

The Golden Gate Quartet was formed in the late 1920s in Norfolk, VA, by some graduates of the city's Booker T. Washington High School. Composed originally of lead Henry Owens, tenor Clyde Reddick, baritone Willie Johnson, and bass Orlando Wilson (bass), the lineup has changed numerous times over the course of the quartet's existence. They first appeared on radio in 1935 over WBT in Charlotte, NC.

The next year, 1936, the group went to Columbia, South Carolina, and asked a radio station manager if they could sign live on the radio. He gave them ten minutes to sing three or four songs. The audience reaction was so good, the manager offered them a Monday through Friday slot, beginning the following week. In 1937, the Quartet recorded 14 songs in less than two hours for the Bluebird recording label, a subsidiary of Victor Records. 1941 was a banner year for the group in which they accomplished three major goals: recording their first record for Columbia, performing their first tour outside the United States (in Mexico), and appearing in their first movie, Paramount's *Star Spangled Rhythm*.

*The Golden Gate Quartet Sings* was a production of Transcription Sales Inc., of Springfield, OH, which began releasing the 260-episode series in 1950. Tom Scott narrated each quarter-hour episode, introducing the group and each song. The episodes alternated between featuring secular folk songs and featuring traditional spirituals. These recordings represent the tail end of The Golden Gate Quartet's broadcasting popularity during the Golden Age of Radio. The group continues to perform today, albeit with a new generation of performers.