

10 Years In Memphis 1927-1937 (1968)

Written by bluesever

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1. *George Torey - Married Woman Blues* 2. *George Torey - Lonesome Man Blues* 3. *Gus Cannon - Poor Boy* 4. *Allen Shaw - Moanin' The Blues* 5. *Robert Wilkins - Jailhouse Blues* 6. *Robert Wilkins - Falling Down Blues* 7. *Big Boy Cleveland - Goin' To Leave You Blues* 8. *Furry Lewis - Billy Lyons And Stack O'Lee* 9. *Furry Lewis - Big Chief Blues* 10. *Frank Stokes - What's The Matter Blues* 11. *Frank Stokes - Jazzin' The Blues* 12. *Tom Dickson - Happy Blues* 13. *Tom Dickson - Death Bell Blues* 14. *Kansas Joe - Pile Drivin' Blues*

Memphis has been a music hub since the first Mississippi Delta bluesmen started drifting north, making Beale Street the center of the city's African American community and a melting pot of musical styles. When the self-proclaimed "Father of the Blues" W.C. Handy, an accomplished bandleader and songwriter, arrived on Beale Street from the Delta in 1908, he brought with him the blues, a new style of music he "discovered" down south. With his publication of "Memphis Blues" in 1912, Handy arguably became one of the first people to publish a song featuring characteristic "blue notes" and containing the word "blues" in its title. The first song of its kind to achieve wide acclaim and sales, it launched innumerable imitations nationwide. Memphis embraced the blues and Beale Street soon became the launching point for many aspiring blues musicians. By the 1920s Beale Street was a showcase for jug bands, who played a mixture of blues, ragtime, and humorous tunes, and were popular among both blacks and whites at medicine shows, juke joints, on riverboats, and at political and civic events.

Mississippi River cities Memphis and St. Louis boomed in population and became major centers for blues music during the northward mass migration of Southern blacks in the early 1900s. The wanderers who left their marks on, and took inspiration from, both cities launched the fusion of blues, gospel, and country music to create not only new forms of the blues, but the earliest forms of rock and roll.

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In 1920, Mamie Smith recorded "Crazy Blues" in New York, arguably the first blues song ever recorded, and its enormous success spawned a new craze for female blues singers and for "race records" featuring black artists. Back in Memphis, Memphis Minnie, one of blues most influential female artists, was discovered on Beale Street by Columbia Records and recorded her first hit, "Bumble Bee," in 1929. Although blues recording slowed down significantly during the Great Depression and early years of World War II, by the early 1940s independent record companies throughout the U.S. began actively recording the blues, while the genre continued to be ignored by the large labels. In Memphis, imminent legends including B.B. King, Howlin' Wolf, and Ike Turner laid down their first tracks with Sam Phillips' Memphis Recording Service. Phillips licensed their recordings to other independent labels, and put them out on his own as well, helping establish his label, Sun Records. ---pbs.org/theblues/roadtrip

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