

## Blind Willie McTell - Searching The Desert For The Blues (2009)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 13 September 2014 17:19 -

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1. *Stole Rider Blues* 40309-2 rec. 18.10.1927 2. *Mama, Tain't Long Fo' Day* 40310-1 rec. 18.10.1927 3. *Mr. McTell Got The Blues (take 2)* 40311-2 rec. 18.10.1927 4. *Three Women Blues* 47185-2 rec. 17.10.1928 5. *Dark Night Blues* 47186-1 rec. 17.10.1928 6. *Statesboro Blues* 47187-3 rec. 17.10.1928 7. *Loving Talking Blues* 47188-3 rec. 17.10.1928 8. *Come On Around To My House Mama* 19302-2 rec. 30.10.1929 9. *Kind Mama* 149319-2 rec. 31.10.1929 10. *Drive Away Blues* 56599-1 rec. 26.11.1929 11. *Talkin' To Myself* 150257-2 rec. 17.4.1930 12. *Southern Can Is Mine* 151904-1 rec. 23.10.1931 13. *Broke Down Engine Blues* 151905-1 rec. 23.10.1931 14. *Painful Blues* 151907-1 rec. 23.10.1931 15. *Scarey Day Blues* 405003-1 rec. 23.10.1931 16. *Low Rider's Blues* 405084-1 rec. 31.10.1931 17. *Georgia Rag* 405085-1 rec. 31.10.1931 18. *Rollin' Mama Blues* 71603 rec. 22.2.1932 19. *Lonesome Day Blues* 71604-1 rec. 22.2.1932 20. *Mama, Let Me Scoop For You* 71605 rec. 22.2.1932 21. *Searching The Desert For The Blues* 71606-1 rec. 22.2.1932 22. *Warm It Up To Me* 14008-2 rec. 14.9.1933 23. *Savannah Mama* 14035-1 rec. 18.9.1933 24. *Love-Makin' Mama* 14045-1 rec. 19.9.1933 25. *Lord, Send Me An Angel* 14050-1 rec. 19.9.1933 26. *Lay Some Flowers On My Grave* C-9952-A rec. 25.4.1935  
Blind Willie McTell - Vocals, 12-string guitar McTell was billed as "Blind Sammie" on 8,9,12 and as "Georgia Bill" on 15 With Ruth Willis (vocals) on 14 With Ruby Glaze (vocals) on 18,19,20,21 With Curley Weaver (guitar, some vocals) on 16,17,22,24,26

Like many pre-war Blues artists, Blind Willie McTell recorded for a number of record companies, often at the same time, under a variety of pseudonyms. Fortunately for the lover of vintage blues, none of these was the notorious Paramount record company, and as a result we have a body of work which not only stands up musically, but in terms of recording and pressing quality as well - unlike the recordings of the likes of Charley Patton, Blind Blake and Blind Lemon Jefferson, for example.

In some respects this ought to make the audio restorer's job easier, you might think. Alas, life is rarely that simple - with higher quality originals to begin with, one inevitably aims higher and is

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less able to settle for anything less than excellence.

In compiling this CD, I initially worked on some 40 tracks by Blind Willie McTell, in many cases from two or three different sources. Each was taken a considerable way along the road of restoration and remastering in order that a judgment could be made (a) between different copies of the same recording, and then (b) between the complete set to narrow it down to a full CD (and I apologise here both for having to leave some excellent material out, and for leaving some rather small gaps between tracks in order to squeeze as much on as possible).

Then comes the painstaking job of "finishing" - a near-forensic examination of each track, looking for individual clicks, surface swishes and other extraneous noises, and attempting to remove or reduce them, one by one, as well as varying out further final noise and hiss reduction. For a set such as this, which had already taken several weeks to assemble, this finishing work took a further three full days of intensive effort to complete.

What do I hope to achieve with all this effort? The finest-sounding a most representative collection of pre-war recordings by McTell ever assembled. No doubt some will dispute the track selections - especially some are here on musical merit., others on sonic merit - but put together as a whole I do feel this considerably improves on all previous issues of this material that it's been my pleasure to listen to over the years. I hope you'll feel similarly! --- [pristineclassical.com](http://pristineclassical.com)

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