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H. WILEY HITCHCOCK

# MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES



A HISTORICAL  
INTRODUCTION  
THIRD EDITION

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PRENTICE HALL HISTORY OF MUSIC SERIES

third edition

**MUSIC**  
**IN THE UNITED STATES:**  
**A Historical Introduction**

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## FOREWORD

Students and others interested in the history of music have always needed books of moderate length that are nevertheless comprehensive, authoritative, and engagingly written. The Prentice-Hall History of Music Series was planned to fill these needs. It seems to have succeeded: revised and enlarged second editions of books in the series have been necessary, and now a new cycle of further revisions exists.

Six books in the series present a panoramic view of the history of music in Western civilization, divided among the major historical periods—Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, and Twentieth-Century. The musical culture of the United States, viewed historically as an independent development within the larger Western tradition, is treated in another book; and one other deals with music in Latin America. In yet another pair of books, the rich folk and traditional musics of both hemispheres are considered. Taken together, these ten volumes are a distinctive and, we hope, distinguished contribution to the history of the music of the

world's peoples. Each volume, moreover, may of course be read singly as a substantial account of the music of its period or area.

The authors of the books in the Prentice-Hall History of Music Series are scholars of international repute—musicologists, critics, and teachers of exceptional stature in their respective fields of specialization. Their goal in contributing to the series has been to present works of solid, up-to-date scholarship that are eminently readable, with significant insights into music as a part of the general intellectual and cultural life of man.

H. WILEY HITCHCOCK, *Editor*

## PREFACE

The Preface to both the first and second editions of this book began with these sentences: "Surely no lengthy justification is needed for a historical survey of American music and musical life. For reasons suggested in Chapter Three of this book, we know less about our own music than about that of western Europe. . . ." Happily, for this third edition I can amend this beginning as follows:

Since the publication of the first edition of this book, almost twenty years ago, general knowledge of, and interest in, the music and musical life of the United States have vastly increased. But still, no lengthy justification is needed for publishing yet another edition (the third, following a second in 1974). Not only have there been major developments in American music in the past decade and a half (these being considered in my completely new Chapter Twelve); there has also been an extraordinary upsurge of American-music scholarship—and by that term I mean to suggest not only writings about the American musical past (up to yesterday) but also editions and

recordings of American music, through a very wide spectrum of genres and periods. My own conception of our musical history has been altered, inevitably, by the passage of time—but also, in significant ways, by this scholarship: the third edition of *Music in the United States (MinUS)*, although obviously a revision and not a new book, reflects this development on virtually every page.

I am still unhappy about the continued tendency of many persons—musicians as well as music lovers—to downgrade American music, especially “serious” American music, vis-à-vis that of Europe (though their number continues to diminish). I am equally unhappy about the resistance of many to the enjoyment of *all kinds* of American music—to be exclusive in their tastes. Those tendencies have prevented us for a long time from enjoying, to the fullest, our musical heritage. My own attempt is still (as I have written here before) to view our music in the round, believing that pop songs as well as art-songs, player pianos as well as piano players, rock as well as revival hymns, minimalism as well as minstrelsy are important parts of the American musical experience. I also attempt to view it head-on, to measure it in its own terms, and to seek the “why” behind the “what” in our musical history.

This new edition has two huge advantages over the previous ones. First, it has been able to capitalize on several major recording projects of the past decade: the more than one hundred albums of New World Records’ *Recorded Anthology of American Music (NW)* and the boxed sets *The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz (SCCJ)\** and *The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Country Music (SCCCM)*, to all of which I frequently refer; and the fifteen-disc series *Folk Music in America* from the Library of Congress, not to mention the earlier, invaluable AAFS series drawn from the library’s Archive of Folk Song. Second, it has also been able to capitalize on the work of the nearly 1000 contributors of the 5000-odd entries in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music (TNGDAM)*, the first comprehensive scholarly encyclopedia of the music of the United States. The many dates, statistics, and other details that differ in this edition of *MinUS* from those in earlier editions reflect this new authoritative resource, as do larger matters of fact and opinion. I occasionally refer specifically to entries in *TNGDAM*, but *only* occasionally; let me remind readers that for almost every topic touched on in this book a *TNGDAM* entry exists, usually with a helpful bibliography.

My approach to nineteenth-century American music has focused on what I call “cultivated” and “vernacular” traditions. In dealing with the latter, as with secular music in the Colonial era, I discuss much music now considered “folk music”—but in its function as the *popular* music of its time

\* A revised edition of this set was issued in 1987, just too late for references to be made to it in this book.

(as I explain in Chapter Three); American folk music as such is considered more broadly by Bruno Nettl and Gerard Béhague in their companion volume in the Prentice-Hall History of Music Series, *Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents*. In discussing American music since World War I, I have emphasized the principal stylistic trends and the predominant musical attitudes. Many fine composers and performers have thereby gone unmentioned; they have had to make way, with my regrets, for those who seem to me to be the ones in whose work the major issues of twentieth-century American music have been addressed most clearly, boldly, and influentially. I make no apologies for devoting an entire chapter of a rather brief book to Charles Ives: his thought and his music continue to stand as provocative, stimulating, and fertile challenges to American musical evolution.

This is a book based on primary sources: almost without exception I have studied the scores or listened to performances of the music cited herein (or done both). My debts to other scholars, however, are many; I have acknowledged these in bibliographical notes, at the end of each chapter, which will help readers reach out beyond this book to other sources; and in footnotes I have attempted to cite primarily works that can serve as useful further references. Whenever appropriate and possible, I have quoted composers on their own music. Two resources to which I do not refer, but which every reader should be aware of, are the unique, massive *Resources of American Music History: A Directory of Source Materials from Colonial Times to World War II*, eds. D. W. Krummel et al. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), and the exceptionally valuable annotated bibliography by David Horn, *The Literature of American Music in Books and Folk Music Collections* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1977); a supplement to Horn's bibliography is to be published. Also scheduled for publication is the much-revised third edition of Gilbert Chase's *America's Music* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press); and two other surveys should be cited here—Daniel Kingman's *America's Music: A Panorama* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1979; rev. ed. in progress) and Charles Hamm's *Music in the New World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983). Essential complements to these histories, and to this one, are the second edition of Eileen Southern's *The Music of Black Americans* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983)—vastly improved over the first (1971), which was a landmark achievement in its own right—and *American Music Recordings: A Discography of 20th-Century U.S. Composers*, ed. Carol J. Oja (Brooklyn: Institute for Studies in American Music, 1982).

Valuable series of earlier American music in facsimile-reprint and fresh editions have proliferated. I refer from time to time to specific volumes in a number of these; let me here just enumerate them by series title. Series with volumes in print include Dover Publications in American Music, Earlier



American Music (*EAM*), and Recent Researches in American Music (*RRAM*); series with volumes yet to appear include the Smithsonian Library of American Music, Garland Publishing's Three Centuries of American Music, and Garland's American Musical Theater Series.

In the first two editions of this book I acknowledged the support and help of many students, colleagues, and friends, to whom I remain most appreciative. For this edition I was helped in many different ways by others, especially William Bolcom, Anne Carley, Sidney Cowell, Richard Crawford, Charles Dodge, Paul Echols, Susan Feder, Betty Freeman, Emily Good, Charles Hamm, Barbara Heyman, Charlotte Kaufman, Kathleen Mason Krotman, Judith Kupper-Smith, Leslie Lassetter, Minna Lederman, Daniel Lentz, William Lichtenwanger, R. Allen Lott, Jessica Lowe, Carol Oja, Nancy Pardo, Vivian Perlis, Kathleen Preston, Roger Reynolds, John Rockwell, Ellen and David Rosand, William Schuman, K. Robert Schwarz, Alyn G. Shipton, Nicolas Slonimsky, Stephen Spackman, Mark Tucker, and Martin Williams.

Once again, I am indebted to many libraries, especially the New York Public Library and its Music Research Division; the Music Division of the Library of Congress; and the music libraries of Brooklyn College, New York University, the University of California at Los Angeles, and Yale University.

The work toward this revision of *MinUS* was largely done in Santa Monica, California, where I was privileged to be among the first group of Getty Scholars (1985–86) at the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities. To the library and support staff of the center; its director Kurt W. Forster; and Herbert H. Hymans, head of the Getty Scholars program, I am very grateful indeed. And it would be ungracious of me not to thank Macmillan (London) and Grove's Dictionaries of Music (New York) for having engaged me, as co-editor of *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, to immerse myself, for what turned out to be five years, in the very deepest and broadest oceans of American music.

My final acknowledgment remains essentially as before: To my wife, Janet, I am grateful for many things, among them the model of her own impeccable scholarship; her contribution to whatever accuracy and grace of expression may be found herein; and her cheerful sufferance, for several years (but now it's many), of my humming, whistling, singing, playing through, and listening to three and a half centuries of American music.

The first edition of this book was dedicated to my parents. This new and very different third edition, written with an acute sense of how fast things change in American musical life and one's views of its history, I dedicate to my grandchildren, John Wiley Watkins and Alison Jarvis Watkins, hoping they will be interested some day in knowing what it was like, way back when.

H. W. H.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- ACS**      *The American Composer Speaks*, ed. Gilbert Chase (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966)
- AM**        Gilbert Chase, *America's Music* (rev. 2nd ed.,; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966)
- EAM**        *Earlier American Music*, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock (New York: Da Capo Press, 1972- )
- ISAMm**    I.S.A.M. monograph (Brooklyn: Institute for Studies in American Music, 1973- )
- MinA**      *Music in America: An Anthology from the Landing of the Pilgrims to the Close of the Civil War. 1620-1865*, ed. W. Thomas Marrocco and Harold Gleason (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1964)
- MM**        *Modern Music*, ed. Minna Lederman (1924-46)
- MMEA**    Irving Lowens, *Music and Musicians in Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1964)

- MQ* *The Musical Quarterly* (1915– )
- NW* *Recorded Anthology of American Music* (New York: New World Records, 1975– )
- OAM* John Tasker Howard, *Our American Music* (4th ed.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965)
- PNM* *Perspectives of New Music* (1962– )
- RRAM* *Recent Researches in American Music*, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock (Madison: A-R Editions, Inc. 1976– )
- SCCCM* *The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Country Music*, comp. Bill C. Malone (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981)
- SCCJ* *The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz*, comp. Martin Williams (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1973; rev. ed. 1987)
- TNGDAM* *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Press Limited and New York: Grove's Dictionaries of Music, Inc., 1986)

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part one

*The Colonial and Federal Eras (to 1820)*

ONE

SACRED MUSIC IN NEW ENGLAND  
AND OTHER COLONIES

In his poem *The Gift Outright*, Robert Frost remarked that "the land was ours before we were the land's./She was our land more than a hundred years/Before we were her people." Acknowledging that there was an "American music" of long standing among the native American Indians; that French Huguenots sang psalms on their arrival in Spanish Florida in 1564; that Englishmen under Sir Francis Drake sang psalms in Spanish California in 1579; and that there is evidence of the use of trumpets and drums, popular and religious song, in Virginia long before the colonization of New England, we still must recognize that the heart of "our land . . . before we were her people" was New England. It is with the music of early New England that our historical introduction must begin.

The musical world left behind by the earliest English-speaking American colonists was a rich one, perhaps the richest England has ever known. At court and in the mansions of the British peerage was heard elegant and sophisticated music of many kinds—madrigals, ballets, ayres, canzonets,

and other part-songs by such Renaissance masters as William Byrd, Thomas Morley, Thomas Weelkes, and John Dowland; variations, dance pieces, preludes, and other fanciful works for harpsichord by Elizabethan virginalists like Orlando Gibbons, John Bull, and Giles Farnaby; fantasies and suites for ensembles of viols and other instruments. The music at the Chapel Royal and in the great cathedrals was no less elaborate and magnificent: both Catholic and Anglican services were permitted under Elizabeth I, and choirs of good size performed intricate and resonant motets and Mass-settings in the one, anthems and great services in the other.

The American colonists, however, could hardly maintain such kinds of music in the New World. Almost none of them were of the wealthy aristocracy that had created and supported such music in England. The leisure necessary to enjoy such purely artistic music was, needless to say, not their lot. Cargo space was at a premium on the tiny colonial ships, and large instruments like organs or harpsichords could not be accommodated. Thus, the colonists could and did enjoy only music that was quite simple and fully functional: social music and worship music. Of the former we have few specific details; of the latter we know more. The history of "American music," in the first century of British colonization, may best begin with New England worship music, specifically the psalmody, sung in religious meetings and at home, that had originated in mid-sixteenth-century Protestant sects of western Europe.

### *PROTESTANT BACKGROUNDS*

John Calvin, austere leader of the Swiss-French Protestant movement, believed that the only proper music for the church had to be based on the lyric poetry of the Bible, the Psalms. Like Martin Luther, Calvin encouraged a congregational music in the language of the people, not a choral music in the ecclesiastical Latin of the Roman Catholic Church. But, unlike Luther, Calvin thought that polyphonic music, instruments, hymns, and other non-biblical texts were too much associated with Catholicism; he replaced them with the unaccompanied congregational unison singing of psalms, translated into metrical French verse. By 1562 the Calvinists had published in their center at Geneva the complete psalter in translations by Clément Marot and Théodore de Bèze (Beza, in Latin), with melodies composed or adapted by Louis Bourgeois. Similar psalters for congregational use were prepared by Dutch Protestants; in the same year as the Geneva psalter, the London printer John Day published a complete English psalter, with translations of the psalms by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins and with melodies partly of English origin, partly of continental—the latter brought back, after Queen Elizabeth's ascendancy, by English Protestants



who had sought asylum in Geneva during the reign (1550–58) of Mary, a Catholic.

The music of these Protestant psalters was adapted from a variety of sources. Some melodies were derived from popular songs of the day; some were older hymn tunes; some were altered versions of Catholic chants. They must have been sung with fervor and gusto: apparently because of their sprightliness, the French Huguenot psalms were dubbed “Geneva jigs” and “Beza ballads”; Shakespeare, in *The Winter’s Tale* (Act IV, scene 3), has the clown say, “Three-man song men all [i.e., singers of part-songs], and very good ones . . . but one Puritan amongst them, and he sings psalms to hornpipes!”

In view of the character of this music and considering the popularity of part-songs in the sixteenth century, it should not surprise us that polyphonic arrangements of psalm tunes, for enjoyment and edification at home, were soon forthcoming. In England Daman’s psalter of 1579 (“to the use of the godly Christians for recreatying them selves, in stede of . . . unseemly ballades”) contained four-part settings, and in 1592 Thomas East enlisted the aid of prominent composers of the day (John Dowland, Giles Farnaby, Michael Cavendish, and others) to provide polyphonic settings for his psalter. Two later and very popular collections of harmonized psalm tunes were Richard Alison’s of 1599 and Thomas Ravenscroft’s of 1621.

### EARLY NEW ENGLAND PSALMODY

That the fiercely devout New England colonists regarded the singing of psalms as an integral part of life is suggested by a comment of one of the little group of Pilgrims that sailed from Delftshaven, Holland, in 1620:

They that stayed at Leyden feasted us that were to go at our pastor’s house, [it] being large; where we refreshed ourselves, after tears, with singing of Psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voice, there being many of our congregation very expert in music; and indeed it was the sweetest melody that ever mine ears heard.<sup>1</sup>

The “joyful melody” sung by “many . . . very expert in music” was doubtless a group of the psalms collected, translated, and published in 1612 for his congregation by the pastor of the English Separatists at Amsterdam, Henry Ainsworth. Ainsworth’s psalter included both prose and poetic translations, copiously annotated, of the entire Book of Psalms; it also included 39 melodies borrowed by Ainsworth from “our former Englished Psalms [and from]

<sup>1</sup> Edward Winslow, *Hypocrisie Unmasked* (1646), quoted in Waldo Selden Pratt, *The Music of the Pilgrims* (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1921), p. 6.