

# OLD HARP SINGING



by the Old Harp Singers of Eastern Tennessee

WONDROUS LOVE, WESTERN MOUNT PLEASANT,  
MORNING TRUMPET, NORTHFIELD, LIBERTY, OCEAN,  
GREENFIELDS, HIGHTOWER, PLEASANT HILL, AMAZING GRACE

Notes by Sidney Robertson Cowell

Folkways Records FA 2356

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Wondrous Love  
Western Mount Pleasant  
Morning Trumpet  
Northfield  
Liberty  
Ocean  
Greenfields  
Hightower  
Pleasant Hill  
Amazing Grace

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

# OLD HARP SINGING

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES ON THE RECORDINGS  
BY SIDNEY ROBERTSON COWELL

THE SEVENTEEN "OLD HARP SINGERS" WHO ARE PRESENTING WHITE SPIRITUALS IN THIS ALBUM ARE PART OF A GROUP NUMBERING MANY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE THROUGH THE SOUTH AND WEST WHO SING RELIGIOUS FOLKSONGS AND FUGING TUNES. THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MEET ON ONE OR TWO SUNDAY AFTERNOONS A MONTH TO SING FROM ONE OF THE MANY COLLECTIONS OF RELIGIOUS SONGS THAT WERE PRINTED IN SHAPED NOTES AROUND THE MIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. SUCH MEETINGS ARE ANNOUNCED AT CHURCH SERVICES OF SEVERAL DENOMINATIONS AROUND THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND THEY BRING TOGETHER ANYWHERE FROM TWENTY-FIVE TO TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE, TODDLERS TO GREAT-GRAND-PARENTS IN THEIR EIGHTIES, IN A KIND OF MUSICAL PRAYER MEETING. ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR, SINGING CONVENTIONS, OR 'BIG SINGINGS', COMBINE ALL THE SINGERS FROM A LARGER AREA, TWO OR THREE COUNTIES, PERHAPS, AND SMALLER FAMILY GROUPS, LIKE THE ONE RECORDED HERE, MAY MEET ON AN OCCASIONAL WEEK-DAY EVENING IN PRIVATE HOMES.

OLD HARP SINGERS ARE NUMEROUS ALONG THE WESTERN SLOPE OF THE APPALACHIANS IN EASTERN TENNESSEE, IN THE COUNTRY AROUND THE LARGER TOWNS AND IN RURAL LOWLAND AREAS TOO, AND THEIR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION IS VARIOUS: SEVERAL DIFFERENT SECTS, METHODIST, BAPTIST AND CHRISTIAN, ARE REPRESENTED HERE. THEY ALL USE ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS OF SHAPE NOTE COLLECTIONS OF SPIRITUAL SONGS: "THE HARP OF COLUMBIA", BY W.H. AND M.L. SWAN. IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN KNOXVILLE IN 1848, AND IS STILL REPRINTED THERE BY THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH. THE GROUPS USING THIS BOOK ALL CALL THEMSELVES "OLD HARP SINGERS", ALTHOUGH THE EDITION MOST COMMONLY FOUND IS A REVISION MADE IN 1867 WHICH APPEARED AS "THE NEW HARP OF COLUMBIA". (COPIES ARE OBTAINABLE FOR ONE DOLLAR PLUS POSTAGE FROM I.B. SHIELDS, MARYVILLE, TENNESSEE.)

THESE PARTICULAR "OLD HARP SINGERS" COME FROM THE CULTIVATED MOUNTAIN VALLEYS OF EASTERN TENNESSEE AROUND SEVIERVILLE AND MARYVILLE. FOURTEEN OF THE SEVENTEEN ARE MEMBERS OR CONNECTIONS BY MARRIAGE OF THE ADAMS FAMILY; ONLY THREE ARE NOT RELATED. MOST OF THE MEN ARE OR

HAVE BEEN PROSPEROUS FARMERS; SOME OF THEM NOW WORK FOR ALCOA (ALUMINUM COMPANY OF AMERICA.) THE WOMEN ARE HOUSEWIVES; ONE OF THEM, SALLY ADAMS, TEACHES THE WEARE VALLEY SCHOOL. ADAMSES HAVE BEEN FAMOUS "SINGERS IN THE HARP" (FROM THE NAME OF THEIR SONGBOOK) FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS, AND THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL SINGING SCHOOL TEACHERS AMONG THEM. AT LEAST THREE OF THE SONG LEADERS OF THE PRESENT GROUP NOW TEACH OR HAVE TAUGHT SINGING SCHOOL.

THE  
**New Harp of Columbia:**  
A SYSTEM OF MUSICAL NOTATION,  
WITH A NOTE FOR EACH SOUND, AND A SHAPE FOR EACH NOTE.  
CONTAINING A VARIETY OF MOST EXCELLENT  
PSALM AND HYMN TUNES, ODES AND ANTHEMS,  
HAPPILY ADAPTED TO  
CHURCH SERVICE, SINGING-SCHOOLS AND SOCIETIES.  
ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.  
By M. L. SWAN.  
NASHVILLE, TENN.  
DALLAS, TEX.; RICHMOND, VA.  
PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.  
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A. A. Hicks, Secretary and Treasurer, 1716 Grand Ave., Knoxville, Tenn.

THE MUSIC OF THE SHAPED-NOTE SINGERS HAS PRESERVED, OR REVERTED TO (WE CANNOT ALWAYS BE SURE WHICH) MANY ASPECTS OF 17TH AND 18TH CENTURY MUSIC: NOT ONLY THE UNINFLECTED INSTRUMENTAL TONE QUALITY AND THE BARE HARMONIES, BUT ALSO MANY ACTUAL FOLK TUNES. WHEN MARTIN LUTHER REMARKED THAT IT WAS A PITY THE DEVIL SHOULD HAVE ALL THE GOOD TUNES, THE WAY WAS OPENED FOR THE ADOPTION OF SECULAR TUNES WITH CHANGED TEXTS FOR RELIGIOUS USE, AND LUTHER HIMSELF BUILT UP THE WONDERFUL BODY OF GERMAN CHORALS THAT WERE THE FIRST MUSIC OF THE REFORMATION IN JUST THIS WAY. WHEN JOHN WESLEY, FOUNDER OF BRITISH METHODISM, TOOK OVER THIS IDEA, HE MISSED THE REAL POINT, HOWEVER, FOR HE CIRCULATED LUTHER'S GERMAN FOLK TUNES AMONG THE BRITISH UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT CHURCH MUSIC WAS THUS SOLIDLY ANCHORED IN THE "MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE." THIS BECAME THE BASIS FOR THE MUSIC OF CITY CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES, OF WHATEVER PROTESTANT DENOMINATION.

MEANWHILE VARIOUS GROUPS OF DISSIDENTERS IN WALES AND ENGLAND, THE REBELS AGAINST ENTRENCHED PROTESTANTISM IN ANY FORM, HAD BEGUN TO CIRCULATE RELIGIOUS WORDS FOR USE WITH FAMILIAR BRITISH FOLK TUNES. IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DURING THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL OF THE 18TH CENTURY,

THE "NEW AWAKENING" THAT WAS PREACHED ACROSS THE UNITED STATES BY JONATHAN EDWARDS (1703-1753) AND GEORGE WHITEFIELD (1714-1770), THAT THIS MUSIC WAS ESTABLISHED IN AMERICA FROM ENGLAND. MOST OF THE TUNES, OR VARIANTS OF THEM, WERE ALREADY HERE, CIRCULATING WITH SECULAR WORDS. THEY CAN STILL BE FOUND ATTACHED TO BRITISH FOLK BALLADS AND LOVE SONGS; SOME OF THEM ARE EVEN CURRENT AS DANCE TUNES. AS FOLK HYMNODY, THIS MUSIC WAS CARRIED BY THE CALVINIST REVIVAL FIRES FIRST TO NEW ENGLAND, THEN SOUTH TO VIRGINIA AND SOUTH CAROLINA, AND "WEST" TO TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY. A LITTLE LATER THE SINGING SCHOOLS AND THEIR PRINTED COLLECTIONS OF THE SAME FOLK MUSIC WERE TO TRAVEL THE SAME ROUTE.

MANY SINGERS NOWADAYS FEEL THEIR WAY INTO THIS MUSIC JUST BY JOINING THEIR FAMILY OR NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS AND STANDING NEXT TO A GOOD SINGER ON THEIR CHOSEN PART. WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM THE INITIATED IT IS NOT TOO HARD TO FIT ONE'S SELF INTO A FEW SONGS IN THIS WAY. THE REAL PRESERVERS AND PERPETUATORS OF THE TRADITION, HOWEVER, ARE THE SINGING SCHOOLS, WHICH SEEM TO HAVE BEGUN IN NEW ENGLAND AROUND 1770 AND TO HAVE USED TAVERN SITTING ROOMS FOR THEIR MEETINGS. THEY WERE CONDUCTED BY ITINERANT SINGING MASTERS, IN SESSIONS THAT USED TO LAST THREE HOURS EVERY EVENING FOR A MONTH. SINGING SCHOOLS ARE NOW RARE, BUT STILL TO BE MET WITH, THOUGH THE SESSIONS ARE NOW USUALLY NO MORE THAN TWO WEEKS. WHOLE FAMILIES ATTEND TOGETHER YEAR AFTER YEAR -- PARENTS, CHILDREN AND GRAND-CHILDREN -- FOR A FEE (AT LEAST UNTIL RECENTLY) OF ONE DOLLAR PER SESSION PER HEAD. THE LESSONS OF A SINGING SCHOOL MASTER IN THE OZARKS WERE TRANSCRIBED VERBATIM BY VANCE RANDOLPH AND CAN BE FOUND IN HIS "OZARK MOUNTAIN FOLKS" (NEW YORK, VANGUARD PRESS, 1932.)

THE LONG NARROW BOOKS OF RELIGIOUS SONGS USED IN THE SINGING SCHOOLS BORE NAMES LIKE "CHRISTIAN HARMONY", "KENTUCKY HARMONY", "HESPERIAN HARP", "SACRED HARP", "SOUTHERN HARMONY", "HARP OF COLUMBIA", AND SO ON. THEY BEGIN WITH A FEW PAGES ON THE RUDIMENTS OF MUSIC, WITH SOMETIMES A ROUND OR A COUPLE OF EXERCISES FOR PRACTISE. THE SONGS ARE ALL RELIGIOUS, AND ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE GROUPS: CHURCH MUSIC, SINGING-SCHOOL MUSIC, AND ANTHEMS. THE ANTHEM SECTION FREQUENTLY INCLUDES FUGUING TUNES (SOMETIMES SPELLED, AND OFTEN PRONOUNCED, "FUDGING TUNES"). ALMOST ALL THESE BOOKS WERE PRINTED IN ONE OR ANOTHER OF THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS OF SHAPED-NOTES, AND THEY WERE DISTRIBUTED BY TRAVELLING SINGING SCHOOL MASTERS WHO WERE OFTEN ALSO THE EDITORS AND ARRANGERS.

1. GEORGE PULLEN JACKSON'S BOOKS ARE A PERFECT MINE OF FASCINATING INFORMATION ABOUT THIS MUSIC AND THE PEOPLE WHO SING IT.

THE IDEA OF GIVING EACH NOTE A SHAPE, A SQUARE, A DIAMOND, A TRIANGLE AND SO ON, TO INDICATE ITS POSITION IN RELATION TO THE TONIC, WAS AN AMERICAN INVENTION LONG CREDITED TO ANDREW LAW, BUT WHICH NOW APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN USED EARLIER BY MESSRS. SMITH AND LITTLE, IN A VOLUME THAT WAS PRINTED IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1798. THE NOTES ARE PLACED ON THE FIVE-LINE STAFF AS WE "ROUND-NOTERS" ARE ACCUSTOMED TO SEE THEM, THE VARIOUS SHAPES HOLLOW OR FILLED, WITH FLAGS ON THE STEMS, TO INDICATE METRIC VALUES IN THE USUAL WAY. THE VARIETY OF SHAPES SIMPLY TAKES THE PLACE OF A KEY SIGNATURE, DIRECTING ATTENTION TO A FEW SIMPLE INTERVAL PATTERNS THAT ARE OFTEN REPEATED, INSTEAD OF WORRYING SINGERS WITH THE TWENTY-FOUR KEYS AND THEIR SIGNATURES, WHICH HAVE NO BEARING ON THE WAY THE MELODY OUTLINES SOUND ANYWAY. AS A DEVICE FOR FACILITATING READING MUSIC AT SIGHT, THE "NEW PATENT NOTES" WERE AN IMMEDIATE AND IMMENSE SUCCESS. INCREDIBLE AS IT MAY SEEM, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF COPIES OF SHAPED-NOTE COLLECTIONS OF RELIGIOUS SONGS WERE PUT INTO CIRCULATION BETWEEN 1800 AND THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR. AND SOME OF THEM ARE STILL BEING PRINTED.

THE HARMONIC SETTINGS IN THE SHAPED-NOTE COLLECTIONS HAVE A RATHER ROUGH AND READY AIR ON PAPER, FULL OF WHAT WERE AT ONE TIME CONSIDERED TO BE MISTAKES IN HARMONY: PARALLEL AND DIRECT FIFTHS AND OCTAVES, INCOMPLETE CHORDS (OMITTING THE THIRD DEGREE) AND SO ON. THIS VERY UNCONVENTIONALITY, HOWEVER, STEMMED FROM A FINE FEELING FOR THE SOUND OF MASSES VOICES THAT HAS GIVEN US A VIGOROUS AND ORIGINAL CHORAL TRADITION. THE ACTUAL SINGING HAS AN ASTONISHING INTENSE RESONANCE, UNSUSPECTED BY THE EYE, BECAUSE THE CUSTOM IS FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN TO SING ALL THE PARTS, PRODUCING SO BROAD AND FULL AN OCTAVE DOUBLING THAT THE FREQUENTLY-OMITTED THIRDS OF CERTAIN CHORDS ARE NEVER MISSED. YOU SIMPLY CHOOSE THE PART YOU LIKE BEST AND SING IT 'UP' IF YOU'RE A WOMAN, 'DOWN' IF YOU'RE A MAN. THE MELODY, UNDER THIS SYSTEM OF FREE ENTERPRISE, MAY WIN OUT IN NUMBERS AND SO BE REASONABLY AUDIBLE, OR IT MAY NOT; THE TREBLE, AND SOMETIMES EVEN THE BASS (AS OFTEN IN "GREENFIELDS") MAY ATTRACT MORE SINGERS THAN THE OTHER PARTS. AS INDIVIDUAL SINGERS LIKE TO SING ONE PART TODAY AND ANOTHER NEXT WEEK, THERE IS NOTHING FIXED ABOUT THE "ORCHESTRATION."

THE FUGUING TUNES WERE REAL COMPOSITIONS IN THE MORE USUAL SENSE, ALTHOUGH TRADITIONAL FRAGMENTS SOMETIMES CREPT INTO THEM TOO. THE NAME OF WILLIAM BILLINGS SEEMS INEXTRICABLY ATTACHED TO THE FUGUING TUNE, BUT OTHER AMERICAN "PRIMITIVE" COMPOSERS WERE WRITING SUCH PIECES AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME. THE ENTHUSIASM EVOKED BY THE CONTRAPUNTAL MUSIC OF BACH AND ABOVE ALL HANDEL, WHOSE ORATORIOS WERE GIVEN BY LOCAL SINGING SOCIETIES IN MOST OF THE LARGER AMERICAN TOWNS BY THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY, WAS PROBABLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IDEA.

THE FUGUING TUNE RETAINS FROM THE CLASSIC FUGUE FORM ONLY THE SUCCESSIVE ENTRANCE OF INDEPENDENT VOICES, AND THEIR TRIUMPHANT COMBINATION AT THE END. THE FORM IS INCREDIBLY CONDENSED: ALL FOUR VOICES ARE ORDINARILY SET GOING WITHIN FOUR MEASURES, AND THE WHOLE PIECE MAY BE NO MORE THAN TWENTY-FOUR MEASURES IN ALL.

TODAY NONE OF THIS MUSIC IN ITS OLDER RELIGIOUS FORM SEEMS TO BE CURRENT IN NEW ENGLAND, SO FAR AS WE KNOW. BUT IT TURNS UP OCCASIONALLY IN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY. FARTHER SOUTH, HOWEVER, AND IN THE MIDDLE AND FAR WEST, THOUSANDS OF SHAPED-NOTE BOOKS ARE STILL IN USE TODAY, ALTHOUGH COMPARATIVELY LITTLE OF THE MUSIC IS OF THE OLDER TYPE HEARD IN THIS ALBUM. THE PAMPHLET COLLECTIONS OF HYMNS USED BY MANY REVIVALIST SECTS (HOLINESS (HOLY ROLLER), JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, AND SO ON) ARE STILL PRINTED IN SHAPED NOTES. THE SONGS ARE PARTLY OLD CAMP MEETING SONGS, PARTLY OF A NEWER VINTAGE, AND THE PACE OF THE SINGING HAS BEEN SPEEDED UP CONSIDERABLY. THERE IS OFTEN A SYNCOPATED PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT WITH "BREAKS" BETWEEN PHRASES OF THE SONG, AND THE MUSIC AS A WHOLE SOUNDS LIKE A CROSS BETWEEN BARBER-SHOP HARMONY AND RAGTIME OF ABOUT 1910. IT IS WRITTEN IN "QUARTETTE" FORM (AS DISTINCT FROM THE OLDER SHAPED-NOTE MUSIC WITH THE MELODY IN THE TENOR.) THE TUNE HAS MOVED INTO THE UPPER PART AND THE WOMEN SING IT ALONE. EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE ADAMS FAMILY SINGING WITH THIS GROUP HAVE FORMED THEMSELVES INTO A DOUBLE QUARTET AND LIKE TO SING THIS "MODERN" SHAPED-NOTE MUSIC.

WESTERN MOUNT PLEASANT (no. 206)

THERE IS A HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS,  
ETERNAL AND ON HIGH,  
AND HERE MY SPIRIT WAITING STANDS  
TILL GOD SHALL BID IT FLY.

THIS IS A FUGUING TUNE FOR WHICH NO COMPOSER IS NAMED. IT IS SOMEWHAT MORE ELABORATE IN FORM THAN "LIBERTY" AND "NORTHFIELD", WHICH ARE SUNG LATER, ON THIS RECORD. LIKE THEM IT BEGINS WITH AN EIGHT-MEASURE PHRASE, ALL PARTS SINGING TOGETHER THROUGH THE STANZA. THE LAST TWO LINES OF THE TEXT ARE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES FOR THE FUGUING SECTION, THE BASS BEGINNING ALONE, FOLLOWED BY THE TENOR, TREBLE AND ALTO IN THAT ORDER, A MEASURE APART. THE COMPOSER HAS SOME FUN WITH THE PHRASE "TILL GOD SHALL BID IT FLY!" TURNING ABOUT THE WORD "FLY" WITH WINGED EIGHTH NOTES THAT ILLUSTRATE THE TEXT BY THE MUSIC AS PURCELL AND HANDEL LOVED TO DO, AND EXTENDING THE FUGUING FOR SIXTEEN MEASURES, IN WHICH THE PARTS ANSWER EACH OTHER IN CONTRARY MOTION, FLYING TOGETHER AND APART AND THEN COMING TOGETHER AGAIN FOR A FOUR-MEASURE CONCLUSION WHICH IS A SOLID AND SATISFYING REPETITION OF THE LAST HALF OF THE OPENING SECTION.

WONDROUS LOVE. 12,9,6,6,12,9.

CHRISTOPHER.

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What wondrous love is this, oh! my soul! oh! my soul! What wondrous love is this, oh! my soul! What wondrous love is

this! That caused the Lord of bliss, To bear the dread-ful curse for my soul, for my soul, To bear the dread-ful curse for my soul.

WHAT WONDRIOUS LOVE IS THIS, OH! MY SOUL!  
 OH! MY SOUL!  
 WHAT WONDRIOUS LOVE IS THIS, OH! MY SOUL!  
 WHAT WONDRIOUS LOVE IS THIS!  
 THAT CAUSED THE LORD OF BLISS,  
 TO BEAR THE DREADFUL CURSE FOR MY SOUL,  
 FOR MY SOUL,  
 TO BEAR THE DREADFUL CURSE FOR MY SOUL.

O WHEN SHALL I SEE JESUS, AND REIGN WITH HIM  
 ABOVE?  
 AND SHALL HEAR THE TRUMPET SOUND IN THAT  
 MORNING.  
 AND FROM THE FLOWING FOUNTAIN, DRINK EVERLAST-  
 ING LOVE?  
 AND SHALL HEAR THE TRUMPET SOUND IN THAT  
 MORNING.

THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY SUNG SHAPED-NOTE  
 HYMNS; IT IS STILL PRINTED IN THE "NEW HARP OF  
 COLUMBIA" IN ONLY THREE PARTS, NO ALTO HAVING  
 BEEN ADDED. THE STANZAIC FORM, WITH ITS ARRANGE-  
 MENT OF THREE-SYLLABLE EXCLAMATIONS, IS VERY OLD.  
 THE MELODY STILL CIRCULATES WITH AN ASSORTMENT OF  
 ROWDY WORDS AND SEVERAL SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FORMS  
 OF THE TUNE, BUT THE TUNE-FAMILY IS UNMISTAKABLE,  
 AND CAN BE TRACED BACK THROUGH SAM HALL, ADMIRAL  
 BENBOW, CAPTAIN KIDD AND OTHER PIRATICAL BALLADS  
 TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 18TH CENTURY, WHEN IT  
 WAS DOUBTLESS ALREADY AN OLD TUNE.

THIS IS A REVIVAL SPIRITUAL SONG, CREDITED TO  
 B.F. WHITE, ONE OF THE EDITORS OF THE OLDER  
 SHAPED-NOTE COLLECTION CALLED THE "SACRED HARP".  
 A NOTE SAYS, 'COUNTER BY SWAN', WHICH MEANS  
 THAT AN ALTO WAS ADDED FOR THIS BOOK BY ONE OF  
 THE SWAN FAMILY WHO EDITED IT. THE WORDS, BY  
 JOHN LELAND, WERE VERY POPULAR IN THE SOUTH.  
 SEVERAL OTHER MUSICAL SETTINGS WERE MADE FOR  
 THEM, BUT THIS IS THE MOST VIGOROUS AND TRUMPET  
 -LIKE ONE.

THE SONGBOOK "HESPERIAN HARP" ATTRIBUTES THE  
 RELIGIOUS WORDS TO "REV. ALEX MEANS, A.M., M.D.,  
 D.D., L.L.D., A METHODIST MINISTER OF OXFORD,  
 GEORGIA."

NORTHFIELD. C. M

How long, dear Sa-viour, Oh! how long Shall this bright hour de-lay! Fly  
 Fly swift a round, ye wheels of time, And bring the pro-mised day.  
 Fly swift a-round, ye wheels of time, . . . . . And bring the pro-mised day.  
 swift a-round, ye wheels of time, And bring the pro-mised day, And bring the pro-mised day.  
 wheels of time. Fly swift a-round, ye wheels of time. And bring the pro-mised day.

## NORTHFIELD (no. 115)

HOW LONG, DEAR SAVIOR, OH! HOW LONG  
SHALL THIS BRIGHT HOUR DELAY!  
FLY SWIFT AROUND, YE WHEELS OF TIME,  
AND BRING THE PROMISED DAY.

THE WORDS OF THIS BRIEF FUGUING TUNE ARE BY ISAAC WATTS (1674-1748), WHO PROVIDED PROTESTANT HYMNODY WITH MANY FAMILIAR SONG TEXTS. THIS IS THE COMMON-EST OF SEVERAL TUNES FOR THESE WORDS. IT WAS COMPOSED BY JEREMIAH INGALLS (1764-1838), ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING OF THE EARLY NEW ENGLAND COMPOSERS. INGALLS WAS THE COMPILER OF A NOW VERY RARE BOOK CALLED THE "CHRISTIAN HARMONY", WHICH IN SPITE OF MUCH MUSICAL MISPELLING INCORPORATED MORE THAN THE USUAL NUMBER OF FOLK TUNES AS SUNG IN THE NEW ENGLAND SINGING-SCHOOLS.

"NORTHFIELD" IS SIMPLE AND BRIEF: THE OPENING SECTION CONSISTS OF AN EASY FOUR-MEASURE PHRASE THAT IS REPEATED. THE FUGUING SECTION LASTS JUST LONG ENOUGH (FIVE MEASURES) TO GET ALL FOUR VOICES IN WITH A TWO-MEASURE REMARK, ENTERING A MEASURE APART; THE VOICES COMBINE FOR A CONCLUDING THREE-MEASURE PHRASE; THEN THE WHOLE LAST SECTION, BEGINNING WITH THE FUGUING BIT, IS REPEATED.

## LIBERTY (no. 98)

LORD, 'TIS AN INFINITE DELIGHT  
TO SEE THY LOVELY FACE;  
TO DWELL WHOLE AGES IN THY SIGHT,  
AND FEEL THY VITAL RAYS.

THIS IS ANOTHER BRIEF FUGUING TUNE, MORE OR LESS LIKE NORTHFIELD IN FORM, EXCEPT THAT WHEN THE FUGUING STARTS THE VOICES DO NOT COME IN AT THE SAME INTERVAL OF TIME IN EVERY CASE. THE TENOR COMES IN ONE MEASURE AFTER THE BASS AS USUAL, BUT THE TREBLE WAITS TWO MEASURES BEFORE FOLLOWING THE TENOR IN, THEN THE ALTO COMES IN ONE MEASURE AFTER THE TREBLE. THE BASS RETIRES TO SUSTAIN A LONG DRONE TONE AFTER ITS OPENING REMARK, UNTIL THE OTHER VOICES HAVE FINISHED THEIR RUNNING AROUND. THE CONCLUDING SECTION IS A REAL CODA, A SORT OF TAIL PIECE TACKED ON FOR EMPHASIS, (REPEATING THE LAST PHRASE OF THE TEXT,) TO BRING THE PIECE TO AN IMPRESSIVE CLOSE.

"LIBERTY" OFFERS A FINE EXAMPLE OF THE BARE HARMONIES OFTEN FOUND IN THE BEST OF THIS MUSIC, WITH PLENTY OF OCTAVES AND FIFTHS SOUNDING TOGETHER, AND WITH ONLY AN OCCASIONAL THIRD.

## OCEAN (no. 159)

THY WORKS OF GLORY, MIGHTY LORD, THAT RUL'ST  
THE BOIST'ROUS SEA;  
THE SONS OF COURAGE SHALL RECORD, WHO TEMPT  
THE DANG'ROUS WAY.  
AT THY COMMAND THE WINDS ARISE AND SWELL THE  
TOW'RING WAVES;  
THE MEN, ASTONISH'D, MOUNT THE SKIES, AND  
SINK IN GAPING GRAVES.

THIS IS A FUGUING TUNE CREDITED SIMPLY TO 'SWAN'. THE COMPOSER WAS PROBABLY TIMOTHY SWAN OF NEW ENGLAND, AND NOT ONE OF THE TWO SWANS WHO LATER COMPILED THE "HARP OF COLUMBIA". IT IS A COMPARATIVELY ELABORATE COMPOSITION, BEGINNING WITH AN OPENING SECTION THAT IS TWELVE MEASURES LONG INSTEAD OF THE USUAL EIGHT. THE ALTO COMBINING WITH THE BASS TO BEGIN THE FUGUING SECTION, IS FOLLOWED BY THE TENOR AFTER ONE MEASURE AND THE TREBLE AFTER TWO MORE MEASURES. THE TREBLE HAS A FINE EXPOSED MOMENT IN WHICH TO SWELL THE TONE ON A LONG PHRASE DEVOTED TO THE WORD 'SWELL', AGAINST A LONG DRONE TONE IN THE BASS. THE CONCLUDING SECTION, FIVE MEASURES LONG, LETS THE TREBLE SOAR ON THE WORD 'SKIES', AND ON THE WORD 'GAP-ING' THREE OF THE FOUR PARTS TURN ABOUT THE WORD IN A DOWNWARD DIRECTION THAT MAY ALSO BE AN ATTEMPT AT A BIT OF DESCRIPTIVE MUSIC WRITING. THE LAST TWO SECTIONS ARE REPEATED.

THIS IS REAL CONTRAPUNTAL WRITING, FOR THE VOICES MAKE FINE INDEPENDENT MELODIES THROUGHOUT THE PIECE, WITH PLENTY OF CONTRARY MOTION AND VARIATIONS IN NOTE VALUES.

## GREENFIELDS (no. 16)

HOW TEDIOUS AND TASTELESS THE HOURS,  
WHEN JESUS NO LONGER I SEE;  
SWEET PROSPECTS, SWEET BIRDS, AND SWEET FLOW'RS,  
HAVE LOST ALL THEIR SWEETNESS TO ME:  
THE MIDSUMMER SUN SHINES BUT DIM,  
THE FIELDS STRIVE IN VAIN TO LOOK GAY;  
BUT WHEN I AM HAPPY IN HIM  
DECEMBER'S AS PLEASANT AS MAY.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN KNEW "GREENFIELDS" AS A BOY. IT IS STILL WIDELY SUNG TODAY. THE FIRST PART OF THE MELODY WAS USED BY BACH IN THE "PEASANT CANTATA". IT WAS PROBABLY A WELL-KNOWN FOLK TUNE WHEN BACH APPROPRIATED IT.

## HIGHTOWER (no. 87)

TIME IS WINGING US AWAY TO OUR ETERNAL HOME;  
LIFE IS BUT A WINTER'S DAY, A JOURNEY TO THE  
TOMB.  
YOUTH AND VIGOR SOON WILL FLEE, BLOOMING BEAUTY  
LOSE ITS CHARMS,  
ALL THAT'S MORTAL SOON SHALL BE ENCLOSED IN  
DEATH'S COLD ARMS.

M.L. SWAN, PROBABLY THE NEPHEW OF THE OTHER EDITOR OF THE "HARP OF COLUMBIA", W.H. SWAN, DIED IN 1869 AT THE AGE OF 32. THIS PIECE BEARS M.L.'S NAME, BUT WHETHER HE INTENDED TO CLAIM THE HARMONIC SETTING ALONE OR THE WHOLE PIECE WE CANNOT TELL.

IT IS A SENTIMENTAL HARMONIC HYMN, OF A TRUE DISSENTER LUGUBRIOUSNESS.

1. Time is winging us a-way To our eter-nal home; Life is but a winter's day, A journey to the tomb. Youth and vigor soon will see, Blooming beauty lose its charms; D.C. 2d Strain.  
D.C. All that's mortal soon shall be En-closed in death's cold arms.

2. Time is winging us a-way To our eter-nal home; Life is but a winter's day, A journey to the tomb. But the Christian shall enjoy Health and beauty soon a-lore. D.C. 2d Strain.  
D.C. Far beyond the world's valley, Se-cure in Je-sus' love.

RECORDED BY SAM ESKIN  
EDITOR — SIDNEY ROBERTSON COWELL  
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR — MOSES ASCH

### PLEASANT HILL (No. 43)

AND LET THIS FEEBLE BODY FAIL, AND LET IT  
FAINT OR DIE;  
MY SOUL SHALL QUIT THIS MOURNFUL VALE, AND  
SOAR TO WORLDS ON HIGH;  
SHALL JOIN THE DISEMBODIED SAINTS, AND FIND  
ITS LONG-SOUGHT REST,  
THAT ONLY BLISS FOR WHICH IT PANTS, IN THE  
REDEEMER'S BREAST.

THIS TEXT IS BY CHARLES WESLEY (D. 1788), WHO  
SUPPLIED MANY OF THE RELIGIOUS WORDS FOR BRITISH  
METHODIST HYMNODY. IN AN EARLY SONGBOOK CALLED  
THE OLIVE LEAF, ACCORDING TO G.P. JACKSON, THE  
TUNE IS CREDITED TO "WM. NICHOLSON OF VIRGINIA  
AND OHIO, CAPTURED BY THE BRITISH AT FORT MALDEN  
IN THE WAR OF 1812." THIS WAS AN EXTREMELY POPU-  
LAR REVIVAL SONG IN THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY,  
FAMILIAR AT CAMP MEETINGS WITH A SOMEWHAT SIMPLI-  
FIED TEXT AND A HEARTY REPETITIVE "HALLELUJAH!"  
REFRAIN THAT MADE IT EASY FOR EVERYONE TO JOIN IN.

### AMAZING GRACE

AMAZING GRACE, HOW SWEET THE SOUND  
THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME.  
I ONCE WAS LOST, BUT NOW AM FOUND,  
WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE.

THE WORDS ARE BY JOHN NEWTON, (1725-1807). THIS  
IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR OF ALL THE OLD HYMN  
TUNES, ALTHOUGH IT HAPPENS NOT TO BE PRINTED IN  
THE "NEW HARP OF COLUMBIA"; EVERY BAPTIST AND  
METHODIST KNOWS AND LOVES THE MELODY, WHICH IS  
USED FOR HALF A DOZEN DIFFERENT TEXTS.

I OWE MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH SALLY AND ARVIL ADAMS,  
THEIR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, TO THE FAMOUS FOLKSONG  
COLLECTOR MARY ELIZABETH BARNICLE, WHOSE ACTIVI-  
TIES HAVE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, PRODUCED IN-  
VALUABLE COMPARATIVE MATERIAL FOR THE STUDY OF  
NEGRO FOLKSONG, AND WHO SINCE HER RETIREMENT  
FROM NEW YORK UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN DOING A SUR-  
VEY OF TENNESSEE FOLK MUSIC FOR THE UNIVERSITY  
OF TENNESSEE. DURING CHRISTMAS WEEK, 1949, SAM  
ESKIN, MY HUSBAND AND I MADE A TRIP TO TENNESSEE  
TO SEE WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE "OLD HARP SING-  
ING" TRADITION THAT I HAD KNOWN TWELVE YEARS  
EARLIER AROUND KNOXVILLE, AND WE SPENT SEVERAL  
DAYS AS MISS BARNICLE'S GUESTS HIGH ON THE  
SHOULDER OF A MOUNTAIN NEAR CADE'S COVE. ON NEW  
YEAR'S EVE SOME OF THE "OLD HARP SINGERS" MET  
AT HER INVITATION AT SALLY ADAMS' HOME NEAR  
SEVIERVILLE. LATER ON, I INVITED THE GROUP TO  
COME TO NEW YORK FOR THE SIXTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL  
OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN MUSIC AT COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY (MAY 1950), WHERE THEY WERE THE  
FEATURE OF THE FOLK MUSIC PROGRAM.

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