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#### EDITORIAL

Material for the Bulletin comes in somewhat irregularly. The last issue was a rather brief one: this is the largest we have offered, and it has still been necessary to hold over one or two important items, notably an account of the Westminster Abbey Hymn Singing services held during May 1971. This and other things will appear in Bulletin 123, and we ask our readers to be patient.



## AMERICAN FOLK HYMNODY

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for the meeting of the  
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### INTRODUCTION

In England the practice of singing hymns to folk melodies sung previously to secular texts may largely be attributed to the work of Ralph Vaughan Williams as musical editor of *The English Hymnal* of 1906. In America, however, the practice of singing hymns to secular folk melodies developed largely outside the realm of the church hymnal. Indeed, it was in the rural singing-school tunebooks compiled by itinerant singing-school masters in the early nineteenth century that the American folk hymn appeared in print. Because of its non-churchly origin and association with unsophisticated rural culture, among other factors, the American folk hymn was either unknown or deliberately rejected by the increasingly dominant urban American culture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Only in recent years has the American folk hymn begun to receive recognition in church hymnals comparable with that received during the first decade of this century in *The English Hymnal*.

### BACKGROUND

*The Anglo-American ballad.* To understand the historical appearance of American folk hymnody, one must consider several factors, beginning with the Anglo-American ballads dating from the early settlements. Much of the credit of revealing to America its Anglo-American ballads belongs to Cecil Sharp, who in the second decade of this century collected hundreds of these folksongs that had survived in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. In the mid-eighteenth century, none other than Benjamin Franklin referred in one of his letters to

... some country girl in the heart of Massachusetts, who has never heard any other than psalm tunes or 'Chevy Chase,' the 'Children in the Woods,' the 'Spanish Lady,' and such simple ditties.<sup>1</sup>

Franklin thus casually mentioned three of the most famous English ballads then known in America. As we shall see, this Anglo-

American folksong tradition provided the basic musical idiom for the American folk hymn.

*Oral tradition in congregational singing.* A second background factor to be considered is the practice of lining-out the psalms in the congregational singing of early eighteenth-century New England. This custom of lining-out existed in England as well as in America. Lining-out is described in the ordinances of the Westminster Assembly of 1644, which recommended its adoption:

... for the present, where many of the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other officers, do read the psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof.<sup>2</sup>

Although the custom of lining-out was accepted reluctantly, when attempts were made to abolish it in eighteenth-century Scotland, much resentment arose among the congregations. As described by John Spencer Curwen, "Lining-out," which had at first been resented as a concession to illiterate England, was clung to as a vital principle.<sup>3</sup> Why did the people cling to lining-out as a "vital principle"? The answer lies at least partly in the formation of an oral or folk style of congregational singing. There is no time here to describe this tradition in detail; it is excellently treated with references to both England and New England in the second chapter of Gilbert Chase's history, *America's Music*. This oral manner of congregational singing in New England was confronted by a group of Harvard-educated pastors in the 1720's, including Thomas Symmes, author of the pamphlet, *The Reasonableness of Regular Singing, or Singing by Note*. Although the following passage from Symmes' pamphlet is admittedly one-sided, it nonetheless clearly reveals the formation of an oral folk style of congregational singing:

... The rules of singing not being taught or learnt, every one sang as best pleased himself, and every leading singer, would take the liberty of raising any note of the tune, or lowering of it, as best pleased his ear; and add such turns and flourishes as were grateful to him; and this was done gradually, as that but few if any took notice of it. One Clerk or Chorister would alter the tunes a little in his day, the next a little in his, and so on one after another, till in fifty or sixty years it caused a considerable alteration. If the alteration had been made designedly by any Master of Music, it is probable that the variation from our psalmbooks would have been alike in all our congregations; whereas some vary much more than others, and it is hard to find two that sing exactly alike. . . . Your usual way of singing is handed down by tradition only, and whatsoever is only so conveyed down to us, it is a thousand

2 Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 31.

3 John Spencer Curwen, *Studies in Worship Music* (First Series) 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (London: J. Curwen and Sons, 1880), p. 142.

1 Quoted in Gilbert Chase, *America's Music*, 2nd ed. rev. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 15.



to one if it be not miserably corrupted, in three- or four-score years' time. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Although the sound of this lined-out folk style of congregational singing as heard in these early New England churches cannot be directly documented, at least an approximate idea of its nature can be gained from a recording of lining-out as it yet survives among the small and relatively isolated Primitive (Calvinistic) Baptist denomination of America.<sup>5</sup> In the following recorded example it is clear that lining-out, which was introduced by necessity, had actually become an organic musical form, with the congregation freely elaborating on the melody rather than merely repeating the recitative-like lines of the leader. As pointed out by Chase, lining-out constitutes a form of the call-and-response pattern found in several folksong traditions, including the Negro spiritual.<sup>6</sup> For example, in the spiritual 'Go down, Moses' the call 'When Israel was in Egypt's land' is followed by the response 'Let my people go.' We now hear a stanza of the hymn 'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah' as lined-out by pastor Walter Evans and his Primitive Baptist congregation in Sparta, North Carolina.<sup>7</sup>

*The singing-school movement.* The third background factor in the formation of American folk hymnody for us to consider is the singing-school movement, which came into being as the response of these early New England pastors to what they considered deplorable congregational singing in their churches. In the singing-school an itinerant teacher would hold annual sessions in school buildings, churches and taverns in a town for periods of perhaps several weeks' duration. The singing-school movement was successful not only in teaching music reading, but also in fostering the first school of native American composers of sacred music, who in the late eighteenth century produced numerous hymn tunes, fusing tunes and anthems. These compositions were published in singing-school texts called tunebooks, each of which contained an introduction for teaching music reading and up to several hundred pages of music.

*The Great Awakening.* The last background factor of the development of American folk hymnody to be considered here is the revival movement known as the Great Awakening, dating from the 1730's and under the leadership of the visiting English preacher

4 Thomas Symmes, *The Reasonableness of Regular Singing, or Singing by Note* (n.p., 1720), quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

5 Lining-out also survives in some of the more isolated Negro churches in America. Examples of white and Negro congregations lining-out hymns are found respectively in two albums of the *Southern Folk Heritage Series*, Atlantic nos. 1349 (side 1, no. 5) and 1351 (side 1, no. 4).

6 Chase, *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

7 Record album *Old Hymns Lined and Led by Elder Walter Evans* (Sovereign Grace Recordings, order no. 6057), available for \$3.00 from the Baptist Bible Hour, Inc., Box 17032, Cincinnati, Ohio 45217, U.S.A.

George Whitfield, the New England pastor Jonathan Edwards and others. Concerning church song, the Great Awakening was influential in breaking the exclusive hold of metrical psalmody upon early America and ushering in what Louis Benson called the 'Era of Watts' during the course of the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup> It is significant for the subject of this paper that the hymn texts of the singing-school tunebooks and a majority of the folk hymns were not from American but rather from Watts and his successors in eighteenth-century England.

#### NINETEENTH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS

*The extension of the singing-school.* In the nineteenth century the singing-school in the North gradually gave way to more sophisticated means of music education and the native American music associated with the singing-school movement was suppressed in favour of hymn tunes arranged from European operas, oratorios and masses by Lowell Mason and his followers. As the singing-school went out of fashion in the North, it shifted to the more rural South and West, the latter being what is now the Midwest. And in its new environment the singing-school prospered with the help of an innovation in notation designed to simplify the task of music-reading: shape notes. The system of four shape notes first appeared in a tunebook entitled *The Easy Instructor* by William Little and William Smith; its earliest extant edition appeared in Albany, New York, in 1802.<sup>9</sup> This four shape notation, based on the English Renaissance solmisation taught by Morley in his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597), represented the seven tones of the major scale by four different note heads in the ascending order of fa, sol, la, fa, sol, la and mi.<sup>10</sup>

Although a seven-shape system of notation based on the movable-do solmisation appeared in the *Christian Minstrel* in 1846 and is even yet widely used, it is associated more with a segment of the gospel-hymn tradition of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries<sup>11</sup> than with American folk hymnody.

8 Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn* Reprint of the original 1915 ed. (Philadelphia: John Knox Press, 1962), p. 359.

9 See 'The Easy Instructor (1798-1831): A History of Bibliography of the First Shape-Note Tune-Book' in Irving Lowens, *Music and Musicians in Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), pp. 115-137.

10 The major scale in four-shape notation is given in the article 'Fasola' in *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* 2nd ed. rev. 1969), p. 309.

11 This southern type of gospel hymnody was characterized by George Pullen Jackson as "gospel-hymn tinged." This is not the type of gospel hymnody associated with the revivals of D. L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey beginning in the 1870's but rather, in the words of Jackson, "It is the old sacred music of the country-South, which has grown and metamorphosed." George Pullen Jackson, *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands* Reprint of the original 1933 ed. (Hatboro, Pa.: Folklore Associates, 1964), pp. 345ff.



It was the older four-shape system of notation that became associated with the American folk hymn during the early nineteenth century. Among the numerous tunebooks in four-shape notation published in the pre-Civil War era, the following were especially popular and appeared in multiple editions: Allen B. Carden's *Missouri Harmony* (St. Louis, 1820), Joseph Funk's *Genuine Church Music* (Rockingham County, Va., 1832), William Walker's *Southern Harmony* (Spartanburg, S. C., 1835) and B. F. White's and E. J. King's *The Sacred Harp* (Hamilton County, Ga., 1844). With the exception of Carden's *Missouri Harmony*, these pre-Civil War tunebooks are still used in southern singing sessions.

*The camp meeting.* From American revivalism, particularly the frontier camp meeting from about 1800, the folk-hymn tradition was enriched by the camp-meeting hymn or revival spiritual. In the frontier areas of the South and West where the population lived too far apart to form churches, the camp meeting was a practical means of bringing the Christian message to a larger number of people. Families would travel annually to the camp-meeting sites to join the spontaneous revival services, which were held daily for periods of up to several weeks. In the spontaneous emotional fervour of the camp meeting, singing played an important role. The singing of the camp meeting was described by the Reverend Samuel E. Asbury, a descendant of America's pioneer Methodist circuit rider Francis Asbury, as follows:

The immediate din was tremendous; at a hundred yards it was beautiful; and at a distance of a half-mile it was magnificent.<sup>12</sup>

The camp-meeting hymns were first published in text collections during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1830's the camp meeting hymns or revival spirituals began to appear in the shape-note singing-school tunebooks.

#### TYPES OF FOLK HYMNODY

The leading authority on American folk hymnody, the late George Pullen Jackson, divided this tradition into three basic categories: 1. the religious ballad, 2. the folk hymn and 3. the revival spiritual.

*The religious ballad.* The first two types of folk hymnody, the religious ballad and the folk hymn, are distinguished from each other primarily by their performers; the religious ballad is more suited to the individual singer while the folk hymn is more of a song of praise for group singing. The texts of the religious ballads usually deal with a person's religious experience or relate a biblical story. A typical ballad dealing with religious experience may narrate a person's sinful past, his conversion, his present and future joys

and conclude with an appeal or warning for listeners to repent and join the Christian pilgrimage. The ballad texts relating biblical events include such titles as 'Weeping Mary,' 'The Babe of Bethlehem' and 'The Converted Thief.'

The ballad last mentioned, which retells the story of the repentant thief on the cross, will be sung for us shortly by my friend and fellow seminary professor, Dr. Hugh McElrath. The melody of this religious ballad may be broadly diagrammed as AA' BA'. Except for the B section, the melody is pentatonic. The use of the pentatonic and other gapped scales is frequently found in American folk hymn melodies. The first stanza of 'The Converted Thief' is entirely narrative; the second and third stanzas consist of the words of the repentant thief and one more line of narrative leading to the concluding words of Jesus: 'Today thy parting soul shall be With me in Paradise.'<sup>13</sup>

1. As on the cross the Saviour hung, And wept, and bled, and died;  
He pour'd salvation on a wretch, That languish'd at his side.  
His crimes with inward grief and shame, The penitent confess'd;  
Then turn'd his dying eyes to Christ, And thus his prayer address'd:
2. 'Jesus, thou Son and heir of heav'n! Thou spotless Lamb of God!  
I see thee bathed in sweat and tears, And weltring in thy blood.  
Yet quickly from these scenes of wo, In triumph thou shalt rise;  
Burst through the gloomy shades of death, And shine above the skies.
3. 'Amid the glories of that world, Dear Saviour, think on me,  
And in the victories of thy death, Let me a sharer be.'  
His prayer the dying Jesus hears, And instantly replies—  
'Today thy parting soul shall be With me in Paradise.'

*The folk hymn.* The term folk hymn is used in two senses. Folk hymn is used broadly to refer to the entire folk hymn tradition. Thus in this sense the religious ballad and revival spiritual are folk hymns. Folk hymn was also used by Jackson more specifically to designate a hymn of praise for group singing whose melody is derived from folk tradition. Before illustrating the folk hymn as a

12 Quoted in Chase, *Op. cit.*, p. 223.

13 'The Converted Thief' appears in a three-part harmonization in B. F. White and E. J. King, *The Sacred Harp* Facsimile of the 1869 ed. with an introduction by George Pullen Jackson (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1968), p. 44. Early versions of each three remaining musical examples cited in this paper are found in this facsimile edition of *The Sacred Harp*, which is presently available from Broadman Press, 127 Ninth Ave., North, Nashville, Tenn. 37203, U.S.A. for \$6.50 (Order no. 451-243).



particular type of folk hymnody, let us briefly deal with the question of its definition and origin.

The American folk hymn has been broadly defined by Irving Lowens as "basically a secular folk-tune which happens to be sung to a religious text."<sup>14</sup> Although this definition is helpful as far as it goes, it is also somewhat problematic, for specific secular folksong counterparts cannot be found for many hymns whose musical style is related to the folk idiom.

In many and perhaps most cases, the melodies and texts of the folk hymns were sung together before they appeared in print in the shape-note tunebooks. This appears to be indicated by William Caldwell of Tennessee in his 1837 tunebook, *Union Harmony*. Caldwell wrote that "many of the airs which the author has reduced to system (i.e. notated) and harmonized, have been selected from the unwritten music in general use in the Methodist Church, others from the Baptist and many more from the Presbyterian taste."<sup>15</sup> This "unwritten music" referred to by Caldwell consisted largely of melodies from the Anglo-American ballad tradition set to hymn texts.

On the other hand, it appears that the singing-school masters in their tunebook compilations also brought folk tunes and religious texts together for the first time and published them. For example, Wheeler Gillet of Baltimore, the urban-oriented compiler of *The Virginia Sacred Minstrel* of 1817, criticized his fellow tunebook compilers who published "trifling and doleful ditties, patched up from old love songs." The phrase "patched up from old love songs" would seem to be at least a hint that these tunebook compilers themselves sometimes brought the folk tunes and sacred texts together for the first time. Also not to be overlooked is the likelihood that some of these shape-note musicians themselves had so thoroughly absorbed the folk idiom that it became their natural medium of musical expression.

An example of a folk hymn that has an identifiable secular folksong counterpart is 'Wondrous Love.' The dorian melody of 'Wondrous Love' was originally the music from the ballad 'Captain Kidd':

My name was Robert Kidd, as I sailed, as I sailed,  
My name was Robert Kidd, as I sailed,  
My name was Robert Kidd, God's laws I did forbid,  
Most wickedly I did, as I sailed, as I sailed,  
Most wickedly I did, as I sailed.<sup>16</sup>

14 Irving Lowens, 'John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part Second: A Northern Precursor of Southern Folk Hymnody,' in Lowens, *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

15 William Caldwell, *Union Harmony* (Maryville. Tenn.: The Author, 1837). Quoted in Jackson, *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

16 Jackson, 'Introduction' to White and King, *Op. cit.*, VI-VII. 'Wondrous Love' is on page 159 of the facsimile edition of *The Sacred Harp*.

Let us sing the two stanzas of 'Wondrous Love,' to the accompaniment of Carlton Young's harmonization from the American *Methodist Hymnal* of 1966.<sup>17</sup>

1. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.
2. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of life  
To lay aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,  
To lay aside his crown for my soul.

'Wondrous Love' has appeared in American church hymnals only in recent years, but the folktune setting of 'How firm a foundation' has been in American church hymnals since the late nineteenth century. This folk hymn, for which no specific secular folksong counterpart has been found, appeared in print as early as 1832 in Joseph Funk's Shenandoah Valley tunebook, *Genuine Church Music* (p.196). A version in three parts entitled 'Bellevue' is taken from the 1844 *Sacred Harp* (facsimile ed., p. 72). The melody, which is pentatonic, appears in the middle (tenor) voice part, as customary in the shape-note tunebooks. Also to be noted is the unconventional harmonization. Several chords, such as the first, are triads with the third missing. The parallel fifths and octaves in the next to the last measure are an integral part of this harmonic style. Although these 'incorrect' harmonies were viewed as crude by Lowell Mason, Thomas Hastings and their followers, they actually sound more modern to our ears than most nineteenth-century hymn tunes. Even though this setting is in three voice parts, it was and still is common practice in this tradition for all parts except the bass to be sung by both men and women; thus with the doubling at the octave of the treble and tenor this piece is actually performed in five voice parts. Let us sing this early melody and harmonization to 'How firm a foundation.'

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!  
What more can he say than to you he hath said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

The next example is the *Methodist Hymnal* arrangement (no. 48) of this same melody to 'How firm a foundation,' designed for unison singing. In this hymnal it is harmonized by Carlton R.

17 Carlton R. Young (ed.), *The Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1966), no. 432. This hymnal is available from the publisher at 201 8th Ave., South, Nashville, Tenn. 37202, for the price of \$3.00.



Young in a style that preserved the hollow-sounding chords without thirds. Note that the meter is a more flowing 2/2 and that the melody contains the two-note melismas found in other early versions of this tune. A fermata has been added by this writer to indicate the natural break in the middle of the hymn, which is indicated by various longer note values in early versions of this folk hymn. Let us sing a stanza of this arrangement of the 1966 *Methodist Hymnal*.

*The revival spiritual.* Jackson's third category of folk hymnody, the revival spiritual, is basically a folk hymn simplified by repetitions, including tag lines added to a standard hymn text and a chorus or refrain. This process of simplification is well illustrated by the first stanza of the familiar hymn by the English Baptist, Samuel Stennett, which reads as follows:

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye,  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie.

With the addition of tag lines and a chorus, a revival spiritual version of Stennett's hymn found in *The Sacred Harp* (p. 117) reads as follows:

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye,  
On the other side of Jordan, hallelujah.  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie.  
On the other side of Jordan, hallelujah.

Chorus:

On the other side of Jordan, hallelujah,  
On the other side of Jordan, hallelujah.

This simplicity embodied in the revival spiritual was designed to communicate with the unlettered frontier folk who had to learn their sacred song from memory in the spontaneous atmosphere of the camp meeting. Also to be noted is that the rhythm of the revival spiritual is generally more lively than that of the religious ballad or folk hymn; this characteristic along with its simplicity served to enhance its popularity in the early nineteenth-century revivals.

We now hear a recorded example of the revival spiritual entitled 'Bright Canaan,' as arranged for mixed choir by Alice Parker and Robert Shaw and sung by the Robert Shaw Chorale.<sup>18</sup> An

18 Published in octavo by Lawson-Gould Music Publishers and available from G. Schirmer, Inc., 609 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, for \$.25 (Order no. 919). Recorded on the album entitled *What Wondrous Love* (RCA no. LSC-2403), which unfortunately is no longer in print. However, a second Shaw Chorale album of American folk hymnody entitled *Sing to the Lord* (RCA no. LSC-2942) is available.

early printing of 'Bright Canaan' (entitled 'Sweet Canaan') is found in *The Sacred Harp* (p. 87). The text as sung by the Shaw Chorale is as follows:

1. O who will come and go with me,  
I am bound for the land of Canaan.  
I'm bound fair Canaan's land to see,  
I am bound for the land of Canaan.

Chorus:

O, Canaan, bright Canaan,  
I'm bound for the land of Canaan,  
O, Canaan, it is my happy home,  
I am bound for the land of Canaan.

2. I'll join with those who've gone before,  
I am bound for the land of Canaan.  
Where sin and sorrows are no more,  
I am bound for the land of Canaan.  
(Chorus.)

3. Our songs of praise shall fill the skies,  
I'm bound for the land of Canaan,  
And higher still our joys they rise  
I am bound for the land of Canaan.  
(Chorus.)

#### REJECTION AND SURVIVAL OF FOLK HYMNODY

In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries the American folk-hymn tradition which had been so popular in the South and West was largely rejected by the major church bodies of these areas in favour of the European-oriented tradition of Lowell Mason and the northern gospel hymn. Folk hymnody survived among the Primitive Baptists and in rural singing sessions held in the Southern states. These singings used mainly *The Sacred Harp*, the most popular shape-note tunebook, which today is available in several different editions. In the *Directory and Minutes of Annual Sacred Harp Singings 1970-1971* there are listed 354 meetings of singings scheduled for 1971 in the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Tennessee.

A Sacred Harp singing is a musical, religious and social event. The singings take place mostly in churches, but also in county courthouses, school buildings and community centres. The singers usually sit informally in sections according to their voice parts. Each singing session opens and closes with prayer. In democratic fashion each singer who wishes is given the opportunity to lead the group



in a selection. Each piece is first rehearsed once in the fasola syllables and then sung with words. After a couple of hours of singing in an all-day session the group adjourns for lunch, an important feature, which consists of a bountiful meal known as 'dinner on the grounds' (weather permitting) with a wide variety of home-cooked food prepared by the ladies. In the afternoon the group enjoys a couple more hours of singing. Although the majority of the singings are of one day's duration, there are also numerous night singings and some two- and three-day singings. In most singings the majority of the singers are of the older generation, having learned this musical tradition from their childhood. There is a certain emotional fervour and vitality in this country singing that is reflected in the faces of the singers themselves. The purpose of these singings is not public performance for an audience but rather whole-hearted participation. As Jackson observed, "This is not listener's music. It is *singer's* music."<sup>19</sup> Thus the vocal quality is that of the country singer and not the fine-art-oriented singing of urban culture. With this in mind, we will now hear an example of Sacred Harp singing by a group from Alabama singing the revival spiritual 'The Happy Sailor.' (The Sacred Harp, p. 388.)<sup>20</sup>

1. Come tell of your ship and what is her name,  
Oh, tell me, happy sailor!  
Come tell of your captain and what is his fame,  
Oh, tell me, happy sailor!

Chorus:

She's the old ship of zion, hallelu! hallelu!  
And her captain, Judah's Lion, hallelujah.

2. She will land us safe on Canaan's bright shore,  
Oh, glory, hallelujah!  
We'll land with our friends who've gone on before,  
Oh glory, hallelujah!

Chorus.

#### REDISCOVERY OF FOLK HYMNODY

George Pullen Jackson. The rediscovery of American folk hymnody is largely due to the work of the late George Pullen Jackson, a professor at Vanderbilt University, who beginning in 1933 with his book *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands* revealed this tradition to the American people. Jackson's 1933 book was followed

<sup>19</sup> Jackson, 'Introduction' to White and King, *Op cit.*, xiii.

<sup>20</sup> Recorded in the album entitled *Sacred Harp Singing in the Old Country Church*, available from the Sacred Harp Publishing Co., P.O. Box 1185, Bremen, Ga. 30110, U.S.A., for \$3.50

by five others dealing with American folk hymnody: *Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America* (1937),<sup>21</sup> *Down-East Spirituals and Others* (1939), *White and Negro Spirituals* (1943), *The Story of the Sacred Harp* (1944) and *Another Sheaf of White Spirituals* (1952), the last book appearing the year before his death. With the exception of *The Story of the Sacred Harp*, his books contain a large selection of folk hymn melodies with texts, mostly taken from the nineteenth-century shape-note tunebooks.

Jackson coined the term 'white spiritual,' which has been widely used in referring to the white man's folk hymnody as distinguished from the better known Negro spiritual. Although the white spirituals or folk hymns were printed in the shape-note tunebooks for several decades before the Civil War, the first Negro spirituals were not published until 1862. Jackson concluded that the Negro spirituals were basically imitations of earlier existing white spirituals. The earlier appearance of the white spiritual in print, however, does not prove its earlier existence, for both bodies of sacred folksong existed in oral tradition for some time before being printed. The viewpoint of more recent scholars is that the Negro spiritual resulted as a musical syncretism of West African and European elements and not as a mere imitation of the white man's sacred folksong.<sup>22</sup>

*Facsimile reprints.* One result of the rediscovery of American folk hymnody has been the reprinting of facsimile editions of several early shape-note tunebooks with historical introductions, including John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music Part Second* (1813; 1820 ed.), William Walker's *Southern Harmony* (1835; 1854 ed.), B. F. White's and E. J. King's *The Sacred Harp* (1844; 1859 ed.) and the soon to be reprinted tunebook of John G. McCurry, *The Social Harp* (1855).

*Choral and orchestral compositions.* Another result of the rediscovery of American folk hymnody has been the use of this tradition in orchestral and choral work. Although there are relatively few examples of symphonic works and cantatas utilizing American folk hymns, hundreds of arrangements for mixed choral groups have appeared in the past few decades. Some collections of folk hymn choral arrangements are John Powell's *Twelve Folk Hymns* (Glen Rock, N. J.: J. Fischer and Brother, 1934), Annabel Morris Buchanan's *Folk Hymns of America* (J. Fischer and Brother, 1938) and John Jacob Niles' *The Shape-Note Study Book* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1950). An excellent series of choral arrangements of both American folk hymnody and hymnody from

<sup>21</sup> *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands* and *Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America* are available in paperback reprints for \$3.00 and \$2.50 respectively from Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick St., New York, N.Y. 10014, U.S.A.

<sup>22</sup> Don Yoder, 'Introduction' to Jackson, *White Spirituals. Op. cit.*, vi-xi.



eighteenth-century New England is that of Alice Parker and Robert Shaw, also recorded by the Robert Shaw Chorale (see footnotes no. 18 and 23). Numerous church, school, university and seminary choral groups have added white spirituals alongside the familiar repertoire of Negro spirituals and have increased the appreciation for both of these rich traditions of sacred folksong.

*Hymnal publication.* In recent years an increasing number of American folk hymns of both white and Negro traditions have appeared in American church hymnals. Particularly noteworthy in this respect is the 1966 *Methodist Hymnal*, which contains more than twenty-five American folk hymn melodies, including six Negro spirituals. In some cases a hymn text from a different tradition is effectively set to the music of an American folk hymn. A pair of good examples of folk-tune and text weddings in *The Methodist Hymnal* are G. A. Studdert-Kennedy's 'Awake, awake to love and work' set to 'Morning Song' (no. 190) from the 1813 *Repository of Sacred Music Part Second* and James Montgomery's 'God is my strong salvation' set to 'Wedlock' (no. 211) from Sharp's and Karpeles' *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (Vol. 2, p. 272).

#### CONCLUSION

Although America may properly claim the folk hymn as a part of its heritage, let it be remembered that it is textually and musically an Anglo-American creation. The American tunebook compilers knew the tradition of folksong brought from the British Isles and incorporated this musical idiom in their folk hymns. They also took the familiar hymn texts of Watts, Doddridge, Newton, Cowper and others and set them to folk melodies. These English texts were later in part simplified to meet the conditions of frontier revivalism. Thus what has been called throughout this paper 'American folk hymnody' could also properly be designated as 'Anglo-American folk hymnody.' Even as Ralph Vaughan Williams some sixty-five years ago introduced folk melodies to hymns in *The English Hymnal*, perhaps editors of new hymnals in the British Isles today will consider utilizing this folk-hymn tradition which has resulted from the rich blending of our Anglo-American cultural heritage.

#### POSTSCRIPT

In closing we will briefly consider the folk hymn which has been chosen for the final act of praise of this meeting, 'Amazing Grace,' also known as 'New Britain.' (*The Sacred Harp*, p. 45). You will note the similarities of the four phrases of this melody. Each phrase begins essentially with an ascending fourth. The last

tone or the last motive of each phrase is repeated at the beginning of the following phrase. The melody of 'Amazing Grace' is pentatonic, with no B or f to be found.

We will now hear a Shaw-Parker arrangement of 'Amazing Grace' sung by the Robert Shaw Chorale. This arrangement preserves much of the sturdy harmonic style and incorporates a folk-song-like melismatic tenor solo, thus retaining much of the rustic quality of 'Amazing Grace,' probably the most popular of all American folk hymns.<sup>23</sup>

#### THE NEW CATHOLIC HYMNAL

BY ERIK ROUTLEY

Without doubt the appearance of this book is the major hymnological event of the year. Those who heard its musical editor expounding it at the Society's Summer Conference will, now that they can have copies in their own hands to keep, have much to debate, much to ponder, and, I feel sure, much to praise.

I think that I should recommend anybody opening the book for the first time to turn first to no. 297, keep his finger in that page, and then turn at once to number 1. 297 is good old 'Faith of our fathers.' Yes: *that*, until comparatively recently, was what Catholics thought hymns were. They were folk-songs with jaunty or sentimental tunes just like sea shanties or any other sort of secular song: there was no question whatever of quality. It was all a matter of folk-association. (A lot of the post-Hierarchy Catholic tunes, I have now found, seem to have come from Tyneside: a native told me a year ago that STELLA isn't a Latin word, but is Stella-on-Tyne, an industrial village adjoining Blaydon. I'm sure all the other members of the Executive knew that but I didn't. Anyhow—Tyne-side remains the district where carefree music-making survives most vitally, and where a good sing is regarded as compensating for any amount of qualitative deviation from orthodoxy.)

Yes: that was Catholic hymnody—not really to be taken seriously when it wasn't plainsong. When you turn to no. 1 in this book—the most beautiful no. 1 ever to start a hymn book out—and find yourself faced with Dowland's 'A God and yet a man?' you have travelled as far as hymnody can take you. This book is a decisive gesture not only in favour of vernacular hymn-singing (there have been several of those in the last seven years) but in favour of quality. It is edited by two enthusiasts, Anthony Petti, a distinguished man of letters, and Geoffrey Laycock, a musician of ripe talent and experience, who throw one thing after another at

<sup>23</sup> Available from G. Schirmer, order no. 919, for \$2.25 and recorded on the album *What Wondrous Love*. This hymn and tune (in a later harmonization) are arranged for congregational singing in our *Conference 1971 Act of Praise*, no. 1.



you not so much with the idea of criticizing what you used to sing, but with an air of simply having to share with you their delightful experiences and discoveries.

Now and again I think I have ventured the view that committee-hymnals tend to be dull hymnals, and that defiance of democratic demands always produces hymnals of character. This book confirms that opinion. Whatever else you say about it, you cannot deny that this has character.

Of course, it would have been scandalous if that hadn't been the case. Editing for a constituency as new as the post-1964 Catholic parish and in a context as bracing as that of the new vernacular liturgies, these two would have had no excuse for producing a book which simply gathered all the most popular material from *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and the *Methodist Hymn Book*. They might have done that: indeed, some hymn-singing in Catholic parishes appears to be nourished mostly on that kind of food. But that would have been to overlook opportunities which are nearer at hand for Catholic editors than they are for Protestant ones at present. There's hardly anything that *had* to go in (and what *had* to go in has been put in the appendix which begins—at no. 297). And one feels that that is literally what they said. 'What goes into this collection will be there because we believe every syllable and every note of it.' That's the conviction that comes through.

I am going to say that to me not every one of the decisions here taken commends itself. There is much room for disagreement and doubt. We may even say that one or two decisions were manifestly misguided. But what we cannot say is that the book fails to do what it clearly sets out to do. This is the point for which I look first in any new hymnal—how it answers the question, 'Are the editors true to their principles?' When we have answered that we can say what we will about the rightness of the principles. But where there is an absence of that sort of integrity, or where there aren't any discernible principles, it's hardly worth saying any more.

Before going into details, perhaps I should say that I do not share all the enthusiasm which is expressed for the liturgical and doctrinal changes which appear to be current in the Roman Catholic Church. This is too large a subject to be handled properly here: it has to do with education, with æsthetic, and even with politics, as well as with theology. But to be brief about this, I tend to believe that there is a pressure within the Catholic Church which is not quite accurately to be called 'Vatican II' but ought perhaps to be called 'Vatican IIa'—a curious puritan movement which does not seem to have much in common with the mind of the late Pope John XXIII. There are aspects of this, and visible consequences of it, which leave me very doubtful. It is not too much to say that as a Protestant I take no pleasure in the sight of a Roman Catholic Church behaving like a Protestant church. I never have thought that this was what the ecumenical movement ought to aim at or be

content with. But I have to mention the matter because at one or two points this collection seems to make concessions to that kind of pressure which are not (to me at least) self-evidently wise.

One of the things that the reader will very soon notice is that in this book great liberties are taken with the texts of hymns. In the Hymn Society this has always been a point of cheerful debate, and among us there are people who are sure that what an author wrote we should sing, to the last comma, and others who reply "what about Watts's worms and Wesley's bowels?"

Well, these editors have—and they are the first to have done it on a large scale—faced the problem which the rest of us have hoped would go away if we didn't look at it: that is, the problem of what to do with 'thee' and 'thou' in hymns, now that they have been so decisively swept out of the liturgy, and hardly less decisively evicted from the Bible. Not only 'thou', but, of course, the verb forms that go with the old second person singular, and 'ye' for the second plural. Very nearly all the way these editors have abolished these archaisms: so we get—

Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven, to earth come down,  
fix in us your humble dwelling,  
all your faithful mercies crown.

And (to the confusion of those looking in the index)—

Your hand, O God, has guided . . .

Now before you hold up your hands in horror at this, I must remind you that these texts have been revised by a man of letters. He has sometimes taken an opportunity where others might have simply made do with carpentry. Here was Neale (in no. 3):

To-day before thy passion,  
they sang their hymns of praise.

Anthony Petti revises thus:

Before your bitter passion  
they paved your way with praise.

I may be unprincipled, but I do find that irresistible: he has actually got more of scripture into that couplet than there was before—and if it wasn't in the Latin, it still preserves the spirit of Palm Sunday. I find myself very rarely objecting to the amendments which have been made in so far as they are dictated by the disappearance of 'thou'. I find it slightly mysterious that here and there the editors have left an old text as they found it, ('Holy, Holy, Holy,' 91, is an example). It is not easy to see why a revised 'Jesu, lover of my soul' was included—the few people who will want to sing this in Catholic circles would probably not be disturbed at all by 'thou' if they can tolerate 'bosom'.



I am content therefore to say that for this purpose I think this particular kind of revision unobjectionable. There are other revisions, not solely dictated by this need, about which I should have much greater doubt. I will mention one or two.

Let all mortal flesh keep silence  
and in loving reverence stand . . . (128)

The alteration of 'fear and trembling' to 'loving reverence' is what I think of as 'Vatican IIa.'

Free themselves from earthly troubles

as a paraphrase of 'ponder nothing earthly-minded' is another example: didn't the original writer mean, 'think about *nothing* earthly, whether pleasant or painful'?

I detect here and there a fear of ecstasy. Here is Faber:

Oh break, oh break, hard heart of mine!  
thy weak self-love and guilty pride  
his Pilate and his Judas were;  
Jesus, our Love, is crucified. . . .

O love of God! O sin of man!  
in this dread act your strength is tried;  
and victory remains with love;  
for he, our Love, is crucified.

That may be almost unbearably intense, but in its strange combination of complexity and inarticulacy it has a piercing quality which I think is absent from this:

Our lukewarm hearts and callous mind,  
our weak self-love and empty pride  
his Pilate and his Judas were  
when Christ, our love, was crucified.

Great loving God, for sins of men  
with bitter pain your strength was tried;  
but you have fought and overcome:  
our Lord and King is crucified. (175)

What motive lay behind that remarkable adaptation? Possibly it had already been decided that the tune LEIGHTON, from William Leighton's *Tears and Lamentations* (1614), should be set to this text. That meant large rhythmical adjustments (for the editors show a very proper sensitiveness to rhythmical incongruities such as the recurring last line of this hymn would have offered to that tune). There may also have been a Calvinistic horror of subjective hymnody, so that 'thy weak self-love' (or 'your weak self-love') became 'Our weak self-love'. But whatever the motives, much has

been lost: especially the specific relation of self-love to Judas and guilty pride to Pilate (by the device of chiasmus)—and it's *guilty* pride, anyhow, not *empty* pride. Moreover the very last line comes as almost an oxymoron after the changed sense of the rest of the verse: not now a battle between the strength of sin and the strength of love, but the strength of God overcoming an unidentified enemy, and then 'Our King. . . is crucified.' Yes—in victory he proves Himself King: but after all he is crucified. It is subtle, but it is, I am sure, profoundly different from what Faber wrote, and the rejection of Faber is uncomfortable to me.

It is the more uncomfortable when one encounters certain other kinds of dubious material in the texts with which the editor has had no quarrel. He has left that contemptuous reference to Psalm 23 in 'Father hear the prayer we offer'—there was a good chance to make a good hymn out of a bad one: he has left the ungrammatical 'songs of praises' in 'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah' (which becomes, 'Guard and guide me, great Redeemer', 81) and he has no qualms about 'in the fire the tares to cast: but the fruitful ears to store' in the old harvest hymn which here opens, 'Let us with thanksgiving come' (133). I am particularly sad at the omission of this verse from 'Firmly I believe and truly' (57):

Simply to his grace and wholly,  
light and life and strength belong,  
and I love supremely, solely,  
him the holy, him the strong.

Apart from the ecstatic devotion there expressed, I miss the pregnant reference to *Sanctus fortis* in the original poem.

I thought that I would dispose of my doubts before going on to my delights; and I have mostly done so with these examples. I feel a great lack of the Exodus dimension of helpless awe in this selection of hymns—perhaps I hear that note more completely in no. 1 than anywhere else. Look at what has happened to 'My God how wonderful you are' (162) and the whole of that part of the story is told. I believe the loss of that last verse at which everybody laughs so heartily is a real loss: it's bad literature because you can't gaze at anything from a 'prostrate' position: but nothing else about that verse is bad: what so many activist folk say is bad is, in my submission, not only not bad but something the lack of which is almost poisonous. I should not dream of accusing these editors of this special vice; but I detect now and again a remote sign of its presence and in conscience I cannot refrain from warning hymn singers and the ordinaries of worship about it. Those who do not recognize it as a weakness at all will naturally allow large discount for the prejudices of this reviewer.

But in the literature it offers this book is simply packed with distinction. I would especially commend the remarkably skilful



versions of the psalms which it gets from Brian Foley, and here and there from the literary editor himself. No. 135 (Psalm 5) is a good example (v 2):

There is no blessing, Lord, from you  
for those who make their will their way,  
no praise for those who will not praise,  
no peace for those who will not pray.

That (set to MELCOMBE) is admirable hymn-writing—economical, epigrammatic, and rhythmical: and it reflects very well the psalmist's thought. He has a version of Psalm 148 (no. 9) which set to one of Elizabeth Poston's most graceful inspirations marks itself out at once as a sure-fire winner. The literary editor has made a very happy revision of the Tate and Brady Psalm 42 (16), and his translations always read like good hymns—on the opposite page (17) is a very tender and tasteful new version of *Stabat Mater*—the only tolerable English translation I know. I think I fault him only in his translation of 'O Sacred head' (50) where there is a repetition of 'misery' in the strong position two lines apart.

Another good psalm-version is Michael Hodgetts on Ps. 93 (237), set to a very fine tune indeed by Marilyn Toller. Here and there we get a Dearmer-like construction of a new hymn on the first line of an old one. No. 25, 'Blest are the pure in heart', becomes a hymn dealing with four of the Beatitudes, modest and straightforward: quite justifiable, I think, in that the familiar version of this hymn is a somewhat limping parody of a Keble original that hardly anybody knows.

The list of new authors is impressive, of new composers even more so. As usual, there are about twice as many new composers as new authors: but the contribution of one or two authors is so substantial that the number of new pieces in words and in music works out about the same. There is a tiny piece from T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, but that is about as far as the plundering of literary classics goes. Hymn Society members will be cheered to see a collaboration between Cyril Pocknee and D. Ingram-Hill in one translation (249), and in two places there are new pieces whose words and music come from the same hand—by Stephen Somerville (59) and by Kenred B. Rowsell (262). More about the music in a moment, but apart from what I have already noted, the one piece whose new words and new music leapt up from the page towards my eye is no. 209, by Michael Dawney and Brian Foley, 'See Christ was wounded for our sake.' This has a truly classic poise. Of authors recently published for the first time we notice Christopher Vaughan (22: *Hymns and Songs*), Rosamond Herklots (60,ib.), Albert Bayly (182, 'O Lord of every shining constellation—tune by Laycock), Brian Wren (136: *100 hymns*) and Fred Kaan (twice). The Langlais-Didier Canticle, *Dieu, nous avons vu*, gets its first official airing

in this country, but the music editor has somewhat drastically edited the tune, and this isn't, I think, the best translation. A pity not to get the authentic tune on its first appearance.

Musically the book abounds with surprises. There have been many commissions, and the new tunes in the book are by Geoffrey Laycock (18), Lennox Berkeley, Norman Caplin, Kenneth D. Smith, Stephen Somerville, Robert Sherlaw Johnson, Ewart Knight, Brian Sargent, Ian Copley, Martin Dalby, William Tamblyn, Colin Mawby, Vernon Griffiths, Paul Johnson, Edmund Rubbra, Michael Dawney, Richard Connolly, Marilyn Toller, Herbert Howells, Peter Aston, Inglis Gundry and Elizabeth Poston. The name of Benjamin Britten is 'dropped' in the preface, but his contribution is the mean parts in two Schemelli Chorales, so it is hardly more substantial than his much advertised offering in the *Cambridge Hymnal*.

The style of the new music varies widely from the very austere (Poston) to the very chromatic (Berkeley), and the shamelessly hearty (Mawby). The impression I get is that Catholic congregations are assumed to be a good deal more biddable than Protestant ones: there are some alarming intervals and key-changes here and there, and some phrases which need precise diction and good ears. Indeed there aren't many of the new tunes that don't have at least one of these qualities. Peter Aston's tune to 'Mercy, Pity, Peace' (253), for example, asks for a start of the third line on high E (and it's no use quoting Martin Shaw's MARCHING as a precedent: the mood could not be more different). Was this wise? Too many of the new tunes sound beautiful on the piano but present steep problems for anyone who wants to teach them to a congregation.

But of course this is a reaction to 'Faith of our fathers'. It's understandable, and healthy, and it's certainly not for a reviewer to tell Mr Laycock what his congregations will take and what they won't. Nonetheless for that, I personally suggest that their very dogmatic adherence to the 'one hymn, one tune' principle (GERONTIUS is, I believe, the only tune that appears twice!) has caused them to do two friends of mine a grave injustice! The worst case is 136. Brian Wren's splendid hymn on Christian unity, 'Lord Christ the Father's mighty Son' simply won't get sung in the parishes to Tamblyn's strenuous and demanding music. That's an anthem for a skilled choir. If ever a hymn deserved congregational treatment this one does, and personally I think it can't be better sung than to Peter Cutts's tune in *100 HT*. Unhappily the other case involves the same composer—it is Fred Kaan's 'We meet you, O Christ'. This may be a highly dubious text, but at least it would be a good idea to let ordinary people see whether they can make anything of it; and with this tune they'll be so busy counting and watching the conductor that the text will be completely lost.

The book is full of fine tunes and well-set hymns, and is almost innocent of dead wood, but it is noticeable how many of the new



tunes seem to have been written by people who seem to be more accustomed to playing hymns than singing them. If there is any weakness in the choice of tunes, I suspect that it is the consequence of zeal and enthusiasm outrunning pastoral sensitiveness.

It is good to see one tune of John Wilson's in the book: it is sad indeed to see that Fred Pratt Green is completely passed by. There is much of the new music about which it would be wise to remain agnostic until it has proved to be acceptable and vitalizing. One hopes very much that that is what will happen.

At this stage it might surprise a reader who has not handled the book to learn of its modest compass. The main body of the book ends at 283, and there are eighteen 'doubles' (a hymn with two tunes getting two numbers), which brings it down to 265 texts. At the end is a pleasant handful of rounds and canons, and then that appendix of nine traditionals. For such a short book, it is indeed richly endowed; but the editors have taken ample notice of other books and traditions. You would not expect a very large overlap between its contents and those of standard non-Roman books in Britain: but the overlaps in fact come out like this:

*English Hymnal*, 117

*Hymns A & M Revised*, 119

*Congregational Praise*, 122

*Methodist Hymn Book*, 105

*Hymns for Church and School*, 100

That is to say, there is an overlap of between 38 and 46 per cent with those books (allowing, of course, for altered versions to be regarded as the same hymns, but not going far enough to include the new 'Blest are the pure in heart'). Moreover, with these 'overlap' hymns the editors don't normally take musical liberties. A person used to the *English Hymnal* could fairly easily sing about two-fifths of this book—assuming, of course, that he had been properly brought up on the *English Hymnal* and knew the right tunes. This is a creditable and sensible policy, especially when one remembers the very high-grade professional tastes of the editors themselves.

The book is very pleasantly produced. It has a large page, a bright cover, and very clear print and music type. Several verses of every hymn are printed inside the music staves, the remainder, if it is a long one, below them—a decent compromise between the English and American styles. The editors irritate me in not putting their index of first lines right at the back of the book: that is a convention which nowadays everybody else follows and if the Hymn Society could take the authority of the MCC we'd make it a rule. The Preface is a real preface—a bit loquacious, perhaps, but excess

of zest in this field is better than absence of it. They have arranged all the hymns in alphabetical order of first lines. That is sensible in a short book, although I find it unimaginative and tending to endorse the opinion that the words of hymns don't matter much. Since so many familiar first lines have been altered it doesn't always make it easy to find the hymn you want, without looking up the index of first lines (which you can't find anyway): and in any new edition I plead with the editors to include in the index a bracketed entry showing the original, and usually familiar, first line of every hymn whose opening they have altered. 'Your hand, O God, has guided' should also appear, in its place, as '(Thy hand, O God, has guided)'. That, anyhow, ought to be done if the editors hope that the book will fall into the hands of non-Catholics.

To conclude, then: this is a hymn book for Radio-3 Catholic churches; for those who really want some simple music that is new and inspiring and dead contrary to the accepted notion of what hymns are. It contains some beautiful choral pieces for choirs to sing, if the new Catholic services make provision for choral singing at all. It contains a decent allowance of ordinary sound, traditional hymns. I don't suppose for one moment that it is a book for a downtown Catholic congregation in Tyneside's dockland, and I should expect it to have more success in the south than in the north. But the spirit is there. It's much less pedantic and standoffish than the *Cambridge Hymnal*; much more respectful to intellect than what older generations have put up with. It's full of quirks and idiosyncrasies (I forgot to mention that the name of Ronald Knox doesn't appear in it); and you could say that there's never a dull moment. Since I believe that hymnody needs incisive and critical intellects at work on it, and professional standards in those who edit hymnals, I commend this as the most exciting, heartening and discomfiting gesture.

#### ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1971

The Annual Conference was held from 19th to 21st July, 1971, at Norwich. We are omitting our usual expansive account of the conference because we are much pressed for space. Dr. Eskew's lecture on American Folk Hymnody is given in this issue; Mr Laycock's excellent account of the *New Catholic Hymnal* is presupposed in the review, also in this issue; and we hope to print later Mr. Sharpe's fascinating lecture on Baptist Contributions to Hymnody. The Act of Praise was held in St. Mary's Baptist Church, Norwich, introduced by Dr. A. L. Peck, conducted by Mr. Geoffrey Laycock, with Mr. Cyril Pearce at the organ.

An account of the important decisions reached at the Conference, contributed by the Secretary, follows.



## EXECUTIVE, SUMMER 1971

At its meeting during the Summer Conference (19th-21st July, 1971) the Executive Committee was urged to proceed with consideration of amendments to the Constitution with a view to submission of amendments to the next Annual General Meeting.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### MEMBERSHIP.

The deaths of Rev. F. C. D. Maldram and R. L. Child were recorded. Tributes to their memory were paid by the Secretary and Rev. Eric P. Sharpe.

Membership on 1st January, 1971, was 323, a loss of 4 during the year, and subscriptions had been received from 44 Libraries, a gain of 1.

### FINANCE.

Introducing his Financial Statement for the year 1970, the Treasurer pointed out that the excess of income over expenditure of £220 was chiefly due to the fact that only two Bulletin bills had come in for settlement during the year; nor had we yet felt the effects of the large rise in printing costs in the autumn of 1970 and the latest increase in postal charges. He reminded members that through the wisdom and generosity of their predecessors the Society had investments which now yielded enough to pay for one Bulletin each year, and he ventured to hope that the present members would bear in mind the possibility of handing on the torch by making similar bequests. The Accounts, audited by Mr. G. E. Jones, were adopted.

The meeting heard with great regret that Dr. Pocknee could not allow his name to go forward for re-election as a Joint Chairman. The Rev. Dr. A. R. Winnett was proposed and then the resolution extended to include the Rev. Eric P. Sharpe so that the Joint Chairmen could be elected by the one vote. The voting was unanimous. Rev. Alan Luff was elected to the Executive Committee.

Note was taken of the Opening on 22nd May of The Williams School of Music at Harpenden, with Rev. Dr. Francis B. Westbrook as Principal, and Mr. G. Edward Jones as Clerk to the Foundation. Dr. Westbrook said that although closely associated with the Methodist Church Music Society the School would be fully ecumenical in the service of the Churches.

It was one of the most profitable Conferences we have held and one which flowed easily because of the excellent arrangements made by Rev. Eric P. Sharpe and Mr. Geoffrey Laycock. The immense help given by Mrs. Sharpe and her friends in providing car transport from and to Norwich Station for those travelling by train is most gratefully acknowledged. Greetings were received during the Conference from Mr. Kenneth Finlay and from Rev. Leslie H. Bunn, Mrs. White and Mrs. Dickie, unable to attend through illness, and the good wishes of these friends were most heartily reciprocated.

W.J.L.

### ROBERT LEONARD CHILD, 1891-1971

R. L. Child who died earlier this year (1971), shortly before his eightieth birthday, had served not only the Baptist denomination but the whole church with distinction. He was Principal of Regents Park College, Oxford for sixteen years until his retirement in 1958, having previously served as minister of two famous churches—St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge, and Broadmead, Bristol. Among the many honours and responsibilities that he accepted were the Presidency of the Baptist Union in 1954, membership of the Joint Committee responsible for the preparation of the New English Bible, and chairmanship of the Overseas Aid Committee of Oxfam.

It was he who first introduced me to the Hymn Society, of which he had been a member for many years; and both as my college principal when I was a student, and later as a member and deacon of my church in Oxford over thirteen years, he had no little influence in stimulating my own interest in hymnody. Though disclaiming any knowledge of music himself, no one was more appreciative of the service given by church musicians, or more understanding of the difficulties often encountered in such service. His own particular contribution in this realm was as chairman from 1957 till his death of the Psalms and Hymns Trust (the body responsible for publication of Baptist hymn books over the past 100 years), and in this capacity he took an active interest in the publication of the *Baptist Hymn Book* in 1962.

ERIC SHARPE

### LESLIE H. BUNN, 1901-1971

Leslie Bunn died on 27th August, 1971, at the age of seventy, and in this the Society has sustained a grievous loss. He was probably the most learned authority on hymn-texts of his time, and it was most appropriate, indeed it was inevitable, that in 1949 he should be asked by the Society to undertake the editing of a new



edition of Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*. The previous year this assignment had been accepted by the late Canon C. S. Phillips of Canterbury; but none of us knew at the time how near he was to the end of his life (he died the following year). At once Leslie Bunn took over the work.

We did not know—none of us were learned enough to know—what it was we were asking him to do. When you think how any other major lexicographical project is set up nowadays—with large finances, massive committees and a network of sub-committees, and publication a volume at a time over periods of many years—the notion of inviting one man to carry the whole load of *Julian* revision now seems fantastic. Bunn undertook it calmly and cheerfully, and for the best part of twenty years, until his health failed, he soldiered on. He was a victim of the pressures of this philistine age, which gives short shrift to the quiet and unobtrusive scholar. Nothing could have been more modest or self-effacing than Bunn's character. His life's work was in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of England where he served congregations (during his time with the Society) at Bellingham (in the far north of Northumberland), Crook, Co. Durham, and at Shrewsbury. What time this ministry left him he gave to his researches on *Julian*, and we must see that the work he left is not lost to posterity if we can.

It is, indeed, in the pages of this Bulletin that most of his written work will be found, and this bears witness to his fastidious regard for scholarly precision, and his profound knowledge and love of his subject. We have been sad to see his health failing this last year, but we remember with affectionate thankfulness his courageous and dedicated work in the field which is especially honoured among us. Two members of our Executive attended his funeral service and we all send our sympathy to Mrs. Bunn and to their daughter.

#### WANTED ON LOAN

Wanted on loan by the Rev. D. M. SALE. Write in first instance, to Park View, Selborne, Alton, Hants.

1. EVANS, James Harrington: Hymns selected chiefly for Public Worship. (London, 1818; 3rd. ed. 1822, last 1843).
2. WILBERFORCE, Bp. Samuel: A selection of Psalms and Hymns for Public Worship. 1832 or any edition.
3. MANT, Bp. Richard: Ancient Hymns . . . to which are added Original Hymns. . . (1837; new ed. 1871).
4. (By A. R. C. DALLAS): Church Psalmody. A selection . . . originally compiled for the use of the parishioners of Wonston, Hants. 2nd. ed. pp. xiv. 305. J. Shayler: Wonston, 1837.

#### THE JAMES MONTGOMERY APPEAL

The Old City Cemetery, Sheffield, where the Montgomery Statue stood through the years, was privately owned and has been bought up for development. This Society is deeply grateful to the Provost of Sheffield Cathedral, the Very Rev. Ivan D. Neill, M.A., for his suggestion, initially made to your Secretary, that the Statue should be resited in the Cathedral Forecourt. As reported elsewhere, this had materialised. The remains of James Montgomery were exhumed and placed in a specially prepared vault underneath the Monument. Montgomery had been buried in two coffins with a lead lining between them and although the outer coffin had decayed, the inner coffin had remained in good condition.

The cost of the resiting operations is estimated to be £3,000 and, of this, £1,000 has been raised. An Appeal is now being issued by the Trustees of the Montgomery Hall, Sheffield, to the Firms of the City. We invite our members to contribute through our Treasurer, Mr. John Wilson. Cheques should be made payable to Sheffield Christian Education Council Montgomery Bi-centenary Fund. The collection taken at the Act of Praise amounted to £27.

W.J.L.

#### SOCIETY NOTES

Attention is drawn to the decision of the Annual General Meeting to close admissions to Life-Membership of the Society.

The short term offer of 10 or more consecutive numbers of the Bulletin at the price of 12½p per copy, plus postage, is still in operation. Complete sets are available.

The next Annual Conference will be held in Bristol, 24th to 26th July, 1972. Please book the dates.

#### FOR LIBRARIANS

By an error for which the Editor apologises, Bulletin 121 was marked 'Volume Seven number Six.' It should have been 'number Seven'. The number on this issue restores the correct sequence.



NEW MEMBERS, 1st JUNE 1970—31st JULY, 1971

Mrs E. D. ABBOTT, 48 Church Mead, Keymer, Hassocks, Sussex.

T. E. ATKINS, Esq., 19 Douay Road, Erdington, Birmingham B24 OBA.

The Revd Dr O. A. BECKERLEGGE, 69 Woodhouse Road, Sheffield, S12 2AY.

The Revd J. BOSTON, Horsford Vicarage, Norwich, NOR 84X.

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The Revd T. DUDLEY-SMITH, 28 The Drive, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Dr CHARLES H. FINNEY, Houghton College, Houghton, New York 14744, U.S.A.

The Revd J. L. HUDSON, The Precentor's Flat, 4 South Parade, Wakefield, Yorkshire.

B. K. HUNTER, Esq., Orchard Rise, Bunch Lane, Haslemere, Surrey.

D. T. W. PRICE, Esq., St. David's University College, Lampeter, Cardigan-shire.

The Revd G. G. TURNER, St Dunstan's Parsonage, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, Sussex.

The Revd M. P. L. WALL, Burford House, Swindon Street, Highworth, Swindon, Wiltshire.