

The Piano Blues - Paramount 1929-30 Vol.1 (1977)

Wpisany przez bluesever
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- Side 1
1. *Charlie Spand – Moanin' The Blues* Guitar – Blind Blake Vocals Piano – Charlie Spand
 2. *Blind Leroy Garnett - Chain 'Em* Piano – Blind Leroy Garnett
 3. *Little Brother Montgomery – No Special Rider Blues* Vocals, Piano – Little Brother Montgomery
 4. *Wesley Wallace – Fanny Lee Blues* Piano – Wesley Wallace
 5. *Louise Johnson – By The Moon And Stars* Vocals, Piano – Louise Johnson
 6. *Will Ezell – Pitchin' Boogie* Cornet – Baby Jay Guitar, Tambourine – Roosevelt & Uaroy Graves Vocals, Piano – Will Ezell
 7. *Blind Leroy Garnett - Louisiana Glide* Piano – Blind Leroy Garnett
 8. *Blind Blake / Charlie Spand – Hastings St.* Guitar, Vocals [Talking] – Blind Blake Piano – Charlie Spand
- Side 2
1. *Charles Avery – Dearborn St. Breakdown* Piano – Charles Avery
 2. *Charlie Spand – Mississippi Blues* Vocals, Piano – Charlie Spand
 3. *Will Ezell – Heifer Dust* Piano – Will Ezell
 4. *Little Brother Montgomery – Vicksburg Blues* Vocals, Piano – Little Brother Montgomery
 5. *Wesley Wallace – No. 29* Vocals, Piano – Wesley Wallace
 6. *James Wiggins – Forty-Four Blues* Piano – Blind Leroy Garnett Vocals – James Wiggins
 7. *Henry Brown – Henry Brown Blues* Piano – Henry Brown
 8. *Louise Johnson – All Night Long Blues* Vocals [Speech] – Son House, Willie Brown Vocals, Piano – Louise Johnson

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This 16-song U.K. LP, from the Sussex-based Magpie label, was one of the better overviews of American piano blues of the late 1920s that one could find, back in the '70s -- a time when few US labels wanted anything to do with archival releases of this sort. The relatively well-known figures such as Charlie Spand, Will Ezell, and Little Brother Montgomery are the bait, to draw us into the joys of such relatively obscure players as Wesley Wallace, James Wiggins, and Blind Leroy Garnett. Blind Blake and Louise Johnson are also featured in this good overview of one corner of the Paramount Records legacy. --- btsdl.cc

On December 4, 2009 Francis Wilford-Smith died and today we pay tribute to him. Smith was an avid collector of 78 records, a broadcaster on BBC Radio 3 (*Aspects of the Blues*) and the compiler of some excellent piano blues LP's on the British label Magpie Records, drawing all the material from his own collection. Today's selections all come from Smith's groundbreaking 21 volume series he started in 1977 and issued on the Magpie label, a subsidiary of the Flyright label. Subsequently his collection was used for a piano blues series on Yazoo issued on CD. He had one of the largest collections of piano blues 78's in the world. Smith also field recorded Roosevelt Sykes and Little Brother Montgomery at his home in Sussex in 1960, yielding two 1980s LP's of the latter: *These Are What I Like: Unissued Recordings Vol. 1* and *Those I Liked I Learned: Unissued Recordings Vol. 2*. Smith made a good living from cartoons published under the pen name 'Smilby' in *Playboy*, which allowed him to outbid others for rare 78s. Wilford-Smith was 82, had suffered from Parkinson's disease since 1994, and spent his last years in a nursing home. He died asleep in bed.

The first volume and volume 17 are devoted to Paramount and as Smith writes: "...We start with Paramount, almost unchallenged as the greatest blues label, and its piano content lives up to its reputation. Here are joys indeed -- and some of the greatest blues piano ever recorded. Spand, Little Brother, Ezell, Louise Johnson, Wesley Wallace, Garnett. ...I think the playing here must satisfy the most critical lover of the blues." From those volumes we spin tracks by Little Montgomery, Charles Avery, Charlie Spand, Louise Johnson, Henry Brown and Jabo Williams. --- sundayblues.org

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