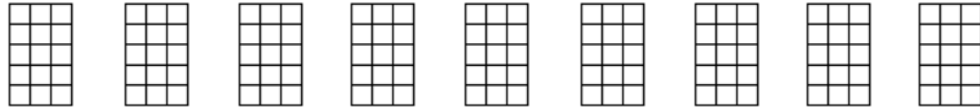


SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

Words and Music by Wallis Willis, Arranged by Ric Douglas



Guest Conductor Ric Douglas

Chorus:

C F C G⁷
Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home
C C⁷ F C G⁷ C F C

Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home.

(Last verse - Amen)

C F C G⁷
I looked over Jordan, and what did I see, comin' for to carry me home?
C C⁷ F C G⁷ C

A band of angels, comin' after me, comin' for to carry me home.

Chorus

C F C G⁷
If you get there before I do, comin' for to carry me home,
C C⁷ F C G⁷ C
Tell all my friends I'm a comin' too, comin' for to carry me home

Chorus

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" is an American Negro spiritual. The first recording was by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in 1909. In 2002, the Library of Congress honored the song as one of 50 recordings chosen that year to be added to the National Recording Registry. It was composed by Wallis Willis, a Choctaw freedman in the old Indian Territory, sometime before 1862. He was inspired by the Red River which reminded him of the Jordan River and of the Prophet Elijah being taken to heaven by a chariot. Some scholars (see Songs of the underground railroad) believe this song and "Steal Away to Jesus"—also composed by Willis—had some hidden lyrics referring to the Underground Railroad. Alexander Reid, a minister at a Choctaw boarding school, heard Willis singing these two songs and transcribed the words and melodies. He sent the music to the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. The Jubilee Singers then popularized the songs during a tour of the United States and Europe. The song enjoyed a resurgence during the 1960s Civil Rights struggle and the folk revival; it was performed by a number of artists, perhaps most famously during this period, by Joan Baez during the legendary 1969 Woodstock festival.

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