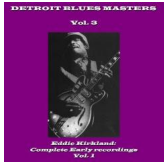


Detroit Blues Masters Vol. 3 - Eddie Kirkland

Written by bluesever

Monday, 30 November 2015 16:54 -

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01. *It's time for lovin' to be done* 02. *That's all right* Eddie Kirkland – vocals, guitar John Lee Hooker – guitar, vocals Detroit, Mi. 1952
03. *Please don't think I'm nose* 04. *No shoes I & II* 05. *I mistreated a woman* 06. *Time for my lovin to be done*
Eddie Kirkland – vocals, guitar Roy Brown – drums Cincinnati, Oh. 23 July 1953
07. *I need you baby* 08. *I must have done somebody wrong*
Eddie Kirkland – vocals, guitar Johnny Hooks – tenor saxophone Joe Dooms – piano Jimmy Parner – drums Detroit, Mi. 1959
09. *Train done gone* 10. *You know I love you* 11. *Blood on your hands* 12. *Love you 'til the day I die*
Eddie Kirkland – vocals, guitar, harmonica + band Detroit, Mi. 1960
13. *So pretty baby* 14. *I tried* 15. *I am so tired (Oh baby please)* 16. *Back bone*
Eddie Kirkland – vocals, guitar The Falcons – vocals + band Detroit, Mi. Marc 1961

Although he has always said that he was born August, 16th 1923 (or 1928) in Kingston (Jamaica), Eddie Kirkland, according to his relatives, would be in fact born in Dothan (Alabama) from a very young girl (of 12 years) that Eddie had not really ever known. He was raised by a foster grandmother who was always listening to Gospel and Country Music through the Grand Ole Opry radio programme, infusing love of the music to the boy.

At a very early age, Eddie works full time in the Sugar Girls Medicine Show first as a handyman and, thanks to the other members of the show who taught him several instruments, more and more as a singer, entertainer and musician. Eddie often told that his striking showmanship came from those medicine show's years. Unfortunately the show (like many others) doesn't survive to the War and Eddie has to work in the industry, first in Indiana and then in Detroit, Michigan. With his show business experience, Kirkland is soon very active in the thriving Detroit blues and R&B scene. In the early 50's, he meets John Lee Hooker who is becoming the blues star of Motor City. Hooker who admired very much the twin guitars of Memphis Minnie and Little

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Son Joe took Eddie with him and the subsequent years saw Eddie playing second guitar with Hooker and recording some incredible tight guitar duos with his leader and some of the best tracks waxed by Hooker at that time. He has also the opportunity to record sporadically for some local labels, his music much more "modern" than Hooker's with a voice strongly influenced by Gospel singers.

This partnership with John Lee, although very successful musically, didn't entirely satisfy Kirkland who said he suffered to stay in the shadow of the bigger name. It also seems that at the end of the 50's, Eddie was involved in a murder case and was in jail for three years.

Anyway, the early 60's find our man in New York City, trying his luck in the R&B clubs, adding a lot of new sounds (like Soul) to his music. This is how he happens to record in 1961 a first-rate album for the Prestige label (in fact its subsidiary Tru Sound) backed by the powerful King Curtis and Billy Butler band. Even if Eddie would later record several excellent albums for labels like Trix, JSP, Evidence or Deluge, this particular LP stands like a true masterpiece. Unfortunately, the music is then judged too soul-oriented for the public of the blues revival whose the Prestige label is chiefly aimed at and the album doesn't sell at all.

Eddie leaves then New York and settles in Macon (Georgia) where, as usual, he plays in the local clubs. One night, Otis Redding, a then rising star, catches his show and takes him in his band. Eddie plays guitar and harmonica with Otis, sings a couple of songs in his shows and has the opportunity to record for the Volt label some commercially successful 45s, The Hawg even making its way into the R&B Top 100 in 1965.

After the untimely death of Redding, the 70's are very lean years for Eddie. The producer and researcher Pete Lowry finds Eddie, persuades him to try his luck as a solo country bluesman, finds him some good gigs and festival appearances and brings him in the studios for two excellent albums for his own label Trix, Front and Center, a very good acoustic solo effort and The Devil and other blues Demons with a small band. Those two are well worth listening to.

Despite all this, Eddie will have to wait until the 1990's to gain his due recognition as a major artist, taking by storm audiences in the USA and Europe, recording several CDs and even becoming some kind of an aged rock star with his association with the group Foghat!

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Despite his age and faltering health, Eddie Kirkland was still musically active when he died from a car accident on February, 27th, 2011 near Tampa in Florida. ---G rard Herzhaft, jukegh.blogspot.com

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