

FOLKWAYS RECORDS RBF 39

Late Band Ragtime

COMPILED AND ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN



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COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

M
1366
L352
1979

MUSIC LP

FOLKWAYS RECORDS RBF 39

SIDE 1

1. RAGGING THE SCALE - Broadway Dance Orch. (1923)
2. DOG ON THE PIANO - Isham Jones Orch. (1924)
3. DOLL DANCE - Sam Lanin Orch. (1927)
4. CANNON BALL RAG - Ben Bernie Orch. (1928)
5. MAGIC NOTES - Deauville Dance Band (1931)
6. SHIVERY STOMP - Seger Ellis Orch. (1937)
7. MAPLE LEAF RAG - Ozzie Nelson Orch. (1938)
8. MAPLE LEAF RAG - Lu Watters' Yehba Buena Jazz Band (1941)

Total Time: 23:00

SIDE 2

1. KANSAS CITY STOMP - Benny Strickler w/Yerba Buena Jazz Band (1942)
2. 12th STREET RAG - Pee Wee Hunt (1948)
3. MAPLE LEAF RAG - Bill Williams Band (1949)
4. DAILY RAG - Pete Daily Band (1949)
5. GRAMOPHONE RAG - Pete Daily Band (1951)
6. FOURTH MAN RAG - Pee Wee Hunt w/ Joe "Fingers" Carr (1950)
7. FLAPPER RAG - Sid Phillips Band (1953)
8. HEY, TAXI - Leroy Holmes & his Tug Boat Eight (1956)

Total Time: 20:40

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS RBF 39

LATE BAND RAGTIME

RBF-39

SIDE ONE - Ragtime for Dancing
RAGGING THE SCALE was written by Edward Claypoole (1883-1952) in 1915. The Broadway Dance Orchestra was an eleven piece house band for Edison Records. On this tune, the unknown pianist is featured in a rare display of virtuosity. A very fine example of a dance band arrangement from this era. Notice how the basic syncopation is cut back so the dancers will have a smoother time of it on the floor.

Like its counterpart - **EARLY BAND RAGTIME (RBF-38)** - this album celebrates orchestrated ragtime through more than thirty years, from 1923 to 1956. The popular music scene changed drastically, and changed several times drastically during this period. It is all reflected here through compositions most of which were published a great deal earlier than the recordings. In some cases, however, there are contemporary recordings of then newly-minted rags, proving that ragtime continues to live its own life, its sounds reflecting its own times.

Since dance orchestras were proliferating at an alarming extent throughout the twenties, it is not surprising that the majority of rags were recorded by these outfits. From the original small dixieland bands (from five to nine separate pieces), to the larger dance orchestras (from ten to twelve pieces), and then onto the big (from fourteen to eighteen members) bands of the swing era, Side One offers a choice selection illustrating the various combinations doing their interpretations of popular, novelty and original rags.

Side Two deals with the first two decades of the dixieland revival wherein the dixieland bands arranged and composed ragtime for themselves, adding their unique band sounds to the ragtime compositions. Interestingly, it was the dixieland revival in the forties which led to the ragtime revival in the fifties. The recording which sparked the revival was Pee Wee Hunt's version of Euday L. Bowman's 12th Street Rag. It quickly became a runaway best seller which led to the other recording companies trying their luck with ragtime.

DOG ON THE PIANO, a great Novelty rag, was composed by famed vaudeville accompanist, Ted Shapiro (1899 -), who made a career of accompanying Nora Bayes, Eva Tanguay and from 1921 until her death in 1966, Sophie Tucker. The Isham Jones Orchestra played the fanciest spots in Chicago, where it made this recording in April, 1924. The pianist-arranger was Roy Barge who had just left the Benson Orchestra (for another fine example of the Jones-Barge collaboration, see **THE DANCING TWENTIES, RBF-27**). The fine trumpet playing is that of Louis Panico, who was a mainstay of this organization. Jones, himself an outstanding composer of popular songs, performed on the tenor saxophone.

DOLL DANCE was written by Nacio Herb Brown (1896-1964) in 1927 and recorded in March of that year by one of the most talented studio bands in New York City led by Sam Lanin. The personnel included Red Nichols on cornet, Tommy Dorsey, trombone; Jimmy Dorsey and Andy Sanella, clarinet and alto sax; Harry Reser, banjo; and this superb Novelty rag featured the truly amazing artistry of Arthur Schutt at the piano.

CANNON BALL RAG, an early Folk rag of 1905 written by Joseph Northup is here given a super-dance band treatment in 1928 by Ben Bernie's great orchestra. While featuring some solos, the joy of listening to this aggregation is in the ensemble and section work. The arranger was J. Kenn Sisson, who later had

his own band. Other future bandleaders playing in this band for this recording were Dick Stabile (clarinet), Jack Pettis (C-melody sax), and Al Goering (piano).

MAGIC NOTES, composed by F. Steininger, is played by the English Deauville Dance Band in a typical 1931 arrangement. Notice how the band sounds like those accompanying early sound films.

SHIVERY STOMP was written by pianist-leader Seger Ellis (1904-), whose 1930 piano solo caused a sensation. Here, he demonstrates his orchestration skills with a fourteen piece big band. One of his four trumpeters was Benny Strickler, whom we'll meet on Side Two. His clarinetist was New Orleans great Irving Fazola. This band from Los Angeles shows the direction that the big bands were taking.

MAPLE LEAF RAG, the granddaddy of ragtime, was composed by Scott Joplin (1868-1917) and became the first big syncopated ragtime instrumental hit. It has continued its popularity through the ages (see the United States Marine Band's 1909 rendition on EARLY BAND RAGTIME, RBF-38 and Herb Wiedoeft's 1924 version on TOE TAPPIN' RAGTIME, RBF-25), and here we celebrate the sophisticated big-band arrangement which features the beautiful trumpet playing of Bo Ashford. Ozzie Nelson, who was later to score a huge success in both radio and television with his series, "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet," insisted on and got a very full and rich orchestral sound. This tempo is ideal for a medium-paced Lindy.

The big contrast came three years later with the start of the dixieland revival in San Francisco, lead and dominated for a decade by Lu Watters and his Yerba Buena Jazz Band. While his version of the MAPLE LEAF RAG is also danceable, it presents for the first time, a dixieland interpretation of a rag. It was this basic atmosphere which has influenced just about every other dixieland band since their formation in 1941. The personnel consisted of Lu Watters and Bob Scobey on cornets; Turk Murphy, trombone; Ellis Horne, Clarinet; Wally Rose, piano; Clancy Hayes and Russ Bennett,

banjos; Dick Lammi, tuba; and Bill Dart, drums. There's was the crisp, driving attack with an ever-pulsing beat which has inspired the dixieland bands of today.

SIDE TWO - Ragtime in Dixieland

KANSAS CITY STOMP was one of Jelly Roll Morton's (1885-1941) major ragtime successes. He recorded it both as a piano solo and with his jazz band, the Red Hot Peppers. We hear the clear and beautiful playing of Benny Strickler with the wartime version of the Yerba Buena Jazz Band in 1942, which consisted of Benny on trumpet; Bill Bardin, trombone; Bob Helm and Ellis Horne, clarinets; Burt Bales, piano; Russ Bennett, banjo; Clancy Hayes, drums.

TWELFTH STREET RAG is the most recorded rag in history. Composed by Euday Louis Bowman (1887-1949), in 1914, it has been a favorite of dance bands, jazz bands, pianists, and all other instrumentalists. This recording, an accident, took place informally after a session which recorded a transcribed radio program. The engineer, having some acetate left on the disc, asked them to play anything they wanted for a couple of minutes. Inadvertently, the tune was left on the disc and when it was broadcast, listeners called their radio stations asking what that unannounced last tune was.

A demand was created that forced Capitol Records to issue this strictly-for-fun effort as a single. From its release in 1948, it ultimately sold over three million copies, making it the biggest selling ragtime recording ever. It also established the doo-wacka-doo chorus as a "must play" feature in every rendition since. This epoch-making recording, long out-of-print, is now back in print. It featured leader Pee Wee Hunt on trombone; Frank Bruno, trumpet; Rosy McHargue, clarinet; Carl Fischer, piano; Harvey Chermak, bass; Glenn Walker, drums.

MAPLE LEAF RAG, that hardy perennial, is back once more played by a most distinguished pick-up dixieland group nominally calling itself the Bill Williams Band, after the trombonist. Famed cornetist Pete Daily and jazz pianist Marvin Ash are also featured.

DAILY RAG was jointly written for this recording by cornet-leader Pete Daily and trombonist Warren Smith. It is an exuberantly played tour-de-force allowing every one a chance to solo. The ensembles sparkle as well. Stan Struy, clarinet; Don Owens, piano; Nappy Lamare, banjo; Phil Stephens, tuba; and George Defebaugh, drums; rounded out this outstanding band in 1949.

GRAMOPHONE RAG was another co-authored composition between leader Daily and banjoist Lennie Esterdahl. Atypical of Daily's band, this features Lennie soloing practically throughout. Leading the band with a drive and clarity of tone rarely found in Pete Daily on cornet.

FOURTH MAN RAG was written by the multi-faceted musician Lou Busch, who, under the pseudonym 'Joe "Fingers" Carr', created an unbeatable atmosphere and established single-handedly a ragtime revival around the whole world during the 1950's. Here, combined with the fantastically successful dixieland band of Pee Wee Hunt's, they join forces for this specially created-for-the-recording rag. Lou's great arranging manages to keep both the Carr and Hunt sounds distinctive yet blendable for a real collaboration.

FLAPPER RAG was composed by Englishman Billy Penrose for this recording by Englishman Sid Phillips. This unusual recording places Sid in two places at once. He was, of course, well known for his arrangements while with Ambrose and his Orchestra. What is not so well known was his ability at the piano. Here he is not only at the piano, but also playing his clarinet as well.

HEY, TAXI was created by Ivon De Bie. Leroy Holmes and his Tug Boat Eight are joined on the vocal by the late television comedian Ernie Kovacs in one of his only appearances on disc. A sheer romp from start to finish, concluding our three decade tour of band ragtime with humor.

CREDITS

Programming and Notes: David A. Jasen

Remastering: Carl Seltzer

Documentation: RAGS AND RAGTIME, A MUSICAL HISTORY by David A. Jasen and Trebor Jay Tichenor, Seabury Press.

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