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Jack

Bill Dodd

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BILL DODD

JACK

I lived a year where
he was born and reared,
as they in Vernon,
or Texas anywhere,
and from it learned something
of where he got his soul
and jazz: partly from
that same old black man
who would have been
a young man, when Jack
was a boy, peddling his tamales
from a call, calling,
"Tamales, get 'em hot,"
and across the street
the high ivy-covered wall
of the rich widow, who
was young, at least younger,
when Jack was, and better
looking, and on this side,
the poorer white,
and the black man with
the tamales in the middle,
and the barbecue and bootlegging
in the flats where
Jack and I heard New Orleans
on big 78's, scratched and brittle,
and punch boards in the little
stores because few could buy,
outright, a box of candy, and
live channel cat for sell
and cork boats on the city
reservoir, &, &
life if you lived through it
like Jack Teagarden did.