

# We Shall All Be Reunited

Music and Lyrics by Alfred Karnes, 1933 with additional lyrics by As You Go

*A*  
Where is now my father's family,

*D A*  
That was here so long ago?

*D A*  
Sitting 'round the kitchen fireside,

*E A*  
Brightened by the ruddy glow.

} Intro

## CHORUS

*A*  
We shall all be reunited,

*D A*  
In that land within the skies.

*D A*  
Where there'll be no separation;

*E A*  
No more marching, no more sighs.

*Alfred Karnes' original  
lyrics in the 2<sup>nd</sup> line of the  
chorus "In that land  
beyond the skies."*

*A*  
Some have gone to lands far distant,

*D A*  
And with others made their home.

*D A*  
Some upon the world of waters,  
*E A*  
All their lives have chose to roam.

## CHORUS

*A*  
Some have gone from us forever.

*D A*  
For with us they could not stay.

*D A*  
They have all dispersed and wandered.

*E A*  
Gone away, so far away.

## CHORUS

*A*  
We shall meet beyond the river,

*D A*  
In that land of pure delight.

*D A*  
Where no sickness or no sorrow,

*E A*  
Will our joys there ever blight.

## CHORUS

# History

"We Shall All Be Reunited," is a song by a Southern preacher named Alfred Karnes that was first recorded during the 1927 Bristol sessions that were said to have launched country music.

Alfred G. Karnes and Ernest Phipps and were both preachers from the Corbin, Kentucky, area. Their recordings from the famed Bristol, Tennessee, recording sessions of 1927 and 1928 were among the earliest recorded examples of Anglo-American gospel music.



Alfred Karnes

Phipps (b. May 4, 1900) and members of his Free Holiness Pentecostal Church congregation recorded six songs at each of the two Bristol sessions. At the 1927 sessions, Phipps's group, labeled the Holiness Quartet, featured two singers and a standard string band. At the 1928 sessions, Phipps fronted a larger group, known as Ernest Phipps and his Holiness Singers, consisting of four singers



Ernest Phipps, 1927

with piano, fiddle, banjo, guitar, and mandolin accompaniment. The resulting twelve commercial recordings, with their evangelical lyrics, repetitions, strong rhythms, improvised harmonies, hand clapping, and guitar backup, provide a rare record of the fervent, intense Holiness style of gospel singing heard in many Appalachian churches in the early twentieth century.

Karnes, born February 2, 1891, in Bedford, Virginia, served as a Baptist preacher at several rural churches near Corbin. Although he often performed in churches with his children, for the Bristol sessions he sang solo, accompanying himself on a Gibson harp guitar. Karnes may also have played that instrument on some of Phipps's recordings.

*by William Bernard McCarthy of Pennsylvania State University on [encyclopediaofappalachia.com/](http://encyclopediaofappalachia.com/)*