

Willie And The Poor Boys - Willie And The Poor Boys (1985)

Written by bluesever
Friday, 14 July 2017 15:46 -

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1. *Baby Please Don't Go* - 2:38 2. *Can You Hear Me* - 3:13 3. *These Arms of Mine* - 3:32
4. *Revenue Man (White Lightning)* - 2:37 5. *You Never Can Tell* - 3:55 6. *Slippin' and Slidin'* -
2:33 7. *Saturday Night* - 2:50 8. *Let's Talk it Over* - 2:59 9. *All Night Long* - 2:31 10. *Chicken
Shack Boogie* - 3:13 11. *Sugar Bee* - 3:12 12. *Poor Boy Boogie* - 3:27 Bass, Vocals,
Producer – Bill Wyman Drums – Charlie Watts Guitar, Vocals – Andy Fairweather-Low, Mickey
Gee Keyboards, Vocals – Geraint Watkins + Chris Rea, Henry Spinetti, Jimmy Page, Kenney
Jones, Paul Rodgers, Ray Cooper, Steve Gregory, Terry Williams, Willie Garnett

The scenario has a familiar ring to it. Some English rock stars – including a former member of Led Zeppelin – assemble in a studio and record a batch of old rock & roll classics. Sounds like the Honeydrippers, right? Well, no, it's Willie and the Poor Boys, an ad hoc band put together by Rolling Stones bassist Bill Wyman.

"When the Honeydrippers thing came out, it was a bit of a shock," said Wyman, whose Willie and the Poor Boys LP was released in May. "I thought, 'Oh, no, beaten to it.' But then when I heard it, it wasn't quite the same thing that we were doing.

"I've always been fascinated by the music that happened between the big-band era, the Forties, and rock & roll in '54 and '55," Wyman continued, taking a break from the Stones' recording sessions in Paris. "Although everyone says rock & roll started with Bill Haley or Elvis Presley in '54, I was always quite amazed by 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' coming out in '52 by Lloyd Price. So I searched out some stuff and found people like Amos Milburn, who did 'Chicken Shack Boogie.' I thought it would be great to do an album of that kind of material one day."

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That day came last November when Wyman and a group of his pals congregated at Jimmy Page's studio, the Sol. There, this aggregation – featuring, at various times, Page, Charlie Watts, Kenney Jones and Paul Rodgers – bashed out more than an album's worth of songs, including "Chicken Shack Boogie," Chuck Berry's "You Never Can Tell," Roy Brown's "Saturday Night" and Little Richard's "Slippin' and Slidin'."

The project wasn't done solely for fun. All profits from sales of the LP and fifty percent of the profits from sales of the half-hour video will go to the American branch of Action Research into Multiple Sclerosis (ARMS), which multiple sclerosis victim Ronnie Lane helped establish.

Wyman isn't the only Stone who's been busy with an outside project. "I didn't like it as much as I thought I would," Wyman said of Mick Jagger's first solo effort. "I thought he'd be a lot more adventurous. He didn't stretch out as far as I thought he might have."

When the making of Jagger's album and videos took longer than planned, sessions for the Stones' next LP were delayed, causing reports of some tension within the band. "The timing could have been slightly better," Wyman admitted, adding that in one phone conversation Keith Richards told Jagger, "Save some songs. Don't use them all."

Wyman claims all is well with the Stones now. "There's a great atmosphere," he says of the recording sessions. The group "ran off" demos of more than thirty songs, from which an album's worth of material has been selected. If the record is finished by the end of summer – and that's a big if the Stones could be touring by the fall.

Meanwhile, Wyman said there was a chance the Poor Boys would play some dates in Europe. "I'll have to learn to be a bit dominant onstage," said the bassist, who's known for his less-than-exciting stage presence. "I mean, people might just come for the curiosity value, you know: 'Billy Wyman's actually moving these days. Your favorite undertaker has started to walk. Where's it all going to end?'" --- Michael Goldberg, rollingstone.com

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