

# The SACRED HARP PUBLISHING COMPANY Newsletter

VOL. 2, NO. 3 Stories about singers and singings, our music and traditions, and Sacred Harp's present-day growth.

DEC 2013

## Remembering Those Who've Gone Before: Sacred Harp Publishing Company 2013 Citation Awards

Karen Rollins | Bowden, Georgia

ON October 11, 1969, the Sacred Harp Publishing Company began a practice that continues to this day. The Board of Directors voted to present citations to "honor and express appreciation to loyal supporters and dedicated singers for outstanding work in the company and untiring support of and dedicated service to the cause of Sacred Harp music." They established six criteria for presentation of the citations:

1. Only deceased stockholders are eligible to receive a citation.
2. The deceased stockholder must have been active in the formation of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company since 1935 and/or be a stockholder in said company.
3. To be eligible to receive a citation, the deceased person must have been a teacher, writer, or an outstanding supporter and leader of Sacred Harp music.
4. All citations presented must have been approved by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.
5. The citation must be presented to the person or persons approved by the Board of Directors.
6. The citation must be presented at the honoree's Memorial or home singing by an officer or member of the Board of Directors of said company.

The first citations were inscribed on a large paper certificate in an Art Deco style. Later ones were smaller and more permanent. A list of honorees is posted as an online exhibit of the Sacred Harp Museum.

This year, the company presented four citations. The honorees, chosen by a unanimous vote, were Harrison Creel, Jerry Enright, Lonnie Rogers, and George Seiler. These singers came from four different states. Two came to the music as adults in the North; two were lifelong singers from the South. Cancer took both northern singers in the prime of their lives. The southern singers lived long lives and left children and grandchildren who sing. They were different men in looks, style, education, and personality. They were all present at the same singing on just two occasions: at the United convention in 1995 and the Lookout Mountain Convention in 1997.

What these men shared, though, was a powerful love for the music and for the people who sing it. They endorsed the traditions of Sacred Harp and they sought to uphold and preserve those traditions. They sang at every opportunity, and they supported the singings in their area. They were all strong singers who were often chosen to chair a singing or convention. They were men of integrity and faithfulness, and they all exhibited warmth and generosity. They loved to travel, they loved to sing, and they were loved in return by the singers.

### Harrison Creel

Harrison Creel lived in Dora, Alabama, and retired from the Jefferson County Health Department. He was a deacon and song leader in his church, a Master Mason, and a veteran. He

## Contents

### News

Remembering Those Who've Gone Before: Sacred Harp Publishing Company 2013 Citation Awards Karen Rollins	1
--	---

### Read the Old Paths

Uncle Tom Denson's Last Lesson: Observations and Impressions of a Son Michael Hinton and Howard Denson	5
"Melancholy Day": Letters of Condolence after the Death of Thomas Jackson Denson C. J. Griggs, Thomas Simpson McLendon, Wilber E. Morgan, and W. T. Coston	9
"There Are More Singings Now Than Ever Before": Hugh McGraw Addresses the Harpeth Valley Singers Hugh McGraw	17
William Walker: Carolina Contributor to American Music Harry Eskew	18

### Singing Reports

"Oh, What a Happy Time": The NEA National Heritage Fellows Concert in Washington D.C. Cheyenne Ivey	12
--	----

### Just a Minute

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church Singing, July 4, 1997: M. B. Forbes Playing the Harmonica, Nathan Rees	13
---	----

### Number, Measure, Weight

The Cold Mountain Bump Jesse P. Karlsberg, Mark. T. Godfrey, and Nathan Rees	14
---	----

## Introducing Vol. 2, No. 3 of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company Newsletter

Jesse P. Karlsberg and Nathan Rees

THE fifth issue of the *Sacred Harp Publishing Company Newsletter* recounts the extraordinary lives and achievements of significant figures across Sacred Harp's history and presents new insights drawn from the minutes of Sacred Harp singings.

Our issue begins with Sacred Harp Publishing Company Executive Secretary Karen Rollins' remembrance of the four 2013 recipients of posthumous citations from the company: Harrison Creel, Jerry Enright, Lonnie Rogers, and George Seiler. Two additional pieces focus on one of the first recipients of a Publishing Company citation, singing school teacher, composer, and Publishing Company co-founder Thomas Jackson Denson. Company President Michael Hinton recounts family stories about "Uncle Tom" Denson, his grandfather, and introduces an account by Denson's son Howard of his father's last lesson, at the 1935 United convention. Another article collects letters of condolence written by prominent singers to T.J.'s other son, Paine, in the wake of Denson's death. Harry Eskew recounts the contributions of nineteenth-century composer, arranger, and songbook editor William Walker, and in an excerpt from a 1964 speech, Hugh McGraw addresses some common criticisms of Sacred Harp singing and describes the state of the tradition in the mid-1960s. Turning to the present, Cheyenne Ivey contributes an account of the eventful trip twenty-two Sacred Harp singers made to Washington, D.C. this fall to join 2013 NEA National Heritage Fellow David Ivey in a celebratory concert. Two additional articles mine the *Minutes of Sacred Harp Singings*. Nathan Rees shares the story of M. B. Forbes and his harmonica, and Jesse P. Karlsberg, Mark T. Godfrey, and Nathan Rees draw on minutes data from 1995–2013 to measure the effect of *Cold Mountain* on our singings.

We invite you to leave comments on these new articles and to write us with your feedback and suggestions of topics for the future. ■

### Editorial Information

Date published: December 2013

Editor: Jesse P. Karlsberg

Associate Editor: Nathan Rees

Editorial email: [jesse@originalsacredharp.com](mailto:jesse@originalsacredharp.com)

Design: Elaena Gardner

To comment on or suggest future subjects for the *Sacred Harp Publishing Company Newsletter*, please contact the Editor.

### Visit us online

This newsletter is first published on the Sacred Harp Publishing Company website. The online edition includes videos, audio recordings, additional images and allows readers to post comments on articles.

[originalsacredharp.com/newsletter](http://originalsacredharp.com/newsletter)

was born into a singing family. So was his wife, Flarce Calvert. He traveled to many singings, and it was often said that he could have handled the bass all by himself. He loved to sing "The Family Bible" (p. 342 in *The Sacred Harp*), and no one else could sing it like Harrison. He also led "To Die No More" (p. 111b) and "The Spirit Shall Return" (p. 512) frequently. He loved good singing and was just as much at home with the Cooper book or *Christian Harmony* as he was with *The Sacred Harp*. He also loved bluegrass and was a fan of Bill Monroe and Ralph Stanley. He had lost an eye as a young man, but he cut a striking figure in his large frame, often in overalls. Harrison's contribution to the future of Sacred Harp is most evident in the participation of his family—his four children, many grandchildren, and now great-grandchildren are carrying on the tradition. Harrison, who died at eighty-four, was not the first Creel to receive a citation. His sister Marie Creel Aldridge received one after her death in 2000. The Creels are usually present at many central Alabama singings and their presence is felt throughout the South and sometimes in the North. They host well-attended singings, especially at County Line Church. Harrison has maintained and enhanced the facilities there.

He was an open, friendly man with a firm handshake. He had a great sense of humor, and he often used his skills to help his neighbors. He was well loved. His funeral last spring was inspiring, and the singing was wonderful. A large crowd of singers filled the church and his grandchildren eulogized him with love. His citation was well deserved. He will be missed.

### Jerry Enright

Jerry Enright first heard Sacred Harp in the late eighties according to his widow, Karen Freund, when he came across an LP in a bin of sale records. He saw a listing for a "concert" of the music in Chicago and he went, expecting to sit and listen. Marcia Johnson told him that he would enjoy it more if he sang, and someone put a book in his



hands. Thus began his love affair with shape notes. Jerry traveled often to sing, and he supported the singings in every way: chairing, cooking, mailing out flyers, organizing, even using his carpentry skills to help put a new roof on the unique facility at Stateline on the Georgia/Alabama line.

Jerry worked hard to preserve the traditional singing. His energy and love resulted in CD releases of singings caught on tape in 1968 on Lookout Mountain and in 1972 at Henagar. Kelly Beard gave Jerry his collection of reel-to-reel tapes, old minutes books, and other memorabilia because he knew they would be in good hands. Jerry gave Sacred Harp his energy, dedication, respect, and love. In return, he received joy, friendship, comfort, peace, and purpose.

Jerry was a "little bearded fella", as Bud Oliver used to say, and he made

his presence known in a quiet, loving way. He traveled often from Chicago to north Alabama and he felt most at home singing out of the red book there. He loved Pine Grove, and he worked hard to promote and preserve that singing on Lookout Mountain. He met his wife Karen there, and he returned to sing as long as he was able. He was probably at his happiest standing in the hollow square at Pine Grove leading "The Child of Grace" (p. 77t), "Calvary" (p. 300), or "Eternal Day" (p. 383), and his memorial there was bittersweet. His ashes are on the mountain at Pine Grove, and one can feel his spirit at rest there. He is acutely missed.

### Lonnie Rogers

Lonnie Rogers was the oldest of the four citation recipients. He lived to be almost ninety-six. He was born into a family that can trace singing back as far

**Top left:** Harrison Creel, Corner, Alabama, 2007. Photograph courtesy of Cassie Allen.

**Top right:** Jerry Enright leading at Liberty Baptist Church, Henagar, Alabama, July 3, 2005. Photograph courtesy of Karen Freund.

**Bottom left:** Lonnie and Vivian Rogers, Ephesus, Georgia, mid 1980s. Photograph courtesy of Karen Rollins.

**Bottom right:** George and Jean Seiler lead at the 2009 Western Massachusetts Sacred Harp Convention, Northampton, Massachusetts. Photograph courtesy of Jessica Keyes.





**Left:** The first Sacred Harp Publishing Company citations were inscribed on a large paper certificate in an Art Deco style. Here, the 1969 citation presented in honor of Frank Rogers, father of 2013 citation recipient Lonnie Rogers.

**Right:** Harrison Creel's Citation. Today's Sacred Harp Publishing Company citations are smaller and more permanent than the earliest citations.

as anyone can remember. According to Hugh McGraw, Lonnie's father, Frank Rogers, received the second citation given by the Publishing Company, in 1969. Lonnie sang all his life. Like Jerry Enright, he met his wife at a singing. Vivian Denney Rogers was also from a family of singers. Her father, Newman, was a singing school teacher, and one of her brothers, Felton, received a citation several years ago. Lonnie and Vivian sang at home and at singings, on bus trips with Leman and Ruth Brown, and at churches and auditoriums throughout the country. Lonnie loved Sacred Harp with a passion that can only be understood by another singer. When he was unable to attend singings, others came to sing around his bed. The light on his face was reward enough. Those visits kept him going.

Lonnie sang every day as he worked and traveled. The music was a part of him. As he died, we five children gathered around his bed to sing the third verse of "New Britain" (p. 45t), his favorite. He also liked "Reynolds" (p. 225t), "Providence" (p. 298), "Fredericksburg" (p. 389), and "Fleeting Days" (p. 348b). Even more than the music, though, he loved the people. He gave me a copy of the new 1991 edition and wrote an inscription in the back. Part of it reads as follows: "As a whole, singers from Maine to California, from Chicago to Florida, show more love for each other than any group I know today.

They are some of my best friends. I love them and the music."

My father was a large man who was happy almost all the time. He loved people, and he felt that it was his mission in life to help others. He taught us to sing, and he carried us to singings until we became old enough to carry him and mother. Many singers came to "sing him home" in February 2012, and they made the day so much easier for us.

### George Seiler

I knew George Seiler only by sight; I doubt that I sang with him more than once. But when a friend sent me a CD of the 2009 New York State Convention, I was enthralled by the prayers of the Chaplain, George Seiler. His voice was strong, his faith was evident, and his loving warmth shone through. His prayers were a mixture of joy and grief and love and gratitude. George, I soon learned, served often as a Chaplain, as Chair, as Treasurer, as Founder, as Teacher, as Greeter—whatever was needed at a singing. He had a way of seeking out new singers and making them feel at home.

George started singing Sacred Harp in 1986 in the workshop sessions at the Old Songs Festival in New York, according to his widow, Jean. He went to a singing school at the Connecticut Convention led by Hugh McGraw, and many singings and conventions followed. He was a strong, confident leader. Nathan

Rees remembered that his powerful and impassioned leadership made his deep love of Sacred Harp immediately evident when he took to the floor. He often led "Greenwich" (p. 183), "Redemption" (p. 480), and "Christian's Farewell" (p. 347).

Although George wasn't known as a singing school teacher, he was one of the more important teachers in Sacred Harp, as Jesse P. Karlsberg noted in his presentation of George's citation. He taught through mentorship, through his strong bass singing voice, and through his empowerment of others. He brought singing masters to the northern conventions to teach: Amanda Denson, Ginnie Ely, Joyce Walton, and David Ivey. He taught through example by being graceful, humble, and welcoming. Jesse also reflected that "George was an outsize presence at singings, and he was able to summon the class to attention with the single word 'Friends.'" That word reflects his Quaker beliefs and his love for the music and its people. Jesse also shared George's observation that new singers would return mostly just for the food, then eventually they would come back for the music as they gained more experience. Ultimately, though, they would return for the warmth and hospitality evident in the hollow square, thanks to people like George. He wrote to Aldo Ceresa that "the community is the most important thing." He also sent Aldo a list of his favorite texts including those on pages 31t ("Grace all the work shall crown"), 68b ("My never-failing treasury filled with boundless stores of grace"), and 122 ("All is well").

George left us way too soon. He is missed at singings, especially in the northeast. But Sacred Harp is stronger there partly through his efforts. And his lessons will live on in the singers who were lucky enough to cross paths with him.

These four men, each in his own way, had a strong influence on those of us who sang with them. They gave of themselves for others; they live on in our memories. We can smile as we sing 77t, 225t, 111b, and 480. We can remember those who loved these songs and we can trust that they sing now around a larger hollow square. ■

## Read the Old Paths

# Uncle Tom Denson's Last Lesson: Observations and Impressions of a Son

Michael Hinton, San Antonio, Texas | Howard Denson, Tuscaloosa, Alabama



Thomas Jackson Denson with his second wife Lola Mahalia Akers Denson and their three children, from left to right, Tommy, Vera, and Violet (Michael Hinton's mother), ca. 1923. Photograph courtesy Michael Hinton.

## Introduction: Observations and Impressions of a Grandson

FROM the earliest years of my life I have heard of my grandfather, Tom Denson. "Pappy Denson," "Dad Thomas," "Uncle Tom," "Professor Denson," "T. J. Denson, Thomas Jackson Denson, and "Mr. Denson" are some of the names I have heard him called. Although I never knew him as he died several years before I was born, I have read about him in old newspaper articles and books about Sacred Harp, and I have heard stories about him from many relatives and friends of the Denson family. My Mother and her two sisters were his "second set" of children and were born in 1913, 1915, and 1916. Howard Denson, youngest child of T. J. and his first wife, Amanda Burdette Denson, was sixteen when T. J.'s first child with Lola Akers Denson was born. T. J. Denson's immediate family spanned an

astounding time range—his first child was born in 1862 and his last in 1916. His first grandchild was born in 1904 and his last grandson in 1947.

During the years that I have been singing Sacred Harp I have been amazed by the number of people I have met who attended T. J. Denson's singing schools in Alabama, Georgia, and Texas. They were all eager to share stories about his teaching, his sense of humor, and his great ability to inspire them to sing. He spent much time traveling to teach singing schools, some lasting two to three weeks. My mother told us stories about going to singings in a horse-drawn wagon when she was young. Her parents would make a pallet in the wagon and would awaken the three young sisters, as she told it, "in the middle of the night and we would get dressed with everything on but our dresses. We would get in the wagon and sleep until we got

close to the singing location and Pappy Denson would stop the wagon, and we would get up and put on our dresses and go on to the singing."

My mom and her sisters, Vera and Tommye, would also tell stories about Pappy Denson talking about his schools and students after coming home from his travels. They lived in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, for some time when the three children of T. J. and Lola Akers Denson were young. They stayed in houses that were owned by Lon Odem, a great singer and successful businessman who helped T. J. Denson while he taught schools and provided the capital for the 1936 *Original Sacred Harp: Denson Revision*. Mom used to tell about her daddy coming home from teaching a singing school and being disappointed because his three young daughters had been playing in a pile of sawdust that their father had bought. They had spread the sawdust all over the place and their daddy was unhappy. As they ate dinner that night, he started telling a story with a familiar plot: "One time there was a man who had three fine young daughters. Now this man got a load of sawdust to use for his plants and garden and he told his fine daughters not to play in that sawdust. Well, the man came home one day and the sawdust was all over because the three girls had been playing in it." He got no farther with his story before, as my mom would tell the story, "we three girls started crying and went running to our room. We never played in sawdust again!"

Mom told another story about her Pappy Denson coming home from a convention in which as they ate dinner he said "I was surprised when I was asked to pray before the dinner on the ground today." They asked him, "What did you pray?" He smiled and said, "I don't know. When I came to myself





T. J. Denson (center) with his sons Howard (left) and Paine (right) at his last birthday, January, 1935. Photograph courtesy of Michael Hinton.

I was taking out the beans." They all laughed and wanted to hear him tell the story again. When he was not feeling well, he would tell his girls that "Pappy is camping in the low ground today."

Pappy Denson bought some kind of used automobile in the late 1920s. He was apparently not a very good driver. Aunt Vera, the oldest of the three daughters, used to tell us that she was riding with him as he drove along a dirt road that had ruts in it from a recent rain. Along the way, they met a man on a wagon pulled by a team of horses. As they got close to the wagon, one of the horses "got spooked and reared up on his hind legs." Pappy Denson's reaction was to turn the steering wheel to the right and into a muddy ditch. After another man pulled the car out of the ditch with horses, Pappy Denson said, "Sugar girly, you are going to have to drive from now on. Pappy is too strong to drive." And he never drove again.

I have learned much about my grandfather from hearing stories from singers who attended his singing schools, as well as from descendants of his students. A number of times I have been told "Your grandfather taught my grandfather to sing!" I have been

surprised at the number of people who sing today who have connections to T. J. Denson. It has been a source of joy to meet people and hear stories about my grandfather.

It has also been a joy to hear the tunes that T. J. Denson composed that are still being sung. Some of his tunes are difficult and have lots of notes! From things I have heard about his leading, he moved around the hollow square and was a "lively" leader.

I had long heard stories about the last lesson that T. J. Denson lead at a singing. He led the lesson in Georgia, just a few days before his death in 1935. Howard Denson's daughter, Amanda Denson Brady, told us about the lesson, and that her father, Uncle Paine, and Aunt Annie Aaron were with him. Recently I found a copy of an article written about T. J. Denson's last lesson. Following the contemporary custom that allotted leaders a certain amount of time to lead for the deceased from individual areas, he was asked to conduct a memorial lesson for singers from Alabama who had died in the past year.

Although the newspaper didn't print the author's name, the article must have been written by one of T. J. Denson's

two sons, Paine or Howard. If I had to guess who wrote it, I would say that it was Howard Denson; the writing style is much less formal and eloquent than what I have seen of Paine's writing in his letters. I sent a copy of the article to Frances Robb, who is a great-granddaughter of T. J. Denson, and granddaughter of Maggie Frances (Denson) Cagle. Frances has done considerable research on the Denson family. As she notes, "Paine's writing was more elaborate and lawyerly. A bit pompous at times and often self-conscious in ways I don't see in this article. But I do think that the son in the title is one of T. J. Denson's sons; it strikes me as too observant for someone not in the family and not keeping a hawk eye on him. I'd pick Howard as the author for, if nothing else, the article's objectivity."

Regardless of who actually wrote it, the article is a poignant account of the last lesson Pappy Denson lead. I submit it on behalf of his family in appreciation and remembrance of a man who taught many to sing Sacred Harp and who touched many lives during his seventy-five years. He often told his students: "I can teach you to sing, but only God can teach you to sing with the spirit."

—Michael Hinton

### Observations and Impressions of a Son

*Reprinted from The Haleyville [Alabama] Advertiser-Journal, September, 1935*

**T**HOMAS J. Denson died suddenly at his home near Jasper, Alabama, early Saturday morning, September the 14th 1935, and was buried by the side of his wife, Amanda Burdette Denson, in Fairview Cemetery near Double Springs on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 15th. The funeral was attended by hundreds and hundreds of his friends throughout North Alabama and from Georgia and Tennessee.

Truly, Tom Denson, or "Uncle Tom," as he was affectionately called, was the Dean of Sacred Harp Singers and Teachers. He had taught two twenty day schools in the Sacred Harp during the past summer, and claimed that

they were the best he had ever taught, with students enrolled from Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee. During the past year he had attended more of the leading Sacred Harp Singings and Conventions than during any similar period of his life. He had just returned from Atlanta where he attended the United Sacred Harp Musical Association which convened there on the 6, 7 and 8th of September, last, and his last appearance as a Leader was to conduct the Memorial lesson in that convention for the members and their friends, who had died during the past twelve months throughout the entire state of Alabama. When his call came to take charge of the class he proceeded to the Leader's position as usual with eagerness and determination. He looked over the audience and at the class about him and said: "We can't help our friends who have gone on, but we can warn the living." Then after a short pause, he continued. "I don't feel like I can lead you now." One friend seated near replied, "We have never seen you fail." He then announced, "We will sing,—STRUGGLE ON, Page 400, Just the words"

*"Our praying time will soon be o'er,  
Hallelujah,  
We'll join with those who're gone before,  
Hallelujah,  
To love and bless and praise the name,  
Hallelujah,  
Of Jesus Christ, the dying Lamb,  
Hallelujah,  
Struggle on, Struggle on, Hallelujah,  
Struggle on for the work's most done,  
Hallelujah"*

At this point he hesitated and looked about,—(We do not know what he was thinking, but we do know he had visited Fairview Cemetery recently, where his wife, the mother of his older children, Paine Denson, Mrs. Annie Denson Aaron, Mrs. Maggie Denson Cagle, and Mrs. Jerusha Denson Edwards and

Howard Denson, had lain for nearly twenty-five years with no other of the family near, and requested that he be placed by her side)—and then deliberately announced, "We will sing,—THE LONE PILGRIM, Page 341."

*"I came to the place where the lone pilgrim lay,  
And pensively stood by his tomb,  
When in a low whisper I heard something say,  
How sweetly he sleeps here alone.  
The Tempest may howl and loud thunders roar,  
And gathering storms may arise,  
Yet calm are his feelings, at rest is his soul,  
The tears are all wiped from his eyes."*

He looked at the audience again and then at the class about him, and with apparent sorrow announced, "We will sing,—WHEN I AM GONE, Page 339."

*"Shed not a tear o'er your friend's early bier,  
When I am gone, When I am gone;  
Smile when the slow tolling bell you shall hear,  
When I am gone, When I am gone.  
Weep not for me as you stand round my grave,  
Think who has died His beloved to save,  
Think of the crown all the ransomed shall wear,  
When I am gone, When I am gone.  
Plant you a rose that shall bloom o'er my grave,  
When I am gone, When I am gone;  
Sing a sweet song such as angels may have,  
When I am gone, When I am gone.  
Praise ye the lord that I'm freed from all care,  
Pray ye the Lord that my joys ye shall share,  
Look up on high and believe that I'm there,  
When I am gone, When I am gone."*

Again he looked over the class, first turning to the Bass Section where one son sat, then to the Tenor Section where the other son sat, then to the Treble Section where one daughter sat and then to the Alto behind which the Officials of the Convention sat, and slowly announced, "I would like to sing one more piece." He paused, as if in deep thought, the moments grew tense, this tension was relieved by the calm and gentle voice of his good friend, Fred Drake, the chairman of the Convention, announcing "Time is up, Uncle Tom." He looked over the class again, as if to say, "Farewell," and walked slowly to his seat.

We do not know and never will know what the last song he wanted to sing was but, from the foregoing, we do know that his lesson was completed and the addition of anything more would have been repetition of something already stated, or the introduction of new subject matter. He must have anticipated that the end was not far distant.

Lovers of Sacred Harp music, and there are many and their friends everywhere, will mourn his passing. Truly he was a good father, a good citizen, a good neighbor and a good singer.

May his work and influence continue. ■

## Read the Old Paths

# 'Melancholy Day': Letters of Condolence after the Death of Thomas Jackson Denson

C. J. Griggs (Atlanta, Georgia), Thomas Simpson McLendon (Carrollton, Georgia), Wilber E. Morgan (Atlanta, Georgia), and W. T. Coston (Dallas, Texas)

**Editors' Note:** *Sacred Harp* singers from across the South wrote to Paine Denson expressing their condolences and sharing their memories after the death of his father, singing school teacher, leader, and composer Thomas Jackson Denson. T. J.'s death on September 14, 1935, shortly after returning home from the United Sacred Harp Musical Association, interrupted work on a planned revision of *Original Sacred Harp*. Col. Paine kept these letters, later passing them along to his sister, Ruth Denson Edwards, who in turn gave them to Hugh McGraw, who placed them in the *Sacred Harp* Museum. The excerpts from these letters presented below express the profound impact T. J. Denson had, as a leader, teacher, and friend, on the "hundreds, yea, thousands, of people throughout the country whose hearts [were] lacerated with grief" by his death.

## Letter from C. J. Griggs

C. J. Griggs was a member of the committee appointed by the United Sacred Harp Musical Association that endorsed the 1911 *Original Sacred Harp*, ancestor of the current 1991 edition. Griggs' picture appeared just to the right of J. S. James' on a page at the front of the book depicting all the members of the committee tasked with supervising the production of the book. Griggs authored the second and third verses to "The Happy Sailor" (p. 388 in *The Sacred Harp*), which were added to the song in 1911. Griggs wrote a short essay on *The Sacred Harp*, titled "A Sketch or Brief History of the Sacred Harp Song Book," in 1936. Born in Cobb County, Georgia, and later based in Atlanta, he served as assistant president of the United Sacred Harp Musical Association under Joseph Stephen James, and was a member of the Methodist Church.

Atlanta, Georgia, 445 Langhorn Street,  
S. W.

September 18, 1935

My highly esteemed friend and brother:

This letter comes to you in tears of condolence, evidencing the sadness that joins me with hundreds, yea, thousands, of people throughout the country whose hearts are lacerated with grief by the death of your distinguished father, our lifelong friend, companion, and brother. Its sorrow impresses us with such force that we hardly can realize its meaning. When we think of his long life of unparalleled usefulness, our minds reflect upon the happy communities and homes filled with sweet singers which are the fruit of his labor. He laid not up for himself treasures of silver and gold, for his life was filled with the milk of human kindness which he demonstrated in his profession and daily attitude to the people. But the melancholy day has come when one and all must lament his departure. We can hear it among the old and the grown-ups, but the saddest of all are the lamentations of that army of sweet children that he has taught to sing. We can hear them say, as they learn of his passing, "Oh, Uncle Tom has gone—our dear old teacher, into whose arms we have fallen so many times and welcomed him to our schools and conventions!" And how sad now is the threshold of his home, where he was kissed goodbye on his outings, where he was welcomed back again to take his hours of rest.

It can truly be said of him that he gave his life to the *Sacred Harp* song book and its contents, of which he was master. There are and have been more fine singers and teachers credited to his instruction than to any other teacher in the southern states. We hope his humble and simple way of living, together with his famous professional life, which has been of such value to the people, will immortalize for years to come the name of T. J. Denson.

In sadness, but in love, I am

Yours,

C. J. Griggs.

O may my last end be like theirs,

Like theirs my last reward!

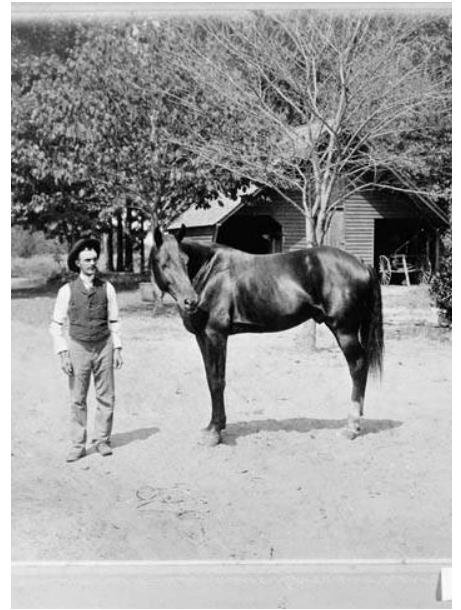


C. J. Griggs, *Original Sacred Harp*, 1911.





**Left:** The McLendon family. Thomas Simpson McLendon is in the second row, second to the right. McLendon's parents, Isaac Newton McLendon and Mary Anne Eliza Rowe McLendon, holding copies of the Bible and *The Sacred Harp* with a prize watermelon at their feet, are seated in the center of the first row.



**Right:** Thomas Simpson McLendon was photographed at the homeplace of his father, Isaac Newton McLendon, three miles outside of Carrollton, Georgia, ca. 1905, with this "fine buggy horse." Courtesy the Georgia Archives.

### Letter from T. S. McLendon

Thomas Simpson McLendon (1876–1965) was one of four sons—all active Sacred Harp singers—of Isaac Newton McLendon. A resident of Carroll County, Georgia, T. S. served as an officer of the Chattahoochee Musical Convention, as did his brothers. One brother, Augustus Jackson McLendon, composed "Sister's Farewell" (p. 55) and served with C. J. Griggs on the committee tasked with revising *The Sacred Harp* that produced the James revision. Members of the McLendon family continue to sing Sacred Harp in West Georgia today.

*Carrollton, Georgia, Rt. 3*

*September 22, 1935*

*My Dear Sir and Brother, my sincere sympathy goes out to you children and Mrs. Denson in the death of Uncle "Tom." He was loved by more Christian singers than any man living in our day. He was the best and most correct director of sacred music I have ever seen on the floor. I have known him for about 50 years and I can truth[ful]ly say he was a man of integrity and honor—you could depend on what he promised or told you at all times.*

*It seems to us we needed him more just now than any time—But God knows best. Sometimes it seems like the loss of a Great man causes his desires or his work to be hastened on. So we hope and believe his most cherished work—the revision of the dear old Sacred Harp—will be finished to completion. Don't let the [illegible] interest interfere with the work because we the lovers of your Father and the Old music want it as near like uncle Tom had planned it as possible. We need the books now because the supply of the other [edition] is exhausted and we can't carry on our practice as we should. As one that loves the whole family, I ask God in my little humble way, to give you all as much as possible reconciliation. We can reflect back to the great work he has done in the cause of Sacred music. May we all live as he lived so when the summons comes that we may be prepared as I believe he was.*

*May I remain as ever. Sincere good wishes to every one of the family.*

*T. S. McLendon*

## Letter and Remembrance from Wilber E. Morgan

Wilbur E. Morgan was an active Sacred Harp singer and a close friend of the Denson family. He lived in Atlanta.

*Atlanta, Georgia, 898 Allene Ave.*

*September 22, 1935*

*Dear Paine:*

*I was grieved beyond expression when I heard of the death of your father. I was away on vacation with my father at the time, he too sends condolence to you with me.*

*All the Morgans loved your father like a brother. I guess you recall the good times we all had together in the Standing Rock community.*

*I received a letter from Ora Morgan this week, she spoke very highly of your father; they were the best of friends. He will be greatly missed by all our people. He had many loyal admirers in and around our old home town.*

*Some how I wanted you to attend our singing at Standing Rock this year. I wish now that you could have attended more than ever, in the event of your father's passing.*

*I have tried to write the Denson family some heart felt sentiment regarding your father's life. I hope you will take this as an expression from the Morgan family.*

*I have wanted to come to the singing at Jasper, Ala. the first sunday in Oct. ever since the invitation was given, I want to go more than ever now, as I guess your father's memorial will be held at this time.*

*I am sending Howard a copy of the paper I am inclosing to you, also a note of condolence.*

*Write me what time I could reach B'ham by rail or bus in time to get to Jasper by singing time on Saturday and Sunday. I want to come in auto if I can find some one that is going that is not loaded.*

*With kind regards to you and yours.*

*I am your friend,*

*Wilber E. Morgan*

Morgan enclosed the following remembrance along with his letter.

**THOMAS J. DENSON**

*Since The Morning Stars sang their sweet melody out to the world of mankind, there has been a musician beloved by all who knew him, yet not one loved more than our good friend, Tom Denson. He was a man of unusual ability, perhaps somewhat limited in his education, yet the cords of sweet music found lodgment in his soul, where they gave birth to a melody that is beyond human expression. His presence in a class of singers was a leaven that permeated all of the audience.*

*"Uncle Tom," as he was most familiarly known, was not only a good singer, but a man who wrote good music. He and his brother, Seaborn Denson, with the help of some more good friends, revised The Sacred Harp and made it one of the best books of sacred music that the South has ever produced.*

*Mr. Denson has been a teacher of music for more than half a century. He has taught classes in many different kinds of books during his life time, but the old Sacred Harp was his favorite book of them all. He used to recall how his sainted Mother and kind old Father sang these sacred old songs to him in the tender years of his life.*

*Thousands of people will rise up and call him blessed because of their own musical training. We can never forget his visit to our home and community many years ago. Tom Denson taught the first singing school I ever attended. He was a young man then, full of life and vigor. The class would do their best to help him sing and he would play games with them during the noon hour.*

*The world has been made a sweeter place to live because of Tom Denson's life of service in song to God and humanity. We will always cherish his memory, remembering the good times we have had together along life's pathway.*

*Friends, may each of us take some good deed of Brother Denson's life, put it into practice in our own life. May we live a life of service to God and humanity, so that when this pilgrimage is over we can meet OUR FRIEND and loved ones on the other shore, where we will never more take the Parting Hand.*

*Faithfully yours,*

*Wilber E. Morgan*



382 COSTON, C. M. D. T. J. DENSON, 1935

1. Dear friends, farewell! I do you tell, Since you and I must part; I go away and here you stay, But still we're joined in heart, Your love to me has been most free, Your conversation sweet; How can I bear to journey where With you I cannot meet? How can I bear to journey where With you I cannot meet? meet? been most free,

Copyright, by Sacred Harp Publishing Co., Inc. 1935.



**Left:** "Coston" (p. 382, *Original Sacred Harp: Denson Revision*). T. J. Denson wrote this song in honor of W. T. Coston.

**Right:** Pictured left to right J. C. Brown, president of the B. F. White Sacred Harp Musical Association of Alabama; W. T. Coston, president of the Texas Inter-state Sacred Harp Musical Association; C. J. Griggs, patriarch of Georgia's fasola folk.

## Letter from W. T. Coston

Coston's note came typed on letterhead representing its author as President of the Texas Young People's Interstate Sacred Harp Musical Association. A long-time advocate of Sacred Harp singing in Texas, W. T. Coston (1861–1938) brought T. J. Denson to the Lone Star State in 1932 to teach a singing school. Coston was a regular attendee of major singing conventions in Alabama and Georgia. Denson dedicated the song "Coston" to him (p. 382 in *The Sacred Harp*). Lorraine Miles McFarland, a singing school student of uncle Tom's who had won a gold piece at a children's song-leading contest in 1930, recalls that Coston, the contest's sponsor, was so pleased with the young leaders that he invited them to stay at his home in Dallas for the weekend. McFarland remembers the wealthy man's home as "more like a grand hotel, not just a house."

1012 N. Marsalis Avenue, Dallas, Texas

September 30, 1935

My dear Friend:

*Yours of September 18th received in due course of mail and I would have answered ere this but for the fact we arrived home sick, and have neither one of us been able to be around since. Glad to state, however, we are feeling better now and hope that we will continue to improve.*

*Your father's sudden death was such a shock to us all that we have hardly been able to gather our wits together since we learned of it, and I want you to know that your letter, giving detailed account of how he came to his death, was a great satisfaction to us, as well as his many other friends in our state that we have passed the information to.*

*In his passing I, myself, as well as so many of his other friends in our state, deeply realize that we have lost one of the greatest Sacred Harp Divines that has ever lived, and that his place can not be filled. It was my pleasure to ride with him from Atlanta, Ga. to Jasper, Ala. on September 9th, and I don't think he was ever more jubilant when I was with him on that occasion. ... As the train neared the station at Jasper, and the time approached to say Good Bye, Uncle Tom, as I have always called him, looked me in the face and said to me, "Brother Coston, we may never meet again on this earth, but if we don't, we will meet in a better world than this." I shall never forget how he looked at me when he spoke those words, when he said, "I want you to remember that I am your friend." I replied to him, "It is mutual." God bless his memory and his influence to the edification and building up and forward march of our organization throughout the South. ...*

*Give our love to all inquiring friends and write me again a long letter at your earliest convenience, and believe me, as ever,*

Your friend,

W. T. Coston ■



## Singing Reports

# Oh, What a Happy Time': The NEA National Heritage Fellows Concert in Washington D.C.

Cheyenne Ivey | Henagar, Alabama



Cheyenne Ivey with her uncle David Ivey, 2013 NEA National Heritage Fellow, after the awards ceremony at the Library of Congress.

WHAT are your hobbies? What are you passionate about? I bet most of you will say sports, reading, or cooking, right? Well, for me and many others, music is a passion—but not just any music: Sacred Harp singing. This tradition has been part of my life and in my family for many years—at least six generations. Others may be the only member of their family to participate. But together we are still one group from all over the world keeping a tradition alive. Whether born into it, or just joining after having heard about it from a friend, we keep fellowship with friends and create a joyful noise together for ourselves and to the Lord.

My uncle, David Ivey is a huge supporter of this tradition; this is why twenty-two of us made our way to Washington D.C. for the National Endowment of the Arts National Heritage Fellows concert in late September. He and eight others received an award in recognition for their work in preserving America's traditions and crafts, inspiring old and young alike with their diverse art forms. Me and my dad, Rod Ivey, along with cousins Shane and Richard, met up with Uncle David and Aunt Karen on Wednesday September 16 to see the winners receive their awards in the Library of Congress. A few of the other singers met us there as well. Afterward, we went to a banquet with the fellow winners and their friends and family. It was an extravagant meal with fancy place settings, elegant glassware, and good food. After enjoying speeches, great conversation, and wonderful entertainment, we headed back to the Embassy Inn and Suites to get some much-needed rest. Most of us had been awake since 4 am for our flight that morning.

Thursday was our day to rest and tour the historical monuments and

memorials. Dad, Shane, Richard, and I walked through the National Mall. Although we didn't get to see all the memorials, we visited quite a few. We saw the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a long granite wall stretched out with names of the soldiers that were killed during this war. Seeing so many names was extremely emotional. Some visitors had left things such as letters or patches from uniforms in plastic bags against the wall along with miniature American flags.

Our next stop was the World War II Memorial. This one was designed much differently. It had the name of each state on a column and quotes from important people of that time engraved in various places around the wall. The columns surrounded a grand fountain right in the middle. The whole arena was filled with a solemn sense of awe in honor of the soldiers that were killed and the families that had been affected during this war. Although it has been years since the war, it still pulls at your heart. When our friends, Susan Harcrow and Scott Ivey visited the memorial, they got to be a part of a reunion of living soldiers from this war.

We stopped by the Lincoln Memorial, and although we didn't stay long, it was still amazing. There were large groups of tourists walking around or sitting on the steps of the building. A few of the monuments had been damaged by the storm that hit months before, but are now being repaired.

Once Susan and Scott arrived in D.C., we met them and took a tour of the Arlington National Cemetery. The place is so large it is sectioned off and numbered. We saw the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers. There used to be four of the unknown soldiers, but now there are only three. Thanks to new technology,

a family was able to identify one of the soldiers. The steps of the guards are so precise that you can see the worn places on the ground where they walk. They stay at their post constantly no matter the weather: morning, noon, and night. Another group was scolded by the guard because too many people were talking. We then visited Robert E. Lee's house. What a majestic view of the city!

After our adventures on the Mall and at the cemetery, we walked back to the hotel feeling totally exhausted. That evening, our group of singers had dinner together, and returned to the hotel to sing with a few of the fellow award winners. We all became close over the course of the week since we were at all of the same events and stayed in the same hotel.

On Friday, we spent the day rehearsing our songs, checking the lighting, and learning our placement on stage and off stage for the concert that night. We stayed and watched each of the performers practice. Everyone then got back on stage to dance and sing, preparing the finale we would join in for at the end of the show. For

the couple of hours before the show, they drove us back to the hotel to eat and rest. We were the first group to perform at the concert, which was very exciting! *Perform*—still a word I can't get accustomed to when referring to Sacred Harp singing. Unlike our usual tradition, we practiced where to stand, what to sing, and what to wear. In our normal routine at a singing, everyone dresses how they feel comfortable and gets to choose their favorite song to lead for that day. This time things were a little different, but we all adjusted well to the change. When we first walked out on the stage it was dark and as we began singing "Idumea" (p. 47b in *The Sacred Harp*), they slowly brightened the lights over the stage. David was interviewed by the host, Nick Spitzer, and we demonstrated the hollow square and sang major and minor scales. Then, we sang "Florida" (p. 203), "Christian's Farewell" (p. 347), and "Wayfaring Stranger" (p. 457). I felt that it was a very moving experience, and I think everyone that was there would agree. [For more on "Idumea," see the essay on page 14 of this issue on the "Cold Mountain Bump."—Ed.]

Each of the other performances was fantastic! I don't think any of us could have picked just one favorite performer to watch. All of them were so kind and talented. It seemed that no one was there to outdo the others, but welcomed each other as equals. This was an unforgettable trip and I feel blessed to have been a part of it. There is no way I could write about all of the wonderful experiences I had or completely express how exciting this opportunity was for me. It was quite fun and gratifying to meet all of these new people. The only way to truly know how fulfilling this trip was is to have been there. Speaking for the Sacred Harp group, I know that to us, each new friend is like a family member. I loved learning all that these people had to share from family traditions that have been around for many years. If there is a family tradition that you haven't tried yet, go for it. You might be glad you did.

*Note: Watch a video of the NEH National Heritage Fellows concert on the Sacred Harp Publishing Company Newsletter website at [bit.ly/osh-nea](http://bit.ly/osh-nea). ■*

## Just a Minute

# Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church Singing, July 4, 1997: M. B. Forbes Playing the Harmonica,

Nathan Rees | Knoxville, Tennessee

ANYONE browsing the 1997 minutes from the singing at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Ashland, Alabama might be a bit surprised to read of this lesson: "M. B. Forbes 164, 59 (on his harmonica)." After dinner, M. B. Forbes played the harmonica again, with a three song lesson of "Wildwood Flower," 452, and "Silent Night," the last song a bit of an unusual choice given that the singing was held on the Fourth of July.

As it happens, M. B. Forbes was Eugene Forbes's brother, who had overcome significant physical handicaps to become an accomplished musician

within his community. Despite the fact that he had only one good arm, M. B. Forbes was able to play several instruments, including the guitar and harmonica. He was a regular attendee at Sacred Harp singings in the area and singers looked forward to his performances—they would even sing along when he played selections from *The Sacred Harp*. He passed away in 2007 at the age of eighty-nine.

M. B. Forbes was not the only person to play the harmonica for a Sacred Harp singing—Gary Farley, of the Gordo community, has favored the class with renditions of "Amazing

Grace" at the Elmore Center Singing in August. Sacred Harp singers around the country will also recognize Loyd Ivey of Henagar, Alabama, as a phenomenal harmonica player, though he has reserved his performances for socials and evening get-togethers (so far).

Though Sacred Harp is an a cappella tradition, there are plenty of instruments in our lyrics, including harps, lyres, bells, and trumpets. So far, though, the harmonica seems to be among the few that have found their way into the hollow square. ■

## Number, Measure, Weight

# The Cold Mountain Bump

Jesse P. Karlsberg, Atlanta, Georgia | Mark. T. Godfrey, San Francisco, California | Nathan Rees, Knoxville, Tennessee

Still from "We've got our war," the scene from *Cold Mountain* featuring the song "I'm Going Home" (p. 282).

ALMOST every Sacred Harp singer has heard of the film *Cold Mountain*, the 2003 Academy-Award-winning motion picture which featured a pair of songs from *The Sacred Harp*: "I'm Going Home" (p. 282) and "Idumea" (p. 47b). The film led to an unprecedented surge of publicity for Sacred Harp singing.<sup>1</sup> Many of us know other singers who first heard about Sacred Harp singing thanks to its inclusion in the film. Perhaps you yourself started singing Sacred Harp after encountering it in *Cold Mountain*.

Tim Eriksen (who pushed to include Sacred Harp in the film), David Ivey (who arranged for Liberty Baptist Church to be used for a recording session for the film and soundtrack), and the various other singers involved hoped that *Cold Mountain* would draw attention to our music and bring new singers to Sacred Harp. Anecdotal evidence and our own experiences suggest that the film did, indeed, increase the prominence of Sacred Harp singing in U.S. culture and draw new

singers to the hollow square. But can we actually measure this?

Analysis of data included in the Minutes of Sacred Harp Singings shows that the "*Cold Mountain* bump" is real and measurable. The motion picture's release coincided with a noticeable jump in the number of Sacred Harp singers, and this increase endured. The two songs included in the film also experienced a spike in popularity the year after the film hit theaters. While one of the two songs included has since retreated from its peak in popularity, both are used more often today than they were before the bump. Ten years after *Cold Mountain*'s premiere, the film continues to draw the occasional new singer to Sacred Harp. Likewise, "I'm Going Home" and "Idumea" continue to find favor with singers.

Sacred Harp singing has been growing since at least 1995, the first year for which digitized records of the minutes of singings are available (more on that growth in a future installment of this column). But while the growth in the

number of singings held each year has been more or less steady, the growth in the number of leaders at minutes book singings jumped noticeably the year *Cold Mountain* played in theaters.

Why associate this bump in leaders with the release of *Cold Mountain*? While there could be other factors at play, timing makes a *Cold Mountain* bump as good a guess as any. *Cold Mountain* was released almost exactly ten years ago—on Christmas Day, 2003. The jump in question showed up the following year. In 2004 the film finished its twenty-seven week run in theaters and received wide media attention during the run-up to the Oscars. Throughout the year Sacred Harp singers had a chance to draw on the attendant wave of publicity to promote local singings and many participated in events like the national "Great High Mountain Tour," which featured artists from the film's soundtrack and that of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

Why would *Cold Mountain*'s popularity cause the number of leaders

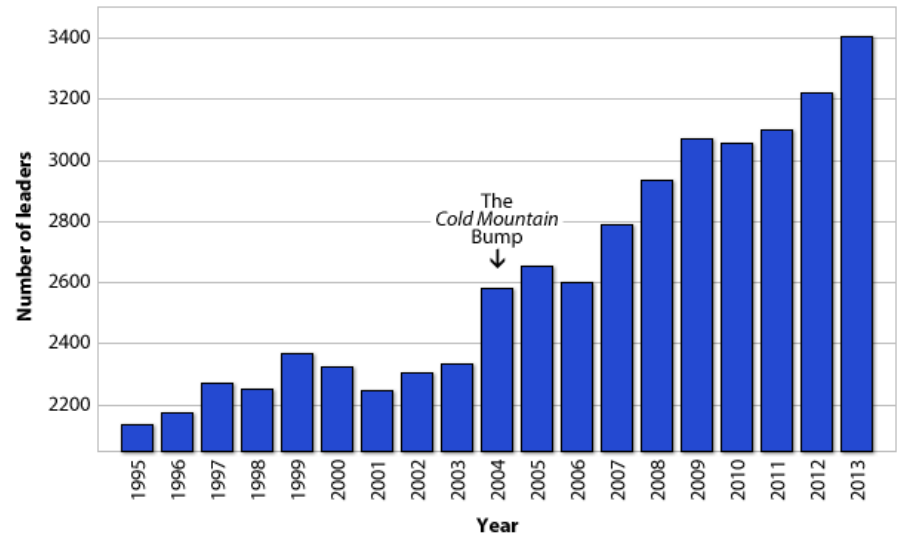


to increase but not have a comparable effect on the number of songs led or the number of singings held? *Cold Mountain* exposed millions of people to Sacred Harp singing for the first time. We wouldn't guess that members of the subset who wanted to learn more would find new singings immediately—rather they'd be more likely to find their way to existing Sacred Harp singings held nearby. We also wouldn't guess that these new potential singers would contribute to a higher number of songs being led. Singings tend to start and end at around the same time of day year after year. Adding a leader may make a given singing one song longer, or it may—if time requires—mean leaving another local leader off, reducing the number of singers called to lead a second time, or pairing up another two singers to lead together.

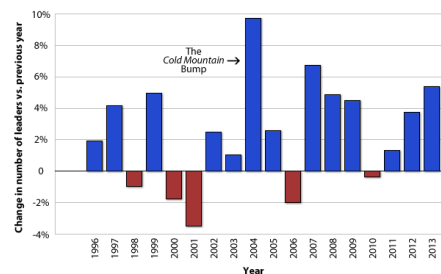
It's easy to imagine, on the other hand, why *Cold Mountain* might have led to an increase in the number of people recorded over the course of a year as having stood in the center of the hollow square. Some new singers may have found themselves invited to stand in the middle with a long-time singer to experience the sound of our music in all its glory. Others may have worked up the courage to lead at their first singing, or may have attended a practice singing for a few months before deciding to try leading at an annual singing recorded in the minutes.

Yet it's also easy to imagine a scenario in which few of these new leaders stuck around. After all, the chart above includes all leaders. Whether a singer led one song or fifty, he or she is counted. So if all *Cold Mountain* did was bring a bunch of newcomers to singings where they were invited to stand in the middle, and then sent on their way, never to return, we might still see a jump in 2004.

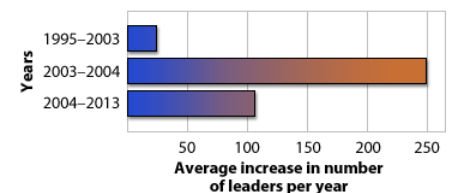
That the *Cold Mountain* bump was sustained, however, suggests that many of the singers who found Sacred Harp thanks to the motion picture returned again, and again, and again. A number of us know singers like this. Our analysis suggests that between 2003 and 2004 our Sacred Harp community grew by



Total number of leaders at all Sacred Harp singings each year as recorded in the minutes, 1995–2013. The largest increase coincided with the release of *Cold Mountain*.



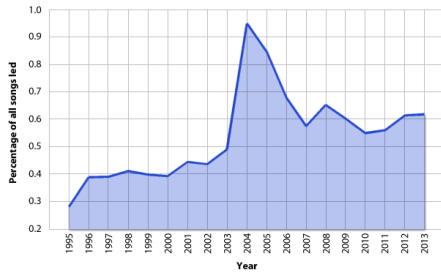
Change versus previous year in the total number of leaders at all Sacred Harp singings as recorded in the minutes, 1995–2013. During the year *Cold Mountain* was in theaters the number of leaders increased by 10 percent.



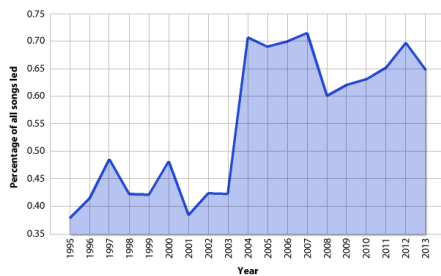
Average increase in the number of leaders per year—before, during, and after *Cold Mountain*. The average annual increase was 4.3 times greater in the years following the film's release.

about ten percent—adding about 250 new leaders—thanks in part to the film. While small—even infinitesimal—when compared with the number of people who watched *Cold Mountain* in theaters, a 250-person jump in leaders is about nine times larger than the average change in the number of leaders over the previous eight years. 2004 also seems to have inaugurated a period of relatively robust growth in the number of leaders. While no year has matched the increase in leaders between 2003 and 2004, our singings have added an average of 107 leaders each year since 2004, 4.3 times greater than the average increase before 2003.

We can also detect the *Cold Mountain* bump by tracing changes in the popularity of the two Sacred Harp songs featured in the film, “I’m Going Home” and “Idumea.” One way of looking at how popular a song is at singings is calculating what percentage that song’s use is of all songs used for each year and charting the change in percentage. For example, the most popular song in *The Sacred Harp*, “Hallelujah” (p.146), has been sung 0.91 percent of the time between 1995 and 2013, while the least-used song, “Edmonds” (p. 115), has been sung just 0.016 percent of the time during the same period. [For more on “Hallelujah,” see Harry Eskew’s essay on William Walker on page 18.—Ed.]



Popularity of "I'm Going Home" (p. 282), 1995–2013. After *Cold Mountain* was released the song nearly doubled in popularity.



Popularity of "Idumea" (p. 47b), 1995–2013. The song's jump in popularity after the release of *Cold Mountain* has been sustained.

Both "I'm Going Home" and "Idumea" were relatively popular before *Cold Mountain* came out. But both songs experienced dramatic spikes in popularity after the film's release. "I'm Going Home" leapt from 0.49 percent to 0.95 percent while "Idumea" jumped from 0.42 percent to 0.71 percent. In 2003 "I'm Going Home" was the forty-second most popular song out of the 554 in *The Sacred Harp*; in 2004 it was the second most popular song in the book. "Idumea" jumped from fifty-sixth most popular in 2003 to twelfth most popular in 2004. As those of us who have been singing since 2003 can attest, the songs became practically omnipresent after the film's release, sung regularly at all-day singings and conventions as well as at practice singings, and often led by request or sung by an experienced singer joined by a newcomer who had encountered Sacred Harp singing in the film.

Both songs have remained more popular in the nine years since *Cold Mountain's* release than they were

beforehand. "I'm Going Home," however, has fallen off from its position in 2004 as the second most popular song in *The Sacred Harp*. The song dropped sharply in popularity each of the three years after 2004, finally settling in as around the twentieth most popular song in the book. "Idumea," however, held onto its newfound popularity during the years when "I'm Going Home" was falling. The song remains among the top ten most commonly led songs. In 2013 it was the seventh most popular of all the songs in *The Sacred Harp*.

Why has "Idumea" retained its popularity to a greater extent than "I'm Going Home"? One possibility may be that the song's moving hymn text, stark harmonies, soaring alto line, memorable melody, and striking high notes toward the middle of the tenor part continue to appeal to singers irrespective of the song's association with *Cold Mountain*. The powerful high notes in the tenor and treble parts during the chorus of "I'm Going Home" also continue to create moments of real energy at singings. Indeed, it may be that singers who were unfamiliar with the songs (re)discovered them after their wild popularity following *Cold Mountain*. This may be one reason why both songs remain more popular today than they were before the film aired.

Another factor, though, in these songs' enduring popularity may be the continued impact of *Cold Mountain*. Even ten years after its premiere, new singers are still coming to Sacred Harp thanks to the film. A man from Texas who ordered a Sacred Harp songbook just this past fall had seen *Cold Mountain* in theaters in early 2004. Though he had meant to look up local Sacred Harp singings, he had only gotten around to doing so earlier this year. While *Cold Mountain* is no longer a major force bringing new singers to Sacred Harp singing, we can safely say that the *Cold Mountain* bump is real, and that—at least to some extent—it continues to effect singings today. ■

## Acknowledgements

This essay expands on material presented by the co-authors at Camp Fasola 2013 in a class titled "True Stories from the Minutes Books." Thanks to the Sacred Harp Musical Heritage Association for sponsoring Camp Fasola and for publishing and making accessible the minutes of Sacred Harp singings. Thanks to Chris Thorman for access to minutes data and for advice on parsing the minutes. Thanks as well to Lauren Bock and Leigh Cooper for useful suggestions and feedback on the material presented in this essay. Finally, thanks to the secretaries of all minutes book singings held between 1995 and 2013 for creating this valuable record.

## Footnote

1. A group of singers traveled to the Academy Awards where, songbooks in hand, they sang backup to Allison Krauss on an Elvis Costello song from the film's soundtrack. Another group of singers performed two songs during a televised performance at the Hollywood Bowl. Melissa Block narrated a thirteen-minute National Public Radio special on Sacred Harp singing, and numerous newspapers, magazines, and local television stations featured stories about Sacred Harp's inclusion in the film. Singers from around the country participated in the Great High Mountain Tour that brought artists from the *Cold Mountain* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtracks—both overseen by producer T. Bone Burnett—together for a national tour. At each stop local singers were invited to join Tim Eriksen on stage for a short set.

## Read the Old Paths

# ‘There Are More Singings Now Than Ever Before’: Hugh McGraw Addresses the Harpeth Valley Singers

Hugh McGraw | Bremen, Georgia



Hugh McGraw leads a singing school on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. at the 1970 Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife. Photograph by Dick Levine.

**Editors' note:** In 1964, Hugh McGraw, then executive secretary of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company, gave a talk on the past, present, and future of Sacred Harp singing for the Harpeth Valley, Tennessee, Sacred Harp singers. His audience included prominent scholars and clergy such as music educator Irving Wolfe and Presbyterian minister Priestley Miller (composer of “The Lamb of God,” on p. 572 in *The Sacred Harp*). In the following excerpt from his talk, McGraw reflects on the state of Sacred Harp singing in 1964 and addresses common misconceptions about the style.

## Criticisms of Sacred Harp Music

**T**HERE are more singings now than ever before. I would say there are over 375 singings held annually in churches, schools, courthouses, back rooms, and even in cafes (and they are always opened and closed by prayer).

As you all know, this music is not “listener’s music,” it is singer’s music. You have got to sing it to understand it. Quite frequently you hear people say, “it all sounds alike to me,” or “I can’t hear any tune to it.” I shall regard such criticism as simply untrue and the result of pure ignorance. Sacred Harp music is written in four-part harmony and it is composed in such a manner that each part is equally interesting to the singer. And, of course, the melody carries the tune of the song and is the most important.

The other criticism you hear is “it all sounds like minor.” Well about one half of our songs are minor, and the singer enjoys both major and minor.

You hear people say, “It’s ‘OLD-FOGY.’” Now what does Old Fogy mean? The word “fogy” means a steward or caretaker, and the word “old” was a tried and trusted one who took care of such things as were worth preserving, and certainly what we are doing to The Sacred Harp is preserving it. When we speak of Old Fogy things we might as well include, for instance, the language we speak, the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the houses we live in, the laws we obey, and last but not least, the God we worship. Now what could be more old fogy than these things I have just named? But brother, I don’t want to do without any of them, and I guess I will just die “old fogy.”

All I can say about Sacred Harp music could be summed up in a few words. Uncle Tom Denson once said, “If you

don’t like it, you had better stay away from it, because it will get hold of you and you can’t get away.”

## Singers Today

I would say that there are 10,000 singers in the Southern states and more joining in every year. I would say that 50,000 Sacred Harp song books have been sold in the last fifty years and I would predict that the next fifty years will see 100,000 sold.

With these modern-time people, they don’t think anything about going 500 to 600 miles to an all day singing. They have new cars; some go by airplane, trains. That is a vast improvement over the horse and buggy days. I have heard some of the older people say that sometimes it would take a week to get to a singing and a week to get back.

However, the old tradition is still carried on just like our grandfathers carried it on before us, and I don’t think that will ever change. Anything that is good enough to last 120 years will last forever.

People have made the remark that Sacred Harp singings are dying out. That is an untrue statement. There are more people singing today than ever before. More singing schools are taught each year. More young people are starting out learning to sing the music, and you know yourself that anything that the young people do and enjoy is certainly something that will go on and on.

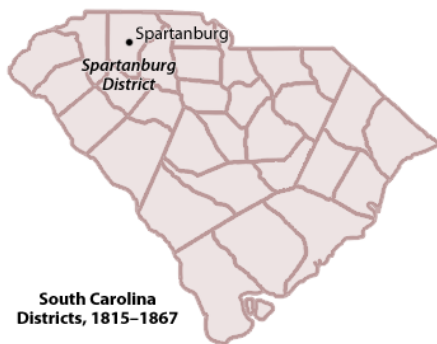
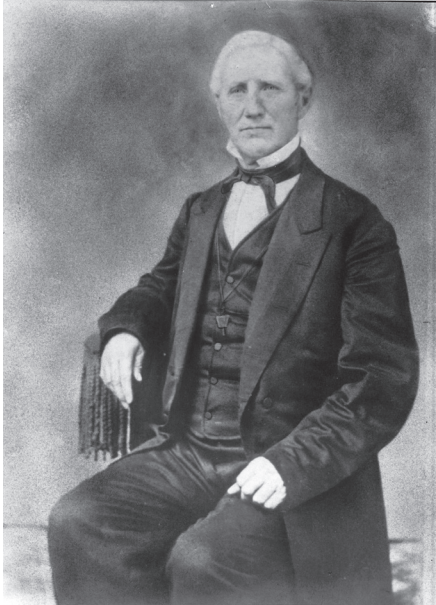
I would like to encourage more young people to start singing, because there is no greater entertainment than a sweet song. I don’t just promote Sacred Harp music—any music is enjoyable and soothing to the ear. Music will never, never, never die. ■



## Read the Old Paths

## William Walker: Carolina Contributor to American Music

Harry Eskew | Macon, Georgia



**Top:** William Walker, A. S. H. Photograph from the collection of George Pullen Jackson, courtesy of his grandchildren.

**Bottom:** Location of Spartanburg, South Carolina. Walker was a prominent resident of Spartanburg for much of his life.

## Introduction

WHEN it comes to the hymnody of the nineteenth century South, *The Sacred Harp* often comes to mind. After all, *The Sacred Harp* is still celebrated in singing practically every weekend across the United States. One singing school teacher whose compilations often get overlooked these days, however, is William “Singing Billy” Walker, a South Carolina native whose tunebook, *Southern Harmony* (1835), successfully rivaled the popularity and sales of *The Sacred Harp*.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, according to one of Walker’s Philadelphia publishers, nearly 600,000 copies of *Southern Harmony* had been sold by 1866,<sup>2</sup> an astronomical figure for the South at this time. Walker’s very name, it seems, was a household term familiar to virtually all southerners in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, as a quotation from Walker’s obituary attests: “*The Southern Harmony* and his name, the distinguished name of the author, are as familiar as household duties in the habitations of the South.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, I would argue that William Walker was not only South Carolina’s best known composer of hymn tunes, but has significantly influenced the face of American music today.<sup>4</sup>

## William Walker

WALKER’S extended family would prove extremely useful to him in years to come. Distant relatives included the famous Confederate general Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, the Rev. John Landrum (the first pastor of the First Baptist Church of Spartanburg), and the Rev. Newton Pinckney Walker (founder of South Carolina’s Institution for the Deaf and Blind at nearby Cedar Springs). More importantly, his sister-in-law had married Benjamin Franklin White, who in 1844 would collaborate with E. J. King in compiling *The Sacred Harp*.

Walker’s musical experiences began at a very young age. By the time he was five, his mother had taught him three hymns with tunes reflecting the Anglo-American folk idiom.<sup>5</sup> Walker composed his first piece, “Solemn Call,” a fugal tune, at age eighteen, in 1827.<sup>6</sup> Further evidence of Walker’s early musical activity is found in a manuscript collection containing pieces which in 1835 were included in Walker’s first published singing school tunebook, *The Southern Harmony* and Musical Companion (hereafter *Southern Harmony*).<sup>7</sup>

In 1835 the then twenty-six year old Walker married Amy Shands Golightly (1811–1897). The Walkers had a long and fruitful marriage with ten children. They became members of the newly organized First Baptist Church of Spartanburg in 1839. During his thirty-six years in that church, Walker, quite familiar with Baptist traditions of worship and music, served as a deacon, a frequent messenger to the Baptist association, and a leader of congregational singing.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the limits of his own formal education, Walker strongly supported formal educational institutions within his own community. In 1835 he was a trustee of the newly founded Spartanburg Male Academy, and in the same year he was one of eleven subscribers who pledged \$1,300 to establish the Female Seminary in Spartanburg.<sup>9</sup> On July 4, 1851, William Walker took part in the cornerstone laying ceremonies of Spartanburg’s Wofford College.<sup>10</sup>

Along with his musical activities, Walker operated a bookstore in Spartanburg, a business that was really both a book and stationery store. Walker’s *Southern Harmony* was an important factor in the success of his bookstore, enabling him to sell merchandise at lower prices, as mentioned in an advertisement on

January 8, 1857 in *The Spartanburg Express*:

*I have made permanent arrangements with several large book houses in New York and Philadelphia, to exchange my music work, the Southern Harmony, as cash prices for their books, etc. At cash prices nett. [sic] I will therefore be able to sell books and stationery lower than they have ever been sold in Spartanburg, and as I desire to do a cash business, I will sell at Columbia and Charleston prices.*

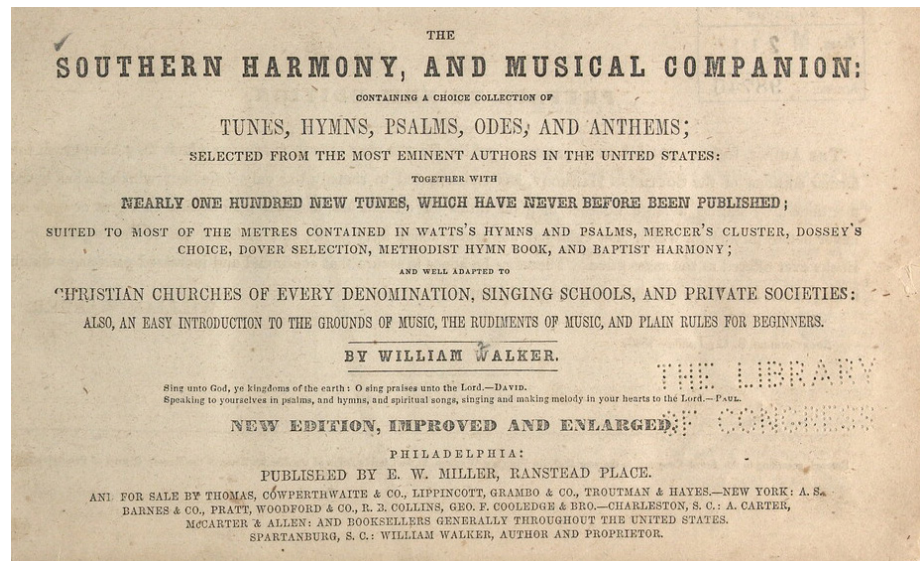
This advertisement illustrates Walker's business acumen. It also documents that Walker was not simply a southerner whose works were sold only in the South. *Southern Harmony* was sold in the North as well as in the South. This is all the more remarkable since this was a time of increasing sectional conflict leading to the Civil War.

Walker's impressive personal library attests to the fact that his interest in books went far beyond the mercenary. In the words of his biographer, "He was possessed of a mind of a literary turn, and had a large and valuable library, and having been engaged for some years in the introduction and sale of books in the town of Spartanburg, he became possessed of many rare and valuable books of general interest."<sup>11</sup>

From about the mid-1850s Walker taught in normal music schools, established to train singing school teachers, using his own tunebooks as textbooks. Walker's professional activities as a singing school instructor ranged far, in his own words, extending thousands of miles across the South and Middle Western states.<sup>12</sup> Altogether, Walker taught music for forty-five years.<sup>13</sup>

### Walker's Tunebooks

**I**N addition to *Southern Harmony*, Walker compiled one other major tunebook and two minor ones. Walker's second tunebook, in four-shape notation like *Southern Harmony*, was the *Southern and Western Pocket Harmonist* of 1846, designed as a supplement to *Southern Harmony* but with more hymns suitable for use in revivals. Walker's third tunebook, *The Christian Harmony*,



Title page of the *Southern Harmony, and Musical Companion*, 1847 edition. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

was a major collection published in 1867 in which he switched from four-shape to seven-shape notation and incorporated more music of Boston-based music educator Lowell Mason and his followers, further evidence of his northern connections. Walker's last collection, entitled *Fruits and Flowers*, was designed for children in both common schools and Sunday schools. Published in 1870 just five years before his death, Walker's preface included an address to children:

*Well, children, I have been engaged for many years in making music-books for the grown people, so I thought I would now make a music book for you, that you might all learn to sing while you are little folks. My mother learned [sic] me to sing when I was a little fellow about three years old. My dear children, don't you want to sing? It seems to me that I can almost hear you say, Yes sir, that we do. Well then, get your parents to buy you a copy of Fruits and Flowers.*<sup>14</sup>

### Southern Harmony

**W**ALKER's compilations, like other singing school tunebooks, made substantial contributions in their day to the publication of hymns in the South. Especially during the antebellum period, a hymnal was a words-only volume, often published in miniature

editions that could be carried to church in one's pocket. Congregational singing in the South among such mainline denominations as Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians was commonly unaccompanied. It was often lined-out, as is still practiced by some white and black Primitive Baptist and Old Regular Baptist congregations as well as by other African-American congregations in the U.S. South and Presbyterian congregations in Scotland. In cases where churchgoers could read music, they probably learned using shape notes in singing schools.

Walker's *Southern Harmony* and his later *Christian Harmony* were two tunebooks among hundreds of singing-school collections published in the United States since the days of William Billings in the late 1700s. From about 1800, singing-school tunebooks began to be published in a four-shape system of shaped note heads corresponding to the then four-shape Elizabethan sol-fa solmization. The ascending major scale would have shapes to represent the syllables fa, sol, la, fa, sol, la, mi, fa. Although largely rejected in the Northeast, shape notes became very popular in parts of Pennsylvania on through the Shenandoah Valley to the South and Midwest as far as Missouri. In these areas it became practically





"New Britain," from *Southern Harmony*, 1847 edition. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

impossible to get a tunebook published unless it was in shape notes.

Walker's tunebooks, like others of its time, served several purposes. They functioned as textbooks for singing schools that taught multitudes how to read music. *Southern Harmony*, like other singing-schools tunebooks of its day, begins with an introduction to music reading, including the use of shape notes. Indeed, the books subtitle reads, "an easy introduction to the grounds of music, the rudiments of music, and plain rules for beginners."

In addition to its use as a textbook for singing schools, Walker's tunebook furnished music for congregational singing of hymn texts already published in words-only hymnals. Hymnals listed on the title page of *Southern Harmony* are *Watts's Hymns and Psalms*, *Mercer's Cluster*, *Dossey's Choice*, *Dover Selection*, *Methodist Hymn Book*, and *Baptist Harmony*. Southern pastors compiled most of these hymnals. One pastor known to Walker was his fellow South Carolinian, Staunton S. Burdett, then pastor of the New Hope Baptist Church near Lancaster. Burdett's *Baptist Harmony* was published only a year prior to Walker's *Southern Harmony*. Burdett's name is listed on the title page of *Southern Harmony*, for he stocked and sold copies of Walker's tunebook. Most of the tunes for congregational use are

found in Part I of *Southern Harmony*.

The singing schools and churches were not the only intended users of Walker's tunebooks. They provided a repertory of challenging pieces for more advanced singers. Part II of *Southern Harmony* is described on the title page as "containing some of the more lengthy and elegant pieces commonly used at concerts, or singing societies." This section includes most of the fusing tunes and anthems, such as William Billings' well-known "Easter Anthem."

Perhaps the most interesting repertory of Walker's *Southern Harmony* is the folk hymn, and it is in this genre that Walker made his greatest contribution to American music. Walker and other rural-oriented singing-school teacher/compiler drew from the rich oral tradition of Anglo-American folksong to provide melodies for many hymn texts. Sometimes the folk melody and hymn text had already been coupled. In other instances, Walker and others fitted secular folk melodies to already well-known hymn texts. It is likely that Walker and some of his contemporaries had so fully absorbed this Anglo-American idiom that they themselves composed tunes in the style.

The best known of all American folk hymns is "Amazing Grace," set to the tune "New Britain," published together for the first time in the 1835 first

edition of *Southern Harmony*. The text, written by the converted slave-trader who became an Anglican minister, John Newton, contained the same six stanzas found in *Olney Hymns* (1779) and was already well known. The tune "New Britain" had also been previously published, but with other texts. No earlier wedding of the tune and text has been documented. The melody, as was normal in this era, is in the tenor part, the middle of three voices.

Also typical of these folk hymns is the angular line of the melody and the use of gapped scales—in this case pentatonic, omitting the fourth and seventh degrees. In harmonizing these folk melodies, Walker and his contemporaries thought linearly as well as vertically, conceiving each voice part as a melody in itself. This practice sometimes produced chords without thirds, along with parallel perfect fifths and parallel octaves.

Another type of folk hymnody, a type that came from the camp meeting revivals, was what George Pullen Jackson called the "revival spiritual." Ellen Jane Lorenz has defined this type as "informal hymns often with refrain and chorus, taking form in camp and revival meetings."<sup>15</sup> One of the best known of the revival spirituals, "The Promised Land," was first published in 1835 in the first edition of *Southern Harmony*. To the hymn text, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand" by the English Baptist pastor, Samuel Stennett, an unknown American added the refrain beginning, "I am bound for the promised land." Walker credits the tune to "Miss M. Durham," who has been identified as Matilda Durham of the Spartanburg area, who married Andrew Hoy and later lived in Cobb County, Georgia, northwest of Atlanta. The tune was later recast in major and reharmonized to accommodate the newer gospel hymn tradition, the form in which it appears in several current hymnals.

There is yet a third widely-sung folk hymn text and tune that Walker, as far as documents show, brought together in print for the first time. In the second edition of *Southern Harmony*, published by Walker and the recently



identified Elijah King, “Esq.,” of Flat Rock, Henderson County, North Carolina,<sup>16</sup> there is an appendix which includes “Wondrous Love,” credited to Christopher. The text, “What wondrous love is this, O my soul,” had been published anonymously in two hymnals in 1811.<sup>17</sup> It was another thirty-nine years before this anonymous text appeared in print together with this beautiful tune. Walker also published “Wondrous Love” in his 1867 tunebook, *The Christian Harmony*. There he described “Wondrous Love” as a “very popular old Southern tune” and indicated that it was “arranged by James Christopher of Spartanburg.” The melody had existed for a number of years in oral tradition, and James Christopher wrote it down and harmonized it. In *Southern Harmony* Walker included only the first stanza, an omission he later rectified in his *Christian Harmony* by providing six stanzas. The text of “Wondrous Love” is in the same meter as the ballad of Captain Kidd and many other songs.<sup>18</sup>

It is clear that Walker was a tune collector, arranger, and a composer in the idiom of the folk hymns that surrounded him. In the preface to the first edition of *Southern Harmony* Walker wrote:

*I have composed the parts to a great many good airs (which I could not find in any publication, nor in manuscript) and assigned my name as the author. I have also composed several tunes wholly, and inserted them in this work, which also bear my name.*

Walker also published melodies from oral tradition harmonized by others, including Spartanburg area musicians of the singing-school shape-note tradition, such as Matilda Durham Hoy (“The Promised Land”) and James Christopher (“Wondrous Love”). It is this form of harmonized sacred folk tunes, arising out of the hill-country of Upper South Carolina that gave Walker’s tunebooks, especially his *Southern Harmony*, much of its distinctive appeal to the South of his day.



Crowds gathered for the 1935 “Big Singing” at the Marshall County courthouse in Benton, Kentucky. Photographs from the collection of George Pullen Jackson, courtesy of his grandchildren.



Grave of William Walker, Spartanburg, South Carolina, before 1939. Photograph from the collection of George Pullen Jackson, courtesy of his grandchildren.

## Walker's Legacy

THE music of William Walker's tunebooks may be found today primarily in three contexts. The first context is the traditional shape-note singing. Two of Walker's four tunebooks are still used today in singings year after year. The only singing that currently makes exclusive use of *Southern Harmony* is the Big Singing Day each fourth Sunday in May at Benton, Kentucky.<sup>19</sup> Walker's *Christian Harmony*, his post-Civil War tunebook in seven-shape notation, is far more widely used in singings than his *Southern Harmony*. Into the early 2000s, two different editions of the book were in use across the South, from Mississippi to North Carolina. A 1994 reprint of the 1872 edition of *Christian Harmony*<sup>20</sup> was used in a number of annual singings in western North Carolina.<sup>21</sup> In Alabama, Mississippi, and North Georgia, singers used an edition of *Christian Harmony* extensively revised by Alabamians John Deason and O. A. Parris that was published in 1958 and revised and reissued again in 1994.<sup>22</sup> In 2010, a committee of singers including representatives from each of these

singing communities published an expanded edition of the book including all the songs from each of the two editions just mentioned, as well as a handful of additional songs by current singers.<sup>23</sup>

Tunebook singings had completely disappeared in from Walker's home state of South Carolina until 1994, when a singing was established on the campus of Wofford College in Spartanburg. This singing, now known as the "South Carolina State Singing in Memory of William Walker," meets on the Saturday before the third Sunday in March and uses *Southern Harmony*, *Christian Harmony*, and *The Sacred Harp*. This singing concludes with a short walk to Spartanburg's historic Magnolia Cemetery for a closing song and prayer of thanks with singers gathered around Walker's grave. Growing out of the Wofford singing in recent years is an annual singing at Furman University in Greenville, on the Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May.

Walker's legacy in traditional shape-note singing is not limited to the present-day use of *Southern Harmony* and *Christian Harmony*. Mark T. Godfrey has analyzed the frequency of song use from *The Sacred Harp* drawing on annual volumes of the *Directory and Minutes of Sacred Harp Singings* from 1995–2013.<sup>24</sup> Walker's "Hallelujah" and "New Britain," also from *Southern Harmony*, ranked as the first and second most commonly led songs among the 554 in *The Sacred Harp* for the period from 1995–2013. Another song from *Southern Harmony*, "Wondrous Love," ranked thirteenth. These same three tunes placed among the top songs used for memorial lessons at Sacred Harp singings: "New Britain" ranked third, "Hallelujah" ranked ninth, and "Wondrous Love" ranked tenth. Among the top songs for closing Sacred Harp singings in the period from 1995–2013, number one was "Parting Hand" from *Southern Harmony*, number four was "Hallelujah," and number seven was "New Britain." Thus the popularity of Walker's tunes and those from *Southern Harmony* at present-day Sacred Harp singings also constitutes a

significant part of his legacy.

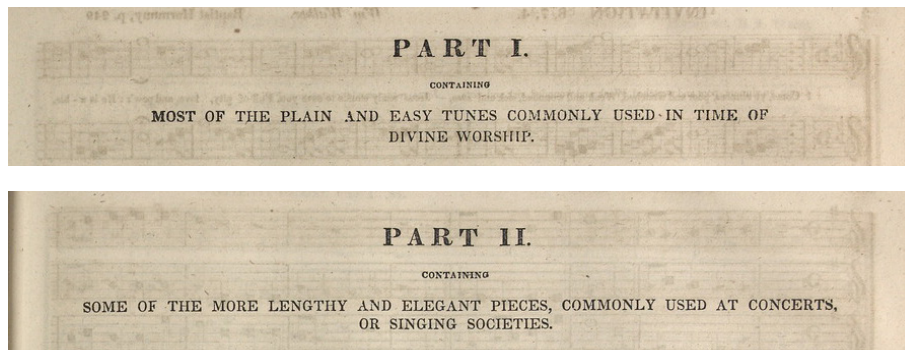
The second context in which the music of Walker's tunebooks is found today is in choral arrangements. Choirs in churches and schools have sung countless arrangements of "Amazing Grace" across the English-speaking world.<sup>25</sup> "Wondrous Love" has also appeared in numerous choral arrangements. Walker's life itself has served as the impetus for an opera. In 1952 Donald Davidson of the English Department of Vanderbilt University and composer Charles F. Bryan of Peabody College collaborated in the production of a light opera, *Singin' Billy*, based on the life of William Walker.<sup>26</sup>

The third context, one that Walker shares with other shape-note composers of his era, constitutes his greatest legacy. This context is that of congregational song, the inclusion of early American folk hymnody in current hymnals of practically every major American denomination. It is notable that some of these folk hymns, such as "Amazing Grace" and "Wondrous Love," have gained ecumenical acceptance, appearing in practically every major new hymnal. While Lowell Mason and his colleagues in the Northeast were composing and arranging hymn tunes based on classical European models, southerners such as William Walker, Benjamin Franklin White, Elisha James King and others were composing and arranging hymn tunes based on Anglo-American tunes in wide oral circulation. These folk hymns of the shape-note tradition from this Carolina contributor are a wonderful treasure of early American song that constitutes a continuing gift to singing congregations and the American heritage even now in the twenty-first century. ■

## Acknowledgements

This essay was adapted by Jesse P. Karlsberg from an article published in the *Journal of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society* 29 (2005–2006). Mark T. Godfrey provided updated statistics on song use for this revised version of the essay.





Beginnings of Parts I and II of the *Southern Harmony*, 1847 edition. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

### Footnotes

1. The most extensive treatment of *The Sacred Harp* is Buell E. Cobb, Jr. *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (Athens and London: Brown Trasher Books, University of Georgia Press, 1978, 1989).
2. Preface to *The Christian Harmony* (Philadelphia: E. W. Miller and William Walker, 1867), iii. Preface dated October 1866.
3. T. O. P. Vernon, "Late Prof. Walker of S. C.," *Musical Million* 7, no. iff, January, 1876.
4. Unless otherwise indicated, biographical data on Walker is based on Harry Lee Eskew, "The Life and Work of William Walker" (MSM thesis, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1960).
5. These three tunes are found in Walker's *Christian Harmony*, revised edition (Philadelphia: Miller's Bible and Publishing House, 1873). Their names with their page numbers and first lines are: "Solemn Thought" (p. 361, "Remember, sinful youth, you must die, you must die"), "That Glorious Day" (p. 114, "That glorious day is drawing nigh"), and "French Broad" (p. 208, "High o'er the hills the mountains rise").
6. Ibid., 155. The fugal tune features a repeated homophonic opening section followed by a section of imitative entrances, the latter section also being repeated, and concluding with a return *da capo* for a final repetition of the opening section, making an AABBA form.
7. See Milburn Price, "Miss Elizabeth Adams' Music Book: A Manuscript Predecessor of William Walker's *Southern Harmony*," *The Hymn* 29, no. 2 (April 1978): 70–75.
8. Walker's associational activities are described in Alfred Merrill Smoak, Jr., "William Walker's *Southern Harmony*" (MCM thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1973), 17–22.
9. Fronde Kennedy, *A History of Spartanburg County* (Spartanburg, SC: The Spartanburg Branch, American Association of University Women, 1940), 60–61.
10. John B. O. Landrum, *History of Spartanburg County* (Atlanta: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, 1900; reprint, Spartanburg, SC: The Spartanburg Journal, 1954), 368–369.
11. Ibid.
12. Walker, *Christian Harmony*, iii.
13. This information is given on Walker's tombstone in Spartanburg's historic Magnolia Cemetery. The full inscription reads: "In memory of William Walker, A. S. H. [author of *Southern Harmony*] Died Sept 24, 1875 in the 67th year of his age. He was a devoted husband and kind father. A consistent Baptist 47 years. Taught music 45 years. The author of 4 books of sacred music. He rests from his labors. He died in the triumphs of faith. Sing praises unto the Lord."
14. William Walker, *Fruits and Flowers* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott and Company, 1873), 3.
15. Ellen Jane Lorenz, *Glory Hallelujah! The Story of the Campmeeting Spiritual* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 131.
16. Tarik Wareh identified Elijah King (1809–1880) based on census records and other historical documents. Elijah King is the only "E. King" who resided in Henderson County around the time the second edition of *Southern Harmony* was published. His father, Benjamin Sylvanus King, "was a noted Baptist preacher, ordained in 1800 at French Broad Baptist Church," Wareh reports. The younger King moved to Texas in the 1850s, where he lived until his death in 1880. Personal correspondence with Tarik Wareh, January 7, 2014.
17. Six stanzas were published in Stith Mead, *A General Selection of the Newest and Most Admired Hymns and Spiritual Songs Now in Use*, second ed. (Lynchburg, VA, 1811), no. 121, and seven stanzas in Starke Dupuy, *A Selection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs from the Best Authors* (Frankfort, KY, 1811), no. 198.
18. See Ellen Jane [Lorenz] Porter, "Two Early American Tunes: Fraternal Twins?" *The Hymn* 29, no. 4 (1978); and Ellen Jane [Lorenz] Porter and John E. Garst, "More Tunes in the Captain Kidd Meter," *The Hymn* 30, no. 4 (1979), 252–262.
19. See Deborah Carlton Loftis, "Big Singing Day in Benton, Kentucky: A Study of the History, Ethnic Identity, and Musical Style of Southern Harmony Singers" (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1987).
20. Published by Folk Heritage Books, 21 Miller Road, Asheville, NC. 28805. This reprint includes four popular tunes added to the original edition on pages 381A–381D. This edition is out of print.
21. See Harry Eskew, "Christian Harmony Singing in Alabama: Its Adaptation and Survival," in *Singing Baptists: Studies in Baptist Hymnody in America* (Nashville: Church Street Press, 1994), 265–276.
22. Published by the Alabama Christian Harmony Singing Association. This edition is also out of print.
23. Published by the Christian Harmony Music Company, for ordering information see TheChristianHarmony.com.
24. Mark T. Godfrey, "Analysis of the Minutes of Sacred Harp Singings, 1995–2013," unpublished dataset, 2013.
25. Although Walker first published "Amazing Grace" with the tune "New Britain," the shape of the melody and harmony by which it is best known today first appeared as arranged in E. O. Excell's *Make His Praise Glorious* (Chicago, 1900), no. 235.
26. A reprint of the score and a book of lyrics with introductory notes to this opera was published with a 1985 copyright date by the Foundation for American Education, P. O. Box 11708. Columbia, S.C., 29211.



The Sacred Harp Publishing Company is a non-profit organization that promotes traditional Sacred Harp singing, community, and culture across the United States and around the world. SHPC publishes *The Sacred Harp, 1991 Edition* and other books, recordings, and resources that support Sacred Harp singing.

Books available



<b><i>The Sacred Harp, 1991 Edition</i></b>	The best collection of sacred songs, hymns, odes, and anthems ever offered the singing public for general use.
<b><i>Original Sacred Harp: Centennial Edition</i></b>	A commemorative reprint of the historic 1911 edition of <i>The Sacred Harp</i> , with a new introduction.
<b><i>The Makers of the Sacred Harp</i></b>	Companion to <i>The Sacred Harp</i> , tracing the sources of every tune and text in our songbook.
<b><i>Legacy of the Sacred Harp</i></b>	One singer's quest to reconnect with family ancestors who composed, sang, and lived by the words of <i>The Sacred Harp</i> .

For ordering information visit [originalsacredharp.com](http://originalsacredharp.com), email [ordering@originalsacredharp.com](mailto:ordering@originalsacredharp.com), or write to Sacred Harp Publishing Company, c/o Jesse P. Karlsberg, 318 Arizona Avenue NE, Atlanta, GA 30307.



Connect with the Sacred Harp Community

For additional issues of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company Newsletter plus audio and video extras. Visit [originalsacredharp.com/newsletter/](http://originalsacredharp.com/newsletter/).

Find a singing in your area and learn more about Sacred Harp singing. Annual singings are held almost every weekend of the year, and there are monthly or weekly practice singings in most US states and several other countries. All welcome beginners! Visit [fasola.org/singings](http://fasola.org/singings) for a singing directory.

Consider attending Camp Fasola, a weeklong all-ages summer camp teaching Sacred Harp singing and traditions. Visit [campfasola.org](http://campfasola.org) for more information.

