Winds of Change: Technology, Pedagogy, and Disaster in the Making of Sam Morgan's Jazz Band

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This article will explore the vagaries that produced Sam Morgan's Jazz Band, whose recordings in 1927 have elicited contradictory views about its place in jazz history. Some scholars have seen the band as the culmination of an archaic phase of idiomatic development (in *Early Jazz*, Gunther Schuller refers to the Morgan Band as "this marvelous anachronism"),[1] while others, especially Lawrence Gushee and Max Harrison, have described it as a precursor of the bands of Bunk Johnson and George Lewis associated with the New Orleans Revival of the 1940s.[2] Both arguments have merit, and it is interesting to note such diametrically opposite opinions about a band that has never figured prominently in the jazz canon, but I am more concerned with the band's origins than its legacy. I want to consider what the winds of change wrought in the convergence of seemingly random events that produced this band: how pedagogies blending amateur and conservatoire traditions, dislocations occasioned by economic deprivation, hurricanes, and world war, and the introduction of new technology within the phonograph industry combined to make this band so memorable.

The organization of Sam Morgan's Jazz Band in 1925 was the product of synergies among musicians from rural Plaquemines Parish south of New Orleans and their urban Creole and African American counterparts in Tremé, the Seventh Ward, and Central City, coalescing over the course of a decade. The catalyst for this phenomenon was the routine of itinerant music "professors" from the city such as James Brown Humphrey and Frank Duson, teachers who were hired by plantation owners to provide musical recreation for field workers as a means of keeping them happy in their situation. Instead, such training enabled incipient brass "scholars" to seek work in New Orleans. The lure of better pay, freedom, and excitement in the city, along with the skidding of plantation agriculture after the Civil War, brought many country people to the city in the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but as we shall soon see, other factors could "seal the deal."

The conservatory-derived pedagogy offered by Jim Humphrey enabled amateurs to supplement homespun methodologies with varying degrees of solfège, method-book instruction, and "hands-on" demonstrations of basic fingerings or embouchure. The experience of the Morgan brothers, Sam and Isaiah, is a case in point. Born in 1887 in Bertrandville, on the east bank of the Mississippi River near Belair Plantation, trumpeter Sam Morgan was almost ten years older than his brother Isaiah, who also studied trumpet. Sam's first lessons were from J.B. Humphrey at Belair, but his musical experience began earlier in the Sugar House Pipe Band.[3] In a memoir by Florence Dymond, whose family owned Belair, she recalls the Morgan brothers' amateur experiments:

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Sam Morgan's Jazz Band (ca. 1927): Seated, l-r, Nolan "Shine" Williams, Isaiah Morgan, Sam Morgan, Earl Fouché, Andrew Morgan, Johnny Dave; standing, l-r, Nathan "Jim Crow" Robinson and Sidney "Jim Little" Brown. Photo credit: Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University.

Some of the small colored boys on Belair, varying from ten to fourteen years old, decided they would have their own band. They used an old lard can for a drum and old, discarded sugar house pipes, varying in length and diameter, some straight and some bent, formed the other instruments. The boys sang and blew through the pipes with the drummer keeping time on the lard can and it was really remarkable the harmony they could get out of all that junk. "Jess James was the King of them all," to the tune of "Sweet Bye and Bye," was their piece de resistance. This was the forerunner of a band of real instruments that was formed some years later. A number of the young colored men, feeling the urge to make music, asked Will [Dymond] to buy quite a number of instruments for them, on which they practiced diligently. Finally, Will suggested that they get a teacher to show them what to do, so that they might progress more rapidly. This they did, and the teacher, a negro, came down from the city and the band started violently to work. After listening all

> the "professor" could say was simply "Niggahs, you sho' can blow," the lesson ended and he took the train back to town. However, out of this aggregation of performers and original members of the "sugar house pipe band" came the two Morgan boys, Sam and Isaiah.[4]

Sam formed a brass band in the country before migrating to the city in 1915. Trombonist Jim Robinson and his nephew, the bassist Sidney Brown (a.k.a. "Jim Little"), who became stalwarts of the Morgan Band, grew up across the river on Deer Range plantation. They had set up a base of operations in New Orleans in 1911 but returned to the country periodically. What compelled these Plaquemines hopefuls to remain permanently in New Orleans was the Hurricane of 1915, which rivaled Hurricane Katrina in the scope of its devastation and flooded all of Plaquemines Parish. After the storm, Robinson and Brown could not return home, because Deer Range had been wiped away when the river levee gave way.[5] On the East Bank, Sam and Isaiah Morgan had returned to Belair to ride out the rough weather, but the plantation was inundated.[6] The destruction in Plaquemines convinced the Morgans that the city would be safer, and they settled in the French Quarter, very near to where Robinson and Brown lived in Tremé. The refugees, who did not know each other prior to moving to New Orleans, had landed in contiguous neighborhoods that were among the most active in the city for brass band funerals, "second line" parades, dance halls, and cabarets, and it did not take long for them to encounter each other and to establish associations with local musicians. Hurricanes are usually remembered for the misery they bring, but they can also create opportunities for growth and discovery.

Sam and Ike were the first members of their family to become professional musicians (their father was a Baptist preacher who also worked seasonally in the lumber industry), and they made good use of the educational opportunities that New Orleans afforded them. According to their younger brother, the saxophonist Andrew Morgan, "Sam [became] a good reader." By his own account, Ike "taught himself how to play using his brother Sam's instrument when he could take it," but he later learned how to read and write music, taking "twelve lessons" from a Professor Delmas of Baton Rouge while he led the Young Morgan Band in the early 1920s. He used these skills to "transcribe the choruses of many lead sheets to trumpet leads," adding that "I had a good ear and could play anything I heard other bands, including those on records, play. I played straight, so that people could understand the tune."[7] Ike confirmed that Sam acquired reading skills after moving to New Orleans and that Jim Robinson "did not read … could only spell a little … but had very little trouble with any of the numbers because he was a good ear man and could usually play a harmony to a lead at first hearing."[8] Andrew Morgan had considerable formal training, taking clarinet lessons from Joe Watson and Paul Chaligny (who used the Otto Langey Method, also favored by Humphrey) and instruction on tenor saxophone from Davey Jones. In the Sam Morgan Band, he learned more by "woodshedding" with his band-mate Earl Fouché, a Creole saxophonist from the Seventh Ward who relocated to Central City after several years in New York.[9]

Yet for Ike, the band's success had less to do with reading notes than with "its swing," its consistent rhythmic intensity: "Sam was a stickler for tempo, he wouldn't allow any variation in tempo. The band played almost any kind of music … the Frenchmen downtown, say at Economy Hall, would demand that a Schottische be played at least once a dance…. At midnight, the band would play a blues … people would begin screaming when the band played a 'slow drag' blues and begin fighting."[10] Like most New Orleans bands, the Morgan Band chose repertoire to suit the occasion, and their book was considerably broader and more eclectic than one would infer from their recordings. In addition to Sam's compositions, which were featured on the recordings, at dance halls the band relied on stock arrangements and "specials" derived from "scores" to fill out the repertoire.[11] Ike related that when the band was playing at the Astoria Garden on South Rampart Street, Sam would wait until the place was full and then "bring hard numbers such as 'Miss Trombone' and 'Sally Trombone' on the job," saying "he who fall down, stay down." Jim Robinson had no trouble with the trombone specialties because he memorized them.[12]

The hurricane of 1915 was not the only cataclysm to affect the making of the Morgan Band. Jim Robinson's story illustrates how dislocations attending World War I fostered change. Robinson began his musical life in 1905 as a self-taught guitarist, but he received basic training in chords from Jim Humphrey and attended dances where the Deer Range Brass Band performed.[13] The violinist Tom Albert's band, which included Frank Duson, would also come to Deer Range from the city. After Robinson left for New Orleans in 1911, he worked for Southern Pacific, a steamship company, making $3.30 a day and $4.40 at night (compared to a dollar a day working at Deer Range, this was "a big salary"). According to bassist Eddie Marrero, Robinson (on guitar) and Sidney Brown (on violin) were with Sam Morgan when he took over Billy Marrero's band in 1916, but World War I intervened.[14] In 1917 Robinson was drafted, which took him to France and provided him with the opportunity to learn the trombone, albeit reluctantly. Violinist Willie Foster (bassist George "Pops" Foster's brother) from McCall, Louisiana, was also in the company and convinced him that playing trombone in the band was better than toting a rifle or pickaxe. Foster helped him with the fundamentals: "Every day, when I'd get a chance, I'd go over by Willie with his violin, and he'd play a song for me and I'd take the trombone--he showed me what to make, to just vamp…. That trombone just came to me overnight. You know, my whole heart and mind had got to it."[15] Robinson stayed in France for a year and a half, performing with a small jazz band for military dances, before returning to New Orleans in 1919. His transition from guitar to slide trombone had momentous consequences for jazz history. He became one of the leading practitioners of "tailgate" trombone, evident not only in his recordings with the Morgan band but also on those made with Henry "Kid" Rena, Bunk Johnson, George Lewis, and the Humphrey Brothers at Preservation Hall.[16] After his return from Europe, Robinson worked with Kid Rena and did spot jobs with Lee Collins in the Golden Leaf Band before settling down to a long-term association with Ike Morgan's Young Morgan

Band in 1922, which became Sam Morgan's Jazz Band three years later when Sam could no longer administer his Magnolia band after suffering a stroke in 1924.

The pastiche of amateur and conservatory experience that enabled members of the Morgan Band to build such unique band chemistry is evident in the recordings made for Columbia in 1927. Max Harrison describes it:

> Morgan's band marked an important stage in the development of New Orleans music. Comparison with the 1923 Creole Band suggests that Oliver took a rather conservative view of New Orleans jazz, and here the ensembles, the plangent sweetness of the saxophones notwithstanding, are more open, the rhythmic pulse lighter. The textures are extremely diverse, variation being achieved from one chorus to another by changes of density, volume, and so on. Quite often, as in "Mobile Stomp," the participants engage in simultaneous variations; the trumpets are less commanding, and the reeds sometimes carry the most important threads … Such elements as the freedom of the parts, the trumpets' wide vibrato, the use of spirituals, the playing of Fouché … all point to the New Orleans recordings of the 1940s…. The point is, however, that the … Morgan recordings prove that New Orleans jazz was still blowing hot and strong, and was still evolving, even if attention had shifted elsewhere.[17]

The recordings were made in New Orleans on 14 April and 22 October 1927, in the Godchaux Building at 527 Canal Street. Columbia had a branch office just a few doors away, and its interest in the Morgan brothers probably came from an awareness of their popularity in New Orleans and throughout the Gulf Coast region.[18] There is some difference of opinion about who led the sessions. Sidney Brown attributes the selection of songs to Sam, but Andrew and Ike remembered that Columbia officials did not allow him an entirely free hand.[19] According to Ike, the band was paid fifteen dollars per side, with composer credits and royalties going to Sam.[20] Label copy notice forms and matrix listings indicate that the company's expectations for sales were about average, with modest advance initial orders of 4,850 to 5,750, compared to higher numbers for best sellers such as Rev. J.C. Burnett (66,750), Rev. J.M. Gates (34,025), Bessie Smith (16,325), and Ethel Waters (12,300).[21] *Everybody's Talking About Sammy* and *Sing on* from the April session were released on 10 June 1927, while *Steppin' on the Gas* and *Mobile Stomp* appeared on 20 November. *Down by the Riverside* and *Over in the Glory Land,* from the second session, came out relatively quickly on 20 December 1927, with *Short Dress Gal* and *Bogalusa Strut* the last to be issued, on 30 September 1928.

Apparently the hymns went over well, because a reissue of *Sing on* coupled with *Over in the Glory Land* came out on 31 July 1930.[22] The popularity of recorded sermons by Burnett and Gates may help to explain why Columbia insisted that the Morgan Band record hymns in dance tempo and why these particular cuts were released with such alacrity and then reissued. Yet there was resistance within the band to the company's

demands. Andrew Morgan recalled that "No jazz band had recorded hymns before the Sam Morgan Band did it; the Morgan Band didn't play hymns until the recording session; they were asked by company officials to record the hymns." Ike was more specific:

> The Morgan band played spirituals and hymns on parades and at Maypoles but didn't play them at dances; other bands did not play spirituals or hymns in dancehalls, either, until Louis Armstrong's record of "The Saints" came out [in 1938], and [we] didn't play that tune until people requested it; I would tell people that my band just didn't play the tune.[23]

Perhaps the credit ascribed to the Morgan Band for being the first to record hymns in dance tempo has been misplaced.

The respective roles of the trumpet players on these records have also been a subject of some speculation. Bill Russell believed that Isaiah "plays lead trumpet (with Sam taking the second parts and presumably all the solos)," but Andrew Morgan claimed that "Sam Morgan played straight trumpet (melody) on the recordings; Isaiah Morgan took the hot solos."[24] Drummer Albert Jiles provides another perspective: "Isaiah would play 'second trumpet' but he was actually playing unison with Sam; I could never quite figure out how they did that, but it sounded great."[25] On the recordings, one can hear all of these possibilities. Variegation was the goal, which allowed the best musical ideas to guide interpretation of the songs. Within a New Orleans-style ensemble, trumpets usually carry the main melodic lines, but on some of the Sam Morgan Jazz Band selections, most notably *Mobile Stomp,* the reeds predominate because it works for the song (especially in the "stop-time" middle section with Andrew Morgan on tenor and Earl Fouché on alto). As Lawrence Gushee reminds us,

> Another major revision in jazz history recognizes that there was nothing sacrosanct about the particular instrumentation of the earliest supposedly "authentic" New Orleans bands to record, that neither written music nor the saxophone nor the eight-to-ten piece dance band that might use both was to be viewed as a sign of musical decadence or of the dilution of the "real jazz."

Gushee argues that the band "could sustain for an entire record a kind of richly textured, relaxed ensemble that a band like A.J. Piron's could attain only after two and a half minutes of coping with a written arrangement," adding that it sounded "extraordinarily full because of the acoustics of the recording studio, the richness of the string bass, and the over-recording of the saxes. More important than any of these, perhaps, is the freedom of attack and phrasing that all members of the group are permitted."[26]

Richard B. Allen provides further context:

> The compositions are drawn from a number of sources including popular and folk songs, rags, and marches. Sam was noted for his ability to swing a number such as "The Waltz You Saved for Me." He would make up variations so original that he could call the new tune his own. He might change a sweet waltz into a moving stomp.... Isaiah claimed to have played lead trumpet and all the solos; however, he did concede that Sam took the trumpet breaks at the end of "Everybody's Talking About Sammy." The other instruments are easy to pick out. I can only hint at the beauty of this music.... The glorious abandon of the ensemble work is so different from all others that it requires fresh and imaginative listening to grasp its significance and variety. The date gives us the privilege of hearing the first recordings of such major figures as Jim Robinson.... Jim Robinson once discussed his belief about the proper recording of a band. He said, "You let every man use his own ideas, and you'll have a perfect record.... Play to your feelings." The men in the Morgan band were so familiar with each other and each other's musical ability that they eased their way up close to this goal.[27]

Gushee reiterates Allen's insights:

> Although the band is modern in some important respects, the material is folk-like and even country-flavored. This strain was still audible in what we now call jazz.... while probably viewed with amusement or contempt by the progressive musicians of the time operating in the urban North, it is for us a positive feature and a precious historical relic.[28]

The residual rural sensibilities of the Plaquemines contingent shaped the Morgan Band's sound and repertoire, illustrating how the supposedly "urban" jazz sounds that emanated from New Orleans in the 1920s incorporated the "country ways" of the hinterland. Albert Jiles believed that Jim Robinson was the "best blues trombone player" in New Orleans because "his solos were beautiful, and he filled in without playing the lead as the young trombone players do, who play as if the trombone were a trumpet. Jim had ideas of his own and always made it sound good, with a real Dixieland trombone sound."[29] Robinson's "country-flavored" or "folk-like" tendencies are revealed in his approach to the blues, which is simple and direct, one might even say rustic (in the sense of "naturally simple"). His tastefully sparse use of glissandi in the ensemble in Bogalusa Strut and the trombone feature in the middle section of Short Dress Gal bear this out, revealing a predilection for pithy melodic and harmonic clarity rather than embellishment. Gushee concurs:

> New Orleans music is slower and more relaxed, due not so much to the fragrant breezes of the Mississippi delta as to the lesser impact of fast ragtime and one-step playing, the longer lives of some of the older dances (quadrilles, lancers, medium-tempo waltzes), and the great influence of vocal blues and slow

> dancing of the rougher sort than in New York.... Also deserving notice is the greater simplicity, or at least less obviously commercial, fashionable character, of the melodic material in many earlier New Orleans performances.[30]

As Allen and Gushee aver, what makes the recordings of Sam Morgan's Jazz Band so distinctive is the band's ability to put the conventional New Orleans dictum of "beautiful melodies, simply stated, with plenty of rhythm for dancers" into practice more fully and effectively than other bands of the era. This is precisely what Allen means when he observes that the musicians "eased their way up close to this goal."

This rustic sensibility may also have influenced how the band responded to new technology. Their recordings were among the first local applications of the new electrical recording process that transformed the phonograph industry. The new technology enhanced the documentation of the Morgan Band's rhythm section, but not as much as it might have. Prior to 1925, acoustical recording technology could not effectively reproduce the sounds of bass and drums. Based on contracts with Western Electric, Columbia introduced electrical recording early in 1925 to improve fidelity. Yet Columbia's electrical process was not used in New Orleans until September 1926.[31] Recalling the Morgan sessions, Sidney Brown expressed satisfaction that "he was the first to play bass that could be heard on recordings," but that honor should actually go to another New Orleans bassist, Steve Brown.[32] Nevertheless, the rhythmic propulsion generated by Brown's big "slap style" sound drives these songs, invigorating the dense ensemble interplay. What is surprising, given the potential benefits of electrical recording for capturing drums, is that a full drum set was not used. Referring to Roy Evans' performance on *Over in the Glory Land,* Alfred Williams noted that he "just used the cymbal" (and apparently wood block) because "they didn't pick up the drum at that time."[33] Perhaps the electrical process was still so novel that the musicians were afraid to test it. Or maybe they were never informed that recording parameters had changed. The result is that the bass and banjo carry the rhythm, while the drums are relegated to accents, as on the "out-chorus" of *Short Dress Gal*, where a choked cymbal is used to emphasize the after beats. While it is difficult to be sure, given the percussive nature of Sidney Brown's technique and the drummer's intermittent use of woodblock (most audible on *Sing on* in juxtaposition to the banjo), it is also possible that the rhythm section gets a boost from Sam's use of "slap stick" on the introductory and closing "stop-chorus" passages of *Steppin' on the Gas* and throughout *Everybody's Talking About Sammy.*[34]

The recordings of Sam Morgan's Jazz Band in 1927 continue to inspire us with their beauty and power, yet they also offer researchers lessons that are more than musical. The myriad of concatenations that brought this band together and the pragmatic eclecticism that informed its activities effectively illustrate the complexities involved in deciphering the stories of even the most parochial jazz bands of the 1920s, while also underscoring the need to go beyond the established canon in our search for meaning. Until we become intimate with every New Orleans musician who put his life on the line for jazz in this

period, we cannot afford to be complacent about our knowledge of jazz origins or its early development. Happily, much more work remains to be done.

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NOTES

[1] Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 75.

[2] Max Harrison, Charles Fox, and Eric Thacker, *The Essential Jazz Records: Volume I: Ragtime to Swing,* Discographies, Number 12 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984), 47–48; Lawrence Gushee, liner notes for *Steppin' on the Gas: Rags to Jazz, 1913–1927* (New World Records NW 269/Recorded Anthology of American Music, 1977).

[3] See John Ball, "Willie Humphrey Interview," *Eureka* 1, no. 3 (March–June 1960): 24; and Willie Parker, interview by Richard B. Allen, 7 November 1958, Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University, as quoted by Karl Koenig, "The Plantation Belt Brass Bands and Musicians, Part 1: Professor James B. Humphrey," *The Second Line* 33 (Fall 1981): 24–40, here 33: "See, at that time they had bands at Pointe a la Hache, Deer Range, St. Sophie, Ironton, Belair, Oakville, Jesuits Bend, all of them places had a band, you see. And old Humphrey had all the work…. He didn't charge but two-bits a lesson…. Belair, that's where Sam Morgan was." Isaiah Morgan also states that the trombonist Frank Duson taught at Belair; Isaiah Morgan, interview by William Russell and Richard B. Allen, 1 December 1958, reel II, p. 6, Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University.

[4] Florence Dymond (1873–1962), "Belair Band," Memoirs, undated manuscript, collection 453, folder 28, Manuscripts, Special Collections Division, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University.

[5] Jim Robinson, interview by William Russell and Richard B. Allen, 10 December 1958, Tulane University, Hogan Jazz Archive [hereafter: HJA], reel I, pp. 3, 12; Sidney Brown, interview by William Russell and Ralph Collins, 27 May 1960, HJA, reel I, pp. 1, 3,

[6] Isaiah Morgan, 1 December 1958, HJA, reel II, p. 6.

[7] Andrew Morgan, interview by William Russell, 4 July 1961, HJA, reel II, p. 10; and Isaiah Morgan, 1 December 1958, reel I, p. 2.

[8] Isaiah Morgan, reel II, p.7.

[9] Andrew Morgan, reel I, pp. 2–3.

[10] Isaiah Morgan, reel II, p. 8.

[11] Andrew Morgan, 4 July 1961, reel II, p. 10.

[12] Isaiah Morgan, reel II, p. 7.

[13] Jim Robinson, reel I, p. 3.

[14] Eddie Marrero, interview by William Russell, 11 October 1961, HJA, reel I, p. 1. Marrero remembers a bassist named Tommy Copeland as playing with Sam Morgan, but apparently not in the immediate aftermath of his father's illness.

[15] Jim Robinson, reel I, pp. 15–16.

[16] According to Alden Ashforth, "Robinson's highly individualistic style was characterized by an ebullient shouting tone and his frequent employment of tongued staccato, glottal ghost notes, and pedal notes; he also made judicious use of glissandos. Although he displayed an inventive sense of melody, he never neglected the trombone's role as the low-pitched contrapuntal voice in ensemble passages." See *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd edn., ed. Barry Kernfeld (New York: Grove Dictionaries, Inc., 2002), s.v. "Robinson, Jim," by Alden Ashforth.

[17] The quotation is from Harrison et al, *Essential Jazz Records*, 47–48. The essential thrust of Harrison's statement was presented earlier by Lawrence Gushee in liner notes for *Steppin' on the Gas*, 5, in which he states, "the Morgan Band was, I think, modern in New Orleans terms. This 1927 rhythm section sounds amazingly like those of the 1940s revival (or survival) bands of Bunk Johnson and George Lewis. It also makes prominent use of saxophones, which later were often considered beyond the pale by purist aficionados of New Orleans jazz."

[18] Although the location of the first Sam Morgan Jazz Band recording session for Columbia Records is given as "the Werlein Music Store" in John Wilby's liner notes for the Jazz Oracle release, statements in the oral histories by band members place the session at "the Godchaux Building in the 500 block of Canal Street" (Godchaux was at 527 Canal; Werlein's was at 605 Canal). See *Soards' New Orleans City Directory, 1927* (New Orleans: Soards Directory Co., Ltd., 1927), 713, 1585; Sidney Brown, reel II, p.6; and Andrew Morgan, reel I, p. 5. The branch offices of the Columbia Phonograph Company (J.R. Bivins, manager) were located just down the street, at 517 Canal; see *Soards 1927*, 477.

[19] This is especially true in the recording of hymns in dance tempo at the instigation of Columbia company officials, see below.

[20] Isaiah Morgan, reel I, p. 5. Ike Morgan also mentions that the band was offered a third recording session but declined because they would have had to travel to Johnson City, Tennessee, to do it. Lawrence Gushee describes Sam's original compositions as "mosaics of phrases and riffs that are part of the New Orleans public domain." Gushee, *Steppin' on the Gas,* liner notes, 5.

[21] See Dan Mahony, *The Columbia 13/14000-D Series: A Numerical Listing*, Record Handbook No.1, 2nd rev. edn. (Stanhope, New Jersey: Walter C. Allen, 1966), 34–40.

[22] Mahony, *The Columbia*, 37, 39, 40, 44, and 54.

[23] Andrew Morgan, reel II, p. 8; and Isaiah Morgan, reel I, p. 4.

[24] Andrew Morgan, reel II, p. 9. Considering the fact that the interviewer is William Russell, the contradiction is something of a mystery. Lawrence Marrero, 2 January 1959, characterized Sam Morgan's trumpet style as "the sweetest" in comparison to Kid Rena as "the jazziest-fast-fingering, lots of notes," and Chris Kelly as "the king of 'ratty,' low-down music" (reel I, p. 5), which lends support to Andrew Morgan's contention, as does Alfred Williams, interview by Richard B. Allen, 13 October 1961, HJA, in which he identifies Sam Morgan's trumpet as carrying the lead in *Sing on* (reel I, p. 1).

[25] Albert Jiles, interview by Richard B. Allen and Marjorie Zander, 24 February 1961, HJA, reel II, p. 8.

[26] Gushee, *Steppin' On the Gas,* liner notes, 2, 5.

[27] Allen, *Sam Morgan's Jazz Band,* liner notes.

[28] Gushee, *Steppin' on the Gas,* liner notes, 5.

[29] Albert Jiles, reel II, p. 7.

[30] Gushee, *Steppin' on the Gas,* liner notes, 2. Gushee also emphasizes "the restraint in New Orleans clarinet playing" and the "moderating effect on the band sound from the early New Orleans predilection for string bass" as features contributing to "greater smoothness."

[31] Charlie Bocage remembered that the only parts of the drum set that Louis Cottrell could use on the recordings with Piron were "cymbal and woodblock" (reel I, p. 6). Charlie Bocage, interview by Richard B. Allen and Herb Friedwald, 18 July 1960, HJA. See also *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd edn., s.v. "Recording: II. History of Jazz Recording: 2. Early Recordings," by Chris Sheridan. See Brian Rust, *The American Record Label Book* (New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House Publishers, 1978), 79, 215, and 306. See also Richard M. Sudhalter, *Lost Chords: White Musicians and Their Contribution to Jazz, 1915–1945* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 73.

[32] Sidney Brown, reel I, p. 3. Steve Brown made "orthophonic" recordings for Victor with Jean Goldkette's Orchestra in January 1927. See Brian Rust, *Jazz Records, 1897–1942*, 5th revised and enlarged edn., vol. I (Chigwell, Essex, England: Storyville Publications and Co., Ltd., 1982), 578, especially *I'm Gonna Meet My Sweetie Now*, recorded 31 January 1927.

[33] Alfred Williams, reel I, p. 1.

[34] Andrew Morgan, reel I, p. 6. Andrew states that Sam used the slapstick "because he had been very sick, and using the slapstick would make it easier on him, as well as helping the band."