Music in Manuscript

A Massachusetts Tune-book of 1782

RICHARD CRAWFORD AND DAVID P. McKAY

The characteristic musical publication of pre-Federal America was the tune collection. Especially popular were sacred tune-books, containing anywhere from a dozen to 100 or more different pieces. Some 100 different issues devoted to sacred music had appeared in this country by 1786, when Chauncey Langdon's *The Select Songster*, the first printed American collection of secular songs with music, was published in New Haven by Daniel Bowen. Music also circulated in manuscript;

¹The information about sacred music publication is taken from a bibliography of American sacred music through 1810 by Allen Britton, Irving Lowens, and Richard Crawford, to be published by the Society. The information about secular music is taken from Oscar Sonneck, *Bibliography of Early Secular American Music*, revised & enlarged by William Treat Upton (Washington: Library of Congress, 1945; reprinted, New

York: Da Capo Press, 1964).

Langdon's The Select Songster had been preceded by only a meager scattering of non-sacreditems: three Pennsylvania publications of the early 1760s, The Military Glory of Great Britain (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1762) and A Dialogue on Peace (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1763), both perhaps by the psalmodist James Lyon, and John Stanley's music to the dramatic pastorale, Arcadia (Philadelphia: Andrew Stuart, 1762), no longer extant; single songs in two periodicals of the 1770s, The Hill Tops (Royal American Magazine, Boston, April, 1774) and General Wolfe (Pennsylvania Magazine, Philadelphia, March, 1775); several instructional works, An Abstract of Geminiani's Art of Playing on the Violin (Boston: John Boyles, 1769), and two which remain unlocated, A Compleate Tutor for the Fife (Philadelphia: Michael Hillegas, 1776), and the Compleat Instructor for the Violin (Philadelphia: John Norman, 1778); and occasional secular items in sacred collections, James Lyon's FRIENDSHIP in John Stickney's The Gentleman and Lady's Musical Companion (Newburyport: Daniel Bayley, 1774), CHESTER and JARGON in William Billings's The Singing Master's Assistant (Boston: Draper and Folsom, 1778), Consonance and Modern Music in Billings's The Psalm-Singer's Amusement (Boston: the author, 1781), and Bunker Hill in Andrew Law's A Select Number of Plain Tunes ([Cheshire: Wm. Law, 1781]). The same year that Langdon's Select Songster appeared, five secular pieces were included in the otherwise sacred American

hand-copied collections of tunes, sacred or secular, are by no means rare in repositories of Americana.

The value of most eighteenth-century American manuscript tune collections lies simply in their existence as artifacts from an earlier age. Copied from printed sources, and recording only their owner's musical preferences, they are of no particular worth as isolated items. There has recently come to light, however, a collection of manuscript music preserving a repertory not traceable to printed sources, yet at the same time establishing its own context of place and time. 'Sukey' Heath's 'Collection from Sundry Authors,' bound in wallpaper together with some copied poetry, now in the possession of Mrs. Dorothy Waterhouse of Boston and hereafter called the Waterhouse manuscript, is an uncommonly significant item for several reasons:

1) its owner can be identified and her family history traced; 2) the collection and many of the pieces in it were specifically dated; 3) of the twenty-eight pieces in the manuscript, eleven were attributed to William Billings of Boston, the foremost American composer of the eighteenth century; 4) the attributions to Billings and the musical style of the rest indicate that all twenty-four of the sacred pieces and probably one of the secular pieces as well were American in origin; 5) since only three of the twenty-four sacred pieces had appeared in print

Musical Magazine (New Haven: Amos Doolittle and Daniel Read, 1786-87). Two keyboard collections followed in 1787, William Brown, Three Rondos for the piano forte or harpsichord (Philadelphia: the author), and Alexander Reinagle, A Selection of the Most Favorite Scots Tunes with Variations for the Piano Forte or Harpsichord (Philadelphia: the author). In 1788 there appeared Stephen Sicard's 'The New Constitution March and Federal Minuet' (Philadelphia) and the ground-breaking work by Francis Hopkinson, Seven Songs (Philadelphia: J. Dobson), the first published collection of secular music composed by a native American. In the years after the appearance of Hopkinson's work, which followed closely the ratification of the Federal Constitution, a secular music industry took over the European sheet-music format and swiftly established itself in the United States. Growth before the very end of the century, however, was very slow: roughly ninety-five percent of the secular music published in eighteenth-century America was printed between the beginning of 1793 and the end of the century. It should also be noted that songsters, collections of song texts without music, were the chief means by which secular music circulated in eighteenth-century America. A bibliography of American songsters through 1820 by Irving Lowens will be published by the Society.

before the manuscript was copied, the rest must either have been noted down from manuscript copies or taken from the composer; 6) in all, fourteen of the twenty-four sacred pieces, including three attributed to Billings, were never published;² 7) of the ten pieces that did appear in print, substantial differences exist between printed and manuscript versions.

Thus the Waterhouse manuscript preserves a small repertory of unpublished, previously unknown eighteenth-century American psalm tunes, including several by William Billings. It preserves also some dated variants of published pieces. Finally, it suggests the possibility that 'Sukey' Heath obtained some of these tunes through William Billings himself.

Susanna Heath (Sukey was her family nickname) was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts, October 27, 1758, the first of four children of John Heath (1732-1804) and Susanna Craft Heath (1738-1808). The family moved to Brookline in 1760. There John Heath, apparently a yeoman of modest station, held the post of fence viewer in 1762. Frequent appearances of his name in Brookline town records in succeeding years indicate that he was an active participant in community affairs.

On June 5, 1783, Sukey, twenty-four years old, married Dr. John Goddard, and several days later the couple left for the groom's home in Portsmouth, N.H.⁶ Born in Brookline, Goddard (1756-1829) had graduated from Harvard in 1777 and

²Information on the publication history of the sacred music is taken from an unpublished thematic index of American sacred music through 1810, compiled by Richard Crawford. The secular music is covered by Sonneck and Upton, *Early Secular American Music*, and by Richard J. Wolfe, *Secular Music in America* 1801–1825 (New York: New York Public Library, 1964).

³Unless otherwise noted, information given below about the Heath family is taken from James M. and William F. Crafts, *The Crafts Family* (Northampton: Gazette Printing Co., 1893), pp. 157-62.

⁴By the Inhabitants of Brookline, *Muddy River & Brook Line Records* 1634-1838 (J. E. Farwell & Co., Printers, 1875), p. 203.

⁵John Heath's cousin, Gen. William Heath of Roxbury (1737-1814), served as a brigadier general under Washington in the Revolutionary War. See R[alph] V. H[arlow], 'Heath, William,' *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 490.

⁶Crafts, Crafts Family, p. 695.

studied medicine in Portsmouth. During a tour of duty as surgeon on an American warship he had been captured and released twice, jailed in the West Indies, and had suffered serious illness. Goddard was to enjoy a successful medical career, and he later served in the New Hampshire legislature. Sukey Heath Goddard died in Portsmouth on July 17, 1787, at the age of twenty-eight, ten days after bearing her third child.

Among the Heath papers is a fragmentary journal by the family's youngest child, Elizabeth ('Betsey,' 1769-1853). Not yet fourteen when her older sister was married, Betsey noted on June 5, 1783, in a brief description of the wedding day, 'Luck was here with his violin in the evening.' On June 9 a 'very respectable company... about forty in all,' drank tea at the Heaths', and Betsey recorded: 'two violins here in the evening. Danced till two o'clock.' Later the same year she wrote of some music-making of her own: 'called for Sally Jewett, and went to singing-school, all the treble came home' (November 11).

Resuming her journal in 1790 after a six-year break, Betsey mentioned dancing a number of times, and then on January 11, 1791, noted that she had 'Sung and acted Damon & Clora with Jo May' at the wedding of her brother Ebenezer ('Eben,' 1765-1845). She mentioned dancing again on January 13. She 'danced and sung after dinner on January 18. On January 26, at a large evening gathering in the Heath house, 'Bellstid & Granger,' professional musicians from Boston, played 'on the fiddle and...clarionet.' Betsey's journal, in short, provides glimpses of the important role of music in the Heaths' social life. Taken together with Sukey's tunebook, with its indications that Sukey and probably her brother Eben tried their hand at composition in the early 1780s, the journal clearly establishes the Heaths as a musical family.

Sukey Heath's tunebook, the Waterhouse manuscript, is

⁷Crafts, Crafts Family, p. 695. Subsequent references in this paragraph to Betsey Heath's Journal appear on pp. 695-99.

dated July 1, 1782, in the front. The music in the book is in two sections, pp. 1-18 containing twenty-four pieces and pp. 22-27 containing four secular songs. All of the dates given to pieces in the manuscript are earlier than the date in front. The first two items, pp. 1-2, were copied on May 30, 1780. Fair Hebe (p. 22) is dated August 1780 and General Wolfe October 21, 1780. The rest of the music dates from the next year. The British Muse was copied on February 28, then between March 8 and March 17 all of the music on pp. 4-18 was set down. A New Song (p. 27), copied on April 6, rounds out the collection.

The entire book seems to have been copied by the same hand. The calligraphy of the texts is identical. Variations in the musical handscript can be explained by the writer's gradual improvement. The notation of the pieces copied first, while legible, is rather awkward, with unorthodox and exaggeratedly slanted stemming, wispy eighth-note flags, and, in The British Muse, p. 26, uncertainty when the bass line goes below G. (Trying for an E below the staff three times, the writer notated D twice and F* once.) In contrast, the last pieces show a firm, more flowing notation, with stems straighter and consistently placed on the proper side of the note-head. By the time Sukey Heath finished her collection she possessed a neat, accurate musical hand.

Tables I-III summarize the content of the Waterhouse manuscript.

The Waterhouse manuscript is an effective reminder that music in the American colonies circulated in manuscript as well as in print. Manuscript circulation seems to have been especially important in the 1770s and early 1780s, when American composers began to contribute to a musical repertory essentially imported from Europe, and found that wartime conditions hindered publication. A graph tracing sacred music publications would show a gradual increase through the 1760s, a slight dip during the 1770s when shortages of paper and copper and un-

TABLEI

Waterhouse Manuscript: Sacred Music

page	Title & Meter	Attribution	Date Copied	Publication ⁸
11	ALBANY C.M.	Wm B		Billings 1770
2	BARRINGTON [L.M.]		5/30/1780	
12	BENNINGTON C.M.		- A	
15	BRADFORD C.M.			
11	BRATTLE STREET L.M.	Wm B		Billings 1770
8	Congress [C.M.]		3/10/1781	
17	DARTMOUTH C.M.		3/17/1781	
3	EUROPE [C.M.]	Wm Billi		Billings 1770
13	GERMANTOWN C.M.	WB	3/16/1781	
9	HACKERS HALL C.M.	Wm B		
1	HATFIELD C.M.	WB	5/30/1780	Law 1786; Shumway 1793; Psalm-Singer's Amusement
			0/10/1501	n.d.; Ingalls 1805
6	HOLLISTON [H.M.]	DII	3/10/1781	
7	LEXINGTON C.M.	EH	0/10/1001	
10	MAXWELL S.M.	OIL	3/12/1781	
4	Moriston L.M.	SH		Dilli 1770 Edmi
9	MORPHEUS L.M.	W. Billings		Billings 1779; Federal Harmony 1790, 91, 92, 93; French 1802
14	NEW HAVEN S.M.		3/16/1781	
12	NEW KITTERY C.M.		3/13/1781	
16	Рьумочтн [10.6.8.6.]	WB	3/17/1781	French 1802
13	RAYNHAM C.M.	WB		
4	SOLITUDE [L.M.]	LB	3/9/1781	Stone & Wood 1793; Psalm-
			*	Singer's Amusement n.d.
7	SPENCER C.M.			
18	VICTORY C.M.	Wm B		Billings 1794
5	WEYMOUTH S.M.	WB		Billings 1794

TABLE II Waterhouse Manuscript: Secular Music

page	Title & Attribution	First Line	Date Copied	Publication
26	BRITISH MUSE	Oh could the various force of sound	2/28/1781	Select Songster 1786; Belknap 1809
27	Corydon & Phyllis/ Arne	Ye shepherds so cheerful & gay	4/6/1781	
22	FAIR HEBE	Fair Hebe I loved with a cautious design	8/-/1780	
27	GENERAL WOLFE		10/21/1780	

⁸A list of publications cited is given at the end of the article.

TABLE III

Waterhouse Manuscript: Texts, p. 1-18

page	First line & Attribution	Source	Tune title
10 14	Cause us to hear with joy Come now my soul, my heart & tongue		MAXWELL New Haven
17	Let every mortal ear attend/Dr. Watts	Watts, Hymns I/7	DARTMOUTH
16	Lift up your heads ye everlasting doors	Fletcher? (see Julian, 1564 i)	Рьумоитн
4	Man has a soul of vast desire	Watts, Hymns II/146	Moriston
4	My flesh shall slumber in the ground	Watts, Psalm 47	SOLITUDE
15	O for a shout of sacred joy/Dr. Watts	Watts, Psalm 47	BRADFORD
5	Shall we go on to sin/D. W.	Watts, Hymns I/106	WEYMOUTH
9	Sleep downy sleep	Flatman, Poems	Morpheus
2	Stay my beloved with me here		BARRINGTON
13	Teach me the measure of my days	Watts, Psalm 39	RAYNHAM
1	Though beauty grace the comely face		HATFIELD
188	To thine almighty arm we owe	Watts, Psalm 18	VICTORY/CONGRESS
7	While shepherds watch/D. W.	Tate, Supplement	LEXINGTON
13	Why do we mourn departing friends/ Dr. W	Watts, Hymns II/3	GERMANTOWN
9	Ye people all with one accord	Sternhold & Hopkins, Ps. 47	HACKERS HALL
6	Ye tribes of Adam join/Dr. W	Watts, Psalm 148	Holliston

stable currency brought music publishing almost to a stand-still, and a sharp and continuous increase in the next decade, especially from 1783 when the treaty of peace was signed. Thus, at the time Sukey Heath copied her collection, music circulated in manuscript out of necessity. Composers apparently encouraged the practice. 'Many of my Musical friends in the Country, have taken Copies from this work,' wrote William Billings in the introduction to *The Singing Master's Assistant* (1778), obviously referring to manuscript copies of his work. Billings requested that any 'variation' that might have crept in through copying be corrected by consulting the published music. Oliver Brownson's *Select Harmony* (1783), carries a similar note: 'The Author having made alterations in some of the Tunes that were given out of his hands, desires that those

⁹ Billings, Singing Master's Assistant, p. [3].

who have received former Copies, would conform to this Publication.'10

It is clear, moreover, that in the 1770s and early 1780s composers could achieve a reputation without breaking into print. Solomon Howe's The Farmer's Evening Entertainment (1804) names as 'first Authors of Note in America, Anno. 1770...Mr. Wm. Billings and Capt. Abrm. Wood.'11 The pairing of Wood with Billings seems strange: the former's The New-England Psalm-Singer had appeared in 1770, but the earliest published piece by Wood, the psalm-tune Worcester, appeared in Andrew Law's Select Harmony, published in 1779. Only if one grants earlier manuscript circulation of Wood's music does Howe's claim for his priority make sense. Another composer who apparently first made a reputation through manuscript circulation was Timothy Swan. Around 1785 Oliver Brownson traveled to meet Swan. As Swan later recalled, 'After [we] had sung and conversed awhile, Brownson observed: Mr. Swan, I had formed an idea of your personal appearance but I find that I was wide of the mark-from your reputation as a composer, I supposed you to be a man well-stricken in years with a wig and a cocked hat.'12 Swan was twenty-eight when Brownson paid his visit, and though he had begun composing at seventeen, none of his music had been published until the year in which he and Brownson met.

Finally, the Waterhouse manuscript indicates also that individual tunes could achieve considerable popularity through manuscript circulation. New KITTERY must have been named to distinguish it from Billings's KITTERY, a fuging-tune. But Sukey Heath copied New KITTERY on March 13, 1781, and KITTERY itself was not printed until Brownson included it in

¹⁰ Oliver Brownson, Select Harmony (n.p., 1783), p. [1].

¹¹Solomon Howe, The Farmer's Evening Entertainment (Northampton: Andrew Wright for the author, 1804), p. [2].

¹²Quoted in Sterling E. Murray, 'The Life and Music of an Early American Composer: Timothy Swan (1758-1842)' (Master's thesis, University of Michigan, 1969, pp. 16-17.

his Select Harmony (1783) as Ketery. Billings himself first published the tune in his Suffolk Harmony (Boston, 1786). Apparently Kittery had become a well-known tune before it ever reached print.

As Table I shows, only four pieces in the Waterhouse manuscript were published before the manuscript was copied. Of the four only two could have been copied from the earlier printed source. Albany and Brattle Street resemble the versions in Billings's New-England Psalm-Singer, both however eliminating the 'choosing notes' (octave doublings in the bass of the printed version). The former also has three or four small variations in treble and bass voices. The latter differs more. Though the manuscript copy follows the printed version almost note-for-note through the first half, it eliminates the second half entirely. Europe is printed in the New-England Psalm-Singer, but as a fuging-tune in duple time; in the manuscript the fuge is gone, the meter is changed to triple, and the treble voice is altered. Morpheus shows changes of another kind. Printed as a sixteen-measure plain tune for four voices in Billings's Music in Miniature (Boston, 1779), it here becomes a fuging-tune for two voices with an eleven-measure contrapuntal section added after the cadence. The Waterhouse manuscript thus offers a neat illustration of the type of fugingtune that the English composer William Tans'ur describes in his Royal Melody Compleat, 3rd ed. (London, 1766): a choral psalm tune setting one stanza of text, followed by an optional 'fuging' section in which the last two lines of the stanza receive some sort of contrapuntal treatment. 13 In Music in Miniature, a supplement of textless tunes for the metrical psalters of the day, Billings removed fuges from some tunes he had first printed as fuging-tunes. Taken together with the printed versions of Europe and Morpheus, the Waterhouse manuscript shows the de-fuging/fuging process in action. And it pre-

¹³Tans'ur's description is quoted in Irving Lowens, Music and Musicians in Early America (New York: Norton, 1964), p. 245n.

serves a lovely fuging section for Morpheus, a tune that was printed only as a plain psalm tune.

Tables I and II also show that six pieces in the Waterhouse manuscript were published at some time after Sukey Heath made her copies. VICTORY and WEYMOUTH were printed in one of Billings's own collections, but not until 1794. This demonstrated lapse in time between the composition of the tunes and their publication casts a suggestive ray of light on a puzzling aspect of Billings's career. From his debut in print, Billings kept the public informed that his prolific output exceeded his means for distribution. The New-England Psalm-Singer (1770) mentions a second 'volume' of original compositions, mostly anthems, withheld from publication for lack of paper and capital;14 The Singing Master's Assistant (1778) refers again to the 'volume'; 15 and finally Billings identifies The Psalm-Singer's Amusement (1781) as 'a Part of the Book of Anthems, which I have so long promised,' explaining that printing costs still prohibited publication of the whole.16

In 1791 Billings tried to sell some of his music to the Boston publishers Thomas and Andrews, and the Boston organist Hans Gram advised the publishers to make the purchase. Ebenezer Andrews reported to partner Isaiah Thomas that Billings 'has got 200 pages by him, that never was published, 9 or 10 tunes of which Gram has played on his Harpsichord, and thinks very good.' It is possible that the 200 pages represented new works written by Billings in the later 1780s—he had published no tunebooks since *The Suffolk Harmony* (Boston, 1786). However, it seems more likely that at least some of the 200 pages of unpublished music Billings was trying to peddle in 1791 dated back to the early part of his career. In 1794 Thomas and

¹⁴Billings, The New-England Psalm-Singer (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1770), p. [2].

¹⁵ Billings, Singing Master's Assistant, p. [3].

¹⁶ Billings, Psalm-Singer's Amusement, p. 2.

¹⁷See David McCormick, 'Oliver Holden, Composer and Anthologist' (S.M.D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, 1963), pp. 78-79.

Andrews brought out The Continental Harmony, devoted entirely to Billings's own music, almost all of it previously unpublished. It is a matter of considerable interest that at least two of the pieces in The Continental Harmony, VICTORY and WEYMOUTH, had been composed more than a dozen years earlier. It also raises the suspicion that other pieces in the collection date from this earlier period as well. Any additional examples that can be so traced will strengthen the possibility that The Continental Harmony—which contains seventeen anthems and a set-piece, and thus suits Billings's 'Book of Anthems' label—is that mysterious unpublished volume Billings kept mentioning, supplemented with other pieces and musically reworked. Thus, the Waterhouse manuscript suggests that the repertory of Billings's Continental Harmony might fit the description Charles Ives was later to give his 114 Songs (1922). 'I have not written a book at all,' Ives explained. 'I have merely cleaned house, '18

In the Waterhouse manuscript VICTORY and WEYMOUTH share with GERMANTOWN, HACKERS HALL, HATFIELD, MOR-PHEUS, PLYMOUTH, and RAYNHAM—all of the pieces attributed in the manuscript to Billings, except for those printed in The New-England Psalm-Singer—the disadvantage of being set for only tenor and bass instead of the usual four-voice chorus. The Waterhouse versions may represent some pieces in their most complete form at the time of copying. It seems more likely, however, that they preserve only the bottom two voices of an original four-voice texture, since all of the 300-odd pieces Billings published were set for four voices. At least one piece is demonstrably incomplete. In the second system of Billings's PLYMOUTH the tenors sing, 'Who is this King of Glory, who?,' and silence follows—except that the words of the answer by the absent trebles are cued in. There is every reason to think that the rest of the Billings tunes, like PLYMOUTH, are preserved here in only partial form.

¹⁸Charles Ives, 114 Songs (privately printed, 1922), preface.

Among the four other pieces that were later printed, PLYMочтн, attributed to Billings, remains something of a puzzle because Billings never printed it himself. The only publication of the tune discovered so far is in Jacob French's Harmony of Harmony, issued in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1802, two vears after the composer's death, and printed there as PLYMоитн New attributed to Billings. The Waterhouse version differs in certain small details, but its layout and length correspond with the version French published. Solitude, attributed by Sukey Heath to L.B., appears in Joseph Stone and Abraham Wood's The Columbian Harmonist (n.p., 1793), attributed to Babcock. The manuscript and printed versions correspond, except that the former lacks a counter (alto voice). The composer's identity remains a question. Samuel Babcock of Watertown, Massachusetts, who published The Middlesex Harmony (Boston, 1795) is a possibility. A better guess would seem to be Lemuel Badcock, a Massachusetts singing-master who was active around 1780.19 The Psalm-Singer's Amusement (n.p., n.d.), the only other collection known to contain Soli-TUDE, attributes it to L. Babcock. The secular and surely European British Muse appeared in Chauncey Langdon's Select Songster (New Haven, 1786). There it is set in G major instead of A major. The vocal line of the two versions is the same, but Sukey Heath's bass-line, articulated by rests and continuing quarter-note motion at cadences, is clearly written for an instrument, while Langdon's could be sung as well as played.

The remaining tune in the Waterhouse manuscript that was later to be published is perhaps the most interesting. Hatfield, attributed to W[illiam] B[illings] and dated May 30, 1780, carries the earliest date in the book. Though Billings never published Hatfield himself, other compilers did, and

¹⁹Alan C. Buechner, 'Yankee Singing Schools and the Golden Age of Choral Music in New England, 1760-1800' (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1960), Appendix C, reproduced from Ebenezer Parkman, *Diary* (Westborough, 1899), a description of a singing-school directed in 1777-78 at Westborough, Mass., by Lemuel Badcock.

though it enjoyed only modest popularity in the composer's day, it was included by the 1860s in *The Sacred Harp* and remains in print to this day as part of that venerable and honored repertory. In the Waterhouse version the tune begins in a three-voice setting: treble, tenor, bass; but after the second phrase the treble breaks off and tenor and bass voices complete the piece. (A staff where a counter—alto—could have been written stands empty.) 'Though beauty grace the comely face, /With rosy white and red', the text begins, suggesting a secular poem, though the 'comely face' in question turns out to belong to Absalom, David's son.

HATFIELD made its debut in print as a psalm tune, not a secular song. Andrew Law's The Rudiments of Music, 2nd ed. ([1786]) prints a setting of Watts's Psalm 39, 'Teach me the measure of my days.' The version in Law is unattributed.20 Moreover, it differs markedly from the Waterhouse version: it is set for four voices instead of two or three; it is doubled in length from four lines to eight; and the bold melodic curve of the original is tempered—the first four phrases, which fill a tenth in the manuscript, span only a sixth in Law's Rudiments. This narrowing of the tune's melodic compass was made necessary by its rhythmic transformation. The Waterhouse version begins in duple meter, then gravitates toward triple at midpoint. The version in Law replaces this unsettled swing with a decisive dactylic motive that begins three of the tune's four large phrases. Most later compilers retained the declamatory compactness of the version Law printed.

In Shumway's *The American Harmony* (Philadelphia, 1793), the next printing of Hatfield, the tenor and bass lines are almost identical with the version in Law's *Rudiments*. Shumway's top two voices, however, are entirely different from Law's, and his text is a hymn by Watts, 'Naked as from the earth we

²⁰Law printed at least two versions of the *The Rudiments*, 2nd ed. The one containing Hatfield survives in only a single known copy, owned by the New York Public Library. See Richard Crawford, *Andrew Law*, *American Psalmodist* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp. 33, 293, 315.

came.' Moreover, Shumway claimed Hatfield, albeit wrongly, to be a brand new piece printed here for the first time, and he identified the composer only as 'Unknown.' There is no reason to suspect Shumway of deviousness. The first-printing claim and the composer's anonymity suggest either that Hatfield came into his hands in manuscript, or that he took the tune, and perhaps the bass as well, from an oral source, and added the top two voices himself.

HATFIELD was printed twice more during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Unlike the two eighteenth-century printings of the tune, both were attributed to Billings. Furthermore, both show considerable differences from any earlier printed version, and both have new and different texts. In the undated Psalm-Singer's Amusement the dactylic rhythmic motive is replaced, creating a somewhat smoother rhythmic flow. And in Jeremiah Ingalls's The Christian Harmony (Exeter, 1805) HATFIELD appears as THE TRUE PENITENT in a threevoice setting that eliminates the counter and introduces more jarring dissonances than any earlier version. No attempt has been made to trace printings of the tune between the second and sixth decades of the century. It appears, however, in The Sacred Harp, enlarged ed. (Philadelphia: S.C. Collins, 1860) in a three-voice setting resembling Ingalls's in rhythm, but with slight differences in the melody, larger differences in the bass, and a very different treble. The Sacred Harp's version is called HATFIELD, the only attribution being, 'Arranged by B. F. White.' The text is the one printed in Shumway's American Harmony.

From the publication of the first instructional tunebooks in the 1720s New England psalmody remained essentially a written tradition in which tunes circulated as polyphonic settings fixed in notation. In contrast, the Southern shape-note tradition which began early in the nineteenth century relied more heavily on oral circulation. Southern compilers printed some Northern tunes intact, but they also took originally secular folk songs from oral tradition, harmonized them, and added sacred words. Thus, secular origin and varying settings were more common in the South than in the North. Ingalls's Christian Harmony, though published in the North, has been recognized as the earliest published prototype of the Southern tunebook, for it is devoted mostly to folk hymns.21 Given the secular tinge of the text in the Waterhouse version of HAT-FIELD, the changing melody, rhythm, harmonization, texts, and attributions in subesquent printings of the tune, HATFIELD has all the earmarks of a folk hymn: an originally secular tune which circulated orally and was eventually notated and set to sacred words. It is possible, in fact, that the version Sukey Heath copied in 1780 and attributed to William Billings had been set down but not composed by Billings. If this were true, HATFIELD in Law's Rudiments (1786) can be proposed as the earliest printed American folk hymn. The Waterhouse version of HATFIELD raises important questions that only further research can settle. At the very least, it preserves in early written form a new and specific link between William Billings and contemporary Southern shape-note singing.

The provenance of the eighteen compositions in the Waterhouse manuscript that have not been found in printed form is no great puzzle. Sukey Heath provided attributions for six. Germantown, Hackers Hall, and Raynham were assigned to Billings ('W.B.' or 'Wm. B.'), the secular Corydon & Phyllis to the British composer Thomas Augustine Arne, Lexington to E.H. (probably Eben Heath), and Moriston to S.H. (Sukey Heath). The musical style of the remaining twelve discloses their origin. The secular Fair Hebe, though not provided with a bass, has the smooth Italianate lilt of British theatre or parlor music of the time. The secular General Wolfe, to-

²¹See, e.g., George Pullen Jackson, *White and Negro Spirituals* (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J. J. Augustin, [1943]), pp. 69-73. For commentary on differences between Northern and Southern practice, see Rachel Augusta Brett Harley, 'Ananias Davisson: Southern Tune-Book Compiler (1780-1857)' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1972), especially pp. 63-64, 132ff.

gether with the tunes by the Heaths and the rest of the unattributed, unpublished music, on the other hand, is unmistakably American. The voice-leading in this music pays no heed to the principles shared by trained Western European musicians of the latter part of the century. Moreover, harmonic intervals considered dissonant in European style and requiring special treatment there erupt unexpectedly and constantly throughout most of these pieces. Finally, the unidentified tunes lack the European sense of harmonic direction. British psalm tunes of the time use harmonic formulas to keep the ear moving steadily toward some tonal goal; American pieces achieve that sense only intermittently if at all, and the unidentified Waterhouse pieces are a case in point.²²

To the modern ear, the American compositional style that developed in the late eighteenth century sounds like an alternative, primitive style rather than a failed, flawed one. The oftenincomplete understanding that eighteenth-century American psalmodists had of the principles of European harmony contributes to the rugged and unusual beauty of their music. Usually self-taught or educated as musicians briefly in singing schools, American composers harmonized their melodies by feel rather than by precept. Their musical instincts were often excellent, but it is fair to call their grasp of harmony primitive—Billings is excepted from this judgment—a fact not at all surprising, because the figured-bass practice in which orthodox European harmonic style was rooted and which European musicians understood as if by instinct was never really grasped by American psalmodists until the very end of the century.

Among the anonymous Waterhouse pieces are examples of American musical primitivism in unusually raw form. To cite just one example, Maxwell is surely the strangest piece in the collection. Maxwell contains many harmonic inconsistencies, some of them produced by moments of heterophony—two or more voices simultaneously performing different versions

²²See Crawford, Andrew Law, pp. 255-266.

of essentially the same melody. Yet the most remarkable thing about Maxwell is its florid character, and especially the vocal flourishes ending the first three phrases. Rather than a composed piece, Maxwell seems a transcription of a standard psalm tune embellished by the performers. Students of American music will recall the controversy over singing that occurred in Boston around 1720, when reformers attacked the undisciplined improvisational style in which many congregations sang psalms, recommending that people be taught to read music so that they could sing together. Maxwell sounds like the kind of music the Boston reformers were complaining about.

Although many of the Waterhouse pieces may seem primitive in the harmonic dimension, they show considerable imagination and variety in the way they set texts, a point calling for some background explanation. Until nearly the end of the eighteenth century American psalmody relied for texts upon three metrical psalters, The Whole Book of Psalmes (Cambridge, Mass., 1640), from its third ed. (1651) called The Psalms Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, and best known as the Bay Psalm Book, Brady and Tate's A New Version of the Psalms of David (London, 1696), and Watts's The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament (London, 1719). The psalms in these works were versified almost entirely in three metrical patterns, each with four-line stanzas: Common Meter, abbreviated C.M., in which lines of eight and six syllables alternated (8.6.8.6.), Long Meter, or L.M., (8.8.8.8.), and Short Meter, S.M., (6.6.8.6.). Because of this lack of metrical variety a small stock of tunes, including one in each of the basic meters and one for each of the more unusual meters, was sufficient for singing everything that was to be sung. Thus the practice of psalmody through much of the century was essentially a matching operation. One learned a tune or two for each meter and then matched texts to them. Tunes conforming exactly to one

²³A lively description can be found in Gilbert Chase, *America's Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), pp. 22-40.

of the metrical patterns are called plain tunes, and plain tunes provided the written music of American psalmody until around 1760. Most tunebooks published in America before 1760—the Bay Psalm Book from the 9th edition (1698) on, Tufts's *Introduction* (3rd ed., 1723 et seq.), James Turner's tunes (1752), Thomas Johnston's tunes (1755)—are tune supplements, collections of textless tunes designed to be bound in at the back of metrical psalters. The meters of texts and tunes were labeled; the singer made the connection. And unless the singer knew either the text or the tune and was then able to focus his attention on one or the other, he was bound to have difficulty coordinating the two. The physical arrangement of the tune supplement did not encourage the learning of new music. 25

When William Billings broke into print in 1770, his creative act was one of unprecedented boldness, but his musical imagination remained within the confines of the earlier psalm-tune tradition. Of the 118 settings of metrical texts in his New-England Psalm-Singer, 110 are plain tunes, that is, settings of a single psalm or hymn stanza without word repetition or any deviation from the textual meter, and most appear without texts, just as in a tune supplement. One of the many reasons Billings's next tunebook, The Singing Master's Assistant (1778), is so important is that it was the first New England collection, and one of the earliest American tunebooks in which each piece was underlaid with a stanza of text. The presence of a text with music is crucial for the notion of a psalm-tune as a musical composition, a setting of a particular text, rather than as a piece of musical whole-cloth suited equally well to any one of dozens of psalms and hymns. Of course, all the tunes in The Singing Master's Assistant were not bound inextricably

²⁴Allen P. Britton, 'Theoretical Introduction in American Tune-Books to 1800' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1949), pp. 124-126 describes and enumerates American-published tune supplements.

²⁵Tune supplements continued to be published into the 1780s. Later examples are Daniel Bayley, *The Psalm-Singer's Assistant* ([1764?] and later), Bayley, *The Essex Harmony* (1770 and later), Billings, *Music in Miniature* (1779), Law, *A Select Number of Plain Tunes* ([1781]), and the anonymous *A New Collection of Plain Tunes* ([1784?]).

with the texts to which Billings set them there. But some were, as a glance at some figures shows. The Singing Master's Assistant contained sixty-one settings of metrical text. Of these only thirty-eight were plain tunes. In setting the other twentythree, Billings composed his way out of the metrical mold of the text by repeating words or drawing them out, or by introducing imitative or fuging sections. In composing such pieces, Billings often took his cue from the text he was setting. Certain musical gestures were used to express certain words, and the resulting text-music integration linked some tunes so firmly to some texts that they seem inappropriate for any other. The inclusion of texts and the setting of them as something other than plain tunes were both symptoms of the growth of the repertory of psalmody in the 1760s and 1770s. They were symptoms as well of Billings's growing creative boldness, a trend in which he was followed by other American psalmodists.26

From this perspective, a look at the music in the Waterhouse manuscript not by Billings—the anonymous pieces, the tunes by Badcock and the Heaths—is instructive. Several are simply plain tunes, either textless or with partial text. Such tunes as BENNINGTON, NEW KITTERY, SPENCER, and Sukey's Moriston are plain tunes in the traditional tune supplement mold. New HAVEN does have a rhythmic broadening at the cadence which sets it apart, and Badcock's Solitude seems linked to its text by mood and title. Setting aside MAXWELL, which has its own peculiarities, the rest are remarkable for their rhythmic variety. DARTMOUTH is a fuging-tune in which a chordal beginning in triple meter gives way to an incisive duple fuge. BARRINGTON follows the same rhythmic plan, though its concluding duple section is less clearly imitative than DARTMOUTH. In BRADFORD and Congress an opening section in triple meter is followed by one in compound duple. There and in Holliston, where a

²⁶Billings's treatment of his texts will be discussed in David P. McKay and Richard Crawford, *William Billings of Boston*, 18th-Century Composer, to be published in 1974 or 1975 by Princeton University Press.

section in duple meter follows a triple-time beginning, an impressive and unexpected acceleration is achieved. In Lexington, which begins and ends in triple meter, the third phrase is in duple, apparently because the composer (Eben Heath) thought that rendered the prosody more successfully.

The music of the Waterhouse manuscript demonstrates that in the early 1780s Americans who may not have had any aspirations at all toward musical professionalism were composing sacred pieces of their own, some bound by the time-honored meters of Anglo-American psalmody, but some reflecting the trend toward a more active musical imagination and closer integration of text and music. Sukey Heath left no hint who might have composed a third of this music, but it is significant that even some of the anonymous pieces which were never printed show so active a declamatory imagination.

Exactly where Sukey Heath obtained the music is the chief mystery of the Waterhouse manuscript. That at least some of it came from William Billings himself is a real possibility. The best evidence for contact is that so large a proportion of the manuscript is given over to pieces by Billings—pieces in versions not available in printed sources. Billings taught singingschools in Boston and its environs, including Weymouth, Stoughton, Needham, and Dover, all farther from his home neighborhood than Brookline, throughout his life. His activities in 1780-81 are only sketchily documented. In 1780 he bought a house on Newbury Street, Boston. In February 1781 his wife gave birth to twins. In November he issued the Psalm-Singer's Amusement from his house in Boston. And at some time during the same year Draper and Folsom published the third edition of his Singing Master's Assistant in Boston. Thus Billings's biography does nothing to confirm or to rule out a sojourn in Brookline.27 Though it is unlikely that Sukey Heath

²⁷See McKay and Crawford, William Billings, for documentation of the biographical details.

would have been Billings's pupil at a Brookline singing-school in 1780-81,²⁸ it may be that he taught there and that, as a devotee of music, Sukey sought him out and obtained the music from him personally. The possibility remains, as well, that there was no contact, that Sukey got the Billings tunes and the rest of the music from other sources, such as manuscripts or other Brookline residents interested in music.

American musical imprints of the eighteenth century preserve a large repertory which only recently has begun to receive the serious study it merits. The Waterhouse manuscript is a timely reminder that printed music tells only a part of the story, that beneath the relatively ordered and apparently selfsufficient surface of the imprints lies a realm of musical activity penetrable only through a conjunction of printed and manuscript materials. As one probes more deeply, one uncovers new layers that bring with them a new perspective. From this vantage point Billings, Daniel Read, Oliver Holden, and the better-known, more prolific composer-compilers loom as giants. Lesser-knowns such as Lewis Edson, Justin Morgan, Oliver Brownson seem important figures. Sukey and Eben Heath and their anonymous compatriots (neighbors, perhaps) whose musical commitment included composing if not publication, add another, perhaps previously unexpected, dimension to our understanding of how firmly American psalmody was rooted in experience. A tradition of sacred music in which participants were both composers and believers arose from the very center of the community.

²⁸At first glance the dates in Sukey Heath's copybook might suggest that she attended a singing-school in March 1781, and that her extended effort in copying music at that time coincided with the duration of the school. Several facts argue against that suggestion. For one thing, Sukey had copied four pieces before March 1781, proving that she knew musical notation well before March. That skill would set her apart from most singing scholars, who were beginners in the art. Another objection is the presence of the tune Moriston, apparently Sukey's own. It is unlikely that a novice singing scholar would so soon in her training produce a composition fully harmonized for four voices. Finally, in March 1781 Sukey Heath was a mature young woman of 22, well beyond the adolescent age at which most young New Englanders attended singing-schools. (Two years later, Betsey Heath, age 13, was attending a Brookline singing-school.)

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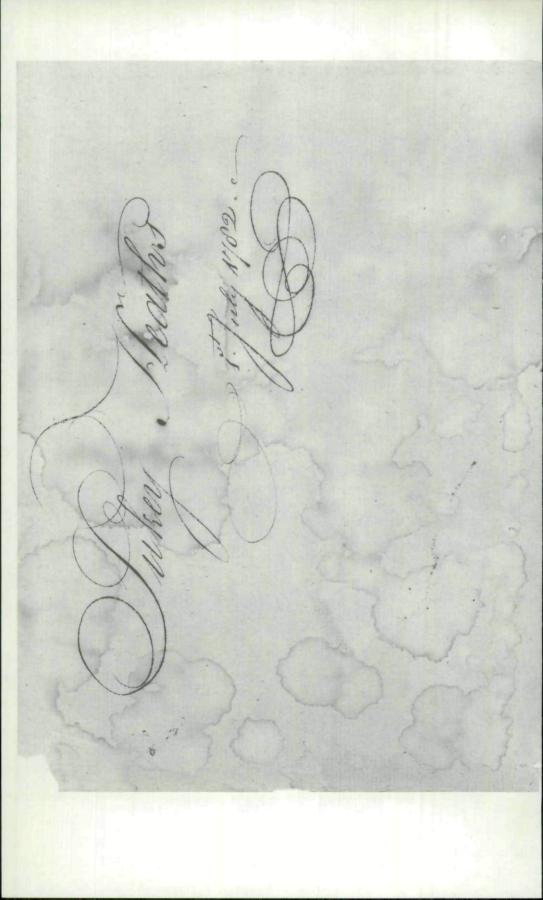
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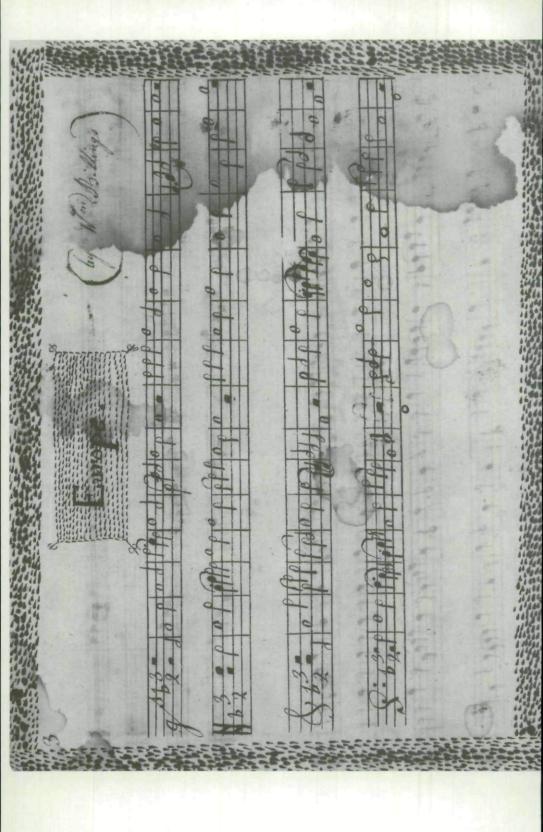


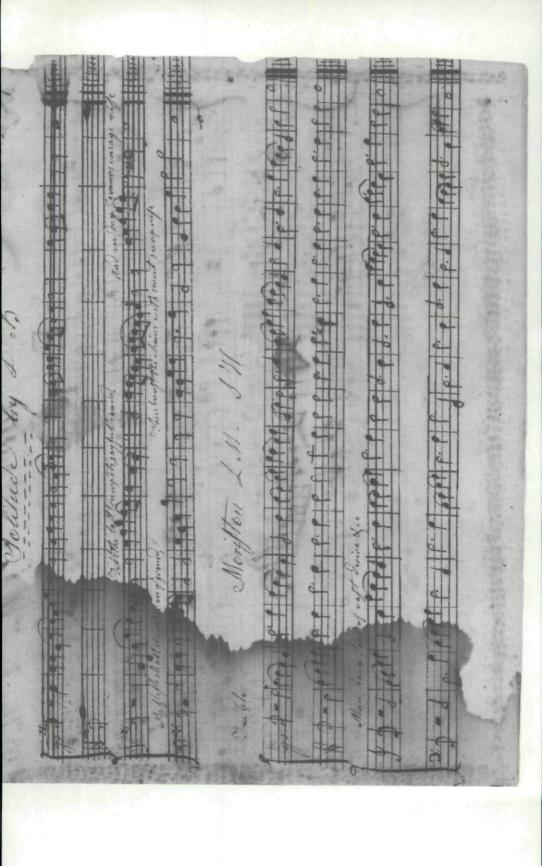


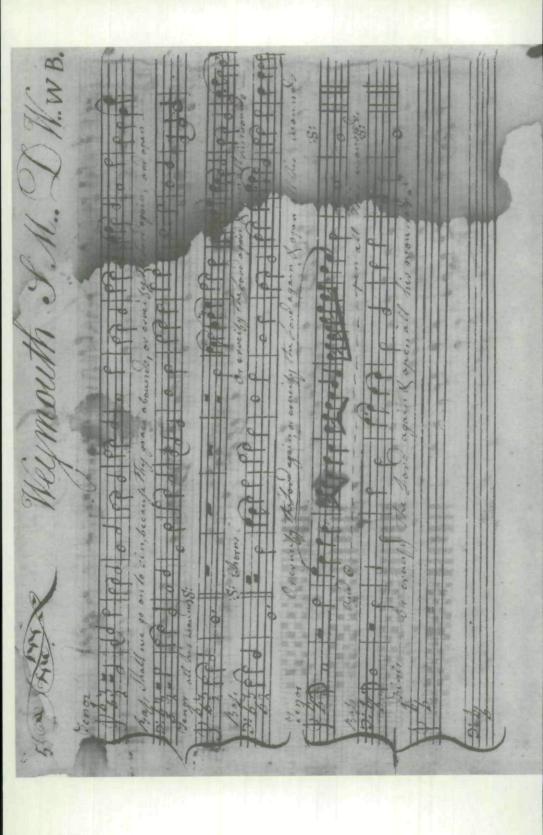
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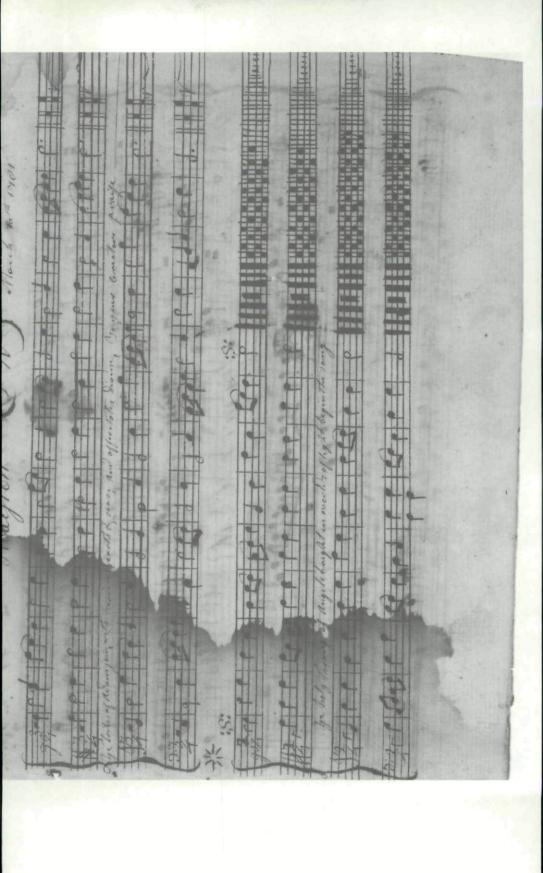
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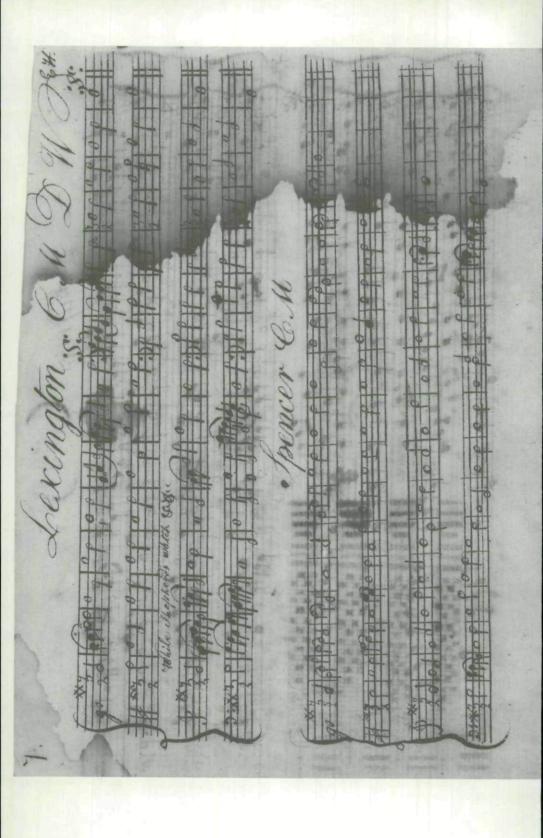


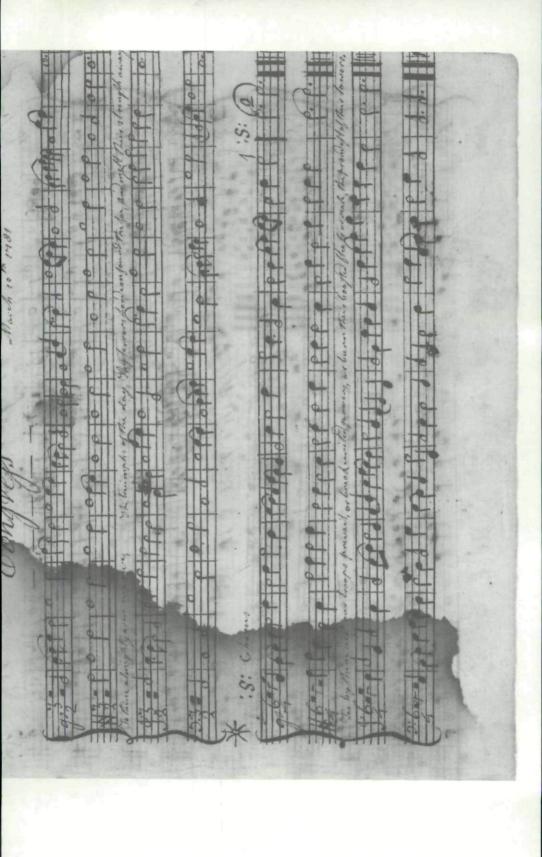


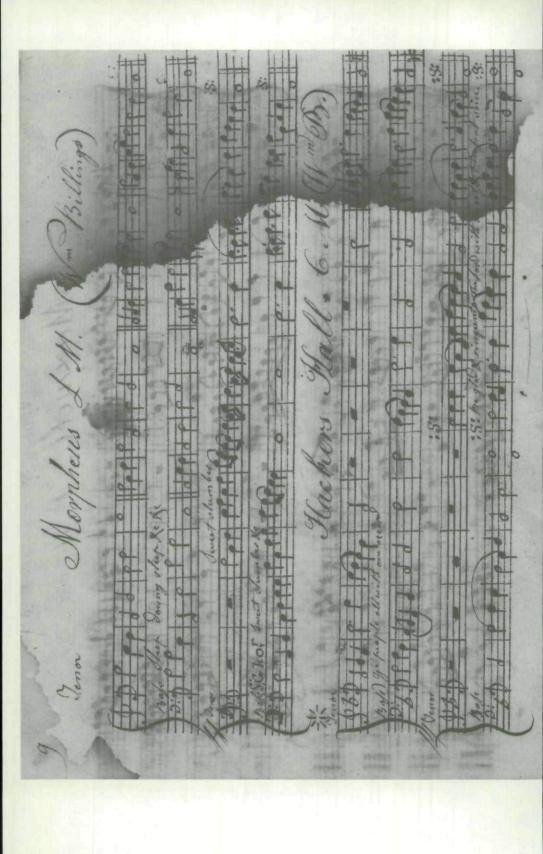




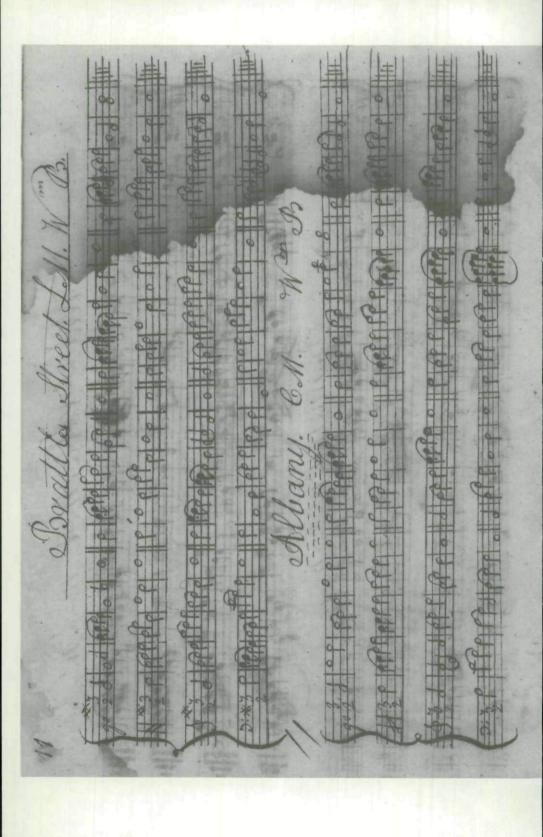




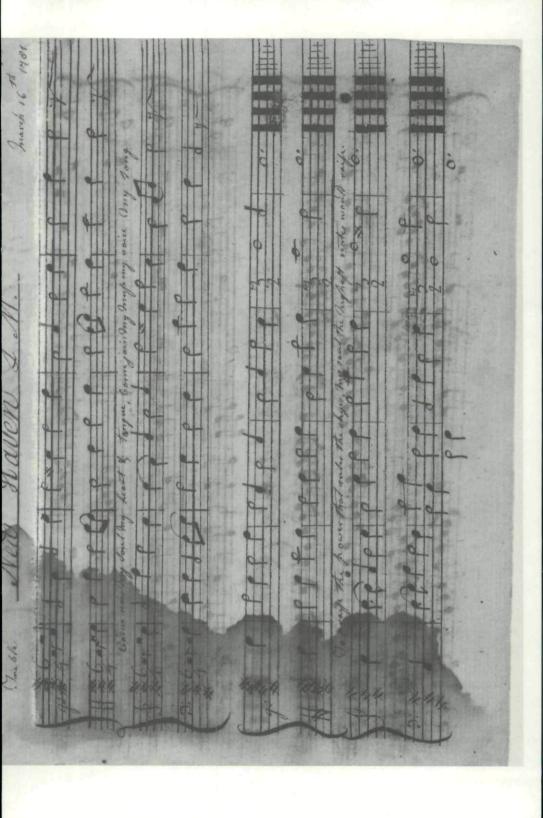


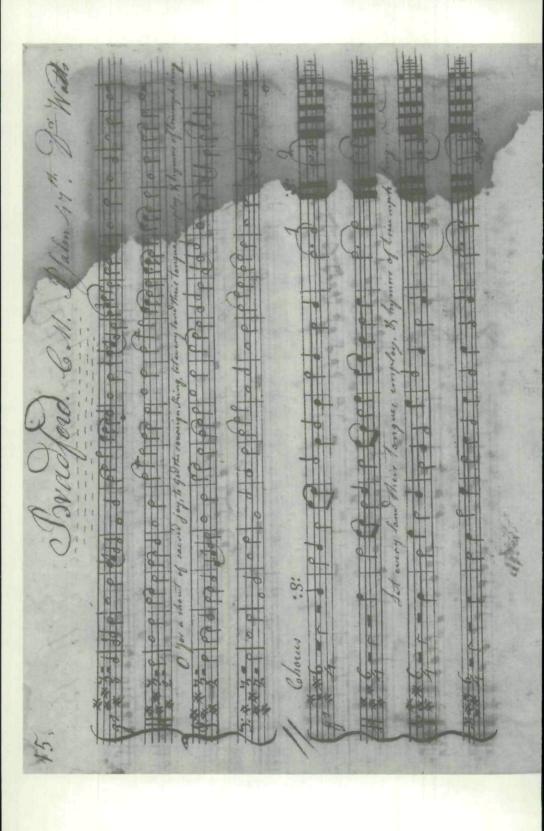


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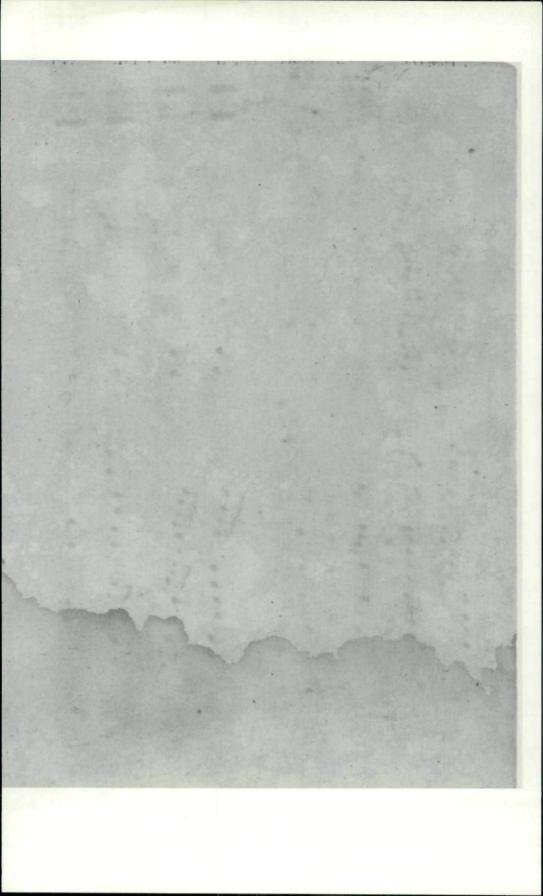


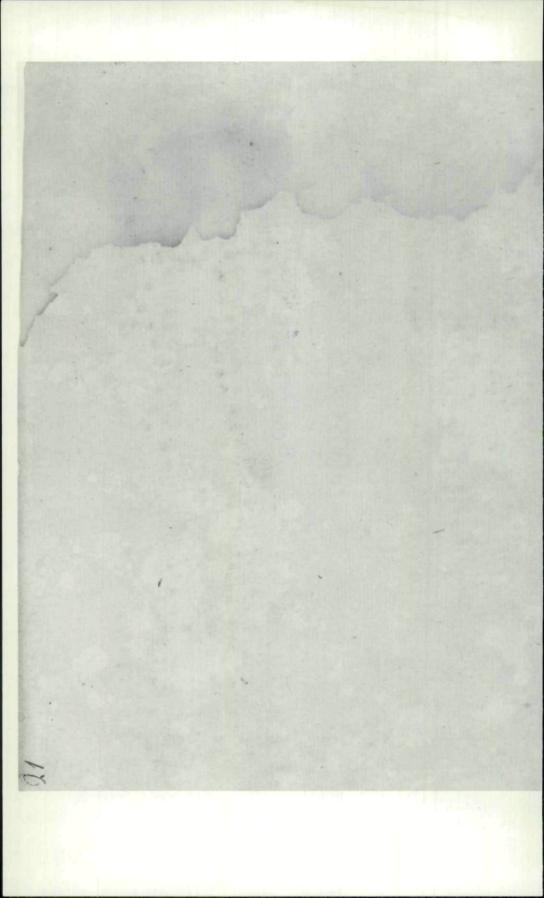
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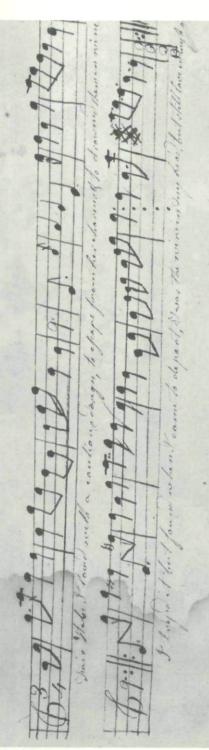
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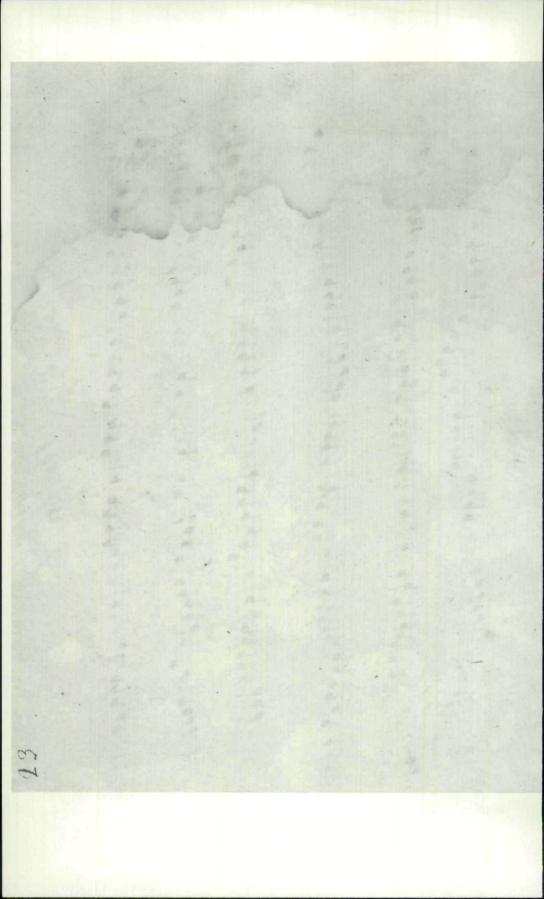
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