

## Jackson Blues 1928 – 1938 (1968)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Dark Road Blues* (Willie Lofton) 2 *Bye Bye Blues* (Tommy Johnson) 3 *Never Drive A Stranger From Your Door* (Willie Harris) 4 *Old Devil* (Bo Carter) 5 *Stop And Listen Blues* (Mississippi Sheiks) [play](#) 6 *Last Time Blues* (Charlie McCoy) 7 *Trouble Hearted Blues* (Ishman Bracey) 8 *Going Back Home* (Mississippi Mudder) 9 *Overtime Blues* (Walter Vincent) 10 *Two Time Blues* (Arthur Pettis) 11 *The Fore Day Blues* (Ishman Bracey) 12 *Lonesome Home Blues* (Ishman Bracey) [play](#) 13 *Pay Me No Mind Blues* (Ishman Bracey) 14 *Black Mare Blues* (Tommy Johnson)

The blues tradition in Mississippi is probably the richest the genre has produced. Giving birth to Charlie Patton and Robert Johnson alone would be enough to ensure the state's legacy, but it hardly stops there. Yazoo Records has turned up enough material for three compilations devoted to Mississippi blues. That's impressive considering the recorded output of many of these artists is so small. The most prolific performer on *Jackson Blues: 1928-1938*, Tommy Johnson, recorded merely a dozen 78 sides. *Jackson Blues* gives the listener a good idea of the sort of musical interbreeding that occurred regularly in any given region. Songs, lyrics, and techniques were acquired from traveling performers and commercial recordings. They would then make the rounds of a small community, finding their way into each musician's unique style. Both Willie "Poor Boy" Lofton's "Dark Road Blues" and the Mississippi Sheiks' "Stop & Listen Blues," for example, are based on Tommy Johnson's popular "Big Road Blues," yet they are miles apart. Lofton rushes through the song, delivering hard, fast, repetitious runs that sound as if they are struggling to keep up with the singing.

The performance is energized, but stiff. "Stop & Listen," on the other hand, sounds completely relaxed, even when singer Walter Vinson seems to increase the tempo, singing against his hot, syncopated guitar lines. Johnson is featured here on three sides, including the excellent "Bye Bye Blues," a typically fine guitar and vocal performance with Charlie McCoy. An exceptional accompanist on both guitar and mandolin, McCoy recorded some outstanding duets with

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musicians from the Jackson area. His collaborators include Ishman Bracey, Bo Chatmon, the Mississippi Sheiks, and brother Joe McCoy (as Big Joe and the Mississippi Mudder). While some of the musicians here have full-length CDs devoted to their work, Yazoo collections like Jackson Blues also provide a home for lesser-known artists with little recorded legacy to speak of. Not as essential as Charlie Patton's *Founder of the Delta Blues* or *Masters of the Delta Blues: The Friends of Charlie Patton*, Jackson Blues remains a superb collection that allows for a more complete picture of the Mississippi blues tradition. --- Nathan Bush, Rovi

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