

I'm going where the Southern Cross the Dog ... Many early blues singers used variations on the phrase. The expression refers to the place in Moorhead, Mississippi, where the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley rail line intersected with the Southern rail line. Many southerners referred to the Yazoo and Mississippi line as the 'Yellow Dog' or simply the 'Dog'

W. C. Handy wrote in his autobiography of the experience of stopping at the railroad station at Tutwiler, Mississippi around 1903, and coming across, as he described it, a lean, loose-jointed Negro who was plucking at a guitar. His clothes were in rags; his feet peeped out of his shoes. His face had on it some of the sadness of the ages.

As he played, he pressed a knife on the strings ... Quote: The effect was unforgettable. His song, too, struck me instantly... The singer repeated the line (Going' where the Southern cross' the Dog) three times, accompanying himself on the guitar with the strangest music I had ever heard. Unquote



The man at the train station is rumoured to have been Henry Sloan...An elder from Dockery Plantation that taught Charley Patton to play.. The Peavine Railroad went from Dockery to 'Where the Southern Cross the Dog a few miles away to connect to all points North and West.



There is a version of the song that WC Handy heard that day and that is readily available...

Blues singers such as Charley Patton, Robert Johnson and Willie Brown all apparently learnt how to play from Henry; and recorded the song in various forms; this is probably why his influence is so recognised. The mystery of Henry deepens as we learn that in 1917 he boarded a train to Chicago, and was never seen again.