

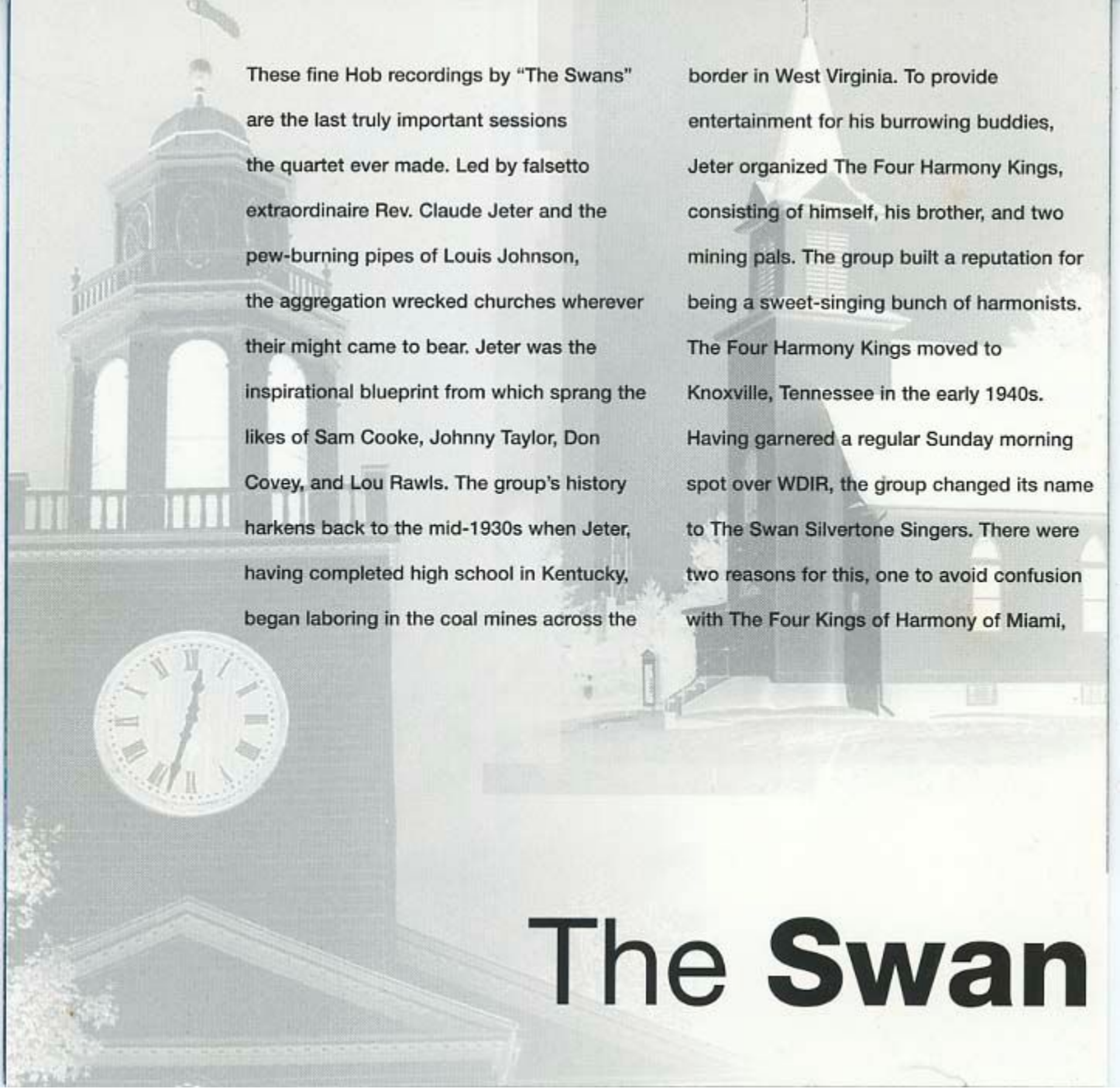
The Swan Silvertones



A Collection of Their Finest Recordings

Hallelujah





These fine Hob recordings by "The Swans" are the last truly important sessions the quartet ever made. Led by falsetto extraordinaire Rev. Claude Jeter and the pew-burning pipes of Louis Johnson, the aggregation wrecked churches wherever their might came to bear. Jeter was the inspirational blueprint from which sprang the likes of Sam Cooke, Johnny Taylor, Don Covey, and Lou Rawls. The group's history harkens back to the mid-1930s when Jeter, having completed high school in Kentucky, began laboring in the coal mines across the

border in West Virginia. To provide entertainment for his burrowing buddies, Jeter organized The Four Harmony Kings, consisting of himself, his brother, and two mining pals. The group built a reputation for being a sweet-singing bunch of harmonists. The Four Harmony Kings moved to Knoxville, Tennessee in the early 1940s. Having garnered a regular Sunday morning spot over WDIR, the group changed its name to The Swan Silvertone Singers. There were two reasons for this, one to avoid confusion with The Four Kings of Harmony of Miami,

The Swan

and the other to elicit additional business for The Swan Bakery, the quartet's on-air sponsor.

In 1946, the group signed with King Records out of Cincinnati and recorded gospel in the jubilee idiom. Having switched to Specialty in Hollywood in 1952, the fellas had developed a looser, more sanctified approach, a style that came to be known as "hard gospel." Their hard and soft styles were perfected when they were tenured to Vee Jay in Chicago in 1956. Maintaining their dual thrust the hard preacherly singing along with flowery

false ornamentation and breathtaking trickery. The Swan Silvertones cut the hit-selling "Oh Mary don't you weep".

The Swan Silvertones, composed of Rev. Claude Jeter or Carl Davis, tenors, Paul Owens, Louis Johnson, and John Myles, baritone, William "Pete" Connor, bass, and Linwood Hargrove on guitar, parted with Hob in 1967. In 1968, after most of these wonderful sides were made, Jeter quit to go solo and was eventually replaced by James Lewis who sounded much like him. The outfit retired from the

Silvertones

road in the late 1970s, although they get together now and then on special occasions around the leadership of James Lewis and Carl Davis.

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 Swan Silvertones

- 1. Only Believe - Part 1**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 2. Only Believe - Part 2**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 3. I Love The Lord**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 4. Amazing Grace**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 5. Call Him Up**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 6. Leaning On Jesus**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 7. Jesus, I Love You**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 8. In My Heart**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 9. He's My Friend**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 10. I've Got Myself Together**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 11. Home In That Rock**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 12. I'm Going With Jesus**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 13. Walk With Me**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 14. Lord, Have Mercy**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)
- 15. He's All I Need**
(Trad./Arr. The Swan Silvertones)

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