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# Trumpet Records: Diamonds on Farish Street (American Made Music Series)

*Marc W. Ryan*

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Elmore James, Sonny Boy Williamson, Little Milton, and James Waller-all of these musical powerhouses furthered their recording careers at a little label on once-thriving Farish Street, the historic black district of Jackson, Mississippi.

These blues, gospel, and R&B all-stars are featured in *Trumpet Records: Diamonds on Farish Street*, the detailed story of this thriving recording label of the mid-1950s.

What caused it to spring to life in Jackson? It began in 1949, when a white woman named Lillian McMurry and her husband purchased a hardware store on Farish Street, then a location on the boundary between the city's white and black business and entertainment districts. While taking inventory of the original stock and renovating the building, she discovered a stack of unsold records, including Wynonie Harris's recording of "All She Wants to Do Is Rock." Curious, Mrs. McMurry played it on the store's record player and became so inspired that she decided to record more music like it. Thus was born Trumpet Records.

The life of the studio was brief, and this book, in careful detail, covers its short history (1951-1956) and includes accounts of recording sessions with its roster of gospel groups, blues musicians, and R&B singers, almost all of them African American. The book also documents McMurry's attempts to fuse country and African American popular music into what would become rock 'n' roll.

From interviews, archival recordings, company documents, reviews, photographs, and the assistance of the founder, Marc W. Ryan has compiled the fascinating history of this short-lived but influential company.

This new edition of a work recognized in 1993 by the Association for Recorded Sound Collections features an updated discography and bibliography, extensive new documentation, and additional insights into the operations of Trumpet Records.

Marc W. Ryan is an independent music scholar living in North San Juan, California. His work has been published in *Rolling Stone*, *Discoveries*, and *Blues and Rhythm*.

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