

VOLUME 2

THE BLUES

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJ 2802

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DARK WAS THE NIGHT ..... BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON  
BLACK WOMAN ..... VERA HALL  
BLACK SNAKE MOAN ..... BLIND LEMMON JEFFERSON  
MISERY BLUES ..... MA RAINY  
WORKING MAN'S BLUES ..... KING OLIVER AND HIS CREOLE JAZZ BAND  
NO EASY RIDER BLUES ..... GERTRUDE PERKINS  
LORD I JUST CAN'T KEEP FROM CRYING ..... BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON  
HOW LONG BLUES ..... JIMMY YANCEY  
MR. JELLY LORD ..... JELLY ROLL MORTON  
BRIDWELL BLUES ..... NOLAN WELSH  
CARLESS LOVE ..... TUXEDO JAZZ ORCHESTRA  
MEAN OLD BED BUG BLUES ..... BESSIE SMITH  
I'M NOT ROUGH ..... LOUIS ARMSTRONG



# Jazz VOL 2

## THE BLUES

### FOREWORD

THE THIRTEEN BLUES SUNG AND PLAYED IN THIS 40-MINUTE ANTHOLOGY ARE PART OF A CONTINUING PROJECT BEING CARRIED FORWARD BY FOLKWAYS RECORDS. TAPE-EDITED COLLECTIONS OF HISTORIC MATERIAL RELATED TO AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC, JAZZ, RAGTIME, AND BLUES ARE BEING PRESENTED SO THAT AMATEURS AND STUDENTS MAY TURN TO THEM AS THEY WOULD TO REFERENCE BOOKS.

THERE IS A NEED FOR SUCH REFERENCE RECORDS. TO BEGIN WITH, NO SUCH SOURCE MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE. MANY RECORDS CONTRIBUTED TO THE SERIES HAVE COME FROM PRIVATE LIBRARIES WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN TREASURED AS UNIQUE COPIES. TO CITE ONE EXAMPLE, THE RECORDING OF VERA HALL'S BLACK WOMAN (SELECTION 2, SIDE 1) HAS NEVER BEEN ISSUED PREVIOUSLY.

IT WAS ALSO FELT THAT IF BLUES AND OTHER MATERIAL INCLUDED IN THE SERIES WERE GROUPED AND CORRELATED, THE ARRANGEMENT WOULD MAKE FRESH LISTENING AND STIMULATE NEW STUDY. POSSIBLY SOME RE-EVALUATIONS OF THE RICHLY REWARDING AND VASTLY NEGLECTED ROOT MATTER OF AMERICAN MUSIC MAY DERIVE FROM THIS METHOD OF PRESENTATION.

A THIRD REASON FOR PUBLICATION OF A CONTINUOUS ANTHOLOGY IS THAT OF PRESERVING, BEFORE THIS MATERIAL IS IRREVOCABLY LOST, SOME RECORD OF WHAT ACTUALLY TRANSPIRED IN A PERIOD ALREADY DIM IN THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO MADE IT.

THERE IS ALSO THE OPPORTUNITY TO FILL A GAP LEFT WIDE OPEN BY WRITTEN METHODS OF MUSICAL NOTATION. MUSICAL REPORTING, COPY-BOOK STYLE, LIMPS WHEN PUT ALONGSIDE THE PHONOGRAPH RECORD AND TAPE MACHINE. IF WE WANT TO KNOW HOW MA RAINEY SANG A BLUES IN 1927, WE HAVE NO WRITTEN TRANSCRIPTIONS. EVEN IF WE DID, THERE WOULD BE THE FACT THAT NOTATIONS OF BLUES, FOLK, AND JAZZ MUSIC ARE INADEQUATE TO THE SOUNDS THEMSELVES. HERETOFORE, INDIVIDUALS UNABLE TO HEAR MUSIC OF THE SORT CONTAINED IN THESE ANTHOLOGIES HAVE HAD TO DEPEND ON SPARSE AND HALTING WRITTEN NOTATIONS. SUCH ATTEMPTS HOLD UP WEAKLY BESIDE THE RHYTHMIC FREEDOM, THE GUSTO, AND THE GLIDING INTONATIONS OF ACTUAL PERFORMANCE. INTERESTED PERSONS HAVE HAD TO BUMBLE THROUGH A QUAGMIRE OF FOOTNOTES. THERE IS A PRIM FUSSINESS ABOUT SUCH NOTES THAT BETRAYS THE ERROR OF TRYING TO FIT THE ROUNDNESS OF THIS MUSIC INTO THE RECTANGULARITY OF EUROPEAN NOTATION. "IN STANZA 2," ONE PILGRIM TELLS US, "THIS INCOMPLETE

MEASURE AND THE UPBEAT TO STANZA 3 ARE OMITTED ENTIRELY. IN ALL STANZAS, THE SECOND AND THIRD UPBEATS ARE OMITTED". A SECOND ADMITS SADLY "THERE IS ACTUALLY MORE SYNCOPATION THROUGHOUT THAN CAN BE INDICATED".

NOW, RECORDS CONFRONT THE LISTENER WITH THE ACTUALITY OF SUCH MUSIC. HIS OWN EARS CAN TELL HIM WHEN THERE IS SYNCOPATION, OR WHEN A VOCAL SLUR THAT WOULD THROW ANY NOTATION IS JUST SIMPLY THERE, BECAUSE A SINGER WANTED IT THERE.

### BLUES

BY FREDERIC RAMSEY JR.  
CO-EDITOR OF JAZZMEN,  
THE JAZZ RECORD BOOK,  
JAZZWAYS.

WE KNOW NOW, OR ASSUME UNTIL SHOWN OTHERWISE, THAT BLUES BEGAN WITH THE HUMAN VOICE. AFTER THAT CAME THE BANJO, AND THE GUITAR. THE PIANO TOOK UP THE SONG, NOT AS A VOICE, BUT AS A STRINGED INSTRUMENT ACCOMPANYING VOICE. THEN THE WIND INSTRUMENTS, NOT AS ACCOMPANIMENT ALONE, BUT OFTEN AS EXTRA VOICES. WHEN LOUIS ARMSTRONG'S CORNET WEAVES ACCOMPANIMENT TO A BLUES SUNG BY NOLAN WELSH, HE IS BREATHING AS HE WOULD IF HE WERE SINGING BLUES HIMSELF. WHEN JOHNNY DODDS' CLARINET CONTRIBUTES AN INSPIRED COUNTERPOINT TO THE MELODIC PARTS CARRIED BY TWO CORNETS DURING FINAL CHORUSES OF WORKING MAN'S BLUES, HE IS BREATHING AND BLOWING WITH A MEMORY - THE MEMORY OF BLUES IN HIS HEART, BLUES AS SUNG. WHEN THE TROMBONE GLIDES IN AND OUT OF THE SAME PASSIONATE COUNTERPOINT OF THESE CHORUSES, THE INSTRUMENT SINGS ALONG BECAUSE BLUES-INSPIRED VOCAL CHORDS OF THE MAN WHO BLOWS IT ARE SHAPING THE INFLECTIONS THAT COME OUT OF ITS BELL.

A LONE WORKER IN A WIDE, PARCHED FIELD, A MOTHER WITH A CHILD, A SLAVE WITH A COMPLAINT, A LOVER WITHOUT LOVE, A MOANING, EERIE UNISON OF VOICES RISING AND FALLING ACROSS HOT PLAINS, THE SHARP, ROLLICKING CLICK OF GUITAR STRINGS AT A SUKEY JUMP, A SAD SONG IN A SHACK ALONG SOME LONESOME RAILROAD LINE, ALL GAVE BLUES THEIR SADNESS, THEIR JOY, THEIR COUNTRY START AND THEIR COUNTRY WAYS. FROM AFRICA, AS HAROLD COURLANDER POINTS OUT IN THE PREFACE TO "NEGRO FOLK MUSIC OF ALABAMA" (EFL 1418, TWO VOLUMES), CAME OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF BLUES SINGING. "THE CONSPICUOUS VALUE PLACED UPON USE OF FALSETTO" IS ONE; RHYTHMIC PUNCTUATIONS, "THE 'AH-HMM! OR 'ANH HANH! OF THE FIELD BLUES", IS ANOTHER. THE "HUMMING STYLE... USED IN MUCH NEGRO SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS SINGING IS NON-EUROPEAN". COURLANDER ALSO POINTS OUT THAT "THE PERSISTENCE OF SONGS OF PROTEST, RECRIMINATION, AND RIDICULE IN THE SECULAR MUSIC OF THE NEGRO HAS ALREADY BEEN NOTED BY SUCH ANTHROPOLOGISTS AS MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS AS EVIDENCE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WEST AFRICAN INFLUENCE".



OTHER CHARACTERISTICS NOTED BY COURLANDER INCLUDE THE CHANGING OF LAST CONSONANTS OF A PHRASE (R, L, K) TO AN M OR N FOR SOFTENING; THE "EXISTENCE OF A SINGING LEADER AND ONE OR MORE 'HELPER'S' AND THE TREATMENT IN WHICH THE 'HELPER'S' LINES SOMEWHAT OVERLAP THOSE OF THE LEADER, IS AFRICAN IN CONCEPTION".

DEFINITIONS OF BLUES HAVE LONG HAD A HALTING WAY OF CATCHING UP WITH ONE BLUES PERFORMANCE OR ARTIST, THEN HAVING TO LOPE OFF AGAIN AFTER A NEW RENDITION IN ORDER TO REDUCE IT IN ITS TURN TO A QUINTESSENCE OF WORDS. MELODICALLY, THE BURDEN OF A BLUES SONG GETS SUNG OR SAID IN THE SPACE OF TWELVE OR EIGHT BARS OF MUSIC (OR SIXTEEN, WHEN THE EIGHT ARE REPEATED). THE PARTLY FLATTED THIRD AND SEVENTH NOTES ARE KNOWN AS BLUE NOTES AND CONSIDERED SINE QUA NON OF A BLUES PERFORMANCE. BEYOND THAT, THE ACTUALITY OF EACH PERFORMANCE BRINGS VARIATIONS ON VARIATIONS. AN INSPIRED COOK ACCEPTS THE IDEA OF A CURRY, BUT KNOWS THERE'S TOO MUCH FENUGREEK IN THE PRINTED RECIPE; SHE (OR HE) ADDS ONLY A PINCH OF CARDAMOM AND BLENDS THE DISH WITH LOVE, NEVER FORGETTING THAT THE CHUTNEY WILL BE TART, HOT, AND SWEET. IN THIS SAME WAY, A BLUES SINGER BRINGS INTO PLAY AN INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS OR HER VOICE TO PRODUCE THE BLUES PERFORMANCE.

THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER DEFINITIONS OF BLUES, MORE IN TERMS OF WHERE THEY FIT INTO THE GENERAL PATTERN OF AFRO-AMERICAN MUSIC, SUCH AS THE ONE THAT CHARACTERIZES BLUES AS A "SECULAR SPIRITUAL". THAT IS TO SAY, INSTEAD OF EXPRESSING A RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OR EXPERIENCE, A BLUES TELLS A STORY ABOUT AN EVERYDAY LONGING OR EVENT. THERE IS CORRESPONDENCE, TOO, BETWEEN THE FAST AND SLOW TIME OF SPIRITUALS, AND THE TEMPI OF BLUES. MA RAINEY'S MISERY BLUES (SIDE 1, SELECTION 4) FOR EXAMPLE, IS TAKEN AT A CHOPPY DANCEABLE RHYTHM THAT PARALLELS THE "COMMON METER" OF THE SPIRITUAL. JIMMY YANCEY'S HOW LONG BLUES (SIDE 2, SELECTION 1) IS QUITE SLOW, AND SHOWS KINSHIP TO THE LONG METER OF THE SPIRITUAL.

THEN THERE IS THE DEFINITION SPOKEN BY THE SINGER, LEAD BELLY, IN THE "TAKE THIS HAMMER" ALBUM (FOL 4 AND FP 4) OF FOLKWAYS RECORDS: "NOW I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THE BLUES. ALL NEGROES LIKE BLUES. WHY? BECAUSE THEY WAS BORN WITH THE BLUES. AND NOW, EVERYBODY HAVE THE BLUES. SOMETIMES THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS. BUT WHEN YOU LAY DOWN AT NIGHT, TURN FROM ONE SIDE OF THE BED ALL NIGHT TO THE OTHER AND CAN'T SLEEP, WHAT'S THE MATTER? BLUES GOT YOU. OR WHEN YOU GET UP IN THE MORNIN', AND SIT ON SIDE OF THE BED - MAY HAVE A MOTHER OR FATHER, SISTER OR BROTHER, BOY FRIEND OR GIRL FRIEND, OR HUSBAND OR A WIFE AROUND - YOU DON'T WANT NO TALK OUT OF UM. THEY AIN'T DONE YOU NOTHIN', YOU AIN'T DONE THEM NOTHIN' -- BUT WHAT'S THE MATTER? BLUES GOT YOU. WELL, YOU GET UP AND SHEV YOUR FEET DOWN UNDER THE TABLE AND LOOK DOWN IN YOUR PLACE -- MAY HAVE CHICKEN AND RICE, TAKE MY EGVICE, YOU WALK AWAY AND SHAKE YOUR HEAD, YOU SAY, 'LORD HAVE MERCY. I CAN'T EAT, AND I CAN'T SLEEP, WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHY, THE BLUES STILL GOT YOU. THEY WANT TO TALK TO YOU. YOU GOT TO TELL UM SOMETHING...."

## THE RECORD SIDE 1

### BAND 1

DARK WAS THE NIGHT, SUNG BY BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON TO GUITAR ACCOMPANIMENT. JAZZ CLASSICS 512. ORIGINAL RELEASE CIRCA 1928. BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON, WHOSE KNOWN OUTPUT OF SOME 24 SIDES WAS A MOST NEGLECTED PART OF THE "RACE" CATALOG OF A LARGE RECORD PRODUCER IN THE TWENTIES, IS A SPIRITUAL SINGER WHOSE MOOD AND WHOSE SONG BORDER ON BLUES. THIS IS ONE OF THE VERY, VERY RARE RECORDED EXAMPLES OF A BLUES-SPIRITUAL THAT IS CHANTED THROUGHOUT. THERE ARE NO WORDS TO THIS SONG, AND NONE ARE NEEDED. THE SOMBRE INFLECTIONS AND EARTHY VIBRATO OF BLIND WILLIE'S VOICE AND THE CHILL, INSISTENT CHORDS STRUCK ON THE GUITAR TELL US MORE ABOUT "THE BIRTH OF THE BLUES" THAN THE REAM OF POPULAR SONGS THAT HAS BEEN COMPOSED ON THIS THEME.

### BAND 2

BLACK WOMAN, SUNG BY VERA HALL. RECORDED 1948 BY FREDERIC RAMSEY JR. THERE ARE FEW, IF ANY COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS OF A BLUES SUNG A CAPELLA, WITHOUT ACCOMPANIMENT OF ANY SORT. THERE ARE FEW EXAMPLES OF BLUES FIRST ORIGINATED BY A MAN BEING SUNG BY A WOMAN -- USUALLY IT'S IN THE OTHER DIRECTION; CRADLE-STORIES SUNG BY WOMEN TO THEIR INFANTS ARE LONG REMEMBERED AND LATER RECREATED, VOCALLY OR INSTRUMENTALLY. RICH AMERSON SANG THIS BLUES FIRST, AND HIS VERSION IS TO BE HEARD IN VOLUME 1, SECULAR MUSIC, OF ETHNIC FOLKWAYS LIBRARY'S "NEGRO FOLK MUSIC OF ALABAMA".

### BAND 3

BLACK SNAKE MOAN, SUNG BY BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON WITH GUITAR. JAZZ CLASSICS 511A, ORIGINAL RELEASE CIRCA 1927. STARTING AS LORN, LONE SONGS OF INDIVIDUALS AT WORK AND AT PLAY, OR AS FIELD CALLS AND CHANTS, BLUES SOON WORKED THEIR WAY INTO THE REPERTOIRE OF MINSTRELS WHO AS CHILDREN HAD HEARD THEM AROUND HOME. WHEN THE CHILDREN GREW UP AND TOOK TO THE ROAD, STRUMMING AND SINGING AS THEY SHIFTED RESTLESSLY UP, DOWN, AND ACROSS THE BORDERS OF A DOZEN SOUTHERN STATES TO MAKE A RAGGED LIVING BY MUSIC ALONE, THE BLUES WENT ALL THE WAY WITH THEM.

LIKE BLIND WILLIE, BLIND LEMON CHANTS ON THIS RECORD. BUT THE CHANTS ARE NOW MORE OF AN INJECTED INTERLUDE; THE BLUES, GROWN UP AND ON THE ROAD NOW, ARE ALREADY ARTICULATE, TELLING A HARD, ROUGH STORY OF WOMAN'S INFIDELITY. WHILE STILL IN HIS TEENS, LEAD BELLY WAS "LEAD MAN" FOR BLIND LEMON, AND HAS RECALLED THE ASSOCIATION WITH HIS TEACHER WITH GREAT NOSTALGIA. MANY TRACES OF BLIND LEMON'S STYLE WERE IN LEAD BELLY'S DELIVERY, YEARS AFTER HE AND BLIND LEMON HAD GONE DIFFERENT WAYS.

### BAND 4

MISERY BLUES, SUNG BY MA RAINEY, ACCOMPANIED BY HER GEORGIA JAZZ BAND. PARAMOUNT 12508-B, RELEASED CIRCA 1927. MA RAINEY, "LITTLE AND LOW" AS DESCRIBED BY THE POET STERLING BROWN, WAS A SHORT, TUBBY WOMAN WITH A POWERFUL VOICE THAT COULD RIDE OUT OVER THE HUBBUB OF A MINSTREL TENT SHOW AND GO DEEP INTO THE HEARTS OF HER AUDIENCE. SHE WAS BORN APRIL 26, 1886, IN COLUMBUS, GEORGIA; NOT ENOUGH IS KNOWN ABOUT HER. DAUGHTER OF SHOW PEOPLE,



SHE APPEARED WHILE STILL A CHILD IN A "TALENT SHOW". AT 15, SHE WAS MARRIED AND ON THE ROAD WITH HER HUSBAND PA RAINÉY'S TROUPE, THE RABBIT FOOT MINSTRELS. WHILE IN THIS SAME TROUPE, SHE MET AND ENCOURAGED THE YOUNG BESSIE SMITH. SHE DIED DECEMBER 22, 1939 AT 53 YEARS.

NOT ALL BLUES ARE SAD, AND MISERY BLUES, TITLE NOTWITHSTANDING, IS A SPLENDID EXAMPLE OF A BLUES THAT DENIES ITS SUPPOSED HERITAGE AND COMES UP SMILING. THE WORDS ARE SAD ENOUGH:

"I'M GONNA TELL YOU WHAT I WENT AND  
DONE,  
I GAVE HIM ALL MY MONEY JUST TO HAVE  
SOME FUN. . .  
HE TOLD ME THAT HE LOVED ME, LOVED  
ME SO;  
WHY I'D A MARRIED HIM, I MEAN THE  
WORST OLE SOUL.  
NOW I'M GRIEVIN' ALMOST DYIN'  
JUST BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW THAT HE  
WAS LYIN'. . ."

OUT OF THIS, MA RAINÉY'S MAGIC MAKES A PICARESQUE EPISODE THAT SHE SPINS AT A ROLICKING TEMPO. SHE GETS HER CLIMAX WHEN SHE SINGS "I'VE GOT THE BLUES, DOWN IN MY SHOES", THEN RIDES INTO HER FINAL CHORUSES, WHERE THE COMPLAINT HAS SHIFTED, THE GUY IS FORGOTTEN, AND "I'VE GOT TO GO TO WORK NOW, GET ANOTHER START. . . WORK IS THE THING THAT'S BREAKIN' MY HEART."

THERE WERE JAZZ MUSICIANS TRAVELING AS PART OF MA RAINÉY'S TENT SHOW, AND WHO PLAYED BEHIND HER WHEN SHE SANG. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE NO INSTRUMENTAL SOLOS IN MISERY BLUES, TRUMPET BREAKS AND A LAUGHING TROMBONE ARE TO BE HEARD, WHILE THE TUBA LAYS DOWN A RHYTHMIC BASS FOUNDATION THAT UNDERSCORES THE MIRACLE OF MA RAINÉY'S ANTICIPATORY AND RETARDATORY TIMING.

## BAND 5

WORKING MAN'S BLUES, BY KING OLIVER AND HIS CREOLE JAZZ BAND. KING OLIVER, LOUIS ARMSTRONG, CORNETS; HONORE DUTREY, TROMBONE; JOHNNY DODDS, CLARINET; LIL ARMSTRONG, PIANO; BABY DODDS, DRUMS; JOHNNY ST. CYR, BANJO; CHARLIE JOHNSON, BASS SAX. (PERSONNEL COURTESY OF THE RECORD CHANGER AND THE BRITISH DISCOGRAPHER, A.J. MC CARTHY) J HJCA 7. ORIGINAL RELEASE RECORDED IN CHICAGO SEPTEMBER, 1923.

MORE THAN 27 YEARS AGO, JUST THREE YEARS AFTER THE FIRST VOCAL NEGRO BLUES HAD BEEN PUT ON RECORD, THE JAZZ CORNETIST KING OLIVER ASSEMBLED AN 8-PIECE BAND FOR A DATE AT THE OKEH RECORDING STUDIOS HARD BY THE LOOP, IN CHICAGO. ONE OF THE NUMBERS THEY CHOSE TO RECORD WAS A BLUES WHICH OLIVER AND HIS GIFTED YOUNG PIANIST, LIL ARMSTRONG, HAD WRITTEN OUT, ARRANGED, AND COPYRIGHTED WITH THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS UNDER DATE OF AUGUST 11, 1923.

AS PERFORMED IN THE STUDIOS IN SEPTEMBER, IT STILL STANDS, MANY YEARS LATER, AS A SUPERB EXAMPLE OF A VOCAL NEGRO BLUES TRANSPOSED FOR ORCHESTRA. AT THAT TIME, NEITHER POPULAR NOR CLASSIC COMPOSERS KNEW MUCH ABOUT BLUES, AND FEWER STILL HAD HEARD AN AUTHENTIC BLUES SUNG BY A NEGRO. THE NEGRO BANDS PLAYING IN WHITE CAFES DID NOT PLAY BLUES SO CLOSE TO THE VOCAL TRADITION AS IS THIS ARRANGEMENT

OF WORKING MAN'S BLUES; IF THEY DID PLAY BLUES FOR WHITE AUDIENCES, AS THEY DID OCCASIONALLY ON RIVERBOATS, THEY ALTERED THEM INTO A SORT OF QUIANT, MINSTRELISED VERSION. BUT THE FACT THAT KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND WAS PLAYING IN A DANCE-HALL, THE ROYAL (LINCOLN) GARDENS, THAT WAS ATTENDED BY CHICAGO'S SOUTH SIDE NEGRO POPULATION, MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR OLIVER'S CREOLE BAND TO STAY CLOSE TO THE BLUES VEIN.

ALTHOUGH HE MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN IT AT THE TIME, KING OLIVER WAS IN THE VANGUARD, AND IT WAS HIS ARRANGEMENTS AND THE PLAYING OF MEMBERS OF HIS ORCHESTRA, THAT FIRST BROUGHT THE RICH MUSICAL LITERATURE OF BLUES TO THE ATTENTION OF OTHER ARRANGERS. HIS YOUNG CORNETIST, LOUIS ARMSTRONG, HAS TOLD US YEARS LATER OF THE WAY OLIVER'S MUSICAL IDEAS WERE ABSORBED BY OTHERS; "THEY TRIED TO GET JOE TO COME TO NEW YORK WHEN HE GOT HOT, BUT HE WOULDN'T COME. AND ALL THIS TIME THE CATS WERE COMING OUT FROM NEW YORK WITH THOSE BIG SHOWS AND PICKING UP ON WHAT HE WAS PLAYING. JOE OLIVER WAS THE MAN IN CHICAGO. BUT HE CAME TO NEW YORK TOO LATE. WHEN HE GOT THERE, EVERYBODY WAS PLAYING HIM."<sup>(1)</sup>

THERE IS DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE, TOO, THAT OLIVER'S INTEREST IN BLUES REACHED BACK INTO THE COUNTRY WHERE HE HAD FIRST HEARD THEM. IT TELLS THE STORY OF HOW BLUES CAME INTO THE CITY, GOT ARRANGED FOR JAZZ BAND, WERE PLAYED, RECORDED, AND THEN STUDIED BY IMITATORS. KING OLIVER ONCE WROTE HIS OLD FRIEND, BUNK JOHNSON, THE TRUMPET PLAYER OF NEW ORLEANS: "IN THE MEANTIME I WILL SEND YOU (A) FEW NUMBERS TO ARRANGE. I CAN GIVE YOU SOME EXTRA CHANGE AS A SIDE (LINE). HAVE YOU GOT ANY GOOD BLUES? IF SO SEND THEM TO ME AND I WILL MAKE THEM BRING YOU SOME REAL MONEY. WHEN MAKING MY ARRANGEMENTS, ALWAYS WRITE THE CORNET A REAL LOW DOWN SOLO (A) LA BUNK. REMEMBER HOW YOU USE TO DRIVE THE BLUES DOWN?"

THE BLUES FANNED OUT FROM KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND IN OTHER WAYS, TOO. WHEN HIS FIRST AND SECOND CHICAGO BANDS HAD BROKEN UP, THE MEN WHO HAD PLAYED WITH HIM TOOK ALONG WHAT THEY HAD LEARNED. SOME, LIKE JOHNNY AND BABY DODDS, WENT WITH ARMSTRONG, ONE OF WHOSE HOT FIVE RECORDINGS CONCLUDES THIS ANTHOLOGY; OTHERS, LIKE BARNEY BIGARD WHO WENT WITH DUKE ELLINGTON, SPREAD OUT TO DIFFERENT ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS. WITH BIGARD WENT SOME OF OLIVER'S BLUES TEACHINGS. DUKE THEN DEVELOPED HIS OWN WAY OF PLAYING BLUES, AND IT WAS A WONDERFUL AND DIFFERENT WAY; THERE WAS NOTHING "COPIED" OR INFERIOR IN WHAT ELLINGTON DID. BUT IT IS TRUE THAT WHEN THE ELLINGTON BAND WAS IN ITS MOST FERTILE BLUES MOOD, MORE THAN A MERE ECHO OF OLIVER'S THEMES CREPT INTO ITS ARRANGEMENTS. ANOTHER LETTER SHOWS THAT OLIVER FELT THERE WAS A BASIS FOR INFRINGEMENT ACTION IN THE CASE OF CREOLE LOVE CALL, WHERE A MELODY USED BY OLIVER IN HIS CAMP MEETING BLUES TURNED UP IN ONLY SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT DRESS. NOTHING EVER CAME OF THE ALLEGED CASE, AS IT IS VERY HARD TO PROVE PATERNITY WITH BLUES.

(1) LOUIS ARMSTRONG, "JOE OLIVER IS STILL KING," THE RECORD CHANGER, JULY-AUGUST, 1950.



**BAND 6**

NO EASY RIDER BLUES, SUNG BY GERTRUDE PERKINS, ACCOMPANIED BY UNKNOWN GUITAR, PIANO, AND TUBA. COLUMBIA 14313D, RELEASED CIRCA 1928.

IN THE "HARVARD DICTIONARY OF MUSIC", ITS AUTHOR WILLI APEL STATES THAT "THE AUTHENTIC FOLK 'BLUES' AND THE MODERN, COMPOSED SPECIES ARE SOMETIMES INDISTINGUISHABLE. SO MANY MILLIONS OF PHONOGRAPH RECORDS OF BLUES SONGS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED THAT NEGROES WHO HEAR THESE RECORDS ACCEPT THEM AS THEIR OWN SONGS AND ADD NEW STANZAS, OR OFTEN CHANGE THE WORDS AND ALTER THE TUNES TO TRANSFORM THEM INTO LOCAL VARIANTS." WHICH IS TO SAY, ONE GOOD BLUES SUGGESTS ANOTHER.

NO EASY RIDER BLUES, SUNG HERE BY GERTRUDE PERKINS, MAY BE AN EXAMPLE OF THE INTERPLAY MR. APEL IS TALKING ABOUT. AT ANY RATE, BESSIE SMITH'S RECORD OF YELLOW DOG BLUES, WITH ITS "DEAR SUE: YOUR EASY RIDER STRUCK THIS BURG TODAY" AND THE REST OF THE STORY ABOUT THE EASY RIDER, OR BOY FRIEND, OF THE LONELY GIRL, WAS ISSUED IN 1925, THREE YEARS BEFORE GERTRUDE PERKINS CAME TO NEW YORK TO MAKE THIS RECORDING. EVEN THOUGH HER MANNER OF SINGING NO EASY RIDER IS QUITE COUNTRYFIED AND UNSOPHISTICATED, COMBINING A HUMMING, CHANTING STYLE WITH WORDS ONLY HALF-INTELLIGIBLE, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT GERTRUDE PERKINS' NO EASY RIDER IS A VARIANT OF ANOTHER VERSION, EITHER RECORDED OR PERFORMED, THAT SHE HAD PREVIOUSLY HEARD OF THIS FINE BLUES. GERTRUDE PERKINS, INCIDENTALLY, IS A CHALLENGE TO COMPILERS OF JAZZ DISCOGRAPHIES, WHO SO FAR HAVE NOT COME UP WITH A SINGLE LISTING OF THIS OR ANY OTHER RECORD OF GERTRUDE'S.

**BAND 7**

LORD I JUST CAN'T KEEP FROM CRYING, SUNG BY BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON, WITH GUITAR AND FEMALE "HELPERS". COLUMBIA 14425-D, RELEASED CIRCA 1929.

HAROLD GOURLANDER, WHO IS GENERAL EDITOR OF THE ETHNIC FOLKWAYS LIBRARY SERIES, SAYS THAT THIS RECORD IS A SPIRITUAL, AND THEREFORE MAY BE OUT OF PLACE IN A BLUES ANTHOLOGY. I HAVE COUNTERED HIS OBJECTION PARTLY BECAUSE I BELIEVE ITS MOOD CAN TELL US MUCH ABOUT BLUES, PARTLY BECAUSE THE SINGER'S SADNESS IS NOT PURELY A RELIGIOUS MATTER ("BUT THE THOUGHTS AS I GET OLDER. . . I FAINT AT WHAT I TOLD HER"), AND MOST OF ALL BECAUSE I LIKE IT AND FEEL THAT IT DOES BELONG HERE. IF THE BLUES ARE, BY ALMOST GENERAL ACCEPTANCE, A SORT OF "SECULAR SPIRITUAL", IT SEEMS TO ME THAT A SPIRITUAL WITH SOME SECULAR CONTENT IS A SATISFACTORY ILLUSTRATION OF THAT FACT. THEN, TOO, I WANTED BLIND WILLIE'S GUITAR STRINGS TO HAVE THE LAST WORD ON THE FIRST SIDE OF THIS BLUES ANTHOLOGY.

**SIDE 2  
BAND 1**

HOW LONG BLUES, PLAYED BY JIMMY YANCEY, PIANO. RECORDED IN CHICAGO DECEMBER, 1943. SESSION 12-002.

EVEN IN THE CITY, A PIANIST CAN PICK UP THE MOOD AND THE MOMENT OF THE BLUES YEARS AFTER THE FIRST, OR SO-CALLED "CLASSIC" (1920-1930) PERIOD OF RECORDING, IF HE'S A MUSICIAN OF THE STATURE OF JIMMY YANCEY.

**BAND 2**

MR. JELLY LORD, TRIO BY JELLY ROLL MORTON, PIANO; JOHNNY DODDS, CLARINET, AND BABY DODDS, DRUMS. BLUEBIRD B10258, RECORDED JUNE, 1927.

THE COMBINATION OF PIANO, CLARINET AND DRUMS GAVE PIANIST-COMPOSER JELLY ROLL MORTON PLENTY OF ROOM FOR AN INSTRUMENTAL EXPOSITION OF BLUES. IN THIS, WE SEE THE WAY A BLUES IDEA IS THE SOLID FOUNDATION ON WHICH MANY A GREAT JAZZ PERFORMANCE IS BUILT.

**BAND 3**

BRIDWELL BLUES, SUNG BY NOLAN WELSH, ACCOMPANIED BY LOUIS ARMSTRONG, CORNET, AND RICHARD M. JONES, PIANO. HJCA 36, ORIGINALY RECORDED JUNE, 1926.

TO HEAR ARMSTRONG PLAY A BLUES ACCOMPANIMENT IS LIKE HEARING BLUES SUNG BY A CORNET. NOLAN WELSH'S STARK DELIVERY OF A HARD-LUCK BLUES IS RELIEVED BY GOLDEN, CHROMATIC FLASHES FROM THE CORNET'S SECOND VOICE, AS IT TAKES ON AT TIMES THE ROLE OF "HELPER" AS WELL AS INSTRUMENTAL ACCOMPANIST

**BAND 4**

CARELESS LOVE, PLAYED BY THE ORIGINAL TUXEDO JAZZ ORCHESTRA, WITH SHOTS MADISON, OSCAR CELESTIN, TRUMPETS; WILLIAM RIDGELY, TROMBONE; WALTER THOMY, CLARINET; EMMA BARRETT, PIANO; JOHN MARRERO, BANJO; SIMON MARRERO, BASS SAX; ABBY FOSTER, DRUMS AND SLIDE WHISTLE. JAZZ CLASSICS 510A, RECORDED IN NEW ORLEANS, 1924.

CARELESS LOVE STARTED OUT AS AN ENGLISH BALLAD BUT BECAME A BLUES IN THE HANDS OF SINGERS AND INSTRUMENTALISTS WHO COULD TRANSPOSE IT TO THEIR WAY OF PERFORMING. DOUBTLESS NEW MELODIC IDEAS WERE ADDED IN THE PROCESS; AT ANY RATE, AS FASHIONED BY THIS BAND AND RECORDED ONLY A YEAR AFTER WORKING MAN'S BLUES, IT STANDS AS AMONG THE MOST HAUNTING AND GRAEFUL OF ALL BLUES MELODIES.

**BAND 5**

MEAN OLD BED BUG BLUES, SUNG BY BESSIE SMITH, ACCOMPANIED BY PORTER GRAINGER, PIANO, AND LINCOLN CONAWAY, GUITAR. COLUMBIA 14205D, RECORDED SEPTEMBER 1927.

WITH BESSIE SMITH, THE BLUES GREW UP, BUT THEY NEVER FORGOT WHERE THEY CAME FROM. HOLDING AND SHAPING HER WORDS AS THE GREAT MA RAINEY HAD TOLD HER, BESSIE COULD MAKE AN EPIC OUT OF MATERIAL THAT WOULD HAVE THROWN ANY OTHER ARTIST.

**BAND 6**

I'M NOT ROUGH, SUNG BY LOUIS ARMSTRONG, WITH HIS HOT FIVE; ARMSTRONG, CORNET; KID ORY, TROMBONE; JOHNNY DODDS, CLARINET; JOHNNY ST. CYR, BANJO, LONNIE JOHNSON, GUITAR. OKEH 8551, RECORDED DECEMBER, 1927.

ARMSTRONG AS SINGER, ARMSTRONG AS CORNETIST; THIS RECORD BRINGS THE TWO TOGETHER IN ONE OF THE MOST SAVAGE AND AT THE SAME TIME THOROUGHLY URBAN BLUES ON RECORD. THE CHICAGO CABARET AUDIENCE OF 1927 WAS NOT A DEEP COUNTRY GROUP THAT LIKED TO SIT AROUND AND LISTEN TO A QUIET BLUES STRUNG AND HUMMED ON A FRONT PORCH; IT WAS A FAST-DRINKING, FAST-DANCING CROWD THAT SUBLIMATED THE MEMORY OF A DEEP-COUNTRY PAST IN A RUGGED, HARSH PRESENT. THE MOOD OF BLUES IS HERE; SO IS THE VOICE, SO IS THE GUITAR WHICH SPLASHES CHORDS OF SATISFACTION ACROSS ARMSTRONG'S HUSKY PHRASING. BUT IF IT SOUNDS A BIT DIFFERENT FROM THE SOMBRE CHANTING OF BLIND WILLIE JOHNSON WHICH OPENED THIS ANTHOLOGY, THEN SOME IDEA OF THE BLUES' LONG JOURNEY HAS ENTERED YOUR HEART.