

Albert Washington



Albert Washington
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August 17th, 1939 – October 23rd, 1998

The path of Jerry and Helen Washington's fifth child Albert began in Rome, Georgia on August 17, 1939. From an early age, Albert remembered the powerful music of the African American vernacular tradition, most especially in the Baptist Church into which he was initiated at age 9.

Albert's first blues recording, "You Gonna Miss Me"/"Ramble," was cut for John Finch in 1962. Both tunes demonstrate Albert's great emotional intensity, particularly the near-field holler-like vocal on the minor key "You Gonna Miss Me." The songs are also important in that they united Albert on record for the first time with his long-time sidekick guitarist Big Ed Thompson, whose distinctive saxophone-influenced flatpicking style became an integral part of Albert's club sound.

These songs were later leased to Bluestown and also recently appeared on a Wolf CD (both unbeknownst to Albert). Wade Hill, Albert's manager, next took Albert to local entrepreneur Vince Morton, who released "I Haven't Got a Friend"/ "So Tired" on his VJM label. The topside, a B.B.

King-inspired shuffle, vaulted Albert into great demand as a touring artist. However, difficulties booking reliable musicians to make the

tours and a hesitance on Albert's part to leave his regular local bookings resulted in many lost opportunities—a familiar refrain in Albert's career. Ultimately, Albert was unable to capitalize fully on the song's success, but he continued to boost his popularity at local clubs like the Vet's Inn, the Soul Lounge, Mom's, and Satan's Den.

Dr. Steven C. Tracy

