ & 1 1/2-inch moon crk.,



**Relaxing with an affable, casual Arthur Pettis**

Misiewicz V, King "V traded." Rorrer "had E-."

Sylvester Weaver—I'm Busy And You Can't Come In/Smoketown Strut—OKeh 8152. Less than 20. Kelly E, Kent "Still have an Eish copy that almost went to

Terry Zwigoff. Got this from Jake back in the '60s." Bussard E-, Dunner E-, Whelan V+, Mare V-.

Will Weldon—Turpentine Blues/Hitch Me To Your Buggy, And Drive Me Like A Mule—Victor 21134. Less than 25. BMI



**A great train adventure recalls a bygone era...**



**Jay Bird Coleman's best record? (or in a first-place tie with 'Boll Weevil?')**

file copy N-, Benecke N-, Bussard N-, Mare E+, Dunner E-, Garon E, Kent "Another fine record that is probably better represented than you may think. Still, 25-35 isn't all that much." Kevin Cleary "2 copies V+ and G-." Mike Marsh V+, Paulus V+, Thygesen VV+, Misiewicz V-, Crumb G+ "found canvassing door-to-

door in Dover, Delaware, 1960-'61."

Western Kid (Frank Brasswell)/(Big Bill Johnson (Big Bill Broonzy)—Mountain Girl Blues/(Skoodle Do Do)—Gennett 7210. One known? Whelan E to E+. Bill Frase?

Western Kid/(Big Bill Johnson)—Western Blues/(I Can't Be Satisfied)—Gennett



**A Frank Brasswell/Big Bill rarity (one known?)**



**Kent: 'Some of these Decca Champions are stupidly rare'**

7230. None known.

Bukka White—Special Stream Line/Strange Place Blues—Vocalion 05526. Less than 15. Tefteller N, Bussard E+, Shor E+, Nevins E, Winter E, Paulus E-, Garon V+/E-.

Washington White/ White and Hairiston—The Panama Limited/The New 'Frisco Train—Victor 23295. Five or six. BMI file copy N-, Nevins N-, Whelan N-, Mare V-. Rorrer "I saw a copy in a junk store about 1972, but couldn't talk the junk dealer out of it."

"Bill" Wilber (Joe McCoy)—My Babe My Babe/Greyhound Blues—Champion 50053. Less than 15. Nevins E+, Whelan E, Rorrer "had E-," Kent "Some of these Decca Champions are stupidly rare. In fact, much rarer than some contemporary Decca (early 7000-7100's). Some are as rare as the original issue! (There might be more copies of "Future Blues" on Paramount than Champion.) Anyway, it's a nice rendition of "Crow Jane."

Geeshie Wiley—Last Kind Words Blues/Skinny Leg Blues—Paramount 12951. Three? Kent "Got this about E- with a 1" inaud. crk. There's the G copy from the Vreede collection, and Peter Honig found a G+ to V- copy that went to Kinney Rorrer to Chris King to Richard Nevins back to Chris." Shor V "Uncle Max's old copy." Chris King: VV- "Unequivocally, one of the best performances ever recorded, as 'scary' a song as it is unique. A bona fide masterpiece, if there ever was one. My copy, with the right stylus & settings, plays very strong." Rorrer "It's very depressing to think of what I once had—especially the Geeshie Wiley."

Geeshie Wiley—Pick Poor Robin Clean!





**'Inspired...electrifying  
train masterpiece'**



**Screams of terror, shrieks of fear  
...the 'eerie' record ever made?**



**A screaming harmonica. Voice: 'Catch 'em,  
catch 'em again'...then shrieking...then desolate  
singing: 'This may bee-E your last.'**

*Eagles On A Half*—Paramount 13074. Three? Nevins E- (Oliver Johnson-Whelan-Perls), a V copy somewhere(?)  
*Robert Wilkins—That's No Way To Get Along/Falling Down Blues*—Brunswick 7125. Five or less. Nevins N-, Bussard E+, Dunner E, Francis Smith E, Mare E/E-, Crumb V++ "masterpiece!" Tefteller V+  
*Robert Wilkins—I'll Go With Her Blues/Get Away Blues*—Brunswick 7158. Five or less. Nevins E+, Dunner E, Chris King "I wish! What a record!"  
*Robert Wilkins—Nashville Stonewall Blues/Police Sergeant Blues*—Brunswick 7168. Five or less. Nevins N-, Smith E-/V+, Whelan V+, Paulus V-.  
*Robert Wilkins—Alabama Blues/Long Train Blues*—Brunswick 7205. Three? Dunner E+, Kent E+ "I have Bernie's old file copy. This record has turned up a couple of times since." Nevins E+.  
*Robert Wilkins—Rolling Stone—part 1/Rolling Stone—Part 2*—Victor 21741. Less than 20. Paulus M(int), BMI file copy N-, Smith N- Tefteller N-, Mare E+, Marsh E+, Wilson E+ "haunting disc, one of my very favorites." Bussard E, Lauro "EBayed April '03, E." Crumb E-, Nevins E-, Shor V+ "had several. Probably 30 or more around." Kent "Had this from Altschuler, and 20 years later, it went to John Tefteller." Raichelson V-, cracked.  
*Robert Wilkins—Jail House Blues/I Do Blues*—Victor 23379. Three? BMI file copy N-, Nevins E+ (Oliver Johnson-Whelan-Perls)  
*Tim Wilkins—Black Rat Blues/Losin' Out Blues*—Vocalion 03176. Five or less. Kent E/V "From Murray Schwartz in the

Bronx."  
*Tim Wilkins—New Stock Yard Blues/Dirty Deal Blues*—Vocalion 03223. Five or less. Andy Hale E "Gayle Dean got my E-copy in a trade," Kent E+/V+, Tefteller V+, Paulus G+.  
*Williams & Sampson (Arthur Pettis & Big Bill Broonzy)/(Famous Hokum Boys)—Barrel House Rag/(Come On In)*—Jewel 20042, Bussard V+, Oriole 8042, Perfect 172. Lauro V+, Whelan V-, Romeo 5042—all between five and 10. Kent "Oriole 8042 about V+. I think this also came from Bill Thompson."  
*Bill Williams (Arthur Pettis) and Sammy Sampson (Big Bill Broonzy)/(Sammy Sampson (Big Bill Broonzy))—No Good Buddy (10045-1)/(Tadpole Blues)*—Perfect 179. Less than 15. Kent "Perfect 179 about EE- with a hc. Found this in Chicago 40 years ago, when I first started collecting." Lauro V+. Romeo 5068. Less than 10. Thygesen V.  
*Bill Williams and Sammy Sampson (Sammy Sampson)—No Good Buddy (10045-2)/(Tadpole Blues)*—Oriole 8068 Cleary E-. Perfect 179. Whelan V-. Fewer than 10 of each.  
*Bill Williams (Sammy Sampson)—Mr. Conductor Man/(State Street Woman)*—Banner 32393, Oriole 8125 Misiewicz V, cracked. Perfect 0201 and Romeo 5125. (About five of each.) Whelan E, Misiewicz E-, "I think I got this from Stewart," Benecke V+, Bussard V+.  
*Ellis Williams—Buttermilk Blues/Smokey Blues*—Columbia 14482. More than 25. Bussard N, Tefteller N-, Benecke E+, Shor E+ "maybe this belongs in the skiffle, jug

band section—super record!)." Whelan E+, Marsh E, Andy Hale E-, Thygesen V+, von Arx "G+/V "looks battered, but plays OK." Rorrer "had N-."  
*George "Bullet" Williams—Frisco Leaving Birmingham (20592-1)/The Escaped Convict*—Paramount 12651. Less than five. Nevins E- [take unknown]  
*George "Bullet" Williams—Frisco Leaving Birmingham (20592-2)/The Escaped Convict*—Paramount 12651. Less than five. J.J. Holiday V+/V, Whelan V/V-, Crumb G+ [take unknown] "record in bad shape, but 'Bullet' cuts though the noise!" Misiewicz G+. Shor "had V+ [take unknown] sold for a disgusting amount of money to the folks—well, you know where (where have they gone, anyway?)." *George "Bullet" Williams—Frisco Leaving Birmingham (20592-3)/The Escaped Convict (20593-2)*—Paramount 12651. Less than five. Whelan V+ to E-, Eric Hubbard V "I picked it up about 3 years ago for 50¢ at a West Virginia swap meet." Paulus V-, Misiewicz V+ "repaired hc to label, repaired bite. From Stewart?" Broadway 5085 as *George Williams*. One or two. Gayle Wardlow E-.  
*George "Bullet" Williams—Touch Me Light Mama/Middlin' Blues (20596-1)*—Paramount 12680. Less than five. [powerful, still unknown vocal] Nevins E, Wardlow V+, Whelan V+, Thygesen V/V+.  
*George "Bullet" Williams—Touch Me Light Mama/Middlin' Blues (GEX 802-B)*—Paramount 12680. Any known??  
*Joe Williams—Little Leg Woman/Somebody's Been Borrowing That Stuff*—

Bluebird 5900. Five to 10. Kent "E+ from the Perls Collection." Wilson "single-sided original shellac test, Mx 85488-1, of *Somebody's Been Borrowing*, E- to E-." Misiewicz "V+ 2-inch hc, clicks." Rorrer "had E." King "V+ traded recently."  
*Joe Williams (Albert Clemens)—Providence Help The Poor People/(Policy Blues (You Can't 3-6-9 Me))*—Bluebird 5930. Five to 10. Garon E, Smith E, Nevins V+, Kent "E with a warp—got this from Jake, I think, or possibly Will Roy Hearn—remember him? (also a good source for Kokomo Arnolds, Peetie Wheatstraws & Casey Bills, when no one wanted them—and still don't)."  
*Joe Williams (Sugar Cane Johnny)—My Grey Pony/(Who Pumped The Wind In The Doughnuts?)*—Bluebird 5948. Five to 10. King E, Paulus E-. Rorrer "had E."  
*Joe Williams—49 Highway Blues/Stepfather Blues*—Bluebird 5996. Five to 10. Bussard E+, Nevins E+, Garon E, Shor V "These early Bluebirds are really unheralded rarities." Winter V, Smith "have test of 49 Highway."  
*Joe Williams' Washboard Blues Singers—Please Don't Go/Wild Cow Blues*—Bluebird 6200. Ten or more. Kent "E to E+ from Jake." Bussard E/V+. Smith "have test of Wild Cow."  
*Joe Williams' Washboard Blues Singers—Stack O'Dollars/Worried Man*

*Blues*—Bluebird 6231. Ten or less. Kent "E to E+ from Jake. I think all of the Joe Williams buff Bluebirds are rare except 'Rootin' Ground Hog.' Lord knows, I've only seen one or two not so good copies of 'Brother James' in the last 30 years. But then they aren't quite as nice as the early or washboard ones." Gary Fortine E, Garon E, Shor V++. Prohaska "sold V+ copy."  
*Joe Williams—I Want It Awful Bad/Mr. Devil Blues*—Vocalion 1457. Five? George Paulus E+.  
*Rabbits Foot Williams (Jay Bird Coleman)—Save Your Money—Let These Women Go\*/Mistreatin' Mama*—Black Patti 8052. Two known. Benecke E+, Nevins E. \*(also as *Middlin' Blues* by George "Bullet" Williams—Paramount 12680)  
*Rabbits Foot Williams—Boll Weevil/You Heard Me Whistle (Oughta Know My Blow)*—Black Patti 8055. One known. Whelan G to G+/G-.  
*Rabbits Foot Williams—Mill Log Blues/Trunk Busted—Suitcase Full Of Blues*—Champion 15339. Between five and 10. Nevins E, Whelan E-  
*Rabbits Foot Williams—Man Trouble Blues/Ah'm Sick an' Tired of Tellin' You (To Wiggle That Thing)*—Champion 15379. Between five and 10. Nevins E+, Whelan E, Benecke E-

*Blind Willie (Blind Willie McTell)—Savannah Mama/B and O Blues No. 2*—Vocalion 02568. Less than 10. Paulus V-, Smith V-, Garon G+, Marsh G+ "great 12-string slide performance. Wish I had a better copy." Misiewicz "G, 2 1/2-inch hc from Bob Graf? He may not be too proud of the record anyway. At least he kept it & sent it for me to hold."  
*Blind Willie—Broke Down Engine/Death Cell Blues*—Vocalion 02577. Less than 10. Ben Kaplan E, Prohaska E, Benecke V+, Mare V-, Paulus V-, Rorrer G.  
*Blind Willie—Warm It Up To Me/Runnin' Me Crazy*—Vocalion 02595. Five to 10. Smith N-, Wilson E+, Bussard E, Mare E, Paulus V-.  
*Blind Willie and Partner—Southern Can Mama/It's A Good Little Thing*—Vocalion 02622. Less than 10. Kent "An E+ copy from John Sadowsky, hmm. Had V- copies of Vo 02577 and 02568 (with several hair cracks) that I let go." Smith E+, Winter E+, Benecke E, Bussard E, Garon E, Whelan E, Lauro V+ "from 'Red' Metzger at a Record Research meeting c. 1975 (paid him \$15)." Paulus V-.  
*Blind Willie and Partner—Lord Have Mercy, If You Please/Don't You See How This World Made A Change*—Vocalion 02623. Less than 10. Smith E+, Misiewicz "V+ from Stewart." Winter V+, Kaplan G+  
*Blind Willie—My Baby's Gone/Weary Hearted Blues*—Vocalion 02668. Less than 10. [inadvertently omitted from original list].  
*Mary Willis—Rough Alley Blues/Low Down Blues*—Okeh 8921. Five or less. Thygesen "E- (plays even better). This year, an American collector found this copy. We arranged a trade—I had to let go of a Black Patti, but it was worth it." Paulus V++.  
*Mary Willis—Talkin' To You Wimmen About The Blues/Merciful Blues*—Okeh 8932. Five or less. John Tefteller N.

## PIANO

*Wesley Wallace—No. 29/Fanny Lee Blues*—Paramount 12958. Five or six. Rich Nevins E+ hc inaud, Dick Spottswood E+, Whelan E- to E, Francis Smith V+, R. Crumb V "got from you!"  
*Barrel House Welch Piano Acc. by Himself (Nolan Welsh)—Larceny Woman Blues/Dying Pickpocket Blues*—Paramount 12759. Less than 10. Smith N-, Whelan V+, Kent "Have something akin to a V+ copy. One side has some corrosion of some sort, that came from the Perls collection." Winter V  
*"Boodle It" Wiggins (acc. by Bob Call p.)—Keep A Knockin' An You Can't Come*





**'Jabo' Williams' rarest (one known)—  
'this version a shade better than Roland's'**



R. Crumb: "here I proudly show off my 'G'-copy of 'Ko Ko Mo Blues' by Jabo Williams (as 'Jimmie Anderson')—Broadway 5111...Oh, it's a mess, but it is an incredible piano record, and you can actually even hear it a little bit through the firestorm of wear and tear! from Nick Perls, but it wasn't a duplicate...he gave it to me because of its crappy condition."



**December, 1929 (?): 4 copies reported**

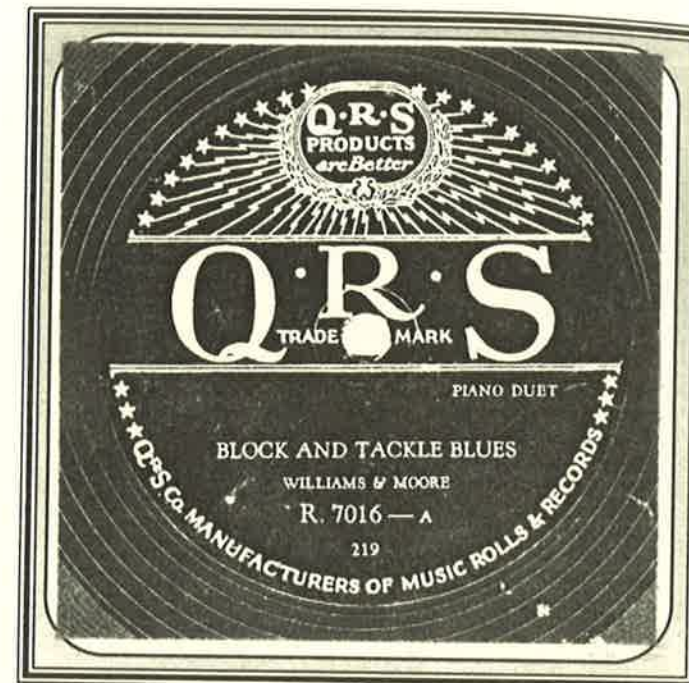
*In/Evil Woman Blues*—Paramount 12662. Less than 10; Smith N-, John Tefteller E+, Whelan E+, Kent "Got an E copy from David Boedinghaus via Frank Mare about 25-30 years ago. I don't think the Wiggins' are especially scarce, except for 12916." Joe Lauro "E+ with a tight hc from 'Good Rockin' Tonight' before the Wall St. crash of '99." George Paulus V++, Jim Prohaska V+. ("Boodle It" Williams)—Broadway 5086. Two or three? Roger Misiewicz E+.

James Wiggins (acc. by Blind Leroy Garnett p.)—*Forty-Four Blues/Frisco Bound*—Paramount 12860. Less than 10. Sherwin Dunner E, Lauro E "from Vreede." Smith E, Helge Thygesen E-, Paulus V++, Andy Hale V, Whelan V, ("James Harris")—Broadway 5061. One or two? None reported.

James Wiggins (acc. by Blind Leroy Garnett p.)—*My Lovin' Blues/Weary Heart Blues*—Paramount 12878. Less than 15. Smith E+, Tefteller E+, Thygesen EE+, Lauro E "from Vreede." Shor E, Spottswood E, Misiewicz V+ "pressure marks, from Altshuler?" Garon V.

James Wiggins (acc. by Blind Leroy Garnett p.)—*Corinne Corinna Blues/Gotta Shave 'Em Dry*—Paramount 12916. Five or six. Smith N-, Clint Wilson E/E+, Shor V+, Whelan G+.

Arnold Wiley—*Windy City/Arnold Wiley Rag*—Brunswick 7113. Less than 20. Prohaska N-, Randy Stehle N-, Kent "E+ to N-, I don't think it's particularly scarce either—probably over 25—I've seen it in a lot of jazz collections, and it was released (Dec. 1929??), just before record press-



**First of four versions—'Walk half  
a block down State Street...'**

ing quantities tumbled." Joe Bussard E+, J.R.T. Davies E+, Ate van Delden E+, Wilson E+, Dunner E, Lauro E "don't think this is too rare." Keith Miller E, Bill Thompson E, Crumb E- "rare or merely scarce?" Smith E-, Whelan E, Andy Hale V+, Paulus E- crk.

Arnold Wiley—*Jumping Blues/Spider In Your Dumpling*—Paramount 12955. Two or three. Wilson EE+ "fine, fine disc; but then, that's just my opinion. After all, I like all my records." Spottswood E, Whelan E, Andy Hale E- with 1-inch hc. Williams & Moore (Blythe & Burton)—*Block And Tackle Blues/Dustin' The Keys*—QRS 7016. Less than five. Stehle N-, Spottswood E, Whelan E, Lauro V+, Mike Montgomery V.

"Jabo" Williams—*Ko Ko Mo Blues—Part I/Ko Ko Mo Blues—Part 2*—Paramount 13127. Three? Nevins V, Whelan V- to V, Broadway 5111 (as "Jimmie Anderson") One known. R. Crumb G-.

"Jabo" Williams—*Pollock Blues/Fat Mama Blues*—Paramount 13130. Four? Gayle Wardlow E+, Smith E, Whelan E. "Jabo" Williams—*House Lady Blues/My Woman Blues*—Paramount 13136. One known. Whelan G to G+/G.

"Jabo" Williams—*Jab Blues/Pratt City Blues*—Paramount 13141. Three? Whelan E to E+ "the Bill Russell copy (via Gayle Wardlow) reissued on A.M. in late '40s," Smith E- [1960: Pat Cather found this one in Birmingham].

Mary Lou Williams—*Night Life/Drag 'Em*—Brunswick 7178. Less than 15. Werner Benecke N-, Rich Nevins N-, Grant Cairns E+, Dunner E, Dick Raichelson E/E+, Lauro E "this is rarer than 7113 Wiley." Spottswood E, Jim Wil-

liams E-/V+, Montgomery "V or V+." Sammy Williams—*House of David Blues/I've Got A Song For Sale*—Autograph (unnumbered, red label). Less than five. Lauro V+, Montgomery V+, Prohaska V+, Whelan V+ (digs)

Sammy Williams—*Mandy, Make Up Your Mind/Mama's Gone Goodbye*—Autograph (unnumbered, blue label). Less than five. Marty Alexander E+, Whelan E-, Montgomery V+, Berresford V, Lauro V with crk. Paulus "had E copy, traded." Sid Williams/(George H. Tremmer)—*Mississippi Shivers/(Some Of These Days)—Champion 15372*. Less than 10. Possibly as Sid Williams?/(as Preston Lillard?)—*Mississippi Shivers/(The Jockey Blues)—Superior 329*. None known.

Sidney Williams/(Watson's Pullman Porters)—*Mississippi Shivers/(Barbecue Blues)*—Gennett 6353. Less than 10. Bussard E, Lauro V+ "EBay." Nevins V+, Whelan V+, Stehle "E with repaired hc." Sidney Williams/(Slim Johnson [The Blues Crooner])—*Mississippi Shivers/(If Mama Has Outside Lovin' [Papa Has Outside Lovin' Too])*—Gennett 2020 and 20339 (20339 is at bottom of label). Less than five. Lauro E+ "from Mark Barresford." Whelan E-, Bill Frase V+, Prohaska V. Bill Frase: "I suspect this was originally intended to be a Hershel Gold Seal. The catalog number fits, and it is a Minneapolis recording—possibly, because it's described as a 'race' record, it went to Gnt. label." Herschel Gold Seal 2020. None reported.

Sid Williams—*Rag Doll/Nola*—Vocalion 15689. Less than 10. Whelan E+ (and an autographed E- copy: "Hello Best Wishes to Ernie From Sid Williams."), Stehle V+,



**Is he still teaching piano  
in Minneapolis?**

Prohaska "sold a V+ copy." Sid Williams\*—*St. Louis Blues/My Pet*—Vocalion 15691. Less than 15. Whelan E+, Lauro E. Bill Frase: "Jon Noring, who was here at the time, got in touch with Sidney Williams. Have lost contact with Jon. He may have moved to San Francisco." \*[Ed. note: Bruce Brecke reported that Sid Williams was giving piano lessons in the early '90s from his home in Minneapolis.]

**STRING/  
JUG/  
SKIFFLE**

Minnie Wallace (acc. by Memphis Jug Band)—*Dirty Butter/The Old Folks Started It*—Victor 38547. Less than 15. BMI file copy N-, Wilson N, R. Nevins N-Paulus N-, Crumb E+, Raichelson E+, Whelan E, Dunner E-, Shor E-, Lauro V++ "from Nauck, Spring '03." R. Hadley V+ "I got this for \$2 in an antique shop in Glendale, CA in early '70s." Misiewicz V-. Van Delden "traded E+ to Denmark a few years ago." Helge Thygesen "I don't have the Victor—only the Bluebird (probably not much more common)—but there is an E+ copy in Denmark." Rorrer "had V+." Minnie Wallace Acc. Her Night Hawks—*The Cockeyed World/Field Mouse Stomp*—Vocalion 03106. Less than 10.



Paulus E, Tefteller E, Don Kent: "E to E—A nice fun record I obtained from Mike Stewart." Shor E-, Smith E-, Thygesen E, Stehle E-, R. Crumb V+ "Field Mouse Stomp—great lyrics—I'm sure that the original title for that song was Mickey Mouse Stomp, but the company was afraid of the Disney Corporation's ire, so changed the name. I love Minnie Wallace's rough, scolding delivery:

Tain't no use you doggin' me 'round,  
You try to pay (lay?) ev'ry broad in town—  
No use to think that you are cute,  
You look like a monkey in a baseball suit—  
No use thinkin' you are right—  
Payin' (layin') a different broad every night—  
You come in creepin' just like a louse,  
You got a face like Mickey Mouse!"

**Minnie Wallace Acc. Her Night Hawks—**Let's All Do That Thing/Pick 'Em Up and Put 'Em Down—Vocalion 03154. Less than five. Paulus E, Smith E, Thygesen E "this was Wardlow's former copy, sold by M. Stewart this year. In my opinion, the best of her 3 records." Shor E-, Stehle E- **Bud Warner and His Red Caps (Henry Johnson & His Boys)/(Little Joe Jackson and His Boys [Frank Bunch and His Fuzzy Wuzzies])—Down Home Special (Fourth Avenue Stomp)—**Bell 1174. Two known? Jim Prohaska E, Whelan "had G+, went to Europe 1969." **Washboard Walter and His Band/Washboard Walter—Narrow Face Blues/Insurance Man Blues—**Paramount 12954. Two or three. John Tefteller E+. **Washboard Walter—Overall Cheater Blues (284-1)/Disconnected Mama—**Paramount 12991. Two? None reported. **Washboard Walter—Overall Cheater**

**Blues (284-2)/Disconnected Mama—**Paramount 12991. One or two. Paul Garon E-.

**Washboard Walter/Black Byrd and Washboard Walter—Wuffin' Blues/I Don't Care What You Do—**Paramount 13100. One or two. None reported.

**Lizzie Washington (acc. by Lonnie Johnson and John Erby)—Mexico Blues/Daddy Threw Me Down Blues—**Black Patti 8054. None known; Herwin 92040. Less than five. Thygesen "sold my V- copy with a 1-inch crk to Roger Misiewicz."

**Watson's Pullman Porters/(Sidney Williams)—Barbecue Blues/(Mississippi Shivers)—**Gennett 6353. Less than 10. [see under Sidney Williams].

**Watson's Pullman Porters/(Geo. Jefferson & Willie Woods)—Down Home Special/(Bearcat Blues)—**Gennett 6378. Less than five. Bill Thompson E, Whelan V

**Whistler's Jug Band—Chicago Flip (12025-A)/Jerry O' Mine (12026)—**Gennett 5554. Less than 10. Bussard E-, Stehle E- "record is not worn, but hard to grade because of some graininess and very low recorded sound level." Whelan V to V+ "not grainy," Crumb V "(grainy surface)." Silvertone 4037. Less than five. Joe Lauro: "I saw the Silvertone on eBay a few months ago in E+ with a \$500 minimum...no one bid!"

**Whistler's Jug Band—Chicago Flip (12025-B)/Jerry O' Mine (12026-A)—**Gennett 5554. One or two. None reported. **Whistler Acc. by His Jug Band—Jail House Blues/I'm A Jazz Baby—**Gennett 5614. Less than 10. J.R.T. Davies E,

Dunner E, Garon E, Thompson E, Paulus E-, Berresford V+, Bussard V, King "had V." Lauro "Nauck had an E+ of the Gennett with a \$1000 Minimum 02/03." Hadley "G, got in LA, barely plays." Thygesen "sold G to young collector in Japan."

**Whistler & His Jug Band—Low Down Blues/The Vamps of "28"—**OKeh 8469. Ten to 15. Bussard E-, J.R.T. Davies V+, Lauro V++ "from Prohaska." Mare V+, Shor V, Whelan V, Garon V-, Kaplan G. Rorrer "I had an E+ copy of this—really nice record." Thygesen "sold V- to a young collector in Japan."

**Whistler & His Jug Band—The Jug Band Special/Pig Meat Blues—**OKeh 8816. Less than 10. Lauro E "from Howard Berg at the Bash 10 years ago." Dunner E-, Shor E-, Crumb G+.

**Whistler's Jug Band—Foldin' Bed/Hold That Tiger—**Victor 23305. Less than five. BMI file copy N-, Van Delden E+, J.R. T. Davies E "more than 20." Dunner E, Mare E-, Nevins E-, Lauro V "from Record Finder about 10 years ago. Had E+ which went to Germany 15 years ago. Traded some Spider Man comics to get it!" Raichelson V, bite 2 grvs., Crumb [cond. unlisted].

**Whistlin' Pete and Daddy Stovepipe—Black Snake Blues/Tuxedo Blues—**Gennett 6212. Less than five. Benecke E, Kent: "E to E-. On bad, but not the worst Gennett shellac, a freebie from Altschuler for turning him on to the E.B. Sullivan collection." Smith E-, Bell V+, Whelan V+/V, Tsotsi V-. Bussard "N on Champion."



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April 20, 1927: Two reported



Kent: 'A stunning performance!'



Thygesen: 'cannot think of anyone better'

**Chicken Wilson and Skeeter Hinton—**Myrtle Avenue Stomp/D.C. Rag—QRS 7051. Less than 10. Smith E+, Kent: "E to E-, from Petersburg, VA, 1984. A stunning performance." Whelan V+ to E-, Nevins V+

**Chicken Wilson and Skeeter Hinton—**Chicken Wilson Blues/House Snake Blues—QRS 7052. Less than 15; Benecke N-, Mare E+, Nevins E+, Bussard E, Jim Williams E/E-E, Smith E-, Kelly V+, Lauro V, Kent [cond?] "from Warren Hicks, I think. A less than stunning performance." Thompson V+ "pressure crk to lbl." Thygesen V-. **George Wilson and Jimmy Hinton—**Paramount 12843. Less than five.

**George Wilson and Jimmy Hinton—Frog Eye Stomp/Station House Rag—**QRS 7060. Less than five. George Paulus V++.

## SANCTIFIED

**Rev. I. B. Ware with Wife and Son—I Wouldn't Mind Dying (But I Gotta Go By Myself)/You Better Quit Drinking Shine—**Vocalion 1235. Less than five. Rich Nevins N-, Joe Bussard E, Francis Smith E, Frank Mare V+, Roger Misiewicz V. Thygesen V "had it E-, but traded 2 years ago to Levine in New York." Shor "Marv Elias has this. I always thought it was a super record."

**Washington White—I Am In The Heavenly Way/The Promise True And Grand—**Victor 38615. Ten? BMI file copy N-, Nevins N-, Paulus E(?), Tefteller E-, Kevin Cleary V+, R. Crumb V+ "from you again!" Misiewicz "E-, repaired 3-inch ec,

ticks. From Shor?" Rorrer "had E-."

**Brother Williams' Memphis Sanctified Singers—He's Got The Whole World In His Hand/I Will Meet You At The Station—**Vocalion 1482. Less than 10. Bussard N, Clint Wilson E+ "a honey—got this from my friend Ron Brown."

**Rabbits Foot Williams/(Jim Foster [Sam Collins])—I'm Gonna Cross The River of Jordan—Some O' These Days/(I Want To Be Like Jesus In My Heart)—**Silvertone 5172. Five or six. Thygesen E+ "if you like harmonica blues/sanctified like I do, I cannot think of anyone better than this one!" Nevins E, Whelan E-/V+ "once had 2 E+ copies, but pressings had built-in surface noise." Bussard V+.

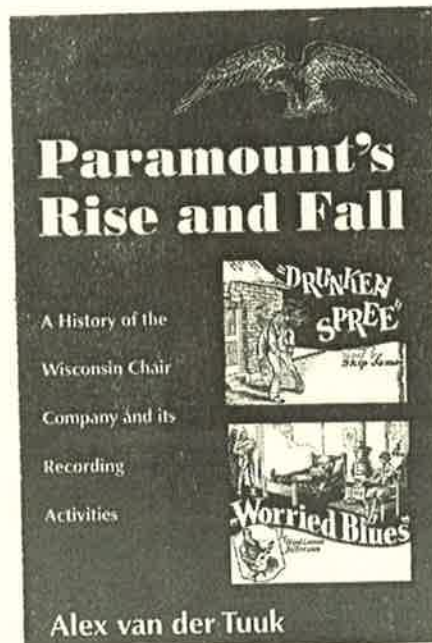
R. Crumb: Deacon Wilson & Congregation—[titles? unissued?—Vocalion 1173 E+ white-label Decca file copy with a ditto-printed sticker on it, from the late\* Bob Altschuler. He told me how he bribed the night security guard to let him in the back door, and for five nights in a row, he loaded a duffle bag with as many rare Vocalions & Brunswicks as he could before the Decca Company had the whole archive hauled to the dump! He had tried to get them to sell him the records before, but they were barbarians who could not be reasoned with." \*[not deceased] Russ Shor: "You should add: **Rev. P.W. Williams & George Alexander's Sanctified Singers—**Paramount 12742—*Testifying Meeting 1 & 2*. It's a real stomper almost all the way through on both sides (I have E-). I've never seen another copy. **Washington White—**Here's a story for 78Q. About 15 years ago, a guy running an antique shop in Quakertown Pa. promised me he had a whole box of 78s, but just couldn't find them now. I went

back a couple of times to encounter promises of 'I'll get to them...' Then, he goes out of business, and the haulers clean out the building, like tossing the box of 78s out the attic window. The box had dealers stock Victors, and one of the few that didn't get completely smashed was this—but it did have a nasty crack to the label. That's how they got rare in the first place."

J.J. Holiday: I would also like to submit the possibility of one Sanctified title you have not listed—a maybe? **Rev. H.C. Woodsworth—The New Birth (508)/Well of Salvation (510)—**Herwin 92010 V+." Clint Wilson: "I have Cl. Williams QRS 'Beau Koo Jack' in EE+. You left this one off your list...I have 'Gas Man Blues' on Superior in V+ (one of the greatest! Not on your list)." [Ed.—absinthe makes the mind absent]

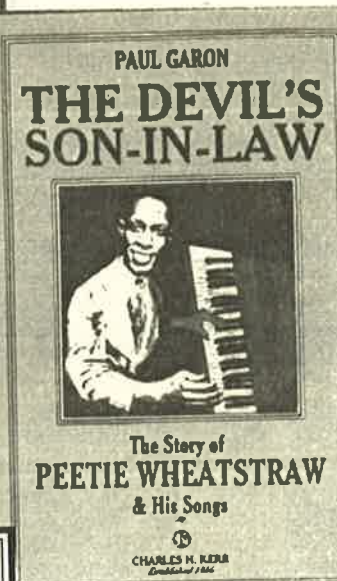
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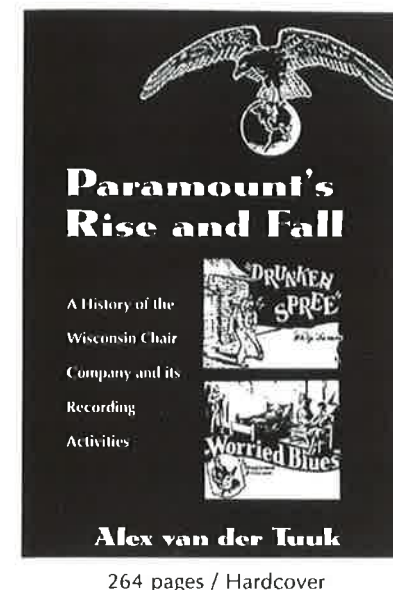


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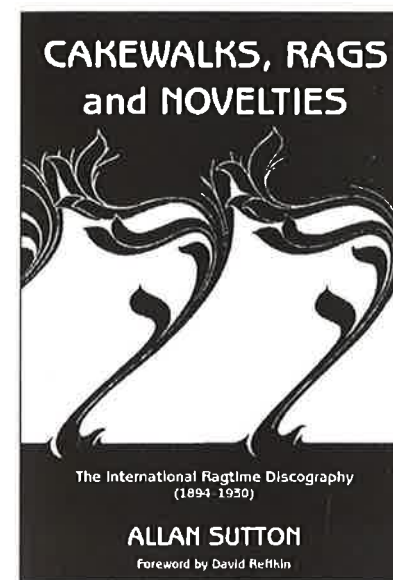
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