

Buddy Bolden Blues

The Firehouse Jazz Band

Ferd "Jelly Roll" Morton

Charles "Buddy" Bolden is the legendary first jazz cornet player. He was a part-time barber, born in New Orleans in 1877. He was a tremendously powerful cornetist who could also play very sweetly. One source claimed that Buddy's horn could be heard 13 miles from Congo Square. Known as a "ladies' man", he led his band until 1907, when he was incapacitated by mental illness brought on by alcohol and/or syphilis. He died in 1931 still confined to an institution.

This song is also known as "Funky Butt", relating to the old New Orleans "Funky Butt" dance hall where Bolden's band often played. It was on Perdido St. between Library and Franklin. Earlier it had been the Union Sons Lodge Hall, but was "Kenna's" when Bolden played there. The odor in the place was so unbearable during dances that trombonist Willie Cornish came up with a name for it, calling it "Funky Butt". Soon everyone in the neighborhood knew the place as "Funky Butt Hall". In the 1930's the building was used as a church.

*These are the standard censored lyrics. Jelly Roll Morton, in his famous 1938 Library of Congress recordings, said the original lyrics were too obscene to be quoted.

Concert Pitch

Slow Blues



I thought I heard Bud-dy Bol-den say, You're nas-ty, You're dirt-y, Take it a - way! You're
I thought I heard Judge Foger-ty say, Give him 30 days in the Mar-ket, Take him a - way! Give him a
I thought I heard Bud-dy Bol-den say, Funk-y Butt, Funk-y Butt, Take it a - way!



ter-ri-ble, you're aw-ful, Take it a - way, I thought I heard him say! I
good broom to sweep with, Take him a - way, I thought I heard him say! I
Funk-y Butt, Funk-y Butt, Take it a - way! I thought I heard hom say! I



thought I heard Bud-dy Bol - den shout, O - pen up that win-dow let that bad air out!
thought I heard Frank-y Du - son shout, Gal, give me that mon-ey 'fore I beat it out! Gal,
thought I heard Bud-dy Bol - den shout, Funk-y Butt, Funk-y Butt, Take it on out!



O - pen up that win-dow let the foul air out! I thought I heard Bud-dy Bol-den shout.
give me that mon-ey or I'll beat it out! I thought I heard Frank-y Du - son shout.
Funk-y Butt, Funk-y Butt take it on out! I thought I heard Bud-dy Bol-den shout.

* Franky Duson was an early New Orleans trombonist, shown in a few early photos. Like dozens of men just after 1900 he also worked as a pimp in Storyville, the legal area of prostitution in the Crescent City. When the government closed Storyville during World War I (1918) it put many jazz musicians out of work.