



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Eugene D. Smallwood Gospel Music Collection

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by Deborra Richardson

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview.....	1
Administrative Information	1
Biographical Note.....	2
Scope and Content Note.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Related/Analytical Title.....	2
Names and Subject Terms	3
Container Listing.....	4
Series 1: Album of Choral Arrangements, 1931 - 1942.....	4
Series 2: Loose Choral Arrangements, 1939-1945.....	5

Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Creators:	Community Life, Div. of, NMAH, SI. Dorsey, Thomas A., choral director Frye, Theodore M., singer Reagon, Bernice Johnson, 1942- Smallwood, Eugene D., Rev. (composer, music director), -2005
Title:	Eugene D. Smallwood Gospel Music Collection
Dates:	1931-1945
Quantity:	0.15 cubic feet, 1 box
Language:	Collection is in English.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The Smallwood collection was acquired through Dr. Bernice Reagon. While doing research on Gospel music with the support of a MacArthur Foundation grant, from 1991 to 1992, she made several contacts with the originators of the Black Gospel music movement in the Americas. Dr. Smallwood was one of those contacts.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Deborra Richardson, August 21, 1992.

Preferred Citation

Eugene D. Smallwood Gospel Music Collection, 1931-1945, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

Collection is open for research.

Ownership & Literary Rights

Copyright restrictions. Use of this collection for performance purposes requires notification of Smallwood's daughter. See Archives Center staff for contact information.

Biographical Note

Reverend Eugene D. Smallwood is a Gospel musician and choir leader who owned his own music publishing company. Some of the more famous Gospel musicians with whom he worked were Mahalia Jackson and the Roberta Martin Singers.

Scope and Content Note

The Eugene D. Smallwood Gospel Music Collection consists of an album of Gospel music scores collected or composed by Reverend Eugene D. Smallwood and nineteen additional loose scores published by Rev. Smallwood's company. The publication dates range from 1931 to 1945. The scores were performed by Reverend Smallwood's choirs. As a composer/arranger, Rev. Smallwood was often able to "correct" or re-arrange the compositions of others to suit his own style. If he felt the music was in the "wrong key", he transposed it himself. Some compositions were the work of such well known artists as Dr. Thomas A. Dorsey and Theodore Frye, whose portraits appear in the collection. The published music includes some additional illustrations of Gospel musicians, e.g. Rev. Smallwood; Lone B. Bouldin, Gospel singer; Earl Pleasant, Gospel singer; and the Universal Gospel singers. Many of the works are numbered according to the system that Rev. Smallwood used in the album, or dated according to his use of the arrangements.

Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon, a staff member in the Division of Community Life, National Museum of American History, was instrumental in the acquisition of the collection. According to Dr. Reagon, the collection is unique because of Rev. Smallwood's use of an album of music which he kept intact. Although the music has been removed from the original album cover for the preservation purposes, this album is a written record of the performance of Gospel music by Reverend Smallwood and his choirs. The collection should prove to be of interest to anyone studying Gospel music and its creators.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into two series.

Series 1: Scrapbook album, 1931-1942

Series 2: Sheet music, 1939-1945

Related/Analytical Title

Jesus Lives In Me,[song]

I'm Just A Sinner Saved by Grace,[song]

Heaven's Radio,[song]

Lead Me To Calvary,[song]

No Disappointment In Heaven,[song]

The Little Wooden Church on the Hill,[song]

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Choral music
Church music
Gospel music

Types of Materials:

Sheet music

Names:

Bouldin, Ione B., (singer)
Martin, Sallie, singer
Pleasant, Earl, singer
Universal Gospel Singers.

Geographic Names:

Oklahoma
Tulsa (Oklahoma)

Container Listing

Series 1: Album of Choral Arrangements, 1931 - 1942

Folder 1	Gospel Music Album (75pp) A - L.
Folder 2	Gospel Music Album (75pp) M - Z.
Folder 3	Album cover

Series 2: Loose Choral Arrangements, 1939-1945

Folder 1	"Hang Out Your Sign for the King." -- 2 copies
Folder 2	"His Nail Scarred Hand." -- 1 copy
Folder 3	"Just for Today." -- 1 copy
Folder 4	"Just Pray On." -- 2 copies
Folder 5	"Let's Go Back To Our Father's Praying Ground." -- 2 copies
Folder 6	"Lord I Just Couldn't Hold My Peace." -- 1 copy
Folder 7	"Lord Plant My Feet On Higher Ground." -- 3 copies
Folder 8	"The Man of Galilee." -- 2 copies
Folder 9	"Something Peculiar Burns Within Me." -- 2 copies
Folder 10	"Whither Shall I Go." -- 2 copies; 11, "Yes My Lord Is A to Z." -- 2 copies.