

Stamps Quartet

Stamps Quartet: Gospel quartet founded in Dallas by V.O. Stamps. Virgil Oliver Stamps, born to William Oscar Stamps and Florence Corinne Rosser on September 18, 1892, in Gilmer, Texas, would die on August 19, 1940, in Dallas, Texas. Virgil Oliver Stamps founded the V.O. Stamps School of Music in 1924, and, his brother Frank (born around 1890 in Gilmer, Texas) established the first Stamps Quartet around the same time. The quartet underwent numerous personnel changes from its beginning in 1924 to the present, and, in fact, some other gospel groups would use the Stamps name whether or not they actually had any direct affiliation with the original Stamps brothers.



The Stamps Quartet became the first southern gospel quartet to sign with a major label when it recorded “Give The World A Smile” for the Victor label in the late 1920s. In 1926, V.O. Stamps partnered with J.R. Baxter to form the Stamps-Baxter Music and Printing Company, which was instrumental in the development of the various Stamps Quartets over the years, and also became one of the most successful printers of shape note hymnbooks in the United States. Virgil Stamps died in 1940, and, with his death, Frank took over the partnership with J.R. Baxter and allowed several groups to use the Stamps name in exchange for their selling of the Stamps-Baxter songbooks.

Over the years, the Stamps Quartet also underwent both high and low points in terms of their popularity. In 1950, Frank Stamps decided to focus his attention solely on publishing songbooks. The remaining members of the group, however, continued to record as the Stamps Quartet for a short time thereafter, but soon changed the name to the Plainsmen Quartet. Around 1962 the group reformed with members Terry Blackwood, Smiling Joe Roeper, Jerry Redd, Big Jim Waits and Roger McDuff. Beginning in 1971, and lasting for over half a decade, the Stamps Quartet reached its greatest popularity as the main backup group for Elvis Presley until his death in 1977. Following Presley’s death, numerous personnel changes resulted in an overall decline in the group’s popularity, despite performing at various Elvis tribute events and gospel concerts. In 2003, the group trademarked the name Stamps Quartet, under which it continues to perform, although only one of the current members (Ed Enoch) remains from the quartet’s golden years with Elvis.

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