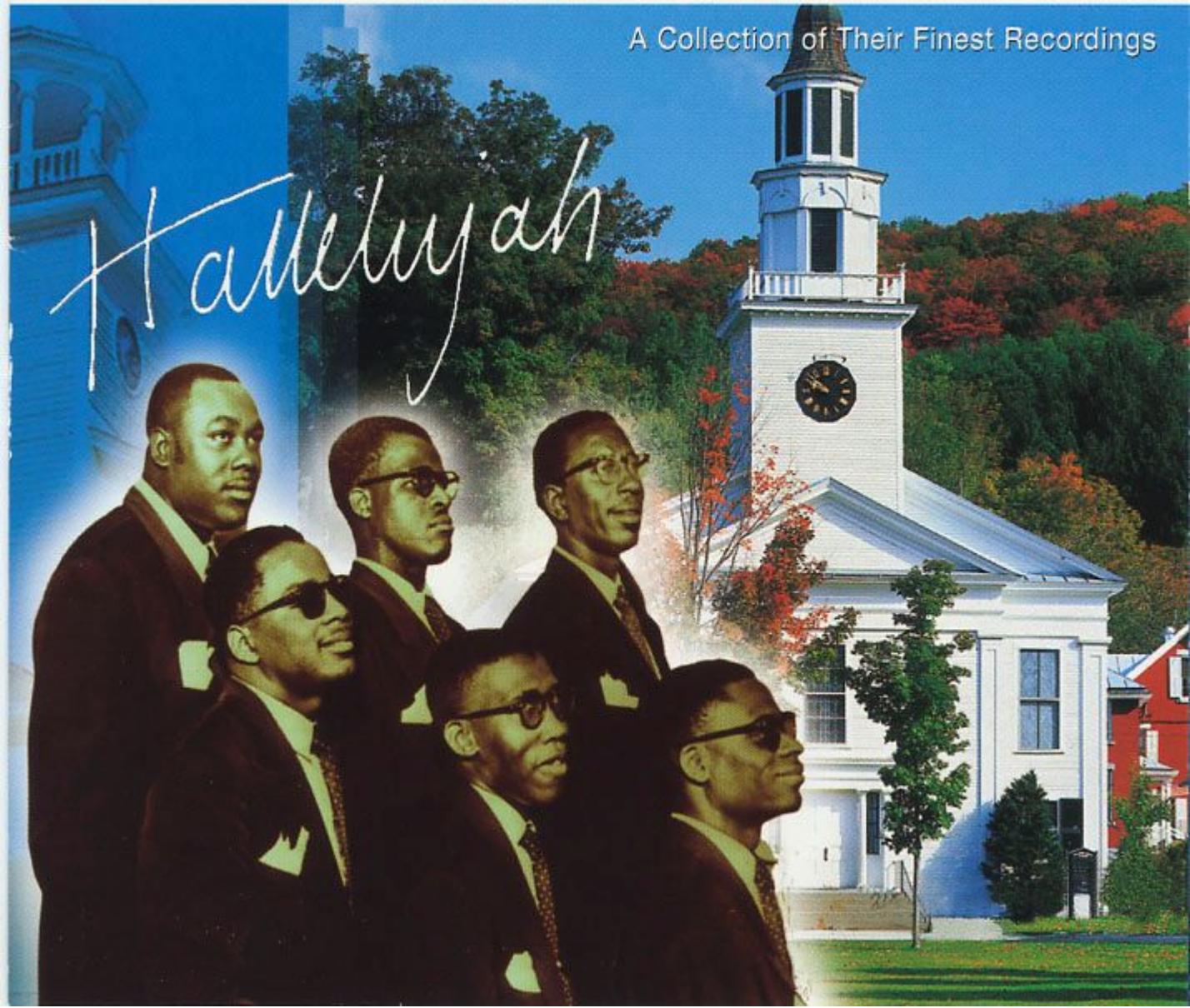


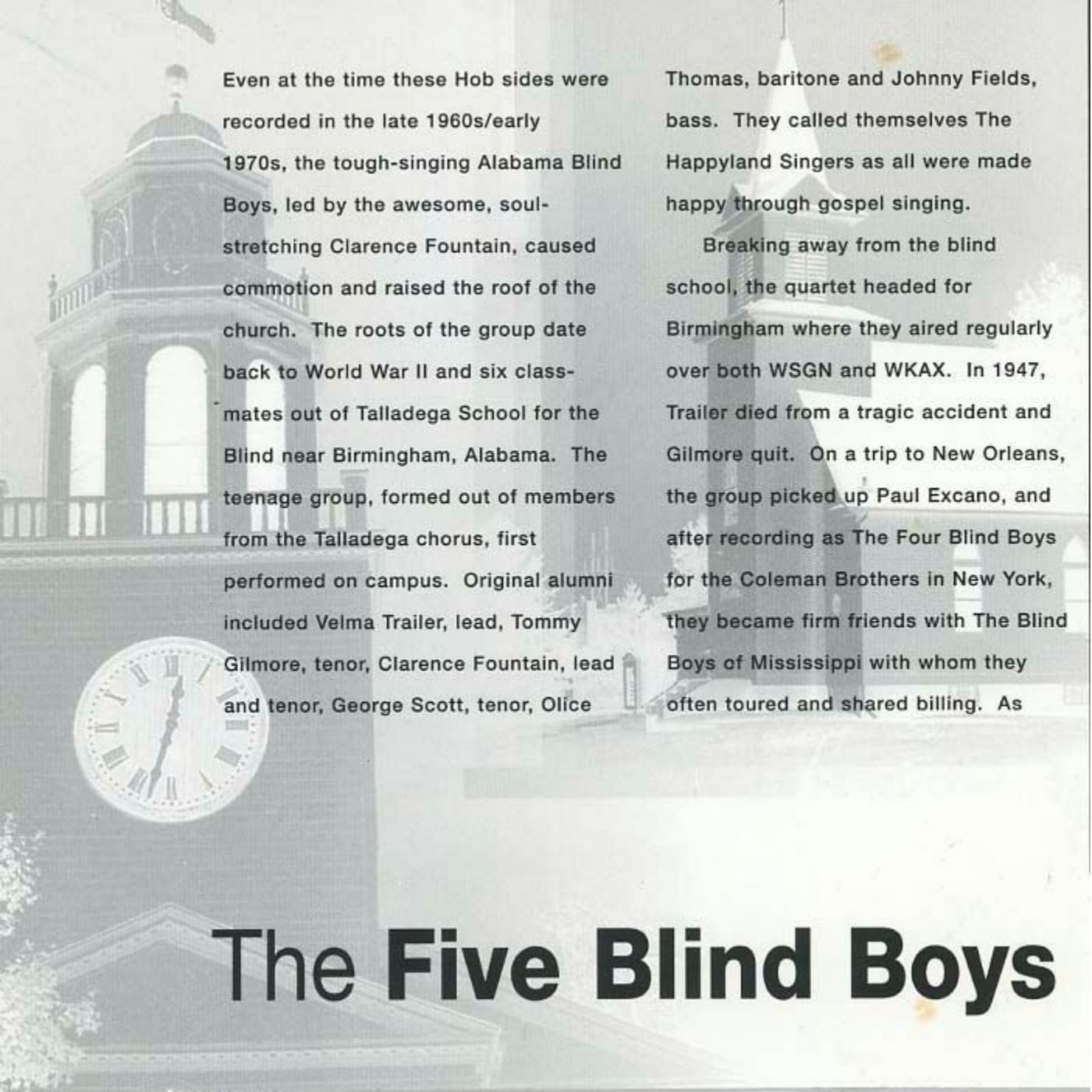
# The Five Blind Boys of Alabama



A Collection of Their Finest Recordings

*Hallelujah*





Even at the time these Hob sides were recorded in the late 1960s/early 1970s, the tough-singing Alabama Blind Boys, led by the awesome, soul-stretching Clarence Fountain, caused commotion and raised the roof of the church. The roots of the group date back to World War II and six classmates out of Talladega School for the Blind near Birmingham, Alabama. The teenage group, formed out of members from the Talladega chorus, first performed on campus. Original alumni included Velma Trailer, lead, Tommy Gilmore, tenor, Clarence Fountain, lead and tenor, George Scott, tenor, Olice

Thomas, baritone and Johnny Fields, bass. They called themselves The Happyland Singers as all were made happy through gospel singing.

Breaking away from the blind school, the quartet headed for Birmingham where they aired regularly over both WSGN and WKAX. In 1947, Trailer died from a tragic accident and Gilmore quit. On a trip to New Orleans, the group picked up Paul Excano, and after recording as The Four Blind Boys for the Coleman Brothers in New York, they became firm friends with The Blind Boys of Mississippi with whom they often toured and shared billing. As

# The Five Blind Boys

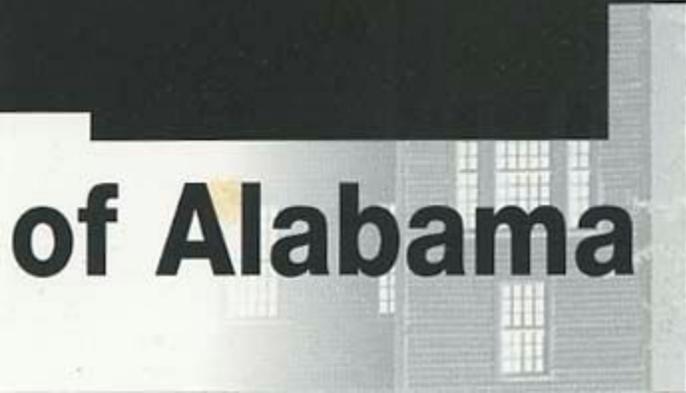
The Five Blind Boys, the outfit waxed thirteen releases for the Philly-based Gospel label over a period of two years.

From 1953 to 1957, The Five Blind Boys of Alabama recorded for Specialty of Hollywood. Three different singing preachers were used as co-leads with Fountain over this five-year period.

After recording for Andex, Savoy, Vee Jay, and Buddah, the boys signed with Hob in 1966. Fountain's whoops, squeals, and anguished vocals can be heard on the sides made in 1966-67. At this point, the group personnel was Clarence Fountain (lead tenor), Louis Dicks (second tenor), George Scott

(tenor and guitar), William "Big Bill" Rash (baritone), and Johnny Fields (bass).

In 1968, Fountain embarked on a solo career. Waxing for Stan Lewis's Jewel label in Shreveport, Fountain cut a number of impressive spiritual albums. Meanwhile, Louis Dicks stepped into Fountain's place with the Hob group and can be heard on some strong sides cut in 1969. Johnny Fields also quit to pursue freelance production work for Stan Lewis when Fountain dropped the group. Billy Bowers took Fields' place. Bowers had also attended the Talladega School for the Blind, although at a later time. The Blind Boys



**of Alabama**

of Alabama continued to record an array  
of impressive releases for Hob during  
the 1970s.

Today's formation of The Five Blind  
Boys is centered around George Scott  
and the devil-shaking Clarence Fountain.

*Opal Louis Nations*

*Opal Nations, born in Brighton, England, is a  
music producer, writer of both fiction and  
music articles, and vocalist with 1960s  
groups Alexis Korner Band, The Frays, and  
The Ram Holder Group, as well as former  
KPFA (Berkeley) deejay.*



*The Five Blind Boys of Alabama*

- 1. Something's Got A Hold On Me**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 2. When I Come To The End Of My Journey**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 3. Too Close To Heaven**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 4. The War In Vietnam**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 5. A Great Camp Meeting**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 6. Father, I Stretch My Hands To Thee**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 7. Come This Far By Faith**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 8. How Far Am I From Canaan**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 9. Too Sweet To Be Saved**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 10. Home In That Rock**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 11. I Got Jesus On My Mind**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 12. Lord's Been Good To Me**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 13. Alone And Motherless**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 14. Running For My Life**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*
- 15. I Saw The Light**  
*(Trad./Arr. The Five Blind Boys of Alabama)*

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