

Chicago - The Blues Yesterday Volume 13

Written by bluesever

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01. *Six weeks old blues n°1* 02. *Six weeks old blues n°2* 03. *God knows I can't help it* 04. *You'll work down to me someday* 05. *Against my will* John Henry Barbee (William George Tucker) – vocals, guitar Willie Bee James – guitar, bass Chicago, 8 September 1938
06. *I know she didn't love me* 07. *Baby I need your love (That ain't it)* 08. *Gonna lose your mind (Tell me baby)*
John Henry Barbee - vocals, guitar Chicago, 1963
09. *Early in the morning* 10. *No pickin' no pullin'* 11. *Six weeks old blues*
John Henry Barbee - vocals, guitar Homesick James – guitar Washboard Sam – washboard Willie Dixon – percussion Chicago, 26 March 1964
12. *Katy Fly* 13. *Big boat* 14. *Only boy child* 15. *Lonesome mama* 16. *Mean actin' mama* 17. *Stuff stomp*
Elijah C. Jones – vocals, guitar Yank Rachell – mandolin John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson – harmonica Aurora, 13 March 1938
18. *Shake'em on down* 19. *Sad home blues* 20. *TNT blues* 21. *Race horse blues*
Elijah C. Jones (as Kid Slim) – vocals, guitar Chicago, 1949
22. *Money taking woman n°1* 23. *Money taking woman n°2*
Johnny Young – vocals, mandolin Johnny Williams – guitar, vocals Chicago, 1947
24. *My baby walked out on me* 25. *Let me ride your mule*
Johnny Young – vocals, mandolin Johnny Williams – guitar Snooky Pryor – harmonica Chicago, Ill. December 1948

For this 13th volume of our ever popular "Chicago./The Blues Yesterday" series, let's go back to the crucial years that between the late 1930's and the late 1940's saw major changes in the Chicago blues.

John Henry Barbee, born William George Tucker on 14th November 1905 at Henning (Tn) learned to play guitar at a very early age and played for tips a little bit everywhere around Memphis, meeting Sleepy John Estes, John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson and Big Joe Williams

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with whom he toured the South for awhile. After a brawl (c. 1937) in which William George shot a white man, he fled to Chicago and took the name of John Henry Barbee to avoid any criminal search. He recorded four wonderful tracks for Vocalion in 1938 and was for a long time a familiar musician of the famous Maxwell Street Market, appearing very often with Moody and Floyd Jones. He was largely living outside music when Willie Dixon rediscovered him in 1963, persuading him to play again in folk clubs as an acoustic solo bluesman. Barbee was part of the American Folk Blues Festival 1964, recorded an excellent album for the Danish Storyville label but after a couple of stage appearances, Barbee felt very ill, was diagnosed with a severe cancer and flew back to the USA. He was quickly involved in a fatal car accident and was jailed in Chicago where he died on 9th November 1964.

We don't know anything about singer and guitarist Elijah C. Jones who was brought to the studios in 1938 by Yank Rachell, recording some titles and resurfacing in 1949 for another (at that time unissued) session where he was billed as Kid Slim.

Johnny Young (1st January 1918 in Vicksburg (Ms)) is of course well known by all the blues buffs around the world as one of the very few Post War blues mandolin player and as a true pioneer of the new Chicago blues. Young was also a familiar musician on the Maxwell Street Market and waxed a couple of sides for tiny labels in 1947-48. Unfortunately, he would have to wait until the 1960's to record again but this time quite extensively thanks to Pete Welding who brought him very often in the studios. After his remarkable contribution to Sam Charters' The blues/Today series, Young became a favorite of festivals and tours in the USA and Europe, recording many first rate LP's, particularly the two for Arhoolie. He was a staunch member of pianist Bob Riedy's excellent band when he died from a heart attack in Chicago, 18 April 1974. ---Gérard Herzhaft, jukegh.blogspot.com

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