

Henry Townsend - Cairo Blues (1999)

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1 *Cairo Blues* 3:23 2 *Tired Of Being Mistreated* 2:51 3 *Biddle Street Blues* 2:47 4 *She Walked Away ...* 3:27 5 *Every Day Of My Life* 3:18 6 *Sloppy Drunk Again!* 3:42 7 *Why Do We Love Each Other?* 3:18 8 *Deep Morgan Stomp* 3:02 9 *Buzz, Buzz, Buzz* 2:40 10 *Heart Trouble* 3:35 11 *Doing Better In Life* 3:09 12 *Do You Remember Me?* 3:59 13 *Now Or Never!* 5:03
Guitar (Baritone) – Mike Stewart (tracks: 2 to 6, 9 to 13) Harmonica – Andrew Cauthen (tracks: 2) Piano – Henry Brown (tracks: 8) Vocals – Vernell Townsend (tracks: 7) Vocals, Guitar – Henry Townsend (tracks: 1 to 3, 5 to 9, 11 to 13) Vocals, Piano – Henry Townsend (tracks: 4, 10)

A veteran of the St. Louis blues scene, Henry Townsend is a true marvel, having recorded in each of the last eight decades, a truly astounding achievement. Blessed with an easy, natural blues voice, a string-snapping acoustic guitar style he learned from old running mate Henry Spaulding, and a down to earth piano approach, Townsend is a living, breathing national treasure. *Cairo Blues* was originally released in 1969, and this reissue has been long overdue. Working with veteran guitarist Mike Stewart, Townsend delivers a sprightly set of acoustic gems, including a nod to his old friend Spaulding, whose only known recordings, 1929's "Cairo Blues" and "Biddle Street Blues," are covered here. "Deep Morgan Stomp" is another highlight, while the two piano tracks, "She Just Walked Away" and "Heart Trouble," are charming and intimate, even though the piano is slightly out of tune. Townsend has never made a bad album, but *Cairo Blues* has a wonderful and intangible warmth that makes it a good introduction to this absolute last of the great country blues players of the 1920s. ---Steve Leggett, AllMusic Review

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