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**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TWO MAJOR TRANSITIONS
IN MUSIC EDUCATION WITHIN
THE CHURCH OF GOD**

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Music

Degree


University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Blair L. Martin

August 1995

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Blair L. Martin entitled "The Significance of Two Major Transitions in Music Education Within the Church Of God." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music, with a major in Education.


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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father
Bruce L. Martin
who taught me to appreciate knowledge
and to the memory of my mother
Jeannette M. Martin (1921-1988)
who instilled in me a love for words.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank several people who gave of their time and knowledge generously to assist in the completion of this thesis. Dr. Delton Alford, Dr. Jim Burns, Dr. David Horton, Mr. Charles Towler, and Mr. Terrell Brinson were all encouraging as well as insightful during the time they allowed me to interview them. Miss Cindy Kilpatrick is an excellent editor who waded through numerous pages of draft. Members of my graduate committee, Mr. Anthony D'Andrea and Dr. James Stroud, were not only encouraging but proved to be very knowledgeable in the classroom as well. A special thanks to Dr. William Lee, my graduate advisor, who talked me into writing a thesis; it turned out to be a great experience. More thanks than I could possibly give go to my wife, Monique, who was supportive yet able to give constructive criticism and who edited every page whether she wanted to or not while I sat for countless hours at the computer. Finally, I would like to thank Jesus Christ. It was His grace that helped me straighten out my life so that I could finish college and pursue a graduate degree.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines transitions of music education within the Church of God (COG), Cleveland, Tennessee. A Pentecostal denomination with its roots in the South, the COG uses a rich mixture of musical styles derived from regional culture and shaped by its religious outlook. Since education occurs in any social institution, and since the COG has the highest percentage growth rate of any Protestant denomination, it is important to research the development and effects of music teaching methods used in what has become a highly influential organization.

In its earliest stages, the COG was the focus of persecution due to ignorance and hatred. As the Pentecostal movement gained national recognition through the Asuza Street revivals in Los Angeles in 1906, however, the COG moved into an era of acceptance and growth. Prior to this music was taught in an oral/aural tradition derived from the poor white Southern Appalachian culture from which the COG received much of its early membership. As the church continued to grow, pulling converts from the middle class, members became more educated.

This rise in education coupled with the growing popularity of a new type of music, gospel songs, made conditions ripe for the COG development of singing schools using shaped notes. The singing school trend continued until the 1960's at which time social upheaval, higher educational opportunities, and a proliferation of round-note church music publications aided in the decline of the singing schools.

For a time, music education was left primarily to the public schools until the COG developed an organizational structure designed to teach music

to all age levels of the church. Although music education is at a higher level of quality than ever, it appears that a greater number of members are not involved with the musical process in the church as compared to the time when singing schools were popular.

In conclusion, it seems clear that teaching musical heritage is a vital part of a comprehensive music program, whether in the school or the church. The evidence presented here also points to the strong advantage of an organized, unified system of music teaching. Understanding past methodologies and approaches can improve music education today.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Hypotheses

This thesis will directly address two major transitions in music education through which the Church of God (COG) has progressed since its beginning.¹ In examining these transitions, it will become clear that, although the COG has had tremendous changes in the way music has been learned, its purpose has remained consistent. It appears that it is this consistency which has given music leaders within the COG the foundations needed to continue striving for excellence in church music education in the face of adversity.²

Music in the COG is unique. A reference to the COG, especially in the South, will usually evoke distinct images. "From its inception the Church of God has been known as a church where music played a prominent role in its

¹There are several denominations which are known as the Church of God. Each has not only its distinct heritage and government, but its own policies, statements of belief and exegetical theology as well. The Church of God, Findlay, Ohio (also known as the Winebrenner Church of God after its founder, or Churches of God, General Conference) retains theological ties with Methodism. The Church of God, Anderson, Indiana, is a fundamental holiness organization with strict policies ranging from dress to worship. The Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee is the only COG which is not only fundamental-evangelical but Pentecostal as well. It is this denomination which will be discussed in this thesis.

²Music in the COG is primarily for ministry purposes. This has been the guide by which programs, education, and performance groups have been organized.

total ministry. Enthusiastic, fervent singing has linked together with dynamic preaching and spirited praise and adoration to create distinctive styles of worship and evangelism."³

Why study music education within the COG? First, the word "educate" is defined as "to develop mentally or morally esp. by instruction."⁴ Therefore, music education cannot be exclusive to the classroom since both mental and moral development occur wherever ideas, skills, sounds, concepts, experiences, or traditions are passed from one person to another. Secondly, both religion and music play vital roles in American history. Not only does American music education have its roots in religion, but much of its growth has been attributed to numerous religious people and organizations.⁵

³Church of God Department of Music Ministries, Music Ministries Manual, (Cleveland, Tennessee: SpiritSound Music Group, 1992), 1.

⁴Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, rev. ed. (1975), s.v. "Educate."

⁵In Lawrence Cremin's The Transformation of the School (New York: Knopf, 1962), the author discusses the importance of culture and community in the reformation of late nineteenth century education.

In an essay review of another work by the same author, American Education: The National Experience, 1783 - 1876, the reviewer notes that Cremin "treats education inclusively, as the purposeful transmission of culture by whatever means." Daniel W. Howe, in History of Education Quarterly, (Summer 1982, 205-215).

The development of music education through Protestantism is discussed in great detail in A History of Music Education in the United States, James A. Keene, (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1982).

In addressing early music education in the United States, the authors of A History of American Music Education Michael L. Mark and Charles L. Gary, (New York: Schirmer, 1992), state that "the groundwork for formal music education was laid by ministers who wanted to improve the quality of music in their churches by returning to traditional music-reading practices. . . The reform work of the New England ministers influenced American education far beyond their dreams. Their work had significant results in the establishment of a formal system of music education to provide music instruction to the masses and eventually led to school music education as we know it today," 70.

There is currently very little literature available concerning music education within the Church of God. Music in the Pentecostal Church is a COG-authored book; however, it is intended as a survey of Pentecostal music and as a guideline for organizing and improving existing music programs.⁶ Another book, Like a Mighty Army, hailed as the history of the COG, is written in an overall historical perspective, and therefore is not meant to focus specifically on music education.⁷ Aside from these books, there is scant material from which information may be found specifically concerning COG music. This lack of research emphasizes the need to examine the music teaching and its impact on those who are affiliated with the denomination.

The amount of influence a denominational body such as the COG exerts, will depend somewhat upon its size and popularity. In April 1993, the cover story for *Time* included a chart depicting church enrollment growth and decline from 1965 to 1989 throughout various denominations. The Evangelical Lutheran experienced only a slight waning (-8%) with United Methodist slightly more (-19%). The Disciples of Christ suffered the largest decrease (-45%). Churches gaining in congregational size included the Southern Baptists (+38%), Church of the Nazarene (+63%), and Assemblies of God (+121%).

The Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) had the largest growth, an increase of 183%.⁸ With this high level of growth, the COG has begun to exert an influence on the lives of many, not only in America, but throughout the

⁶Delton Alford, (Cleveland, Tennessee: Pathway Press, 1967), 9.

⁷Charles W. Conn, Like a Mighty Army: A History of the Church of God, (Cleveland, Tennessee, Pathway Press, 1977.)

⁸Richard N. Ostling, "The Church Search," Time (5 April 1993) : 46-47.

world. By virtue of its use in such a growing organization, the music in the COG reaches a large number of people at every age level. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that the methods by which the music is taught will ultimately affect many COG members. The impact of this denomination, however, remains unnoticed by a vast majority of researchers and authors. Some who do attempt to approach the subject too often promulgate inaccuracies or misrepresentations which are likely a result of faulty information or a lack of understanding.⁹

Music in the COG worship service and other activities is not chosen arbitrarily. Rather, it is selected as a means to renew "interest and participation in a vibrant music ministry involving congregational and individual participation in enthusiastic and spiritual singing. . ."¹⁰ With Pentecostalism being such an integral part of the COG, it is logical that it directly affected the development of music teaching methods.

⁹Sidney Ahlstrom's highly respected two-volume work Religious History of the United States (New York: Mifflin Co., 1968) does not even mention the Church of God, while other equally respected anthologies mix the COG into a broad group of denominations labeled as the Pentecostal movement.

The Encyclopedia of Religion in the South (1984, s.v. "Pentecostalism.") claims that Pentecostalism was brought to the South by Gaston Barnabas Cashwell, who, after receiving the Baptism of the Holy Ghost with evidence in tongues while in Los Angeles in 1906, began revivals in North Carolina and Tennessee. During a Cashwell revival in January 1908, A. J. Tomlinson received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. The writers then make the assumption that since Tomlinson was a leader in the fledgling congregation, his receiving of the Baptism brought the COG into the Pentecostal movement. The information omitted from this segment is that the Baptism had been experienced by all the COG ministers except for Tomlinson, some as much as twelve years earlier. "It should be noted that this happened [Spirit baptism] in 1896 - ten years before the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in California in 1906 which is popularly regarded as the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement." Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 5-7.

¹⁰Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 19.

The COG, like any denomination, has undergone significant transitions in its development. Social, cultural, economic, and religious events have influenced its efforts with music. These transitions affected not only church polity, but also congregational involvement, which included formal music as a part of worship. Music in the COG stemmed from an oral tradition, but today is a formal, intentional effort in which the education of its members is prominent.

Two major transitions stand out in their effect on music within the COG. The first, a move from the oral tradition into an era of shaped notes and singing schools, increased the accessibility of music performance for the non-musician and seemed to strengthen church families through a unified social/educational approach. The second, a move from the singing schools to a more formalized "European" method of instruction, intensified music learning for some while excluding others.

Of what consequence were these transitions? With the advantages of an historical perspective, were the three musical eras a positive development educationally for members in the COG? Were the transitional periods detrimental in continuing the cycle of music heritage? Before one attempts to answer these questions, a survey of denominational origins would be advantageous in illuminating both the cultural as well musical heritage of the COG.

CHAPTER TWO

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

Beginnings

The Church of God was inauspicious in its inception. On Thursday, August 19, 1886, a small group of Christians gathered at the Barney Creek Meetinghouse, a rough log building located at the confluence of Barney and Coker Creeks in the Unicoi Mountains of Southeastern Tennessee. Under the leadership of Reverend Richard G. Spurling, a local Baptist minister, the small assembly discussed the growing pattern of modernism and liberalism which was settling over mainstream denominations. As a result of that meeting, Spurling, along with seven men and women, formed a new congregation dedicated to reasserting "intrinsic doctrines of the Bible and the vital matters of Christian service."¹¹

With scriptures as a guideline, the fledgling denomination began to pattern their services after the early Christian church. They were dedicated to living their lives according to the Word of God. They believed that "since reformation and holiness were resisted in the church, there must be a separation if there was to be genuine spiritual identity. A Christian union should be formed that would reassert the intrinsic doctrines of the Bible..."¹²

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid, 7.

The Christian Union was the first name of the organization which later became the Church of God.¹³

Worship with music in the early COG was primarily without musical accompaniment and drew from the hymnody of the people who comprised the first congregations. "Such hymns as "Amazing Grace," "Blessed Assurance," "At the Cross," and "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" were invariably sung, for what is now popularly called "gospel singing" was unknown."¹⁴ It is likely that the early members' thoughts were turned in a mostly spiritual direction in order to "return to holiness" and that music which was passed from one generation to the next was done so by virtue of environment and experience. It was not until after the denomination became organized in the early twentieth century that music instruction became an option for those interested.

Although the COG is the second largest organized Pentecostal denomination in the world today, with congregations in each of the fifty states, many mainline denominations as well as the public in general still misunderstand the concept and even definition of Pentecostal.¹⁵ One source

¹³In May, 1902, the Christian Union reorganized under the name The Holiness Church at Camp Creek. "The new designation indicates that the church had come to look upon itself as more than an association, with a mission other than bringing all denominations together. 'The Holiness Church' described its doctrinal position, and the suffix 'at Camp Creek' located the church rather than formed a part of its name." Ibid, 45.

During the second General Assembly held in January, 1907, the members decided to rename themselves the Church of God. Church of God of Prophecy, "Book of Minutes (Second, 1907)" In General Assembly Minutes 1906-1914. (Cleveland, Tennessee: White Wing Publishing House and Press, 1992.), 27.

¹⁴Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 19.

¹⁵According to Church of God records, the May, 1995, worldwide membership was 3,656,687. Church of God International Offices, Department of Business and Records. (Cleveland, Tennessee) Julian B. Robinson, Director.

defines Pentecostal as "of, relating to, or constituting any of various Christian religious bodies that emphasize revivalistic worship, baptism conferring the gift of tongues, faith healing, and premillennial teaching."¹⁶ This definition, however, neither clarifies the term nor elucidates origins.¹⁷ Even supposedly objective writers misunderstand Pentecostals. One source, when discussing the rise of Pentecostalism, claims that it was very popular among several groups, "especially the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) and the snake handlers of Southern Appalachia."¹⁸

¹⁶Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "Pentecostal."

¹⁷The roots of Pentecost lie in the history of Judaism. According to the New Bible Dictionary (2nd ed., 1982, s.v. "Pentecost, Feast Of.") Leviticus 23:16 reads *pentekonta hemeras* for the Hebrew 'fifty days', referring to the number of days from the offering of the barley sheaf at the beginning of the Passover. On the 50th day was the Feast of Pentecost. Since the time elapsed was seven weeks, it was called *hag sabu ot*, feast of weeks' (Ex. 34:22, Dt. 16:10).

The first reference to Pentecost in the New Testament can be found in Acts 2:1-4: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. There was what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." (NIV)

According to the Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (1988, s.v. "Pentecost, Feast Of."), "the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost . . . implies the passing of the old system of worship, as well as the climax and fulfillment of the promises that system foreshadowed. For the church, Pentecost has become a time to celebrate God's bestowal of the gift of the Spirit. Modern Christians who believe in the possibility of receiving the same experience of the Holy Spirit as the apostles on the Day of Pentecost . . . are called "Pentecostals.""

¹⁸Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, 1989 ed., s.v. "Restorationist Christianity." Besides placing the COG in the same class as snake handlers, this work also claims that "Pentecostalism embraced a pessimistic theology anticipating an imminent 2nd coming of Christ." With definitions and connotations such as these, it is easy to understand why mainline denominations did not (and in many cases still do not) view Pentecostals in a favorable light.

Persecution

At the turn of the twentieth century, the isolation and private demeanor of the small number of people who wished to "recapture the nature of holiness," served to make them easy targets for those who, out of hatred and ignorance, turned an angry eye toward them. In its first few years, the Christian Union suffered persecution in many forms. What began as verbal epithets developed into physical acts of violence.¹⁹

There were several conditions which hindered the news of persecution from reaching larger communities and proper authorities. The church was still in its embryonic stages with only a few congregations in a relatively small, isolated area of southeastern Tennessee and western North Carolina. In addition, many of the influential people in the area were passively, if not aggressively, hostile toward the young church. Once the public was aware of the new movement, peace slowly replaced abhorrence.²⁰

¹⁹Conn states in Like a Might Army that "the antagonism took a more violent course when members of the group were baptized with the Holy Ghost. Claiming such an unfamiliar experience as this, speaking in languages that could not be understood, falling in ecstasy or trance under the power of God, and praying over the sick and afflicted were acts too confusing to be tolerated. Outbreaks of violence began to endanger the lives of many." Several homes were destroyed by fire and the building in which the Camp Creek, North Carolina congregation met was destroyed by dynamite. Later, the same church, after being rebuilt, was destroyed by a mob of 106 men including "several ministers, stewards and deacons, one justice of the peace and one sheriff." On several occasions shots were fired into homes or at specific people and some members suffered beatings and whippings, but by 1902, the majority of persecution had waned, spurred to cessation when Cherokee County, North Carolina prosecuted the 106 men involved with the destruction of the Camp Creek church. The "members of the holiness group begged the court for clemency toward these men who were their neighbors and kinsmen, all of whom needed to be converted rather than imprisoned. The men were freed." 29-37.

²⁰The Azusa Street revival in 1906 received nationwide coverage because of the availability of the press. The music at this revival had a very great African-American influence also due to its location (Los Angeles). Dr. Delton Alford, interview by author, Tape recording, Cleveland, Tennessee, 5 May 1995. Dr. Alford is a highly respected author, teacher, and music minister

During the six years in which abuse was delivered, the perseverance needed to survive in the economically strained regions of remote Appalachia proved beneficial in keeping the churches' spirit of community and commitment alive. Persecution was seen only as a temporary trial over which they felt their faith in God would triumph. After six years of persecution, no lives were lost and the church began to experience positive growth. In the face of adversity, the members of that early church had bonded in a way that allowed them to overcome difficulties. Times of persecution had served to give the church an identity; an identity which included faith, the Holy Spirit and its gifts, and a cultural and spiritual unity which was evident in numerous facets of the church.²¹

in the COG. He is currently serving as the Director of the Department of Music Ministries for the International Offices of the Church of God.

This may also be a factor in Pentecostal music being perceived as African-American music.

²¹"Many . . . 'respectable churches' denounced Holiness believers, disparagingly calling them 'holy rollers.' Such rejection only caused Church of God members to seek a more exclusive fellowship within their own community." Mickey Crews, The Church of God: A Social History (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 15.

"No lasting harm was done; instead, the persecution drew the holiness group together and strengthened their faith in Him who had filled them with His Spirit." Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 37.

CHAPTER 3

THE FIRST MUSICAL ERA -- ORAL/AURAL

The Early Elements

There is an erroneous concept concerning the mountain people of Southern Appalachia during the latter period of the nineteenth century. That they were backward, ignorant, and inbred is commonly portrayed in novels, television, plays, and motion pictures.²² They were undoubtedly rugged, a necessity for surviving their meager agrarian conditions;²³ however,

²²Terms such as "hillbillies," "ridgerunners," and "briarhoppers" were applied to Appalachian workers who migrated to large midwestern cities in search of labor. Clyde B. McCoy and Virginia McCoy Watkins, "Stereotypes of Appalachian Migrants," in *The Invisible Minority*, William W. Philliber and Clyde B. McCoy eds., (Lexington: The Univeristy Press of Kentucky, 1981), 21.

Generalizations of the southern rural culture can be found in the eighteenth century as well as the nineteenth and twentieth. Author Grady McWhiney notes that "on the eve of the American Revolution the Reverend Charles Woodmason described backcountry Carolinians as being ignorant and impudent. 'Very few can read -- fewer write. Few or no Books are to be found in all this vast Country . . . Nor do they delight in Historical Books or in having them read to them, as do our Vulgar in England for these People despise Knowledge, and instead of honouring a Learned Person, or any one of Wit or Knowledge be it in the Arts, Sciences, or Languages, they despise and Ill treat them -- And this Spirit Prevails even among the Principals of this Province.'" *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South*, (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1988), 193-194.

Even as late as 1972, John Boorman, in his film *Deliverance*, portrayed the struggles of a group of men (Burt Reynolds, Jon Voight, Ned Beatty, and Ronny Cox) after one of their members is brutally sodomized and another murdered by two hulking native mountain men from northeast Georgia.

²³"Life in this region was rugged and toilsome . . . along the mountainous slopes and narrow, twisting valleys farmers eked a frugal living from the soil, following plows drawn by oxen, for the few who could afford a mule or a horse were looked upon as rich. Crops were sufficient but not abundant, for the sterile red soil produced only grudgingly under the coaxing hands that tilled it." Conn, *Like a Mighty Army*, 3.

although unschooled, many retained a sophisticated understanding of the world in which they interacted. Their social life centered around church, music, and related activities. To be sure, they were not classically trained in the European sense, but their music was intricate, both rhythmically and melodically, as well as rich with tradition.²⁴ These people who formed the Church of God and who brought to it their unique musical heritage were a small sect from the Appalachian sub-culture. The emphasis they placed on their music is evident in the role it played during worship.

Alford states that "the Pentecostal church has gone to great lengths to model its worship, doctrine, patterns of Christian living, and in some cases methods of church government after the practices of New Testament Christians."²⁵ The COG used both the Old and New Testaments, which provided extensive examples of music in many types of situations,²⁶ as a

²⁴Charles Wolfe discussed at length the origins of folk music in the South and especially the Appalachians of Tennessee in his book Tennessee Strings. He gives an account of the first scholar, an Englishman by the name of Cecil Sharp, to traverse the imposing Appalachians searching for English and Scottish folk songs which were still being sung in a manner close to their original form. In less than a year Sharp had enough material to publish a collection of these rural folk songs in 1917. He published an expanded version in 1932. The author also states that "one type of song Sharp did not try to collect in his journeys into the mountains was the religious folk song. Had he done so, he would have found a thriving tradition of religious singing, not only in the mountains but across rural Tennessee." (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 3-8.

Sharp's book was described as "the most valuable contribution that has yet been made to this special phase of folksong," by Richard Aldrich, music critic of the *New York Times*. He proclaimed Sharp the "chief authority on English folksong." Henry D. Shapiro, Appalachia on Our Mind, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 256.

²⁵Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 32.

²⁶Genesis 4:21 is the first reference to music. Speaking of the eighth generation from Adam in the line of Cain, Jubal "was the father of all who play the harp and flute."(NIV)

basis for incorporating music into the worship service. Scriptures also served as a guideline during two major cultural transitions which transformed the way in which music was taught within the church.²⁷

The Influence of COG Music

Dr. Delton Alford in his book Music in the Pentecostal Church quotes Charles L. Etherington as stating that "in its ultimate sense music is used in the church for one of two purposes: (1) as an aid to and a part of the act of worship, or (2) as a means of entertainment."²⁸ The COG used music in both ways, but ultimately focused on the spiritual purposes.

Of the three types of songs mentioned in the New Testament, the early COG primarily used hymns to convey its theology.²⁹ The traditional hymn is a "song of praise and adoration which is usually sung and directed to God." It is either based on scripture or is a paraphrase of scripture.³⁰

"The roots of music in Pentecostal [churches] were from the traditional evangelical church, heavy influence being [from] the Baptist and Methodist

²⁷"There were songs of joy and songs of mourning. David wails out his cry of anguish in 1 Samuel 1: 17-27, and exults in joy through the songs that we call the Psalms. Songs of praying and of praising are seen in Psalm 51 and in many of the other Psalms. We find songs which express a particular religious experience as with Deborah, Judges 5:1-31, and with Hezekiah, Isa. 98: 3-20 . . . Then we find songs of adoration and supplication, patriotic songs and songs of power and victory, Ps. 44:8; Judges 5: 1-31." Reynolds, I.E., Ministry of Music in Religion, (Nashville, Tennessee: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1929), 36.

²⁸Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 19.

²⁹"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." Col. 3:16 (NIV).

³⁰Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 30.

traditions in the late 1800's."³¹ These traditional hymns, coupled with holiness preaching and Spirit baptism, were all found attractive by new members who came in large numbers seeking a renewal of faith. The hymnody used in early COG worship had primarily three sources: Methodist, Baptist or Sacred Harp.³² As the COG grew after 1906, congregations appeared in numerous locations in the region surrounding Cleveland, Tennessee.³³

It may be that the familiarity with music which had been borrowed from leading denominations helped to create a comfortable atmosphere for new members. As the church expanded into Alabama, thousands of poor whites ended previous ties to mainline denominations. "They identified increasingly with the Holiness sects newly emerging from the Methodists, or with the Church of God, then expanding rapidly from its home base just northeast of Alabama, in Cleveland, Tennessee."³⁴

Between 1906 and 1920, the COG experienced considerable prosperity and growth. In 1910 alone, the membership grew from 1,005 to 1,855, an increase of almost eighty-five percent. The number of local churches jumped

³¹Alford interview, 1995

³²The Sacred Harp was a tune book first published in Georgia in 1844 but printed in Philadelphia. Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, s.v. "Sacred Harp".

³³In 1905, the Pastor of the Camp Creek, NC church moved to Cleveland with some prominent members of the congregation following in 1906. Cleveland soon developed into the central location. Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 71.

³⁴Wayne Flynt, Poor But Proud, (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1989), 235.

from thirty-one to fifty-eight.³⁵ By 1910, the church as an organized body was large enough to support its first missionaries.³⁶

As the COG attracted a membership coming mainly from a poorer, white, Southern population, the church as a body "tuned into the popular culture as opposed to the elite culture."

The elite were not interested in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit because it came according to the principles of 1 Corinthians 1, to the weak and the foolish, and these strong, great churches were unwilling to receive this new revelation. . . . Not only did the elite not wish to be identified with these holy-rollers, but the holy-rollers did not want to be identified with a dead religion of the mainline churches. So it was a conscious choice on both sides; it was both theological and cultural . . . it was not clear-cut, but the trend was clear.³⁷

Consequently, the musical style of the COG was not exclusively Pentecostal, but rather a southern-rural style. This popular culture, as it

³⁵The first Annual Assembly was held in January, 1906.; The first book published under the auspices of the COG was in 1920. It included a collection of songs, hymns, and new songs.; Alford interview, 1995. Church of God of Prophecy, "Book of Minutes (Seventh 1912)" In General Assembly Minutes 1906-1914. (Cleveland, Tennessee: White Wing Publishing House, 1992), 127-128.

³⁶In 1910, a retired Methodist minister who had joined the COG two years previous, sailed to the Bahamas to become the first COG preacher on foreign soil. Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 98.

An interesting incident concerning Bahamian revivals and some prejudice with which they met, comes from the author's wife (a Bahamian). She recounts the story of her grandmother's conversion as being a direct result of these revivals. The first services were held on Green Turtle Cay, Abaco, with meetings at The Current, Eleuthera following. Hatti Griffin, a young girl of twelve, and her sister Hilda were forbidden to attend the services. Their parents, who were strict Methodists, frowned on the excessive behavior exhibited by the newcomers. Curiosity won over obedience, however, and the next Pentecostal meeting was held with two girls peeking in the windows. It was those early exposures to the charismatic messages that eventually persuaded Hatti and Hilda to join the COG, a heritage which has affected four generations.

³⁷Dr. David Horton, interview by author, 9 May 1995.

expanded its influence in the COG, brought to the church music an "upbeat" aspect. This helped to develop the belief that Pentecostals were expected to feel the music with clapping hands and body movement.³⁸

Methods of Instruction

With the large majority of members having little or no formal education, methods of teaching music to recent converts and youngsters in the church relied heavily on an oral (singing and repeating)/aural (hearing and perceiving) tradition.³⁹ This form of instruction was not exclusive in the church, but rather reflected an approach which had been used in the rural South since its settlement.⁴⁰

Besides serving the purpose of passing songs from one generation to the next, the oral tradition served a social purpose as well. Since a number of families who attended the COG lived in isolated regions, the Sunday gathering was a time of community bonding and sharing. This was typified in

³⁸Dr. Jim Burns, interview by author, 4 May 1995; Pentecostals may have been more free with their movement due to their ancestry as well. "Southerners of every social class danced. Dancing was so admired that people often paid to learn how to move their feet to music, just as their ancestors had in Scotland and Ireland." McWhiney, Cracker Culture, 114-115.

³⁹"The schools were little attended, for the fields were insistent and demanding; the filling of mouths could not be delayed, so 'book learning' had to wait. Large families were found around every table, making bread a necessity and education a luxury." Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 3.

⁴⁰"Many of the singers did in fact learn their songs orally (and aurally) from other singers in their family or community. An analysis of Boswell's collection of Tennessee folk songs . . . reveals that over half of the songs were learned from relatives, usually the mother or the father. Yet in many cases of oral transmission, print helped out the process; many old ballad singers possessed handwritten texts, or 'ballets,' of their songs. Sometimes these ballets were collected and pasted or copied into books which were passed down through the family. There have been few instances of any singers actually singing from these ballets, but these texts were available for reference if need be." Wolfe, Tennessee Strings, 7.

the 'all-day singing'. As a social activity, it brought families together, and passed not only music but a way of life from one homestead to the next.

It was a day of great expectation for the whole family. For the youngsters, it was a day of games like horseshoe pitching, hide and go seek, annie over and others. The women folk enjoyed this diversion from the hard life on the farm, as they caught up on all the news and talked over upcoming quilting bees, house warmings and which home would be the host for the preacher the next Sunday. The men, too, enjoyed this opportunity to visit with the men from down the valley and their talk of horse-trading, the upcoming elections or a big fish story. To all, it was a day filled with good, wholesome fun and fellowship - the type only those God-fearing country folks who lived it could understand.⁴¹

Instruments

Instrumental accompaniment was primarily left to stringed instruments. Newly formed congregations in the first two decades of this century were not affluent enough to purchase a piano immediately, so members proficient on guitars or other string instruments provided the music. Most of the churches were still rural and the music "was a lot of mountain music; guitars and things like that. Organs were almost unheard of."⁴²

Oddly enough, though many members were likely to play a fiddle as well as a guitar, fiddles were (as a matter of practice and not doctrine) not brought into the service. Many churches "associated the fiddle with the work

⁴¹Gene Gideon, "All-Day Singing and Dinner on the Ground," Albert E. Brumley's All-Day Singin' and Dinner on the Ground, (Powell, Missouri: Albert E. Brumley & Sons, 1972), 32-34.

The "All-Day Singing" is still practiced in many locations. The author has attended several churches, in both the Midwest and the South, which participate in this rich tradition.

⁴²Horton interview, 1995.

of the devil, since the fiddle was used at square dances where many people were hurt or even killed."⁴³

Some may look at the musicians of the early twentieth century with derision or pretension. One professor of music stated that

When we look back, we tend to think of the early days as being primitive, but that's a misconception. Whenever we do that, it is an arrogance of the present. They were very up-to-date with musical instruments just like when we use [electric] guitars and synthesizers and things like that and we think that we're hip and we're with it and up-to-date. They were very up-to-date with the popular culture [of the time], and popular culture has changed.⁴⁴

The First Major Transition

Music as a form of entertainment as well as worship continued into the twenties. The dinner on the ground developed into the music convention.⁴⁵ The earliest occurrence of music conventions in the COG was

⁴³Gideon, "All-Day Singin'."

"In old folk expressions and tales, as well as in contemporary music and literature, the fiddle has commonly been associated with mischief, moonshine, and shotguns. It has been called the 'devil's box,' and the expression 'as thick as fiddlers in hell' has been used to describe an abundance of something undesirable, such as mosquitoes. In folklore, Satan himself is a fiddler, who will meet aspiring musicians at any crossroads and teach them to play. His students become virtuosos at the cost of their souls . . . the violinist Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840) 'was thought by even sane-minded people to have been taught to play by the Devil.' . . . At the heart of the teachings of most Southern churches is the belief that one must reject the things of this world in order to find salvation . . . but the fiddle tunes were too good to remain the exclusive employ of the devil, and all it took to bring such tunes into books of 'sacred' song was a set of religious words. For instance, 'Fisher's Hornpipe,' a favorite at fiddlers' conventions, became 'The Old-Fashioned Bible' in the Sacred Harp hymnal." Joyce H. Cauthen, With Fiddle and Well-Rosined Bow: Old-Time Fiddling in Alabama, (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1989), 201-206.

⁴⁴Horton interview, 1995.

⁴⁵The dinner on the ground mixed eating with singing, but the music convention, though still a social event, focused primarily on singing and playing.

in the mid-teens to early twenties. Shortened from the all-day singing, they were usually held after Sunday service from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.⁴⁶

With the centralization of the church, better roads on which to drive and more reliable cars in which to travel, musicians who had previously been restricted to playing or composing for their own congregation and/or family were able to reach a larger audience. These circumstances as well as the rising popularity of the music convention appear to be the major factors in creating the need for printed music specifically for the COG.

In any body or organization, as transitions occur, there is generally not one specific item or one day in particular which is deemed a turning point. Rather, it is a gradual development of circumstances, unknown to the individuals of the time, which impact the future. Concerning the COG around 1910, increasing numbers in more central locations helped to create an environment ripe for change. With the central church having moved from the mountains into Cleveland, Tennessee, and with other churches of modest, yet significant size being started in other states such as Georgia and Florida, the oral tradition began its decline.⁴⁷

As a greater number of members began to live in or near cities and towns, the number of uneducated members began to decrease. Although "education" might refer only to the ability to read and write as opposed to a set curriculum learned within a classroom, the effects of a more accessible ability to decipher the printed page reached those whose lives were intertwined with both church and music.

⁴⁶Alford interview, 1995.

⁴⁷Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 85-86, 96-98.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SECOND MUSICAL ERA -- SHAPED NOTES AND SINGING SCHOOLS

Gospel Songs in the COG

Members of the COG, whether musicians, clergy, or laity, have regarded the gospel song as a valuable part of their twentieth-century Christian experience. As composers began writing songs depicting scenes of heaven, the rapture, or abounding joy on Earth through God's promises and Holy Spirit, Pentecostals embraced the gospel song as a form which best promulgated their theology. "Pentecostal church music has always encompassed and made use of the singing of hymns and psalms in its services, the very nature of the Pentecostal outreach ministry has lent itself to an emphasis on the gospel hymn or gospel song."⁴⁸

Although a result of numerous influences pre-dating the COG, the transforming influence of new hymns (also known as "new songs," gospel hymns, or gospel songs) did not find fruition prior to 1910.⁴⁹ The gospel song

⁴⁸Ibid., 49.

⁴⁹"Musical influences of the gospel song were: 1. the hymns of Watts and Wesley; 2. folk hymnody; 3. the revival-camp meeting songs; 4. the Negro spiritual; 5. the singing schools, singing school books, and convention songbooks; and 6. the Sunday school and YMCA songs of the late nineteenth century." Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 49.

"A hymn, in its strictest sense, has to do with textural connotations and directions . . . [it] was more typically song form . . . thus developed the gospel song of praise to God . . . This form became terrifically popular. Writers from Lowell Mason on began to write in this form texts that were more hymn-like

is usually associated with folk music and throughout its development may be described as religious folk music.⁵⁰ The COG has made "great use of the gospel song to express the joys and hopes of the life found in Christ as well as to express and testify of strength that can be gained through a life that is directed by the Holy Spirit."⁵¹

Clearly, the gospel hymn was not an exclusively COG, or even Pentecostal, musical form. It was, and still is, a tradition found in many parts of religious Americana.⁵² Its influence on the Pentecostal movement and the COG, however, is detected in the large number of musicians and members who have been affected. Popular Pentecostal writers who helped spread the gospel song include Cleavant Derricks, "We'll Soon be Done with Troubles and Trials"; Vep Ellis, "I'm Free Again"; and Otis L. McCoy, "Send Me."

Other twentieth-century writers who have written within the gospel song medium and whose songs are widely used in both the COG and other Pentecostal denominations include "Norman J. Clayton, John W. Peterson, Thomas A. Dorsey, Charles Weigle, George Schuler, Charles Bartlett, Charles

than they were gospel-like . . . thus the birth of the term gospel hymn -- a hymn in the sense of what it does." Alford interview, 1995.

⁵⁰Religious folk music: music that has arisen from a given culture when a need existed for a new and personal expression feelings, emotions, beliefs, or ideals. Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 32.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²"Gospel hymnody has the distinction of being America's most typical contribution to Christian song . . . Its very obviousness has been its strength . . . In an age when religion must win mass approval in order to survive, in an age when religion must at least win a majority vote, . . . gospel hymnody is inevitable." Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements, s.v. "Pentecostal and Charismatic Music."

Wycuff, Bill and Gloria Gaither, Albert Brumley, Joe Parks, Ralph Carmichael, Lanny Wolfe, and Jack Hayford."⁵³

Shaped Notes

As the popularity of gospel songs increased into the early twenties, a form in which these songs could be written, published, and learned was needed. The first publishers in the COG decided on shaped notes as opposed to round notes because of the ease at which shaped notes could be read by those who had neither the time nor the inclination for formal music training.⁵⁴ The earliest books contained a section of traditional hymns and a section of new songs, both written in shaped notes.⁵⁵

As a transitional aid from the oral tradition, the shaped notes gave the singer a "second association with the pitch."⁵⁶ Many musicians were able to move from the sound association of the pitch to the visual symbol. They learned to feel gospel music conventions by aural traditions, and once music reading was mastered, they knew it looked like X but sounded like Y.⁵⁷

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴"A type of notation employed in tune books and hymnals in the U.S. (especially in the South and Midwest) from the 19th century until the present in which the shape of the note head indicates the solmization syllable corresponding to the note in question; also termed buckwheat-note or character notation. The first such system, introduced in 1801 in *The Easy Instructor* of William Little and William Smith, was based on fasola solmization and assigned a different shape to each of the four syllables employed (hence, four-shape notation): *fa, sol, la, and mi*. . . . By the mid-19th century, the use of seven shapes (of which there were at first several competing systems) corresponding to seven syllables began to supersede the four-shape system." The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, s.v. "Shape-note."

⁵⁵Horton interview, 1995.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Burns interview, 1995.

The interpretation, or feeling, of the music was paramount in conveying the music in the way the gospel composer intended. Shaped notes were merely an outline. If a gospel musician played or sang the music exactly as it was written, he was "dead in the water and would never be asked to come back."⁵⁸

Singing Schools

Throughout the 1920's and 1930's, COG ministers began connecting the popularity of the gospel songs and shaped-note publications to outreach ministries. They realized that many people who might otherwise not enter a conventional worship service would, if given the opportunity, attend a singing which used popular gospel songs. The more involved attenders became in a church sponsored function, the more likely they were to return; the more often they returned, the more likely they were to become saved, sanctified, baptized by the Holy Ghost members; new members were likely to invite others to hear the music and preaching. This cycle was quickly implemented into the outreach ministry.⁵⁹

In this effort to reach even more people, many of the clergy decided to use the potential of the singing school.⁶⁰ Born as a result of the Great

⁵⁸The impact of the interpretation can be seen in the continuation of this quote: "People would be looking [at him] out of the corner of their eyes. Back in my home town of Mineral Wells [Texas], we thought reading round notes was an affliction because people who did that had no heart, had no music in them. We only let them perform on Wednesday nights. I actually held off learning how to read music deliberately because so many people I knew who read the round notes weren't musical. Part of that was they didn't know how to interpret gospel music." Burns interview, 1995.

⁵⁹Bob Brumley and Sharon Boles, eds., America's Memory Valley, (Powell, Missouri: Albert E. Brumley & Sons, 1992), 44, 59.

⁶⁰Ibid., 44.

Awakening, the singing school was especially popular in the South.⁶¹ Although the singing schools and the oral tradition existed simultaneously, the oral/aural heritage was such an integral part of the culture that it likely delayed the development of singing schools in that region.⁶²

The COG's use of these schools indicates a strong desire to reach as many people as possible.⁶³ Often held every night for a one- or two-week period, and at a time when farming activities were few, the singing school became as much a time of social interaction as a time of instruction.⁶⁴ In contrast to revivals, which were usually intense and serious, the singing schools were considered fun and light-hearted.⁶⁵

This is not to imply, however, that singing schools were not effective or were of little consequence. To the contrary, after a two-week session, the final service (which was an informal graduation) often featured a choir, comprised of the best students, sight-singing songs which they did not know prior to their lessons.

The effectiveness of shaped-note singing schools lies in its simple technique. The methodology works because:

⁶¹The singing school was believed by some to have started as early as 1770. Lois S. Blackwell, The Wings of the Dove, (Norfolk, Va: The Donning Company/Publishers, Inc., 1978), 26.

⁶²Wolfe, Tennessee Strings, chap. 1 passim.

⁶³The church sponsored singing schools were not held for profit and even when outside teachers were brought in, any cost was not recovered via participants.

⁶⁴The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture states that "even today, many older Southerners associate singing schools with their courting days." s.v. "Singing Schools"; Burns interview, 1995.

⁶⁵Horton interview, 1995.

Shaped notes are very much in the line, in the tradition, of the Orff and Kolday techniques. . . . it is taking rudimentary, basic aspects of music that a person would know, that a child can learn, . . . and if they know the shapes, they don't have to know lines and spaces or key signature to be pretty good singers. I know people who can play piano by shaped notes . . . you can put any new piece of music that is related to the gospel genre in front of them and they can play by the shapes.⁶⁶

Instrumental Music

Instrumental music for the church orchestra was not published as early as vocal music was for the choir. The lack of printed instrumental music may have been due to the type of instruments which were most common at that time. By the late twenties and early thirties, the use and variety of instruments began to expand. Guitars, banjos, and other stringed instruments were still the most popular, but "a variety of brass instruments came into use as well; instruments such as trombones and trumpets as well as instruments which we do not use today, such as the alto horn. At the time they [instruments not used today] were used they were not considered old-

⁶⁶Burns interview, 1995. During the same interview, Dr. Burns related a story about a time, when as a young man, he received an invitation by Conner B. Hall (the first COG musician inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame) to ride up to a church in the Maryville, Tennessee area to pass out new songbooks (shaped notes) at a singing convention. The purpose was to introduce the new convention books throughout the state so that by the time summer camp meeting came around, they could really 'sing the fire out of them.' Conner called up a man who looked to be around 70-75 years old to step forward and lead the congregation in a song. The man had never heard the songs before and had not even seen the newly published book.

He flipped through the book and said 'ninety-seven looks like a good one, let's sing that one.' He then proceeded to tell the congregation that they would sing it through with syllables first and then add the words. He gave them the tonality by singing Do-Sol-Mi-Do and then led the entire church through the song.

After relating that incident, Dr. Burns asked the author, "how many graduates from any music institution in America would be willing to stand up and direct a song that they'd never seen, much less pick one out when the choir's waiting for them?"

fashioned."⁶⁷ By the end of World War II, instrumental accompaniment could mean anything from a small piano to an orchestra.⁶⁸

The Gospel Quartet

As singing schools brought the possibility of reading music to more rural COG congregations, the need for teachers and/or musicians willing to travel increased. The demand became great enough that "if you were a good singer and a good teacher, you had the opportunity to be heard."⁶⁹ One of the finest mediums for both singers and teachers, was the gospel quartet.

The birth of gospel quartets came about through the marketing techniques of James David Vaughan. The James D. Vaughan Publishing Company, a business in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee shared by James and his brother Charles, had sold 30,000 songbooks in 1909. The following year the brothers decided to publish a new book entitled "Voices for Jesus." James reasoned that if he put a quartet on the road to promote the book, his sales would increase.⁷⁰

His idea became reality when, in May, 1910, the first professional all-male gospel quartet in America began to tour. Not only did sales increase (1910 - 60,000 books; 1911 - 75,000 books, and in 1912 - 85,000 books), but the

⁶⁷Horton interview, 1995.

⁶⁸The orchestra of that time was vastly different, however, than the orchestra found in today's COG. Concerning orchestra, Dr. David Horton stated that his mother "had one of the first orchestras in the COG in the middle forties in our church in Charlotte, North Carolina. My [other siblings] and several other kids in the church were all in school bands and Mom put this together and bought from the Baptist bookstore the Tabernacle Hymnal, which was the first orchestrated hymnals available at the time. There were a number of other churches that were doing that sort of thing, too, shortly after that." Ibid.

⁶⁹Alford interview, 1995.

⁷⁰Bob Terrell, The Music Men, (Asheville, North Carolina: Bob Terrell Publisher, 1990), 16-18.

Vaughan Quartet became extremely popular and well received everywhere it sang.⁷¹ In 1921, a year before the first country recording, the quartet cut the first gospel recording ever, "I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray."⁷²

Gospel Quartets and Radio

On November 21, 1922, WOAN Lawrenceburg, became the first radio station to broadcast from Tennessee. The station was also a marketing brainchild of James D. Vaughan. He viewed radio as a means to reach people with his quartet in order to sell more music as well as an interdenominational ministry. He quickly overcame the problem of few people owning radio sets by selling them as soon as his station began broadcasting. "Radio stations such as WOAN catapulted quartets into widespread notoriety, and gospel quartet music was accepted and enjoyed in our largest cities. It was not considered to be a cult music, but simply good music."⁷³

As more people heard the WOAN broadcasts, requests for quartets to come and sing multiplied. "By the middle twenties, Vaughan had sixteen quartets on the road, all on salary, . . . and all selling Vaughan songbooks and records . . ."⁷⁴ By 1924, the Vaughan Quartet had its first competition from the

⁷¹"They would go around playing at churches and conventions and people would put them up for the night and sometimes take an offering for them. Most often they'd give them a pounding, which is an old southern word . . . meaning at the end of the service we're going to have this quartet here . . . these guys [have a] need - bring them some food. So what would happen was people would bring them butter, eggs, ham and whatever or sometimes bring them offerings." Alford interview, 1995.

⁷²Terrell, The Music Men, 16-18.

⁷³Ibid, 20.

⁷⁴Ibid, 18.

Stamps Quartet,⁷⁵ but with the field virtually wide open, it made little difference in the popularity or the sales of Vaughan-published music.⁷⁶

Not only were requests multiplying for live performances (the catalyst for numerous quartets forming in the late twenties and early thirties), but the need for printed music also increased. As gospel quartets were being heard on the radio with more frequency, those who organized music for the COG congregations were impressed with the amount of new music being played over the airwaves. As the popularity of these songs grew, the focus of staying in touch with the people was the key element in bringing the songs into the service. As more songs were purchased, the publishers increased their output to meet the demand.

Gospel music in the COG expanded dramatically during this time. The increase of gospel publications as well as a greater amount of exposure on radio appear to have been major factors in this development. Many COG members "listened religiously to gospel radio stations," a condition which very likely aided in the incorporation of these popular songs into the worship service.⁷⁷

⁷⁵Ibid, 37.

⁷⁶Wolfe comments on the influence of Vaughan on both gospel and country music. "From the early 1920's to the 1960's, Vaughan was a major force in the development of gospel music throughout the country. . . Vaughan started his own record company . . . and used it to promote his own gospel music . . . for the same purpose, he established . . . the first radio station in Tennessee, WOAN. . . His singing schools gave generations of Southerners their first taste of the "rudiments" of music, and many a country singer started out singing gospel songs from one of the 105 songbooks Vaughan published in his career." Tennessee Strings, 52-53.

⁷⁷Dr. Charles W. Conn, interview by author, Phone conversation, 1 July 1995.

The Birth of A New Music Genre

The men in those early quartets, the publishers, and members of the COG who promoted the gospel songs probably never imagined the lasting effect, the popularity, or the new musical genre which have all developed from the gospel quartet, its music, and its influence.⁷⁸

Contemporary Christian Music (CCM), a highly popular form of entertainment in the music industry today, owes its existence to the gospel quartet phenomenon. The first vestiges of Christian music reaching a general audience came through gospel quartet recordings. As more quartets were featured on radio and television, a great foundation was built for the beginning of the religious entertainment industry so prevalent in today's society.⁷⁹

An integral part of the gospel quartet's rise to popularity was that the musicians who sang in them wrote their own music and knew what was already popular. Many of the quartet composers would hear a new style on the radio and almost immediately write a song using that style.⁸⁰

⁷⁸"The gospel music business, which is today a major facet of the nation's entertainment industry, developed out of two aspects of nineteenth-century American religious history - the shape-note singing schools and the evangelical revivals; but it drew much of its dynamism and much of its personnel from the Holiness-Pentecostal movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries." Bill C. Malone, Southern Music American Music, (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1979), 67.

⁷⁹Alford interview, 1995.

⁸⁰"I talked to some of these guys that sang in the quartets, and what they would do was listen. In the forties and fifties these guys would do a radio show every day, a live radio show, and they'd listen all day long. They'd listen to pop radio and they would hear a song idea, and what they would do is, they would take that idea, that style, and they'd just write a new song, a gospel song, a song with religious words. They would write it and rehearse it and that night they'd sing it - HOT NEW SONG FROM THE VAUGHAN QUARTET - or whoever . . .

One song in particular showed the contemporary nature of the composers'. Leroy Abernathy wrote a song entitled the "Gospel Boogie" after hearing a new style of music on the radio - boogie-woogie. The "Gospel Boogie" was one song, however, that, although popular and new, was not well received in the COG. It was considered scandalous by some because it was too close to worldliness.⁸¹

The impact of gospel music and gospel quartets was not relegated only to the COG, though as stated earlier, it did receive wide benefits from it.⁸² The entire nation, by the late forties and early fifties, had the opportunity to experience gospel music quartet via radio. By 1954 one quartet had even been

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²The author chooses the word 'impact' to express the overall striking importance the gospel quartets had on millions of Americans. One such instance involved an older teen-age boy. His family had recently moved from Tupelo, Mississippi to Memphis, Tennessee. The Songfellows, a quartet which was based and sang regularly in Memphis, was the object of this young man's attention. He became friends with two of the members who let him sit backstage during each performance. After several months, the boy asked for an audition. The quartet agreed, listened to him, but refused to let him join as an alternate because of his inability to sing harmony. His name was Elvis Presley. Terrell, The Music Men, 313.

As a child, Elvis' mother, Gladys Smith attended the Church of God and Prophecy, a Holiness church which, during the first half of this century was more Pentecostal in nature. "The congregations of the Churches of God were more exuberant and emotional, and more 'physically agitated' in the 1930's through the 1950's than they are now. . . for an exact replica of what Gladys and later . . . Elvis were experiencing in their Church of God [and Prophecy] days, you must today go to the Pentecostal church." Elaine Dundy, Elvis and Gladys, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985), 46.

Elvis attributed his physical movements, with which he shocked the nation, to his Pentecostal days as a boy. "Man, the very first thing I could remember in my life was sittin' on my mama's lap in church. What did I know when I was two years old? But all I wanted to do was run down the aisle and go sing with the choir. I knew it then; I had to sing. I'll tell you something else too, those people [in church] might be whacked out, but they know how to move. They're free. They're not afraid to move their bodies, and that's where I got it. When I started singing, I just did what came natural, what they taught me." Larry Geller and Joel Spector, If I Can Dream: Elvis' Own Story, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 39-40.

featured on nation-wide television, and in the remaining years of the decade, many more would follow suit.⁸³

Shaped-Note Publishing Companies

The first publishers of the shaped-note convention music were the Vaughan Company and the Stamps-Baxter Music Company.⁸⁴ By 1931, the Publishing House of the COG, "operating under the trade name 'Tennessee Music and Printing Company,' printed and sold enough music and songbooks to merit a separate report at the [COG] Assembly."⁸⁵

By 1934, Tennessee Music rivaled both Vaughan and Stamps-Baxter in music sales.⁸⁶ To facilitate the production increase and sales demands, the 1934 Assembly "created two new offices for the Publishing House - a music editor and an editor of Sunday School literature. . . . By 1934 a music editor became a practical necessity, so Otis L. McCoy, who had made a great

⁸³During the week of June 11, 1954, the Blackwood Brothers were featured on Arthur Godfrey's "Talent Scouts", a prime-time program broadcast from New York on CBS. Terrell, The Music Men, 141.

⁸⁴Convention music (or convention book) was the common name for songs which were published in collections to be used primarily for singing conventions, camp meetings, and revivals. Alford, Music in the Pentecostal Church, 47-48.

⁸⁵The Tennessee Music and Printing Company was not named the Church of God Publishing Company specifically to avoid strained business relations with denominations which were not appreciative of the Pentecostal form of worship. Alford interview, 1995.; Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 226.

⁸⁶Eventually Tennessee Music purchased the Vaughan Co. and become larger than Stamps-Baxter.

reputation for himself at the [Church of God Bible Training] school, was named music editor."⁸⁷

The "Redback" Hymnal

The most significant contribution to gospel song publication came from Tennessee Music. Otis McCoy and Vep Ellis, both well-respected musicians and song writers (though Vep Ellis was a pastor by vocation), collaborated in publishing a collection of shaped-note gospel songs. The result was the Church Hymnal published in 1951.⁸⁸ The Church Hymnal was a boon to the COG in several ways. Financially it became the largest selling gospel song collection in the history of America, which placed Tennessee Music in the position of the largest publisher of shaped notes in the world.⁸⁹

The Church Hymnal also provided a way for COG songwriters to have their music widely sung in other denominations. The fact that nowhere on the Church Hymnal does the name Church of God appear was an important factor in its becoming so popular in non-Pentecostal churches. It is considered a truly ecumenical, country hymnbook.⁹⁰ Today, the Church Hymnal is the

⁸⁷In 1931, the COG published its first collection of gospel songs entitled Radiant Gems. Church of God Department of Music Ministries, Music Ministries Manual, 2.

⁸⁸The Church Hymnal is also known as the "Redback" hymnal because for a number of years it was published in a red hardcover. The author has noted that today, a visitor in a COG might experience a few moments of confusion when he or she hears the music leader asking the congregation to turn in the "redback" hymnal to page X even though all the hymnals he or she can see are green or blue.

⁸⁹Burns interview, 1995.

⁹⁰Ibid.

gospel hymnbook of choice, with its major buyer being the Baptist denomination.⁹¹ Over 100,000 copies are still being sold each year.⁹²

Because of its high level of sales, the Church Hymnal allowed a greater number of congregations to sing gospel songs in harmony through the use of shaped notes. What had been accomplished in families and in singing schools could now be heard in every worship service.

The Convention Book

Another reason for the Church Hymnal's popularity was its close association with convention books. In respect to its content, it was basically a convention book in hard binding.⁹³ The importance of the convention books was in the large amount of new music they brought to the average COG member's disposal.

Otis McCoy directed the publication of two convention books a year; one for the spring season and one for the fall.⁹⁴ His dedication in seeing the convention books regularly published reached beyond his position as music editor. First and foremost, McCoy was an educator, and the convention books, since their inception, had been a valuable tool for singing instruction.

Convention music was, in its most basic form, folk music. Its reflection of popular styles was due to the fact that it was written, played, and sung by "everyday people." The convention songs were not meant to be passed on from one generation to the next. They were considered by many to be

⁹¹Alford interview, 1995.

⁹²Burns interview, 1995.

⁹³Horton interview, 1995.

⁹⁴Alford interview, 1995.

"disposable music." "It just happened that some of them became popular enough to last until today."⁹⁵

There is a noticeable relationship between singing schools and convention books. In regard to this tradition, Dr. Jim Burns, Professor of Music, at Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee stated in an interview that

People were learning to read music in contrast with many other congregations who didn't do that, who sang the same hymns for a hundred or two hundred years. There's some good things about that, of course, too, but with these folks learning how to read shaped notes, their goal was to try to learn as many new songs as they could sing every year. They loved to apply what they had learned in the singing schools, so they would specifically publish paperback collections because they didn't plan to use them after a year or two. They were going to get all the juice out of them during the next year, sing all those new songs, utilize that ability to sing all those notes with shapes and then go on to learn new music.⁹⁶

Charles Towler, current Music Editor for the Church of God publishing company, stated in an interview that

"The idea of a convention book to start with, in the very beginning, was it was like an exercise for people to learn to read music. The idea being . . . that we want to teach kids to read music but we want them to read something that's wholesome, something that's got good words to it, and also something that's going to be useful in the church. That was the idea of printing convention books, a collection of new songs that they could sight read. Even today . . . there are groups of people who get together just for the challenge of opening a book and somebody leading and sightreading that song. They don't want to sight-read something about a Honky-Tonk Woman, they want to try and read Jesus loves me."⁹⁷

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Burns interview, 1995.

⁹⁷Charles L. Towler, interview by author, Tape recording, Cleveland, Tennessee, 8 May 1995.

The convention book tradition anticipated current trends in music publications. Presently, the Catholic Church uses loose leaf hymnals and quarterly pamphlets in order to facilitate rotating music. Hosanna Integrity has become a major publisher in the last decade due to the popularity of choruses and praise and worship music in Pentecostal/Holiness congregations.⁹⁸ These types of music publications found in Pentecostal and Catholic churches are similar in purpose to the convention songs. They are meant to be incorporated into the worship service only until newer ones are published. The difference between today's "disposable" music and the convention books lies in the fact that contemporary choruses are not written for instructional purposes with sight-reading in mind.

The COG Bible Training School

As important as the singing schools and convention books were in the advancement of sight-reading, education was not limited to them exclusively. In 1917, the Thirteenth Annual Assembly passed measures to "institute a school 'for the training of young men and young women for efficient service on the field,' . . . In this school the Bible was to be 'the principle textbook,' but the courses were also to include 'such literary works and music as are necessary.'"⁹⁹

January 1, 1918 was the opening day of classes for the newly formed COG Bible Training School (BTS). Only twelve students were enrolled that

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 148.

first term, but that small organization was the impetus for Lee College, which would one day boast well over 2,000 students.¹⁰⁰

Music instruction was considered an integral part of education at the BTS. The 1931-1932 school year catalog contains a description of the BTS music program:

It is a well known and established fact that music has played a very prominent part in evangelism during the entire Church Age. The management has made special efforts and has succeeded in the extension of the Musical Department in the B. T. S. for this term. However, we do not profess to offer all the advantages of a Musical Conservatory, yet it is the purpose of the management to provide such instruction as will enable the worker to sing, lead in singing, any congregational hymn, new or old, to do special quartet work, solo singing, song writing, and to train for singing school teaching, and class training.¹⁰¹

This course will include studies as follows: THEORY, SIGHT SINGING AND EAR TRAINING, HARMONY, ADVANCED HARMONY, COUNTERPOINT, COMPOSITION, MUSIC APPRECIATION AND HISTORY, AND REPERTOIRE.

VOICE (voice building) can be secured in private lessons at a small fee each lesson. This work will be under the direction of Brother McCoy and will prove a great benefit to the speaker or preacher as well as the singer.

INSTRUMENTAL INSTRUCTION on Piano, Banjo, Mandolin, Guitar, Saxophone, Trombone, Cornet, Piano-tuning and helpful instructions on many other instruments. . .¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Lee College, a Church of God institution located in Cleveland, Tennessee, is a fully accredited liberal arts college. The importance of music education to the COG is manifest in the new fine arts center located at the edge of campus. The first graduate degree offered at Lee College is a Master's of Church Music, which will begin in the Fall semester of 1995.

¹⁰¹It is obvious by the reference to singing schools that instruction was to be implemented in the shaped-note style so as to reach a greater number of people.

¹⁰²The fact that banjo, mandolin and guitar are listed before saxophone and trombone aids the reader in placing into perspective the vital role these instruments played in the oral era and into the singing school era. Instruments which had been previously played by ear were transferring into the shaped note tradition. That instruments such as the clarinet or violin were

All our musical instruction is to train one for services in Christian work. We believe that this is greatly needed in our churches. Good singers and musicians are welcomed everywhere.¹⁰³

Two photographs in the 1931-1932 Announcement depict the climate of music education at that time. The first is captioned "Bible School Orchestra" and pictures nine women, ten men and the director (Otis McCoy) posing with their instruments. The instruments are seven guitars, two banjos, two mandolins, three saxophones (two alto and a tenor), two fiddles, and a bass drum (the identity of two instruments cannot be ascertained due to photographic quality, and the director is sitting behind a potted plant.) This photograph portrays the Southern-rural heritage which was so prevalent in the COG.¹⁰⁴

The second photograph is subtitled "Cleveland Bible School Quartet." The explanation beneath the picture is typical of the purpose for which many gospel quartets began:

The Quartet has done some real good work this term. They have rendered valuable service at the churches and singing conventions in several of the nearby towns and cities, which seemingly was very much appreciated. Among the places visited are Birmingham, Knoxville, Atlanta, North and East Chattanooga, Lenoir City, Etowah, Copperhill, Lawrenceburg and others.

Groups of students also have rendered splendid service at various churches and singing conventions. These trips seemed very much enjoyed by the students.¹⁰⁵

not even mentioned indicates that low popularity relegated them to a relatively insignificant role.

¹⁰³The Church of God Bible Training School, Announcement 1931-1932 (Cleveland, Tennessee, n.d.), 13.

¹⁰⁴Church of God Bible Training School (Cleveland, Tennessee), 41.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 40.

An added dimension to the work of the Cleveland Bible School Quartet can be seen through its development. The 1934-1935 Catalogue pictures the renamed quartet (B.T.S. Male Quartet) with four instruments. The text under the photograph is an indication that the use of music for recruitment purposes as well as spreading the Gospel had been a high priority for the COG since its earliest days. "When they [the COG] would go into a new community and start a new church, a lot of times that's the way they did it. The first thing they wanted to do was to teach music, to teach singing and get people to sing . . ." ¹⁰⁶ Not only did the B.T.S. Male Quartet sing gospel music, but they played arrangements as well, using a fiddle, guitar, banjo, and dobro. ¹⁰⁷

This Quartet was organized in 1931 and has been traveling each year singing and teaching throughout the United States. This last year they travelled in the interest of the Bible School and this summer they are travelling with the Superintendent and making the various state conventions and assemblies soliciting students for this next term. This Quartet received its training in B. T. S. and each member is a live-wire booster for our school.

These men are not only musicians and singers, but are good Christian gentlemen and are each baptized with the precious Holy Ghost. ¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Towler interview, 1995.

¹⁰⁷The dobro is a guitar-like instrument developed by "five Czechoslovakian immigrant brothers named Dopyera (thus DOPYera BROthers or Dobro). The instrument is played in a horizontal or 'tabletop' position on the lap or, if the musician stands, held by a neck strap, with arms and hands working inside, the rich sound produced by a combination of plucking and a metal steel bar depressing the strings while sliding over the fingerboard." Cecelia Tichi, High Lonesome: The American Culture of Country Music, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 206.

¹⁰⁸Church of God Bible Training School, Catalogue 1934-1935, (Cleveland, Tennessee: Church of God Bible Training School), 14.

Two photographs from BTS history found in the COG archives give an indication of the direction in which instrumental education developed. One, dated 1936-1937, pictures over fifty students playing a number of instruments. Most notable is the decline in the variety of string instruments, though the guitar is still in the majority.¹⁰⁹

A second photograph, dated only early forties, pictures sixty individuals, almost equally divided in gender (twenty-nine women and thirty-one men). In this picture, only one banjo can be seen, and although the arrangement is such that a number of people might be holding smaller instruments which are hidden, it is clear that the majority of students are not playing the guitar. There are a number of trombones, trumpets, and saxophones, but no fiddles or mandolins.¹¹⁰

The Contributions of Otis L. McCoy

The man most responsible for combining music education and commercial music publication in the COG was Otis L. McCoy. Between 1934 (the year he was selected to be the first COG Music Editor) and 1954 (the year V.B. Ellis succeeded him), McCoy supervised the publication of more than fifty convention songbooks.¹¹¹

As an instructor at the BTS, his commitment to education is evident as stated in the 1932-1933 catalog.

¹⁰⁹Photographic Collection of Hal Bernard Dixon, Jr., Pentecostal Research Center, Cleveland, Tennessee.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹COG Department of Music Ministries. Music Ministries Manual, 3.

Professor Otis L. McCoy, formerly of Lawrenceburg, Tenn., has again been secured as instructor of Music in B. T. S. for another term. Brother McCoy, who is a talented musician, has neither spared time nor means to better qualify himself for this great work. For some six or seven years he was connected with the James D. Vaughan Musical Conservatory of Lawrenceburg, Tenn., as student and instructor and was a member of the Radio and Recording Quartet which traveled continually throughout the United States, except during school term, when they rendered valuable services at the Conservatory.

We thank and praise the Lord for the privilege of obtaining such a worthy, qualified man for this position.

This last term, Brother McCoy, with his competent instructions and his "determined-to-win" efforts, met with glowing success in the Musical Department. He was greatly appreciated by all the students for his Vocal and Instrumental instructions. You will find him willing and always ready to assist you in your study of music. There were so many desiring private lessons until he was unable to take care of all, for lack of time. Even before the term closed we were forced to secure an assistant for him in his work. Meet McCoy.¹¹²

His time at the Vaughan Musical Conservatory, along with the time he spent on the road with the gospel quartet (the Vaughan Office Quartet, also known as the Vaughan Saxophone Quartet) and his teaching experience, gave McCoy the qualifications needed to integrate music education into the publishing venue.¹¹³

The singing schools and gospel quartets reached their height of popularity in the mid-forties through mid-fifties. By the late-fifties and early-sixties, their influence had sharply declined.¹¹⁴ Although there were likely

¹¹²The Church of God Bible Training School, Catalogue 1932-1933, (Cleveland, Tennessee: Church of God Bible Training School), 13.

¹¹³"McCoy's warm personality and vibrant voice made him a popular figure wherever he appeared. During his youth he, more than any other teacher of music, made the Church of God conscious of the advantages and pleasure of gospel music." Conn, Like a Mighty Army, 226.

¹¹⁴In 1958, Lee College sponsored its last two-week singing school. Horton interview, 1995.

many reasons for this, a significant one may have been the rise of printed choral music written and produced by non-Pentecostal publishers targeting a Pentecostal audience.

By 1960, there was very little music being printed specifically for a Pentecostal constituency, yet an interest in that type of publication was high as exemplified by the popularity of the Church Hymnal and other shaped-note publications. The music that *was* available through outside publishers was "written in such a way that if you did [perform] them exactly like they were written, it would be a little stiff."¹¹⁵ As new music for Pentecostals became available, it attracted musicians who were interested in staying in touch with the latest music.¹¹⁶

A major influence in the attitudes of the musicians themselves came from better educational opportunities. No longer satisfied with the oral/aural and shaped-note tradition being passed from family members and singing school instructors, COG music students began in greater numbers to seek their education in established institutions. Church musicians classically trained in schools such as Florida State, Mississippi State, and the University of Tennessee were learning with standard notation.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵Horton interview, 1995.

¹¹⁶"The first books that came out for the Pentecostals were not what we would typically call Pentecostal music with quotation marks around it. It wasn't the rompin'-stompin' kind of stuff. As the movement toward the choral thing started to happen, your better trained musicians gravitated toward the new thing that was happening, and that was all in round notes." Ibid.

¹¹⁷No doubt it was difficult for some students in this transitional time. Having been raised with the shaped-note tradition and then finding themselves confronted with teachers who either knew nothing of shape notes or belittled them could easily have caused feelings of animosity toward their instructors, or feelings of shame concerning their background. In regard to these instructors and the shaped-note tradition, Dr. Horton states, "They didn't understand it, they considered it, because it was associated so strongly with the southern-rural, . . . inferior. Ignorantly so, I would add, but none the less they

Never before had so many COG youth been able to obtain degrees from state universities. This increased opportunity was possible through the overall upward mobility of the COG. As membership continued to grow in more densely populated areas, fewer members were joining from isolated and/or destitute regions.¹¹⁸

University students were not the only ones learning "round notes." As the more affluent joined the COG, primary and secondary students were able to join band and choir programs in the public schools or begin private piano lessons from a local teacher. These instructors, especially in the larger cities, looked at shaped notes with disdain.¹¹⁹

The cycle of decline in regard to the singing schools, gospel quartets and shaped notes begins to look like the "chicken or the egg" question. The weakening of one did not submerge the others in its wake. Rather their close inter-relatedness affected one another; positively as they rose in popularity, and negatively as they fell.¹²⁰

considered it inferior, and looked at [it by] either, at best in most cases, ignoring it, [or] at the worse, making fun of it." Ibid.

¹¹⁸U.S. membership in 1955 was 143,609; by 1970 it had risen to 263,299. In 1976, the percentage of U.S. churches located in cities and towns with a population of 1,000 to 25,000 was 46%, while rural areas only accounted for 12.42% of all churches nationwide. Church of God International Offices, Department of Business and Records. (Cleveland, Tennessee.) Julian B. Robinson, Director.

¹¹⁹Horton interview, 1995.

¹²⁰As listeners chose other forms of entertainment besides the gospel quartet, their interest in singing gospel music waned. Without the interest in singing conventions, there was less desire for singing schools. "Without the singing school tradition, you didn't have the shaped note tradition." Burns interview, 1995.

Without shaped notes, gospel music became less an integral part of worship as newer standard note publications became popular. As gospel music began to lose its importance in the place of worship, fewer people heard it or sang it. As fewer people sang gospel music, fewer listeners tuned in to hear it on the radio.

It may seem to an observer that the COG became embarrassed by its shaped-note tradition and consequently hastened its demise by taking a passive role in keeping it alive. This view, however, would be a misinterpretation of the facts. The COG has always been interested in remaining current in the field of music. In understanding the move away from shaped notes, it should be understood that the

shift was not so much [caused by] being ashamed of shaped notes as the musicians moving toward a new kind of music, a new style of music, and that new style of music not being available in shaped notes. Working hand-in-glove with that is, then, here is a church down the street and they have a trained choir and they're doing round notes, and we're not. . .¹²¹

The attitude toward music in the COG throughout its existence has always been a positive and forward one. As shaped notes fell out of favor, the attitude was not so much 'this is old fashioned' as it was 'let's move on toward the new.' Reaching the 'new', however, can be difficult. As more of its musicians received a 'classical' music education, and as music increased in technical demand, the COG turned toward a more "European" method for use in the church.¹²²

¹²¹Horton interview, 1995.

¹²²An implication to this effect is stated in the Music Ministries Manual, published by the Music Ministries department. In addressing the development of music ministry in the COG, the manual states that during the mid-sixties "music continued to flourish in the church with choirs, special groups and soloists gradually assuming even more prominence in the service than that of congregational participation."

CHAPTER FIVE

THE THIRD MUSICAL ERA -- CONTEMPORARY "EUROPEAN" METHOD

Since the 1950's, music education in the COG has been more closely related to the European style than to its traditional rural beginnings.¹²³ Training is done on an individual level through private lessons and with fewer opportunities for group interaction, which was an integral part of the singing schools. Teaching on a group level is directed more toward performance. The choir and/or orchestra receives the majority of this instruction while the congregation has taken a more passive role. This may be a direct influence from the trend-shifting methodologies in public school music education.

During the 1950's, public music education lacked a central philosophy which tended to restrict its development. By the 1960's, however, attitudes

¹²³The term "European" refers to attitudes and practices not derived directly from an American environment. "The post-Revolutionary self-confidence was succeeded by an attitude of condescension toward American culture. In their obsession with good taste, with elegance, with gentility, cultivated Americans sought . . . to imitate or import the products of European culture . . . It was inevitable that European musicians, both immigrants and those who came to America temporarily, should endeavor to exploit the American musical market. . . . What actually happened was that European musical culture . . . was transported to the United States and superimposed upon our social structure. In a sense, however, it is incorrect to say that European *culture* was brought to America. . . . It would be more accurate to say that the products, the techniques, and the carriers of European musical culture were transported to America." Gilbert Chase, America's Music, 2nd ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 325.

toward not only music education, but arts education as a whole, were changing. New approaches, such as Eurhythmics, Orff, and Kodaly, were being implemented in American music classes. Conceptual learning was influencing instructional practices in all subjects including music.

The shifting paradigms can be illustrated by the outcome of the Tanglewood Symposium held in the spring of 1967. Those invited to attend were to discuss a series of questions.¹²⁴ From this gathering came the Tanglewood Declaration which, within the body, stated, "We now call for music to be placed in the core of the school curriculum."¹²⁵

In addition to the declaration, the symposium called on the profession

- to clarify and define music in the society and in education
- to explore the mutual concerns and possible means of cooperation with the social institutions responsible for the development of music within the society¹²⁶

Other modifications to the music curriculum included an emphasis on aesthetic music education and an improvement of non-performance classes. Funding for arts education through federal, state, and private institutions

¹²⁴These questions included:

1. What are the characteristics and desirable ideologies for an emerging post-industrial society?
2. What are the values and unique functions of music and other arts for individuals and communities in such a society?
3. How may these potentials be attained? Michael L. Mark and Charles L. Gary, A History of American Music Education, (New York: Schirmer, 1992), 311-312.

¹²⁵Ibid., 312.

¹²⁶James A. Keene, A History of Music Education in the United States, (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1982), 362.

increased and was used in many ways.¹²⁷ An overall awareness (if not importance) of the arts became more common in society.

As the schools strived to increase the quality of music education, the decline of shaped notes and singing schools seemed to retard music teaching within the COG. Even though the structure of each individual singing school had been designed by the sponsoring congregation or school and was fairly loose, there was still the unifying factor of an observable goal (sight-reading and singing).

By the mid-sixties, the COG had no goal-oriented program ready to take the place of the singing schools. During this time there was the continued use of newly published music, as well as the desire to meet the changing needs of the church.¹²⁸ All indications point to a diminished period of music education. This is not so much apparent in written material as it is in the lack of it.

The 1960 General Council recommended the creation of a unified body on the national level which would operate under the auspices of the general headquarters:

Whereas, good gospel singing and music are related to a Biblical, balanced, abiding evangelistic emphasis in the Church, we recommend that the National Music Committee be merged with

¹²⁷In 1963, the Ford Foundation offered a grant of \$1.38 million to the MENC to organize the Contemporary Music Project for Creativity in Music Education (CMP). Although this program ultimately fell short of its intended goal, it provided the groundwork for other programs which would combine aesthetics, appreciation, composition and performance. Mark and Gary, A History of American Music Education, 349.

¹²⁸In 1963, Pathway Press (previously Tennessee Music) published its first collection of choral arrangements entitled, Magnify the Lord, and in 1969 an updated hymnal, Hymns of the Spirit, which contained a stylistically comprehensive selection of music for the worship service. Church of God Department of Music Ministries, Music Ministries Manual, 3.

the Evangelism Committee, and that the duties and responsibilities of the Music Committee be given to the Committee on Evangelism, and that this committee be entitled "National Evangelism and Music Committee."¹²⁹

The length of time between activities on the national level, however, is another indication of the overall music education weakness at this time. It was twelve years later, in 1972, before an ad hoc committee of musicians was organized by permission of the COG Executive Council to address musical needs (education and performance) of the church. Recommendations from this committee, the National Association of Musicians in the COG, led to the Executive Council appointing a Music Study Commission in 1974.¹³⁰

The culmination of efforts from both the National Association of Musicians in the COG and the Music Study Commission led to the Executive Council creation of the Church Music Committee in 1976. This was the first music organization to oversee music on a national scale which was not tied to any other ministry department. It eventually led to the organization of State Music committees in 1980 and the Department of Music Ministries created in 1992.¹³¹

Although the 1960's seemed to be a period of few advancements, the importance of the development of music leaders was addressed. Recommendations from the General Council in 1964 concerning the qualifications of music minister read:

1. Must have the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

¹²⁹Church of God, Minutes of the 48th General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee: Church of God Publishing House, 1960), 216.

¹³⁰Alford interview, 1995.

¹³¹Ibid.

2. Must be thoroughly acquainted with the teachings and doctrines of the Church as set forth by the General Assembly.
3. Must possess the necessary training, formal or an adequate substitute thereof, to enable him to serve the church effectively in either of these highly specialized areas of the ministry.
4. Must successfully pass the examination given by a duly constituted board of examiners.¹³²

The role of the music minister as teacher has since taken on even more significance. The qualifications of today's music leader include specific requirements in personal, spiritual, and professional/musical areas. The emphasis placed on education is evident in the increased role of the music leader since 1964, primarily in the professional/musical category.

1. Have a thorough background in music theory
2. Have an adequate singing voice and a good knowledge of vocal technique
3. Know how to teach music to all age groups
4. Understand the musical heritage of the Church of God
5. Have the ability to train and conduct a choir
6. Have a thorough understanding of church music ministry
7. Be familiar with church music organization
8. Understand the important role of congregational singing in the ministry of the church
9. Be able to lead the congregation in musical worship.¹³³

These various organizations have worked together to create a structure of music education under the guidance of the Department of Music Ministries.¹³⁴

¹³²Church of God, Minutes of the 50th General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee: Church of God Publishing House, 1964), 73-74.

¹³³Department of Music Ministries, Music Ministries Manual, 30-31.

¹³⁴The Department of Music Ministries has a set of comprehensive objectives which include:

1. To coordinate and promote all the various aspects of music ministry in the Church of God.
2. To coordinate music ministry at the state level.

Contemporary Music in the Church

Since its inception, the Department of Music Ministries has promoted a variety of music in conjunction with the newest publications. This is not a recent development and is reminiscent of the promotional advantages of gospel music and early radio. The difference lies in today's use of educational opportunities such as state and national conventions, which could only be possible through an overall unifying organization.

The diverse styles of music used in worship services today reflect favorably on the success of promotion and education. The word "contemporary" is defined as "marked by characteristics of the present period."¹³⁵ In this regard the COG has always been congruent with the popular culture to which it has been most closely associated. It is likely that as the COG moved from its Southern birthplace it continued to absorb musical styles of the culture in which it was located. This absorbing of styles would explain the various idioms of music heard in the COG today.¹³⁶

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3. To create and promote music materials in cooperation with Pathway Press that will help serve the music needs of the Church of God and the general Christian community.
 4. To provide and promote use and acceptance of printed music and materials.
 5. To develop, supervise and promote the use of recorded music in the denomination.
 6. To influence and promote music ministry programs provided by the denominational colleges and schools.
 7. To evaluate, enhance and promote the program of licensure for ministers of music in the denomination.
 8. To provide plans and assistance for the music ministry of appropriate regional, national and international church convocations.
 9. To provide a fellowship for church musicians at the state and general levels which will promote the exchange and sharing of ideas and resources. Mike L. Baker, State Music Program: A Model Profile, (Cleveland, Tennessee: Church of God Department of Music Ministries, 1994.) Photocopied.

¹³⁵Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "contemporary."

¹³⁶The author has had the privilege of accompanying a number of COG musical activities. Musical styles which were heard included African-American, Gospel, Country, Pop, Praise and Worship, and Jazz, to name a few.

By the early 1970's, composers were combining older, traditional hymns and convention songs with Black gospel and rock.¹³⁷ This combining of the traditional with the old is not exclusive to the COG or Pentecostals. Throughout Protestant history songs for worship services have been set to popular music.¹³⁸ One of the aspects of Martin Luther which aided his popularity was his insistence on taking relevant ideas and setting them to popular tunes.¹³⁹

Flexibility from Heritage

The accommodation and assimilation of various music types appears to be linked with the cultural tradition of perseverance found in the COG Southern rural heritage. As founders of the denomination, the men and women living in the mountains were forced to adapt to changing conditions in order to survive. This ability was likely a major factor contributing to the COG resisting persecution, isolation and relative poverty. Today's international and influential organization continues to adapt to circumstances as needed. The flexibility of the denomination as a whole is not relegated to merely a governing body, but to subdivisions within the church. The continuing diversity of music found within the COG worship services suggests that this contention concerning the ability to adapt is not only probable, but actual.

¹³⁷Terrell Brinson, interview by author, 8 May 1995.

¹³⁸The text for "Oh How I Love Jesus" was set to a popular English beer drinking tune. Towler interview, 1995.

¹³⁹Alford interview, 1995.

CHAPTER SIX

THE EFFECTS OF TWO TRANSITIONS

A Move Toward Singing Schools

Music has been a socializing force since the beginning of our nation.

In the early years of our own culture, aesthetic experience and ordinary experience had a close relationship . . . the singing school, the singing convention, and the family and group songfests that dominated the music life of an earlier day represented direct sources of aesthetic experience . . . they were vital, highly charged forces in the sentient life of the people.¹⁴⁰

The importance of music as a unifying factor should not be underestimated in any segment of society, including the church. As the COG moved from the mountainous, isolated regions in which it had first emerged, its focus was on community through worship services and other activities. Singing schools were available to all who wished to attend. Even people who were not saved but just wanted to sing were welcome. People who might never darken the door of a church were drawn to singing schools as a place of entertainment, fellowship, and instruction.¹⁴¹

Evidence supports the contention that singing schools were a positive influence. Their instructional potential reached everyone regardless of age or aptitude. Never before had so many COG members been able to read music

¹⁴⁰Charles Leonhard, "People's Arts Programs: A New Context for Music Education," Music Educators Journal 66 (August 1980) : 39-39.

¹⁴¹Horton interview, 1995.

and sing together so quickly. Gone were the days of memorizing rote notes and depending on others to bolster weaker sections due to forgetfulness. Each individual was enabled with the tools needed to sing independently yet feel a part of a group, whether in the church choir, or the congregation. "That's where we've had some of our greatest success . . . if you had a bunch of people together who could read shaped notes, you could have a choir in a hurry."¹⁴²

The system of shaped notes was not a method found only in singing schools. Just as songs and instrument playing were passed to subsequent generations through the family, the shaped notes were passed to family members by those who had attended singing schools.¹⁴³

The unity of the shaped-note reading system simplified the exchange of musical ideas from one community to another. Because of this exchange, regional styles and interpretations were not as pronounced as they were during the aural/oral tradition. Yet individual qualities were not lost during the influence of singing schools. It was likely because of the unity of one system that musical differences were more easily understood by musicians outside of the community.

¹⁴²Burns interview, 1995.

¹⁴³Singing schools were not exclusive to one particular denomination, but were provided for any who wished to attend. They were an ecumenical, educational, and social institution. The author spoke to a North Georgia music teacher whose grandmother, Eula Mae Holloway, had been a singing school student along with her eleven brothers and sisters. The community in which they lived, Blue Ridge, Georgia, was a very small rural community. Even though she attended the Church of Christ, she would meet with people from other denominations at a singing school several times a year. These schools were held by singing school teachers who did not live within the community. The first music education experience this teacher remembers is her grandmother teaching her shaped notes. She began learning at the age of six and by the time she was involved with public school music, she had a firm foundation with, and could confidently sing, shaped notes. She attests to the ease at which they can be learned at any age. Cami Marcus, interview by author, Phone conversation, 28 June 1995.

A Move Away from Singing Schools

To say that a transition, shift, or change in every attitude, method, or paradigm was either completely positive or negative would be a sweeping generalization which would very likely have little supportive evidence. To say that a transition leans more heavily to a negative or positive side would be a more plausible statement.

The decline of the singing schools and shaped note tradition appears to be an instance when a transition was more negative than positive. The demise of the singing schools gave the church one less unifying factor.¹⁴⁴ For generations the church and its social functions had been a mainstay which supported morality and social responsibility. As the singing school (a social and educational institution which had served so many in the COG for decades) diminished, many young people seemed to turn to other sources for guidance.

With a culture upheaval occurring nationwide in the 1960's, baby-boomers left their family church to find fulfillment elsewhere.¹⁴⁵ Even with this exodus of student membership nationwide, the COG was able to continue increasing its enrollment. The breakdown of the singing school as a social gathering place however, still had its effects. As singing schools fell into disfavor, the "general music skill of the congregation often declined. Certainly in the terms of musical literacy it declined."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴Horton interview, 1995.

¹⁴⁵Ostling, "The Church Search," Time, 5 April 1993.

¹⁴⁶Horton interview, 1995.

This is not to imply, however, that unified and systematic music education has ceased in the COG. To the contrary, it has expanded, especially since the establishment of the Department of Music Ministries in 1992, and an organized system of authority. It is evident, however, that although those participating in choral programs in the church are receiving more information through extended rehearsals with a higher quality of music and musicians, the overall body within the church has less musical skill today than during the days of the singing school.¹⁴⁷

There may be a general contention that if the public schools are producing higher quality music programs with a more comprehensive approach in both performance classes and non-performance classes, the church no longer needs to organize music education within its purview. The fallacy in that thought, however, becomes evident when one realizes that a higher quality music program in the public schools does little for the students if they do not use the ability once they have left the academic setting. A large increase in skill, knowledge and ability in a small percentage of each congregation is a poor substitute for a decrease in skill, literacy and ability in the larger group. Thus, a search for the solution to the problem of American music education for the few, often lamented in music education literature, may have had a direct influence on the COG.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸An example of this shortcoming is described by Bennett Reimer: "Less than 2 percent of high school students are enrolled in any nonperformance music course, and the great majority of the tiny percentage enrolled are likely to be those also involved in performing groups. Because only 12 to 15 percent of high school students participate in any performing group, school music education for the overwhelming majority of American youngsters ceases after grade 8." A Philosophy of Music Education, 2d ed., (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1989), 177.

There are some who recognize the lost skills from the singing school days who wish to see a unified method of instruction in the COG once again. They do not necessarily advocate a resuscitation of shaped notes, but a system which incorporates sounds and symbols into a pattern of learning which, with proper instruction, can be attained at any age level.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹The current COG Music Editor, in lamenting the decreasing literacy of the modern-day congregation as a whole, remarked, "I'm not sure they ever recovered what they lost." Towler interview, 1995.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Importance of a Musical Heritage

When reviewing and interpreting history, the reader can extrapolate actions and ideas to implement for improvement. He or she may also realize certain actions and ideas should *not* be implemented in order for refinement to take place.

What does the musical development in the COG mean to today's aspiring musician and/or teacher? What can be appropriated from the events surrounding the three major musical eras? What can be learned from the two transitions? Is there relevancy for today in the oral tradition, the singing schools, or shaped notes?

Musical heritage was paramount in the early days of the COG. The word "oral" in oral tradition infers a teaching/learning method requiring someone to tell and someone to hear. Interactional learning and community was vital. Though contacts may have been less in those isolated regions of the Appalachians in the late nineteenth century, they served to reinforce musical patterns to which a child may have already been exposed.¹⁵⁰ That many

¹⁵⁰Concerning the importance of musical contact, even those hailed as great composers experienced learning in society as opposed to a vacuum. Mozart was "brought into contact with every kind of music that was being written or heard in contemporary western Europe. He absorbed all that was congenial to him with uncanny aptitude. He imitated, but in imitating he improved on his models; and the ideas that influenced him not only were echoed in his immediate productions but also continued to grow in his mind,

adults were uneducated, though musical in some way, seems to point to the efficiency of repetition in the home and other social environs. Music must have been so tightly interwoven with the everyday life that it was not cast aside after adulthood or viewed as childish and insignificant.

It appears that the importance of this heritage continued throughout the span of the singing schools as well. Though in different format, the passing of a tradition, through gospel music, retained its importance in the family and in the church.

The advantages reached beyond the scope of music as well. The family was likely strengthened by the unity of participation needed in the singing schools. The family, long cited as the backbone of the community as well as the country, was linked together in activities of education, enjoyment, worship, and music, and so could withstand difficulties it might face. During times of adversity, a strong family could draw on the qualities and strengths of each other, and, like their pioneer forefathers, persevere.

As the heritage was weakened and the mantel passing grew less significant, so too did the tie of the family. A heritage rekindled, despite ethnicity, geographic region, or socioeconomic status, might serve as an impetus for unification once again. This is not to say that all of society's ailments would be cured, but that a strengthened heritage would be a move in the right direction. It might reestablish the sense of belonging for so many children who believe they are lost in the endless sea of today's social calamities.

sometimes bearing fruit many years later." Donald J. Grout, A History of Western Music, 3rd ed., (New York: Norton & Co., 1981), 311.

The COG is now beginning to emphasize the importance of its heritage coupled with the importance of its ministry.

Our rich musical heritage is to be appreciated. But, just as importantly, the future of the music ministry of the church seems bright as well. Music promises to be a vital part of the expansion and growth awaiting the church in coming decades. Spirit-filled music will continue to be a dynamic source for ministry through worship, evangelism, education, and Christian living.¹⁵¹

Music has not lost its significance. Indeed, it is heard in every facet of our society. The point from which it is heard and given significance is what is at stake. It does not have to be in the church alone, and should not be. For a lasting impression on the community music education should involve parents as well as children.¹⁵² It should come from the church, the home, the schools, as long as it conveys the message that children of this society belong to something larger. That there is something of which to be proud is a message which should be announced through the corridors of every institution in which children take a part. Music educators could, and should, be the announcers.

Importance of a Teaching System

Music teaching without a system is like a tree with shallow roots. It may last for a season but will soon pass away or fail in the first storm of tribulation. The oral tradition withstood the test of time. Though lacking in many educational areas to which we aspire today, the essence of rote learning and interaction is used in current methodologies. The singing school training

¹⁵¹Department of Music Ministries, Music Ministers Manual, 5.

¹⁵²Robert E. Bliss, "Take Music into the Community," Music Educators Journal 58 (October 1971) : 34-37.

of shaped notes and its sound to symbol approach has also been incorporated into current approaches.

When the COG allowed the absence of a system to become prevalent, an educational void followed. It was only through the efforts of concerned musicians that circumstances were changed creating new foundations based on musical discernment and knowledge.

Whatever system chosen, it should be used in not only the school but, like the passing of a musical heritage, should be espoused in the home and church as well. Its importance should rival the significance of heritage and, when combined, should offer a substantive basis for cognitive learning and critical thinking encompassing all areas of music. This is a legacy for which we should strive, an heirloom of culture to be instilled in the hearts and minds of future generations ensuring a survival of those musical qualities which we treasure.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. [Name] was born [Date] [City, State]. He received his B.S. in Music from [University] in [Year]. He is an active member of the [Organization] and has served as its [Position]. He has been a Professor of Music at [College] since [Year]. He has also been Chairman of the [Committee] and [Department of Arts and Sciences].

Dr. [Name] received his M.A. in Music from [University] in [Year]. He has been a Professor of Music at [College] since [Year]. He has also been Chairman of the [Committee] and [Department of Arts and Sciences].

Dr. [Name] received his B.S. in Music from [University] in [Year]. He is currently a Music Teacher at [School].

Dr. [Name] received his M.A. in Music from [University] in [Year]. He has been a Professor of Music at [College] since [Year]. He has also been Chairman of the [Committee] and [Department of Arts and Sciences].

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Dr. Burns is currently a Professor of Music at Lee College and a member of the Graduate Faculty. He has served as Chairman of the Music Department at Lee College. He was raised in the COG and first learned music by reading shaped notes.

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Dr. Charles W. Conn has numerous titles to his credit. Among them are Like a Mighty Army (the history of the Church of God), Where the Saints Have Trod (the history of Church of God World Missions), and The Evangel Reader (a history of the editorial and publishing ministry of the Church of God). In 1977 the COG Executive Council designated Dr. Conn as Historian of the Church of God. Among his many positions he served as General Overseer of the COG (1966-1970) and President of Lee College (1970-1982).

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Dr. Horton is currently Professor of Music at Lee College where he directs the Campus Choir and serves as a member of the Graduate Faculty. He has also been the Director of the Church of God Church Music Committee and Chairman of the Music Department at Lee College. He was raised in the COG (his father was General Overseer from 1962-1966, and from 1974-1976) during the shaped-note and singing school era.

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A music teacher in North Georgia, Marcus was born and raised in the region. Her heritage is indicative of many in the South.

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Mr. Towler has been COG Music Editor for Tennessee Music and Printing and Pathway Press for over twenty years. He has surpassed Otis McCoy in the number of convention books edited.

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VITA

Blair L. Martin was born in Elkhart, Indiana, February 14, 1966. In August, 1978 he and his family moved to Gainesville, a small town in the Ozark Mountains of Southern Missouri (pop. 627). He graduated from Gainesville High School in 1984, and in the fall of that year began his studies as a Music Education major at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri. In the spring of 1990, he received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Music Education and that summer moved to Nassau, Bahamas where he began teaching elementary music in a private Christian school and working in children's ministry. It was there he met and married Monique Sands, a Bahamian citizen who was also a school teacher. In the summer of 1992, he and his wife moved to Cleveland, Tennessee where he began teaching as adjunct faculty at Lee College, Cleveland, Tennessee. He has taught music privately and worked as a free-lance musician. In the fall of 1994, he enrolled at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and in August 1995 received a Master of Music degree in Music Education.