

SNW 301 Barnacle Bill

vocal by: Al Green

Release Date: (vinyl) 1989 / 08 (MP3) – 2003 / 12

Singing Call MS-18

Hanhurst's Best Seller listing
(August 1989) – unplaced

ORIGINAL MUSIC DETAILS: WRITERS: Carson J Robinson and Frank Luther
PUBLISHERS: Southern Music Pub Co. Inc. OBO Peer International Corporation

Original artist: Louis Jordan's Elks Rendezvous Band

This is really a traditional tune that was written by Carson J Robinson and Frank Luther. It was released in 1927 and is based upon an earlier song named “Bollochly Bill”, which in turn is based upon an even earlier song named “Abel Brown”. The song originates in the mid-to-late 1800s and has quite a few “bawdy” lyrics in some versions!

When Al Green – a very accomplished caller from the U.K. – visited Sweden and suggested re-recording the Square Dance version, Stefan and Ingvar were quick to take up the idea. The tune had been previously released (more than once) as a Square and was very popular – especially for use at “Square Dance Parties” (or – as we used to call them “One Night Stands”). The essential part of this composition is that it runs at two different tempos – “slow and graceful” and “fast and furious”! It really is a fun record and it can be used at any special party event – with great effect!

Additional Lyrics:

Who's that knocking at my door?
Who's that knocking at my door?
Who's that knocking at my door?
Said the fair young maiden!

Well, it's only me from over the sea,
Said Barnacle Bill the Sailor,
I'm all lit up like a Christmas tree,
Said Barnacle Bill the Sailor.
I'll sail the sea until I croak,
Drink my whiskey, swear, and smoke,
But I can't swim a bloody stroke,
Said Barnacle Bill the Sailor

Tell me when we soon shall wed,
Tell me when we soon shall wed,
Tell me when we soon shall wed,
Said the fair young maiden

Uh-uh!
I got me a wife in every port,
Said Barnacle Bill the Sailor.
The handsome gals is what I court,
Said Barnacle Bill the Sailor.
With my false heart and flattering tongue
I courts 'em all both old and young,
I courts 'em all, but marries none,
Said Barnacle Bill the Sailor.

Where, When and Who produced the music:

In 1986, Bengt “Bula” Ericsson, from Katrineholm in Sweden, joined the Sting team. Ingvar Pettersson and Stefan Sidholm asked Bula to assist them with the production of the second batch of tunes and he remained an essential part of the Sting and Snow production-process for many years.

As a part of Bula's involvement with Sting and Snow, Bula set-up some music sessions, to “try out” other groups and investigate ways to expand the repertoire of the company.

The musicians who feature on this recording were some of those that Bula had auditioned, who seemed particularly appropriate for this type of song.

We will always be indebted to Bula for all that he did to help the labels grow; thanks Bula!

Bula is now part owner of Marble Records and is still very active in producing Square Dance music.