

## LP 1 Side 1

1. *Every Day I Have The Blues* (5:01)
2. *When My Heart Beats Like A Hammer* (2:44)
3. *Bad Luck Soul* (2:15)
4. *You've Been An Angel* (2:35)
5. *Get Out Of Here* (2:37)
6. *My Sometime Baby* (3:03)
7. *Good Man Gone Bad* (2:42)

## LP 1 Side 2

1. *Someday* (2:28)
2. *You Done Lost Your Good Thing Now* (3:21)
3. *You Know I Go For You* (2:34)
4. *Please Accept My Love* (2:28)
5. *Lonely* (2:11)
6. *Days Of Old* (2:25)
7. *Bad Luck* (2:52)

## LP 2 Side 1

1. *3 O'Clock Blues* (3:02)
2. *Fishin' After Me* (2:27)
3. *Don't Cry Anymore* (2:13)
4. *The Woman I Love* (2:55)
5. *Going Down Slow* (2:47)
6. *Sweet Little Angel* (3:09)
7. *I Am* (2:14)

## LP 2 Side 2

1. *Bad Case Of Love* (2:14)
2. *I Wonder* (2:43)
3. *Mean Ole Frisco* (2:27)
4. *Sweet Sixteen, Pt. 1* (2:56)
5. *Sweet Sixteen, Pt. 2* (3:11)
6. *Worry Worry* (2:37)
7. *Quit My Baby* (2:28)

## LP 3 Side 1

1. *Sugar Mama* (2:38)
2. *Things Are Not The Same* (3:05)
3. *My Reward* (2:09)
4. *Be Careful With A Fool* (2:45)
5. *Don't Look Now, But I've Got The Blues* (2:38)
6. *Walking Dr. Bill* (3:38)
7. *Gonna Miss You Around Here* (2:48)

## LP 3 Side 2

1. *Hully Gully Twist* (2:51)
2. *Lonely Lover's Plea* (2:40)
3. *Peace Of Mind* (2:11)
4. *Early In The Morning* (2:35)
5. *Time To Say Goodbye* (2:03)
6. *Dark Is The Night (Part I)* (2:33)
7. *Partin' Time* (2:56)

Undisputed blues royalty, Riley 'Blues Boy' King made his way into the world on 16 September 1925, at Itta Bena, Mississippi. As a youth, King sang in church and on the streets, though he spent more time picking cotton and driving tractors in order to survive. But music offered a better way of life, and at the age of 23 he quit Mississippi and headed for Memphis, Tennessee to appear on Sonny Boy Williamson's radio show. He soon had his own show and, by 1949, was cutting singles for the Nashville-based Bullet label.

Influenced by such as Lowell Fulson, Roy Brown, T-Bone Walker, Louis Jordan and Nat Cole, along with jazz heroes like Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt, Riley established himself not only as a blues singer of substance but also a guitar-player of outstanding quality - he and his guitar, which he dubbed 'Lucille', proving a formidable combination.

He claimed that he once rushed back into a burning club in order to retrieve his guitar, which he had left behind. "The next morning we found two men trapped in one of the rooms, burned to death," King told writer Jeff Tamarkin. "We discovered that the two guys were arguing over a cook - a lady named Lucille. I never did meet her, but I named my guitar Lucille to remind myself never to do anything like that again."

This 3LP compilation documents B.B.King's breakthrough years, when, initially signed to the Bihari Brothers' RPM label, he unleashed a torrent of superb recordings that would establish him as the world's most famous blues singer-guitarist. There was no messin', right from the start. A version of Lowell Fulson's 1948 hit *3 O'Clock Blues*, recorded at the black YMCA, rocketed to the very top of the R&B charts in 1952.

Throughout 1953-54 the flow of hits continued. Then, in 1955, King opted to record a version of *Nobody Loves Me* - a 1948 song by Memphis Slim, that in turn owed much to an original by Pinetop Sparks. Re-titled *Every Day I Have The Blues*, it made a real impact on B.B.'s audiences - so much so that King made it his theme song. There'd be further RPM chart hits, such as *Bad Luck* and *Sweet Little Angel* (both 1956); followed by a similar array of successes - including *Sweet Sixteen Part 1* and *Partin' Time* (both 1960) - following his switch to the Kent label in 1958.

But King was still performing for a specific audience. During 1957 he gave an interview in which he explained: "We don't play for white people. Of course, a few whites come to hear us on one-night stands but they are so few we never run into segregation problems. I'm not saying we won't play for whites because I don't know what the future holds. Our music is blues, straight from the Delta. I believe we'll make it on that."

There were attempts to broaden his appeal: tracks such as *Hully Gully Twist* was enjoyable, though ultimately unsuccessful, stabs at the teen dance market. On a more sophisticated level, he'd sometimes step out from his brass-boosted, almost big-band environment, and cut sides with strings in order to widen his audience. But despite playing around 300 live dates a year and providing some of the finest blues music ever recorded, King remained unappreciated by white audiences until the late '60s.

During 1969, B.B. and his band toured the States in the company of the Rolling Stones. It was during this period, he revealed: "All of a sudden kids started coming up to me saying 'You're the greatest blues guitarist in the world.' And I'd say 'Who told you that?' And they'd say Mike Bloomfield or Eric Clapton. It's due to these youngsters that I owe my new popularity."

In 1970 B.B. became the first bluesman to appear on *The Tonight Show*, and in October that year, over 70 million people witnessed his performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.

International concerts followed, taking him to Europe, Australia and Japan; and he was in demand for advertising campaigns promoting Pepsi Cola and Cutty Sark whisky. Caesars Palace in Las Vegas beckoned, along with recording sessions with Stevie Wonder, Van Morrison, Willie Nelson, U2 and others.

When illness struck, King was forced to perform most of his act seated. But the power never waned and B.B. remained a giant in his field right up until his death in May 2015. He made scores of remarkable recordings during his career - but the ones on this compilation represent that marvellous moment in time when Riley King and Lucille combined to make their indelible mark on the history of the blues.

Glenn Matthews