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Chris Barber Presents Lost & Found, Vol. 2 (2008)

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In case you haven't read the intro to the [review of volume one](#) of Chris Barber's *Lost & Found* CD series, here's the story. Since the early 1950s, Chris Barber has been one of the movers and shakers in the British blues and jazz worlds, as both the leader of The Chris Barber Band, and as a concert promoter. During the 1950s and '60s, Barber brought dozens of American blues artists to the U.K. and Europe to perform on the continent for the first time, often backed by his band. Barber's shows helped bring blues music to Britain, thus influencing a generation of British blues musicians.

Chris Barber Presents Lost & Found, Vol. 2

The second volume of Chris Barber's *Lost & Found* series picks up where the first ended, that is with folk-blues legends Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee. As explained by Barber in his introduction and in the album's liner notes, The Chris Barber Band had accompanied Terry and McGhee on a tour of England and Germany. Barber did regular broadcasts on BBC radio, and took Terry and McGhee into the studio, backed up by his band and vocalist Otilie Patterson. It is from these 1958 BBC broadcasts that the five Terry and McGhee songs originate.

Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee on the BBC

"Poor Man Blues" is an easy-going, slow-shuffling country-blues wailer, with perfectly-timed vocal interplay between the two singers creating its own sort of rhythm track, accompanied by McGhee's casually-strummed guitar and low-key punctuation marks provided by Terry's harp. The instrumental "Boogie On The Blues" is a McGhee solo piece, showcasing his skilled Piedmont-style guitar-picking (lighter, and more nimble than Delta-style guitar).

The duo are joined by The Chris Barber Band for three songs, vocalist Otilie Patterson bringing her trembling vocals to "When Things Go Wrong" alongside Terry and McGhee's backing instrumentation, with a few horn blasts thrown in for good measure. Her performance on the classic "How Long Blues" is even more impressive; Patterson's torch-style vocals are complimented by McGhee's rhythmic fretwork and Terry's imaginative, mournful harp runs, the entire band joining in at the song's close.

Muddy Waters with Otis Spann and The Chris Barber Band

Barber booked Muddy Waters into the Manchester Trade Hall in October 1958, the beginning of the blues music legend's first U.K. tour. To say that it was the stuff of legend would be understating the importance of this, and following shows in Britain. Accompanied by his long-time foil, pianist Otis Spann, Waters kicks into a phenomenal reading of the Willie Dixon gem "Hoochie Coochie Man." Waters' powerful vocals are matched by Spann's menacing ivory-bashing, the noted musician riffing madly behind Waters' swaggering performance.

The rest of the Waters/Spann performance on *Lost & Found* is equally impressive, the two displaying their unique chemistry on songs like "Long Distance Call," "Blues Before Sunrise," and a haunting reading of "Baby Please Don't Go." Waters' solo performance - just his voice and guitar - on "Rollin' Stone" (the song that gave Mick Jagger his band's name), is nothing short of remarkable. Holding the audience in the palm of his hand, the Chicago blues giant schooled a generation of British musicians to follow with swaying, seductive vocals and switchblade guitar play.

Waters and Spann have the crowd on its feet for the romping "I Can't Be Satisfied," the normally reserved British audience



Chris Barber Presents Lost & Found, Vol. 2
Photo courtesy MVD Audio & The Blues Legacy

stomping and clapping as Waters' guitar dashes in between Spann's percussive keyboard runs. Joined by The Chris Barber Band for "Walkin' Through The Park," Waters delivers a Chicago blues experience with a British jazz flavor, the band's horn section reinforcing Waters' vocals with a timely soundtrack and full-blown, inspired solos. Otilie Patterson joins in for a raucous reprise of the song, swapping verses with an over-the-top Waters for a big finish.

Champion Jack Dupree and Louis Jordan

New Orleans pianist Champion Jack Dupree, a colleague and protégé of noted Crescent City mirthmaker Professor Longhair, had moved to England by the late-1950s to escape the persistent racism of the southern United States. Invited by Barber to perform for a live BBC broadcast from The London Jazz Club on December 3, 1959, Champion Jack contributes three delightfully bluesy songs for *Lost & Found*.

With a bit of a southern drawl and oddly mismatched, discordant piano, Dupree launches "Merry Christmas Blues," a traditional "I'm leaving, but I'll be back one day" blues number. Dupree wins the audience over with the humor of "Mother-In-Law Blues," his spoken-word vocals supported by gentle, rolling notes from his piano. "When Things Go Wrong" is the keystone of Dupree's performance here, his rich, fluid vocals paired with a dusky piano sound, a solid swinging rhythm provided by the Barber band's bassist and drummer.

The lone Louis Jordan track on *Lost & Found, Vol. 2* seems like an afterthought, but it's actually an outtake from a 1962 recording session with The Chris Barber Band. The one song out of ten that didn't make the finished album, "T'ain't Nobody's Business" is a duet between the R&B great and Otilie Patterson, her silky, jazz-inflected vocals balanced by Jordan's soaring, soulful voice, resulting in a remarkable musical collaboration.

The Reverend's Bottom Line

This second CD in the *Lost & Found* series builds upon the powerful performances of the first volume with more important music. Though not up to modern standards, sound is slightly better on this volume, the re-mastering capturing more of the nuances of the various performances...perhaps because many of the songs here are taken from radio transcriptions rather than live recordings. Regardless, *Lost & Found, Vol. 2* is an invaluable document – capturing strong, entertaining, historical music-making from some of blues music's favorite sons. (MVD Audio/The Blues Legacy)

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