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# Western Swing in Transcription: Who's Sorry Now? by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies (Decca 5158-B)

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WESTERN SWING IN TRANSCRIPTION: *WHO'S SORRY NOW?*

BY MILTON BROWN AND HIS MUSICAL BROWNIES

(DECCA 5158-B)

by

Madeline Olson Dietrich

A Thesis Submitted in

Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Music

at

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

May 2013

ABSTRACT  
WESTERN SWING IN TRANSCRIPTION: *WHO'S SORRY NOW?*  
BY MILTON BROWN AND HIS MUSICAL BROWNIES  
(DECCA 5158-B)

by

Madeline Olson Dietrich

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2013  
Under the Supervision of Dr. Gillian Rodger

This thesis presents a full-score transcription of a recording of a string band performing a Tin Pan Alley song. Context is established through a review of events leading up to the recording, focusing on contributions by key personnel. Decca 5158-B, *Who's Sorry Now?* by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies is today regarded as western swing, but the style is hardly comparable to the slick, highly arranged sound of western swing orchestras from the late 1940s and early 50s. The Brownies were a Texas fiddle band playing mostly pop and jazz standards, not the cowboy and western themed repertory of later western swing bands. The Brownies played dance music on the radio and in dance halls during the Depression, and there was not time in their lives to devote to planning intricate chord progressions and solos. They achieved their excellence by doing it - over and over and over again, six days a week, four hours a day, for more than four years. Unarranged and spontaneous, this record is a three minute snapshot of a hot fiddle band doing what they did best, playing hard-driving dance music.

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This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my wife Stephanie,  
who challenged me to go back to school and earn an academic degree.  
Bite me, sweetie.

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I also wish to recognize Cary Ginell, whose scholarship in the area of Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies laid much of the groundwork for my thesis.

## Introduction

Three parties, each with a different point of origin, crossed paths on January 28th, 1935 and co-existed for a period of three minutes in pursuit of a single goal: to profit from the sale of music. As proof, a record exists of the encounter, in the form of a 78 rpm phonograph record. The record label identifies these three parties, as seen in Figure I-1.

Figure I-1. The record label of the 78 rpm record Decca 5158-B.



The record company is Decca Records, Inc. The song is *Who's Sorry Now* (Snyder-Kalmar-Ruby). The performer is Milton Brown and his Brownies.<sup>1</sup> The label offers a clue about the record's contents: "String Band with Singing."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The band's full name is Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies.

<sup>2</sup> Side A contains a recording of the Brownies playing *Copenhagen*, offering only the description "String Band." Side B contains a recording of the Brownies playing *Copenhagen*, offering only the description "String Band."

Beyond that, if we wish to know more about the record, we can engage in a little research, and we can also listen to it. It was the latter means by which I was introduced to this recording, and I can report that the music is indeed a string band performance with vocals. But it is much more. It is an artifact from the very early days of western swing, when fiddle bands first started playing popular and jazz songs, when steel guitars were first amplified, and when everyone was dancing to swing music. This music is not simply a string band with singing, it is hard-driving western swing.

### **Purpose and Method**

Much has been written on the subject of western swing, but precious few musical examples are available in print. To help alleviate this deficit, I will present a full-score transcription of the performance with critical commentary. Further, I will establish a cultural context for the performance by presenting the backstory for each entity involved with the production, the song, the band, and the record company, culminating with an account of the circumstances in the Chicago recording studio the day the recording was made. My purpose in writing this thesis is to provide greater access to this music for musicians and scholars, and to provide evidence that the musical roots of western swing were firmly grounded in hot jazz.

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## Context and Scholarship

For reasons discussed in Chapter One, Decca 5158 was marketed in the Decca Hillbilly Catalog. In Chapter One I will also consider the social reasons for the emergence of hillbilly records in the 1920s, and I will examine how Decca Records, Inc. came to dominate the hillbilly market by the mid-1930s. In *Recorded Music in American Life*, William Kenney characterizes the relationship between record companies of the northern United States and rural musicians of the south in terms of a "colonial economy" characteristic of the post-Reconstruction: record companies which were recording hillbilly music "extracted musical performances from white southern musicians and sold them back as industrial commodities."<sup>3</sup> In his introduction to *The Decca Hillbilly Discography, 1927-1945*, Cary Ginell gives insight into the backstory of Jack Kapp, founder of American Decca, and his brother Dave Kapp, the Artist and Repertoire (A&R) man in charge of Decca's Hillbilly Series.<sup>4</sup>

In Chapter Two I will introduce Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies and explain how the band came to be associated with Decca. I will examine how Milton Brown fits the profile of the rural folk musician described in Bill Malone's *Country Music, U.S.A.*, (3rd ed).<sup>5</sup> Cary Ginell's *Milton Brown and The Founding of Western Swing* features interviews of former band members who give first-hand accounts of their experiences

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<sup>3</sup> William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory, 1890-1945*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 135-136.

<sup>4</sup> Cary Ginell. *The Decca Hillbilly Discography, 1927-1945* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1989), Introduction.

<sup>5</sup> Bill C. Malone and Jocelyn R. Neal, *Country Music, U.S.A.: Third Revised Edition* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 29.

working and performing with Milton Brown. Ginell presents an exhaustive account of Brown's life and career, and the role his band played in developing western swing. In Chapter Three I will focus on the Brownies' experience in the recording studio during the session in which *Who's Sorry Now?* was recorded. This chapter also relies heavily on Ginell's work, particularly from his interviews with surviving members of the Brownies and their recollections. In considering the Brownies' performance of *Who's Sorry Now?*, it is useful to separate the song from the performance to understand which aspects are structural elements of the song and which are improvisations unique to the performing group. In Chapter Four I will explore the question of how *Who's Sorry Now?* became an enduring hit destined to become part of the Brownies' playlist. Drawing largely on Russell Sanjeck's *American Popular Music and Its Business*, I will consider the song's Tin Pan Alley origins.<sup>6</sup> Regarding the musical appeal of the song, in his book *Origins of the Popular Style* Peter van der Merwe gives insight into the "parlour style," the musical language favored by most Tin Pan Alley and ragtime composers.<sup>7</sup> Charles Hamm's *Yesterdays* gives further insight to the song's music and lyrical structures.<sup>8</sup>

### **Transcription and Commentary**

In Chapter Five I will describe my transcription process and the particular difficulties posed by the Brownie's music. In Chapter Six I will detail the manner with which the individual members of the Brownies approached the music (*how* they played), while in Chapter Seven I will give a chorus-by-chorus overview of the recording, highlighting

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<sup>6</sup> Russell Sanjeck, *American Popular Music and Its Business: The First Four Hundred Years*, III, from 1900 to 1984, (New York: Oxford, 1988), chapters 2-6.

<sup>7</sup> Peter van der Merwe, *Origins of the Popular Style: The Antecedents of Twentieth-Century Popular Music*, (New York: Oxford, 1989), chapters 26-29.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Hamm, *Yesterdays: Popular Song In America*, (New York: Norton, 1979), chapters 13-14.

musical points of interest (*what* they played). In Chapter Eight I will demonstrate the merit of transcription through two practical scenarios. The full transcription is contained in Appendix A.

## Chapter 1

### The Record Company: American Decca and the Decca Hillbilly Series.

During the 20s country music dancing began to incorporate popular urban styles like the two-step and the foxtrot as urban dance music permeated the southern market via radio and phonograph.<sup>9</sup> At the time, an economic recession in the U.S. coupled with newly available commercial radio led record companies to test urban minority and rural audiences, and by the late 1920s, most record companies had race and hillbilly labels catering to these markets.<sup>10</sup> The record itself is evidence of how radio and phonograph technology accelerated the affect of urban music and dance culture onto its rural counterpart in a process Bill Malone calls the "commercialization of country music."<sup>11</sup> Part of this process involved record companies from New York and Chicago sending artist and repertoire representatives ("A&R men") to the south to find local talent. The entrepreneurial southern musician was eager for the chance to make a record, even if the record company took the vast majority of the proceeds from the enterprise. The music was then labeled as having a rustic, rural quality and sold by the northern record company to the southern rural population that spawned the musical resource in the first place. Kenney likens this process to a colonial or reconstructionist economy wherein northern interests harvest raw materials from the south, process them and sell them back to southerners at a high profit.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Cary Ginell. "The Development of Western Swing" (*JEMF Quarterly* 20:74, 1984), 58. Sounds from clubs and radio from New Orleans, Chicago and Kansas City permeated southwest during this time.

<sup>10</sup> Cary Ginell DHD, xi.

<sup>11</sup> Malone, 1. "...the massive commercialization of country music is a facet of the tech and communications revolution which has radically transformed American popular tastes and steadily worked to pull rural, conservative South into American mainstream."

<sup>12</sup> Kenney, 135-136.

## **The Depression**

Records became luxury items with the onset of the Great Depression. In 1927, industry-wide sales exceeded 100 million records, but by 1932, sales had dropped to just 7 million, forcing many record companies out of business. By 1934, companies formed for the purpose of marketing race and hillbilly records (Paramount, Black Swan, Herwin, etc) either were dismantled or absorbed by bigger companies. Okeh (first label to record and release blues records in 1920) was near folding.<sup>13</sup> Victor Records responded to the financial hard times caused by the Depression by introducing a budget label at 35 cents. At the time, popular series of records sold for 75 cents, but race and hillbilly would not sell at that price. Victor's budget labels included names like Sunrise, Timely tunes, and Electradisk. They settled on Bluebird in January 1933, offering a catalog that included popular, hillbilly, jazz, blues, and gospel. Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies did a field session for Victor on the Bluebird label on April 4, 1934.<sup>14</sup> The resulting records suffered from poor promotion and distribution, prompting Brown to look at other record companies for any future recordings.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ginell DHD xi

<sup>14</sup> Ginell MB, 97.

<sup>15</sup> Ginell DHD, xii.

Figure 1-1. Cover of the 1938 Decca Hillbilly Catalog.<sup>16</sup>



<sup>16</sup> Ginell DHD ii.

## Decca

An English stockbroker named Edward Lewis founded The Decca Record Company Ltd in 1929. In its first five years it acquired various American labels including Brunswick, Melotone, and the labels of the American Record Corporation.<sup>17</sup> Jack Kapp, a former talent scout for Brunswick Record Company,<sup>18</sup> joined with Lewis in 1934 to form American Decca.<sup>19</sup> Kapp had started as delivery boy for various record companies, then became a salesman, and then director of artists and repertoire (A&R) for Brunswick. He rose to prominence after supervising the 1928 Al Jolson session that yielded *Sonny Boy*, which sold over 2 million copies. Kapp later resigned from Brunswick over creative differences.

Where Victor's Bluebird label was failing, Decca was succeeding in selling budget records for 35¢.<sup>20</sup> Jack Kapp owed part of this success to having cornered the jukebox market.<sup>21</sup> The jukebox, a coin-operated automatic record playing machine, was rapidly taking over the niche the coin-operated player piano had filled in the previous two decades, particularly in the south.<sup>22</sup>

Unlike many A&R men at the time, Jack Kapp was a fan of rural music and worked well with country people. Decca had studios in New York and Chicago, and drew talent from

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<sup>17</sup> Ginell DHD, xii.

<sup>18</sup> Ginell DHD xi. Known for having supervised Brunswick's 1928 recording session of Al Jolson as A&R director. The session included the song *Sonny Boy*.

<sup>19</sup> Ginell DHD, xi-xii. Lewis started Decca in the UK in 1929.

<sup>20</sup> Compared with 75¢ for premium labels In 2013 dollars, this amounts to \$6 and \$13 respectively. CPI Inflation Calculator <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl> (accessed 3/6/13)

<sup>21</sup> Kenney 166-167

<sup>22</sup> Sanjeck APM, 132-133.

the National Barn Dance radio show broadcast on WLS.<sup>23</sup> He hired his younger brother Dave to build the Decca Hillbilly catalog, and sent him the south and southwest to scout talent and conduct field recordings.<sup>24</sup> Dave Kapp heard about the Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies in late 1934.<sup>25</sup> He traveled to Fort Worth and arrived at the radio station where the Brownies were doing a live broadcast.<sup>26</sup> Dave convinced Jack to bring the Brownies up to Chicago for a recording session.

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<sup>23</sup> Ginell DHD xiv

<sup>24</sup> Ibid xiii. These recording sessions took place in bigger cities like New Orleans, Charlotte, Dallas, and Los Angeles, and were held in hotel ballrooms using field equipment.

<sup>25</sup> Ginell DHD, xv.

<sup>26</sup> Ginell MB, 169-170.

## Chapter 2

### The Band: Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies.

#### **Milton Brown**

Born in 1903, Milton Brown first entered the workforce as an agriculture worker, but later succeeded as a cigar salesman before focusing his efforts on his professional music career. He was a people-person and closely fit Bill Malone's profile of the rural folk musician of the late 1910s. Milton Brown was male, white, of poor upbringing, and a southern Protestant.<sup>27</sup> In the early 1920s, Milton Brown received formal music training in high school as a vocalist, and was a member of various singing groups between 1927 and 1930, performing mostly popular songs.<sup>28</sup> He also started singing with fiddle bands for dance parties held at private residences. These bands consisted of two or three musicians, usually a fiddle player and a banjo or guitar player. By introducing popular tunes into the string band format, Brown linked rural and urban audiences.

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<sup>27</sup> The typical southern musician "was more than likely to a man...because women in their culture were not supposed to assume the role of entertainer. Nevertheless, he was a man whose musical perceptions had been shaped by women, first by the mother who had lullabied him to sleep and who, perhaps, had taught him his first musical instrument. Furthermore, his songs were often consumed by the theme of male-female relations, and the insecurities that plagued his life as a poor, unfulfilled worker or farmer...He was also white...most likely a composite of forgotten European groups, with a bit of Indian thrown in..." His music was "a composite of instrumental and vocal styles and songs, heavily indebted to the various ethnic groups of the South, and particularly to the blacks from whom his ancestors had borrowed since the beginning of American life..." He was "a Protestant Christian, but in a very general, cultural sense...not necessarily a churchgoer or church member...his outlook on life...was strongly shaped by the God-centered fatalism of his religious conditioning, and his music was influenced crucially by that of the camp meetings, all-day singings, and shape-note schools. Intellectually and emotionally, he was torn by the conflicting impulses of Puritanism and hedonism." He was rural, but "his ruralism...did not necessarily connote an agricultural existence." He was folk, but "his folkness...was not a conscious posture (the folk are never aware that they are folk until someone tells them so)...Finally, he was southern..." (Malone 28-29)

<sup>28</sup> Ginell MB, 27-28.

Figure 2-1. Milton Brown.<sup>29</sup>

In 1930, Brown started singing with the Wills Fiddle Band, a duo consisting of Bob Wills on fiddle and Herman Arnsperger on guitar.<sup>30</sup> As the band's popularity grew, dances moved from private homes to public spaces. The larger rooms required more volume, so additional players were sometimes added (e.g., a second fiddler or another guitar). The group acquired a business sponsor, The Aladdin Lamp company, and started doing radio spots on WBAP in Fort Worth calling themselves The Aladdin Laddies.<sup>31</sup> Later in 1930, Wills, Arnsperger, and Milton Brown solicited the sponsorship of Will Lee O'Daniel, sales manager of Burrus Mill and Elevator Company in Saginaw, north of Fort Worth. Burrus Mill made Light Crust Flour, and when the band went on the air at KFJZ they were known as The Light Crust Doughboys.<sup>32</sup> The band had a regular radio spot by day and at night played dances, including a standing gig at the Crystal Springs Dancing Pavillion

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<sup>29</sup> Ginell MB, 171.

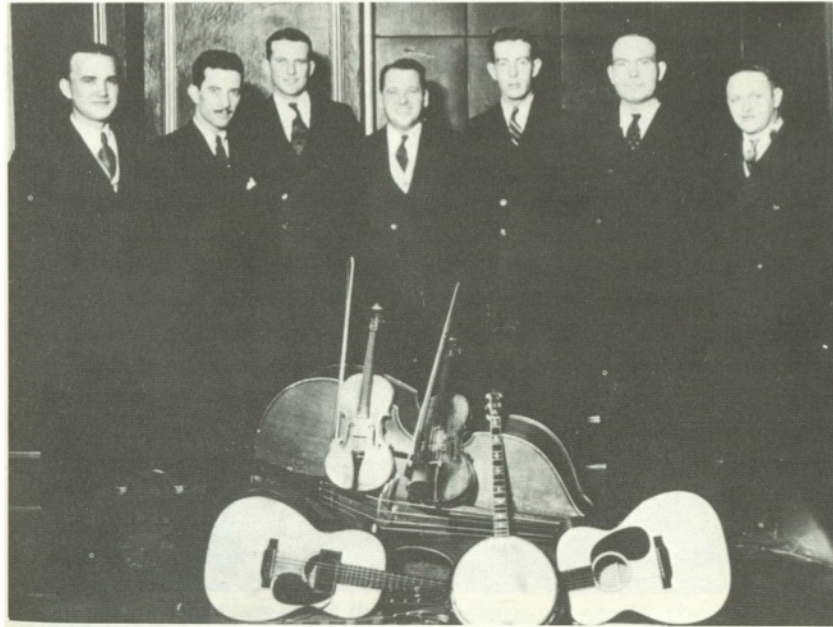
<sup>30</sup> Ginell JEMF, 58. Bob Wills descended from generations of well-known breakdown fiddlers, and his style was influenced by black field workers in north Texas. Arnsperger played a rhythm guitar style emphasizing the 2nd and 4th beat of a 4/4 measure.

<sup>31</sup> Ginell MB, 37

<sup>32</sup> Ginell MB, 45

northwest of Fort Worth. O'Daniel objected to dancing and dance music and forbade the Doughboys from playing it on the air.<sup>33</sup> This eventually led to Brown quitting the band in 1932. Wills quit a short time later and went on to form Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys.

Figure 2-2. Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies.<sup>34</sup>



### **The Musical Brownies**

In 1932 Milton Brown started his own band called The Musical Brownies. He hired local musicians including his brother Derwood on guitar, Wanna Coffman on double bass, and Ocie Stockard on tenor banjo.<sup>35</sup> Ocie Stockard had played tenor guitar with another area band, the High Flyers, but switched to tenor banjo for the Brownies, bringing a louder and more percussive sound to the rhythm section. Wanna Coffman initially played bass in

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<sup>33</sup> Ginell MB, 65

<sup>34</sup> Ginell MB, 171.

<sup>35</sup> Ginell MB 70.

a slap-style, but gradually moved to a more traditional pizzicato.<sup>36</sup> Brown hired Fred Calhoun to play piano for the Brownies in late 1932, making Calhoun the first pianist to play in a Texas string Band.<sup>37</sup> Starting his music career as a drummer, Calhoun played drums and piano in various Kansas City jazz bands during the 1920s. With piano, bass, rhythm guitar and tenor banjo, the Brownies had a rhythm section resembling the New Orleans and Chicago jazz groups of the late 1920s and early 30s.<sup>38</sup> Milton Brown initially hired Jessie Ashlock to play violin and later added a second violinist, Cecil Brower. Ashlock later quit the band leaving Brower as the sole violinist.<sup>39</sup> Brower majored in music at Texas Christian University and played in the Dallas Symphony for a brief time.<sup>40</sup> Brower previously played with The Southern Melody boys and was able to play improvised jazz solos in a style patterned after Joe Venuti.<sup>41</sup> Brower's versatility led to his leaving the Brownies twice, once to play with Ted Fio Rito's dance orchestra in New York City,<sup>42</sup> and the other to join the Gorgie Porgie Boys who were playing at CBS in Columbia, Ohio. While in Ohio, Brower entered a statewide fiddling competition and won the title "National Champion Fiddler for 1935."<sup>43</sup> Bob Dunn was hired to play steel guitar for the Brownies in 1934.<sup>44</sup> Dunn studied Hawaiian guitar with Walter Kolomoku through correspondence and had toured with a professional outfit called the Panhandle Cowboys and Indians in 1927.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ginell MB, 70, 72.

<sup>37</sup> Ginell JEMF, 63.

<sup>38</sup> John Mehegan, *Jazz Rhythm and the Improvised Line*, Jazz Improvisation Volume 2 (New York: Watsun-Guptill Publications, 1962), 21-22.

<sup>39</sup> Brown would subsequently hire additional fiddle players.

<sup>40</sup> Malone, 162.

<sup>41</sup> Ginell MB, 59.

<sup>42</sup> Ginell MB, 177.

<sup>43</sup> Ginell MB, 175

<sup>44</sup> Ginell JEMF, 64

<sup>45</sup> Ginell MB, 108.

The Brownies performed with a jazz-oriented interplay between the vocals and solo instruments. Their song list deemphasized traditional country music in favor of popular hits, blues and jazz numbers.<sup>46</sup> The Brownies had a regular radio show on WBAP and later on KFJZ in Fort Worth. Brown understood the primary function of his radio show was to promote the Brownies as a dance band.<sup>47</sup> The Brownies business was limited to listeners within broadcast range. Because the Brownies had to be back at the station the next day, the band's territory was limited to how far the band could make a round-trip and perform within 24 hours. Thus, it was in Brownie's interest to make records to increase their audience. The band had previously recorded for Victor Bluebird in 1934, but Milton Brown was not happy with the final product. The Brownies were playing regularly at Crystal Springs as well as other private and public venues, and were playing their daily radio spot for KFJZ, when they were approached by Dave Kapp of American Decca Record Company.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ginell MB, xxii.

<sup>47</sup> W. Lee O'Daniels was also a politician, and served as Texas governor from 1939 to 1941, and then as a U. S. Senator from 1941 to 1949. He was loosely depicted in the Cohen Brothers film *O Brother Where Art Thou?*

<sup>48</sup> Ginell, MB, 170.

## Chapter 3

### The Recording Session

#### Unfamiliar Surroundings

Jack Kapp had reserved a special train car just for the Brownies.<sup>49</sup> They left Fort Worth on Saturday, and arrived in Chicago mid-afternoon on Sunday January 27. Ocie Stockard reports it was seventy degrees when they left Fort Worth, but in Chicago it was "about ten to twenty below zero."<sup>50</sup> Stockard exaggerated his account--The Dallas Weather Bureau Office reports a high temperature of 72 on Saturday when the train left, but the high reading at Chicago University was 22 *above* zero.<sup>51</sup> Still, there was a 50 degree temperature difference between Fort Worth and Chicago, and any wind coming off the lake surely made it feel colder. There was a trace of snow on the ground when the band loaded their equipment into the two limousines Jack Kapp had sent to meet them. They were taken to the Warner Brothers Studios where Decca was headquartered. The studio was located in the American Furniture Mart Building, an imposing gothic structure with an eerie edifice located at 666 Lakeshore Drive (Figures 3-1 and 3-2).<sup>52</sup> Given that it was Sunday, there were likely few people on the premises as they unloaded their equipment. The Brownies were in unfamiliar territory.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ginell MB, 171

<sup>50</sup> Ginell MB, 171.

<sup>51</sup> National Weather Service, Record of Climatological Observations, Chicago Midway Airport US Station ID:GHCND:USW14819; Chicago University US Station ID GHCND:USW00014892; Dallas Weather Bureau Office, US Station ID GHCND: UWW00093928.

<sup>52</sup> Sometime in the late 1980s the street number was changed to 680.

<sup>53</sup> Ginell MB, 171

Figure 3-1. The American Furniture Mart Building.



Figure 3-2. 666 Lake Shore Drive, close-up of entrance.



### Unusual setup<sup>54</sup>

The Brownies were accustomed to playing in close proximity to one another, but because of the acoustic limitations of the studio and the single microphone used, balance had to be achieved by locating each instrument closer or farther from the microphone. The banjo and piano were separated by twenty to thirty feet. The bass was on the far side of the room, with the steel guitar on the opposite side. The guitar was placed away from the microphone except when Derwood sang, and the fiddle only stepped up for leads (this accounts for the wide dynamic discrepancy between Brower's lead and backup playing). In sharp contrast to their live shows, songs could only last two and a half to less than four minutes, so arrangements were timed out before the recording began so the band knew how many choruses to play, and they probably decided the order of take-off solos at this time.<sup>55</sup>

### The pressure of recording

There was no way for the musicians to know how the music sounded; it was impossible to play back the record without ruining the wax.<sup>56</sup> The Brownies did not actually hear the

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<sup>54</sup> Ginell MB, 171-172

<sup>55</sup> Ginell MB, 172. Further, in a personal email to me, Ginell states "... you should resist the urge to get too wrapped up in the minutiae of the details of the musicians' performances. I'm certain that their approach to the music was strictly instinctive and *they didn't plan the minute details of harmony* that you are endeavoring to uncover (*italics mine*). To them, it was strictly dance music. There wasn't time in their lives to devote to planning intricate chord progressions and solos. They achieved their excellence by doing it - over and over and over again, six days a week, four hours a day, for more than four years. Balance this with your analysis and it will help keep your perspective." Cary Ginell, 7/14/12

<sup>56</sup> If the performer made a mistake, the engineers would have to shave off the top layer of the wax and re-do it. This proved too time-consuming, so a policy of single-takes was the rule, with the strategy of recording as many songs as possible during a session. Ginell MB, 100.

records until they were released the following April.<sup>57</sup> Milton Brown had earlier instructed the band there was to be no drinking, concerned that alcohol would negatively affect the band's performance.<sup>58</sup> When the session started, the band was not on its game. Jack Kapp said "Boy, that don't sound like you at all," and then invited everyone to set their instruments down and convene in his office, where he produced a fifth of whiskey. Bob Dunn, who reportedly played his best after a few drinks, went out for some ice. They sat and talked and passed the bottle around a few times, and then returned to the studio relaxed and resumed cutting records, this time finding their stride.<sup>59</sup> Dave Kapp would later recall the times he brought southern bands into New York or Chicago and the bands would perform differently, and singers sang "as if they were expected to sing differently because they were in the city."<sup>60</sup>

## **Variety**

The Brownies stuck to playing tunes they knew and played regularly.<sup>61</sup> Milton Brown was hoping the recording session would help establish an out-of-state fan base, and chose tunes from among those most requested at Brownies dances.<sup>62</sup> The session comprised a variety of styles including sentimental ballads, blues, hokum,<sup>63</sup> novelty songs, old-time fiddle songs and breakdowns, several Tin Pan Alley hits, and a Mexican folk song.

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<sup>57</sup> Ginell MB, 173. Sales of records from this session were marginal at best. It has also been noted that records released by Decca during their first 6 months in business were of dubious quality due to some faulty manufacturing equipment.

<sup>58</sup> Ginell MB 171.

<sup>59</sup> Ginell MB 172

<sup>60</sup> Ginell MB, 171.

<sup>61</sup> Ginell MB, 172

<sup>62</sup> Ginell MB, 174.

<sup>63</sup> According to Grove, hokum applies to "a style on the boundary between blues and jazz which enjoyed a short-lived popularity with African-American record-buyers in the late 1920s. It was characterized by swinging dance rhythms and witty, often double entendre, lyrics." Paul Oliver. "Hokum." In *The New*

## Chapter 4

### The Song: *Who's Sorry Now?*

At the beginning of this paper I stated that three separate parties came together for one common purpose, to sell music. Decca Records hosted the Brownies for two days, during which 36 separate recordings were made. For the duration of each recording, Decca and the Brownies joined creative forces with whichever party was responsible for the particular song being recording at the moment, resulting in 36 unique combinations of contributors.<sup>64</sup> *Who's Sorry Now?* was the twentieth song the Brownies recorded during the session, and for just under three minutes Decca records and the Brownies collaborated with an unknowing group of songwriters from 1923 to create the musical performance that was recorded, produced and sold as Decca 5158-B.<sup>65</sup> That group of songwriters consisted of Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics). They were represented at the recording session only by a standing agreement with The American Society of Composers, Publishers and Authors (ASCAP), which ensured that anyone wishing to perform the song in public would pay a set fee for the right to do so.<sup>66</sup>

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Grove Dictionary of Jazz, 2nd ed., edited by Barry Kernfeld. Grove Music Online. Oxford Music. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/J205000> (accessed August 25, 2012).

<sup>64</sup> That party could consist of an individual songwriter, a group of writers, and in cases of "traditional" songs, that party involves a host of singers and musicians, each making some addition or alteration during the lifespan of the song as it morphs its way through history.

<sup>65</sup> Ginell MB, 294. The recording date is listed as January 28th. The session lasted two days, January 27-28. The recording was number 20 of 36. We don't know if the engineers and musicians took a break at some point to sleep. We can deduce it was recorded after midnight during the first day or it was among the first recorded on the second day.

<sup>66</sup> Hamm, 338-339.

*Who's Sorry Now?* was part of the Brownies' repertory, being frequently requested at dance engagements.<sup>67</sup> But what about the song made it a hit in the first place? The purpose of this chapter is to examine the musical and textual elements of the song itself. In doing so, we will also better understand the nature of the society from which the song came (urban culture of the early 1920s) and its reasons for enduring popularity. Further, we will better appreciate which sound elements are a part of the song, and which are unique to the Brownies.

### **Origin and Format**

*Who's Sorry Now?* was published in 1923 by Waterson, Berlin and Snyder Co. of New York,<sup>68</sup> a member of ASCAP and one of Tin Pan Alley's "popular song factories."<sup>69</sup> The song was released simultaneously as sheet music, piano rolls and phonograph recordings.<sup>70</sup>

### **Sheet Music**

From its early days in the 1880s,<sup>71</sup> the strategy of Tin Pan Alley publishing houses involved a reciprocal agreement between singing artists and music publishers, aiming to stimulate live performances to promote the song among sheet-music buyers by soliciting

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<sup>67</sup> Sanjeck 132. Also, the Kapps were thinking about their juke box business and insisted on including it. There were 150, 000 jukeboxes in use by 1936. Almost half of Decca's production was intended for southern jukebox markets and largely featured hillbilly and black performers.

<sup>68</sup> Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar (lyrics), Harry Ruby (lyrics), *Who's Sorry Now?* (Sheet music for voice and piano), (New York: Waterson, Berlin & Snyder Co., 1923), ASCAP Work ID: 530081448, International Standard Musical Works Code: T0711926054 Published in the Strand Theater Building, 1571 Broadway at W 47th St. While the term Tin Pan Alley is often associated with the buildings around W 28th and Broadway, by the early 20s most publishers had moved up to the "West 30s and beyond. Gray, Christopher. "Streetscapes/West 28th St, Broadway to Sixth...". *New York Times*, July 13, 2003.

<sup>69</sup> Sanjeck, 32. Quoting The New York Times.

<sup>70</sup> The back cover of the sheet music indicates the song is "obtainable on all Phonograph Records and Music Rolls."

<sup>71</sup> Hamm, 284-285.

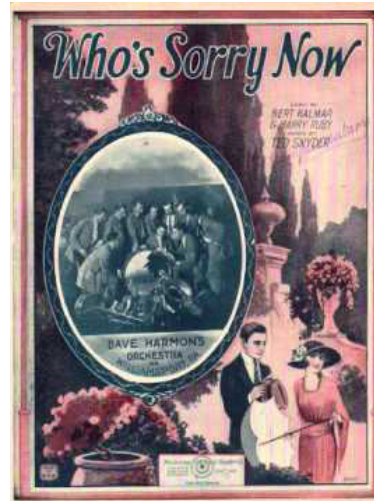
well-known artists to perform a song in exchange for an initial "gift" and royalties on each item sold.<sup>72</sup>

Figure 4-1. Who's Sorry Now sheet music covers.

Featured by Margie Coate.



Dave Harmon's Orchestra.



Sung with great success by  
Eddie Healy and Allan Cross.



Leo Terry, organist, New Tiffin Theater.



<sup>72</sup> Russell Sanjeck, *From Print to Plastic: Publishing and Promoting America's Popular Music (1900-1980)*, (I.S.A.M. Monographs: Number 20, (New York: Brooklyn College of the City University of NY, 1983), 10-11.

Sheet music of a new song was initially printed in a batch of a few thousand "artist copies," a.k.a. "professional copies," printed on cheap paper without cover art and distributed to singers and bandleaders. If a song showed signs of success, 10,000 "regular copies" were printed and distributed to department stores and music dealers. Regular copies were printed on heavier paper and featured colored lithographs of sentimental or scenic settings with an inset portrait of the artist who agreed to perform it (Figure 4-1).<sup>73</sup> Tin Pan Alley songs were marketed for literate, urban white people of the middle and upper classes,<sup>74</sup> and women in particular (see Figure 4-2).<sup>75</sup> As a song increased in popularity, songpluggers redoubled their efforts, enlisting additional performers to push the song in new venues. A hit song would be pushed until public interest begins to wane. At that point, songpluggers shifted their attention to other songs.

Figure 4-2. Who's Sorry Now?<sup>76</sup>



<sup>73</sup> Hamm, 289; Sanjeck PP, 10. Artist or professional copies were printed on cheap paper without cover art and distributed by publishers and songpluggers to performers and musicians. Regular copies were printed on heavier paper and featured colored lithographs of sentimental or scenic settings with an inset portrait of the artist who agreed to perform it.

<sup>74</sup> Hamm, 379.

<sup>75</sup> Sanjeck PP, 12.

<sup>76</sup> Detail from sheet music cover, supporting the claim that women were the target audience for sheet music sales. In this empowering depiction, the young lady controls the situation, using her umbrella to cockblock the gentleman, signaling precisely why he is sorry now.

Songs were also promoted through the distribution of piano rolls and phonograph records. Player pianos were introduced by the Aeolian Company in 1902. By 1909, annual sales exceeded 45,000, and peaked in 1923 at 205, 556.<sup>77</sup> Sales dropped as affordable radios became available in the mid-20s, and the player piano business all but ended during the Depression. Meanwhile, as phonograph record and cylinder sales increased,<sup>78</sup> Tin Pan Alley publishers recognized the importance of the phonograph for promoting new songs.<sup>79</sup> By 1920, record sales outnumbered sheet music sales.<sup>80</sup> But as we have seen, the Depression slowed record sales dramatically.

### **Formula for a Hit**

Why did *Who's Sorry Now?* succeed? While there may be no accounting for taste, the song was written using known-good formulas, and is brilliant in its simplicity. Peter Van der Merwe frames the challenge of successful music composition (music that will find public appeal) as the coordination of a satisfying melodic line with a satisfying rhythm and a satisfying harmony.<sup>81</sup> The length of a composition is also a consideration. In *America's Songs*, Philip Furia comments: "Though songs are often extravagant in sentiment and expansive in emotion, good songwriters are masters of economy."<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Sanjeck PP, 8-9.

<sup>78</sup> David J. Steffen, *From Edison to Marconi: The First Thirty Years of Recorded Music*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005). p 28-33. Home record and cylinder players had been available since the mid 1880s.

<sup>79</sup> Sanjeck PP, 8-10. In 1909 over 25 million discs and cylinders were manufactured.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>81</sup> Van der Merwe, 98-99

<sup>82</sup> Furia, xxvi. Standards "are miniatures, most of them only thirty-two bars long, each exploring a single point along love's endlessly changing line. Then, in the best songs, the writers ring witty changes on the most tired clichés of romance."

Tin Pan Alley songs were written for a public who, in the estimation of Tin Pan Alley publishers, wanted songs in a familiar style.<sup>83</sup> Despite the many technological advances in the entertainment industry, popular song forms remained relatively the same from the 1900s through the 1930s.<sup>84</sup> One reason for this is that new media producers obtained their music through ASCAP, whose interest was in pushing the style of music already being produced, and not so much with providing music that may have been more appropriate for film or radio.<sup>85</sup> Snyder entered the song writing business the early 1900s, and *Who's Sorry Now?* has a sentimental, old-fashioned sound suggesting the older style of first generation Tin Pan Alley.<sup>86</sup> Snyder wrote *Who's Sorry Now?* with tried and true formulas, lyrically and musically.<sup>87</sup>

*Who's Sorry Now?* came out in the midst of a string of "melancholy songs that insist on sounding good-natured."<sup>88</sup> Citing the cyclical nature of song fads, Ted Snyder commented that a publisher's strategy must be to "*feel* what the public may want next."

...I saw all those 'cry' songs and none of them making the headway [though they should be]...they had not hit on the right idea of that type of song. So I tried my hand and was lucky enough to get the right song. It was a number deliberately written to fit conditions which I felt were in the air. I thought the public wanted that kind of song.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Hamm 290-291

<sup>84</sup> Hamm 338-339

<sup>85</sup> Hamm, 339. ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) was founded in 1914 to collect fees for live performance of ASCAP songs. Waterson, Berlin & Snyder Co. was an ASCAP publisher.

<sup>86</sup> Hamm, 379. First generation Tin Pan Alley writers did not set lyrics to dance rhythm in order to accompany actual dancers, but to evoke the flow of the dance for expressive purposes. Popular songs weren't danced to until the 1910s and 20s.

<sup>87</sup> Sanjek AMP, 36. Successful [Tin Pan Alley] songwriters had a knack for "catching public attention with stories of love that had a strain of sentimentality in the words as well as a certain plaintive touch in the melodies, and from novelty pieces inspired by contemporary life and written to the new shoulder-shaking syncopation. In spite of any inherent appeal or merit, such songs became hits because their nationwide exposure in vaudeville was subsidized by music publishers."

<sup>88</sup> Furia and Lasser, 20.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, 36.

## Form

Like most Tin Pan Alley songs, *Who's Sorry Now?* has a verse and a chorus, with the chorus having the more significant melodic and lyrical material.<sup>90</sup> Performing the chorus alone without the verse was the norm by the mid 1920s.<sup>91</sup> The chorus of a Tin Pan Alley song usually set in 4 equal-length sections and 32 measures in length, with AABA or ABAC the most common forms.<sup>92</sup> The harmonic scheme employs a dominant cycle, referred to as the "ragtime" progression by Van der Merwe. In a dominant cycle, the quality of diatonic chords in a progression like iii vi ii V7 I are all made dominant 7th chords: III7 VI7 II7 V7 I. This change in quality results in a string of secondary dominants leading to a final cadence.<sup>93</sup> During the first half of the chorus (m 1-16), the cycle reaches tonic at bar 11, and the section is rounded out by a brief tonicization of the V in measure 14 and 15. In the second half, the cycle begins as it did in the first, but beginning in measure 22, the chord qualities revert to their diatonic qualities, with C7 of measure 7 being replaced by Cm, the ii of Bb. The final eight measures employs the common formula of going from a subdominant function (m25-26) to tonic, then through a quick compressed version of the dominant cycle, ending on tonic in measure 31 (Figure 4-3.)<sup>94</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Hamm, 292-293, 333. "The inevitable song form of Tin Pan Alley: a verse (or maybe two) sketching a situation or a vignette; and a chorus, almost always of 16 or 32 measures, consisting of the most memorable music, the tune that would come to mind if the title of the song were mentioned."

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 359

<sup>92</sup> Hamm, 361. The chorus form of *Who's Sorry Now?* is ABA'C.

<sup>93</sup> Van der Merwe, 250-251. Examples of the dominant cycle are common in the mid-Romantic period, for example in the opening chords Franz Liszt's 'Liebestraum' no. III.

<sup>94</sup> The function of the progressions iii vi ii V7 I and III7 VI7 II7 V7 I are the same in that both target the tonic. The dominant cycle artificially introduces temporary leading tones, creating the chromatic "barbershop" harmony associated with popular songs of the late 19th century (Hamm, 294-296). Improvising musicians freely interchange diatonic quality with dominant when approaching cadences.

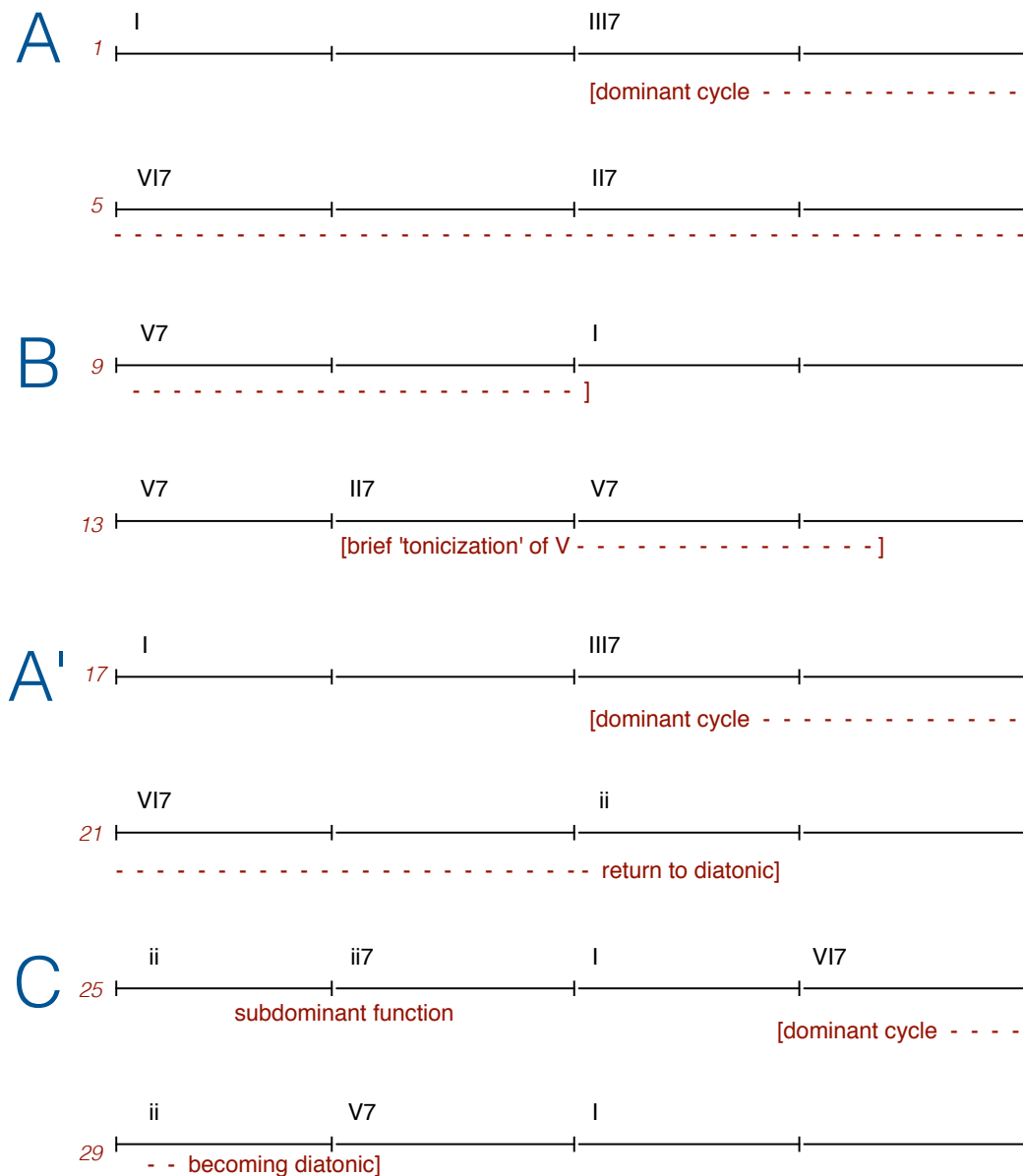
Figure 4-3. The harmonic scheme for the chorus of *Who's Sorry Now?*

Figure 4-4 is a chord analysis of the sheet music identifying chromatic harmony in terms of chord names.<sup>95</sup> As Van der Merwe notes, "there was nothing the *fin de siècle* parlour

<sup>95</sup> See Appendix D for the original sheet music. Passing chords in this analysis usually result from including the melody note with the harmonizing chord. Labeling resulting vertical sonorities with a particular chord name confines the information to the function



Tin Pan Alley songs lyrics invariably focus on an aspect of love and relationships.<sup>96</sup> In this case, it is the "I told you so" of a rejected lover. In the *Green Book of Songs by Subject*, Jeff Green lists Who's Sorry Now? under the category Revenge, Getting Even.<sup>97</sup> The text of the chorus is divided into 4 stanzas.

Stanza 1 & 2: Confrontation in the accusatory.

Who's sorry now?  
Who's sorry now?  
Who's heart is aching  
for breaking each vow?

Who's sad and blue?  
Who's crying too?  
Just like I cried over you.

Stanza 3: Statement of self-absolution.

Right to the end,  
just like a friend,  
I tried to warn you, somehow.

Stanza 4: Statement of consequence; the reveal.

You had your way,  
now you must pay;  
I'm glad that you're sorry now.

### **Melody and Harmony**

The comments below are illustrated in Figure 4-5.

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<sup>96</sup> Furia and Lasser, xxvi.

<sup>97</sup> Jeff Green. *The Green Book of Songs by Subject: The Thematic Guide to Popular Music*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed., (Nashville: Professional Desk References, Inc., 2002), 1146.

Figure 4-5. Melodic and textual analysis of Who's Sorry Now?

**A**

1. Opening motive: ascending; mediant floor and ceiling; repetition in text, contour, rhythm, range.

2. Whose heart....? Heart-break, heart-ache; but the object of break is vow.

3. Appearance of Eb (D#).

4. Descending motion through chromatic passing tones leading to surprise resolution.

5. Arrival on E natural.

Who's sor - ry now? - Who's sor - ry now? -

Who's heart is ach - ing for break - ing each vow? -

**B**

6. Echos opening motive.

Who's sad and blue? Who's cry - ing too? -

Just like I cried o - ver you. -

**A'**

7. Same melody, new rhyme scheme.

Right to the end, - - just like a friend, -

I tried to warn you some - how.

8. Climax.

**C**

9. Transition to closure: inverted opening motive, emphasis on Eb, restoration of D as ceiling.

You had your way, - now you must pay. -

I'm glad that you're sor - ry now! -

Who's sorry now?  
Who's sorry now?  
[Whose] heart is aching  
for breaking each vow?

Who's sad and blue?  
Who's crying too?  
Just like I cried over you.

Right to the end,  
just like a friend,  
I tried to warn you, somehow.

You had your way,  
now you must pay;  
I'm glad that you're sorry now.

1. The titular question *Who's sorry now?* is set to an ascending tonic triad in first inversion spanning the octave from D<sup>1</sup> to D<sup>2</sup>, followed by a repetition of the question in the same rhythm set to an ascending major mediant triad spanning the same octave, establishing a floor and ceiling for the melody at the mediant.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Van der merwe, 224-225. In the chapter titled "The Parlour Modes," van der Merwe calls the mediant "the most emotionally sensitive note in the major mode" and discusses the prominence of mediant-based

2. While first two instances of *who's* is a contraction of who and is, the third iteration of *who's* is possessive, as in "whose heart is broken...?"<sup>99</sup> It is the same phonetic sound, but with new meaning, and is still directed at the accused.

3. The pitch assigned to *whose*, E $\flat$ , adds emphasis because it is:

- a half-step higher than the established goal of the opening two arpeggios ("breaks the ceiling")
- the augmented fifth of a dominant sonority (a G augmented chord), a striking dissonance following two major triads.<sup>100</sup>

4. The same E $\flat$  breaks the established motivic pattern and leads a descending pattern over three measures while exploiting chromatic-derived sentiment along the way, ending with the surprise resolution of the D $\sharp$  to E $\natural$ ,<sup>101</sup> though the resolution is obfuscated by a delay and octave displacement.<sup>102</sup>

5. The unexpected C major triad provides the setting for the indictment *breaking*.

*Breaking* is further set-up with the rhyme and rhythm of *aching*, as both words are

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melodies in music of the 19th century. This further suggests Snyder was going for an "older," more sentimental style.

<sup>99</sup> Printed as *who's*, but should be *whose*.

<sup>100</sup> Though notated as e $\flat$  instead of d $\sharp$ . See note 87.

<sup>101</sup> The e $\flat$  in the G7 chord suggests melodic minor and prepares our ear for resolution to Cm.

<sup>102</sup> This resolution becomes an interesting listening point for solo improvisors--do they target the E $\natural$  directly from below, as Benny Goodman did in 1928, or is it approached from above as in the melody, as Miff Mole does? Or is the D $\sharp$  / E $\flat$  ignored altogether, as in Cecil Brower and Bob Dunn, who treat the harmony in m 5-6 as G13 instead of G+ (see Chapter 8 and Appendix D).

associated with heart (heart-ache, heart-break). But *breaking* turns out to refer to a broken promise, a violation of terms.

6. *Who's sad and blue? Who's crying too?* in measure 9-12 brings back the upward ascending chord-tone arpeggio motive.

7. The third stanza begins at m 17, with the opening melody, but the rhyme scheme is changed at the end of the stanza (m 24). *Somehow* recalls the sound of "vow" rather than rhyming with end/friend, connecting the accusation *for breaking each vow* with the self-absolution of the singer, who attempting to warn (1. now, now, vow; 2. blue, too, you; 3. end, friend, vow; 4. way, pay, now.)

8. The climax of the song occurs when the harmonic pattern in m 5-7 is repeated in 21-23, the G augmented chord resolves to C minor and not major, the minor sonority underscores singer's solemn self-absolution, *I tried to warn you some how*. In m 21-22, the melody surrounds the mediant ceiling by half step on either side.<sup>103</sup>

9. The final stanza begins with the anti-climax, featuring a step-wise descending pattern in a inverted reference to the opening motive. The line descends from and returns to e<sup>b</sup> (m 25-26) and repeats sequentially a diatonic step lower (m 27-28), re-establishing mediant ceiling of D.

## Final Analysis

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<sup>103</sup> From a composer's perspective, in a 32 bar song form, the golden ratio occurs at approximately the fourth beat of measure 19.

I would argue that the second line, m 5-8, and in particular the visceral impact caused by the appearance of the pitch E $\flat$  on the downbeat of m 5, is the signifying feature of the song. The subsequent return of E $\flat$  in m 25 and 26 recalls the abrupt shift to an augmented sonority in m 5, and marks the climax of the song. The E $\flat$  could be viewed as symbolizing the bittersweet gratification the speaker gets from seeing their former lover in their present sorry state.

To hear *Who's Sorry Now?* performed as it was printed, refer to the performance by Marion Harris (Brunswick 2443)<sup>104</sup> or Irving Kalmar (Vocalion 14588).<sup>105</sup> The other versions in the Discography, recorded between 1923 and 1940, are all performed in a two-beat or four-beat swing feel. As discussed in the conclusion, when musicians perform *Who's Sorry Now?* as a swing tune, the dance beat tends to create an up-beat mood which overshadows the melodrama induced by the song itself. This is certainly the case with the Brownies' version.

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<sup>104</sup> Marion Harris. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923 Brunswick 2443, 78rpm.

<sup>105</sup> Irving Kaufman with The Ben Selvin Orchestra. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923, Vocalion 14588. 78rpm.

## Chapter 5

### The Transcription Process

#### Method

Before proceeding, it must be stated that the original 78 rpm recording was unavailable, so my transcription is of the digital transfer appearing on *Bob Dunn: Master of the Electric Steel Guitar 1935-1950*.<sup>106</sup> If the original had been available, I would have transferred it to a digital format for ease of playback. I am grateful a professionally remastered transfer was available.<sup>107</sup>

In preparing the transcription, I have attempted to strike a balance between prescriptive and descriptive notation. In his essay “Prescriptive and Descriptive Music-Writing,” Charles Seeger distinguishes two purposes for writing music on paper. Prescriptive writing serves as a set of instructions for how a piece of music shall be made to sound, while descriptive writing serves as a report of how a particular performance actually sounded.<sup>108</sup> My goal was to include as much detail as possible without cluttering the page with excessive notations. My approach to the transcription was the following: after repeated listening, I mapped out the formal structure, then carefully notated each sonic event in as much detail as possible using standard notation supplemented with additional symbols for slides, string bends and ghost notes (Table 5-1). I used a keyboard for pitch reference and a metronome to determine the tempo. I used

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<sup>106</sup> Origin Jazz Library OJL-1004, CD 2010.

<sup>107</sup> The credit goes to sound engineer Michael Kieffer.

<sup>108</sup> Seeger, Charles. “Prescriptive and Descriptive Music-Writing.” (*The Musical Quarterly* 44, 1958) p 184.

software to slow down the speed while maintaining the pitch.<sup>109</sup> I have found transcribing at slower speeds promotes a tendency to notate incidental sounds which are less noticeable at full speed, but are nonetheless there. It is in the spirit of description that such minutiae are included. For prescriptive purposes, notation of these sounds may serve only to distract from the underlying musical intentions of the soloists, but such sounds may offer clues about performance technique.

Table 1. Articulations and pitch manipulations.

	<i>staccato</i> (short; play note for half value)
	<i>tenuto</i> (play note for its full value with a light attack)
	<i>accent</i> (added emphasis on attack)
	<i>marcato</i> (short with accent)
	<i>fall</i> (downward slide to indefinite pitch)
	<i>scoop</i> (upward slide from indefinite pitch)
	rapid <i>glissando</i>
	slow <i>glissando</i>
	wide vibrato
	Indicates pitch sounds less than a quarter tone sharp or flat.
	<i>ghost notes</i> (small note head less audible; x indicates no discernible pitch)
	<i>bend</i> (pitch moves upwards from first pitch then downwards to next)

<sup>109</sup> Audacity.

### **Inherent problems: What key?**

To begin a transcription of tonal music, it is helpful to determine the key it is performed in. If unknown, an educated guess must be made. The first sound on the record is a single pitch played by the violin, the first note of *Who's Sorry Now?*, which is the third scale degree of the tonic key. The frequency as it appears on the remastered version is between 285.75 and 286 Hz.<sup>110</sup> In equal temperament, if A = 440 Hz, then 286 falls almost exactly half-way between C# = 277 Hz and D = 294. If we choose C#, then the song should be transcribed in A, a natural key for a string band.<sup>111</sup> If D is chosen, the song must be transcribed in Bb, the key the song was published and typically performed in. Which key The Brownies played the tune in could shed some light on the nature of the band's music, suggesting whether it was more fiddle band oriented, or more swing and jazz band oriented. To determine the answer, one must look to the idiomatic qualities of the instrument and the technique used to play them. Assuming the Brower's violin is in standard tuning, a clue lies in the first measure of his solo, on beat 2 of m 97. This is the lowest pitch of the solo. If the Brownies played the tune in Bb, it is a G, correlating to the lowest pitch possible on a violin. This pitch occurs again in m 109, 110, 113 and 124. There is also a lick in m 103-104 that almost certainly utilizes the open D string. Other evidence might be found with careful analysis of the piano and steel guitar parts, but with those instruments the key a song is played in makes less difference technically. For this reason, I based my conclusion that the Brownies played *Who's Sorry Now?* in Bb on the violin part.

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<sup>110</sup> It varies between 285.75 and 286.25 Hz (this variance might be attributed to a slight vibrato or subtle changes in bow pressure (The more bow pressure, the tighter the string, the sharper the pitch), and might or might not be played on an open string

<sup>111</sup> String bands tend to favor the sharp keys because of the ease of playing diatonic scales and chords in those keys, esp I IV and V.

### Rhythm Section: Sound Mass

The greatest difficulty in transcribing this music lies with the rhythm section, and in discerning which instruments are playing which pitches in a given instance. It may be clear that a Bb triad is being produced, but determining the precise voicings is not always possible. Table 5-1 lists the three primary functional elements of the accompaniment texture played by the rhythm section. Table 5-2 illustrates distribution of functional texture elements by instrument.

Table 2. The three functional elements of the rhythm section.

Element	Instruments
<b>chords</b> : four to the bar, heavily accented on beats two and four	shared by banjo, guitar and piano R. H.
<b>tenor line</b> : inner voice within chord texture; at times emerges as independent line; occasionally appears harmonized	shared by piano L. H., guitar, and sometimes steel guitar
<b>bass line</b> : single note, usually root on beat one and third or fifth on beat three	played by double bass; sometimes shared by piano L. H.

Table 3. The distribution of functional texture elements by instrument.

Instrument	Function
tenor banjo	plays <b>chords</b>
guitar	plays mix of <b>chords</b> and <b>tenor line</b>
piano R. H.	plays <b>chords</b>
piano L. H.	doubles <b>bass line</b> an octave higher; sometimes plays <b>tenor line</b>
double bass	plays <b>bass line</b>

## Chapter 6

### Commentary: Technique and Musicianship

#### **Piano**

Calhoun seems to be doubling the bass line at times, but it is unclear whether he is playing octaves or single notes on beat one and three, and whether the left hand is involved in playing chords on beat two and four. Some times the L. H. plays a tenor line in the left hand leading from the third of a chord to the third of the next chord. notably during Bob Dunn's solo in mm 81-88). The right generally plays only on two and four. The style is not stride in its strictest sense, and it is not comping in the modern sense. It is what could best be described as playing "rhythm." Further, it is likely that such a rhythm piano part would not involve much shifting of positions, but rather favoring chord voicings that lay under the hands, in the mid-range on either side of middle C. In the transcription, the piano part of the first 32 bars, then, is a possible rendering based in part on what is audible, and in part on what is plausible. The piano solo beginning in m 33 was transcribed with fair certainty in the right hand, which consists mostly of a quarter note texture in octaves, but the left hand is derived from audible pitches combined with likely chord voicings in that area of the keyboard.

#### **Bass and violin**

In part because I am most familiar with orchestral strings, I found the least difficulty in notating the violin and double bass parts. Further, the bass and the violin have distinctive timbers and provide lots of information outside the mid-range, making them easier to hear. In editing the violin part, I have no doubt a swing violinist could render a more

accurate and consistent articulations. Fortunately, Coffman's bass playing is very conventional and posed no transcription problems.

### **Steel guitar**

The most unconventional element of the steel guitar execution is the pitch bends. For this, I've employed the symbol for pitch bends employed by Hal Leonard.<sup>112</sup> Rather than using quarter sharps and flats to indicate microtonal pitch bends. I've employed upward and downward arrows to indicate slight deviations from the notated pitch.<sup>113</sup>

### **Guitar & Banjo**

Derwood Brown and Ocie Stockard were capable of playing single-note take-off solos, but for this recording session were relegated to rhythm. Derwood Brown's guitar playing is comparable to Jimmy Rodgers, with his right hand he uses a pick, sometimes playing single-string chord tones on the low string on beat one and three, and alternating with a strum of the mid to high strings on two and four. There are occasional walk-ups and lead-ins consisting of single-note lines in the octave below middle C, lasting from 3 to 8 beats that prepare a chord change, effectively creating a tenor or baritone counter line. Beats two and four are accented, whether he is playing a chord or a single note. Brown's rhythm playing is very difficult to hear except when he plays a single note line. Presumably he was standing away from the microphone, leaving room so other performers could approach the microphone as needed. Also, the guitar lacks the percussive projection of the piano and tenor banjo. Brown seems to stay in the low

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<sup>112</sup> Hal Leonard, *Publishing Guidelines*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2007, 260.

<sup>113</sup> Adapted from Joyce, xlvii-xlviii.

positions employing a combination of open and barre chords.<sup>114</sup> Ocie Stockard played driving tenor banjo, generally performing four sharp down strokes per measure, with occasional ornaments consisting of two accented eighth notes played in one beat. The voicings depicted in the tenor banjo part may or may not be the voicings Stockard used, but since there are only four strings involved, the number of plausible combinations is limited. I have based voicing on the audible pitches of the higher strings and deduced the lower strings from possible voicings in the same position.

### **Slash Notation**

Because the transcription is designed to strike a balance between descriptive and prescriptive notation, in the guitar and banjo I've used a combination of standard notation to convey audible gestures and slash notation to indicate *something* is being played by a particular instrument, leaving it up to a performer to decide what to play in these spots.

### **Harmonic Language**

The harmonic language of the rhythm section is almost exclusively triads and dominant seventh chords. The soloist's choice of notes reflects the chord structure rather than the melody, with frequent use of the 6, 9 and flat 3. Further, the overall harmonic scheme is simplified. In their accompaniment and in their solos, the Brownies do not observe the +5 in m 5 or 21, thereby omitting the greatest source of tension and arguably the signature of the song. The progression is further simplified with the omission of the F chord in bar 13 of the form. Instead, each time the band plays a C7 for both measures, effectively

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<sup>114</sup> Ginell's book on Milton Brown has 5 photos with Derwood Brown in a playing pose. Each shows Derwood playing open chords or barre chords in low position.

delaying the dominant tonicization that normally occurs at that point until bar 15.  
(compare with Figure 4-2).

### **Vocals & Hollers**

A trait that distinguishes western swing from other types of swing music is its heavy use of crooning vocals.<sup>115</sup> Milton Brown's vocals were a critical part of the Brownies appeal. Many of the country and blues songs feature Brown singing multiple verses alternating with instrumental take-off solos. For jazz songs, the Brownies adhered more to jazz performance conventions, utilizing vocals to sing the melody at the beginning or end of the performance, or omitting it altogether. In *Who's Sorry Now?*, the melody is played instrumentally by the violin in the first chorus and sung in the final chorus. An important trait of western swing, the holler, is absent from this recording altogether. Hollers are used to introduce or encourage a soloist at the onset or midst of their hot solo, to lend excitement and a sense of familiarity to the performance. Bob Wills was famous for his comments and hollers during a performance. Brown used them to a lesser extent, and for whatever reason he did not holler on *Who's Sorry Now?*

### **Dynamics**

No attempt has been made to reflect dynamics in the transcription. Changes in volume for an individual player may be the result of a player's technique and intention, but was also a result of his relative position to the microphone. Because the band was recording with only one microphone, the sound engineer was unable to control any individual's volume level, leaving it up to the musicians to control the level of sound coming from their

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<sup>115</sup> Ginell & Coffey, xiii.

instrument. Balance was achieved by adjusting the proximity of each instrument to the microphone. In this recording, Milton Brown and Cecil Brower were probably standing and thus were able to step up to the microphone when it was their turn to be in the forefront. The only other player to have this kind of mobility was Derwood Brown (guitar), and because he did not take a solo on this performance, he likely stood in a single position, somewhat far from the microphone, as his guitar is very low in the mix.<sup>116</sup> Interestingly, during the final two measures of the recording, when Milton Brown is finished singing, the steel guitar inexplicably increases in volume. This may be the handiwork of a sound engineer, either at the recording session or during a subsequent transfer, or someone could have turned up Dunn's amp at the last moment, or someone may have brought the microphone close to Dunn's amp.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Ginell's book on Milton Brown contains 3 pictures of the Brownies in studio performance. In each, Ocie Stockard and Bob Dunn are seated. The bass and piano are also likely to have remained stationary.

<sup>117</sup> Dunn may have increased his own volume just by playing harder, but the nature of the increase in volume suggests something artificial.

## Chapter 7

### Formal Overview

The Brownie's performance of *Who's Sorry Now?* consists of 5 choruses played straight through without intro, outro or interlude. The first chorus features the melody played on violin, the second is the piano solo, the third is the steel guitar solo, the fourth is the violin solo, and in the final chorus Brown sings the song.

#### Chorus 1: melody (instrumental)

Brower closely adheres to the melody as it was published in terms of pitch and rhythm. He plays a mixture of sweetness and intensity, playing on top of or slightly ahead of the beat, creating a floating effect over the rock-solid beat of the rhythm section. Compare the first 8 measures of Brower's interpretation with the reference melody. Note especially the use of anticipation and the use of triplets to even out rhythms (Figure 7-1).

Figure 7-1. Brower's phrasing, mm 1-8.



#### Chorus 2: piano solo

Here the guitar and banjo back off. They're both still audible, but are playing minimally. Both instruments may or may not be strumming full chords at this point, but accents on 2 and 4 are still evident, mostly in the banjo. Calhoun's left hand also backs off, but it is unclear to what extent. I have probably notated more than Calhoun is actually playing, but I wanted to present a plausible, flowing left hand part for performance purposes. I suspect Calhoun was playing more sparsely than what is written. In m 55-56, he ends the

phrase in a sort of disintegrating gesture as his right hand treads down into the left's domain. Here, as elsewhere, Calhoun makes use of open 5ths in interesting ways. Calhoun's solo is devoid of florid scale passages. Calhoun's forceful style probably arose from playing in crowded dance halls, and may point to Calhoun's past as a jazz drummer. The melodic content of Calhoun's solos consist mostly of pounded out quarter note triadic arpeggio and major pentatonic scale patterns, mostly in octaves. This solo is divided into 4 measure phrases reminiscent of snare drum patterns typical of the Chicago style (Figure 7-2).<sup>118</sup> In other recordings from this session, Brown would introduce a Calhoun solo with a holler like "*Beat it out, Freddie!*"<sup>119</sup> Note Calhoun's use of Ab over the Bb chord (b7 over tonic triad) creating a blues sonority. Calhoun's solos consistently use the same patterns throughout the different recordings made in the Chicago session.<sup>120</sup>

Figure 7-2. Calhoun's drum-like rhythm, mm 33-36.



<sup>118</sup> Mehegan, 37.

<sup>119</sup> As in *Grey Bonnet*.

<sup>120</sup> Some of the phrases in Calhoun's solo are nearly identical to those he used in *Sweet Georgia Brown* the previous day (Decca 5121-B).

### **Chorus 3: steel guitar solo**

During the third chorus, the rhythm texture changes subtly. The bass still plays clearly on one and three, but not much else. An occasional strum can be made out, but neither Derwood Brown or Ocie Stockard are playing full force. Beat two and four are still played and accented, but softly and probably not with full strokes (or perhaps lightly muted strokes). Calhoun shifts to a more minimal style. His left hand fashions a broken tenor line. It is unclear whether his right hand is playing at all, on two and four, or on all four beats. Whatever he's doing here, it is static and minimal. I've chosen to notate the audible left hand notes, and notate partial triads on two and four in the right hand.

### **Dunn's Technique and Trombone**

In her book *Jazz of the Southwest*, Jean Boyd introduces Bob Dunn as a former jazz trombonist (Boyd 115).<sup>121</sup> In his essay *Bob Dunn and the Trombone*, David Sager details playing traits that suggest Dunn had knowledge of the trombone and emulated it in his playing, but does not mention anything about Dunn playing the instrument.<sup>122</sup> The extent to which he actually played trombone is unclear, but his playing suggests familiarity with the instrument.<sup>123</sup> The steel guitar and trombone are structured similarly, consisting of a vertical harmonic structure accessible in a single slide (or bar) position, with adjacent positions a semitone apart, allowing the player to glissando between positions. With the trombone, that vertical structure is the harmonic series. With the steel guitar in standard

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<sup>121</sup> Andy Volk also states Dunn played trombone in his book *Lap Steel Guitar*, Anaheim: Centerstream Publications, 2003, 96, as does Stacy Phillips in his *The Dobro Book*, New York: Oak Publications, 1992, 79n.

<sup>122</sup> Sager, 35-36.

<sup>123</sup> In an interview, western swing fiddler Jimmy Thomason notes Dunn was a "real good trombone player." Ginell, BD, 25.

A tuning, the structure consists of two root-position triads stacked one upon the other.<sup>124</sup>

A steel guitar player can easily glissando from one position to the other, as can a trombonist. On the flip side of the coin, both trombone and steel guitar players must learn to place the bar or slide in position *without* sliding into it, reserving glissandos for effect. On the steel guitar, this is done by lifting the bar off and placing it back onto the string in a rapid, clean motion. As Stacy Phillips points out, the easiest way to play rapid staccato notes is by changing strings moving the bar perpendicularly between strings as much as possible. Dunn also sought to emulate the articulations of brass players by using his right hand to dampen the strings rather than his left, allowing more control of attacks and cut-offs.<sup>125</sup> Slanting the bar at the diagonal yields different chords. Baumann comments that while most Hawaiian (style) players used slant position across the upper strings, using them across the lower strings is unusual. It is easier to rotate the bar clockwise to achieve a forward slant, as was probably done in m 79, while a reverse slant is more difficult simply because it is more difficult to rotate the bar counterclockwise. Nevertheless, the line along the reverse diagonal is accessible (Figure 7-3). Baumann comments that one of the things that makes Dunn's playing so unusual, at least in this early recording session, is the use of the forward slant position on the lower strings in low positions. Hawaiian players would use these slants, but typically on the higher, thinner strings.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> It is generally agreed that Dunn was using a standard A tuning (also called "high A"), from low to high A C# E A C# E. Ginell MB, 111-112;

<sup>125</sup> Coffey, 5.

<sup>126</sup> Why did Dunn play like this? Baumann speculates a couple of possible reasons. One is that Dunn's guitar may have sounded better in the lower register, and this may have been due to the thicker strings being able to hold a magnetic charge longer. The pickup on Dunn's guitar lacked a magnetic coil and required the user to charge the strings running a large magnet over them.

Fig 7-3. Use of straight vs slant bar position.

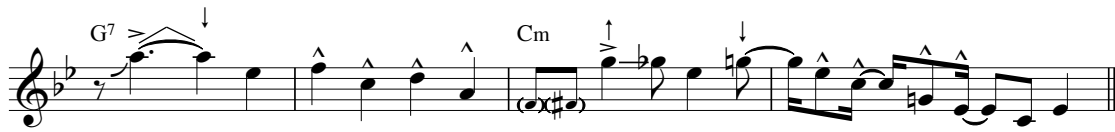
The figure consists of two musical examples, each with a staff and a corresponding fretboard diagram.   
 Example 73 (top): The staff shows a melodic line starting on a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The fretboard diagram shows the positions for these notes: A (1st fret), G (2nd fret), Bb (3rd fret), A (2nd fret), G (1st fret), F (1st fret), E (1st fret), and D (1st fret).   
 Example 89 (bottom): The staff shows a melodic line starting on a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The fretboard diagram shows the positions for these notes: G (2nd fret), A (3rd fret), Bb (4th fret), A (3rd fret), G (2nd fret), F (1st fret), E (1st fret), and D (1st fret).

### Dunn's Melody and Phrasing

In the recording, Dunn structures his solo along the lines of the song, in two-measure statements, many which begin with an ascending gesture in the first measure, in the first measure answered by a descending, trailing-off gesture. Dunn's solo ideas are based in triads and dominant seventh chords, but also frequently employ the 6 and 9. Dunn's most trombonistic gesture, to my ear, occurs at the climax of the song form, in measure 85-86. The first note A, is the highest note of the solo, the 9 of G7. Dunn attacks it, then smears it before following it by chord tones of the G7 in a descending arpeggio with each tone approached by a lower neighbor,<sup>127</sup> He then plays a similar contour over the Cm triad in 87-88 (Figure 7-4).

<sup>127</sup> Effectively superimposing a Dm over the G7.

Figure 7-4. A trombone-like passage played by Bob Dunn.



### Feedback

Perhaps the most hauntingly beautiful aspect of Dunn's sound on this recording is the feedback coming from his amplifier, noticeable throughout the solo but most prominent during and immediately following his solo break (m 79-84). I have chosen not to depict the feedback in the transcription, because I believe the sound is an artifact and not necessarily intentional, or at least not used and manipulated in the manner of Jimi Hendrix or Pete Townshend. On the other hand, Dunn was certainly aware of it, as were the engineers.<sup>128</sup> Dunn was playing a hollow body guitar with a weak pickup through an over-driven amplifier. How much intent was involved in the feedback's presence is a matter for speculation.<sup>129</sup>

### Chorus 4: violin solo

During the violin solo, Stockard's banjo becomes more present, as if in response to Brower stepping up to the microphone, and in general introducing a higher level of energy than in the previous two choruses. The guitar and piano trade off playing the tenor line.

<sup>128</sup> Ginell MB, 173

<sup>129</sup> Doyle, 135, 137 and Wakefield, 33. Dunn's amp had low wattage, between 3 and 8 watts, resulting in a grungier sound when the volume is turned up.

Cecil Brower was classically trained, and understood chord progressions and song structures, informing his solo playing.<sup>130</sup> Beginning in the 3rd measure of the solo proper (m 99), Brower gives us a taste of his classical technique, effortlessly grabbing the high D in 3rd position on the E string, probably with his pinky, and then dragging the pinky back down to B natural, the 6 of the D7 chord. From here Brower combines a tricky doublestop fingering with a rocking bow to play a syncopated rhythm, giving the lick a very "fiddle" sound. The double stop requires the third finger to remain in place on the A string, playing the F# (the third of the D7 chord) while the first finger stops the E string which alternates with the second finger to play scale degrees 5 and 6 over the 3rd. All of this with exceptionally good intonation and clear articulation. Brower then plays the same lick down a fifth by repeating the same gesture over the G7 in the same position as before, only using the D and A strings. From here, he deftly shifts back to first position maintaining doublestops, but changing the pattern and executing a complex pattern consisting of a E and C sliding down a two half steps in succession to open D and Bb, and rocking the bow to grab an E and A (the 3 and 6 of C7), alternating between the two sets of double stops in a hemiola pattern (Figure 7-5).

Figure 7-5. First 8 measures of Brower's solo, mm 97-104.



<sup>130</sup> Ginell MB, 88-89.

### **Chorus 5: melody (vocal)**

Brown was known by his peers as having his own vocal style and not emulating any other contemporary singers, but on jazz tunes he might be compared with Ted Lewis or Cab Calloway, while his Tin Pan Alley renditions resembled those of Fred Astaire. Brown improvised around the melody, not unlike early Bing Crosby when he sang with Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys. After Milton Brown's arrival on the scene, the focus of Texas fiddle bands shifted from the fiddle player to the singer.<sup>131</sup>

### **Polyphony: Dunn and Brower in dialog behind the chorus**

The Brownies did not perform with the front line polyphony of New Orleans and Chicago bands of the 1920s, but they did employ a polyphony of sorts in the form of added fills and backgrounds. Brower's fills are single string eighth-note fills, while Dunn typically used two or three strings in long durations emulating a horn section playing back-up. Examples appear throughout the recording, but most prominently during the final chorus where Dunn and Brower trade-off between Milton Brown's vocals (m 129-160).

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<sup>131</sup> Ginell MB, xxi

## Chapter 8

### Practical applications

Let us say we wished to compare Dunn's and Brower's solos with solos of contemporary jazz or swing combo players. This could (and should) be done with the audio recordings. But we can also make comparisons based on visual representations of the solos. The advantage to this is immediate, side-by-side comparisons can be made. Such a comparison could be done aurally, but our brains have more trouble focusing on two or three pieces of music played simultaneously.<sup>132</sup> For this demonstration, the selected solos were played by known jazz musicians and limited to pre-1935 recordings.<sup>133</sup>

Where to begin? Which solo examples might make for valid comparisons? Choosing the arbitrary limiters of "same song" and "known jazz performers" seemed reasonable at the time this comparison began, but in hindsight a better comparison for these purposes can surely be found by not limiting the criteria to the same song.

One studies a jazz solo to gain insight into a player's style and/or to get ideas for one's own improvisations. Ultimately, these insights are best absorbed by a student through repeated listening and by playing the material from memory, but a transcription could be made during the process and might prove handy for reference at some future moment.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Another kind of "aural" comparison, and by far a more reasonable one, is to compare two recordings in succession, so that the second is compared with the listener's *memory* of the first. This is, in fact, the way we generally make musical comparisons.

<sup>133</sup> The full solos transcripts are in Appendix C.

<sup>134</sup> The student can take "notes" during the process.

### Scenario 1: Improvisation vs Embellishment

If we wanted to determine how much a soloist is embellishing the melody vs improvising ideas based on the chord progression, it would be useful to analyze the solo for occurrences of the melody. In the example, melody notes occurring in sequence over the associated harmony are highlighted. Because *Who's Sorry Now?* is a melody comprised largely of chord and scale tones (written as arpeggios and scalar passages), it isn't the best song to make this determination. After all, if an improviser is at the beginning of the form and is thinking of chord tones for note choices and plays an ascending arpeggio starting on the 3, the result will sound a lot like the melody.

In Figure 8-1, we can see that the opening of both Goodman and Mole's solo consists largely of embellished melody, while Brower and Dunn seem to ignore the melody altogether.<sup>135</sup> Note that Goodman and Mole emphasize the +5 (notated as Eb rather than D#) in m 5 while the other three soloists ignore it, and both players resolve it to E in m 7, but only Goodman does so in the same register.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> The example of Red Nichols and His Five Pennies performing *Who's Sorry Now?* with Benny Goodman sitting in for Fud Livingston (according to Rust, *Jazz Records*, 1202) turns out, then, to be a poor example for supporting any general conclusions about performance styles of the period.

<sup>136</sup> Both Goodman and Mole's solo are from the same recording with Red Nichols. Schuller discusses Nichols/Mole-led groups from this period with admiration for the ensemble playing, but not so much for the solo innovations. Schuller singles out recordings of 1926-28 as innovative and praise-worthy, but states that Nichols ultimately succumbed to a more commercial-driven style, and it would be left to the Benny Goodman trio in 1933 before real chamber jazz would be heard. (Schuller II, 810-811.)

Figure 8-1. Solo comparison: improvisation vs. embellishment.

Benny Goodman, 1928—Cl.

Henry "Red" Allen, 1932—Tpt.

Cecil Brower, 1935—Vln.

Bob Dunn, 1935—St. Gtr.

Miff Mole, 1928—Tbn.

Who's sor-ry now? - - Who's sor-ry now? - -

Cl.

Tpt.

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Tbn.

G<sup>+</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C

Who's heart is brok-en for break-ing each now? - -

## Scenario 2: Bob Dunn and Brass Players

Bob Dunn's playing is often compared to that of brass players. "He played the steel guitar like a horn, with his short, staccato notes resembling the bursts of a trumpet."<sup>137</sup> It is often noted Dunn was a fan of and influenced by trombonist Jack Teagarden, but Sager compares Dunn's playing with other brass players like Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke, and especially Miff Mole.<sup>138</sup>

To offer a point of departure for illustrating these comparisons, I've juxtaposed Dunn's solo with two solos played over the same song at different times, one by Miff Mole, and the other by trumpeter Henry "Red" Allen (Figure 8-2). Taken separately, the solo transcriptions might be used to support general statements made about the playing style of these performers. For example, the "large, striking intervals" of Mole can be observed in mm 7-12. Looking at the Allen solo, we can find examples of "octave jumping," mm 5-7 and 19-20, and "odd turns-of-phrase," especially notable in m 6-8 and again in mm 17-19. But as long as we have the three transcriptions in front of us, why not search for examples where players handle a particular section of the song in a similar fashion. Not surprisingly, no uncanny similarities arise, though there are three instances where Dunn happens to play a similar lick to Allen or Mole over the same measures. In m 11, both Dunn and Allen play an ascending arpeggio followed by the pitch G (root) in m 12. In mm 15-16, Dunn and Mole both use the pitch G to embellish the root F from above. Does this demonstrate instances of parallel thinking? Hardly. No real conclusions can be drawn

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<sup>137</sup> Malone, 162.

<sup>138</sup> Sager, a trombonist, notes "Dunn played in the angular style that hot trombonists of the day were using, choosing large, striking intervals and creating unusual arcing melodies of the sort favored by the highly influential jazz trombonist Miff Mole."

from such a small sample set, but I've included the example to demonstrate both the utility and the bias that can arise from such visual comparison. The complete solos of each player can be found individually and in a comparative score in Appendix C.

Of the three solos selected for comparison, I think Henry Allen's is most interesting. He phrases "over" the bars, that is, he phrases his solos unevenly. His solo can be roughly divided into eight short phrases, but some last between four and five bars (mm 1-5, mm 13-17, mm 20-24) while others last only two or three (mm 6-8, 17-19). Allen also makes frequent use the "trail-off" gesture used by Dunn, that is, an accented peak note is followed by a descending series of notes in irregular rhythm which fade out into a mumble. (mm 18-19, 26-27). Compare this with Dunn (mm 4, 17, 24)

Figure 8-2. Solo comparison: Dunn's brass-like playing.

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 9 to 12, and the second system covers measures 13 to 16. The instruments listed are Tpt. (Trumpet), St. Gtr. (String Guitar), and Tbn. (Trombone). The lyrics are: "Who's sad and blue? Who's crying too? Just like I cried over you." Red boxes highlight specific passages in Dunn's solo that are compared to Allen's playing.

**System 1 (Measures 9-12):**

- Henry "Red" Allen, 1932--Tpt. (Measures 9-12)
- Bob Dunn, 1935--St. Gtr. (Measures 9-12)
- Miff Mole, 1928--Tbn. (Measures 9-12)

**System 2 (Measures 13-16):**

- Tpt. (Measures 13-16)
- St. Gtr. (Measures 13-16)
- Tbn. (Measures 13-16)

## Conclusion

Music contains a message, but the attempt to describe that message with words or symbols can never convey music's full meaning. To the part of us that cries, laughs, or dances, music's message is self-evident--it needs no interpreter. But what about our cognitive ego? How can *it* know what the message is? I believe this is the real reason for transcription: our brains are jealous of our heart and feet. And the introduction of a transcription, for better or for worse, helps to shape our concept of the music.

### Communication of music

Let us say a music performance communicates a message, or a set of messages, from the creator's mind to the listener's mind. In "A Mathematical Theory of Communication,"

Claude Elwood Shannon states:

The fundamental problem of communication is that of reproducing at one point either exactly or approximately a message selected at another point. Frequently the messages have meaning; that is they refer to or are correlated according to some system with certain physical or conceptual entities.<sup>139</sup>

This communication can be illustrated with Claude E. Shannon's model of communication (Figure C-1).<sup>140</sup> Figure C-1. Shannon's model of communication. In Shannon's model, the information source "produces a message or sequence of messages to be communicated to [a receiver]." The transmitter "operates on the message in some way to produce a signal suitable for transmission over the channel." The channel is

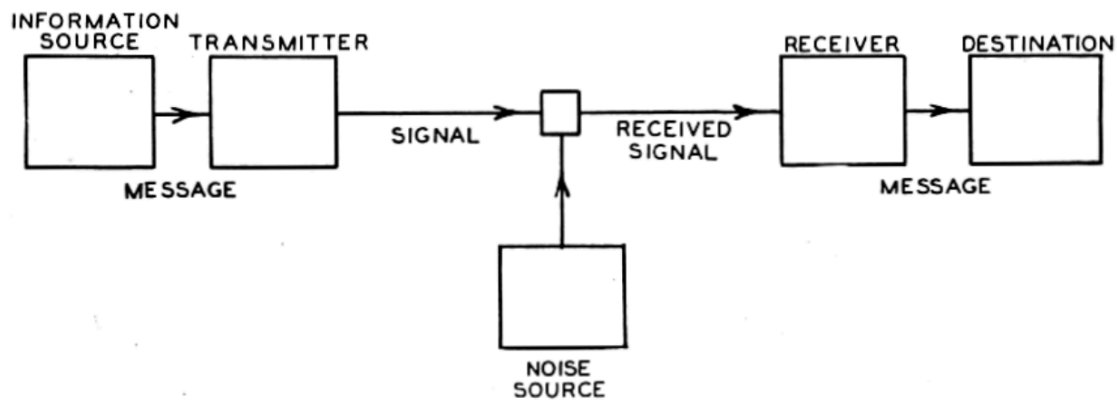
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<sup>139</sup> Shannon, Claude Elwood, "A Mathematical Theory of Communication," *The Bell System Technical Journal*, (XXVII No. 3, 1948), 379.

<sup>140</sup> This is the illustration from Shannon's original article. The model since became known as the Shannon-Weaver Model following Warren Weaver's collaboration, wherein the element of feedback is introduced. Certainly in live performance feedback exists, but when a person listens to a recording, the communication is one-way. Shannon, Claude Elwood, and Warren Weaver. *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1949).

"merely the medium used to transmit the signal from transmitter to receiver," and the receiver "performs the inverse operation of that done by the transmitter, reconstructing the message from the signal." The destination is "the person (or thing) for whom the message is intended."<sup>141</sup>

Figure C-1. Shannon's model of communication.



In music performance, the information source is the mind of the music's creator, and the destination is the mind of the listener. The set of messages is encoded and transmitted by the musician in the form of an acoustic signal, which is decoded by the listener's ear and sent to his or her mind. Each step in the communication chain introduces noise.

## Noise

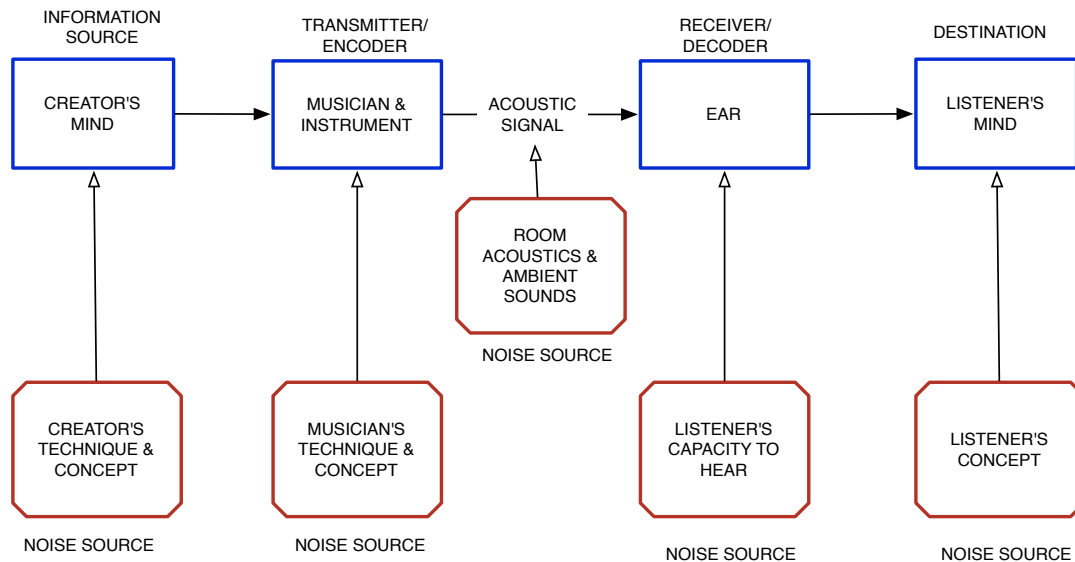
Everything that adds to the signal as it travels from the creator's mind to the listener's mind is noise.<sup>142</sup> In Figure C-2, just a few examples of possible noise sources are illustrated. Noise may include the quality of transmission (how accurately is the improviser recreating the sounds in his mind?), distractions in the room (smoke, talk),

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 380-381.

<sup>142</sup> The Berlo Model better accounts for the human elements in a person to person communications. David K. Berlo, *The Process of Communication* (New York,: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1960).

and in the quality of the receiver (how well can the listener hear? What is the listener's background?).

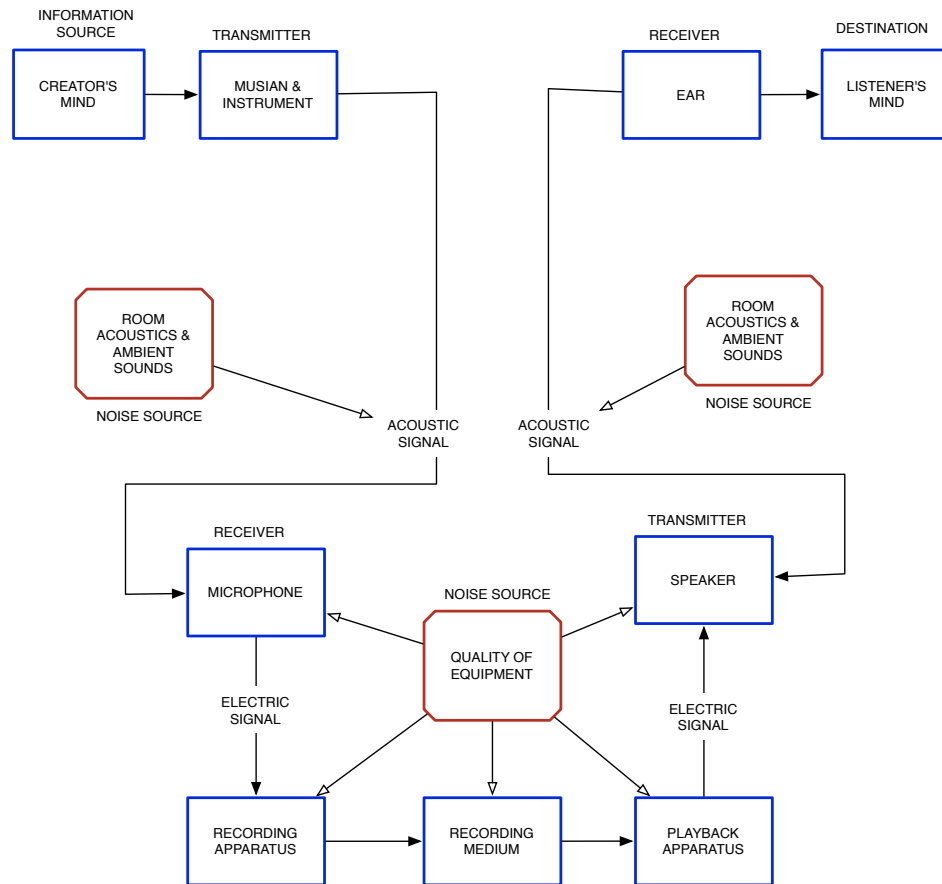
Figure C-2. Sources of noise in live performance.



In a recording, the recording and playback equipment and/or the medium on which the recording was made or reproduced can and invariably does contribute to noise.

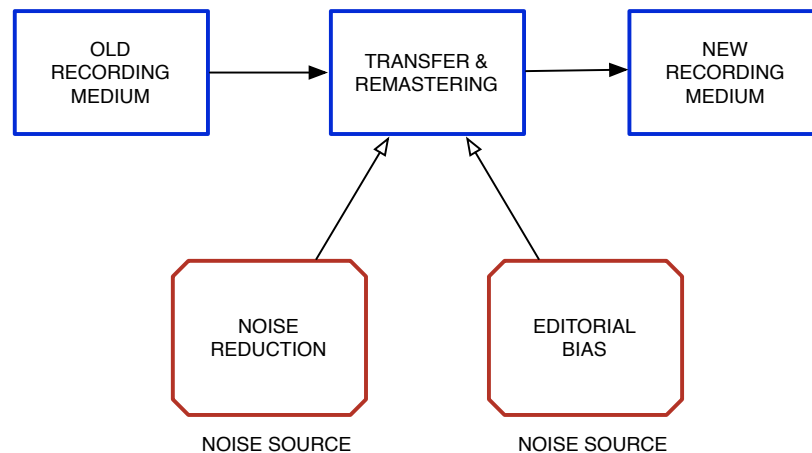
The number of potential noise sources increases significantly if recording and playback are introduced as part of the chain of communication (Figure C-3). The quality of the equipment is based on how faithfully the original acoustic signal is recorded and reproduced. In the case of a 78 rpm record reproduced from wax discs which were cut with a needle set into motion with the signal from a single microphone, the amount of added noise is significant. For over a century engineers have sought to improve recording technology for the purpose of reducing noise.

Figure C-3. Recording introduced into the chain of communication.



Each diversion of the signal brings potential for additional noise. If a recording is remastered, noise is introduced in the form of editorial bias when the engineer chooses which frequency ranges to bring out. Noise is introduced even with the decision to reduce extra-musical sounds from the playback (Figure C-4).

Figure C-4. Noise from the transfer and remastering process.



Noise is not necessarily a bad thing. The noise a conductor brings to performance in the form of interpretational bias is typically viewed as a positive addition to the composer's message. The same is true in the case of a skilled improviser, where a musician's technique and concept adds positive elements to the musical message.<sup>143</sup> Whether noise limits or enhances a musical message is for the listener to decide.

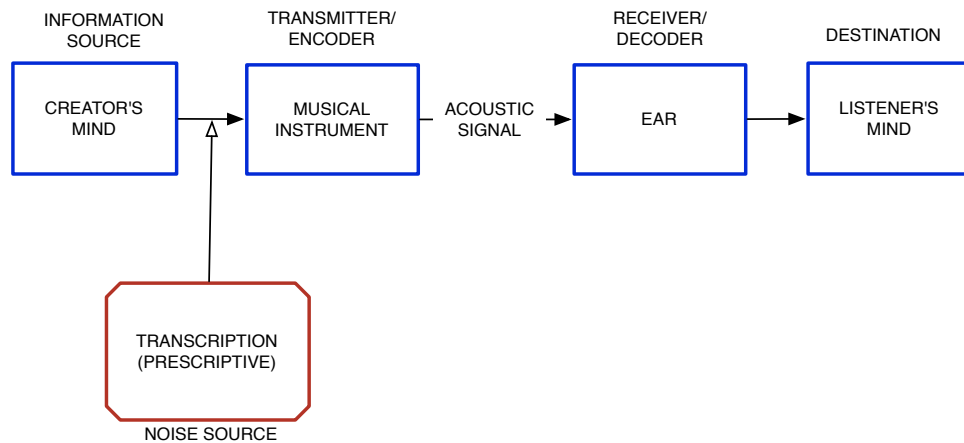
### **Transcriptions are noise**

With a transcription, an interpreter attempts to represent sound visually. The musical message is transmitted from the interpreter's mind to a reader's mind, and noise comes in the form of editorial bias from the transcriber's choice of notational symbols. As Seeger points out, there are two reasons for attempting to represent music visually, to prescribe or to describe. A prescriptive transcription enters the chain of communication when the transmitter's purpose is to recreate an existing performance. The information source in

<sup>143</sup> Note the creator and musician may be the same entity.

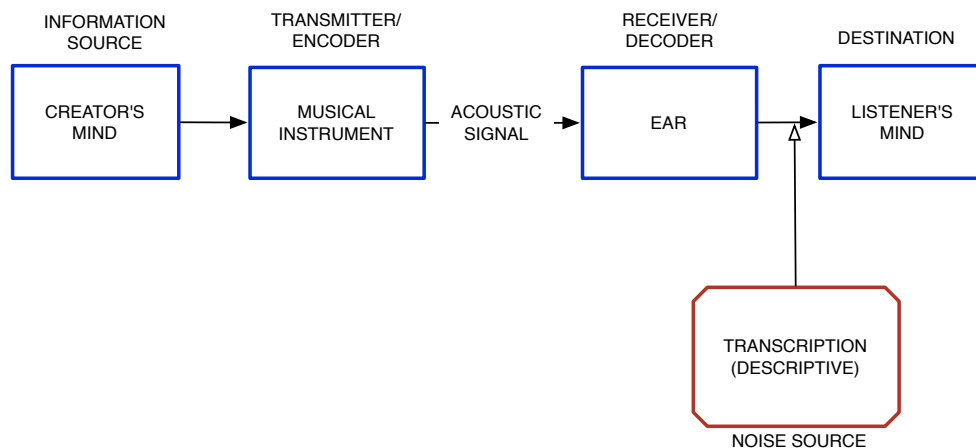
this case is the recording itself.<sup>144</sup> Here the transcription introduces noise nearer the beginning of the communication chain, affecting the performer's concept of the music (Figure C-5).

Figure C-5. Noise from prescriptive notation.



Descriptive transcriptions introduce noise at the end of the chain, affecting the concept only of the listener's who sees the transcription (Figure C-6).

Figure C-6. Noise from descriptive notation.



<sup>144</sup> The information source can still be traced back to the mind of the creator, but at this stage the source is a static record.

### **Why transcribe?**

Why would anyone willingly insert noise into the signal? Noise can distract, but it can also facilitate focus, like the click of a metronome. Of course people can do without transcriptions. Performers can simply imitate the sounds from the recording. Indeed, for people who do not read music, transcriptions bring nothing of value. But for people who do read music, a transcription may serve as a useful tool.

### **Transcriptions provide access**

A transcription allows examination of the music outside of time and space. The music can be accessed on some level without physically occurring.<sup>145</sup> For prescriptive purposes, the transcription creates access for musicians who would attempt to recreate the performance. It provides a stepping off point, but only for people who can read the music, and thus only for people with some amount of formal training. This music is complex enough to require that training. For descriptive purposes, a transcription provides a chronological index of events, in columns and rows, for identification or reference.

### **Why transcribe western swing in full score?**

Much has been written on western swing, but existing transcriptions are mainly limited to individual solos. Traditionally students have used transcriptions of solos to better understand an improviser's thinking process. A full score transcription provides a precise realization of the vertical texture of a performance, an important style component of ensemble playing.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> I suppose music "physically" occurs in the mind as the result of an electrochemical process.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

### Why transcribe Decca 5158-B?

As an example of early western swing, The Brownies' performance of *Who's Sorry Now?* is unexceptional. The purpose for selecting an unexceptional performance is to illustrate norms, not exceptions. The performance does not stand out among all the thirty-six sides recorded at the Chicago session.<sup>147</sup> *Who's Sorry Now?* was a regular part of the Brownies' repertory; the band performed it dozens if not hundreds of times prior to recording it. The purpose in transcribing the performance is not to uncover any underlying meaning or intent on the part of the improvisors, but simply to illustrate how the musicians performed. Like a snapshot of a football player catching a ball, the transcription exposes performance habits, whether mundane or extraordinary.<sup>148</sup>

### What is the message?

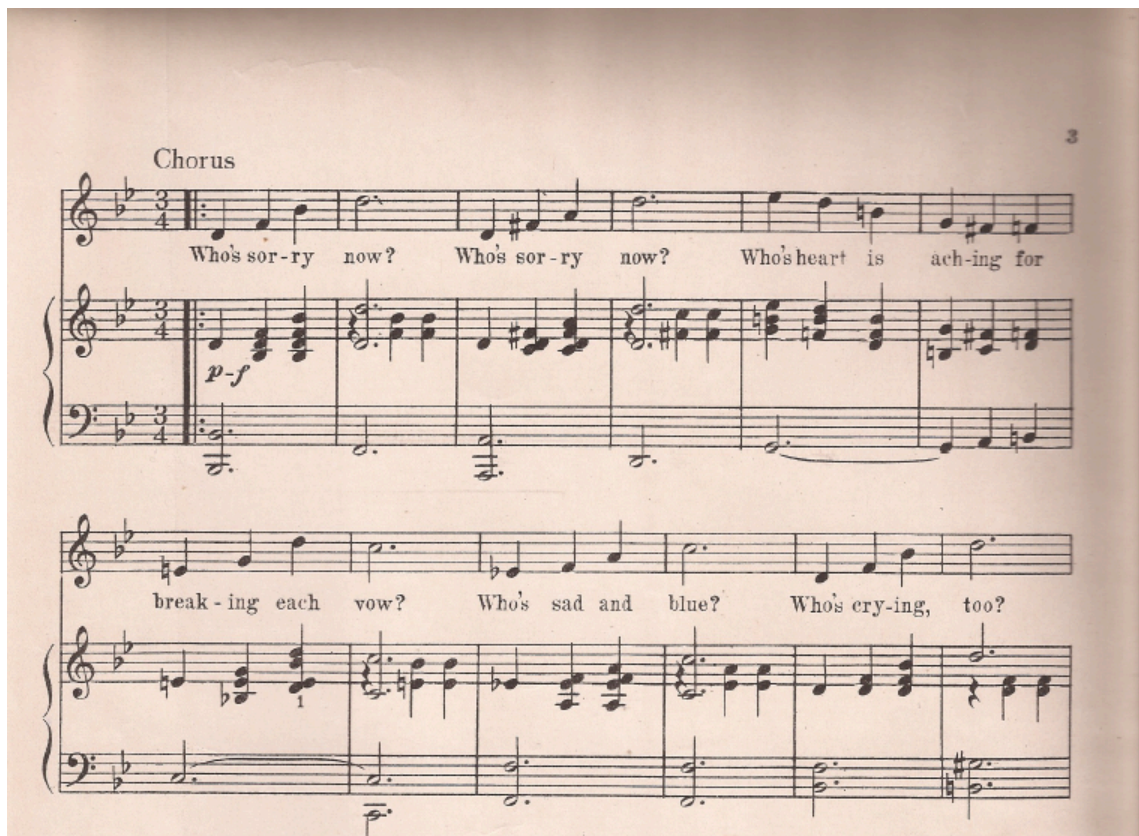
*Who's Sorry Now?* contains many messages. The textual message of the song is clear enough: the sweetness of revenge. The musical message of the song as conveyed by its harmony seems vaguely sentimental and melancholy, especially when performed in the original waltz time (Figure C-7). Not to limit sheet music sales, the publishers provided an optional foxtrot ending, which brightens the mood a bit.

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<sup>147</sup> Examples of recordings cited from this recording session include Dunn's signature tune *Taking Off*, Boyd, 41, and *St. Louis Blues*, Malone, 163.

<sup>148</sup> Some of the licks in these solos appear note-for-note in other songs from the same recording session, serving to navigate through similar (or identical) chord progressions.

Figure C-7. *Who's Sorry Now?* was originally published as a waltz.



On Decca 5158-B, the presence of the Brownies' strong swing beat overshadows the other messages of the song, that is, the swing rhythm dominates the performance and sets one's foot to tapping, thereby encouraging the sale records for dancing.

But the presence of the string band instrumentation combined with Decca's choice to market the performance as "hillbilly" music adds a strong social message: "this music is intended for an audience of low social standing." That message filters the music from reaching any listener who snubs hillbilly music, whatever they believe hillbilly music to be. For me, creating the transcription is a means to a nefarious end. By "planting" this transcription in the context of a master's thesis, it will wind up in an academic database.

Knowledge of the music may then seep into a dark corner of the collective mind of music academia and come to the attention of an unsuspecting musician or scholar. The danger here is that my transcription might corrupt the music's message, but I feel the danger is outweighed by the chance that someone will benefit from this introduction to the music.

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### Discography

Billy Banks and His Orchestra. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1932, Oriole 2521. 78rpm.

Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1935, Decca 5158-B. 78 rpm.

Digital transfer released on *Bob Dunn: Master of the Electric Steel Guitar 1935-1950*. Origin Jazz Library OJL-1004, CD 2010.

The California Ramblers. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923. Claxtonola, 40221. 78rpm.

The Hoosier Hot Shots. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1940, Okeh 05745, 78rpm.

Marion Harris. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923 Brunswick 2443, 78rpm.

Isham Jones Orchestra. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923, by Brunswick 2438. 78rpm.

Irving Kaufman with The Ben Selvin Orchestra. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923, Vocalion 14588. 78rpm.

Frankie Newton and His Uptown Serenaders. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1937, Vocalion 3839. 78rmp.

Red Nichols and His Five Pennies. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1929, Brunswick 4243. 78rpm.

The Original Memphis Five. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1923, Victor 19052. 78rpm.

The Three Tobacco Tags. *Who's Sorry Now?* Ted Snyder (music), Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (lyrics), 1939, Bluebird 8365. 78rpm.

Appendix A  
*Who's Sorry Now?* as performed by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Score

# Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY  
Music by TED SNYDER  
Transcribed by M. Dietrich

$\text{♩} = 110$   
Swing

Violin

Steel Guitar

Voice

Tenor Banjo

Acoustic Guitar

Piano

Double Bass

*B $\flat$*  *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

*B $\flat$*  *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

*B $\flat$*  *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

*pizz. B $\flat$*  *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

*sim.*

10

This musical score is for measures 10 through 14 of the song 'The Rose Tree'. It features six staves: Violin (Vln.), String Traps (St. Gtr.), Voice, Tenor Banjo (T. Ban.), Acoustic Guitar (A. Gtr.), and Piano/Double Bass (Pno./Db.). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The Violin part begins with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, Bb4) followed by a half note (G4) and a quarter note (F4). The String Traps play a series of chords: Bb4-Gb4, F4-C4, and Bb4-Gb4. The Voice part is silent. The Tenor Banjo and Acoustic Guitar parts play a series of chords: C7, F7, Bb, and G7. The Piano/Double Bass part plays a series of chords: C7, F7, Bb, and G7. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with a key signature of two flats and a time signature of 4/4.

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. The score is arranged for a full band and includes a vocal line. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Vln. (Violin):** Plays a melodic line in G major, featuring a key signature change to F major (one flat) for the bridge section (measures 15-18).
- St. Gtr. (Steel Guitar):** Provides harmonic support with chords in G major and F major.
- Voice:** The vocal line, which is mostly silent in this excerpt, with a few notes visible in the bridge.
- T. Ban. (Trombone):** Plays a melodic line in G major, featuring a key signature change to F major for the bridge section.
- A. Gtr. (Acoustic Guitar):** Provides harmonic support with chords in G major and F major.
- Pno. (Piano):** Provides harmonic support with chords in G major and F major.
- Db. (Double Bass):** Provides harmonic support with chords in G major and F major.

The score is in G major, 4/4 time, and includes a key signature change to F major for the bridge section. The bridge section is marked with a "15" and a "3" indicating a triplet.

20

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>

D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>

D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>

D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>

D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>



25 30

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

35

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

B $\flat$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  D $^7$

solo



40

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$

45

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.



50

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

55 60

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

Chord symbols: Cm, Eb, Ebm, Bb, G7

70

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.



75

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

80

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

85

90

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

Vln. solo 95  
 St. Gtr. B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  F $^7$   
 Voice  
 T. Ban. B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  F $^7$   
 A. Gtr. B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  F $^7$   
 Pno. B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  F $^7$   
 Db. B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  F $^7$



Vln. B $\flat$  D $^7$  100 G $^7$   
 St. Gtr.  
 Voice  
 T. Ban. B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$   
 A. Gtr. B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$   
 Pno. B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$   
 Db. B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$

Vln. *C7* *105* *F7* *Bb* *G7*  
 St. Gtr.  
 Voice  
 T. Ban. *C7* *F7* *Bb* *G7*  
 A. Gtr. *C7* *F7* *Bb* *G7*  
 Pno. *C7* *F7* *Bb* *G7*  
 Db. *C7* *F7* *Bb* *G7*



Vln. *C7* *110* *F7* *Bb*  
 St. Gtr.  
 Voice  
 T. Ban. *C7* *F7* *Bb*  
 A. Gtr. *C7* *F7* *Bb*  
 Pno. *C7* *F7* *Bb*  
 Db. *C7* *F* *Bb*

115

Vln.  $D^7$   $G^7$   $Cm$  120

St. Gtr.

Voice

T. Ban.  $D^7$   $G^7$   $Cm$

A. Gtr.  $D^7$   $G^7$   $Cm$

Pno.  $D^7$   $G^7$   $Cm$

Db.  $D^7$   $G^7$   $Cm$



125

Vln.  $E^b$   $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

St. Gtr. 8

Voice

T. Ban.  $E^b$   $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

A. Gtr.  $E^b$   $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

Pno.  $E^b$   $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

Db.  $E^b$   $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

130

Vln.  $B\flat$   $F^7$

St. Gtr.  $B\flat$   $F^7$

Voice

Who's sor - ry now?\_\_ Who's sor - ry now?\_\_

T. Ban.  $B\flat$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $D^7$

A. Gtr.  $B\flat$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $D^7$

Pno.  $B\flat$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $D^7$

Db.  $B\flat$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $D^7$



135

Vln.  $\sharp B$

St. Gtr.  $\sharp B$   $\sharp C$   $\sharp D$   $\sharp E$   $\sharp F$   $\sharp G$   $\sharp A$   $\sharp B$

Voice

Who's heart is ach - in' for break - ing each vow? Who's sad 'n' blue?\_\_

T. Ban.  $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

A. Gtr.  $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

Pno.  $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

Db.  $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$

140

Vln. *(2)*

St. Gtr.

Voice

Who's cry-in' too? — Just like I cried ov - er you.

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F

145

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

Right to the end — sweet-heart and friend, — I tried to warn you some -

T. Ban.

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Db.

B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$

155

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

how. Now you've had your way, now you must pay.

Cm Eb Eb Bb G<sup>7</sup>

T. Ban.

Cm Eb Ebm Bb G<sup>7</sup>

A. Gtr.

Pno.

Cm Eb Ebm Bb G<sup>7</sup>

Db.

Cm Eb Ebm Bb G<sup>7</sup>



160

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Voice

I'm glad that you're sorry now.

C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb

T. Ban.

C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb

A. Gtr.

Pno.

C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb

Db.

C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb

## Appendix B

*Who's Sorry Now?* as performed by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies

## Parts

Violin .....	85
Steel Guitar .....	88
Tenor Banjo .....	92
Guitar .....	95
Piano .....	98
Bass .....	103

## Violin

## Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY  
Music by TED SNYDER  
Transcribed by M. Dietrich

Swing

 $\text{♩} = 110$ 

The violin score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked 'Swing' with a quarter note equal to 110 beats per minute. The score consists of eight staves of music, with measure numbers 7, 13, 19, 25, 31, 43, 55, and 67 indicated at the start of their respective staves. The music features various musical notations including eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, and rests. There are several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a bracket) and dynamic markings such as 'sfz' (sforzando) with a wedge-shaped crescendo line. The score concludes with a final double bar line on the eighth staff.

## Violin

79 **12**

91 **3** solo

97 B $\flat$  D $^7$

100 G $^7$

103 C $^7$  F $^7$

107 B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$

111 F $^7$  B $\flat$

115 D $^7$  G $^7$

119 C $m$  E $\flat$  E $\flat m$

## Violin

123 B $\flat$  G $^7$  C $^7$  F $^7$

127 B $\flat$  F $^7$

132 2

139 2

146 3 3

151 3 3

Steel Guitar

Steel Guitar

1

## Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY  
Music by TED SNYDER  
Transcribed by M. Dietrich

Steel Guitar

The musical score is written for a steel guitar in the key of B-flat major (two flats). It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble clef staff and a guitar staff. The guitar staff includes fret numbers and bar lines. The score is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic at the beginning of the first system. The first system covers measures 1 through 8. The second system covers measures 10 through 15. The third system covers measures 20 through 24. The fourth system covers measures 25 through 30. The fifth system covers measures 45 through 50. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and bar lines. The guitar staff shows fret numbers and bar lines. The score is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic at the beginning of the first system.

Steel Guitar

St. Gtr.

St. Gtr.

St. Gtr.

St. Gtr.



## Steel Guitar

55

60

4

4

St. Gtr.

65

solo

Bb

D7

St. Gtr.

70

C7

St. Gtr.

75

Bb

G7

C7

St. Gtr.

80

F7

Bb

St. Gtr.

85

G7

St. Gtr.

Steel Guitar

St. Gtr.

Cm  $\uparrow$   $\downarrow$  Eb Ebm 2

St. Gtr.

Bb G7 C7 F7 95 Bb

St. Gtr.

F7 10 10 10 10

St. Gtr.

120 125

St. Gtr.

2 2

St. Gtr.

135

St. Gtr.

3

## Steel Guitar

140

St. Gtr.

145

150

155

160

## Tenor Banjo

## Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY  
Music by TED SNYDER  
Transcribed by M. Dietrich

$\text{♩} = 110$

The sheet music is written for Tenor Banjo in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 110 beats per minute. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The music is organized into measures, with measure numbers 7, 13, 19, 25, 31, 37, 43, and 49 marked at the beginning of their respective lines. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: Bb, D7, G7, C7, F7, Bb, Cm, Eb, Ebm, F7, Bb, D7, G7, C7, F7, Bb, G7, C7, F, Bb, D7, G7. The notation includes various rhythmic figures, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Some notes are marked with accents (>). The music is transcribed by M. Dietrich.

## Tenor Banjo

55 Cm Eb Ebm Bb

60 G7 C7 F7 Bb F7

65 Bb

67 D7 G7 C7

73 F7 Bb G7 C7

79 F Bb D7

85 G7 Cm Eb Ebm

91 Bb G7 C7 F7 Bb F7

97 Bb D7 G7

103 C7 F7 Bb G7

## Tenor Banjo

109 C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

115 D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>

121 E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

127 B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

133 G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

139 B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F

145 B<sup>b</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>

151 C<sup>m</sup> E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

156 G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

The musical score is written for Tenor Banjo in a single system. It consists of nine staves of music, each containing four measures. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The notation includes various chords (C<sup>7</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, D<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, C<sup>m</sup>, E<sup>b</sup>, F, B<sup>b</sup>) and rhythmic patterns indicated by slashes and vertical lines. Some measures have a 'v' symbol above them, likely indicating a vibrato or a specific playing technique. The measure numbers 109, 115, 121, 127, 133, 139, 145, 151, and 156 are placed at the beginning of their respective staves.

## Acoustic Guitar

## Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY  
Music by TED SNYDER  
Transcribed by M. Dietrich

♩ = 110

The score is written for acoustic guitar in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 110 beats per minute. It consists of nine staves of music, each containing a series of chords and some melodic lines. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The chords are labeled as follows:

- Staff 1: Bb, D7, G7, *sim.*
- Staff 2: 7 C7, F7, Bb, G7
- Staff 3: 13 C7, F7, Bb
- Staff 4: 19 D7, G7, Cm
- Staff 5: 25 Eb, Ebm, Bb, G7, C7, F7
- Staff 6: 31 Bb, F7, Bb, D7
- Staff 7: 37 G7, C7, F7
- Staff 8: 43 Bb, G7, C7, F
- Staff 9: 49 Bb, D7, G7

The notation includes various rhythmic values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes), rests, and dynamic markings like *sim.* (sustained). The guitar part is primarily composed of chords, with some melodic lines interspersed.

2

## Acoustic Guitar

55  $E\flat$   $E\flat m$   $B\flat$

60  $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $F^7$

65  $B\flat$

67  $D^7$   $G^7$   $C^7$

73  $F^7$   $B\flat$   $G^7$   $C^7$

79  $F$   $B\flat$   $D^7$

85  $G^7$   $Cm$   $E\flat$   $E\flat m$

91  $B\flat$   $G^7$   $C^7$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $F^7$

97  $B\flat$   $D^7$   $G^7$

103  $C^7$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $G^7$

The musical score for acoustic guitar spans measures 55 to 103. It is written in a single staff with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a common time signature. The notation uses a mix of whole, half, and quarter notes, as well as rests. Chord symbols are placed above the staff to indicate the harmony. The progression includes various chords such as  $E\flat$ ,  $E\flat m$ ,  $B\flat$ ,  $G^7$ ,  $C^7$ ,  $F^7$ ,  $D^7$ ,  $Cm$ , and  $F$ . The score is divided into systems of four measures each, with measure numbers 55, 60, 65, 67, 73, 79, 85, 91, 97, and 103 marking the beginning of each system.

## Acoustic Guitar

3

109 C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

115 D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup>

121 E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

127 B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

133 G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

139 B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F

145 B<sup>b</sup> D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>

151 C<sup>m</sup> E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m B<sup>b</sup>

156 G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

Detailed description: This image shows a musical score for acoustic guitar, measures 109 to 156. The music is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The notation consists of chords and rhythmic patterns. Measures 109-114: C7, F7, Bb. Measures 115-120: D7, G7, Cm. Measures 121-126: Eb, Ebm, Bb, G7, C7, F7. Measures 127-132: Bb, F7, Bb, D7. Measures 133-138: G7, C7, F7. Measures 139-144: Bb, G7, C7, F. Measures 145-150: Bb, D7, G7. Measures 151-155: Cm, Eb, Ebm, Bb. Measures 156-160: G7, C7, F7, Bb. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like 'v' (accents) and 'z' (breath marks).

Piano

# Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY

Music by TED SNYDER

Transcribed by M. Dietrich

$\text{♩} = 110$

Measures 1-6 of the piano introduction. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 110. The notation shows a series of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Chords are labeled: Bb, D7, G7.

Measures 7-12 of the piano introduction. The notation continues with chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Chords are labeled: C7, F7, Bb, G7.

Measures 13-18 of the piano introduction. The notation continues with chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Chords are labeled: C7, F7, Bb.

Measures 19-24 of the piano introduction. The notation continues with chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Chords are labeled: D7, G7, Cm.

Measures 25-30 of the piano introduction. The notation continues with chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Chords are labeled: Eb, Ebm, Bb, G7, C7, F7.

## Piano

31 *solo*

37

40

43

49

55

Bb F7 Bb D7 G7 C7 F7 Bb D7 G7 Cm Eb Ebm Bb

## Piano

60

G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

65

B<sup>b</sup>

67

D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup>

73

F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup>

79

F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup> D<sup>7</sup>

85

G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>m</sup> E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>m

## Piano

91

B $\flat$  Gm C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  F $^7$

97

B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$

3

103

Musical score for measures 103-108 of 'The Rose Tree'. The score is in 2/4 time and B-flat major. The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score consists of six measures. The first measure has a C7 chord. The second measure has a B-flat chord. The third measure has an F7 chord. The fourth measure has a B-flat chord. The fifth measure has a B-flat chord. The sixth measure has a G7 chord.

109

Musical score for measures 109-114. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. Measure 109: Treble has a quarter rest, bass has a half note C4. Measure 110: Treble has a quarter rest, bass has a half note D4. Measure 111: Treble has a quarter rest, bass has a half note E4. Measure 112: Treble has a quarter rest, bass has a half note F4. Measure 113: Treble has a quarter rest, bass has a half note G4. Measure 114: Treble has a quarter rest, bass has a half note A4. Chords are indicated: C7 in measure 109, F7 in measure 111, and Bb in measure 113. A triplet of eighth notes (G4, F4, E4) is in the bass of measure 114.

115

D7 G7 Cm

121

Chord symbols: Eb, Ebm, Bb, G7, C7, F7

## Piano

127

Measures 127-132: Treble clef, key of Bb. Chords: Bb, F7, Bb, D7. Bass clef: whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

133

Measures 133-138: Treble clef, key of Bb. Chords: G7, C7, F7. Bass clef: whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

139

Measures 139-144: Treble clef, key of Bb. Chords: Bb, G7, C7, F7. Bass clef: whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

145

Measures 145-150: Treble clef, key of Bb. Chords: Bb, D7, G7. Bass clef: whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

151

Measures 151-155: Treble clef, key of Bb. Chords: Cm, Eb, Ebm, Bb. Bass clef: whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

156

Measures 156-160: Treble clef, key of Bb. Chords: G7, C7, F7, Bb. Bass clef: whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes.

## Double Bass

## Who's Sorry Now?

as recorded by Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies  
Chicago, January 28, 1935, Decca 5158-B

Words by BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY  
Music by TED SNYDER  
Transcribed by M. Dietrich

♩ = 110

pizz. B♭

D<sup>7</sup>G<sup>7</sup>

2

## Double Bass

55 Cm Eb Ebm Bb

60 G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb F<sup>7</sup>

65 Bb

67 D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup>

73 F<sup>7</sup> Bb G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup>

79 F Bb D<sup>7</sup>

85 G<sup>7</sup> Cm Eb Ebm

91 Bb G<sup>7</sup> C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb F<sup>7</sup>

97 Bb D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>

103 C<sup>7</sup> F<sup>7</sup> Bb G<sup>7</sup>

## Double Bass

3



Appendix C  
Solos for comparison

Score .....	107
Benny Goodman, Cl.....	110
Miff Mole, Tbn.....	111
Henry Allen, Tpt.....	112
Bob Dunn, St. Gtr.....	113
Cecil Brower, Vln .....	114

# Who's Sorry Now?

## solo comparison score

1 2

Benny Goodman, Clarinet--1928

Henry "Red" Allen, Trumpet--1932

Cecil Brower, Violin--1935

Bob Dunn, Steel Guitar--1935

Miff Mole, Trombone--1928

Who's sor - ry now? - - -

3 4 5 6

Cl.

Tpt.

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Tbn.

Who's sor - ry now? - - - Who's heart is brok - - en for

7 8 9 10

Cl.

Tpt.

Vln.

St. Gtr.

Tbn.

break - ing each vow? - - - Who's sad and blue?

## solo comparison score - 2

11 12 13 14

Cl. *B $\flat$*  *G $^7$*  *F* *C $^7$*

Tpt. *B $\flat$*  *G $^7$*  *F* *C $^7$*

Vln. *B $\flat$*  *G $^7$*  *C $^7$*

St. Gtr. *B $\flat$*  *G $^7$*  *F* *C $^7$*

Tbn. *B $\flat$*  *G $^7$*  *F* *C $^7$*

Who's cry - ing too? - - - Just like I cried o - ver

15 16 17 18

Cl. *F* *F $^7$*  *B $\flat$*

Tpt. *F* *F $^7$*  *B $\flat$*

Vln. *F $^7$*  *B $\flat$*

St. Gtr. *F $^7$*  *B $\flat$*

Tbn. *B $\flat$*

you. - - - Right to the end, - - -

19 20 21 22

Cl. *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

Tpt. *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

Vln. *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

St. Gtr. *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

Tbn. *D $^7$*  *G $^7$*

just like a friend, - - - I tried to warn you some -

## solo comparison score - 3

23 24 25 26

Cl. *Cm* *E<sub>b</sub>* *E<sub>b</sub>m*

Tpt. *(B<sub>b</sub>)*

Vln. *Cm* *E<sub>b</sub>* *E<sub>b</sub>m*

St. Gr. *Cm* *E<sub>b</sub>* *E<sub>b</sub>m*

Tbn.

*hov.* - - - - You had your way, - - -

27 28 29 30

Cl. *B<sub>b</sub>* *G<sup>7</sup>* *C<sup>7</sup>* *F<sup>7</sup>*

Tpt. *(B<sub>b</sub>)*

Vln. *B<sub>b</sub>* *G<sup>7</sup>* *C<sup>7</sup>* *F<sup>7</sup>* 3

St. Gr. *B<sub>b</sub>* *G<sup>7</sup>* *C<sup>7</sup>* *F<sup>7</sup>*

Tbn.

now you must pay. - - - - I'm glad that you're sor - - ry

31 32 33

Cl. *B<sub>b</sub>* *(F<sup>7</sup>)*

Tpt. *(F<sup>7</sup>)*

Vln. *B<sub>b</sub>* *F<sup>7</sup>*

St. Gr. *B<sub>b</sub>* *F<sup>7</sup>*

Tbn.

now! - - - -

Benny Goodman, clarinet  
*Who's Sorry Now?* Red Nichols and His Five Pennies.  
 New York, February 1, 1929. Brunswick 4243.  
 2nd chorus, 0:44.

♩ = 182

1 B $\flat$  D $^7$  G $^7$

6 C $^7$  F $^7$

11 B $\flat$  F/C C $^7$

15 Cm $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  D $^7$

20 G $^7$  Cm

25 E $\flat$  E $\flat$ m B $\flat$  G $^7$

29 C $^7$  F $^7$  B $\flat$  (F $^7$ )

The musical score is written for a clarinet in 4/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The key signature has two flats (B $\flat$  and E $\flat$ ). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 182. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, and rests. Chord symbols are placed above the staff at specific measures: B $\flat$ , D $^7$ , G $^7$ , C $^7$ , F $^7$ , B $\flat$ , F/C, C $^7$ , Cm $^7$ , F $^7$ , B $\flat$ , D $^7$ , G $^7$ , Cm, E $\flat$ , E $\flat$ m, B $\flat$ , G $^7$ , C $^7$ , F $^7$ , B $\flat$ , and (F $^7$ ). A triplet of eighth notes is indicated at measure 3. The score ends with a double bar line at measure 32.

Miff Mole, trombone  
*Who's Sorry Now?* Red Nichols and His Five Pennies.  
 New York, February 1, 1929. Brunswick 4243.  
 3rd chorus, 1:26.

$\text{♩} = 182$

1  $B^b$   $D^7$   $G^7$

6  $C^7$   $F^7$

11  $B^b$   $F/C$   $C^7$   $Cm^7$  3

16  $F^7$   $B^b$   $D^7$

21  $G^7$   $Cm$   $E^b$

26  $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$

29  $C^7$   $F^7$   $B^b$

Henry "Red" Allen, trumpet  
*Who's Sorry Now?* Billy Banks and His Orchestra.  
 New York, May 23, 1932. Oriole 2521.  
 5th chorus, 1:58.

♩ = 230

The musical score is written for a trumpet in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 230 beats per minute. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The score consists of eight staves of music, each with a measure number and a key signature change indicated above the staff.

- Staff 1 (Measures 1-4):** Key signature Bb. Measure 1 has a whole rest. Measure 2 has a half note G4. Measure 3 has a half note A4. Measure 4 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 2 (Measures 5-8):** Key signature Eb. Measure 5 has a whole rest. Measure 6 has a half note G4. Measure 7 has a half note A4. Measure 8 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 3 (Measures 9-12):** Key signature Bb. Measure 9 has a whole rest. Measure 10 has a half note G4. Measure 11 has a half note A4. Measure 12 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 4 (Measures 13-16):** Key signature Eb. Measure 13 has a whole rest. Measure 14 has a half note G4. Measure 15 has a half note A4. Measure 16 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 5 (Measures 17-20):** Key signature Bb. Measure 17 has a whole rest. Measure 18 has a half note G4. Measure 19 has a half note A4. Measure 20 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 6 (Measures 21-24):** Key signature Eb. Measure 21 has a whole rest. Measure 22 has a half note G4. Measure 23 has a half note A4. Measure 24 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 7 (Measures 25-28):** Key signature Bb. Measure 25 has a whole rest. Measure 26 has a half note G4. Measure 27 has a half note A4. Measure 28 has a half note Bb4.
- Staff 8 (Measures 29-32):** Key signature Eb. Measure 29 has a whole rest. Measure 30 has a half note G4. Measure 31 has a half note A4. Measure 32 has a half note Bb4.

Bob Dunn, steel guitar  
*Who's Sorry Now?* Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies.  
 Chicago, January 28, 1935. Decca 5158.  
 4th chorus, 0:44.

$\text{♩} = 210$

1  $B^b$   $D^7$

5  $G^7$   $C^7$

9  $F^7$   $B^b$   $G^7$

13  $C^7$   $F^7$

17  $B^b$   $D^7$

21  $G^7$   $C^m$

25  $E^b$   $E^bm$   $B^b$   $G^7$

29  $C^7$   $F^7$   $B^b$   $F^7$

Cecil Brower, violin  
*Who's Sorry Now?* Milton Brown and His Musical Brownies.  
 Chicago, January 28, 1935. Decca 5158.  
 4th chorus, 0:44.

$\text{♩} = 210$

The musical score is written for violin in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 210 beats per minute. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score consists of eight staves of music, each containing a measure number and a key signature change. The notes are written in a standard musical notation with various ornaments and dynamics. The key signature changes are indicated by flat symbols above the staff.

1  $B\flat$

5  $G^7$   $C^7$

9  $F^7$   $B\flat$   $G^7$

13  $C^7$   $F^7$

17  $B\flat$   $D^7$

21  $G^7$   $Cm$

25  $E\flat$   $Ebm$   $B\flat$   $G^7$

29  $C^7$   $F^7$   $B\flat$   $F^7$

3

Appendix D  
1923 Sheet Music

2

# Who's Sorry Now?

Words by  
BERT KALMAR  
and HARRY RUBY

Music by  
TED SNYDER

Valse moderato

Piano

The piano introduction is in 3/4 time, marked 'f' (forte). It features a series of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand, creating a waltz-like feel. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Voice

The first vocal line begins with the lyrics: "You smiled when we part-ed, It hurt me some - how, I thought there was Al - tho' I for - give you, I can - not for - get, How you shat - tered". The piano accompaniment is marked 'p' (piano) and continues with chords in the right hand and notes in the left hand.

The second vocal line continues with the lyrics: "noth - ing worth while. The tab - les are turn - ing, And all my i - deals. You smiled when I told you, That". The piano accompaniment continues with chords in the right hand and notes in the left hand.

The third vocal line concludes with the lyrics: "you're cry - ing now, While I am just learn - ing to smile. you would re - gret, And now you know just how it feels." The piano accompaniment continues with chords in the right hand and notes in the left hand.

1286-4

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## Chorus

Who's sor-ry now? Who's sor-ry now? Who's heart is ach-ing for

*p-f*

break-ing each vow? Who's sad and blue? Who's cry-ing, too?

Just like I cried ov-er you. ————— Right to the end,

Just like a friend, I tried to warn you, some-how. —————

4

You had your way, Now you must pay;

I'm glad that you're sor-ry now. <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> now.

*Optional ending into Fox-Trot Chos.* Moderato  
now. Who's sor-ry now? - Who's sor-ry now?

Who's heart is ach - ing for break - ing each vow? -

Who's sad and blue? - Who's cry-ing too? - Just like I  
cried ov-er you. - Right to the end, -  
Just like a friend - I tried to warn you some-how.  
You had your way - Now you must pay, -  
I'm glad that you're sor-ry now.