In March 2016 Billy Bragg and Joe Henry, guitars in hand, boarded a Los Angeles-bound train at Chicago’s Union Station looking to reconnect with the culture of American railroad travel and the music it inspired. Winding along 2,728 miles of track over four days, the pair recorded classic railroad songs in waiting rooms and at trackside while the train paused to pick up passengers.

mbodayle, musiccitymike.net:

"Brit" Billy Bragg and "Yank" Joe Henry have recently collaborated on one of the most unique and interesting musical projects in recent memory. Modernizing the concept of "field recordings," Bragg and Henry used several American railroad stations as their "fields." Their exploits travelling and recording at the stops along Amtrak’s Texas Eagle railway route from Chicago to Los Angeles are well-documented (click here) for their new record, Shine A Light, which was released on this day (September 23, 2016). At this late Friday afternoon performance at Grimey's record store, Bragg prefaced "The L&N Don’t Stop Here Anymore" with reference to its appropriateness to the current state of the Union Station. It’s a given that neither Bragg nor Henry have the vocal skills to be on The Voice. But, their raw-sounding vocals perfectly suit this collection of traditional songs written during hard times in America. Harmony-wise it was far from the Louvin Brothers, but that didn’t seem to matter, although they did sound their best when one took the lead over the other. As with any Billy Bragg performance, what happens between the songs tends to matter as much as the music itself.

+ + + +

Thanks to mbodayle for sharing the show at Dime.
Front cover picture by Dave H, posted on Twitter - Thanks!
Back cover pictures posted at musiccitymike.net.

Lineage:
Recorded with Roland Edirol using SP-CMC-8 mics with STC-9000 Preamp.
Track separation with CDWave.
0A. (soundcheck) 9:39
0B. (intro) 1:32
01. Railroad Bill 3:36
02. The L and N Dont Stop Here Anymore 5:55
03. Rock Island Line 4:33
04. In the Pines 4:10
05. Gentle on My Mind 4:26
06. The Midnight Special 5:23
07. Tonight Ill Be Staying Here With You 3:33
08. (outro) 1:39
45 mins

Billy Bragg - vocals and acoustic guitar
Joe Henry - vocals and acoustic guitar