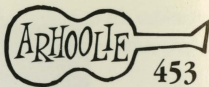


L.C. "GOOD ROCKIN'" ROBINSON

"Mojo in My Hand"



1. MOJO IN MY HAND (3:10)
2. UPS AND DOWNS (6:15)
3. PINETOP'S BOOGIE WOOGIE (3:30)
(Joe Perkins-Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
4. ACROSS THE BAY BLUES (3:45)
5. L.C.'S SHUFFLE (2:40)
6. CAN'T BE A WINNER (4:55)
(James Madison-Tradition Music Co./BUG Music)
7. I'VE GOT TO GO (4:00)
8. STOP AND JUMP (2:30)
9. SHE GOT IT FROM THE START (5:35)
10. THINGS' SO BAD IN CALIFORNIA (3:55)
11. NEW TRAIN TIME (3:15)
12. I'M JUST A COUNTRY BOY (5:04)
13. L.C.'S THEME (2:12)
14. JESUS, DID I KNOW (2:36)
15. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO
WITHOUT THE LORD (4:38)
16. SOMETHING MIGHTY SWEET ABOUT
THE LORD (3:08)
17. IDA RED (4:00)
18. L.C.'S BLUES (3:16)
19. SWEET JESUS (3:05)
Total time: 71:47

L. C. Robinson – vocals, guitar, fiddle & or steel guitar on all selections.

6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, & 19 previously unissued, all others originally released on Arhoolie LP 1062.

Session # I: (#1– #6) with **James "Pee Wee" Madison** – guitar (& vocal on "Can't Be A Winner"); **Samuel Lawhorn** – guitar; **Calvin Jones** – bass; **Willie Smith** – drums; **Joe "Pinetop" Perkins** – piano; **Charlie Musselwhite** – harmonica; **Muddy Waters** – supervising. Recorded at Wally Heider studios, San Francisco, Ca., on September 9, 1971.

Session # II: (#7– #13) with **Dave Alexander (Omar Shariff)** – piano; **William Hyatt** – bass; **Teddy Winston** – drums. Recorded at Funky Features, San Francisco, Ca., on December 17, 1971.

Session # III: (#14–#19) with **A.C. Robinson** – harmonica & vocals; **Teddy Winston** – drums; **L.C. Robinson** – fiddle; **Ren Hawkins** – piano & vocals. Recorded by Tony Ferro at radio station KPFA in Berkeley, Ca., on November 27, 1975 during a Thanksgiving Day broadcast of traditional American music, hosted by Chris Strachwitz.

All selections (except 3, 6, 14, 15, 16, & 19) composed by L.C. Robinson, © by Tradition Music/ Bug Music.

Produced by Chris Strachwitz

Cover: Beth Weil

Cover photo © by Chris Strachwitz

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L.C. *Good Rockin'* ROBINSON

MOJO
IN
MY
HAND





L.C. "Good Rockin'" Robinson

Photo © Robert Scheu

L.C. *GOOD ROCKIN'* ROBINSON

"Mojo in My Hand"

L. C. *Good Rockin'* Robinson gained his nickname from Oakland disc jockey Jumping George (Oxford). "It's because I put on such a wild and rocking show," he would proudly explain. A stalwart of the Oakland blues scene since the early fifties, L. C. had a rich background and an inimitable style. At club appearances, dressed dapper, L. C. stood upright behind his table-stand slide guitar and casually ripped out searing steel licks, looking more than a little like the man on top of the wedding cake. His standard 6-string guitar had a fifty foot extension cord and when the time came to sling that around his neck, L. C. roamed the floor, table to table.

L. C. and his wife Peggy lived in a modest home in west Berkeley—untouched by avant-garde culture and revolutionary rhetoric. During the latter part of L. C.'s life, his work in a laundry was curtailed by bursitis (aggravated by the steam). The occasional money he made playing local ghetto clubs coupled with his disabil-

ity insurance allowed them to get by. Throughout his lengthy career L. C. made some records, but he had hardly been prolific. He recorded two 78s for the Black & White label in the late 40s as the Robinson Brothers with A.C. on harmonica, a couple of sides for Oakland producer Bob Geddins in the fifties, and played lead on an instrumental flip side to a Mercy Dee record. In the late sixties, he was the featured performer on one side of an album titled "Oakland Blues" recorded for the World Pacific Bluesmasters series. This was his first LP album (and now CD!).

L. C. played steel guitar, usually a country musician's instrument. Though bottleneck guitar playing has always been an important mode of blues, few bluesmen, for whatever reason, play the table-stand guitar. L. C. started out playing the bottleneck style taught him by his uncle Blind Willie Johnson, but switched to the steel after being introduced to the instrument by its foremost exponent in country music of the thir-

ties, Leon McAuliffe.

In the late 1930s L. C.'s native Texas was inundated by a style of music called Western Swing. A hybrid form, it contained elements of straight country breakdowns, band ensemble playing (as popularized in those days by Benny Goodman, et al) and ballad singing. The most famous practitioner of Western Swing was Bob Wills and his Texas Play Boys. Wills' steel player, Leon McAuliffe, is considered by many to be the most influential country musician to play the steel guitar. It was McAuliffe who first showed L. C. the steel and whose influence is directly responsible for the bluesman's choice of instruments. When performing, L. C. would occasionally throw an old Bob Wills tune into a show between blues numbers. During his Texas carnival days, L. C. switched off between guitar and fiddle. (This CD includes L. C.'s first recordings on fiddle.) Don "Sugarcane" Harris, noted R&B performer and one half of the Don and Dewey singing duo, was a youngster of nine years old when L. C. gave him some elementary lessons on the instrument.

Born Lewis Charles Robinson in Austin County, Southeast Texas on May 13, 1918, L. C. and his brother A. C. began their careers as a

unit in their early teens. They traveled throughout Texas in bands with names like the Three Hot Brown Brothers and the Seven Black Aces. When carnival work was short, L. C. worked as a presser in Temple, Texas. It was in Temple that L. C. met bank robber Clyde Barrow. "He had a '34 V-8 Ford," L. C. recalled, "and he gave me twenty-five dollars to sing 'Sittin' on Top of the World.' His girlfriend Bonnie was there too."

After the Second World War, L. C. came west to rejoin his brother, fresh out of the service. The two of them played together all around the Bay Area as the Robinson Brothers until 1959, when A. C. joined the Church of Christ and gave up secular music. After that L. C. played the same clubs as a solo, though work steadily decreased in frequency and financial remuneration. The session with the Muddy Waters Band was born after a midnight jam at San Francisco's Keystone Korner, a popular club with blues revivalists. The full house was treated not only to a superlative set by the redoubtable Muddy, but a guest appearance by John Lee Hooker, followed by L. C. No one in the crowd or the band had ever seen or even heard of him before, but L. C. gave them all something to remember him by. Charging into the Elmore James classic, "Dust My Broom"

L. C. not only rocked the club but inspired the band. Pinetop Perkins almost fell off his piano stool with his long glissandos down the keyboard. Stranger no more, L. C. was literally

mobbed after the brief appearance, with John Lee Hooker hugging his shoulders and monopolizing his ear.

(Joel Selvin - 1972 - then editor of "The Night Times")

Producer's Note:

L.C. Robinson died in Berkeley, Calif. on September 26, 1976. Not only was L.C. influenced by Bob Wills and especially his steel guitarist, Leon McAuliff, but his very favorite singer was Milton Brown, another legend in the Western Swing field. The initial release of the LP from which much of the material heard here was taken, finally opened a few doors for L.C. Robinson during the blues boom of the 1970s which continues unabated to this date. Thanks to blues promoter and DJ Tom Mazzolini, who has dedicated his life to promoting the blues here in the San Francisco Bay Area, L.C. Robinson, along with Sonny Rhodes and Floyd Dixon, made a trip to Sweden in 1975 at the invitation of the Scandinavian Blues Society. The trip turned out to be the highlight of his forty year career. Earlier that year L.C. appeared at the Berkeley Blues Festival produced by Joe

Garrett.

In November of 1975 I was fortunate enough to arrange a reunion of sorts of the two Robinson brothers who agreed to perform together on Berkeley's listener sponsored station KPFA, even though their respective musical genres were supposed to be mutually exclusive. Several of us who were interested in promoting various traditional American musical genres on KPFA, had been presenting full days of mostly live performances every year on Thanksgiving Day. Thanks to Tony Ferro, one of the station's engineers, a stereo tape was made of the proceedings and I have included most of the music on this CD.

These selections with A.C., now also deceased, represent a rare audio snapshot of not only a fine gospel harmonica player and singer, but also a taste of what could be heard at the

Pentacostal Temple Church of God in Christ, located at 1915 McAllister Street in San Francisco, where Rev. A.C. Robinson was one of the

active participants. According to his obituary, L.C. Robinson became a member of that church during his last year of life.

(Chris Strachwitz - September 1996)



Photo © Robert Scheu

L. to r: Samuel Lawborn, Willie Smith, Charlie Musselwhite, James Madison, L.C. Robinson, Calvin Jones, Pinetop Perkins

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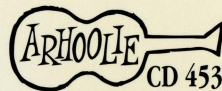
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