



I went down to
**ST. JAMES
INFIRMARY**



Investigations in the shadowy world of early jazz-blues in the company of Blind Willie McTell, Louis Armstrong, Don Redman, Irving Mills, Carl Moore, and a host of others, and where did this dang song come from anyway?

Robert W. Harwood



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For my father, Jeffrey Harwood



CONTENTS



Introduction / ix

- 1 Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues / 1
- 2 The Unfortunate Rake / 21
- 3 Ding Dong Daddies from Dumas / 37
- 4 Gambler's Blues / 57
- 5 St. James Infirmary, Part I / 81
- 6 St. James Infirmary, Part II / 103
- 7 Gambler's Blues (St. James Infirmary Blues) / 127

APPENDIX A: Song variants / 147

APPENDIX B: Record labels / 155

APPENDIX C: Comments on early recordings / 159

APPENDIX D: A bit more about Carl Moore / 171

Bibliography / 181

Acknowledgments / 185

INTRODUCTION



“THIS IS THE OLDEST BLUES SONG I KNOW.” So said jazz great Jack Teagarden before a 1941 performance of “St. James Infirmary.” The first time I heard the song, it sounded utterly contemporary.

It was about 2001. I was alone in my apartment, reading while listening to a CD I’d recently bought titled *The Finest in Jazz Vocalists*. Lou Rawls’ voice came through the speakers singing “St. James Infirmary.” I had been a Lou Rawls fan in my teenage years and so I paid closer attention. Rawls began with a mournful preamble:

When will I ever stop moaning?
When will I ever smile?

And then the band picked up the tempo and launched into the main body of the song:

I went down to St. James Infirmary
I heard my baby groan
I felt so broken hearted
She used to be my own.

It was then that I shot out of my chair and exclaimed excitedly, “That’s ‘Blind Willie McTell!’” I can’t explain my exhilaration today, but back then it brought to mind, with a jolt, the Bob Dylan song of that name. It’s not that this Rawls melody was identical to the one Dylan used, but there were similarities. For instance, both songs use the same basic chords—Em, Am, B7 (although Dylan avoided adhering to the three-chord cycle). Hundreds of songs are based on those guitar chords, but it was also in the pulse or the phrasing that the similarities revealed themselves. (I have played these two songs to friends, who often don’t hear the resemblance.)

Dylan recorded his song “Blind Willie McTell” in the spring of 1983 for his *Infidels* album, which was released in November of that year. “Blind Willie McTell” did not appear on the album, however, and neither did several other songs from those New York sessions. In fact, “McTell” appeared on no official Dylan recording (bootleg records were another matter) until 1991, when Columbia compiled a 3-CD set of alternate versions and previously unreleased material called *The Bootleg Series, Volumes 1–3*. This is where I first heard Dylan’s “Blind Willie McTell,” and it was an immediate standout.

“Blind Willie McTell” is a magnificent piece of song craft that touches on, among other things, the slave trade in the United States. But the poetry and the music of the song carry us into broader terrain. Dylan accomplishes this not through conventional narrative, however, but through a series of vignettes, a cascade of images that, coupled with a compelling melody, conveys a landscape of conflict and despair. Its chorus summons the musician of the title: “Nobody can sing the blues like Blind Willie McTell.” Asked why he had omitted the song from his album, Dylan said he didn’t think he had recorded it right. He didn’t perform the song in concert until August 5, 1997, at Montreal’s Du Maurier Stadium, fourteen years after recording it in the studio.

Standing there in my apartment, listening to Lou Rawls, I remembered Dylan’s words near the end of “Blind Willie McTell”—“I’m gazing out the window of the St. James Hotel.” Here, in a song melodically reminiscent of “St. James Infirmary,” Dylan seemed to be paying homage. I found that puzzling and I made up my mind to find out more about “St. James Infirmary.” Little did I know that this was the beginning of a five-year journey.

The history of the song would prove itself to be a puzzle with oddly shaped and missing pieces. In late 2004 I felt I had amassed enough information to publish a small book on the subject called *A Rake's Progress*. I also found, at about this time, an interesting article about "St. James Infirmary." Written by author and "St. James" enthusiast Rob Walker, it was one of a series of letters he had written to friends from his home (at that time) in New Orleans.¹ This was both the most comprehensive and the best-written overview of the song that I had encountered, an engaging reflection and exploration. "Sad song about a man going to see the corpse of his lover," Walker wrote, "and will she go to heaven or will she go to hell ... and whatever the answer, she 'ain't never gonna find another man like me.' Wow. That's beautiful and wrong at the same time." This letter, which he titled simply "St. James Infirmary," puzzled over the identities of Moore and Baxter, two musicians central to the first recording of the song. I had addressed that question myself in *A Rake's Progress* and wrote Rob a letter to pursue it further. We have been corresponding ever since. Rob's letters were published in 2005. In the chapter "St. James Infirmary" he acknowledged my contribution to the Moore-Baxter solution, and referred to me as a "fellow 'St. James' obsessive."

Obsessive? I didn't think of myself as obsessive. But I must have been. For although I had published a small book about the song, I refused to let it go. Too much of the puzzle remained unfinished—too many questions without answers.

It wasn't long before I found that much of *A Rake's Progress* was incorrect. That book had been based largely upon common assumptions about "St. James Infirmary," assumptions that I had more or less treated as facts. Over the next four years I discovered much that has not, as far as I am aware, appeared anywhere else. And so you have, in *I Went Down to St. James Infirmary*, a new history of the song.

This is a book about "St. James Infirmary," its origins and its evolution as one of the most popular, successful, and influential songs in American popular music. It is also a book about the times it sprang out of and the music business in the 1920s and '30s (and, in many ways, today also) and about song ownership.

Chapter 1 discusses the business of music in the early twentieth century, the profitability of adapting old songs for recordings, and the

authorship of the classic blues song “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues.” Chapter 2 looks critically at the generally accepted connection between “St. James Infirmary” and “The Unfortunate Rake.”

The following five chapters follow “St. James Infirmary” through its various incarnations between 1927 and 1931—from its first recording in 1927 through to the controversy that surrounded its copyright. But in doing so, the book looks even further into the past. There is some evidence that “St. James Infirmary” was in the repertoire of minstrel shows long before it was recorded, and so in these pages we encounter the nineteenth-century black-face performers Daddy Rice and Dan Emmett.

Throughout I have included many anecdotes about the artists and businessmen associated with “St. James Infirmary,” including fairly extensive biographical coverage of a few people—Carl Moore and Irving Mills, for example—who were central to its development as a popular song. The book looks at the people and the times in which “St. James Infirmary” achieved its initial popularity and asks, again and again, what happens to a traditional song when it becomes merchandise.

Note

- 1 Rob Walker, *Letters from New Orleans* (New Orleans: Garrett County Press, 2005), 188.

I
DYIN'
CRAPSHOOTER'S
BLUES*


Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues (Porter Grainger)

Jim Johnson gambled night and day
With crooked cards and dice
A sinful man without a soul
His heart was cold as ice
He said I feel so doggone blue
I want to die today
The devil told me what to do
But I ain't had my say
I want you all to know
The way I want to go

I want eight crapshooters for my pallbearers
And let them all be dressed in black
Nine men going to the graveyard
And only eight men coming back
I want a jazz band on my coffin
Chorus girl on my hearse
And don't say one good word about me
Because my life's been a doggone curse

Send poker players to the graveyard
 To dig my grave with the ace of spades
 Have police in my funeral march
 While the warden leads the parade
 I want the judge who jailed me fourteen times
 To put a pair of dice in my shoes
 Then let a deck of cards be my tombstone
 I've got the dyin' crapshooter's blues

Folks, I ain't never been on the level
 Now I'm dying and going to the devil
 My head's aching, my heart's thumping
 I'm going down below bouncing and a jumping
 Don't be standing around me crying
 I want everybody to Charleston while I'm dying
 One foot up and a toenail dragging
 Throw me in that hoodoo wagon
 Oh Mr. Devil, stand aside
 I've got the dyin' crapshooter's blues

IT MIGHT SEEM STRANGE to begin an exploration of “St. James Infirmary” with a chapter titled “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues.” After all, “Crapshooter’s Blues” was first recorded in 1940, thirteen years after Fess Williams and His Royal Flush Orchestra recorded “Gambler’s Blues”—the title by which, in 1927, “St. James Infirmary” was known—and twelve years after Louis Armstrong and His Savoy Ballroom Five recorded the tune under the title “St. James Infirmary.” But just as the songs that went before led to “St. James Infirmary” as we hear it today, so did “St. James Infirmary” spawn children of its own. One of the most revered of these descendants is Blind Willie McTell’s “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues.” In some ways the latter song illustrates the sorts of difficulties that arose when popular music became a commodity; as we shall see, the artist credited with its composition is not the artist who wrote the song. In this respect, “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues” shares ethical as well as musical entanglements with “St. James Infirmary.”

“St. James Infirmary” appeared on the cusp of radical changes in

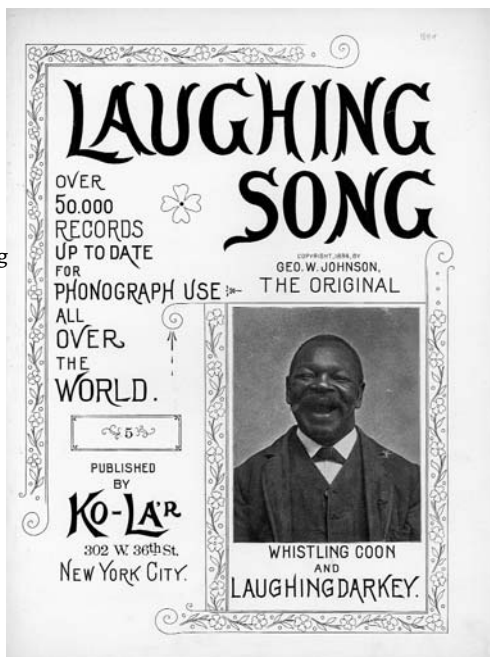
the music business. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sheet music publishers paid entertainers to perform their songs on stage in order to stimulate sales. Even as late as 1920 there were no public radio stations. Record players were just becoming an affordable luxury—even though, at twenty-five dollars for Victor Talking Machine Company's low-priced Victrola, many bought them through instalment plans.

The music industry had grown substantially over the previous thirty years. In 1890 recorded music was a curiosity, primarily experienced via coin-operated machines in parks, county fairs, train stations—places where people were likely to gather in large numbers. Insert the flexible ear tubes, drop a nickel in the coin slot, and you might, depending upon which cylinder was in the machine, hear a Strauss waltz or a popular song of the day—"Listen to the Mocking Bird," perhaps, or "Down Went McGinty." You might hear George W. Johnson's "The Whistling Coon," or "The Laughing Song." Johnson was the first black to be recorded, and one of the first vocalists to appear on a recording. "The Laughing Song" would have drawn lines of curious listeners to the nickel booths. Though the lyrics are silly (and demeaning) and the melody rudimentary, each verse is punctuated by a chorus of hearty laughter that even today is infectious. No doubt many listeners in the 1890s would have burst into laughter themselves, to the puzzlement and curiosity of passers-by. It might well have been worth a nickel to find out what the fuss was about.

At this time phonograph records were wax cylinders. They could not be mass-produced. However, as many as five records could be made at a time by having the recording horn of each machine turned toward the singer's mouth. The recording horn focused the sounds onto a diaphragm. As the diaphragm vibrated, a stylus carved impressions into the wax layer of the cylinder. In order to maintain a consistent recording volume, the singer could turn his head neither left nor right. Even the sound of a hand moving across clothes would be picked up by the sensitive stylus, and at the end of each song the singer would have to remain stock-still, with breath held, until the recording had ceased.

Listening to a recording of "The Laughing Song" today one can't help but be amazed by the seeming spontaneity and sincerity of John-

George Johnson sometimes sang the the “Laughing Song” fifty or more times a day in the recording studio to meet listeners’ demands. (“Laughing Song,” Rare Book, Manuscript and Special Collections Library, Duke University.)



son’s laughter. He recorded for a fee of twenty cents per 2-minute performance, and by 1894 he apparently made and sold over 25,000 copies of “The Whistling Coon” and “The Laughing Song” (sometimes singing the same song fifty or more times a day in the recording studio). As Tim Brooks noted in *Lost Sounds*, “To appreciate what an incredible total this was for 1894, it is necessary to understand the limited scope of the industry in the early 1890s. There were very few phonographs in private homes, so nearly all the 25,000 had to have been sold to exhibitors and coin-slot operators who played them over and over again for a fascinated, paying public. They must have worn out a lot of copies of these two songs.”¹

It wasn’t long before Johnson faced some stiff competition. Noting the remarkable success of Johnson’s songs, Columbia released the same songs in performances by a white store clerk named John Atlee. There were as yet no copyright laws covering recorded music, and even in these early days competition was cutthroat. With the advent of recording, the music business was becoming big money.

As the years progressed, songs became increasingly valuable—at least from a financial perspective. While “St. James Infirmary” originated as a folk-song that appeared in a number of guises depending upon locale and performer, it was transformed into a piece of merchandise, valued for its return on investment. By the time McTell recorded “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues,” in 1940, the music industry was in full bloom. Shrewd investors often bought, for a few dollars, songs from indigent musicians and either registered the copyrights in their own names or convinced the performers to assign copyright to them. If a musician did not have the education or savvy to know better, record executives would pay them twenty-five or a hundred dollars to record a song. If the song was a hit, the artist received no further money.

Bessie Smith, the “Empress of the Blues,” for example, never saw a penny beyond her cash-per-recording deal with Columbia, though she authored many of the songs. Frank Walker, who signed Bessie to Columbia Records, struck out the royalty clause in her contract. For years one of Columbia’s most successful artists, Bessie valued her recordings for their advertising potential; they increased the size of her listening audience and therefore the box-office take at her live performances. There was, and is, much moneymaking sleight of hand in the recording business. One man who mastered the tricks early was Ralph Peer.

When, in 1920, Mamie Smith’s “Crazy Blues” (about which we shall hear more later) was released by Okeh Records, Fred Hagar was the director of production. Hagar made the decision to record and release the song. But it was Ralph Peer, Hagar’s assistant, who solved the thorny problem of how to classify these songs. They couldn’t be listed together with, say, “popular music” because all the popular musicians were white. Up to this time very few blacks were recorded, and the recordings they did make were styled for white audiences. The recording companies felt there was no profit to be found in developing a black audience, and further presumed that their white audience preferred certain kinds of music. The industry was pretty well controlled by Victor, Columbia, and Edison; these were the companies whose decisions shaped the popular taste in music.² But when Okeh took the bold step of recording a black female vocalist, with-

out prettying up the sound to match the popular records of the day, they ran into a problem. How to this classify this record? Ralph Peer coined the term “Race Record” to identify those made by black artists for black audiences. The term was adopted by competing record companies.

It’s fair to say that Peer had little feeling for the music he was recording. His taste ran to opera, chamber music, and big-band music. He was known to occasionally refer to the artists he worked with in a deprecating manner. He once called Louis Armstrong’s university-educated second wife, Lillian, “an awfully nice ole nigger girl,” and when explaining the lack of correspondence from aspiring black artists (as opposed to the masses of mail he received from hillbilly hopefuls) he said, “Of course, niggers can’t write—southern niggers.”³

Peer was foremost a businessman, and profit was his main motivation. Much of Peer’s success was founded in hillbilly music, a genre he disdained. But he was a fast learner, and knew how to follow the wind. When OKeh’s chief engineer, Charles Hibbard, convinced company executives that recording studios could be taken on the road and Hibbard designed the equipment to do so, Peer accompanied him to Atlanta. It was 1923. Among the sides they recorded was a nineteenth-century minstrel song, “The Little Old Cabin in the Lane.” Performed by Fiddlin’ John Carson, it is now widely regarded as the first country, or hillbilly, record (the term “country music” had not yet been coined). Initially, though, Peer liked neither the music nor the quality of the recording and allowed only 500 copies to be printed. Demand soon forced further printings, however, and the recording soon sold 500,000 copies. Peer realized there was gold in country music. His search for gold later led him to Bristol, Tennessee—to the Carter Family and to Jimmie Rodgers. Peer was also the first to record Blind Willie McTell.⁴

When he left OKeh in 1925, Peer secured a position with Victor by suggesting that they hire him for an annual salary of one dollar; he would control the copyrights of the songs he recorded for them. It was common practice for producers to purchase songs outright, giving the artist perhaps twenty-five or a hundred dollars for a tune. If the song sold well (most didn’t), royalties on sales could be significant.

Peer understood that he could attract and retain artists if they anticipated payment beyond the amounts offered for the recording dates alone. He would retain control of the song in return for the promise to pay future royalties. So in the case of successful recording artists such as the Carter Family, money would keep trickling in. Peer assigned a percentage of the copyright royalties to them, pocketing the rest himself. He also retained publishing rights, renewals, and subsidiary rights.⁵ If another artist recorded one of his artist's songs, it was Peer who collected the royalties.

In order to maximize his profit Peer insisted that the musicians he worked with record new songs rather than traditional tunes, which had relatively little monetary value.⁶ (The copyright on a traditional song applies only to that particular interpretation, including modified lyrics, so other artists are free to perform their own interpretations.) Peer realized that one could claim ownership of a "traditional" song by personalizing it—that is, by imposing slight alterations on the melody and/or lyrics. Under the guidance of Ralph Peer, for example, A.P. Carter roamed the hills of Appalachia in search of old tunes, reworking them for Carter Family performances and recordings ... and for copyright purposes. In the parlance of a court document that we shall examine, this reworking was a matter of turning "an ordinary bit of merchandise" into a profitable commodity.

Few of Peer's artists were accomplished songwriters, but they were accomplished borrowers. Musicians had long been adapting old songs—"messing them up one way or another," as McTell would say. That's why there are uncounted variations of "Barbara Allen," extending back at least as far as the seventeenth century. And if they don't all tell a different story, they tell it in different ways. "Stagolee," "Frankie and Johnny," "Willie the Weeper," "John Henry," "House Carpenter"—the list can seem endless. The songs were common property; one might steal a pig or a brooch, but never a song. But when songs could be assigned monetary value, artists and entrepreneurs were tempted to put their names to songs other people wrote. This, as we shall see, is what McTell did with "Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues." By all accounts McTell was an intelligent and honest man. He was familiar with borrowed songs, and often adapted earlier compositions when writing his own songs. As Michael Gray, author of

Hand Me Down My Travelin' Shoes, a major biography of McTell, writes, "He would say himself of his methods of composition: 'I jump 'em from other writers but I arrange 'em my way.'"⁷

IT HAD LONG BEEN THOUGHT THAT Blind Willie McTell was born in Georgia in 1901... or perhaps 1898. Michael Gray recently narrowed it down to 1903 or 1904.⁸ McTell was probably blind from birth, but might have lost his sight as a child. Or he might have been able to perceive light in one eye as a young child or as a young man. His original family name was not McTell but McTier. His name might have changed when a teacher at a school for the blind misunderstood Willie's pronunciation. In a 1977 interview, though, McTell's wife, Kate, claimed that Willie's father's side of the family were whisky bootleggers who needed to disguise their identities. Kate and Willie married in 1934 but separated some years later, and she sang on a few recordings with him as Ruby Glaze—although it might not have been Kate on these records at all. Recent history can be surprisingly elusive.

McTell started playing harmonica and accordion at an early age but soon showed an aptitude for the guitar (an instrument both his parents played). His father seems to have been something of a roustabout, fond of drinking and gambling. His parents separated soon after Willie was born and, while his mother struggled to make ends meet, Willie's large extended family helped out as needed. They were living in Statesboro, Georgia, when his mother died in 1910. Not long afterwards McTell left home to play in carnivals and medicine shows, on street corners, at house parties, and fish fries. Most of his adult life was spent travelling. Often he followed the seasonal harvests; workers there would have a few dollars to spend on entertainment. (From McTell's now famous "Statesboro Blues": "My mother died and left me reckless / My daddy died and left me wild, wild, wild.") During this time he also attended several schools for the blind, where he learned to read and write music in Braille. In the twenties he started playing a twelve-string guitar, and by the time he began recording, in 1927, this was his instrument of choice. Many bluesmen would use the twelve-string as a rhythmic instrument, but McTell mastered complex picking styles that were uniquely expressive and sometimes sounded like more than one guitarist at work. In

his "Travelin' Blues," an arresting example of the talking blues, McTell's twelve-string imitates, with startling conviction, clanging train bells, blowing whistles, and clattering steel wheels. McTell recorded more than 120 songs over three decades—many of them indisputable classics—but he was never able to realize much profit from them. They never sold well. Possibly his biggest hit was his 1929 "Travelin' Blues," which sold just over 4,200 copies.⁹

In 1940 the music historian John Lomax, collecting music for the Library of Congress, went looking for McTell. He found him playing in the Pig and Whistle, an Atlanta drive-in rib eatery. Lomax took McTell back to his hotel (the blind McTell reportedly pointing out the sights as they drove past) where Lomax had his recording equipment. Lomax encouraged McTell to return the next day. Willie did, and they recorded for two hours. McTell talked and played without interruption. In the absence of hard historical data, much of the McTell lore is derived from these conversations. They are fascinating to listen to. McTell talked about his childhood and his travels, he played examples of different guitar styles and spoke about the history of the blues. He seems to refer to the period between 1908 and 1914 as the time of the "original blues," and marks 1920 as the time of change for the blues. It was then that black artists started recording. During this session, Lomax urged McTell to talk and sing about the hard times the Negro suffered in the South, about their mistreatment at the hands of whites: "Ain't it hard to be a Nigger, Nigger, don't you know that one?" Lomax pressed. McTell insisted that some songs might talk about the meanness of the world, but that they have "reference to everybody," that the world can be a difficult place regardless of one's colour. Among the songs McTell played for Lomax was "Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues." He introduced it with the words, "I'm going to play this song that I made myself. Originally this is from Atlanta; three different marches of tunes."

Later, in 1949, under the name Barrelhouse Sammy (the Country Boy), he recorded the song a second time for Herb Abramson and Ahmet Ertegun's newly formed Atlantic Records. During these Atlantic sessions McTell recorded fifteen tracks, but only two were released—"Kill It Kid" and "Broke Down Engine Blues."

Ertegun recalled his meeting with McTell in an article *Rolling Stone*

posted on its website, “Ahmet Ertegun: In His Own Words.” Ertegun:

I was walking along a main street in the black section of Atlanta—to me this is the most incredible story of my whole career—and there was a blind man who was sitting on the corner of the street with his back to the side of the building singing gospel songs, with a hat in front of him for people to drop money into. I stopped to listen to him because he was playing incredible slide guitar and singing so beautifully. I handed him some money so that the fellow could tell it was bills, not coins, and he said, “Oh, thank you—thanks.” So I said, “Have you ever heard of Blind Willie McTell?” And he said, “Man, I am Blind Willie McTell.” I said, “I can’t believe it. You are?” He said, “Yeah, that’s who I am.” And I said, “I would love to record you. I’m from a record company in New York.” We went to the studio that same day, but he only wanted to play gospel songs. I said, “Oh, man, but we wanted some blues.” He said, “Well, I don’t sing blues anymore, I’ve found God.” I said, “But you make great blues music—this is not a bad thing—if you could just sing some blues.” “Well,” he said, “don’t put my name on it.” So I said, “OK, we’ll call you Barrelhouse Sammy.” So we made some blues records and they came out under that name until after he died, when we released them with his actual name. It would have been criminal not to let people know who he was.

But the time had passed when a lone guitarist and singer could make much of an impression on the general public. McTell included “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues” again during his final recording session, three years before his death, in August 1959. This last session was an informal affair, with McTell in a small record shop on Atlanta’s Peachtree Street. The owner Ed Rhodes had installed recording equipment, which he’d bought with the idea of making a few records to sell locally. In the fall of 1956 a customer had taken Rhodes to meet a man who was using a cane to walk from car to car in a parking lot behind the Blue Lantern Club, singing anything people would request in return for a few coins. At first McTell refused any invitations to play for the tape machine, but would drop into the store occasionally to chat about his early days travelling with the John Roberts Planta-

tion Show or about his time as a Georgia still operator in the twenties. Perhaps he talked about his early recordings too, about how he saw little profit in the end, or about singing on street corners for tips when the recording opportunities dried up. But one evening, with the help of a bottle of corn whisky, he agreed to tape some songs. When the bottle was empty the session ended and McTell went home. Years later the tapes of that session were found at the bottom of a pile of trash in Rhodes' attic.

A CD of the Ed Rhodes tapes, *Last Sessions*, was released by Prestige/Bluesville in 1992. Although fourteen songs are captured on this record, as well as some of McTell's conversation, it is a truncated version of the original session. Several of the songs Willie performed that day are missing from the CD, including "St. James Infirmary." I have not heard this song elsewhere, but Michael Gray had, and I contacted him via his website.¹⁰ Gray responded that "I've heard the full version and I fear you may find it disappointing, if only because it comes very late on in the session, by which time Willie has been fed a good deal of whiskey. All the same, of course, it's great to have a McTell version at all, and it does tip its hat briefly to its commonality with 'Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues.'"

Despite the abridged nature of the CD, it is a fine recording. Although slowed by age and ill health McTell's performances have flashes of brilliance. He even performs an old McKinney's Cotton Pickers number, "Beedle Um Bum." And, of course, there's his fantastic retelling of "Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues." McTell, with his twelve-string guitar and a bottle of whisky in a small Atlanta record store, said to the owner before starting to play, "Now, I ain't in no hurry. Not if you ain't."

So McTell chatted and sang as customers walked into and out of the shop. He was more forthcoming about "Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues" than he had been with Lomax. During an extensive introduction to the song he revealed that he started writing it in 1929 and finished in 1932. He wrote it for his friend, a gambler named Jesse Williams, who "wanted me to play this over his grave. That I did. See, I had to steal music from every which way you could get it, to get it to fit."

"Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues" is considered the quintessential Mc-

Tell classic. With a melody reminiscent of “St. James Infirmary” and verses that ingeniously list a number of burial requests (“Dig my grave with the ace of spades,” “let a deck of cards be my tombstone,” “I want the judge and solicitor who jailed me fourteen times to put a pair of dice in my shoes,” etc.), the song has the reputation of being not only a direct relative of “St. James Infirmary” but also an extension of the songwriting tradition through which a centuries-old British lyric about a soldier dying of syphilis evolved into, in “Streets of Laredo,” a cowboy dying from a gunshot wound. Michael Gray expressed a widely held opinion when he wrote: “This is Willie’s personalized version, one of a whole sequence of songs, based upon the traditional English ballad ‘The Unfortunate Rake’ and which also becomes the black standard ‘St. James Infirmary.’ ‘The Unfortunate Rake,’ ‘St. James Infirmary’ and ‘Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues’ all end up wondrously transmuted into [Dylan’s] ‘Blind Willie McTell.’”¹¹ When I first wrote about these songs in 2004, I enthusiastically agreed: “There can be little doubt though that McTell reshaped ‘St. James Infirmary’ and its ilk into something worthy of the best of those organic transformations which took place as the songs moved from town to town, from county to county, transported on the feet of troubadours.”¹²

But McTell did not write “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues.” Nor was he the first to record it. That had happened in 1927, the year Fess Williams and his Royal Flush Orchestra made the first recording of “St. James Infirmary” under the title “Gambler’s Blues”—that is, two years before McTell asserted that he started writing it, five years before he claimed he finished it, and thirteen years before he first recorded it.

IN NEW YORK CITY, on May 5, 1927, blues singer Martha Copeland entered the Columbia Studios to record two songs by pianist/composer Porter Grainger: “Mr. Brakes-Man (Let Me Ride Your Train)” and “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues.” Grainger played piano on both songs. Later that year the song was recorded twice more—by the blues singers Viola McCoy (August 1927) and Rosa Henderson (September 1927). With minor differences, Grainger’s song is the same “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues” that McTell performed. The melody is

identical, down to the intriguing Charleston two-step that appears towards its close.

Porter Grainger was a songwriter, pianist, and arranger who, although influential and respected in his day, has slipped into obscurity. Even the place and date of his birth have, until now, been unknown. Although his talents as a songwriter and pianist are generally judged to be meagre, a re-evaluation of his work may well yield a different verdict. Much of the information about him has been gleaned from recording ledgers or through biographies of people he was associated with. He seems destined to be remembered primarily as the piano player in Bessie Smith's 1928 revue *Mississippi Days*. Chris Albertson, in his biography of Smith, wrote that *Mississippi Days* was "an extravaganza that boasted a cast of forty-five 'noted' performers and was billed as a 'Musical Comedy Triumph.' Much of the show's success was owing to Bessie's new musical director, a shy young man named Porter Grainger, who composed and arranged all the music."¹³ Grainger had already written some remarkable songs for Bessie. In fact her first released recording was of Grainger's "'Tain't Nobody's Biz-ness if I Do," which—along with Alberta Hunter's "Downhearted Blues"—was one of Smith's first great successes:¹⁴



With minor differences, Grainger's song "Dyin' Crap Shooter's Blues" is the same song that Blind Willie McTell performed years later.

There ain't nothing I can do nor nothing I can say
 That folks don't criticize me
 But I'm going to do just as I want to anyway
 And don't care if they all despise me
 If I should take a notion
 To jump into the ocean
 'T'ain't nobody's business if I do.

The song inspired a number of variations, and has survived the intervening years as a blues standard. Another Grainger tune, “Sing Sing Prison Blues,” was recorded by Smith in 1924 with Don Redman (who will figure prominently when we discuss Louis Armstrong’s version of “St. James Infirmary”) on clarinet. “The judge said / Bessie, tell me why you killed your man,” Bessie sings, and while the clarinet plays a funeral dirge she answers “Judge, you ain’t no woman / And you can’t understand.” These and other songs show that Grainger was a gifted songwriter. But he was schooled in a cabaret tradition that was already aging quickly in the 1920s.

Porter Parrish Grainger was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, on October 22, 1891.¹⁵ It is not known what happened to his parents, but according to the 1900 census he was living with his Aunt Mattie Covington (a seamstress) on his grandfather’s farm. There were eight people in that household, including his younger sister Ursula and a lodger. His grandfather, Joseph Coleman, was forty-seven. Joseph and his wife, Patience, had been married for seventeen years. She was fifteen years older than her husband and never had children of her own. Joseph had two daughters from a previous marriage living with them: Sally, a seamstress, was twenty-three years old, and Mattie, also a seamstress, was thirty. Mattie’s husband, James Covington, lived there too. By 1910 Mattie and her husband, along with Ursula and Sallie, had moved to Bowling Green, where James worked as a carpenter. Porter, now nineteen, was elsewhere. In fact he seems to have disappeared from the historical record until about 1923, the year Bessie Smith began recording his songs and he appeared on recordings accompanying now forgotten singers like Gladys Bryant and Ethel Finnle.

Grainger had been involved in the music business for a number of years before this, though. His World War I draft registration card, on which he listed his profession as “composer of songs,” placed him in Chicago in 1917. It notes that his wife and his father are dependents. This is puzzling. According to the 1930 census, Grainger—although living alone on West 130th Street in New York—declared that his “age at first marriage” was thirty-three. In 1917 he turned twenty-six. Porter claimed exemption from the draft because his father needed his support. But if he was supporting his father, why was he

living with his aunt and grandfather as a child? It turns out Grainger was not the only one making incongruous claims.

The same incongruity occurred with a friend of his, Robert William Ricketts. Grainger and Ricketts were both piano players and song composers. The New York City telephone book for 1925 lists them as a partnership, "Grainger & Ricketts," songwriters, at 1547 Broadway in New York. They had been writing together since at least 1923, the year in which Viola McCoy recorded half a dozen of their songs—including "Mistreatin' Daddy," which was covered four years later by Bessie Smith. In the same year Fletcher Henderson recorded their "Charleston Crazy" with his Club Alabam Orchestra as well as "Chatanooga (Down in Tennessee)" with his Sawin' Six. (Each of these groups featured Don Redman on clarinet.) The years 1923 and 1924 saw Grainger/Ricketts songs being released by Lena Wilson, Virginia Liston, Trixie Smith, the Tampa Blue Jazz Band, Ted Claire's Snappy Bits Band, W.C. Handy's Orchestra, Clara Smith, Lucille Bogan, Rosa Henderson, and Mamie Smith. They were a going concern.

Robert Ricketts is another musician about whom little is known. Born in Ohio in 1885, he was performing in minstrel shows in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1920 he was a theatre musician living alone in a Philadelphia lodging house on Lombard Street. While he declared himself as single on the census, his 1917 draft registration card noted that he was married to Anna Ricketts, who was listed living at the same Lombard Street address. One has to wonder if both Ricketts and Grainger falsified their draft registration information in order to avoid or delay being drafted into the army.

It is not certain that Grainger was ever married. In the liner notes to Document Record's *Jazz and Blues on Edison, Volume 1*, Lawrence Tedder writes that singer Ethel Finney's "full name was Ethel Finney Grainger; she married the pianist and composer Porter Grainger around 1924." This would agree with the 1930 census records where Grainger—although seemingly living alone—stated he was first married at age thirty-three. By the early 1940s, though, Porter was single, declaring his aunt as next-of-kin on his World War II draft registration card. Bessie Smith's biographer, Chris Albertson, portrays Grainger as a homosexual. He dressed elegantly in the high fashion

of the day, with spats, a walking stick, fancy hats, and fine suits. “Bessie was as impressed by Porter’s work as she was by his handsome looks,” Albertson notes, “but she did think him a bit pretentious at times.” She was doubtlessly aware of his sexual preferences, but she reportedly seduced him a couple of times.¹⁶

With another collaborator, Freddie Johnson, Grainger wrote the score for an all-black comedy revue called *Lucky Sambo*. Although this opened in 1925, we can see from the title that American entertainment was not yet far removed from the prevailing influence of the minstrel shows. Grainger wrote the scores or contributed songs for several other all-black musical revues, including *Hot Rhythm* and *Brown Buddies*, both from 1930, and *Yeah Man*, in 1932.

Judging from the recordings of his songs, Grainger probably worked with cabaret and blues singers long before 1920. Bessie Smith, for instance, made her first records in 1923 but probably had been singing Grainger songs in her shows for years. A commercial market for the recordings of black artists did not emerge until 1920, and it took some years before “blues fever” swept the nation. While this meant great success for people like Bessie Smith, artists like Porter Grainger and Blind Willie McTell did not fare as well.

AS WE HAVE NOTED, McTell always claimed authorship of “Dyin’ Crapshooter’s Blues.” When speaking to Ed Rhodes in his Atlanta record store in September 1956, McTell spun such a lengthy tale that one is tempted to believe the song was based on his own experience. McTell’s friend Jesse Williams was a gambler who was fatally shot on Calder Street. Williams wished to be buried at home in New York City, so at a cost of \$282.85, McTell took him there in an ambulance. McTell sat by his bedside for three weeks and as Williams lay dying, he told McTell what he wanted in the way of a funeral. McTell then told Jesse’s father, who made arrangements for his son to get everything he wanted ... well, almost everything. But McTell wrote the full list of requests into the song, which he promised Jesse he would sing at his gravesite.

Jesse Williams liked whores, and he asked that seventy-seven women attend his funeral. His father couldn’t arrange that—it was too far for the women to travel. But, according to McTell, he did arrange everything else. Quite a feat! The funeral included eight crap-

shooters dressed in black as pallbearers, a hearse with a crooked card painted on its side, a parade to be led by the high sheriff followed by twelve policemen, as well as sixteen good crapshooters, sixteen singing bootleggers, sixteen gambling racketeers, and a rolling bar with two people serving drinks. If Jesse Williams did indeed get the funeral he wanted (excepting, of course, the seventy-seven women), it would have been one for the ages. A grand parade, his grave dug with an ace of spades, a deck of cards to serve as his tombstone.

With the exception of the women, the McTell list is virtually the same one that Grainger wrote. Of the thirty-four lines in Grainger's song, twenty-nine appear in McTell's, either word for word or altered only slightly. Here's how Grainger's song starts:

Jim Johnson gambled night and day
 With crooked cards and dice
 A sinful man without a soul
 His heart was cold as ice.

McTell transforms this into:

Little Jesse was a gambler, night and day
 He used crooked cards and dice
 Sinful guy, good-hearted but had no soul
 Heart was hard and cold like ice.

McTell adds a few verses to the song, expanding upon Jesse's character, but the melody throughout is identical to Grainger's. Not even that charming break at the end belongs to McTell. Here's Grainger's version:

My head's aching, my heart's thumping
 I'm going down below bouncing and jumping
 Don't be standing around me crying
 I want everybody to Charleston while I'm dying
 One foot up and a toenail dragging
 Throw me into that hoodoo wagon....

Here's Blind Willie's:

His head was achin', heart was thumpin'
 Little Jesse went to hell bouncin' and jumpin'
 Folks, don't be standin' around ole Jesse cryin'
 He wants everybody to do the Charleston whilst he's dyin'
 One foot up, a toenail draggin'
 Throw my buddy Jesse in the hoodoo wagon....

So, what is it about McTell's version that makes it stand out? Or, perhaps more to the point, why did Grainger's song need McTell to drag it into the open air? This might become clearer when we look at the history of earlier recordings of the song.

Martha Copeland was the first person to record "Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues." Not much is known about her, but she was a competent blues singer in the style of Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith. She recorded thirty-four songs between 1923 and 1928, and in 1926 she had a hit with "Black Snake Blues." But a number of people had hits with that song in 1926, starting with the great Victoria Spivey, who wrote it with Lonnie Johnson.¹⁷ Blind Lemon Jefferson released the song in the same year, although he called it "That Black Snake Moan." (Rerecorded in 1927 as "Black Snake Moan," the song became a major hit for Blind Lemon.) The two other women who recorded "Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues," Viola McCoy and Rosa Henderson, released "Black Snake Blues" in 1927.

McCoy's version of "Black Snake Blues," for instance, came out on the Cameo, Lincoln, and Romeo labels. The two latter labels were subsidiaries of Cameo. Lincoln was a budget label, selling disks for fifty cents. The Romeo label was contracted to the S.H. Kress five-and-dime department-store chain, popular for their low prices. Romeo releases sold for twenty-five cents. Similarly, the Perfect label, which released Rosa Henderson recordings, was a budget subsidiary of Actual-Pathé. Many people bought these lower-priced records, and they could be the source of significant profit. Their profitability was one reason that Duke Ellington's manager in his early years, Irving Mills, released multiple versions of Ellington tunes on a variety of labels—including the flexible Hit-of-the-Week discs, one song per

disc, which sold at newsstands for fifteen cents. To prevent competition with their higher-priced releases, the Ellington band adopted a variety of pseudonyms—such as the Ten Black Berries or the Jungle Band ... or, for their March, 1930 Hit-of-the-Week release of “St. James Infirmary,” the Harlem Hot Chocolates.

Musicians such as Martha Copeland and Viola McCoy were second-string players on the music scene. The companies did not invest large sums in their recordings. The instrumental arrangements were spare and the sound engineering merely adequate. The recording is a little muddy. Copeland's and McCoy's “Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues” featured only clarinet and piano. The singers are not particularly expressive; it sounds as if they hadn't the time to become familiar with the songs. One can hear this clearly when comparing Victoria Spivey's singing in “Black Snake Blues” to that of Copeland, McCoy, or Henderson. Spivey takes the song leisurely, but with inventive phrasing, sensuality, and depth. The instrumental arrangement is spare, with Spivey on piano and a trumpeter interjecting short phrases. But the sound is well spaced and clear. The Copeland, McCoy, and Henderson versions suffer in comparison. While the arrangements are similarly spare, the instruments are not clearly articulated—the sound is flat and murky. The singing—while at times very good—lacks expression, so the song drifts past the listener without making much of an impression.

A similar comparison can be made between McTell's and the earlier versions of “Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues.” McTell sparkles with personality and wit. Had a major label recorded and promoted it, there's a good chance that he would have had a hit on his hands. “Dyin' Crapshooter's Blues” is an exceptional song. This is not immediately apparent in the 1927 versions where it takes some concentration to hear the song's sad, wry, tragic, and comical elements. McTell's musical and storytelling skills cast a vivid illumination. He breathed life back into the song, revealing a work of art.

Notes

- 1 Tim Brooks, *Lost Sounds: Blacks and the Birth of the Recording Industry, 1890–1919* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 7–8.

- 2 Chris Albertson, *Bessie* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 37.
- 3 Mark Zwonitzer with Charles Hirschberg, *Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone? The Carter Family and Their Legacy in American Music* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 84.
- 4 Michael Gray, *Hand Me My Travelin' Shoes: In Search of Blind Willie McTell* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 197.
- 5 Nolan Porterfield, *Jimmie Rodgers* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 97.
- 6 Nolan Porterfield, *Jimmie Rodgers* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 98–99.
- 7 Michael Gray, *Hand Me My Travelin' Shoes: In Search of Blind Willie McTell* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 203.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 94.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 211.
- 10 Michael Gray, <http://handmemytravelinshoes.blogspot.com/>.
- 11 Michael Gray, *The Bob Dylan Encyclopedia* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 447.
- 12 Robert W. Harwood, *A Rake's Progress* (Kitchener, ON: Harland Press, 2004), 37.
- 13 Chris Albertson, *Bessie* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 169.
- 14 Smith recorded the songs on February 15 and 16, 1923, at her first sessions for Columbia.
- 15 Much of the census data in this book was found through searches via the excellent genealogy website ancestry.com. Grainger's birthplace was listed on his 1917 draft registration card. I have also referred to census records and ship logs in this and later chapters.
- 16 Albertson, *Bessie*, 170.
- 17 This was Spivey's first release, beginning a long line of remarkable recordings—which included some with a young Bob Dylan on her own Spivey Records.

APPENDIX A
SONG
VARIANTS



BASED UPON SANDBURG'S *American Songbag* and the early recordings of "St. James Infirmary," I have divided the variants of the song into five principal groups:

- 1 "Those Gambler's Blues" (the first version from Sandburg's *The American Songbag*): this was very similar to "Gambler's Blues" recorded by Fess Williams in 1927 and "written" by Carl Moore and Phil Baxter.
- 2 "Those Gambler's Blues" (the second version from Sandburg's *Songbag*). This is notable for its inclusion of the verse:

I may be killed on the ocean
I may be killed by a cannonball
But let me tell you buddy
That a woman was the cause of it all.
- 3 "St. James Infirmary" as recorded by Louis Armstrong in 1928 and copyrighted by Irving Mills in 1929; this became the version we most often associate with the title.
- 4 "St. James Infirmary" as modified by Irving Mills, in which the protagonist shows a more tender side:

I tried to keep from cryin'
 My heart felt just like lead
 She was all I had to live for
 I wished that it was me instead.

He eventually concludes, “I hope we’ll meet again up there.”¹

- 5 The Hokum Boys recorded two versions of the song. The lyrics are reminiscent of the *Songbag* renderings, but each version tells a slightly different story. To me, the songs read like variations of their own, as if the Boys were singing local variants of a traditional song. These variants stand alone, as no other recording uses these lyrics.

THE FOLLOWING CHART lists the twenty-two recordings of “St. James Infirmary” released between 1927 and 1930. I have included only those records manufactured for release in North America (so that, for instance, Spike Hughes’ 1930 recording from London, England is not listed). Similarly, I have tried to avoid listing any of the non-American label numbers. For example, the Harlem Hot Chocolates’ version was also released on the Jazz Collector label in England, but that does not appear in the chart. The evolution—or, if you prefer, devolution—of the song during this period is a purely American affair. As the Gotham/Denton & Haskins suit proclaims, the song was now “an ordinary bit of merchandise” that became, thanks to the efforts of Mills et al., quite profitable. Although it was undoubtedly Armstrong’s recording that brought “St. James Infirmary” into public awareness, it was Mills who kept the momentum going.

The Hokum Boys, Mattie Hite, Gene Austin, and Alex Hill all feature the cannonball verse. In Sandburg’s *Songbag* it is:

I may be killed on the ocean,
 I may be killed by a cannonball,
 But let me tell you, buddy,
 That a woman was the cause of it all.

This verse strikes me as extraneous. It doesn’t make sense, at least not in the context within which it appears. It stands alone, as if

grafted from another song, with no attempt to incorporate it into the story. Gene Austin makes the best job of it by moving the verse to the end of the song, where it serves as a final musing on a fractured state of mind. The verse evokes images of naval warfare and brings to mind the dying comrade in “The Unfortunate Rake” or the later variant “The Young Sailor Cut Down in His Prime.” Still, neither of these songs has a verse remotely like this—and its inclusion is a mystery. One is hard-pressed to imagine a dissolute gambler seeking solace in the navy.

Indeed, only one of the *Songbag* variations makes mention of a gambler. This occurs in the last verse of the first variant. Although both songs retain the title “Those Gambler’s Blues,” absolutely nothing in the second version (aside from the title) give a glimpse of the protagonist’s occupation. We don’t even know if he drinks. In fact, these lyrics betray nothing about the character other than that he might be a sailor and that he is distraught.

Nor does Armstrong’s version overtly mention a gambler (although the Stetson hat, together with the line “so the boys’ll know that I died standing pat,” suggest a man of that profession). In fact, of the twenty-two recordings I have found that were released between 1927 and 1930, only five explicitly mention a gambler. The first of these is, of course, Baxter and Moore’s “Gambler’s Blues.”

The version Moore and Baxter published is the only one that pre-dates (by two years) the printing of Sandburg’s *American Songbag*. The *Songbag* was a prospector’s dream for songwriters and music publishers. But Baxter and Moore undoubtedly based their adaptation on primary sources, upon songs that were extant as part of an aural tradition. Baxter was from Texas, Moore from Arkansas. It’s a good bet (not that I’m a gambling man) that the song they knew came from one (or both) of those states.

Note

- 1 In addition to copyrighting the original song, “Joe Primrose” also copyrighted an arrangement of it on February 11, 1930. Based upon the first copyright, this arrangement is for piano and ukulele. The copyright is for “New matter: New words and music of “Verse” and new words for extra choruses.” The copyright was renewed on February 10, 1958, under the name Irving Mills.

Song Variants of “St. James Infirmary”: I–12

Title	Performer	Composer on record label
1 Gambler's Blues	Fess Williams and His Royal Flush Orchestra	Baxter–Moore
2 St. James Infirmary	Louis Armstrong and His Savoy Ballroom Five	Redman
1st Mills copyright March 4, 1929		
3 Gambler's Blues (St. James Infirmary Blues)	The Hokum Boys	none
4 Gambler's Blues No. 2	The Hokum Boys	none
5 St. James Infirmary	George E. Lee and His Novelty Singing Orchestra	Primrose
6 St. James Infirmary Blues	Kansas City Frank and His Footwarmers	Primrose
7 St. James Infirmary Blues	Atlantic Syncopators	None
8 St. James Infirmary	Rube Bloom and His Bayou Boys	Primrose
9 St. Joe's Infirmary (Those Gambler's Blues)	Mattie Hite	None
10 St. James Infirmary	King Oliver and His Orchestra	Primrose
11 St. James Infirmary (Gambler's Blues)	Gene Austin	Primrose
12 St. James Infirmary	The Ten Black Berries (Duke Ellington Orchestra with Irving Mills as Sunny Smith)	Primrose

Lyrical variation	Recording date	City	Record catalogue
1	February 25, 1927	New York	Vocalion 1087
3	December 12, 1928	Chicago	OKeh 8657
5	October 1929	Chicago	Paramount 12897
5	October 1929	Grafton, Wisconsin	Paramount 12919
3	November 6, 1929	Kansas City	Brunswick 4684
Instrumental	November 1929	Chicago	Paramount 12898 Broadway 1355 (as Harry's Reckless Five)
3, 4	c. November 1929	New York	Madison 50047
3	January 16, 1930	New York	Columbia 2103-D
1, 2	January 27, 1930	New York	Columbia 14503-D
3	January 28, 1930	New York	Victor 22298, Bluebird B-5466
1, 2	January 28, 1930	New York	Victor 22299-A, Bluebird B-6863
4	January 29, 1930	New York	Take 1 issued on Apex 41121, Conqueror 7486, Domino 4498, Perfect 15272, Regal 8941, Romeo 1209; Take 2 issued on Oriole 1849; Takes 2 and 3 issued on Banner 0594, Cameo 0194, Champion 867, Jewel 5849, Romeo 120

Song Variants of “St. James Infirmary”: 13–22

Title	Performer	Composer on record label
13 St. James Infirmary	Mills' Merry Makers	Primrose
14 St. James Infirmary	Carl Fenton and His Orchestra	?
15 St. James Infirmary	Alex Hill and His Orchestra	Primrose
2nd Mills copyright February 11, 1930		
16 St. James Infirmary	The California Ramblers	Primrose
17 St. James Infirmary	Alphonso Trent and His Orchestra	Primrose
18 St. James Infirmary	Harlem Hot Chocolates (Duke Ellington Orchestra with Irving Mills on vocals)	Primrose
19 Those Gambler's Blues	Jimmie Rodgers	Arranged by Jimmie Rodgers
20 St. James Infirmary	Cab Calloway	Primrose
21 St. James Infirmary	Kid Ory	?
22 St. James Infirmary	Dick Robertson and His Orchestra	Primrose

Lyrical variation	Recording date	City	Record catalogue
4	January 31, 1930	New York	Harmony 1104-H
Unknown	c. January 1930	New York	QRS Q-1023
1, 2	February 8, 1930	Chicago	Vocalion 1465, Supertone s-2237
4	February 24, 1930	New York	Grey Gull/Radiex 1843, as Bay State Broadcasters on Van Dyke 81843 and Goodson 204
Scat version; one verse of lyric	March 5, 1930	Richmond, IN	Gannett 7161, Champion 15956, as Duke Diggs and His Orchestra on Supertone 9653
4	March 1930	New York	Hit-of-the-Week 1045-D, Biltmore 1014
1, 2	July 5, 1930	Hollywood	Victor 22554, Montgomery Ward M-4211
1, 3	December 23, 1930	New York	Brunswick 6105, Lucky 5071
Instrumental	1930	?	?
2, 3, 4	? late 1929	New York	Brunswick 4720

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