Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music

W. K. McNeil, Editor

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W. K. McNeil

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INTRODUCTION

Two questions frequently asked about gospel music are "What is it?" and "When did it start?" Some people would designate as gospel music any religious song, but that is not the definition scholars would use. They interpret the term as referring to songs reflecting the personal religious experience of people. Gospel song lyrics are often subjective, usually addressed to one's fellow human beings, and focus on a single theme that is emphasized through repetition of individual phrases and concludes by a refrain after each stanza. Texts deal with conversion, atonement through Christ, salvation, and heaven's pleasures. Stylistically, they range from meditative and devotional to instructive and even militant. Gospel songs rarely employ the technique of utilizing a single tune between texts, as often happens in other forms of popular music. Generally, gospel music is confined to Protestant evangelical groups, both black and white, but it can also be found in Roman Catholic churches.

Defining when gospel started is more problematic because there are many times one could select as gospel's starting point. It could be dated from the 1850s when these songs first appeared in religious revivals. Or it could be dated from the urban revivalism era of the late nineteenth century. Or it could be dated from 1874 when Philip Paul Bliss titled one of his collections *Gospel Songs*.

There are some other problems in dating gospel's origins, the major one being the divisions of white and black gospel. Although there has been considerable interplay between the two types of gospel, they have different starting points. Generally, white gospel is considered to be the older of the two, although both have roots extending back far beyond their actual origins. White gospel is usually dated from the second half of the nineteenth century, while black gospel's basic performance style dates from the first decade of the twentieth century.

This seems a good time to lay to rest an opinion that frequently crops up in discussions of gospel's origins, namely, that gospel music grew out of camp meeting spirituals. It is true that one can find similarities between camp meeting spirituals and gospel songs, but overall, marches and secular songs of the day were more influential and should be considered a greater source of derivation. Indeed, many early gospel composers, such as George F. Root, were also well known as producers of secular music.

How to Use This Book

The *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music* comes at a time when there is a revival of interest in gospel music. It is designed to answer questions such as the definition and origins of gospel music and cover the subject in as broad a way as possible. In other words, it aims to answer the who, what, and why of gospel music. The work is intended to be a valuable reference for both scholars and the general reading public.

This encyclopedia has several points that should enhance its appeal. For one thing, it deals with both black and white gospel, something that is usually not attempted in reference works on gospel music. In fact, no form of music has traditionally been as segregated as gospel. In recent years this has started to change. Even so, most of the attempts to cover both in book form have been superficial and inadequate. It is the sincere hope of the editors and contributors that the present work will correct this trend.

Another important feature of the *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music* is that it contains the most up-to-date information. This is due in large part to the contributors, who have been specially selected because of their expertise. In some cases, putting these entries together required conducting a good deal of independent research.

The entries in this work are arranged in an easily accessible A to Z format. Twenty photographs illustrate the text. Essays include cross references that direct interested readers to related entries throughout the text. Most essays include a bibliography and a discography. These are selective and intended as guidelines to further research. Bibliographies cite sources used by the authors and the discographies include recordings, usually in

CD or LP form, of significance or ones that are currently available. When no reference citation appears, it means that the information was taken from record liner notes.

Coverage

The list of entries was drawn up with the intention of covering every important aspect of the music. Admittedly, such a list is subjective, but it was not the work of only one person. The editor and associate editors and various consultants contributed to the final list. By this coverage we believed we would be representing every important aspect of gospel's history. Although in a work of this kind there can be differences of opinion about inclusion and exclusion and practical considerations now and then intervene to modify one's ideal plan, we believe that all major figures have been included and that the work overall represents an important step forward in the study of gospel.

One of the most difficult things to run down were birth and death dates for personalities. In some cases, such as the Deal Family, not even family members knew the birth and death dates of the act's members. They were, however, cooperative, with some family members even going so far as to search cemeteries for Deals in an effort to find the needed information. Ultimately, we came up with both birth and death dates for most and only death dates for others. But even this is more data than is given in other references that include the Deal Family.

The Deals recorded in the 1920s, so it is perhaps understandable that some biographical details about them would be forgotten. Less comprehensible is the lack of such information on currently active and popular acts. An example is Take 6, one of today's hottest gospel acts. It took a great deal of effort to find birth dates for the members of this group, but we finally succeeded. They were not trying to hide the information; apparently it was just not of great concern to them to make their birth dates widely known. Yet, it should be noted here that most performers were gracious with their time and understood our need to get the most accurate data we could.

Although the attempt was to provide birth and death dates for all performers, we were not always successful and had to settle for providing them when possible. For groups, we give birth and death dates wherever possible for the most significant members of the group, usually the original members or the ones belonging to the act when it was most popular. It was thought pointless, as well as probably impossible to discover, birth and death dates for everyone who belonged to a quartet that had frequent changes of personnel. For the same reason, all members of choirs or other large aggregations are not listed individually. Instead, only the leaders are supplied.

Included in this volume are

- Biographical profiles of numerous performers, such as Andrae Crouch, and influential figures in the development of gospel music, such as Isaac Watts. Coverage extends from the earliest names in gospel to the most contemporary. Birth and death dates are included wherever possible.
- Important events in the history of gospel such as the Azusa Street Revival.
- Broadcasting outlets, such as radio station WLAC AM, and record companies, such as Canaan Records, that were prominent in gospel's history.
- Publications, such as *The Singing News*, significant songbooks, such as *Gospel Pearls*, and noteworthy publishing companies, such as Lillenas, all of which helped popularize some of the best-known gospel songs.
- Thematic entries on topics ranging from instruments frequently used by gospel performers to types of performing groups, such as gospel quartets and gospel choirs, to the unique qualities of gospel as it is composed and performed in different regions around the United States, to the globalization of gospel.

Undoubtedly, the most important consideration is that this encyclopedia be read. Every effort has been expended in making the entries readable. Our contributors must be given credit for this. Carefully chosen not just for their expertise but also for their writing ability, they have produced a volume that is academically sound, readable, and mostly jargon-free. In short, they have produced a manuscript that will appeal not just to scholars but to interested lay readers as well. We hope, and think, that the *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music* will be for some time the book that everyone turns to when they want to find out about any aspect of gospel music.

W. K. McNeil

A

ABERNATHY, LEE ROY

(b. August 13, 1913; d. May 25, 1993)

Lee Roy Abernathy, affectionately dubbed "Professor," was one of gospel music's more innovative and entrepreneurial performers. In a professional career that spanned more than sixty years, he organized quartets, taught voice and piano, and composed one of the all-time best-selling gospel songs. He grasped the importance of television in its early days, hosting his own daily gospel show in Atlanta and introducing other gospel musicians to a wider audience. In many ways, Abernathy broke the mold of the traditional gospel performer as he used his broad range of musical—and marketing—talents to succeed in the world of professional entertainment.

Gospel Roots in a North Georgia Textile Community

Abernathy was born on August 13, 1913, in the community of Atco in Bartow County, Georgia. He acquired his musical training early from his piano-playing mother, Clara, and his father, Dee, who taught singing in schools and wrote gospel songs while variously employed as a sharecropper and mill worker in the rural North Georgia textile community.

By the age of five, Abernathy sang first tenor in his father's weekend group, the Atco Quartet. He was still singing five years later when the quartet recorded with Columbia. However, because of complications from impacted tonsils and throat surgery, he turned to playing the piano at the age of twelve and did not resume his singing career for another twenty years.

In the 1920s, the Abernathy family moved frequently around northwest Georgia in search of better employment prospects. They finally settled in Canton, about thirty-five miles north of Atlanta, which eventually became Abernathy's permanent home. As a young teenager, Abernathy was a member of his father's group, the Abernathy Quartet, and played piano for recordings of "I'm Redeemed" and "Don't Forget to Pray" for RCA Victor. He also started his own quartet, the Modern Mountaineers, a country band that played in local theaters and churches and at banquets. During the early 1930s, the group played occasionally on Atlanta's WSB radio, and they recorded a series of 78s for Bluebird.

Abernathy's lifelong involvement in music education began early. He studied under such legends of the shape-note gospel world as A. J. Showalter and Adger Pace. He also learned to read sheet music at Atlanta's Conservatory of Music. After marrying Louise Ammons, the daughter of a mill supervisor, and moving to nearby Dalton, he opened Lee Roy's Music Store, where he taught private music lessons. During this time, he and his father continued to collaborate, writing such songs as "Won't We Have a Good Time" and "My Labor Will Be O'er."

Professional Legacy

In the mid-1930s, Abernathy began to display the entrepreneurial range that would characterize the rest of his career. He introduced his "Radio School of Music" on Dalton radio station WBLJ in 1938. Several years earlier, he recorded one of the Speer Family's first records at his Dalton studio. He also wrote campaign songs ("Good Times Are Coming Soon") for Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1936 reelection and for Georgia Governor Eugene Talmadge ("$3-Dollar Tag Song"). Nearly twenty years later, Abernathy would be writing campaign songs for himself ("Lee Roy's the Boy") as a candidate for the 1958 Georgia gubernatorial race. He even followed this with a song to concede defeat after he finished a distant third with 33,099 votes.

In 1943, he became the first gospel musician to publish sheet music of compositions, in shaped notes, with the first song being his own "I'll Thank My Savior for It." This break from tradition earned him ridicule at a time when other gospel groups sold collections of their songs in annual convention books under the auspices of music publishers.

After moving to Chattanooga and organizing the Four Tones in 1943, Abernathy toured the country and performed gospel and popular songs in USO shows. When the group disbanded because of two members' draft status, he joined Billy Carrier, George Hughes, and Bill Lyles in the Swanee River Boys as part of a special wartime arrangement. He followed this with an interlude in Richmond, where he played piano for the Rangers Quartet on WRVA. In 1945, the enterprising businessman began offering piano lessons by mail order, once again garnering ridicule from his contemporaries but nevertheless finding a market for his efforts. After Atlanta's tragic Winecoff Hotel fire in December 1946, one of the nation's deadliest hotel fires with 119 victims, Abernathy displayed his versatility by writing a popular song that described the event, "The Burning of the Winecoff."

In 1947, he joined the Homeland Harmony Quartet, created by Connor Hall and including James McCoy, Shorty Bradford, and Aycel Soward. Early the next year the group recorded Abernathy's new song, "Everybody's Gonna Have a Wonderful Time Up There." Later known as the "Gospel Boogie," the song became a subject of controversy across the United States because of its jazzy, dance hall beat. The White Church Records version sold 200,000 copies. Months later, black gospel artists and country singers gave the song wider distribution with their renditions. Over the years, the song has been recorded (and frequently turned into *Billboard* hits) by Pat Boone, Johnny Mathis, and Johnny Cash, eventually selling more than five million records.

In 1948, he wrote his now out-of-print book "*It*," a history of gospel music events and, according to Abernathy, a "handbook for the new professional quartets." A year later, in 1949, he and Shorty Bradford left the Homeland Harmony Quartet and formed the Happy Two, performing on television shows and doing backup work and commercials. Abernathy wrote some of TV's first singing commercials, including "You'd Better Get Wild Root Cream Oil, Charlie," as well as songs for shampoo and insect spray.

In 1951, with their rising popularity, Abernathy and Bradford began hosting a daily TV show on WAGA in Atlanta that would air for the next seven years. The show featured other gospel musicians and, at one point, was rated number three in the United States by Nielson. During this time, he also performed with other quartets, including the Miracle Men and the Lee Roy Abernathy Quartet.

During his later years, he invented a typesetting system for setting music and established his Hall of Fame School of Music located near his home in Canton. In 1973, he was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame. This was followed by his election to the Georgia Music Hall of Fame in 1989.

Abernathy died on May 25, 1993, as a result of complications after a stroke. He was survived by his wife Louise, a son, and two daughters.

HAROLD JACOBS

See also Hall, Connor; Homeland Harmony Quartet; Rangers Quartet; Showalter, Anthony Johnson; Speer Family, The; Swanee River Boys

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Discography

Lee Roy Abernathy with Homeland Harmony Quartet (and Happy Two where indicated), 78-rpm recordings:

"Burning of the Winecoff Hotel"/"Newborn Feeling" (White Church 1097); "Checking Up on My Payments"/"Sin Ain't Nothing but Blues" (White Church 1099); "Filled with Glory Divine"/"Jacob's Ladder" (Happy Two) (Quartet 1060); "Filled with Glory Divine"/"Television" (Quartet 0012); "Gospel Boogie (Everybody's Gonna Have a Wonderful Time Up

There)''/''You Can't Believe Everything You Hear'' (King 4223); ''Gospel Boogie (Everybody's Gonna Have a Wonderful Time Up There)''/''You Can't Believe Everything You Hear'' (White Church 1084); ''Hallelujah Boogie'' (Happy Two)/''Georgia Boy'' (Shorty Bradford) (Quartet 0020); ''I Know the Lord''/''Tis So Sweet to Trust Him'' (White Church 1098); ''I Want to Know More''/''On That Judgement Day'' (White Church 1082); ''Oh What an Awful Day''/''Everybody Ought to Know'' (White Church 1083); ''Television''/''Shorty's Banjo'' (Shorty Bradford) (Quartet 1061); ''You Can't Believe Everything''/''Gospel Boogie'' (Quartet 0013).

ACKLEY, ALFRED

(b. January 21, 1887, Spring Hill, PA; d. July 3, 1960, Whittier, CA)

Although a Presbyterian minister by calling, Alfred Henry Ackley is chiefly remembered as a composer of evangelical hymns that were widely admired in the 1930s. He is credited as the author of more than 1,500 religious and secular songs, many of which were published through his lifelong association with the Rodeheaver Publishing Company. (His older brother, Bentley DeForest Ackley [1872–1958], was also an accomplished composer and editor with the Rodeheaver Company and the author of more than 3,000 gospel songs.)

Ackley's own musical credentials were of a professional order. He received his first musical training as a child from his father and later studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Ackley was also known as a highly skilled cellist.

In 1914, he was ordained into the ministry following graduation from Westminster Theological Seminary in Maryland. After serving in pastorates in Pennsylvania and California, he worked for several years with the evangelist Billy Sunday. In recognition of his many contributions to the field of gospel music, Ackley was awarded an honorary doctor of sacred music degree from John Brown University in Arkansas.

Ackley's most famous song, ''He Lives,'' remains a popular hymn today. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Ackley wrote the song in response to the query of a sincere young Jewish student who had asked Ackley, ''Why should I worship a dead Jew?''

DAVID BEAUDOUIN

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ACKLEY, BENTLEY DEFOREST

(b. September 27, 1872; d. September 3, 1958)

Prolific writer and editor of gospel hymns, reportedly producing over 2,000 songs. Born in Spring Hill, Pennsylvania, he was the older brother of Alfred Henry Ackley (1887–1960), who was also a prolific gospel songwriter, and the two worked together in Homer A. Rodeheaver's publishing company. As a child Bentley demonstrated a prodigious interest in music, becoming proficient on the melodeon, piano, reed organ, alto horn, cornet, piccolo, and clarinet. His first job, however, was as a stenographer in New York and Philadelphia; he acquired after these positions studying shorthand and typing.

During the 1890s, he published several secular songs, none of which found lasting success. In 1908 he became private secretary and pianist to evangelist Billy Sunday, remaining with him until 1915. During these seven years he began to compose gospel songs. In 1910 he joined with Rodeheaver in founding the Rodeheaver–Ackley publishing company in Chicago. He, his brother, and Charles H. Gabriel supplied a majority of the firm's copyrighted publications. B. D. Ackley remained with the firm until his death. The most popular of Ackley's gospel songs are ''If Your Heart Keeps Right,'' ''I Walk with the King,'' and ''Sunrise.'' Some of his other songs include ''Jesus, I Am Coming Home,'' ''Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me,'' ''I Would Be Like Jesus,'' ''In the Service of the King,'' ''Somebody Knows,'' ''Jesus,'' ''Surrender,'' and ''God Understands.''

W. K. MCNEIL

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Porter, Thomas Henry. Homer Alvan Rodeheaver (1880–1955): Evangelistic Musician and Publisher. Ph.D. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1981.

ACUFF, ROY

(b. September 15, 1903, Maynardsville, TN; d. November 25, 1992)

Singer, composer, publisher, bandleader. Known to generations of fans as ''the King of Country Music,'' Roy Claxton Acuff was for years the cornerstone of Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, where he served as a spokesman for country music. In the 1940s, his records were constantly on the best-seller charts, and his formation of the Acuff–Rose publishing company

Roy Acuff. Photo courtesy Frank Driggs Collection.

in mid-1942 launched the Nashville country music publishing industry. Although his own repertoire ranged from classics such as "Wabash Cannonball" and "The Precious Jewel" to modern songs such as Eddy Raven's "Back in the Country," he routinely performed, recorded, and wrote gospel songs, and these form the backbone of his musical legacy.

Born in Union County north of Knoxville, Acuff was early exposed to a rich variety of Appalachian music, from fiddle tunes to old ballads. His father was a lawyer and a Missionary Baptist preacher, and young Roy dutifully attended the rural singing schools sponsored by teachers employed by publishing companies such as Vaughan, Teacher's, and Showalter. His greater interest, though, lay in fiddling and singing, and soon he had landed a job on Knoxville radio station WROL, with his string band he called the Crazy Tennesseans.

One of the popular groups on the station was a gospel quartet called the Black Shirts, which was made up of young men from Bob Jones University in southeast Tennessee. They featured a song called "The Great Speckled Bird," an odd song based on a verse from Jeremiah, chapter 12, verse 9: "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird." When Acuff learned the quartet was leaving the station, he paid them twenty-five cents to copy down the words for him, and he started using the song. The audience response was overwhelming, and in October 1936 the American Record Company offered him a recording contract, largely on the strength of the "Bird." Acuff later joked, "They didn't want me—they wanted the Great Speckled Bird." Under the misspelled title "Great Speckle Bird," it became Acuff's first release—released the same month it was recorded—and went on to become his career song and a gospel standard.

The authorship of the song is tangled and confused. It was picked up by radio singers throughout the South and was published in an M. M. Cole songbook in 1937 with composer credits to Reverend Guy Smith, a singing evangelist from Springfield, Missouri, and Smith is generally still given credit for the song today. However, recent research has suggested that the song was written by a Hurricane, West Virginia, songwriter named Sara Dillon, as early as 1926, and it was published as a single-sheet "ballet" that year and in a songbook in 1928 by the Church of God Publishing House in Cleveland. The Church of God operated Bob Jones University, where the Black Shirts were from, and the song specifically mentions "the great Church of God." Acuff used for his melody the folk tune "I Am Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes," although Smith and later recordings used a different melody similar to that of "Old Ties." The record sold so well that, in March 1937, Acuff recorded "Great Speckle Bird #2," in which he used other stanzas from the Dillon song that he presumably got from the Black Shirts. In 1938, when he auditioned for the Grand Ole Opry, Acuff sang the song, and the audience response won him a place on the Opry roster.

Throughout the late 1930s, Acuff sprinkled his recording sessions with other gospel songs: "Tell Mother I Will Be There"; "The Automobile of Life" (1938), a 1925 song written by a woman from Kansas; "That Beautiful Picture" (1938), a favorite encore on the Opry; "Further Along" (1940), a singing convention song popularized in the mid-1930s; and "The Precious Jewel" (1940), a rewriting of "The Hills of Roane County." On most of these, Acuff did not use a quartet format but rather often sang verses solo, joined by Pete Kirby (Bashful Brother Oswald) doing what people of the time called a "screaming tenor."

For a time in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Acuff had a publishing arrangement with R. E. Winsett, a veteran shape-note convention book publisher from Dayton, Tennessee, and a number of his songs appeared in Winsett books of the time. Around 1940, Acuff also published his own little songbook, which he sold to fans for twenty-five cents; this also included many gospel songs, including a number that he was apparently singing at the time but did not get around to recording until years later. When his 1941 recording "Just Inside the Pearly Gates" was noted by *Billboard* magazine, making it one of the first country records to receive national trade paper attention, New York publishers began to offer him contracts. Always a shrewd businessman, Acuff felt if his song properties were that valuable, he could do better by organizing his own publishing company. This he did in 1942, in partnership with Fred Rose, an experienced publisher and songwriter who was located in Nashville. The result would become one of the largest publishing houses in the country, Acuff–Rose.

As Acuff's popularity soared in the 1940s, he began to rely on his new partner, Fred Rose, for new gospel songs written in the older style. This resulted in the 1944 chart hit "The Prodigal Son," the up-tempo "Wait for the Light to Shine" (1944), "I Heard a Silver Trumpet" (1943), and "I'll Reap My Harvest in Heaven" (1942). The 1945 hit "That Glory Bound Train" merged Acuff's two favorite themes: salvation and trains; it was written by Acuff with Odell McLeod. Perhaps the most lachrymose of these songs was "Wreck on the Highway" (1942), which described a scene where "whiskey and blood ran together" but "I didn't hear nobody pray." After some initial confusion, Acuff–Rose discovered the composer was a North Carolina textile worker named Dorsey Dixon.

The last of the great Acuff gospel songs was "I Saw the Light" (1947), written by Hank Williams from an old Chuck Wagon Gang song, "He Set Me Free." Acuff actually beat Williams in recording it first, and it became a show closer for him for the rest of his career. It actually charted again in 1971, when Acuff rerecorded it with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

Throughout his long career, Roy Acuff remained a staunch defender of traditional country music, with its high harmonies and acoustic instrumentation. To the end, he considered gospel music a cornerstone of that musical style.

CHARLES K. WOLFE

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ADAMS, YOLANDA

(b. August 27, 1962, Houston, TX)

Singer Yolanda Adams was born into a family that ensured her exposure to a wide variety of musical genres. Her appreciation of a broad range of musical styles flourished as her mother, who had studied music in college, introduced Adams and her five siblings to jazz, gospel, and classical works. Today, Adams is one of the most prominent and versatile contemporary gospel artists in the world. It is difficult to categorize her performance style because she possesses the amazing ability to switch musical gears from song to song. From traditional gospel to a style heavily influenced by R&B, new jack, and jazz overtones, Adams delivers each with complete integrity in an emotionally charged delivery. She is credited with liberating gospel music's more formal, traditional image. In each recording she addresses social issues forthrightly. In the works of this former elementary teacher, the problems that plague the nation's youths are especially prevalent.

From the time she was thirteen Adams toured and performed with the Southeast Inspirational Choir. Composer/producer Thomas Whitfield recognized the genius in the young singer and offered her an opportunity to record her own solo album. The resultant project, *Just As I Am* (1988), was guided by Whitfield and attracted widespread critical praise. Subsequent albums including *Through the Storm* (1991) and *More Than a Melody* (1995) established her as a force in gospel and R&B, and she won a host of awards including several Stellar Awards, two Soul Train Lady of Soul Award, two Grammys, and five NAACP Image Awards.

Adams soared to new heights with the 1999 release of *Mountain High . . . Valley Low*. The album featured the smash hit "Open My Heart" and spent much of the year at number one on *Billboard* magazine's Gospel and Contemporary Christian Charts, eventually selling over a million copies. Her subsequent albums, *Christmas with Yolanda Adams* (2000), the live release *The Experience* (2001), and *Believe* (2002), have further strengthened her position as one of gospel's best loved and most successful artists and one of the most talented singers in all of music. Since her debut in 1988, Adams has recorded an impressive number of projects.

DONNA M. COX

Discography

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AKERS, DORIS

Doris Mae Akers (b. May 21, 1923, Brookfield, MO; d. July 26, 1995, Minneapolis, MN)

Highly regarded singer, choir director, music publisher, and composer of gospel music, sometimes referred to as "Mrs. Gospel Music." Akers showed an early aptitude for music, teaching herself to play piano by ear as a very small child and composing her first work, "Keep the Fire Burning in Me," a few years later. By her teens Akers had formed an ensemble called Dot Akers and Her Swingsters, which performed jazz and swing standards of the day. Akers moved to Los Angeles in the mid-1940s, and there she performed with the Sallie Martin Singers and later founded her own group, the Doris Akers Singers. In 1948 Akers and Dorothy Simmons formed the

Simmons–Akers Singers, which performed frequently and became one of the most important gospel groups of the late 1940s and 1950s.

Akers published hundreds of songs during her lifetime, and many of them may still be found in religious hymnals and songbooks of various religious denominations. Her first published composition was "A Double Portion of God's Love" in 1947, with Martin and Morris Music, and shortly thereafter Akers cofounded a publishing company with Simmons called the Simmons and Akers Music House. Beginning in the 1950s Akers also published with the white-owned publishing house Manna Music, effectively bridging the distinctly separate realms of black and white gospel music that were present at that time.

During the 1950s and 1960s Akers performed regularly as a solo artist and directed the Sky Pilot Choir. She was the creator of the so-called "Doris Akers/Sky Pilot sound," an innovative style of directing and arranging gospel choir music that continues to influence gospel music composition and direction today. Akers wrote or arranged many of the standards in gospel music from this period, and she recorded for the RCA, Capitol, and Christian Faith labels. Among her better-known compositions are "Sweet Sweet Spirit," "How Big Is God," "I Cannot Fail the Lord," and "Sweet Jesus," and she cowrote "Lord Don't Move That Mountain" with her longtime friend Mahalia Jackson. Several of Akers's songs were featured in movies or stage productions, including "Trouble" (*Praise House* and *Me and Bessie*) and "Lead Me Guide Me," which was sung by Elvis Presley in one of his final films. In the 1970s, Akers moved from Los Angeles but continued to perform gospel music in Columbus, Ohio. After relocating to Minneapolis in the 1980s, Akers served as choir director at Grace Temple Deliverance. In the late 1990s she was featured in gospel musician Bill Gaither's music videos *Old Friends* and *Turn Your Radio On.* Akers received several awards during her lifetime, including Gospel Composer of the Year (1961), and the Smithsonian Institution honored her songs and recordings with the accolade of "National Treasure." In 2001, Akers was posthumously inducted into the Gospel Music Association's Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

ERIN STAPLETON-CORCORAN

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Discography

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Sing Praises Unto the Lord (1957, RCA Victor).
The Sky Pilot Choir, Vol. I (1958, Christian Faith Records).
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Doris Akers Sings (1960, Christian Faith).
Forever Faithful (1963, RCA Victor).

ALEXANDER, CHARLES McCALLUM

(b. October 24, 1867; d. October 13, 1920)

Charles "Charlie" McCallum Alexander was one of the two most important individuals—the other being Homer Rodeheaver—who established the model of the twentieth-century evangelistic musician and popularized gospel music around the world.

His connection with gospel music began in 1884 when he attended a revival service held by evangelist D. L. Moody and his song leader/soloist Ira Sankey. Six years later he matriculated at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, the chief training ground for gospel musicians. After graduation he spent eight years with evangelist Milan B. Williams on the "Kerosene Circuit" of the Midwest, perfecting his approach to leading congregations in singing the popular religious music of the age: gospel songs.

In 1902 Alexander joined evangelist Reuben A. Torrey for a tour of Australia. There the gregarious and flamboyant Charlie with the distinctly Southern accent became a prominent feature of the revival meetings, holding popular "services of song" in which he treated the enthusiastic crowds of thousands like a well-trained choir.

Part of his success came from his association with pianist Robert Harkness, whom he met while in Australia. Harkness had no previous knowledge of how to play church music, and he began improvising accompaniments on the piano to make the gospel songs more interesting. Alexander quickly realized that Harkness had discovered a highly effective style for playing gospel music on the piano—an instrument that proved to be much better suited for accompanying gospel music than the traditional organ.

During the next decade the two men helped popularize a new paradigm for church music wherein singing was led by a highly visible song leader standing in front of the congregation, employing standard conducting patterns to coordinate the music of congregation, choir, and musical instruments, with the piano being prominent. This model clearly differed from the traditional approach wherein an organ, usually placed in a choir loft above and

behind the congregation, led the singing (often with the help of a choir).

One of the reasons requiring this new approach was the nature of gospel songs. Whereas most of the hymns had been rhythmically more straightforward, many of the new gospel songs were much more fluid rhythmically, often requiring holds or tempo changes during the songs themselves. This newer style clearly required a leader to keep everything together, and Alexander proved to be the perfect combination of conductor, cheerleader, and master teacher.

In addition to his leading congregational singing, Alexander became involved in editing and publishing song collections for the revival meetings. *Alexander's Revival Songs* (1902) was the first of his productions and continued for nearly two decades, with *Alexander's Hymns Nos. 3* (1915) achieving worldwide fame and remaining in publication for nearly a century. Part of Alexander's success in gospel hymn publishing resulted from his relationship with songwriters such as Charlie Tillman and Charles Gabriel.

It was Gabriel's lilting "Glory Song" ("When all my labors and trials are o'er") that Alexander adopted as a kind of theme song and helped popularize literally around the world. For many of these songs Alexander obtained international publishing copyrights, thus ensuring his collections a long life.

Because a number of books were also published about the life and work of Alexander, his influence became a powerful model for future gospel musicians to emulate. For with Charlie, people loved to sing the gospel songs and hymns that he made come alive in a new and powerful way. His legacy helped spawn nearly a century of revivalism in which gospel hymnody was one of its most vital components.

MEL R. WILHOIT

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ALLEN, RANCE

(b. November 19, 1948, Monroe, MI)

Rance Allen fronted the first modern gospel group to take secular songs and secular performance practices and recast them with religious lyrics. In doing so, the Rance Allen Group was able to cross over to the soul charts and proved to be influential in what was referred to as the contemporary Christian music movement, epitomized by crossover artists such as the Winans and Andrae Crouch.

Raised in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), Allen started playing piano at the age of seven. A few years later Allen took up guitar. At the time, Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Reverend Utah Smith were largely responsible for making the electric guitar the instrument of choice in the COGIC church. Allen's mother, Emma Pearl Allen, partially inspired by Rosetta Tharpe, also played the electric guitar and passed much of Tharpe's incendiary, church-wrecking style onto her son.

In the late 1960s, Allen began playing church programs in and around Detroit fronting the Rance Allen Group, which included his brothers Tom and Steve on drums and bass guitar. A third brother, Esau, would play percussion with the group at various times in the 1970s. In 1969 the Rance Allen Group recorded a single for a small independent label, Reflect Records, which is owned by their manager. Two years later, they entered a Detroit radio contest, where they won first prize singing Tharpe's "Up Above My Head." One of the judges was legendary black promotion man Dave Clark. Impressed by what he heard, Clark took Allen to the Memphis-based soul label Stax Records, whose vice president, Al Bell, proceeded to sign Allen and set up a gospel subsidiary, Gospel Truth, to release recordings by the Rance Allen Group.

The Rance Allen Group's three *Gospel Truth* albums, issued between 1972 and 1974, included gospel treatments of the Temptations' "Just My Imagination" (retitled "Just My Salvation"), Stevie Wonder's "For Once in My Life," and Archie Bell's "There's Gonna Be a Showdown." After Stax went bankrupt in 1975, the Rance Allen Group recorded for Capitol, a reconstituted Stax, Myrrh, Bellmark, and Tyscot. Along the way, the group placed five singles on the *Billboard* rhythm and blues charts. In 2004, the group was nominated for a Grammy for their *Live Experience* album, which featured guest appearances by contemporary gospel stars Fred Hammond, LaShun Pace, and Kirk Franklin.

ROB BOWMAN

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Discography

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Brothers (1974, Gospel Truth LP GT-3502).
A Soulful Experience (1975, Gospel Truth LP GT-4207).
Live Experience (2004, Tyscot CD).

ALLEN, RICHARD

(b. February 14, 1760, Philadelphia, PA; d. March 26, 1831, Philadelphia, PA)

African American religious leader, founder and first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, and hymnbook compiler, Richard Allen was one of the most influential figures in nineteenth century America for the black community.

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on February 14, 1760, Richard Allen was the slave of distinguished lawyer and Chief Justice of the Commonwealth (1774–1777) Benjamin Chew. Allen was later sold to Stokley Sturgis, a farmer near Dover, Delaware, where he was brought up and converted to Methodism. Shortly afterwards, he began preaching, and as a result of his religious dedication and conviction, his master allowed Allen to preach in his house, where even he was converted under Allen's proselytizing. Once he was able to pay for his freedom, Allen and his brother found work cutting wood, working in a brickyard, and hauling salt during the Revolutionary War, all the while preaching and traveling to neighboring states whenever possible. Allen traveled to small towns and rural settlements in Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York, Maryland, and even as far south as South Carolina, bringing him into contact with other leaders and founders of early American Methodism.

In 1786 Allen began preaching regularly at St. George Methodist Church in Philadelphia, where the number of black worshippers attending services increased tenfold. The suggestion to establish a separate place of worship was made but was quickly rejected by the white majority congregation and elders. In 1787, fellow black minister Absalom Jones was asked to leave the altar of St. George and led the remainder of the congregation out of the church to worship independent of white oppression. This movement led to the formation of the Free African Society, one of the first black mutual aid societies in the United States, and the eventual construction of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, which later fell under the direction of Absalom Jones.

Wanting to remain faithful to Methodist doctrines, Allen separated from the African Episcopal Church and established Bethel African Church in 1794. In 1799, Allen was ordained deacon, but despite having independent congregations, white elders still maintained control over the black church. After many years of struggling to achieve total separation, the church was granted independence in 1816. Later that year, several black Methodists came together and decided upon the title of African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Richard Allen was ordained the first bishop.

During this time of separation Allen wanted to publish his own hymnal specific to the worshipping needs of black Methodists. In 1801 Allen published *A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns Selected from Various Authors*, the first hymnal published exclusively for use in the black church. While Allen could have easily adopted the Methodist hymnal, he instead collected hymns that appealed to black Americans. The first edition of Allen's 1801 hymnal contained fifty-four hymn texts, without musical notation, drawn mainly from the collections of Isaac Watts, Charles and John Wesley, and other popular hymnodists from Methodist and Baptist churches. Like many other hymnals of the time, Allen's collection was in the form of a "pocket" hymnal, without any guidelines to the tunes or melodies of the text, although it has been said that many of the hymns were sung to familiar tunes used in other churches and, in some cases, even originally composed or adapted from popular tunes. A second edition of the hymnal was released later in 1801, entitled *A Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs, from Various Authors*, which included ten more texts, some composed by Richard Allen himself.

In 1818 Allen published the first official hymnbook of the AME church, which was also the first published document produced by the oldest black-owned publishing company in the country, the AME Book Concern. The *African Methodist Pocket Hymn Book* contained 314 hymns, and, of those, only fifteen were carried over from the 1801 volume, not including Allen's own "See! How the Nations Rage Together." Following the publication of the 1818 hymnal, other hymnals were periodically published but without significant changes. It was not until the publication of the 1889 hymnal that musical notation was included.

The historical significance of the publication of Allen's early hymnals is an essential component to understanding the black church and the black

religious experience in America. Although Methodist and Episcopal doctrines permeated much of early African Methodist Episcopal Church practices, the music was defined primarily by the African American experience. Richard Allen served at Bethel AME in Philadelphia until his death on March 26, 1831, and he was buried in Philadelphia.

SARAH ARTHUR

See also Jones, Absalom

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ANDERSON, ROBERT

(b. 1919, Chicago, IL; d. June 1995, Chicago, IL)

Anderson began singing in church as a boy and in the early 1930s was one of the first members of the Roberta Martin Singers considered as the best mixed (male–female) gospel group of the time in Chicago, thanks to Roberta Martin's gift for writing lyrical songs (she was also a great piano player). Anderson was probably her best singer, but he was also ambitious. In 1939, he left the group and began singing duets with R. L. Knowles, a Kansas City singer who was appointed the lead singer of the First Church of Deliverance, the famous Spiritualist church of Chicago led at the time by the flamboyant Reverend Clarence Cobb.

Knowles and Anderson are credited with bringing the "ad-lib" style to church singing, with jazz-influenced runs, free-spirited melisma, and influences of secular music, whether pop, blues, or swing. Anderson was even called the "Bing Crosby of gospel," because he was crooning and delivered an effortless phrasing; he also had a great sense of timing. Knowles and Anderson successfully toured California, and Anderson once mentioned that he even had played a small role in *Gone With the Wind*! He came back to Chicago to open a music studio, The Good Shepherd, where he instructed singers and musicians, publishing also his own compositions. In 1943 he stole the show at the National Baptist Convention with his own rendition of his song "Something Within." In 1946 he made a tour of the South and sang on the radio in Birmingham, Alabama, with a tremendous success.

Back in Chicago, he formed his own group modeled on Roberta Martin's, but he hired only female singers—the best he could find in Chicago and Gary, Indiana. First, he called them the Good Shepherd Singers (like his studio) and then the Gospel Caravans.

By the time he recorded for United Records, the group was composed of Albertina Walker, Elyse Yancey, Ora Lee Hopkins, and Nellie Grace Daniels. It was a very strong ensemble, whose only rivals were the Ward Singers and the Davis Sisters in Philadelphia. Each member could lead, and they influenced many groups and singers, such as Dorothy Love Coates and her Gospel Harmonettes, James Cleveland (who played piano for some years with Anderson), and quartet leads Sam Cooke, Johnnie Taylor, and Lou Rawls, who were trained by him and carried the Anderson style into pop music. He started a long friendship with Mahalia Jackson, who sang a lot of his compositions. In April 1952, he left the Caravans and Albertina Walker became the group's manager, leading it to stardom.

Anderson spent some years successfully leading a male group, but his popularity declined with the rise of Contemporary Gospel, and he went to work for a florist. In the 1980s he recorded for Spirit Feel. In early 1995 he entered the hospital for a by pass operation but it failed because he also had diabetes. He suffered a stroke and some months later, in June 1995, he died; the funeral was held at the Greater Harvest Baptist Church, the choir of which he had once conducted.

ROBERT SACRÉ

See also Caravans; Cleveland, James; Cooke, Sam; Jackson, Mahalia; Martin, Roberta; Walker, Albertina; Ward Trio (Ward Singers)

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ANDREWS GOSPEL SINGERS, THE

Ola Jean (b. December 12, 1929)
Myrta Sue (b. 1932)
Paula (b. 1934)
Sylvia (b. 1936)

In the early 1960s, the Andrews Gospel Singers and their leader Ola Jean Andrews represented what was called "progressive gospel." The term referred to elements of blues and jazz that imbued the music. As a popular performing group in the San Francisco Bay area, they were admired by the young Edwin Hawkins, who picked up on their modern, high, "fluted" sound. The style appealed to many white as well as black churchgoers. With her musical expertise and passion for an advanced gospel music, Ola Jean became an incentive also for Andrae Crouch. The Andrews Gospel Singers were, in turn, influenced by older groups such as the Clara Ward Singers and the Gospel Harmonettes; The Andrewses can therefore be regarded as a link between the traditional and the contemporary black gospel styles.

The nucleus of the Andrews Gospel Singers was four sisters: Ola Jean, Myrta Sue, Paula Marie, and Sylvia Lois. With the eldest, Ola Jean, as director and pianist, they were formed in 1950. Myrta Sue was eventually replaced by Jeanne King, and they were augmented with two cousins, Donna and Flora Daggao.

The Andrews sisters moved with their parents in 1939 from Eldorado, Arkansas, to the San Francisco Bay area. Mother Leceola Tobin Andrews was a singer and choir director, and their father Joseph Henry Andrews became a deacon and Sunday school superintendent at the Eighth and Peralta Church of God in Christ (COGIC). Ola Jean devoted herself most deeply to the church's music activities. At an early age she was encouraged by her parents to play the piano. She heard her uncle play honky-tonk music and also favored big band jazz and boogie-woogie pianists on the radio. At fifteen, Ola Jean decided to completely deliver herself to Christ. Of the other sisters, alto Myrta Sue played keyboard, Paula Marie was a Richard Williamson– trained soprano, and Sylvia Lois had sung from the age of seven.

The Andrews sisters started in a children's group called the Sunshine Band at Emmanuel Church of God in Christ. " . . . [W]e were asked to sing in other churches. We entered many contests, winning first place each time. One such contest was given by KDIA. As winners of that contest . . . we were awarded a fifteen-minute broadcast every Sunday afternoon (live) for three years."

Ola Jean's piano playing was influenced by Herbert "Pee Wee" Pickard of the Gospel Harmonettes, James Cleveland of the Caravans, and her greatest idol, Clara Ward. Ward often rehearsed in the Andrews home. By watching her, Ola Jean learned how to teach harmony. Ola Jean took private piano lessons and studied music at City College in San Francisco. She also became a music major graduate of Career Academy of Broadcasting.

During the 1950s, the Andrews sang at many important events arranged by the churches, and they soon became stars in the Bay Area. They appeared in the Bay Area Youth Fellowship under the direction of Herman Harper and at F. D. Haynes's Third Baptist Church in San Francisco. The sisters moved to Berkeley and in 1958 Ola Jean became principal choir director for the Choir of the Ephesians COGIC. Reid's Records in Berkeley sponsored choir competitions and the Andrews won the Best Group trophies several times. They also participated in the yearly gospel fests at Oakland Auditorium. The Andrewses opened one year for C. L. Franklin and his young daughter Aretha. The Clara Ward Singers were also on the program.

At the same time Ola Jean was developing music programs at the Ephesians COGIC—where the famous Hawkins family were members of the assembly—Edwin Hawkins often played organ for the Inspirational Choir. Hawkins adored the Andrewses and learned a lot from listening to them. The girls had appeared at the International Young Congress of the COGIC in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1959. Then they were recruited to the A. A. Allen's revival meetings in Miracle Valley, Hereford, Arizona. The meetings were broadcast and recorded. The Andrews were featured on at least six Miracle Revival LPs in 1960–1961. They also appeared on television in Hollywood with their idols Dorothy Love Coates and the Gospel Harmonettes. A successful tour of the Eastern and Southern states followed. Another milestone in their career was their participation in drummer/jazz singer Jon Hendrick's show Evolution of the Blues at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1960.

Several female gospel groups at this time—for example, the Clara Ward Singers, the Gospel Pearls, and the Meditation Singers—had adjusted their presentation for performances in night clubs. Some even forsook their gospel roots and became pop singers. The Andrews were approached by Columbia Records, who offered them a recording contract if they would only sing secular words to gospel melodies. They refused.

In 1961, the Andrewses sang on two gospel songs with folk/jazz singer Barbara Dane for Capitol Records. The company soon recorded the Andrewses on their own and in 1963 issued *Open Your Heart* (Capitol LP 1959). The album contains a tasteful mixture of Negro spirituals, gospel standards, and a

few compositions by Herbert Pickard and Ola Jean. The record exposes the polished, immaculate, and yet exuberant and soulful sounds of the Andrews Gospel Singers.

Although they did several out-of-state tours, family affairs and commitments in their church took over, and the Andrews Gospel Singers dissolved in 1970. However, Ola Jean continued on her own. Between 1973 and 1978, she produced a half-hour morning program on radio station KRE, titled "The Happy Sounds of a Forever Life." From 1979 to 1981, she was music director of a church (Christlicher Zentrum) in Berlin, Germany. During the period from 1982 to 2004 Ola Jean was minister of music and psalmist in both Europe and the United States and an in-prison seminar instructor with Chuck Colson.

Ola Jean returns to her Berlin church every so often. Of the original group, Donna Daggao has passed away, but even in the twenty-first century the Andrews Gospel Singers come together now and then for reunion concerts.

PER NOTINI

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He's All Right (Miracle Revival LP 143). The Andrews Sisters (vocal), Ola Jean Andrews (piano/vocal) with Gene Martin (vocal) and David Davis (organ), Miracle Valley, Hereford, Arizona, 1961.

He's Coming Home Again (Miracle Revival LP 139). The Andrews Sisters (vocal) with Ola Jean Andrews (piano/vocal), unknown (organ), Miracle Valley, Hereford, Arizona, *I Shall Not Be Moved* (Miracle Revival LP 127). The Andrews Sisters (vocal) with Ola Jean Andrews (piano/vocal) and the A. A. Allen Revival Choir, Miracle Valley, Hereford, Arizona, 1960.

The Andrews Gospel Singers

Does Jesus Care (Capitol T/ST 1959); *He Satisfies; He's a Mighty God* (4995); *I Won't Turn Back* (4995); *If You Miss Me Here*; *Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*; *The Miracle*; *Open Your Heart*; *Soon I Will Be Done*; *Walk Over God's Heaven*. Ola Jean Andrews (piano, vocal, arrangement), Sylvia Lois Andrews (lead vocal), Paula Marie Andrews (vocal), Donna Daggao (lead vocal), Flora Daggao, Norma J. King (vocal) unknown (bass, drums, tambourines); probably Los Angeles, May 1963.

Don't Forget to Pray; Faith (Capitol T/ST 1959). Same group as previous entry except organ player unknown; probably Los Angeles, January 1963.

ANDREWS, INEZ

(b. October 19, 1929/1935, Birmingham, AL)

This contralto lead vocalist, nicknamed "Songbird," was a main figure in gospel music for more than three decades, working with the Caravans as well as having a significant solo career. Andrews was known as much for her impeccable ability to blend with a choir as for her ability to be an aggressive lead vocalist. Her lead vocal sound is described as reverent, effusive, and sometimes "shrieking" with her passion for her music. She is most commonly recognized for her hits "Lord, Don't Move That Mountain," "The Need of Prayer," "The Healer," and "I'm Glad About It."

Andrews was a child prodigy but started her more formal singing career with the Raymond Raspberry Singers and the Original Gospel Harmonettes.

Andrews gained her wider appreciation singing with Albertina Walker's Caravans, one of the most popular touring gospel acts of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Caravans featured a constant rotation of some of the best female gospel singers of the era, with Andrews joining in 1958. She and Shirley Caesar performed together as the lead voices, gaining immense popularity.

Andrews left the Caravans in 1962 to pursue solo initiatives. One of the most significant record-label owners and producers of the era, Don Robey, who gave her the nickname "Songbird," signed her to his new subsidiary of the same name (Songbird) part of Duke–Peacock (Gospel) Records. Her magnanimous vocal style helped forge the style of the label, which also signed other famous gospel acts such as the Jackson Southernaires, the Williams Brothers, the Pilgrim Outlets, and the Reverend Oris Mays.

Andrews recorded and performed regularly with her four backup singers, the Andrewettes, throughout the 1960s. In 1973, she had her first crossover breakthrough with the release of "Lord, Don't Move That Mountain," which hit #48 on the black singles chart.

Andrews exhibited the ultimate staying power as a recording artist, having top-ranked albums across various charts over three decades. In addition to "Lord, Don't Move That Mountain," she returned

in 1988 with *If Jesus Came to Your Town Today,* which rose to #31 on the top gospel album chart. Her last major hit came in 1992 when she recorded with the Thompson Community Singers for the release of *Raise a Nation*, which made it to #30 on the top gospel album chart.

Andrews' style has influenced many, ranging from Shirley Brown to Vanessa Bell Armstrong to Cassietta George. And although Andrews has not won a Dove Award or been inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, her presence and contribution to the fabric of gospel music cannot be denied.

MARGARET B. FISHER

See also Caesar, Shirley; Caravans; Original Gospel Harmonettes; Williams Brothers

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Discography

The Need Prayer (1963, Songbird SBLP-200); *Lord, Don't Move That Mountain* (1972, Jewel); *Jehovah Is His Name* (1986, Jewel); *The Two Sides of Inez Andrews* (1987, Shanachie LP 6019); *If Jesus Came to Your Town Today* (1988, Miracle); *I Made a Step in the Right Direction*, (1990, Savoy); *Inez Andrews* (1990, Savoy); *Raise Up a Nation* (1991, Word/Epic); *Shine On Me* (1991, MCA); *Headline News* (1999, MCA); *Close to Thee* (Songbird, SBLP-213); *Letter to Jesus* (Songbird SBLP-201).

ANDRUS, BLACKWOOD & COMPANY

Sherman Andrus (dates unknown)
Terry Blackwood (dates unknown)

Gospel group popular in the 1970s formed by Sherman Andrus and Terry Blackwood, former members of the Imperials. Blackwood had been the lead singer for both the Imperials and the reorganized Stamps Quartet. While with the Imperials, the two men had been experimenting together; their efforts resulted in the Imperials' increased popularity. After departing from that group, they formed their own band with Karen Voegtin (vocalist), Bill Egtlin (keyboards and vocals), Bob Villareal (guitar and vocals), Tim Marsh (drums), and Rocky Laughlin (bass). This aggregation debuted on Greentree Records in 1977 with *Grand Opening*.

After this album became a hit on contemporary Christian music charts, it was followed in 1979 by *Following You,* which featured gospel songs by Phil Johnson and Reba and Dony McGuire, among others. Since the 1970s both men have remained active, Blackwood working with his sister Kaye in Memphis and Andrus performing as a solo act on college campuses in Oklahoma.

W. K. MCNEIL

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Discography

Grand Opening (1977, Greentree).
Following You (1979, Greentree).

ANGELIC GOSPEL SINGERS

Since 1944, the traditional Angelic Gospel Singers (the Angelics) have written and sung spiritually inspiring songs. The Angelic Gospel Singers are the longest consistently selling female gospel group in African American history. Margaret Wells Allison, her sister Josephine Wells McDowell, and friends Ella Mae Norris and Lucille Shird formed the group. Norris, Shird, and Allison had been members of the Spiritual Echoes of Philadelphia.

The Angelics started singing in the Philadelphia area. They performed at revivals, local churches, and conventions. These women wore robes for special occasions, over plain dresses or black skirts and white blouses. They accepted "free-will offerings." The Angelics never sang in nightclubs or wore flashy clothes. During the Golden era of gospel music (1945–1955), they began to perform for audiences that were willing to pay an admission. Male gospel groups were prominent and well received; however, women groups were told they needed to stay home with their families. The Angelics' travels outside Philadelphia began in Asheville, North Carolina, Shird's home town. They then traveled to Greenville, South Carolina, to Norris's home town. They traveled all over the South and to major cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Birmingham, Miami, Atlanta, Raleigh, and New York.

A 1949 recording on Gotham Records produced a hit written by Lucie Eddie Campbell (1885–1963), known as "Miss Lucie," of the National Baptist Convention. The rendition by the Angelics, "Touch Me, Lord Jesus," became a household song during the golden era, selling over a million copies the first year and receiving the *Billboard* Top Twenty Award. The gospel radio program "Ernie's Record Mart" on WLAC, Nashville, Tennessee, made this song its theme for over ten years. Accompanied by Allison's piano backup, "Touch Me, Lord Jesus," written by Campbell, has continued to be a gospel hit. It has not been published in as many hymnals as Thomas A. Dorsey's "Precious Lord," yet this song has received a reputation as a traditional gospel hymn in Baptist, Holiness, and Pentecostal audiences.

While under the Gotham Record label, the Angelics recorded "He Never Left Me Alone," "Jesus, When Troubles Burden Me Down," and the Christmas composition of "Glory to the Newborn King." In 1950, the Angelics teamed with the Dixie Hummingbirds quartet to record "Dear Lord Look Down Upon Me," "Left Me Standing on the Highway," "Wondering Which Way to Go," and other songs.

In 1951, Bernice Cole of New York joined the group. In 1953, Lucille Shird left the group to get married. In 1955, Ella Mae Norris also left the group to get married. In 1955, they remade "Touch Me, Lord Jesus," and "Sweet Home." The next remake of "Touch Me, Lord Jesus" included Allison's testimony under the Nashboro Label. In 1957, Bernice Cole left the group because of illness in her family. Allison and McDowell continued to sing. In 1961, the first male singer, Thomas Mobley, joined the group and stayed twelve years, until 1973. Geraldine Morris joined in 1973 and stayed until she died in 1974. In 1975, Bernice Cole returned to the group. In 1982, Pauline Turner of Franklin, Virginia, joined. In 1984, Darryl Richmond (bass guitarist) and John Richmond (lead guitarist) of Danville, Virginia, joined the group. Teresa Burton later joined.

In 1984, they released an anniversary album to commemorate forty years of gospel. The album featured "If you Can't help Me" and "Don't Stop at the Top of the Hill." Since 1984, the Angelics recorded these albums: *Out of the Depths, Lord, You Gave Me Another Chance, He's My Ever Present Help, I'll Live Again,* and *I've Weathered the Storm.* The Angelics were on the Nashboro Label for twenty-seven years. They then moved to Malaco Records in Jackson, Mississippi, in the 1980s. In December 1993, Malaco released an album of theirs entitled *Don't Stop Praying*.

The Angelics worked closely with the "queen of gospel," Mahalia Jackson (1911–1972), the Mighty Clouds of Joy, the Soul Stirrers, the Jackson Southernaires, Willie Banks and the Messengers, Brooklyn Allstars, Slim and the Supreme Angels, the Swanee Quintet, the Davis Sisters, evangelist Shirley Caesar, the CBS Trumpeters, and the Sensational Nightingales.

The Angelics are a traditional pioneer group who maintain the "down-home" style of expressing feelings in simple words. Although there were changes in personnel, the group still maintains the same style of music, dress, and mannerisms. A music video entitled *Angelic Gospel Singers: The Gospel in Motion,* produced by Xenon Pictures, Inc., describes what words can't explain. One can see and hear a unique barrelhouse piano style that echoes the lead singer. These strong female voices harmonize in a manner similar to the male quartet the Fairfield Four.

In May 2004, to a standing-room audience in Starke, Florida (a town north of Gainesville), the Angelics "brought the house down," meaning people were praising God, shouting, and singing. The featured songs were "Going Over Yonder," "Jesus Never Fails," "Touch Me, Lord Jesus," "Sweet Home," and "I'll Meet You on the Other Side of Jordan." The Angelics have been nominated for induction into the International Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Detroit, Michigan.

Margaret Wells Allison

The founder and leader of the Angelics, Allison was born on September 25, 1921, in McCormick, South Carolina, about fifty miles from Augusta, Georgia. In 1925, during the depression, when Margaret was four years old, the Wells family moved to Philadelphia for her father to obtain work. The Wells family attended the Little Temple Pentecostal Church in Philadelphia. The name "Angelic Gospel Singers" came to Margaret in a dream. She studied piano and at the age of twelve transferred her membership to the B. M. Oakley Memorial Church of God in Christ. The largest African American Holiness Pentecostal denomination in the world, the Church of God in Christ, was founded in 1907 and in 2004, it had over 5.6 million members in fifty-eight countries. Its historical headquarters are in Memphis, Tennessee.

SHERRY SHERROD DUPREE

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Discography

Touch Me, Lord Jesus (Malaco Records 4381).

ANOINTED PACE SISTERS

The nine sisters who comprise the Anointed Pace Sisters began singing informally in local talent shows in Georgia in the late 1960s. As children, the sisters experienced poverty and uncertain conditions in the Pool Creek neighborhood of southeast Atlanta. Reared in a strong Christian family, like many gospel singers, the sisters found release and safety in the church. Active in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) music conventions, the sisters soon came under the direction of the famed choral director Dr. Mattie Moss Clark. In the early 1970s, they won an award for Best Gospel Group at the annual COGIC convention—a frequent stepping-stone for success in gospel music. Among their early supporters were the Reverend Clay Evans (who once told Clark that she would "pick up the torch left by Mahalia Jackson") and Edwin Hawkins. Dubbed the Anointed Pace Sisters, the group began actively touring with their uncle, evangelist Gene Martin, as part of the Action Revival Team.

The Anointed Pace Sisters, now dominated by the powerful voice of LaShun Pace, recorded two projects with the independent Faith label in Atlanta that enjoyed some regional success. The group's first recording for a nationally distributed label came in 1992, when they released *U-Know* for Savoy. *U-Know* remained on the *Billboard* charts for more than a year, eventually reaching the number two spot in the gospel charts. Several of the sisters shared writing duties, including Phyllis Pace ("U-Know") and LaShun Pace ("24-7"). A subsequent Savoy release recorded lived in Atlanta, *My Purpose,* did nearly as well in 1994 and produced the hit "Hands of God," featuring LaShun on vocals.

However, the sisters experienced various management and booking problems and did not record for several years. Still, recording as Shun Pace-Rhodes, LaShun's powerful performance of "In the House of the Lord" with Dr. Jonathan Greer and the Cathedral of Faith Choir brought her to the attention of Savoy Records in 1990. She released her first solo project, *He Lives,* in 1991, and she was the featured soloist for a variety of mass choirs, most notably the Gospel Music Workshop of America, Hawkins' Music & Arts Seminar Mass Choir, and the Central George State Choir. She was also featured in the Steve Martin movie *Leap of Faith* (directed by Richard Pearce, 1992) as one of the "Angels of Mercy Choir" and in the theatrical productions *The Living Cross* and *A Fool and His Money*.

Later releases, again under the name of LaShun Pace, include *Shekinah Glory: Live* (1993), *Wealthy Place* (1996), *Just Because God Said It: Live* (1998), and *God Is Faithful* (2001), all for Savoy. Anthony Heilbut's *The Gospel Sound* cites LaShun Pace as one of the great voices of modern gospel, able to "draw on folkloric traditions" as well as sing modern, funk-oriented gospel.

Finally freed from legal difficulties, the Anointed Pace Sisters released *It's Already Done* in 2004 for the independent Gospel Music label—ten years after their previous release, *My Purpose.* Like earlier recordings, *It's Already Done* is a mixture of traditional and contemporary gospel, featuring the songwriting talents of Melonda Pace, Latrice Pace-Speights, and Duranice Pace-Love.

LaShun signed with EMI Gospel in late 2004 and released her first CD with the label, *It's My Time,* in early 2005.

Both LaShun Pace and the Anointed Pace Sisters have received several Stellar and Grammy award nominations for their releases.

ROBERT DARDEN

See also Church of God in Christ (COGIC); Gospel Music Workshop of America; Mattie Moss Clark and the Southwest Michigan State Choir

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Discography

Anointed Pace Sisters

It's Already Done (Gospel Pace Music).
My Purpose: Live in Atlanta (Savoy).
U-Know (Savoy).

Shun Pace-Rhodes and LaShun Pace

God Is Faithful (Savoy).
He Lives (Savoy).
It's My Time (EMI Gospel).
Just Because God Said It: Live (Savoy).
Shekinah Glory: Live (Savoy).
Wealthy Place (Savoy).

ARCHERS, THE

Tim Archer
Steve Archer

Contemporary Christian gospel duo popular in the 1970s that grew to include their sister Janice on soprano. It was perhaps inevitable that the brothers would be involved in religious activities of some sort because their father spent thirty years in the ministry and two of Tim and Steve's brothers were pastors in California and Holland.

The Archers got their start participating in singing sessions in their father's church and then started performing in other churches throughout northern California. Encouraged by Ralph Carmichael and Andrae Crouch, among others, they added instrumentation to back up their voices. In 1972 they recorded their first album, for Charisma Records. Impact soon purchased Charisma and reissued the disc as *The Archers.* This repackaged album received great critical praise, which led to a booking at Expo '72 in Dallas. Subsequently, they toured with Pat Boone and worked in one of his films.

As their name became prominent and their album sales increased, the addition of Janice only made the group better. Their 1978 album *Fresh Surrender* was nominated for a Dove Award.

W. K. McNeil

Discography

Any Day Now (aka *The Archers*) (1972, Charisma).
Keep Singing That Love Song (1974, Impact).
Fresh Surrender (1978, Light).

ARMOND MORALES AND THE IMPERIALS

Armond Morales (b. February 25, 1932)
Jake Hess (b. December 24,1927)
Shaun Sherrill Nielsen (b. September 10, 1942)
Gary McSpadden (b. January 26, 1943)
Henry Slaughter (b. January 9, 1927).

The Imperials were first formed in 1963 by Jake Hess. Hess had been the lead singer for the Statesmen, a Southern gospel quartet, and he handpicked the best vocalists he could find to form the original group. Bass singer Armond Morales and pianist Henry Slaughter had both been members of another successful gospel quartet, the Weatherfords. Tenor Shaun Sherrill Nielsen came from the Speer Family, and Gary McSpadden was a member of both the Statesmen and the Oak Ridge Boys.

In 1964 their musical direction was impacted by the British music invasion of America, led by the Beatles. Their first album was released in 1964, on Impact Records, and was entitled *Jake Hess and the Imperials*. In 1967 Hess left the Imperials for health reasons, and Armond Morales took up the mantle as group leader.

During the next four decades, the Imperials would regularly change personnel and had nearly three dozen different members, some of whom—such as Larry Gatlin, Danny Ward, Jason Beddoe, Mark Addock, Brian Como, Peter Pankratz, and Bill Morris—never recorded with the group. Many former alumni, including Sherman Andrus, Terry Blackwood, Gary McSpadden, Henry Slaughter, Paul Smith, and Russ Taff, had successful solo careers after leaving the troupe. The only original member who continued to tour with the group was Armond Morales. Morales owned the name "Imperials," and he served as the group's manager.

By the late 1960s the Imperials had a new look and a new sound, which drew some criticism from old fans as they gained acceptance by new ones. In 1971 the Imperials broke down racial and musical barriers when they had Sherman Andrus join the group as its new lead singer. He was an original member of Andrae Crouch and the Disciples. By the end of his five-year stay with the group, the Imperials won a Grammy Award for best gospel album, with *No Shortage.*

In the early 1970s, they were in great demand and regularly appeared on a variety of television shows, including those of Mike Douglas, David Frost, Merv Griffin, and Joey Bishop. At the same time they made appearances in Las Vegas, Reno, and Lake Tahoe, where they shared the stage with artists as diverse as

Pat Boone, Carol Channing, Jimmy Dean, Elvis Presley, and Connie Smith. The Imperials collaborated with Elvis Presley on his *How Great Thou Art* and *He Touched Me* albums. They also toured with Presley and shared the stage as his backup singers from 1969 to 1971. They became regulars on Jimmy Dean's weekly TV show, as well as recording and touring with him. Being in the spotlight gave the Imperials the opportunity to cross over into secular music, like their contemporaries the Oak Ridge Boys, but they chose to stay with gospel.

They have recorded over forty albums during their four decades of performing. Fourteen of their songs hit number one on the CCM chart. They received fifty-eight Dove Award nominations, of which they won seventeen. They have been Group of the Year eight times. The secular recording industry recognized the Imperials with four Grammy Awards, and they were the first Christian act to perform on the Grammy Awards live telecast. The Imperials have appeared in concert in many countries around the world, including Canada, England, Finland, Haiti, Holland, Hong Kong, Israel, and the Philippines.

In the mid 1980s, they once again stirred up a certain amount of controversy and alienated many of their oldest fans when they abandoned Southern gospel for the techno-pop/hard rock sound of *This Year's Model.* Morales considers this period, which also included *Stir It Up* and *Love's Still Changing Hearts*, as a period when the band was going through an identity crisis. The band lost touch with its original direction and eventually returned to its initial purpose of ministering to the church with a joyful noise. It was during this period that Morales recruited Steve Ferguson and Jeff Walker, who were ordained ministers, to aid in helping the group get refocused. Throughout the 1990s the Imperials scaled down their musical focus from entertaining in concert halls to ministering in churches. In the late 1990s the group formed their own record label, Big God Records. The beginning of the twenty-first century saw the group still going strong under the direction of founding member Armond Morales and performing between a hundred and fifty and two hundred concerts a year. The twenty-first century Imperials configuration included Morales and his son Jason, Jeremie Hudson, and Shannon Smith.

BOB GERSZTYN

See also Andrus, Blackwood & Company; Crouch, Andrae; Jake Hess and the Imperials; Oak Ridge Boys; Presley, Elvis; Slaughter, Henry and Hazel; Speer Family, The; Weatherfords, The (Quartet and Trio)

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ARMSTRONG, VANESSA BELL

(b. October 2, 1953, Detroit, MI)

Starting from a humble beginning singing in church at age four, Vanessa Bell Armstrong has built a career that exceeds the standard bounds of gospel performer, to encompass the full entertainment spectrum, from Broadway show appearances to television.

Dr. Mattie Moss Clark first noticed Armstrong at age thirteen in her local singing setting at church in Detroit, Michigan. By being in the presence of Clark during her formative years, Armstrong was able to work with and learn from some of the finest gospel talents of the era, including the Reverend James Cleveland, the Mighty Clouds of Joy, the Clark Sisters, and the Winans.

Her recording career commenced with her signing to Onyx, a division of Malaco, where she recorded two albums, *Peace Be Still* and *Chosen*. She later began recording with Jive Records/Zomba, where

she sustained a prolific recording stint during the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. She segued labels to Tommy Boy Gospel for the 2001 release of *Brand New Day*. She has a steady and building audience of fans, ranging from young to old alike, through her ability to connect with strong material, her vibrant vocal style, and her connection to mainstream media.

Her first major foray into mainstream recording happened in 1986 when she was selected to record the theme song for the NBC primetime television show *Amen*, starring Sherman Helmsley. She beat out both Aretha Franklin and Patti Labelle for the spot. During this creative period, she also made a Broadway appearance in *Don't Get God Started* in 1987, and she appeared in Oprah Winfrey's television movie *The Women of Brewster Place* in 1989. She has since appeared in more than a dozen television productions.

This broad expansion into mainstream media brought her fuller attention across contemporary gospel, urban, and traditional gospel music segments. She has influenced other contemporary gospel and urban recording artists, such as Sandra Crouch and Joe.

Overall, Armstrong has achieved strong commercial success with her urban contemporary, soul, and gospel vocal style. She has hit the *Billboard* top gospel charts ten times, with a #1 on *Chosen* and a #3 with her debut *Peace Be Still*. Her 1988 self-titled album *Vanessa Bell Armstrong* crossed over to the contemporary Christian charts as well, reaching #28. She took *Something on the Inside* and *Secret Is Out* to the R&B/hip-hop album charts. She also has charted on the R&B/hip-hop singles and tracks with 1987's "You Bring Out the Best in Me" (#80) and 1993's "Something on the Inside" (#94).

In recognition of her great career achievements, Armstrong was voted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2001.

MARGARET B. FISHER

See also Cleveland, James; Mighty Clouds of Joy; Winans, The

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ARTHUR SMITH AND HIS CROSSROADS QUARTET

Arthur Smith (b. April 1, 1921)
Ralph Smith (b. Unknown; d. Early 1980s)
Sonny Smith (b. Unknown)
Tommy Faile (b. September 1928; d. ca. 1996)
Lois Atkins (b. Unknown)
Don Ange (b. Unknown; d. ca. 2004)
Wayne "Skeeter" Haas (b. ca. 1940)

Arthur Smith, best known for his jazzy-country guitar instrumentals, has experienced a long career in country music, including leadership of the popular Crossroads Quartet. A native of Clinton, South Carolina, he grew up in nearby Kershaw, where his father was music director at a textile mill. Initially interested in horn music, young Smith also developed dexterity on a number of stringed instruments as well, especially lead guitar. His brothers Ralph and Sonny also joined him, and they worked on radio at WSPA Spartanburg and recorded four numbers—two of them sacred—for Bluebird in 1938 as Smith's Carolina Crackerjacks.

Smith's ascent began about 1945 when he first recorded his classic instrumental "Guitar Boogie," originally for Superdisc, but the master was later leased to MGM, where most of his recordings appeared over the next decade when he became the leading musical figure at WBT radio and then at WBT-TV. The Crossroads Quartet developed as a featured act within his entourage and became quite popular, first recording for MGM in 1953. The original members were Arthur on guitar and baritone, Ralph Smith on tenor, Sonny Smith on lead, and Tommy Faile on bass vocal. Their best-known early recordings were "I Saw a Man" and "The Fourth Man," cut in 1954 and 1955, respectively. In all, the Quartet made some twenty-three sides for MGM and later did long-play albums for Dot and Starday as well as on Smith's country albums.

Membership in the Crossroads Quartet underwent some changes over the years. Sonny Smith retired from the group after the first few years, and Arthur did not always sing but still played guitar. When Sonny retired, Ralph took over the vocal leads, and several females were part of the quartet at times, most

notably Lois Atkins. Later members included Don Ange, a blind pianist who could also sing, Wayne "Skeeter" Haas, and banjo picker David Deese. In addition to daily television in Charlotte, a weekly *Arthur Smith Show* was syndicated, sometimes in as many as sixty-eight markets, but usually about fifty, and the quartet was always a popular feature.

After Ralph Smith passed away the Crossroads Quartet performed less, and Arthur Smith also became less active musically, spending much of his time with a variety of business activities. He has been considered one of Charlotte's leading citizens for several decades.

IVAN M. TRIBE

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Discography

Arthur Smith & the Crossroads Quartet (1962, Starday SLP 186); *Inspirational Songs Sung by the Crossroads Quartet* (1965, Metro MS 528); *Singing on the Mountain* (1965, Dot DL 25642).

AZUSA STREET REVIVAL

1906–1909

The seeds of revival were planted in the hearts of many in several locations around the country—South, North, and East—before a movement would take root and flourish thousands of miles away on the West Coast by 1906. William Joseph Seymour, considered the father of the modern Pentecostal movement, was born May 22, 1870, of African American parentage in Centerville, Louisiana.

At about age twenty-five, Seymour moved from Centerville to Indianapolis, Indiana. There, he joined a black Methodist congregation. By 1900, he moved on to Cincinnati, Ohio and became affiliated with a Methodist church led by Euro-American the Reverend Martin W. Knapp, a trained clergyman who preached holiness and divine healing in integrated settings. Not long thereafter, Seymour began attending a congregation called the Evening Light Saints, which later became the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana). What Seymour had been searching for, he believed he had found. In one of the services, he approached the altar, "prayed through," and went back to the altar a second time, remaining until he was wholly sanctified, as he later testified. While with the Evening Light Saints, he was ordained as an evangelist. In 1903, he moved to Houston, Texas, and on to Jackson, Mississippi, two years later, where he met Charles P. Jones, the founder of the Church of Christ (Holiness) USA.

One more person Joseph Seymour would meet later during Summer 1905 was Reverend Mrs. Lucy F. Farrow, a black holiness pastor from Houston. Reverend Farrow, who had attended the services of Texas revivalist Charles F. Parham, was invited to return with him and his family to Kansas as their governess. Parham, a Euro-American minister, ran a Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, where Agnes M. Ozman was baptized with the Holy Ghost, which was evidenced by her speaking in other tongues on New Year's Day 1901. The whites-only school was the first known American location where several individuals received the Holy Ghost. Parham enforced a whites-only policy at the altar. Blacks could engage in prayer and seek salvation from a segregated back room. In 1905, Seymour attended Parham's Bible Training School, which opened at 503 Rusk Street in Houston, but he too was forced to learn from a separate rear room.

By January 1906, Seymour had quit the Bible school and received a letter from Mrs. Neely Terry from Los Angeles inviting him to pastor the congregation of Reverend Mrs. Julia W. Hutchins. On the strength of Mrs. Terry's recommendation (based on her acquaintance with Seymour in Houston), Reverend Seymour was invited to pastor the twenty or so people who initially worshipped in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Asbery, 214 North Bonnie Brae Street. Within a short period, the congregation outgrew the house and Reverend Mrs. Hutchins found new larger quarters at 9th and Santa Fe. When Seymour arrived in Los Angeles in late February or early March 1906, he preached holiness and divine healing as well as the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues. The doctrine became a hotly divisive issue with the burgeoning congregation.

One April Sunday evening when Seymour arrived at the church, he found the door padlocked, per Hutchins's orders. Mr. and Mrs. Edward S. Lee, an African American family under Hutchins, welcomed him to stay in their home, whereas the Asbery couple invited Seymour to conduct church meetings in their home. On April 9, 1906, Seymour went to Lee's home to pray for him for healing. While there, Seymour prayed for Lee to receive the Holy Ghost. Within minutes, Lee received the Holy Ghost and began to speak in other tongues. Two hours later they arrived together at the Asbery home, where the church

meeting was scheduled. During the service, Brother Lee made testimony about his experience. During the course of the service, seven more people experienced what Brother Lee had. During this time, Seymour had preached to others the baptism in the Holy Ghost but had not himself experienced the infilling, until April 12, 1906. His quest for spiritual fulfillment and a deeper life in Christ was now accomplished.

In the meantime, the Asbery residence overflowed as more friends and neighbors came, were baptized with the Holy Ghost, and began to testify about the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:11). The group learned that a building located at 312 Azusa Street was available and immediately rented it. The First African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church had owned the two-story wooden forty- by sixty-foot frame structure until 1903. In the interim, it had been used for storage and as a livery stable. Volunteers and church members cleaned and prepared the church, which at capacity would seat about seven hundred fifty worshippers. Similar to the circumstances of Jesus's birth, the revisitation of the Holy Spirit upon mankind included a stable

From these humble beginnings in 1906 until 1909, no one knows how many thousands of people came, were engulfed by the Holy Ghost, and departed to inform others and to plant or contribute to the birth of Pentecostal churches and missionary work. People from nearly every country, every tongue, race, and ethnic group found their way to the Azusa Street Revival. A *Los Angeles Times* reporter, unfamiliar with the biblical account of Acts 2, on April 18, 1906, wrote the front-page headline "Weird Babel of Tongues . . . New Sect of Fanatics Is Breaking Loose . . . Wild Scene Last Night on Azusa Street . . . Gurgle Wordless Talk by a Sister." In September 1906, William Seymour penned the following headline in the first issue of his church newspaper, *The Apostolic Faith*: "Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts." Five thousand copies were printed. By 1907, fifty thousand copies were being printed regularly for worldwide distribution. In issue after issue of *The Apostolic Faith*, firsthand accounts by individuals representing more than fifty nations attributed their salvation experience directly to the Azusa Street Revival that had lasted about a thousand days, led by African American evangelist William Joseph Seymour.

EVELYN M. E. TAYLOR

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B

BAGWELL, WENDY

(b. May 16, 1925, Chamblee, GA; d. June 13, 1996)

Wendell Lee "Wendy" Bagwell was equally adept at singing a gospel song or spinning an amusing tale, and he did both to great acclaim as the longtime leader of Wendy Bagwell and the Sunliters.

Bagwell attended West Fulton High in Atlanta and was twice decorated for bravery as a combat Marine at Saipan and Iwo Jima. Returning home to Georgia, he won custody of an abused eight-year-old nephew, Ronnie Buckner (although Wendy was not quite 21), and he soon married Melba Louise Hogue of Simsville, Georgia. In church, Bagwell met two young singers, Geraldine Terry and Georgia Jones, and he formed an amateur gospel trio with them. Soon they had radio sponsors (a local supermarket, Mary Carter Paint) and were touring in the area as much as Wendy's full-time jobs allowed. They made $35 a week as regulars at the Georgia Jubilee in East Point (near Atlanta), where young Jerry Reed, Joe South, and others joined them as "underpaid talent." Geraldine Terry stayed with the group, marrying James Morrison and becoming known professionally as Jerri Morrison; Georgia Jones was succeeded by Dot Pressley, Virginia Williams, and then, about 1960, by "Little" Jan Buckner, who married Bagwell's adopted nephew Ronnie and became a longtime member of Bagwell's Sunliters.

Syndicated television helped make Wendy Bagwell and the Sunliters regionally popular (*America Sings, Guy Mobile Home Show, The Bob Poole Show, The Wally Fowler Show*), and they made their first recordings for Hilltop in the early 1960s, featuring then and always a mix of traditional gospel favorites with the sort of story songs Bagwell loved to write ("Pearl Buttons," "Willie McNeil," "Aunt Kate," "Uncle George"), presaging the spoken humor of later years. With great promotion, they became the first Southern gospel group to play Carnegie Hall (1962) and the first to tour Europe (1965). In 1968, they released their first of four albums for RCA Victor, then in 1970, began a long association with Canaan Records, for whom Bagwell released the million-selling monologue that established him as a top-flight comedian: "Here Come The Rattlesnakes" (sometimes titled "Rattlesnake Song"). Like much of his later humor, this was the true story of an on-the-road experience—the memorable night in which a Kentucky congregation brought out six rattlesnakes to handle after a concert. As Bagwell recounted the story, "If God ever told me to handle a rattlesnake, I would. But he didn't, and so I ain't." Soon he was gospel's version of Andy Griffith, Brother Dave Gardner, and Jerry Clower, and in 1975, he released his first all-comedy album, *Bust Out Laffin'* (Canaan CAS-9765). Bagwell's liner notes to this album won him his only Dove Award. Music, however, remained first and foremost, as Bagwell turned down repeated advice to leave the gospel field for full-time comedy.

In addition to making recordings and averaging one hundred and fifty road shows a year with the Sunliters, Bagwell, along with his daughter Wendy Lea and nephew Ronnie Buckner, operated a furniture business out of his Hiram, Georgia, home. Bagwell died in Atlanta after surgery on a ruptured

brain aneurysm on June 13, 1996. Posthumously, he has been honored by induction in 1997 into the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame and (as Wendy Bagwell & the Sunliters) in 2001 into GMA's Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

RONNIE PUGH

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BAILES BROTHERS, THE

Kyle O. Bailes (b. May 7, 1915; d. March 3, 1996)
John J. Bailes (b. June 24, 1918; d. December 21, 1989)
Walter Butler Bailes (b. January 17, 1920; d. November 27, 2000)
Homer Vernon Bailes (b. May 8, 1922)

The four Bailes Brothers constituted a country music duet (they usually worked in twos) that recorded a high proportion of gospel material and created numerous original songs, most notably the classic number "Dust on the Bible." The brothers were Kyle O., John Jacob, Walter Butler, and Homer Vernon. Natives of Kanawha County, West Virginia, the brothers were reared in poverty by their widowed mother after their father died in 1925. They worked to forge careers in country music from the mid-1930s, largely inspired by radio singers they heard via WCHS Charleston; they appeared on that station and other West Virginia broadcast outlets.

Generally speaking, the various combinations of brothers found little commercial success in depression-racked West Virginia, but, after World War II brought some return of prosperity, John and Walter achieved prosperity at WSAZ Huntington. In 1944, with the help of Roy Acuff, they secured a spot at WSM and the Grand Ole Opry. They began recording for Columbia in February 1945, waxing their classic "Dust on the Bible" and several other sacred and heart songs, most notably "I've Got My One Way Ticket to the Sky" and "Ashamed to Own the Blessed Savior." In all, they recorded twenty-eight sides for Columbia through 1947, with half of them being original religious songs. In the fall of 1946, the Bailes Brothers had a session for King, recording twenty-four songs, half of them gospel, including such classics as "An Empty Mansion," "Something Got Hold of Me," and "Daniel Prayed." The mandolin of Ernest Ferguson and steel guitar of Shot Jackson helped define their instrumental sound.

Late in 1946, the brothers moved to KWKH Shreveport, where they helped start the *Louisiana Hayride* in April 1948. In the meantime, Walter left to enter the ministry, and Homer, who had joined them at WSM after his release from the army, became Johnnie's duet partner. Kyle also worked with them periodically as bass player and handled their booking. The act broke up in 1949 but periodically reformed, most notably in 1953, when Johnnie and Walter recorded another dozen songs—all sacred—at three different sessions. In addition to several originals, these efforts included two songs written by others, "Muddy Sea of Sin" and "Avenue of Prayer."

Walter Bailes, who had been the group's principal songwriter, continued as such in addition to his ministerial efforts. His best-known later composition, "Give Mother My Crown," became one of the better-known Flatt and Scruggs songs of the later 1950s. Along the way, he received the title "Chaplain of Music Row" and had Sunday evening programs on WSM. In addition to numerous solo recordings, he cut several duets with Kyle and an album with Homer in 1968, who by this time had also entered the ministry. Many of these discs were on Walter's Loyal label. His later efforts were on a newer label, White Dove. Johnnie and Homer also cut a gospel album for Starday in 1972, and all four brothers did a reunion album in 1977 for Old Homestead. It even included sister Minnie helping out on a few numbers and Ernest Ferguson again playing mandolin. Walter, Kyle, and Ernest played numerous churches and a few bluegrass festivals in the later 1970s. Johnnie and Homer also played a few festivals in this era, but Homer, who regularly pastored a church, did little traveling. Homer did cut a pair of albums for Old Homestead in the 1980s. As the twenty-first century dawned, only Homer remained active, largely retired from his Methodist ministry but still preaching and singing on occasion.

Overall, the Bailes Brothers—with their sacred and heart songs—had a great deal of impact with their radio work in the 1944–1949 era, and to a lesser degree with their recordings. Commercially, they had periods of intense success, but their overall impact and sustained prosperity was hampered by periodic internal dissension. In 2002, Bear Family Records of Germany reissued all of their Columbia recordings on compact disc, an indication of continuing interest in their music. In addition, the impact of their original songs—largely composed by Walter—continues to be felt in country gospel music circles.

IVAN M. TRIBE

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BANJO

The banjo came to gospel music through its association with country, bluegrass, and popular music styles. Although there is not a "gospel banjo" style, the banjo played an important role as an accompaniment instrument for gospel performers.

The American banjo has its roots in African American stringed instruments brought to this country by the slaves. Although we do not know the specific model for the banjo, instruments with gourd bodies, four to eight strings, and guitar-like necks were known in Africa and were noted in the Southern colonies in the eighteenth century. Slaves with musical talent were often encouraged to play European instruments such as violins and guitars for dances and parties; the American banjo combines elements of these European instruments with its African predecessors.

Despite slavery and segregation, there was a good deal of interplay between black and white musicians in the South during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. One of the first white musicians to take up the banjo was Joel Walker Sweeney, who was performing in Virginia as early as the 1830s. White musicians turned to woodworkers to make their instruments; these sometimes featured gourd bodies, but they increasingly featured a hoop-shaped body with a skin head stretched across the top (like a modern tambourine). Sweeney is credited with adding the short, drone string to the banjo, or at least had instruments made with this feature for his own use. Sweeney originally performed with circuses and eventually joined the growing minstrel show circuit, where white musicians and performers imitated black musical styles. The banjo became a favorite of minstrel players because of its close association with plantation life. Specialty banjo makers such as William Boucher in Baltimore (and others) were in business by the mid-nineteenth century, showing the demand for the instrument. By this time, most instruments had either five or six strings (including the short drone string), with five strings increasingly becoming the norm. The traditional style of playing was known by various names (e.g., frailing, knocking, clawhammer, etc.), and it involved brushing across the strings with the back of the index or third fingernail while "catching" the fifth or drone string with the thumb to create a regular rhythmic pattern.

By the turn of the twentieth century, banjos were very much a part of American musical life. Makers such as S. S. Stewart of Philadelphia and Fairbanks (later Vega) of Boston promoted the instrument heavily, and college banjo clubs were established in major Ivy League schools, while performers worked the vaudeville circuit. Meanwhile, the need for dance bands to have a louder chord instrument than the guitar led to the development of hybrid instruments such as the banjo guitar (a banjo with a six-string guitar neck) and then the "tango," or tenor banjo (a four-string banjo). These instruments were more suited to being played with a flat pick (like a guitar) for playing either melodies or chords.

Early country five-string banjo players such as famed Grand Ole Opry star Uncle Dave Macon featured gospel music as part of their repertoire, although they were not primarily gospel performers. Macon recorded many gospel songs, along with songs with religious themes ("Jordan Am a Hard Road to Travel") commenting on the lack of religion in contemporary life. When bluegrass music became popular after World War II, gospel songs became an integral part of many bands' performances, although initially the banjo was not used on gospel numbers because of its association with secular dance music.

Bill Monroe, known as the "father of bluegrass music," recorded beautiful gospel quartet numbers, but they were accompanied only by guitar, mandolin, and bass. The Stanley Brothers, another early bluegrass group, similarly usually did not feature banjo on their gospel recordings. However, by the early 1950s a few bluegrass groups began specializing in gospel music proudly featuring the banjo. Notable among them was the Lewis Family, featuring the banjo playing of "Little Roy" Lewis on their bluegrass gospel television show, broadcast out of Augusta, Georgia, as early as 1954. In the 1960s and 1970s, more bluegrass groups began specializing in gospel music, notably Doyle Lawson with his group Quicksilver (originally using banjo player Terry Baucom), whereas old-timers such as Ralph Stanley (now leading the Clinch Mountain Boys on his own since the death in 1966 of his brother Carter) began using full band instrumentation—including the banjo—on their gospel recordings.

Outside of bluegrass, gospel country harmony groups were popular on local radio throughout the

South. Photos of these groups show that they often used tenor, banjo guitar, or even banjo ukulele (a hybrid featuring a small banjo head attached to a ukulele neck) as accompanying instruments. Although not many of these groups recorded, judging from recorded evidence and reminiscences of musicians, the style of performance on these instruments would have been similar to that of secular bands, who used them for rhythmic accompaniment and occasional lead melody work.

RICHARD CARLIN

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BARBERSHOP QUARTETS

Overview

Barbershop is a type of four-part (TTBB) vernacular vocal music generally performed with the melody in the second tenor, supported homophonically by major, minor, and major-minor seventh chords that tend to follow the circle-of-fifths progression. Although the earliest known use of the word "barbershop" to describe this style of music appears in 1900, its origins extend back at least to the mid-nineteenth century. It saw its heyday in the decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century and is still practiced worldwide by a relatively small but avid group of enthusiasts.

Origins

The origins of barbershop harmony are impossible to trace with any certainty. Some historians have attempted to connect it with the practice of amateur music making in the barbershops of seventeenth-century England. While they may share a common association with regard to setting, Elizabethan "barber's music" and barbershop harmony bear no significant musical relationship with one another. Barbershop is an American musical idiom, a conflation of the diverse musical and cultural sensibilities that pervaded the United States during the 1800s. Begun as a social activity enjoyed largely by amateurs, it was born out of improvisation and the nineteenth-century interest in vocal harmonizing. Strong evidence suggests that African Americans—particularly those in the South—were chiefly responsible for forging the early "close harmony" style that would later be called *barbershop*. In casual settings such as barbershops, barrooms, and street corners, African Americans that were denied access to many other venues used singing as one of their primary forms of recreation.

Almost from the beginning, these amateur excursions into close harmony singing have enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the professional groups that played a large part in popularizing the style. Blackface quartets were a staple of minstrel shows. Their repertoire, including songs about the South and "days gone by" (for example, Stephen Foster's "Old Folks at Home"), may have established the association of barbershop with nostalgia that continues to this day. Quartet features were carried over from the minstrel shows into the vaudeville circuit and the recording studio. Amateur quartets also performed to some notoriety, representing businesses, police departments, churches, and the like. Several hundred amateur quartets and choruses continue to sing under the auspices of the various barbershop organizations.

Barbershop enjoyed the height of its popularity around the turn of the twentieth century as the recording industry was coming into its own. In the 1890s black foursomes such as the Unique Quartette and the Standard Quartette and white groups such as the Manhansett Quartet were some of the first recording artists. Well into the 1920s, close harmony foursomes—led by the Haydn Quartet, the American Quartet, and the Peerless Quartet—were the dominant forces in popular music.

Musical Elements Associated with Barbershop

It is impossible to list the musical elements of barbershop in any definitive way or to describe an authentic performance practice. It has no known point of origin, nor did it receive any scholarly attention during its formative years. Nonetheless, certain core elements do seem to have become identified with the barbershop style.

Barbershop historically is identified as a male quartet style. The four parts are identified as tenor (specifically first tenor), lead (which is in the second tenor range), baritone, and bass. Idiomatic to barbershop is the practice of placing the melody in the second tenor part while the first tenor harmonizes in a relatively lighter voice above it. The bass tends to sing the roots and fifths of the chords, and the baritone fills in the chord sometimes below the lead, sometimes above. The association of barbershop with male singing is so strong that even women who today sing in barbershop quartets still use the tenor, lead, baritone, and bass voice designations. Barbershop is now considered a form of *a cappella* music, although early documentation and recordings reveal that it was sometimes accompanied by any number of instrumental combinations.

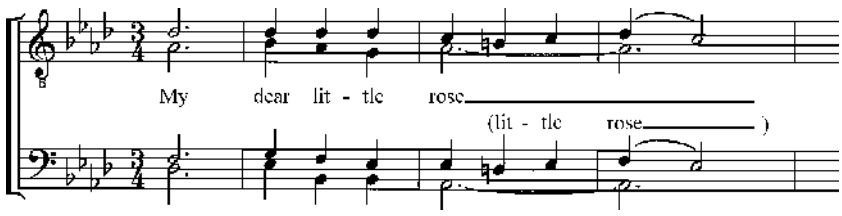
The hallmarks that have come to represent the barbershop style speak to its character as an improvised vernacular music. One of barbershop's most iconic elements is its use of call and response. In one type, the lead will sing a lyric that is repeated verbatim by the harmony parts. Several songs in the standard barbershop lexicon employ this technique and were referred to by some early chroniclers as "echo songs." "You're the Flower of My Heart, Sweet Adeline"—which some consider the icon of barbershop music—is a classic echo song. As it is traditionally performed, every line except the last is offered first by the lead singing alone, and then the lyric is repeated by the other parts, who harmonize with the final note of the lead line, as follows:

Sweet Adeline (sweet Adeline)
My Adeline (my Adeline)
At night, dear heart (at night, dear heart)
For you I pine (for you I pine)

Perhaps because of its *a cappella* nature and its connection with African American musical tradition, the barbershop style has a strong metrical foundation, even in its *rubato* passages. This metrical foundation is manifested by means of a class of devices—called *rhythmic propellants* by later barbershop theorists—that are designed to maintain the pulse, especially when the melody is holding a note or resting between notes. Rhythmic propellants take many forms. The examples of call-and-response patterns cited earlier are but one technique that groups use in part to maintain the sense of meter.

Related to call-and-response are "echoes," a loose designation that applies to a situation in which the harmony parts sing a few words to fill a gap left by the melody line as it holds a note or rests between notes. The term "echo" no doubt refers to its use in early practice when the harmony parts would simply repeat the last few words of the melody. It is sometimes the case, however, that the echo parts—rather than repeat the melody's lyric verbatim—sing a short phrase with different words that relates directly to the words of the melody. A 1924 recording by the Shannon Quartet of "Sweet Rosie O'Grady" illustrates a classic example of echo (see Example 1).

Other common rhythmic propellants include "bass pickups" and "fills" (using either words or nonsense syllables), the "tiddlies," and "swipes." A tiddly is a brief embellishment effected by one or two voices over a static chord. It can resemble standard nonchord tones (especially neighboring and suspension tones), but the primary purpose of a tiddly is to maintain the quick rhythmic drive. Tiddlies seem to spring from the improvisational nature of vocal lines in the black musical tradition. A swipe occurs when one or more parts move to a different tone while the other part(s) maintain a steady pitch. The effect of a swipe is key to the barbershop sound. It not only keeps the rhythm going but also adds harmonic changes and fills out



Example 1. Excerpt from "Sweet Rosie O'Grady." Shannon Quartet, 1924.

chords (for example, the bass and baritone might move from the root and fifth of a triad up to the fifth and seventh; this changes the triad with a doubled root to a complete seventh chord).

Barbershop utilizes a rich harmonic scheme. Again, owing to its improvisatory nature and its connection with African American idioms, the chord changes are rapid and often employ progressions uncommon to the classical standard practice. Barbershop leans toward consonant chords and features seventh chords for their ability to accommodate each singer on a distinct chord tone. Major-minor seventh chords are a particular staple of the barbershop style. In barbershop the major-minor seventh chord is found in two contexts. First, it acts in the traditional dominant seventh sense, resolving down a perfect fifth but with several secondary dominants strung together to effect a circle-of-fifths progression. Such a harmonic progression is found in Western classical music, often used as a modulatory device. It is rare in common practice music, however, to find entire songs based on the circle-of-fifths progression. The practice thrived, however, among popular-music composers of the late 1800s and early 1900s, particularly among ragtime and Tin Pan Alley composers.

Just as common to barbershop, however, are major-minor seventh chords that do not serve a dominant or secondary dominant function. Such cases suggest that in barbershop, as in other music linked to the African American tradition, the dominant seventh sound often arises as a result of a blues scale coloration on an otherwise major chord. In these instances, the harmony may not progress according to a dominant function but according to its function as a simple diatonic triad. Such nondominant major-minor seventh chords are the result of a heterophony—a horizontal rather than a vertical approach to music—and again speak to the improvisational nature of barbershop. When a blue third or blue seventh scale degree is added to the subdominant or tonic chords, respectively, the effect will resemble major-minor seventh chords. But because they are not conceived as dominant chords, they will resolve as if they were simple triads to whatever chord the melody dictates. It is this pervasiveness of—and freedom with—the major-minor seventh chord that is at the heart of barbershop harmony.

Barbershop is also known for certain distinctive vocal traits. Most amateur barbershop quartets incorporate a falsetto (literally a head voice quality) tenor. While rooted in the black tradition, it has a practical purpose for its existence in barbershop. The brilliance of a full-voice tenor can easily overpower the lower lead voice. Because the style is melody based, the falsetto tenor is used to support the lead without drawing attention to itself. Even tenors who sing in full voice generally do so with a softer, lighter quality that recalls falsetto singing. Barbershop singers today strive for what they call "expanded sound." This is literally a quality that is marked by strong overtones and is a result of several things, including a robust tone, justly tuned chords, matched vowels, and a balance that favors the lower voice parts and the most consonant intervals. Whereas earlier quartets used a great deal of *portamento* from note to note, modern quartets tend to sing cleaner intervals, reserving *portamento* for key places in the song in which they want to add *portamento* as a dramatic effect.

Barbershop's Influence

Although barbershop music has enjoyed only limited scholarly attention, its impact on vocal music in general and subsequent groups was enormous. Many prominent black musicians, such as Louis Armstrong, W. C. Handy, and Jelly Roll Morton, claimed barbershop singing as among their earliest musical experiences. Groups that would figure prominently in jazz and gospel began as barbershop quartets or claimed strong roots in barbershop music. The Mills Brothers' father, John Mills, Sr., sang in a quartet for many years, and it was in his barbershop in Piqua, Ohio, that the brothers began singing together. The popular gospel group the Golden Gate Jubilee Quartette also began as a barbershop quartet and started singing together in a barbershop. One of the early recording quartets, the Shannon Four, reinvented themselves as a jazz group called the Revelers. That incarnation was the prototype for the famous German quartet, the Comedian Harmonists. Even later popular ensembles, both male and female, had strong roots in barbershop singing. These include the Four Freshmen, the Hi-Lo's, and the Chordettes. Barbershop's influence is felt particularly in white and black gospel quartets from the early 1900s to the present, many of which use all of the standard barbershop idioms, including a voicing with melody in the second tenor. Thus, in spite of its unassuming image, barbershop was seminal to most of the vocal harmony genres that have succeeded it.

Interest in barbershop music had waned considerably by 1938, when two barbershop enthusiasts, Owen C. Cash and Rupert Hall, formed an organization to preserve it. Given the name "The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop

Quartets Singing in America''—whose lengthy initials (SPEBSQSA) were meant as a parody of President Roosevelt's New Deal agencies—the organization gained some popularity nationwide. This organization inspired a female barbershop organization called Sweet Adelines International. From these two groups have come several more male and female organizations worldwide. These organizations also fostered organized choruses that sing in the barbershop quartet style.

JAMES E. HENRY

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BARREN CROSS

Jim LaVerde (b. May 1964)
Mike Lee (b. May 1964)
Ray Parris (b. March 29, 1964)
Steve Whitaker (b. July 10, 1963)

Barren Cross (BC) was born in November 1983, after nearly three years of gestation. The quartet was composed of bassist Jim LaVerde, singer Mike Lee, guitarist Ray Parris, and drummer Steve Whitaker, who were all natives of the Los Angeles area. Initially, Parris met Whitaker through a newspaper ad in early 1981. They both shared a vision for a Christian heavy metal band but were lacking a lead singer and bass player. Their communication was minimal for the next couple of years. In the spring of 1983, Whitaker met Lee through another newspaper ad and introduced him to Parris as their voice. The trio began rehearsing, writing songs, and looking for a bass player. By Fall 1983, LaVerde filled the void and completed the foursome. They named themselves BC because it symbolized the resurrection.

The new group was based in Inglewood, California. They played their first show in January 1984 at a girls' detention center. By early 1985, they met with Dino Elephante of the rock group Kansas. Elephante produced a six-song EP for them titled *Believe.* After making up press kits that included the EP, BC sent them out to a dozen record labels and landed a recording contract with Star Song records. In January 1986, Star Song released "Rock for the King,." composed of the six songs from the EP, remastered, along with three additional new tunes.

Touring tightened BC's performance as well as its cohesiveness. Live shows displayed the same incendiary guitar work found on the album. In some ways the band resembled a Christian version of Van Halen, with Paris's guitar work, while Lee's powerful singing style was reminiscent of Bruce Dickinson from Iron Maiden. Their songs were metallic and melodic at the same time. They contained killer hooks and had an overtly strong Christian message. When compared to their "Christian metal" counterpart Stryper, both groups' lyrics were both overtly Christian, but some considered BC's sound as being heavier.

In 1987, Barren Cross signed a contract with Enigma, a secular record label. *Atomic Arena* was released in 1988 and, after being marketed to both Christian and secular audiences, received some airplay on MTV and secular radio stations. During this time, they recorded *Hotter than Hell*, their live album, which was not released until 1990. It was also during this time that they collaborated with secular guitarist Ronnie Montrose for a remix of "Rock for the King."

During this period, the band was at its peak and recorded *State of Control,* which was once again engineered by the Elephante brothers. By August 1989 BC's cohesiveness began to unravel, with Whitaker and Lee leaving the band to return to school, raise families, and pursue other musical directions. Replacements were used temporarily for some touring, but that ended by 1990. The band temporarily reunited to record their fourth studio album, *Rattle Your Cage,* in 1994. Although the band has never officially disbanded, little has been heard from them since 1994, other than reuniting for an occasional concert.

BOB GERSZTYN

See also Rock Gospel; Stryper

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BARRETT SISTERS

Widely considered the best documentary on gospel music—and considered one of the best documentaries ever—*Say Amen, Somebody* is ostensibly about two gospel legends, Thomas A. Dorsey and Willie Mae Ford Smith. However, the documentary's most electrifying performances are by DeLois Barrett (b. December 3, 1926) and the Barrett Sisters.

Three of ten children born in poverty on Chicago's South Side, sisters DeLois, Billie, and Rodessa drew widespread attention in Chicago's crowded gospel music field first by harmonizing in the homes of friends and neighbors and then by singing for the Morning Star Church in the mid-1940s. Lead vocalist DeLois was tapped to join the Roberta Martin Singers while still a teenager. Despite the presence of such luminaries as Eugene Smith, Norsalus McKissick, Myrtle Scott, Robert Anderson, Willie Webb, and Martin herself, Delois's operatic soprano and animated, emotional stage presence attracted attention wherever the group performed, especially in their trademark song, "Yield Not to Temptation."

While DeLois remained with the Roberta Martin Singers for eighteen years, sister Rodessa became a choral director, and Billie studied at the American Music Conservatory before becoming a church soloist. When DeLois married the Reverend Frank Campbell in the 1950s, she generally restricted her travel to the Chicago area. The sisters reformed their trio in 1961, began recording two years later, and have performed continuously since, generally in smaller venues and churches. The Barrett Sisters, like their friend the late Mahalia Jackson, have also remained active in social justice issues and Democratic Party politics.

The Barrett Sisters, lovingly called "the Sweet Sisters of Zion," were finally thrust into the national spotlight with the award-winning documentary *Say Amen, Somebody.* The subsequent acclaim finally enabled DeLois to fill a long-held dream (memorably voiced in *Say Amen, Somebody*) to perform throughout the world, and the Barrett Sisters have given concerts from Paris to the Fiji Islands.

After nearly sixty years of performing, the Barrett Sisters are one of the few remaining direct links to the original gospel sound of the 1930s and 1940s. DeLois's powerful voice and physical presence have made her the voice of choice for the funerals of some of gospel's most beloved artists, including Mahalia Jackson, Dorsey, Smith, even faith healer Kathryn Kuhlman.

ROBERT DARDEN

See also Dorsey, Thomas; Jackson, Mahalia; Smith, Willie Mae Ford

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BARROWS, CLIFF

(b. April 6, 1923)

Clifford "Cliff" Burton Barrows was for more than fifty years one of the most familiar personalities associated with gospel music during the second half of the twentieth century. As song leader, choir director, and master of ceremonies for the Billy Graham Crusade Association, beginning in 1945, Barrows exerted a significant influence on gospel music.

The son of Charles and Harriet Barrows, young Clifford was converted during a Sunday school meeting after hearing a message on John 3:16. He felt called to Christian ministry while in high school and later entered Bob Jones College for training, majoring in sacred music. While in school Barrows was influenced by Homer Rodeheaver, who had been evangelist Billy Sunday's song leader during the early decades of the century. Rodeheaver, as a charismatic soloist, song leader, and publisher, was then the leading figure in gospel music.

Upon Barrows's college graduation in 1944, he became an evangelist and song leader for Youth for Christ before joining Billy Graham. Barrows helped shape an approach to the Graham crusade meetings based on the model developed by Moody and Sankey during the 1870s and later continued by the Sunday/Rodeheaver team, wherein congregational song remained a conspicuous and important component of the revival meetings.

Unlike the earlier models, however, the music of the Graham crusades was characterized by a more conservative approach as Barrows and the "team" of musicians—including vocal soloist George Beverly Shea and pianist Tedd Smith—relied upon traditional hymns and older gospel songs as the core of their music. In fact, the song most identified with the Graham crusades, "Just As I Am," was a gospel hymn from a century earlier.

The impact of a revival "crusade," which involved a series of highly publicized and widely broadcast services that might last for many weeks, was to popularize whatever music Barrows chose for his crusade choirs to sing. As a result, some of the late twentieth century's best loved gospel songs were those made popular by their inclusion as a crusade "theme" song. Examples included "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," "To God Be the Glory," and "How Great Thou Art"—gospel songs no publisher could afford to leave out of a new hymnal after they gained fame in a Graham meeting.

Barrows also carried on the tradition of song leader as master of ceremonies, following in the footsteps of Ira Sankey, Homer Rodeheaver, and Charlie Alexander. In this role, Barrows reflected an energetic, smiling spokesman who smoothly tied together the disparate parts of a revival service. Unlike his former models, Barrows was not involved in composing or publishing music.

His efforts were directed toward other aspects of the Graham Association, however. These included being program director and host for the weekly *Hour of Power* radio program from its inception in 1950. From 1965 to 1970, Barrows was also president of World Wide Pictures, the film arm of the ministry known for its use of more contemporary music.

In 1966, Barrows and Donald Hustad compiled and edited *Crusader Hymns*, a volume of songs for use in the revival meetings. Barrows also assisted in compiling *Crusader Hymn Stories,* with biographical and anecdotal stories related to the hymns and gospel songs popular in the meetings.

Although the music of the Graham crusades tended to reflect a conservative bent, Barrows did feature new gospel writers as they began to emerge. These included John Peterson and the Gaithers, reflecting traditional gospel hymnody, and Andrae Crouch, reflecting the growing popularity of black gospel music. Also included were representatives of the folk music movement, such as Johnny Cash, and the newer leaders of contemporary Christian music.

With the Graham crusades being such an influential factor in evangelical life, Barrows did much to popularize the performance practice of gospel hymnody as congregational song led by an arm-waving conductor, accompanied by a piano and/or organ, assisted by a choir and sung in a fairly straightforward, nonimprovisatory manner.

Over his long career, Barrows may well have led more people in singing gospel and religious music than any other human being. For his contributions, he was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in Nashville in 1988.

MEL R. WILHOIT

See also Crouch, Andrae; Rodeheaver, Homer Alvan

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BARTLETT, EUGENE MONROE

(b. December 24, 1885; d. January 25, 1941)

Singer, songwriter, editor, and publisher Eugene Monroe Bartlett was born the day before Christmas in Waynesville, Missouri. His education came at the Hall-Moody Institute in Martin, Tennessee. Early in life he developed an interest in music that he manifested by teaching singing schools. In later years his schools brought together such well-known teachers as James Rowe and Homer Rodeheaver.

In 1918 Bartlett joined forces with John A. McClung and David Moore to form the Hartford Music Company in Hartford, Arkansas, thirty miles south of Fort Smith. Moore had been partners with Will M. Ramsey in the Central Music Company until Ramsey moved to Little Rock, Arkansas. He then threw in his lot with McClung and Bartlett to form a company that would have a significant influence on the development of the Southern gospel music industry. During the 1920s this company achieved some success with Bartlett's songs "Victory in Jesus" and "Everybody Will Be Happy Over There." Bartlett was president of the Hartford Music Company from 1918 to 1935, during which time it expanded to include branch offices in Nacogdoches, Texas, and Hartshorne, Oklahoma. This growth was accomplished in much the same way James D. Vaughan built up his Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, company.

In 1921, the Hartford Musical Institute—a shape-note school with sessions twice a year, in January and June—was established. By the early 1930s approximately four hundred students were attending this school. Bartlett also published *The Herald of Song,* a monthly magazine promoting shape-note singing and advertising quartets sponsored by Hartford to promote the company's products. These activities notwithstanding, Hartford's greatest claim to fame was Albert E. Brumley, who attended the Hartford school in 1926 and went on to become the best-known southern gospel songwriter of all time. Arriving in Hartford without sufficient money to pay the school's tuition, Brumley was enabled to enroll by Bartlett, who also put the youth up in his own house, an act of kindness Brumley never forgot.

Brumley attended music classes, earning his keep by working for the Hartford company and writing songs in his spare time. While in Hartford, he published his first song, "I Can Hear Them Singing Over There," with Bartlett's help. Brumley later described this 1927 effort as "not one of my better tunes." Brumley also was bass singer for the Hartford Quartet, which featured, in addition to gospel numbers, comedy songs such as Bartlett's "Take an Old Old Tater and Wait." The latter piece became a country hit when later recorded by the West Virginia singer Little Jimmy Dickens.

After leaving the Hartford Music Company, Bartlett worked briefly for the Stamps–Baxter Music Company and the James D. Vaughan Music Company. He remained active conducting singing schools throughout Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Alabama, and Tennessee. Besides those already mentioned, his best-known songs are "I Heard My Mother Call My Name in Prayer" and "He Will Remember."

W. K. MCNEIL

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BASS, MARTHA

Martha Carter Bass Peaston (b. 1921, Arkansas; d. September 21, 1998, Saint Louis, MO)

Martha Bass's family moved to Saint Louis, Missouri, when she was two years old, and Martha joined the Pleasant Green Baptist Church at an early age, under the leadership of Pastor Reverend G. H. Pruitt. Influenced by the National Baptist Conventions, she started to read the Bible and to sing in the choir with a dark, powerful contralto and, from the beginning, was outstandingly good, like her own mother, Nevada Carter.

She was chosen by Willie Mae Ford Smith to perform in her backup group, and of all of Smith's female pupils, Bass came closest to duplicating her vocal power and resonance, even if Martha's idol was Mahalia Jackson. Trained and obviously inspired by her mentor, she was known as a "house shouter," with bluesy accents, because of her ability to rouse a church into pandemonium. That is how she had a short stay of about three or four years with Clara Ward and the Ward Singers; she recorded with them for Savoy in 1950, and her version of "Wasn't It a Pity How They Punished My Lord" was a huge hit.

At about the same time, her family and entourage organized a private recording session, and two songs were issued on the Bass label. Then she got married, and, with two sons and a baby girl—later to be the famous soul singer Fontella Bass, married to Lester Bowie, the leader of the Chicago Art Ensemble—Martha chose to raise her family, staying at home and returning to the Pleasant Green Choir. However, she stayed in touch with the Ward Singers, and, in 1963, she was hired as sales manager of a music store the Wards opened to sell printed music, songbooks, records, and greeting cards.

The shop was closed two years later, and, in 1966, with plenty of free time again and eager to testify her faith and her love of God, Bass thought it was time to make new records under her own name. She "advertised" herself and was well received in Chicago by Checker Records. Her first album in March 1966 was entitled *I'm So Grateful,* with strong tracks such as "I Do, Don't You" and "What Manner of Man Is This." (Her daughter Fontella claimed she was playing piano and singing in the backing group.) It was a sizeable hit in the Middle East, and it led to new albums on Checker, including *Rescue Me* in 1968, with, among other great songs, "In Times Like These" and "Now That I Found the Lord." In 1969, a tribute to her idol, *Martha Sings Mahalia Jackson*, her own favorite, a tribute that was not a servile copy of the model but a personal testimony to the greatest of the gospel singers ever.

In 1972, she recorded her last album for Checker, *It's Another Day's Journey,* and, after that, Martha, who sang only church songs—toured for some time with her mother Nevada and daughter Fontella, billed in Europe in the 1980s as "From the Roots to the Source." But from the late 1980s until her death in 1998, she was satisfied to be her daughter's best supporter, and she helped Fontella's career any way she could until Selah Records gave the whole family—Martha, Nevada, and Fontella—an opportunity to make a record altogether in 1990, with Fontella's brother and special guest David Peaston (*A Family Portrait of Faith*).

With Willie Mae Ford Smith and Cleophus Robinson, Martha Bass will remain one of the best gospel singers ever to come out of Saint Louis, Missouri. Unfortunately, she was sadly underrecorded.

ROBERT SACRÉ

See also Jackson, Mahalia; Smith, Willie Mae Ford; Ward Trio (Ward Singers)

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BAXTER, J. R., JR.

Jesse Randall Baxter, Jr. (b. 1887; d. January 1960)

J. R. Baxter, Jr., sometimes known as "Pap" or "Pa," was a singing schoolteacher whose partnership with Virgil O. Stamps ultimately resulted in the Stamps–Baxter Music & Printing Company, the leader in the field of gospel song publishing. A native of DeKalb County, Alabama, Baxter had briefly been a country schoolteacher, but his interest in gospel songs led him to study with such early practitioners of the trade as Thomas B. Mosley and Anthony J. Showalter.

In 1918, he married Clarice Howard. Working for Showalter, Baxter gained an acquaintance with Virgil Stamps and bought into his company in 1926. Initially, he ran the Stamps–Baxter office in Chattanooga, Tennessee, until Stamps died in August 1940, after which time the Baxters moved to Dallas, Texas, and took over the main office. By that time, Stamps–Baxter had moved ahead of its chief rival, the James D. Vaughn Music Publishing Company of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee.

Baxter continued to run Stamps–Baxter and maintain the company's position in the field throughout his lifetime. A composer of some note himself, the publisher's own credits as author or coauthor included "Try Jesus," "Travel the Sunlit Way," "Something Happens (When You Give Your Heart to God)," "I Have Peace in My Soul," "Living Grace," and "I Want to Help Some Weary Pilgrim." According to a November 7, 1949, article in *Time*, the company had fifty employees, did $300,000 worth of business yearly, and had four traveling quartets and "a school in Dallas to train itinerant song leaders." In addition to its Dallas premises, the firm still maintained an office in Chattanooga and another one in Pangburn, Arkansas, which was run by one of their key writers, Luther Presley.

Following J. R. Baxter's demise, Clarice "Ma" Baxter took charge of the firm and operated it until her own death, after which it was sold to Zondervan Publishing House of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Of J. R. Baxter, one friend was quoted at the time of his death as saying, "He never bruised a heart, nor made one bleed."

IVAN M. TRIBE

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BAYLOR, HELEN

(b. ca. 1950, Tulsa, OK)

Helen Baylor grew up in Los Angeles and was involved with popular music from an early age. At seventeen she became the youngest cast member in the road company of the Broadway musical *Hair*. She went on to work with Chaka Khan, Aretha Franklin, and Stevie Wonder but would ultimately testify to a life of degradation from which she had to be redeemed. Baylor began recording Christian music in 1990.

In 1992 she became affiliated with the Fellowship of Inner-City Word of Faith Ministries and on January 10, 1993, she was ordained a minister within that fellowship at Crenshaw Christian Center in Los Angeles. A year later, she received Dove Awards for Contemporary Gospel Album (*Start All Over*) and Contemporary Gospel Song ("Sold Out"). On February 18, 1995, Baylor was awarded an honorary doctorate in sacred music from Friends International Christian University (Merced, California). She later moved to Jonesboro, Georgia, where she became a member of Divine Faith Ministries, International, and she became involved in that church's ministries of music, healing, and deliverance. Baylor has also served on the boards of two facilities for unwed mothers: St. Domenic's in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the Elizabeth Home in Ft. Worth, Texas. She is married to James Baylor and the mother of four children.

Baylor's husky voice has generally endeared her to critics, and her roots in rhythm and blues have given her music popular appeal. Her first album *Highly Recommended* featured several dance tracks and included two songs ("There Is No Greater Love" and "Victory") that became top-forty hits on Christian radio charts; in the mid-1990s she added light jazz influences to her repertoire. Baylor has often been described as a gospel artist with crossover appeal, and this may be owed in part to her penchant for recording duets with mainstays of both gospel and Christian pop: her various albums pair her with Andrae Crouch, Bob Carlisle, Phil Driscoll, Billy Preston, and Marvin Winans. She has also sometimes chosen to rework secular soul songs into gospel tunes, recording slightly rewritten versions of "Love Brought Me Back" (originally a hit by D. J. Rogers) and "How Sweet It Is" (a hit for Marvin Gaye and James Taylor).

Baylor's greatest success in the world of gospel came with *The Live Experience*, a recording of a 1994 benefit concert she gave to support a children's ministry. The album appealed to Christian pop fans