

89:20(a-b)

TAPE INDEX

DOWN HOME DAIRYLAND RADIO PROGRAMS

Madison Gospelaire
(Will & Dortha Williams, Darlene Horner,
Richard Jones)
7852 Highway 51
DeForest, Wisconsin
608/846-3630
February 4, 1989

Recorded by Jim Leary
Ampex 632 tape
Nagra 4-L recorder

1. Announcement.

Will Williams
(high-pitched hum mars recording)

2. Born Crystal Springs, Mississippi. Loved gospel music, heard at local church where groups like Five Blind Boys and Dixie Humming Birds would sing. Was in Army nine years after high school. Sang in Army while in Viet Nam with other men who liked gospel. After Army to Madison, sang with Whispering Voices of Faith. After two years with Voices, formed Gospelaire ca. 1985.

3. Gospel sung same way as blues, feeling, a story. During slavery black people sang to ease their burdens, make life easier. Rhythm made work easier.

4. Influenced also by Nightengales, Mighty Clouds of Joy, Soul Stirrers.

(hum is mostly gone)

* 5. Accapella type of gospel Will first started listening too. Then guitars added, now drums, flutes, everything. W can't get into the contemporary sound, too much rock and roll. ["Accapella . . . the contemporary," ca. 40 secs.]

6. Most groups W heard growing up male groups, five voices. Heavy bass, baritone, first tenor, second tenor, lead or lead tenor. Close to the barber shop style.

7. Blind Boys good for having high tenor lead and gravelly voice trading off. Dortha went to Piney Woods Junior College with Archie Brownlee of the Five Blind Boys.

Dortha Williams

8. Born Hazelhurst, Mississippi. Heard quartet singing first when her father was in a group. The Gospelaire a "semi-quartet group. . . We don't sing quartet, we don't sing choir, we're somewhere in between."

9. When D was little would hear groups singing on Sunday evenings. Would listen until they got tired.

10. A lot of the early groups male, women started singing eventually, but D can't recall just when.

? 11. Was inspired to sing mostly by her dad, but likes any song that makes you

feel good inside. Dad born in Mississippi, had five kids, worked hard. Moved to Chicago in the 1950s until he passed away. [This passage might work with some editing, possibly with brief biography preceding the mention of singing.]

12. D and husband had been singing in a church, wanted to do more singing in different churches. Asked ("axed") people if they liked gospel and formed group. [Might work.]

13. Gospel scene in Madison mixed between old time and modern way. D likes to sing old time way, "it's ministering to the people the way we're used to." Mt. Zion has a newer type of choir.

14. D, Will and Darlene from Baptist tradition. Baptized in a pond with the lily pads. Same for Darlene. All the kids were gathered to be baptized. Singing part of this. Singing a means of communication from slavery times.

15. Sings some rearrangements of songs sung when little, songs in current repertoire from radio and records and hearing songs in church. Tries to choose songs that fit their style.

Darlene Horner

16. Born Hazelhurst, Mississippi. Went to church with grandmother. Walked ten miles, could hear older people singing as they approached the church. Went barefoot, then put shoes on when they got to the church. Had a religious time. Baptized in a river with snakes. [Might stop her for a good quote.] Then moved to Chicago. Met minister from Arkansas there, worked in a church with children in a choir. Had revivals. [For longer quote, stop after " . . . having revival."] Had food outside.

17. Dad inspirational, sang a lot. Member of choir and deacon at Progressive Baptist Church in Chicago.

18. Would learn the notes and harmonize. Asked God to answer their prayers by singing songs. People prayed through songs in slavery times. Dr. Watts was an old gentleman who made up songs.

19. Darlene inspired by Aretha Franklin, Mahalia Jackson, James Cleveland, Rev. Clay Evans in Chicago. Darlene followed quartets, but choir was more what she did.

20. Darlene only in Madison a few years. Hasn't heard that many singers, but Mt. Zion has a fine young people's choir. Also Rev. Johnson of Madison Pentecostal leads the church in "congregational songs" that are "really inspiring." Leader gets before the congregation and starts singing, everyone in the congregation joins in and sings.

21. Cites "Jesus in on the Mainline" and others as good congregational style songs.

22. Most black people in Madison area up from Chicago, often via Mississippi and Alabama. Chicago a "congestive city." Like "a dream" to be in Madison where it is "peaceful and quiet." Will adds that black people from the

Carolinas went to New York, midwestern blacks from Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, and Tennessee. Darlene reckons in Miss. people just work and go to school. Chicago better, but "hell" after a while. Madison "a different world altogether."

Richard Jones

23. Born Birmingham, Alabama, 1933. Studied music harmony and theory for seven years. Played flute in a high school band. Picked up guitar in early 1960s.

24. Not involved with gospel early on. Parents very religious. R played R&B and jazz and rock 'n' roll on east coast with various groups. Hasn't been playing for awhile, but getting back into it. Has been in Madison about eight years.

25. R met Will Williams, heard they needed a guitar player. Figured he would start with them. Enjoys it.

26. Chiefly plays rhythm, no room for fill-ins when the only backing instrument. Would like it if they had a bass in the group.

INTERVIEW ENDS

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Madison Gospelaires
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Tape Two

1. Announcement.
2. "I Love The Lord" (Dr. Watts number). [ca. 1:10]
3. Darlene "preaches" about the meaning of this song.
- * 4. "Guide Me" (Gospelaires theme song). [ca. 2:53, closing with spoken:
"That's the theme song and we usually warm up on that."]
5. "Glory, Glory," with guitar. First take.
6. "Glory, Glory," " " . Second take. [All three takes are "off"
in some fashion: balance,
singing on key, ending
together, etc.]
7. " " " " . Third take.
8. "Must Jesus Bear The Cross Alone." [Tentative start, strong finish.]
9. "Jesus Is A Rock In A Weary Land." First take.
10. "Jesus Is A Rock In A Weary Land." Second take. [3:17]
- * 11. Richard Jones on guitar and solo vocal, "Shake My Mother's Hand." [2:05]
- * 12. Accapella, Dr. Watts hymn with Darlene Horner leading, "I Know I Am A Child
of God." [2:15]