

Who backed The Beatles? (8)

Nigel Whalley:

The son of Chief Superintendent Harold Whalley, head of the Liverpool police's "A" Division, Nigel was a close childhood friend of John Lennon. They became friends when they were just five years old. As a boy he lived on Vale Road, Liverpool, very close to John Lennon's house on Menlove Avenue. Needless to say, he too became a member of the close-knit group of friends led by John in which he was known as "Whalloggs". Later on, when John formed his first skiffle group, Nigel was a pupil at the Bluecoat Grammar School. This, though, did not prevent Whalley from joining The Quarry Men.

He started off playing the tea-chest bass. One day, however, the group was involved in an incident which would change Nigel's status: One night, when the members of The Quarry Men were travelling home by bus from one of their gigs, two Woolton thugs (Teddy boys), Rod and Willo, approached them and threatened to beat the boys up. The Quarry Men immediately leapt off the bus and fled, leaving their tea-chest on the road. After this, Nigel became the manager of their skiffle group, and Len Garry took over on the bass. As manager, Whalley had some publicity cards printed for The Quarry Men, which read:

"Country, Western, Rock & 'n' Roll, Skiffle, The Quarry Men and Open for engagements.

After finishing school, Whalley became a golf professional at the Lee Park Golf Club, although he continued to manage the affairs of The Quarry Men. At the golf club Nigel met and played golf with Dr. Sytner, whose son Alan opened the Cavern Club. Through this contact, Nigel arranged for his group to play at the Cavern on 7 August 1957. They began this, their first gig at the Cavern, with the Del Vikings number "Come Go With Me". John followed this with the numbers "Hound Dog" and "Blue Suede Shoes". Sytner, standing alongside, quickly shouted out: "Cut out the bloody (?) [sic] rock" [sic]. It's worth noting that McCartney wasn't with the group on this occasion because he was on holiday. When Paul returned, Whalley briefly continued as manager of the group because McCartney, believing he was good for the group, convinced the others that he should stay.

On 15 July 1958 Nigel went to see John, but he was wasn't in. He saw Mimi talking to John's mother, Julia Lennon, at the gate. Nigel walked up the road with Julia for around 200 yards and then, having said goodbye to her, continued up Menlove Avenue. At the same time Julia began crossing the road. Nigel heard the scream of brakes and, turning round quickly, saw Julia's body flying into the air in front of the car ... Julia had been run over by a police officer, who was later prosecuted. Nigel attended court as a witness. The police officer was acquitted ...

When he reached 18, Whalley left Liverpool and went on to work at Wrotham Heath Golf club, Borough Green, Kent.

Lou Walters:

His real name was Walter Eymond. Friends also called him Wally. He was bass guitarist and vocalist with "Rory Storm & The Hurricanes, then a leading group in Liverpool, of which Ringo Starr was also a member. In 1960, when the "Hurricanes" were in Hamburg at the same time as the Beatles, this was in October when the Beatles were playing at the Indra, Lou went to see them perform. He later went up on stage and sang a few numbers with them. Allan Williams, who was there at the club, was intrigued by Walters's singing style, and there and then suggested to Lou that he record a disc with the Beatles, who would back him.

Arrangements were made for the recording session to take place in Hamburg, at the local Akustik Studio at Kirchenallee 57, opposite the central railway station. On the day of the recording session, 15 October 1960, Pete Best wasn't with the Beatles because he was ill. His place at the drums was taken by the "Hurricane" Ringo Starr! All this took place by chance, but it was the first time the future Fab Four would play together. By the way, after the session, the Beatles informed Allan Williams that they'd like to record a few more numbers with Ringo but without Lou. Williams, however, who had already shelled out £10 (!) for the previous recording, was unwilling to spend any more money and therefore turned them down.

We know there are several acetate copies of this historic recording, one for each of the performers. Williams also had his own copy, but failed to hold on to it. Entering one of London's many pubs, he sat down and had a fair amount to drink, and left it behind there ...

We should add that this recording has never appeared on any of the countless bootlegs.

Andy White: He

is the session drummer whose playing we hear on the second recording of the song "Love Me Do", which took place on 11 September 1962. Ringo Starr took part in the first recording of this song. However, George Martin was unhappy with his drumming, which is why he invited the experienced Andy White to the studio for the second recording of the song. By the way, George Martin was absent from the second recording session, which meant Ron Richards was in charge of everything that went on at the studio on that occasion. He was he who offered Ringo the opportunity to play the tambourine during

the recording. Richards also re-recorded "P.S. I Love You" with Andy White on the drums. Ringo "shook" the maracas. "Love Me Do" was recorded eight times (!), and Andy White was paid just over £57 for his efforts.

It's worth noting that two versions were released: One with Andy White and the other with Ringo Starr. The version of the single with Ringo playing the drums (4 September 1962) was published in the form of a single, with a red label. And on the Beatles' "Please Please Me" album we hear the Andy White version of "Love Me Do". Later, in April 1963, another single containing "Love Me Do", again with Andy White on the drums, was released with a black label. White played in Vic Lewis's Orchestra, and was married to Lyn Cornell, a member of the then popular Liverpool group The Vernons Girls, and later played in the BBC Radio Orchestra in Glasgow.