

*Set to Music:*  
*The Engravers, Artists, and Lithographers*  
*of New Orleans Sheet Music*

FLORENCE M. JUMONVILLE

FROM THE TIME the city of New Orleans was founded in 1718, the procession of its history has marched to the beat of music. It was taught in a school founded by missionaries in 1725, and in the archives of the Ursuline nuns is a manuscript volume containing religious music composed in 1736 in the Crescent City to commemorate the Lenten season. The first documented performance of an opera occurred in 1796, and during the nineteenth century New Orleanians sustained a self-supporting resident opera company that provided some of the best opera available in America. At the French Opera House and other theaters and concert halls, throngs sought admittance. Historian John Smith Kendall claimed that 'on opera nights crowds competed for the upper, cheaper galleries at the Opera House so vigorously that coats were torn, hats crushed, and tempers ruffled; and then, ensconced in the coveted locations, sat for hours entranced, listening to the music with tears of delight streaming unashamedly down their faces.'<sup>1</sup>

1. Alfred E. Lemmon, 'Te Deum Laudamus: Music in St. Louis Cathedral from 1725 to 1844,' in Glenn R. Conrad, ed., *Cross, Crozier, and Crucible: A Volume Celebrating the Bicentennial of a Catholic Diocese in Louisiana* ([New Orleans]: Archdiocese of New Orleans in Cooperation with the Center for Louisiana Studies, 1993), 490; Henry A. Kmen, 'Singing and Dancing in New Orleans: A Social History of the Birth and Growth of Balls and Opera, 1791-1841' (Ph.D. diss., Tulane University, 1961), iv, 92, 98-99; John Smith

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After the United States bought the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803, enterprising Americans, lured by the prospect of opportunity, poured into the newly acquired region. The population, further swelled by emigrants from Santo Domingo and other countries, soared from approximately 7,000 in 1803 to 12,000 by 1806, and had doubled within four years.<sup>2</sup> The newcomers flooding onto the docks and streets of New Orleans included composers and musicians who would contribute to the city's musical heritage and persons who would aid their efforts by facilitating the physical production of sheet music that the composers wrote and the musicians played. Among the latter were Henri and Clementine Wehrmann, little more than newlyweds, who arrived from Paris in the fall of 1849 after a voyage of forty-eight days.<sup>3</sup> Because of this couple, the history of sheet music in New Orleans should be dated 'b.w.' and 'a.w.'—'Before Wehrmann' and 'After Wehrmann,' for she was an engraver and he a printer and lithographer who, during the next fifty years, individually or together would produce an estimated 8,000 pieces of sheet music.<sup>4</sup> Their contribution was substantial because their firm was the first to concentrate on the publication of music.

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Kendall, 'New Orleans' Musicians of Long Ago,' *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 31 (January 1948), 130-31 (quotation).

2. These statistics appear in Robert Clemens Reinders, 'A Social History of New Orleans, 1850-1860' (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1957), 6-7. Other estimates of the population in 1803 and 1806 vary.

3. 'Golden Wedding,' *New Orleans Times-Democrat* (October 23, 1898). The precise date of the Wehrmanns' arrival is not known, but family records in the possession of their granddaughter, Lise Wehrmann Wells of New Orleans, state that their first child, Henriette, was born in Paris on August 22, 1849. Considering the length of the voyage and assuming that Henriette was at least two weeks old when the family left France, they could not have arrived before late October.

4. John Smith Kendall quotes this estimate without citing his source ('Musicians of Long Ago,' 148). It has been repeated, apparently uncritically, by Peggy C. Boudreaux, 'Music Publishing in New Orleans in the Nineteenth Century' (M.A. thesis, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1977), 1, and in *Encyclopaedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918*, ed. John A. Mahé and Rosanne McCaffrey (New Orleans: Historic New Orleans Collection, 1987), 405. I have examined over 1,200 pieces to which the Wehrmanns contributed the music, the cover, or both. Based on the plate numbers which appear on many of those pieces, it can be determined that the Wehrmanns engraved between 4,500 and 5,000 pieces that bear plate numbers. A substantial quantity lack plate numbers, and it is indeed likely that another 3,000 pieces or more could have been pro-

As secular music became increasingly popular in the 1700s, a growing demand developed for sheet music, which provided the directions aspiring musicians needed. Sheet music publishing emerged in America during the latter half of the eighteenth century and by the late 1780s had been securely established in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charleston. As the frontier moved westward, sheet music publishers and dealers followed it to Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, St. Louis, and other towns both small and large—including New Orleans.<sup>5</sup> Before the local production of sheet music began, the names of Crescent City music sellers appeared as secondary imprints on pieces of sheet music engraved and published elsewhere. This practice kept New Orleanians in contact with musical trends in other major cities and continued well into the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

Conversely, publishers in other cities participated as secondary publishers of music that began to issue from the Crescent City in the 1850s. The earliest dated piece discovered thus far that bears a New Orleans imprint is 'Bounding Billows,' copyrighted on May 24, 1827, by Philadelphia publisher George Willig and sold in New Orleans by Emile Johns, who had begun selling sheet music the previous year.<sup>7</sup>

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duced by the Wehrmanns. The pieces I have seen come from the substantial holdings of the Historic New Orleans Collection, the Louisiana Collection at Howard-Tilton Memorial Library at Tulane University (New Orleans), and Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge), as well as two small collections owned privately.

5. Richard F. French, 'The Dilemma of the Music Publishing Industry,' in Paul Henry Lang, ed., *One Hundred Years of Music in America* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1961), 173; Richard J. Wolfe, *Early American Music Engraving and Printing: A History of Music Publishing in America from 1787 to 1825 with Commentary on Earlier and Later Practices* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 38; *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, s.v. 'Publishing and printing of music.'

6. Boudreaux, 'Music Publishing,' 102. See, for example, 'Donna Ada's Polka' by T. M. Brown, which was published in New York in 1873 by Wm. A. Pond & Co., in Chicago by Root & Lewis, in San Francisco by M. Gray, in Pittsburgh by H. Kleber & Bro., in Milwaukee by H. N. Hempsted, and in New Orleans by Louis Grunewald. More research into this cooperative publishing and distribution is needed.

7. John H. Baron, 'Paul Emile Johns of New Orleans: Tycoon, Musician, and Friend of Chopin,' in International Musicological Society, *Report of the Eleventh Congress* (Copenhagen: International Musicological Society, 1972), 246-50.



Lithography, introduced in the United States soon after 1800 and used extensively after 1825, freed printers from the restrictions of traditional engraving and typography. The process had reached New Orleans by 1822, but fifteen years passed before it became firmly ensconced. In 1837 the bilingual newspaper *L'Abeille* (*The Bee*), heralding lithography as 'one of the brilliant discoveries of the age,' established a lithographic department from which a variety of lithographs and sheet music began to emerge.<sup>8</sup> 'Le doute,' a romance that apparently was issued in association with the January 21, 1838, issue of a weekly periodical entitled *La Créole*, is the earliest dated New Orleans-produced sheet music. Its cover was executed by local printers Jerome Bayon and Justin Sollée, but the music itself was lithographed by *The Bee*, which provided both music and cover for future issues.<sup>9</sup>

Others hastened to practice this new art. Emile Johns, who began to sell sheet music published in France and the northeastern United States in 1826, opened a printing office in New Orleans in 1834. With the advent of lithography, he established one of the first firms in the Crescent City. Born in Cracow and trained in Vienna as a concert pianist, he migrated to New Orleans in 1818 at the age of twenty to pursue a musical career. It took a different form than he had expected. E. Johns & Company, music sellers and stationers, was established in 1830, and he opened a printing office in 1834 to which he soon added lithography. Since Johns was active as a composer, it is not surprising that he would produce sheet music. 'Hark Maties Hark' is the only extant piece bearing his own imprint as a lithographer. The rest of the music that he composed or published was printed by other lithographers.<sup>10</sup>

8. 'Lithography at the Bee Office,' *New Orleans Bee*, April 5, 1837; Priscilla O'Reilly, 'A New Plane: Pre-Civil War Lithography' (Paper presented at the Nineteenth Annual North American Print Conference, New Orleans, April 29, 1987), 1-3.

9. Madame Saint-Clair, 'Le doute' (Nouvelle-Orléans: [s.n.], 21 Janvier 1838); also, e.g., Julien Pecarrere, 'Si l'avait su' (Nouvelle-Orléans: [s.n.], 18 Février 1838).

10. Mrs. G. L. Poindexter, 'Hark Maties Hark' ([S.l.: s.n., c. 1839]); e.g., E. Johns, 'Ob! plaignez le pauvre orphelin,' publiée pour le bénéfice des orphelins (Nouvelle Orléans: Imprimé gratis chez Juls. Manouvrier & P. Snell, 18 Décembre 1839).

When Johns issued 'Jackson's Grand March' in 1840 in association with the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, he turned to Jean Houguenague for lithography. Census records indicate that Houguenague was born during the first decade of the nineteenth century, and city directories from 1841 through 1846 list him as a lithographic printer.<sup>11</sup> Four pieces of sheet music by him have survived, each of which is significant. 'Grand Tippecanoe March,' copyrighted in 1840, is probably the earliest dated New Orleans sheet music that bears an illustrated cover. 'National Waltzes,' copyrighted in 1839, was distributed jointly by Emile Johns and Benjamin Casey, another local vendor of sheet music whose business was established immediately after Johns's.<sup>12</sup> Casey engaged Houguenague to lithograph 'Old Rosin the Bow,' but he also published a number of other pieces such as 'La Cachucha,' also undated but likely earlier, that do not bear the imprint of a lithographer or engraver.

Jules Manouvrier arrived in New Orleans from Prussia at the age of twenty-two in 1838 and remained there until he died in 1875.<sup>13</sup> In addition to views of prominent buildings such as St. Louis Cathedral and St. Mary's Church in Galveston, he lithographed maps and numerous pieces of sheet music. Manouvrier is noteworthy as one of the few lithographers who worked both 'b.w.' and 'a.w.' He produced pieces such as the 'Buena Vista March' and 'Une couronne de fleurs' between 1846 and 1852, when he worked with Perez Snell to create both the music and the covers. Snell, born during the last decade of the eighteenth century, was active in New Orleans as a printer and lithographer from 1835 to 1852. Later Manouvrier produced the covers of such pieces as 'La couronne imperiale' for which the Wehrmanns engraved the music.<sup>14</sup>

11. *New Orleans Artists*, 190.

12. On Casey, see Boudreaux, 'Music Publishing,' 17-20.

13. *New Orleans Artists*, 252.

14. 'Buena Vista March' (New Orleans: Wm. T. Mayo, [c. 1848]); H. E. Lehmann, 'Une couronne de fleurs' (Nouvelle Orléans: Wm. T. Mayo, [between 1846 and 1852]); L. Gabici, 'Grand Triumphant March' ([New Orleans]: Wm. T. Mayo; [New Orleans]: J. E. Benoit, [1847 or 1848]); H. E. Lehmann, 'La couronne imperiale de L'Étoile du Nord'



Louis Xavier Magny, like Manouvrier, worked in New Orleans before the Wehrmanns came and continued after they arrived. Magny, the first person in New Orleans to recognize their talent, was a native of Avignon who was born during the first decade of the nineteenth century. He arrived in New Orleans in the mid-1840s and remained active until his death in 1855,<sup>15</sup> lithographing prints of prominent buildings such as St. Louis Cathedral, numerous portraits, and book illustrations for *Rodolphe de Branchelièvre* by Charles Lemaître and others. Magny also produced some of the finest and most diverse sheet music covers of his time and place, such as 'The Rangers Lament for Poor Old Joe,' a Whig song that supporters of Millard Fillmore introduced in 1849. Some, like 'Polka aérienne,' bore relatively simple illustrations, while others were considerably more intricate. 'Valse du Tivoli,' for example, provides probably the only surviving illustration of a popular beer garden located just beyond the French Quarter. Textual accounts verify that the image is an accurate one. 'The Crescent Mazurka' was 'dedicated to the ladies of the Crescent City by the publisher,' E. A. Tyler, whose music store is depicted on the cover. Considering that Magny was noted for his portraits, it is not surprising that they appeared on some of his sheet music. An image of a little girl, possibly Nannie Nye Mayo, a daughter of music publisher William T. Mayo, graces the cover of 'The Golden Bird of Hope.' An unidentified 'Chatelaine' appears on the cover of a piece of that name, and a portrait of Madame Arraline Brooks, a local music teacher, graces the cover of 'Polka Quadrilles.' Both of those images were based on illustrations by Giovanni Tolti, who also did the art work for such lithographs as the 'Explosion of the Louisiana' between his arrival in New Orleans about 1849 and his death in 1860.<sup>16</sup>

(Nouvelle Orléans: A vendre chez les principaux Marchands de Musique, c. 1855); *New Orleans Artists*, 252, 359.

15. *Ibid.*, 250.

16. Charles Lemaître, *Rodolphe de Branchelièvre* (Nouvelle-Orléans: Imprimerie de J. L. Sollée, 1851); 'The Rangers Lament for Poor Old Joe' (New Orleans: Wm. T. Mayo, [1849]); Hubert Rolling, 'Polka aérienne' ([Nouvelle-Orléans]: En vente chez les Mar-

In 1846 Emile Johns sold his music business to William T. Mayo, who published many of the pieces Magny lithographed. The story is told that one day, probably in late 1849, Magny presented himself before Mayo, accompanied by 'a fair, blue-eyed slip of a girl scarcely more than five feet in height, with the daintiest of tiny hands, and said: "Monsieur, this lady is an engraver of music, and you will do well to give her work." Mr. Mayo looked at her incredulously. What! That fragile little girl an engraver! Those childish hands manage engravers' tools! He would not believe it. But since she insisted, he gave her something to engrave as a test.<sup>17</sup> The young lady was the former Charlotte Marie Clementine Böhne, wife of Henri Wehrmann. Born in Paris in 1830, Clementine was then nineteen years old, and her husband, a native of Minden, Germany, was twenty-two. With their infant daughter, as well as her mother and brother, they had been drawn to New Orleans by family ties; Clementine's father, Auguste Böhne, had already established himself there as a music dealer. Perhaps he suggested to his daughter and son-in-law that the Crescent City would be a likely place in which to practice their talents.<sup>18</sup>

Although every accomplished young lady was expected to *play* the piano, engraving the music that enabled others to play was not a common talent for a woman. Astonishing though it may have seemed to Mayo, young Madame Wehrmann was a skilled engraver, and she passed his test effortlessly. When Clementine was a thirteen-year-old in Paris, 'according to the necessity of most young French girls, [she] was obliged to select a profession. She

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chands de Musique, [between 1846 and 1852]); Hubert Rolling, 'Valse de Tivoli' ([New Orleans: s.n., [between 1846 and 1852]); 'The Crescent Mazurka' ([New Orleans]: E. A. Tyler, [n.d.]); Thomas J. Martin, 'The Golden Bird of Hope' ([S.l.: s.n.], c1850); H. E. Lehmann, 'La chatelaine' (Nouvelle Orléans: Chez H. E. Lehmann, et chez tous les principaux Marchands de Musique, [between 1846 and 1852]); Michael Hoffner, 'Polka quadrilles' (New Orleans: Wm. T. Mayo, [between 1846 and 1852]); *New Orleans Artists*, 377.

17. 'Musical History of Louisiana.' *New Orleans Times-Democrat* (October 31, 1909), sec. 3, p. 1.

18. *New Orleans Artists*, 405, 406.



had no taste for millinery, saw no future as a manipulator of wax flowers, and began to consider the art of engraving music, a study that soon took possession of the young girl, who gave three years services to her instructors for her apprenticeship.<sup>19</sup> It is probable that her father was associated with the music business in Paris and that she did not select music engraving arbitrarily.

Following Magny's advice, Mayo gave the Wehrmanns work, and so did virtually all of the city's music publishers, including the 'big four': A. E. Blackmar; Louis Grunewald; Philip Werlein, who bought Mayo's business in 1852; and Junius Hart, who came a bit later than these others. Their fame spread beyond New Orleans, and so did their work; Wehrmann imprints appeared on sheet music published in Vicksburg, Natchez, Mobile, and other cities.<sup>20</sup> The 'A.W.' period of New Orleans music history was flourishing.

Three different Wehrmann imprints, discounting insignificant variations, appear on sheet music they produced: those of Madame Wehrmann, those of Henri Wehrmann, and those which read 'Wehrmann' or 'Wehrmann Engraver.' One of the earliest Wehrmann imprints I have found to date, that of Madame, appears on the last page of a piece of music published by Mayo in 1850. Entitled 'Sea Serpent Polka,' this piece bears a cover lithographed by Magny that is one of the most extraordinary produced in mid-nineteenth-century New Orleans and, in its day, was considered 'rather a shocking thing.'<sup>21</sup> It depicts a serpent with a man's head and forked tongue floating on the surface of the Mississippi River at New Orleans. The face was rumored

19. Unidentified newspaper clipping in Wehrmann scrapbook in possession of Lise Wehrmann Wells of New Orleans.

20. E.g., Basile Barès, 'Temple of Music' (New Orleans: Blackmar & Co., c1871); E. Bischoff, 'Crispino e la comare valse' (New Orleans: Louis Grunewald, c1866); Auguste Davis, '135 Canal Street Waltz' (New Orleans: Philip Werlein, c1877); Harry Graves, 'Sweet Eyes of Blue' (New Orleans: Junius Hart, c1891); E. E. Osgood, 'One of My Waltzes' (Vicksburg, Miss.: Blackmar & Brother, c1860); Robert Meyer, 'Irma' (Natchez: A. Dies, c1859); William Herz, 'Secession March' (Mobile, Ala.: J. H. Snow; Louisville: D. P. Faulds & Co.; New Orleans: A. E. Blackmar & Bro., c1861).

21. Eliza Ripley, *Social Life in Old New Orleans; Being Recollections of My Girlhood* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1912), 148.



to be a likeness of the composer, Maurice Strakosch, who resided in New Orleans and supplemented his income from teaching music by writing it.<sup>22</sup>

A newspaper clipping that describes the elderly Madame Wehrmann as 'small, white-haired, with large, expressive blue eyes, and the soul of music in her features' also outlines her technique. 'The engraving is done on plaques of metal composed of tin and lead, of silvery appearance. The ledger lines are scraped along with an instrument with the aid of a ruler of iron; the notes and accidentals and other musical characters like die in the tops of iron [are] placed over the designed spot and struck, leaving the effect upon the clear surface. The supplementary and note-lines, the ties, quavers, rests and clefs are graven in this way; then the plates are delivered to the printer, who may produce a million copies from it. There is some art in the work of these plaques, and much skill and familiarity with the groundwork of music; and it has all become second-nature of Mme. Wehrmann, who loves her profession, and can readily produce three engraved plates during a day.'<sup>23</sup>

Those pieces which bear the Wehrmann imprint without a given name almost certainly were engraved by Madame Wehrmann. Less is known about Henri's background than about his wife's. He is usually described as a printer,<sup>24</sup> and it is likely that he just operated the presses, but his imprint appears on roughly as many pieces as his wife's. Obviously all of the music was produced using the same equipment and the same methods. The possibilities are that Clementine, as a sort of ghost-engraver, produced the music which bears Henri's name as head of the firm or, considering that his imprint appears exclusively on music from 1880 and later, that through the years he learned the art of engraving music from his wife. Meager evidence, chiefly the contemporary references to Henri as a printer and not as an engraver, suggests the former theory.

22. Kendall, 'Musicians of Long Ago,' 134.

23. Unidentified newspaper clipping in Wehrmann scrapbook in possession of Lise Wehrmann Wells of New Orleans.

24. 'Golden Wedding.'

A significant number of pieces of sheet music share the characteristics of having been printed by the Wehrmanns but lack imprints. Covering virtually the entire period in which the Wehrmanns were active and including a variety of compositions, these pieces undoubtedly issued from their shop. It is possible but highly improbable that employees or apprentices executed some of the work. More likely Clementine produced those pieces as well as those which bear imprints, although no information survives that would explain why some pieces are unsigned. Except for other family members who will be discussed below, no other engravers of the period could be found whose backgrounds included working with them. Given their prominence and apparent popularity in late nineteenth-century New Orleans, it is likely that former employees would have boasted of the association and, as the years passed, been sought out to give newspaper interviews entitled something like 'My Years with the Wehrmanns.'

Before the Civil War various lithographers produced covers which were as different as the music plates were similar. Magny, for example, lithographed the cover of the 'Eclipse Polka,' which depicts the composer, Henssler. Elaborate lettering characterized covers by Charles J. Stevens, a New Yorker who, during the 1850s when he was active in New Orleans,<sup>25</sup> also illustrated books such as *Bliss of Marriage; or, How to Get a Rich Wife*<sup>26</sup> and *A History of the Proceedings in the City of New Orleans, on the Occasion of the Funeral Ceremonies in Honor of Calhoun, Clay and Webster, Which Took Place on Thursday, December 9th, 1852.*<sup>27</sup> 'Oratorial Grand March' reproduces Dionis Simon's rendering of the monument on Canal Street that honored the popular politician Henry Clay. Simon, a native of Germany, was active in New Orleans from 1857 until his

25. F. Henssler, 'Eclipse-polka' (New Orleans: Wm. T. Mayo, c1852); Theodore von La Hache, 'Grand Dedication Cantata' (New Orleans: H. D. Hewitt; Boston: O. Ditson; New-York: Wm. Hall & Son, c1853); *New Orleans Artists*, 365.

26. S. S. Hall, *Bliss of Marriage; or, How to Get a Rich Wife* (New Orleans: J. B. Steel, 1858).

27. (New Orleans: General Committee of Arrangements, 1853).



death in 1876 at the age of 46.<sup>28</sup> He collaborated with Tolti to create the cover of a piece of music composed by a slave named Basile.<sup>29</sup> Another German, Benedict Simon, combined talents on some covers with Louis Lucien Pessou, an African-American born in New Orleans in 1825 and active as a lithographer from 1853 to 1868. Benedict Simon was one of the city's earliest and finest color lithographers and is best remembered for a series of thirty-two views of local buildings, including an especially vivid depiction of his own establishment.<sup>30</sup>

In the early 1860s Jules Lion, a free man of color, contributed the art work for some of the most noteworthy music covers that emanated from New Orleans. Lion was born in France about 1811 and came to New Orleans in late 1836 or early 1837, remaining active as a painter, sketch artist, and lithographer until his death in 1866. Probably his first employment there was as one of the two sketch artists employed by *L'Abeille* to execute drawings from which lithographs were made. Noted for his portraiture, Lion produced a series of lithographs including among his subjects both prominent and average citizens. Also a photographer, Lion is credited with introducing the daguerreotype process to the Crescent City in 1840. None of his daguerreotypes is known to survive.<sup>31</sup>

Not surprisingly, most of Lion's music covers also portrayed persons and buildings. Ironically, many of them, such as the 'General Joseph E. Johnston Quick March,' illustrated Confederate figures. 'Parade March and Quick Step' is dedicated to the fifth company of the Washington Artillery, and three members of the company appear on the cover. The couple standing before a

28. Thomas J. Martin, 'Oratorial Grand March' (New Orleans: F. Hartel, 1860); *New Orleans Artists*, 353.

29. Basile [Barès], 'Grande polka des chasseurs a pied, de la Louisiane' (Nouvelle Orléans: En vente chez les Marchands de Musique, c1860).

30. F. R. Prohl, 'The American Flag' (New Orleans: P. P. Werlein & Co.; New York: Wm. Hall & Son; Philadelphia: G. André & Co.; Boston: O. Ditson & Co., c1858); *New Orleans Artists*, 353.

31. Charles East, 'Jules Lion's New Orleans,' *The Georgia Review* 40 (Winter 1986), passim; *New Orleans Artists*, 238-39.

Confederate flag on one series cover can be identified as Harry Macarthy, who composed 'Missouri!' and the other pieces listed, and his wife Lottie Estelle. 'Free Market Waltz' bears the only extant image of the structure built as a waterworks after it was remodelled for use as a distribution center where Confederate women whose menfolks were off fighting received free foodstuffs contributed by upriver plantation owners.<sup>32</sup>

For several years, beginning with the occupation of New Orleans by federal troops on May 1, 1862, the local music business was in turmoil. Union soldiers confiscated Philip Werlein's stock and sold it at public auction, and the firm ceased all operations until the autumn of 1865. The story is told that the Wehrmanns were at Werlein's when the soldiers arrived, and Henri, 'knowing their penchant for acquiring booty, contrived to camouflage the fine pianos under a huge tarpaulin, surrounding them with whatever warehouse material he could find. Expecting to find the expensive pianos displayed on the floors of the store, the soldiers did not bother to look at the heap of "junk" that hid . . . [them].' It was with those instruments that Werlein was able eventually to reestablish his operations. Grunewald also was forced out of business. Similarly, A. E. Blackmar's stock was raided and his Confederate copyrights confiscated by order of General Benjamin Butler. This situation impelled Blackmar and his brother Henry to relocate their headquarters, which Henry managed in Augusta, Georgia, while A. E. remained in New Orleans. Despite these obstacles, the Blackmar firm almost certainly was the most prolific publisher of Confederate sheet music.<sup>33</sup>

32. Adolphus Brown, 'Genl. Joseph E. Johnston Manassas Quick March' (New-Orleans: A. E. Blackmar & Bro., c1861); Theodore von La Hache, 'Parade March and Quick Step' (New Orleans: P. P. Werlein & Halsey, c1861); Harry Macarthy, 'Missouri' (New Orleans: A. E. Blackmar & Bro., c1861), 'Free Market Waltz' (New Orleans: Louis Grunewald, c1862).

33. Richard B. Harwell, *Confederate Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950), 10-11, 17-24; 'Have You Ever Tried to Hide a Piano?', unidentified newspaper clipping ([1942]) in Wehrmann scrapbooks (quotation). Harwell describes the Blackmar concern as numerically the leader in Confederate music publishing, with nearly twice the output of its nearest competitor (232 pieces; Schreiner & Son of Macon and Savannah issued 121). Because, however, many additional pieces have come to light in the



The Wehrmanns' output dwindled during most of the war years and immediately after the South's surrender. Of the dated pieces they engraved that I have seen, at least thirty were published in each of the years 1860, 1861, and 1869. By this last date Louisiana had been formally readmitted to the Union, although occupation troops remained in New Orleans until 1877. Except in 1863, when a high of twenty-four pieces were issued, annual production from 1862 through 1868 stood at two-thirds or less of its antebellum level. After 1864 this can be attributed in part to the major publishers' new tendency to commission out-of-state engravers to produce some of their music. The cover of the 'Crescent Hall Polka,' for example, was lithographed by local J. H. Boehler, but the music was engraved by Oakes—which Oakes has not yet been determined. Blackmar had a particularly close association with Clayton of New York, and other distant engravers contributed other pieces.<sup>34</sup>

Some pieces, of course, continued to be engraved by the Wehrmanns, often with covers by William H. Leeson, a prolific lithographer of sheet music covers who was primarily known as a photographer. With the advent of color lithography, Thomas Fitzwilliam made such work a specialty, and publisher Junius Hart often employed him to produce bright and colorful covers. Worthy of special mention is the 'Mexican Music' series, which Hart published after the Mexican Military Band's astonishing popularity during and after the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in 1885. These pieces would influence the early jazz musicians; according to Jelly Roll Morton, 'If you can't manage to put tinges of Spanish in your tunes, you will never be able to get the right seasoning, I call it, for jazz.'<sup>35</sup>

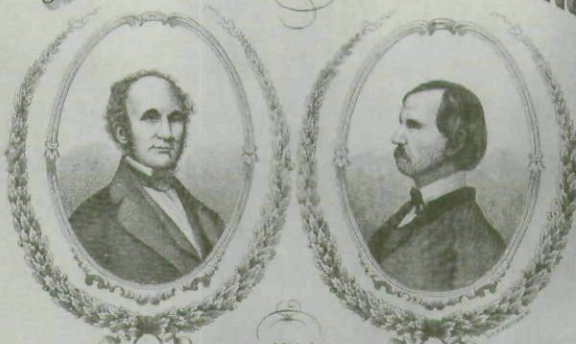
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more than forty years since Harwell's work was published, we cannot accept this assessment without qualification or further investigation.

34. Theodore von La Hache, 'Crescent Hall Polka' (New Orleans: L. Grunewald, c1866). Other examples include J. W. Groschel, 'Sing Me a Switzer Song of Love,' and Morgan C. Kennedy, 'Birdie Schottisch' (New Orleans: Blackmar & Co., 1865); L. Hampel, 'Mount Hermon Schottisch,' and F. W. Smith, 'The Girl with the Calico Dress' (New Orleans: Blackmar & Co., 1866); Robert Meyer, 'How Can I Leave Thee' (New Orleans: Louis Grunewald, 1866).

35. Thomas L. Morgan and William Barlow, *From Cakewalks to Concert Halls: An*

THE WHITE MAN'S BANNER



SEYMOUR AND BLAIR'S  
CAMPAIGN SONG

WRITTEN BY  
F. M. Bigney

COMPOSED BY  
Th. von la Hache.

SONG, 24 MARCH, 34

NEW ORLEANS  
Published by LOUIS GRÜNEWALD, 129 Canal St.

Fig. 1. Th. von la Hache, *The White Man's Banner, Seymour and Blair's Campaign Song* [Litho. H. Wehrmann N.O.], New Orleans: Louis Grunewald. American Antiquarian Society.





Fig. 2. Theod. von la Hache, *Silverspoons Schottisch* [Litho. H. Wehrmann N.O.],  
New Orleans: Louis Grunewald. American Antiquarian Society.

Almost from the time they arrived in New Orleans, the Wehrmanns had been publishing sheet music themselves, in addition to producing it for Blackmar, Grunewald, and others. Often they enhanced their publications with covers by Louis F. Gery. Gery, a native of France, was born about 1830 and was active in New Orleans from 1850 until 1890 as an engraver and printer, but all of his dated sheet music, such as 'The Bell Crevasse' dedicated to Clementine Wehrmann, predates the Civil War.<sup>36</sup>

No lithographer claimed credit for the cover of 'Pic Nic Polka,' copyrighted in 1854 by its composer, the prolific and popular Theodore von La Hache. Although it was printed in blue, the imprint—that of Louis Grunewald—was added in black, after the original printing. Apparently the Wehrmanns kept plates in stock for some pieces that, in most instances, were in the public domain or for which Henri owned the copyright. They stood ready to add the imprint of any publisher or dealer who ordered in quantity. Multiple copies exist of a substantial number of such pieces, one copy without an imprint and each of the others with the imprint of a different publisher. For example, three copies of 'Minuit' by Basile Barès, the former slave composer, exist, one bearing Grunewald's imprint, another with Blackmar's, and a third without an imprint.<sup>37</sup>

The Wehrmanns' publishing endeavors burgeoned after the Civil War, and Henri became a major publisher of sheet music. Now he was responsible for commissioning covers, as well as for seeing to the engraving and printing of the music. At about the same time—around 1869—Henri's younger brother Hermann arrived in New Orleans, probably with his wife Henrietta, and briefly shared Henri's address. Like Henri, Hermann was a

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*Illustrated History of African American Popular Music from 1895 to 1930* (Washington: Elliott & Clark Publishing, 1992), 33.

36. N. A. Barbé, 'The Bell Crevasse' (New Orleans: P. P. Werlein & Co., c1858); *New Orleans Artists*, 155.

37. Basile Barès, 'Minuit' (New Orleans: A. E. Blackmar, c1873); Basile Barès, 'Minuit' (New Orleans: Louis Grunewald, c1873); Basile Barès, 'Minuit' ([S.l.: s.n.], c1873).

printer and lithographer, and between them the brothers created the covers for numerous pieces of sheet music during the last third of the nineteenth century. Hermann apparently remained with his brother only until he was able to establish his own firm. For a brief period in the late 1880s, Henri and Clementine's son Clement worked with his father.<sup>38</sup> In addition to music, Henri lithographed maps, a lengthy volume of plans of each square block of the third district of New Orleans, and Mardi Gras memorabilia, including a 1875 proclamation of Rex, King of Carnival.

Among other pieces of music published by Henri and engraved by Clementine was 'Stella Waltz,' one of a number of pieces composed by Henry, the youngest of their seven children, born in 1870. By the age of seventeen, he already had several published works to his credit, including some of the few pieces of sheet music composed for instruments other than the piano. His contribution to the family enterprise went beyond composing music, for beginning in the late 1880s he also executed art work for many covers. He enjoyed widespread acclaim as a musician, composer, and teacher until his death in 1956, and he is still remembered in New Orleans some forty years later.<sup>39</sup>

As the twentieth century dawned, the sun began to set on the New Orleans music publishing industry. Henri's 1905 obituary recalled: 'Twenty-five years ago his publication and handiwork were utilized in every city of the United States, but the rapid advancement in the art, and the utilization of movable types in printing cheap music, reduced the demand for metallic plate and stone work, and his business decreased in consequence.'<sup>40</sup> The Wehrmanns faced competition from other firms, such as the Standard Music and Photo-Litho Company, and lithographers like Odbert V. Greend who, like the Wehrmanns themselves, operated independently. Nevertheless, the Wehrmann imprint con-

38. *New Orleans Artists*, 406-7; Boudreaux, 'Music Publishing,' 36.

39. Henry Wehrmann Jr., 'Stella Waltz' ([S.l.: s.n.], c1889); *New Orleans Artists*, 406-7. Although this and other publications give Wehrmann's date of birth as 1871, family records in the possession of his daughter, Lise Wells, state that he was born in 1870.

40. 'Henri Wehrmann, Sr., Dead,' *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, September 14, 1905.



tinued to appear at least until 1899, although with decreasing frequency. As noted above, Henri died in 1905 and Clementine in 1911; each was ill just for a few days.<sup>41</sup>

'New Orleans was, in the nineteenth century, a cultural center without equal in the South,'<sup>42</sup> where concert halls and theaters were patronized by a large, music-loving public. At home, young ladies cultivated the skills of piano-playing and singing, and they accumulated dozens, in some instances perhaps even hundreds, of pieces of sheet music: dance music, prominently including polkas, galops, and the very popular waltzes; patriotic Confederate pieces; marches and quicksteps; religious music; vocal music; and substantial quantities of works from opera. Some of the city's finest lithographers and engravers contributed their talents to the creation of that sheet music, but none sustained the sort of establishment where a corps of apprentices practiced the art. Even the Wehrmanns, whose extensive output would suggest that they had help, maintained a family operation. Considering how far-reaching was their influence, we can but speculate what could have happened had there been no Civil War and had they sought to expand their business. As it is, we are left to study the music and the sparse data left behind in an effort to understand better the major contribution these two and their colleagues made to the cultural life of New Orleans, the South, and the nation.

41. *Ibid.*; 'Death Comes to Mrs. Wehrmann,' clipping from unidentified newspaper, March 31, 1911.

42. Boudreaux, 'Music Publishing,' iv.

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