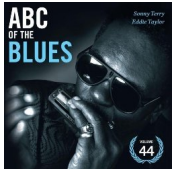


ABC Of The Blues CD 44 - Sonny Terry & Eddie Taylor (2010)



CD 44 - Sonny Terry & Eddie Taylor 44-01 Sonny Terry – *Bye Bye Baby Blues* 44-02 Sonny Terry – *I Don't Care How Long* 44-03 Sonny Terry – *Blues and Worried Man* 44-04 Sonny Terry – *Harmonica Blues* [play](#) 44-05 Sonny Terry – *Somebody's Been Talkin'* 44-06 Sonny Terry – *Harmonica Stomp* 44-07 Sonny Terry – *Twelve Gates to the City* 44-08 Sonny Terry – *You Got to Have Your Dollar* 44-09 Sonny Terry – *Don't Want No Skinny Woman* 44-10 Sonny Terry – *Blowing the Blues* 44-11 Eddie Taylor – *Bad Boy* 44-12 Eddie Taylor – *Big Town Playboy* 44-13 Eddie Taylor – *Find My Baby* 44-14 Eddie Taylor – *Stroll Out West* 44-15 Eddie Taylor – *E.T. Blues* 44-16 Eddie Taylor – *Don't Knock at My Door* 44-17 Eddie Taylor – *I'm Gonna Love You* [play](#) 44-18 Eddie Taylor – *Leave This Neighborhood* 44-19 Eddie Taylor – *I'm Sitting Here* 44-20 Eddie Taylor – *Ride'em On Down*

Harmonica player **Sonny Terry** was one of the initial bluesmen who crossed over into areas not normally associated with the genre before he came along. Along with his partner, guitarist Brownie McGhee, Terry played on numerous folk recordings with the likes of Woody Guthrie, developed an acting career showcased on television and Broadway, and never compromised his unique high-pitched penetrating harmonica style called whoopin'.

Sonny Terry was born Saunders Terrell on October 24, 1911, in Greensboro, GA. He lost his sight by the time he was 16 in two separate accidents. His father played harmonica in local functions around town and taught Terry at an early age. Realizing his eyesight would keep him from pursuing a profession in farming, Terry decided instead to be a blues singer. He began traveling to nearby Raleigh and Durham, NC, performing on street corners for tips. In 1934, he befriended the popular guitarist Blind Boy Fuller. Fuller convinced Terry to move to Durham, where the two immediately gained a strong local following. By 1937, they were offered an opportunity to go to New York and record for the Vocalion label. A year later, Terry would be

back in New York taking part in John Hammond's legendary Spirituals to Swing concert, where he performed one of his memorable tunes, "Mountain Blues." Upon returning to Durham, Terry continued playing regularly with Fuller and also met his future partner, guitarist Brownie McGhee, who would accompany Terry off and on for the next two decades. McGhee was initially sent to look after Terry by Blind Boy's manager, J.B. Long. Long figured McGhee might get a chance to play some of the same shows as Terry.

A friendship developed between the two men and following Fuller's death in 1941, Terry and McGhee moved to New York. The change proved fruitful as they immediately found steady work, playing concerts both as a duo and solo. Terry became an in-demand session player who started showing up regularly on the records of folk luminaries including Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, and Pete Seeger. An acting role was also initiated at this time, in the long-running Broadway production of Finian's Rainbow in 1946. By the mid-'50s, Terry and McGhee began broadening their collective horizons and traveled extensively outside of New York. They released a multitude of recordings for labels like Folkways, Savoy, and Fantasy that crossed the boundaries of race, becoming well-known in folk and blues circles performing for black and white audiences. It was also in the mid-50s that Terry and McGhee accepted roles on Broadway, joining the cast of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, exposing them to an even broader audience.

In the early '60s, the duo performed at numerous folk and blues festivals around the world, while Terry found time to work with singer Harry Belafonte and in television commercials. Terry was constantly traveling throughout the '70s, stopping only long enough to write his instructional book, *The Harp Styles of Sonny Terry*. By the mid-'70s, the strain of being on the road developed into personal problems between McGhee and Terry. Unfortunately, they resigned their long partnership, divided by the bitterness of constant touring. Terry was still being discovered by a younger blues generation via the Johnny Winter-produced album *Whoopin'* for the Alligator label, featuring Winter and Willie Dixon. Winter had produced a comeback album for Muddy Waters (*Hard Again*) that helped rejuvenate his career, and he was attempting the same with Terry. By the '80s, Terry's age was catching up with him. He quit recording and only accepted sporadic live appearances. Terry passed away in 1986, the year he was inducted into the Blues Foundations Hall of Fame. ---Al Campbell, allmusic.com

When you're talking about the patented Jimmy Reed laconic shuffle sound, you're talking about Eddie Taylor just as much as Reed himself. Taylor was the glue that kept Reed's lowdown grooves from falling into serious disrepair. His rock-steady rhythm guitar powered the great

majority of Reed's Vee-Jay sides during the 1950s and early '60s, and he even found time to wax a few classic sides of his own for Vee-Jay during the mid-'50s.

Eddie Taylor was as versatile a blues guitarist as anyone could ever hope to encounter. His style was deeply rooted in Delta tradition, but he could snap off a modern funk-tinged groove just as convincingly as a straight shuffle. Taylor witnessed Delta immortals Robert Johnson and Charley Patton as a lad, taking up the guitar himself in 1936 and teaching the basics of the instrument to his childhood pal Reed. After a stop in Memphis, he hit Chicago in 1949, falling in with harpist Snooky Pryor, guitarist Floyd Jones, and -- you guessed it -- his old homey Reed.

From Jimmy Reed's second Vee-Jay date in 1953 on, Eddie Taylor was right there to help Reed through the rough spots. Taylor's own Vee-Jay debut came in 1955 with the immortal "Bad Boy" (Reed returning the favor on harp). Taylor's second Vee-Jay single coupled two more classics, "Ride 'Em on Down" and "Big Town Playboy," and his last two platters for the firm, "You'll Always Have a Home" and "I'm Gonna Love You," were similarly inspired. But Taylor's records didn't sell in the quantities that Reed's did, so he was largely relegated to the role of sideman (he recorded behind John Lee Hooker, John Brim, Elmore James, Snooky Pryor, and many more during the '50s) until his 1972 set for Advent, *I Feel So Bad*, made it abundantly clear that this quiet, unassuming guitarist didn't have to play second fiddle to anyone. When he died in 1985, he left a void on the Chicago circuit that remains apparent even now. They just don't make 'em like Eddie Taylor anymore. ---Bill Dahl, Rovi

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