

Robert Johnson

Robert Leroy Johnson influenced the Blues more than any other Musician in history. He was born in Hazelhurst, Mississippi on May 8, 1911. Little is known of his early life and no photos of Robert existed or were known until 1980. Legends and local Mississippi Delta stories proliferate about Robert Johnson. One local legend tells of Robert selling his soul to the Devil in exchange for his guitar expertise. His recording, Crossroads lends some credence to the legend.

Robert starting playing the guitar while a teenager and learned Delta Blues guitar playing from such legends as Charley Patton and Son House.

Robert Johnson was married twice; one of his wives died in childbirth. His music style was dark and contained many references to double dealing women and the devil. He traveled through Mississippi and Arkansas playing mostly in Juke Joints, Country Gatherings, and Levee Camps.

Robert's songs were recorded only twice. Both times were with Columbia Records in 1936 and again in 1937. Much of his music was forgotten until the Blues revival of the 1960s.

Many of Robert Johnson's songs have been re-recorded by modern artists such as the Rolling Stones, who recorded Love in vain and Stop Breaking Down.

Robert died mysteriously on August 16, 1938 in Greenwood, Mississippi. The most popular story has it that he was poisoned by the jealous husband of a woman he was stepping out with. Another story says that Robert was cursed by Black Magic and spent his last hours barking like a dog.

Sources:

[Encyclopedia Britannica](#)

[Atlanta Music Group \(AMG\)](#)

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