

The Blues Songs in the Club 7 recordings

I was perhaps lucky to witness back around 1980 the performance of some of the greatest blues songs ever:

“I’m a Man” performed by Bo Diddley

“Rock me Baby” performed by the lead guitarist (I haven’t identified him) in Lonnie Brooks band.

“Little Red Rooster” performed by the James Cotton band.

“Messed up Again” performed by the Lonnie Brooks band.

“Cold and Lonely Night” performed by the Lonnie Brooks band.

Songs such as “Little Red Rooster” and “I’m a Man” have also been performed by British blues bands.

Without wanting to go into a long aesthetic discussion about the merits of African American blues singers as contrasted to British and American white blues singers, there is obviously often a difference in the performance.

The performances here of Lonnie Brooks and James Cotton especially reflect the tradition of the blues. In other words, much like a Shakespeare play, the idea of authenticity is all important. Thus, Billie Holiday always convinced her audience and listeners that she was communicating real human emotion. I’m not saying that the British and American white blues and rock bands were incapable of this, but it is obvious that many of the Stones performances are narcissist, and not focused on communicating real human emotions. Okay – nuff said – this was of course a gross generalization, but I think I managed to express the point I was trying to make without delving into further discussion.

Little Red Rooster (performed here by Lonnie Brooks)

Of course, there are countless versions of the song “Little Red Rooster”. According to Wikipedia the song was written by Willie Dixon.¹ But this

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Red_Rooster#Background Read: 26 Dec. 2022.

seems to miss the obvious point that the song has rural origins. After all, how many farmyards are there in the Chicago of the 1950s. From a sociological-historical perspective the obvious observation is that this song indirectly refers to the “Great Migration”.²

Put briefly, the folk acoustic blues of the rural south was transformed into the electric blues in the northern US cities, such as Chicago. But many of the artists, such as Muddy Waters, who had migrated from the **rural south, retained the rural mindset in the lyrics of their songs.**

“Little Red Rooster”

I am the little red rooster
Too lazy to crow for day
I am the little red rooster
Too lazy to crow for day
Keep everything in the farm yard upset in every way
The dogs begin to bark and hounds begin to howl
Dogs begin to bark and hounds begin to howl
Watch out strange cat people
Little red rooster's on the prowl
If you see my little red rooster
Please drive him home
If you see my little red rooster
Please drive him home
Ain't had no peace in the farm yard
Since my little red rooster's been gone.

I'm a Man (performed by Bo Diddley)³

“ 'I'm a Man' was one of the first songs Bo Diddley recorded for Checker Records. Unlike his self-titled 'Bo Diddley' that was recorded the same day (March 2, 1955 in Chicago), 'I'm a Man' does not use the Bo Diddley beat. Rather, it was inspired by Muddy Waters' 1954 song 'Hoochie Coochie Man', written by Willie Dixon.

“I'm A Man”

Artist: Bo Diddley

² “The Great Migration, a long-term movement of African Americans from the South to the urban North, transformed Chicago and other northern cities between 1916 and 1970. Chicago attracted slightly more than 500,000 of the approximately 7 million African Americans who left the South during these decades.”

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/545.html#:~:text=Great%20Migration&text=The%20Great%20Migration%2C%20a%20long,the%20South%20during%20these%20decades>. Read: 26 Dec. 2022.

³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I%27m_a_Man_\(Bo_Diddley_song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I%27m_a_Man_(Bo_Diddley_song)) Read: 26 Dec. 2022.

Now when I was a little boy,
At the age of five
I had something in my pocket
Keep a lot of folks alive

Now I'm a man
Made twenty one
You know baby,
We can have a lot of fun

I'm a man,
I spell M-A-N, man

All you pretty women,
Stand in line,
I can make love to you baby,
In an hour's time.

I'm a man
I spell M-A-N, man

I goin' back down,
To Kansas to
Bring back the second cousin,
Little John the conqueroo.

I'm a man,
I spell M-A-N, man.

The line I shoot,
Will never miss,
The way I make love to 'em,
They can't resist.

I'm a man,
I spell M-A-N, man.

Still Shots from Super 8 films

Films are something else than photos. Nevertheless, photos can perhaps capture human emotion better than film – as an emotion is frozen-in-time so to speak. I have taken so-called ‘still-shots’ from the films, which, amongst other things, show the engagement and deep-felt feeling of the performers.

Bo Diddley



James Cotton



Lonnie Brooks Band

