

BROWNIE MCGHEE SINGS THE BLUES

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FG 3557



PHOTO BY FRANK COLDWELL

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS FG 3557

BROWNIE
MCGHEE
SINGS
THE
BLUES

Memories Of My Trip

How Long

Walkin' Blues

Big Wide World

A Hard Road To Travel

Face In The Crowd

Blues Singer's Prayer

You Don't Know My Mind

A Cheater Can't Win

Poor Boy

Brownie's Blues

I Ain't Gonna Scold Ya

Hard Feeling

Gone But Not Forgotten

©1958 FOLKWAYS RECORDS AND SERVICE CORP.
43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., U.S.A. 10019
Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. P. 58-613

Descriptive Notes are inside pocket

FOLKWAYS FG 3557

BLUES

by

Brownie McGhee



Photo by Frank Coldwell

Every man leaves his home sometime, and I'm a
poor boy and a long, long ways from home.

---Brownie McGhee

SIDE I, Band 1: POOR BOY

Poor boy, a long way from home (3)
Please don't mistreat me, please don't do
me wrong.

Broke and hungry, ragged and dirty
too (3)
Just want to know, can I go home with you.

Good old boy, just been treated
wrong (2)
Good old boy, ain't been treated right,
freezing ground was my bed last
night.

Big bell ringing, little bell's tone,
I'm a lonely, lonely, and a long, long
ways from home.

This here grave yard, a mighty
lonely place (3)
Six feet in the ground, throw dirt in
your face.

Dig my grave with a silver spade, (2)
Baby, see that my grave's dug with a
silver spade,
And let me down with a golden chain.

Well, I ain't good looking, got no
curly hair, (3)
Well, then, me and my God will take
me anywhere.

What makes you baby, hold your head so high,
Tell me baby, what makes you hold your head
so high,
Tell me baby, why you hold your head so
high,
Well, the way you hold it, that's the way
you'll die.

SIDE I, Band 2: MEMORIES OF MY TRIP

This is the way that a song is born. And
while I was on my trip, in England, I
happened to write down a few words, and I
called it "Memories of My Trip". I had such
a wonderful time, I wanted to jot this down,
and so, I'd better sing it for you.

In Germany, I saw Berlin; In London, I saw
Big Ben,

Scotland yard, and a square they called
In Scotland, everything was fine, and the water,
well it drank like wine,
And I want you to know, there's great people
in Glasco.

The band that I traveled with, the boys in
the band, the banjo player,
the drummer, the bass, the
clarinet, the trumpet, and the
trombone.

Call them by their names. And they had a
singer called R. B. Patterson.

Big Gildman, Monty, Pat, and Chris,
How can I forget, memories of my trip.
Give my re---well my regards, and tell all of
my friends like this.

From Birmingham, to Bristol, from Bath, to
Liverpool.

Cheers through the years, cause I love you
one, one and all.

Big Girl, Monty, Pat and Chris,
How can I forget, memories of my trip.
Just give my re---my regards, and tell all
my friends like this,

From Birmingham, to Bristol, from Bath, to
Liverpool,

Cheers through the years, I love you one and all.

SIDE I, Band 3: WALKING BLUES

Well, fellas, I don't feel too good, and I don't
feel too bad. But it's really a sad story. I've
been walking for the last thirty days or more.
I know eventually gonna catch up with me. I
want to tell you really something true. Let me
sing you a couple of choruses.

Paper boy hollering extra, have you heard the
news?

Lord, I just shot the girl I love, Brownie's
got them walking blues,

And I keep on walking, trying to walk my blues
away,

Well, it's I'm so glad, trouble won't last always.
She used to be my sweet milk, but she soured on
me,

Now we can't keep the butter, she ain't sweet
like she used to be,
And I keep on walking, etc.
There's grounds in my coffee, boll weevils all
in my meal,
I've got the tacks in my left shoes, keep sticking
me in my heel,
And I keep on walking, trying to walk my blues
away,
I know the sun's gonna shine, in my back door
some day.
Nobody cares about me, I ain't even got a friend,
Lord, I lost my mother, when will my troubles end,
I keep on walking, etc.
Blues in the morning, blues in the afternoon,
Blues when it's midnight, why do you come so soon?
And I keep on walking, etc.

SIDE I, Band 4: HARD FEELING

Yes, I'll say it, and when a man can't scold a
woman that's a mighty hard feeling, and it's
very unfortunate about a man when he's away,
And here goes a little song, "Ain't That a Hard
Feeling When you're Down and Out".

Well, when I was in prison, trying to do my
time,
I come back home, find my baby crying.

Ain't that a hard feeling, (3)
when you're down and doing bad.

Well, my shirts in the laundry, my pants in the
presser shop,
I ain't got no place to stay, Lord, I'm sleeping
in an old vacant lot.

I only had two friends, in the world since I
was born,
They were my mother and father, now my mother's
dead and gone.

My friends, when they meet me on the street,
I ask them for a dime,
They say, I cannot see you, but I'll see you
some other time.

Well, my sisters and my brothers, say I'm a
drunkard and ain't no good,
They help everybody in town, and all around the
neighborhood.

(Hard, hard feeling).

SIDE I, Band 5: A HARD ROAD TO TRAVEL

(SPOKEN)

What did he say, boy? Huh. Where is she?
That's the way you feel. Hard road to travel,
especially when you're all alone.

Well, I ain't going down, that big road
by myself, (2)
Well, if I can't take you with me, I'm
gonna take somebody else.
We're long and dreary, Lord, and the road
is mighty rough, (2)
Seems like the harder and further I
travel, things get mighty tough.

Well, I'd rather be walking, I don't appreciate
no ride,
Because the one that I love and want, she's
not here by my side.

That's why I ain't going down that big road
all by myself,
Well, if you don't come and go with me, baby,
I'm gonna take somebody else.
Oh, baby, won't you please come and go with me.
Well, if you'll just come and go with me my
little girl,
I'll be as good as good can be.

SIDE I, Band 6: YOU DON'T KNOW MY MIND

You don't know, you don't know, you don't know
my mind, Lord, Lordy,
You don't know, you don't know my mind,
Well, when you see me laughing, laughing just
to keep from crying. (repeat)

Well I asked my baby, if she stand to see me
cry,
She said yes, if you can stand to see me die,
You don't know, etc.

I'm going to the racetrack, see my pony run,
If I win, any money, I'm gonna bring my babe
some.
You don't know, etc.

(I think you understand now).

SIDE I, Band 7: BROWNIE'S BLUES

This little dedication to my father. My mother,
she's dead and gone. My father is past sixty-
five now, and I happened to jot these words down.
I hope they'll always be remembered and never
forgotten. It's called "Brownie's Blues".

Well, my father's getting old, and his hair's
turning white like snow (2)
My mother's dead and gone, I'm doing the best
I can, you know.

It's a hard pill to swallow, when that talk
going around, (2)
After the woman I made so happy, she's after
every man in town.

I can't even get a favor, from a friend I
know in town, (2)
Lord, I even go to the welfare store, and
they'll turn old Brownie down.

I can always tell, when the girl I love is
loving someone else,
I can always tell when my baby's loving
someone else,
She gets mad with me, sleeps every night
by herself,

Umm, Lord, I can't go on like this, (2)
I'd give anything in the world, just to be
where my baby is.

I'm going to change my ways of living, nobody
else is gonna treat me wrong (2)
You know money's gonna be my only lover,
I'll take the highway to be my home

SIDE II, Band 1: FACE IN THE CROWD

Standing on the corner, people rush by me,
Shy ones and sly ones, the humble and the
proud,
How long, must I go on looking, looking for
your face in the crowd.

Walking through the city, the crowded old city,
Thousands of faces, the quiet, the proud,
How long, how long will it take you, to find
my face in the crowd.

People all around me, feel so all alone, just
like a motherless child,
A long ways from home,

If there is a true love, how will I find it,
Glowing like diamonds, all wrapped in a shroud,
How long will it take you, just to find my
face in the crowd.

(repeat chorus and last verse)

SIDE II, Band 2: BLUES SINGER'S PRAYER

(laughs) This is known as the Blues Singer's
Prayer. I usually play this...or pray this...
when I'm by myself, but I'd always rather play
it when there's somebody near me.

Please please, don't you worry, while out of
your town,
Oh, yes, God knows, while I'm out of your town.
Cause the love, the love I have for you darling,
can't be turned around,
Oh, yes, God knows, can't be turned around.
Please, I pray don't mistreat, because I'm young
and wild,
Oh, Lord, I say, because I'm young and wild.
Because I want, I want you to remember, I'm
my mama's baby child,
Oh, yes, I'm my mama's baby child. (Sing to me,
guitar)
I'm gonna write, gonna write a letter, gonna
mail it in the air,
Oh, yes, God knows, gonna mail it in the air.
To let my friends, my friends all know, that
Brownie's got a love somewhere,
Oh, yes, God knows, Brownie's got a woman
somewhere. (Yes, I have)
And I know, and I know my baby, she's got to
love me some,
Um, yes, God knows, she's got to love me some.
(How do you know it?)
She throws her arms, arms all around me, like
a circle round the sun,
Um, yes, God knows, like a circle around the sun.

SIDE II, Band 3: I AIN'T GONNA SCOLD YOU

There's a birth to everything, and there's the
living, and there's the life, and there's the
joy, and there's a cause. But I wrote this
little number. It's from realistic life. It's
something that actually happened to me, and I
said it and I meant it, because everybody knew
about it. And the title of this tune is "Ain't
Gonna Scold You, Because Everybody Knows".

My baby, she don't love me, she don't even care,
I loved you and you hurt me, you wouldn't play
fair and square,

I ain't gonna scold you, because everybody knows,
I once loved you and you hurt me, but I would
never love no more.

My friends, they all told me, and I thought it,
thought it was a joke,
They said, Brownie, there is fire, where you
see a lot of smoke.

But I ain't gonna scold you, cause I don't care
where you go, etc.

I saw you last night darling, you was out with
my friend they call old Jim,
And he wasn't treating you baby, fair but you
were treating him.

Well, I bought you, bought you nice dresses, so
you could look good,
look good everywhere,

I let you live in the beauty parlor, so you
could have nice curly hair.

Tell me, tell me baby, hellfire, tell me
the truth,

Didn't I see you last night, talking in that
old telephone booth.

(No, no, I won't do that)

SIDE II, Band 4: A CHEATER CAN'T WIN

Usually in a man's life he always wants to sing,
or talk about the things that he has done, or
the things that he's doing. Yeah, I used to
gamble a little bit, but I wasn't such a good
gambler after I met fellows better than me. So
I happened to write down a few words about a
"Cheater Can't Win".

Well, I used to be a dealer, and I was also a
cheater too, (2)
Lord, I found out the winner's got the best
hands, what else could I do.
I placed the aces on the bottom, and then I
walked those cards around,
Well, I took kings in my hands, I was the
loser when the deal went down,
Stealing will not pay, Lord, and a cheater
cannot win.
Stealing will not pay, and a cheater cannot
win, (2)
You may think you are the winner, in this life
you are the loser in the end.
(Sing to me, guitar)
Cheating was a habit, but winning was all I
craved, (2)
Lord, I tried to play fair, I found out I
was a cheating slave.
Cheating will not pay, and a cheater cannot
win,
Stealing will not pay, and a cheater cannot
win,
You may think you are the winner, but you are
the loser in the end.

SIDE II, Band 5: BIG WIDE WORLD

I don't have to worry about what I eat and drink,
neither the clothes I wear,
Love is a burden, nobody wants to share.
Not in this big wide world, Lord that's all I'm
thinking of,
Love's greatest gift to mankind, suffering for
the need of love.
(second & succeeding chorus, Mother natures
greatest etc.)

Well, the deers they have places, squirrels go
from tree to tree,
I'm out in this big wide world, nobody cares
for me,
Out in the big, etc.

Well, the deers they got mates, squirrels go
from tree to tree,
The hummingbirds sing sweet songs, I'm lonely as
a man can be,
Out here in this big, etc.

Well, I never dreamed in my life, man could be
treated so unkind,
All these fruit trees around me, and ain't
nary one of them mine,
Out here in this big, etc. (Yes, yes)

Well, you know I went to Little Rock, so tall and
so fair,
Fell down on my knees and I began to say this
prayer,
Lord, out here in this, etc.

Well, you know the good book says do unto others,
as you'd have them to do unto you,
But turn that same page over, it means do the
same thing too,
Out in this, etc.

SIDE II, Band 6: HOW LONG

This is a number I've always liked, and it seems
like the people likes it too. And I've been
playing it around on concerts, here, and there
and everywhere. It's by an old friend of mine.
And it's called How Long.

How long, baby, how long, has that evening train
been gone,
How long, how long, baby how long.
Well, if I could holler, well like a mountain
jack,
Go up on the mountain, call my baby back,
For how long, how long, baby how long.
I can hear a whistle, can't see no train,
Deep down in my heart, there's an aching pain,
For how long, how long, baby how long,
Going to the pawn shop, put my watch in pawn,
Don't want it to tell me, baby, that you've
been gone,
For how long, how long, baby how long.
I can see that green grass, growing on a hill,
I ain't seen no green grass, on a dollar bill,
For how long, how long, baby how long.
Well, a ten dollar bill looks like a window
shade to me,
A twenty dollar bill baby, something I don't
never see.
For how long, how long, baby, how long.
I ain't got no money, nor ticket on the train,
But I would ride the blinds, baby, to be with
you again,
For how long, how long, baby, how long.
(How long, now?)

SIDE II, Band 7: GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

This is a number that I hope that you know,
and you that don't know, will try to consider.
The death of a good friend of mine that has
not been too long, and I'll just try to do a
few words. It's none other than Big Bill
Broonzy. He's gone but Not Forgotten. And
I want to do a little chant for Bill and his
friends, from Arkansas to Chicago, from the
Dominion of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

Well, he's gone but not forgotten, Big Bill,
he's gone away (2)
Well, he heard a voice calling, and he knew he
could not stay.
Well, he's gone but not forgotten, I'm gonna
tell you the reason why, (2)
Well, Big Bill is gone, but his songs will
never die.
Big Bill's got a million friends, North, East,
South and West (2)
Well, you know it's hard to tell, hard to tell,
which place he was loved the best.
The last letter I got from Big Bill, friends
I was in London town (2)
He said Brown, I'm from the hospital, but
my eyesight is failing now.
Well, I never will forget the day, he said
it's alright to sing my songs (2)
Bill, I never will forget, I'll always try
to carry your business on.
(How do you play it, boy?)
Farewell, so long, farewell old pal of
mine, (2)
I'll have to end, end my song, cause I'm
almost crying now.