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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Rebecca Elizabeth Brown entitled “Survey and Analysis of Selected Rhythm Band Literature 1928-1932.” I have examined the electronic 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 Music Education.

____________________________
William R. Lee
Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

________________________________
Lee R. Harris

________________________________
Paul H. Shurtz

Acceptance for the Council:

____________________________
Stephanie Bellar
Interim Dean
of the Graduate School
SURVEY AND ANALYSIS OF SELECTED RHYTHM BAND LITERATURE
1928-1932

A Thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Music in Music Education
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Rebecca Elizabeth Brown
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To Matthew Phelps
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand how the written scores of the rhythm band were utilized in music education. Six rhythm band pieces were selected from the era when the rhythm band was the most popular: “At the Circus” and “March of the Brigands” by Paul Valdemar from *The Etude*; “The Boy Scouts” and “Anitra’s Dance” by J. Lilian Vandevere; *The Rhythm Band Series Volume I* by Lyravine Votaw, Ruth Laederach, and Cora Mannheimer; *Rhythmic Ensemble Band-Books For Children-The Folk Tune Book* by Angela Diller and Kate Stearns Page; *Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio* by Jane Kerley, Clarice Giddings, and Frances Taylor; and *Eighteen Folk-Tunes* by Virginia Peakes Churchill. The pieces were described, their historical context examined, and the scores were compared. The rhythm band scores demonstrated the desirable musical outcomes then and now: reading rhythms and demonstrating an understanding of musical concepts such as form, dynamics, tempo, and meter. The pieces exemplified some of the goals of the Progressive Era such as education for group cooperation and child-centered education.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

“Let there be a toy orchestra in every kindergarten and primary grade, and let it include each and every child. As she trains this group, let the teacher remember that she is not working for herself alone, or establishing an activity which soon to be forgotten. She is helping to place for all future music education in broad foundation of rhythm.”¹

This vision set forth by J. Lilian Vandevere neatly captures the purposes and history of the rhythm band. She described what was true at the time and also correctly foretold what was to become of a small music activity begun in the Kindergarten.

The toy orchestra, or rhythm band as it eventually was called, was a significant addition to music classes in elementary education from about 1900 to the 1960s. The term “rhythm band” often conjures up images of young children playing simple percussion instruments together with a clamorous effect. The rhythm band was once considered mainly a pleasant activity for small children, but it quickly earned an important place in music education.²

Rhythm band activities were found in the homes of private teachers and elementary school music classes for the rest of the century. The music composed or arranged for rhythm bands is of particular interest because they are among the first scores specifically for instrumental instruction in elementary general music.


The influence of rhythm band’s activities can be found in present-day music education.³

The rhythm band was popular during the Progressive Era. Cremin defines Progressivism as “a many sided effort to use the schools to improve the lives of individuals.”⁴ The rhythm band was a multipurpose tool for Progressive educators. It served those who desired to move away from the strict memorization approach that had been used in previous decades to a more flexible, experiential classroom.⁵ The rhythm band provided a tactile, “hands-on” activity for children to learn rhythm and music, which was well suited to the objectives of Progressive education.⁶ The Progressive Era was also concerned with conditioning the public to work and live cooperatively in groups.⁷ The rhythm band trained children at a young age to work agreeably together to achieve a musical goal. The appropriate use of leisure time was seen as important.⁸ Rhythm band participation for youth was seen as a good and wholesome recreational activity.

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Throughout the course of music education history in America, there has been an ongoing debate among educators over the best method for introducing music to children particularly in the primary grades. The two methods were “note” and “rote.” Teachers who advocated the “note” method taught children the notes of the staff and how to read them before they sang or played and instrument. Teachers who followed the “rote” method sang or played the music for students and had them imitate it before learning how to read it from the staff. The rhythm band served both “note” and “rote” groups of educators. Those who wished to teach by rote could do so and encourage students to listen carefully to the music to decide which instruments would be the best accompaniment. Those who taught by note could use the many charts and scores that were published for rhythm band or compiled their own to teach students the rudiments of rhythmic notation visually. The rhythm band’s association with toy instruments attracted children. Teachers made good use of this natural attraction to teach their students. Thus, the flexible nature of the rhythm band appealed to many types of teachers and lent itself to fulfilling the educational goals of the period.

These flexible characteristics gave the rhythm band its historical significance. It was an activity that was popular for less than a decade but left its mark on music education. Prior to the rhythm band, the main emphasis of music

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education in the primary grades was singing.\textsuperscript{11} After the introduction of the rhythm band, students learned music through an additional medium. The use of simple instruments in the music class became a permanent part of the way music was and is taught to young children.\textsuperscript{12} The printed music associated with the rhythm band preserves early simple instrument pedagogical practices and shows how they were both similar and different from singing methods that preceded them. As the rhythm band gained popularity in schools and communities, publishers joined the movement printing music and resources to supplement these young ensembles.\textsuperscript{13}

This paper will explore six sets of printed music pieces for the rhythm band. An examination of context of these pieces and comparative analysis will show how these scores were used and investigate their usefulness in teaching music concepts and skills. These findings may help contemporary music teachers understand effective or less effective methods of teaching music using simple instruments.

A short history of the rhythm band will open the curtain to introduce the analysis of the rhythm band music. The literature review will set the stage for a closer look at the individual pieces and how they were selected. The analysis will commence with a description and context of six selected pieces. Rubrics for each piece will plot their purposes, strengths, and weaknesses. An analysis of the


\textsuperscript{12} Mathis, “Simple Instrument Experiences,” 270.

\textsuperscript{13} Ludwig and Ludwig advertisement, \textit{Music Supervisors’ Journal} 14, no. 4 (March 1928): 54.
results will culminate in a discussion of their effectiveness. Their impact will be observed in music texts that came subsequently. The conclusion will close the curtain on an important act in American music education.
Chapter 2

A Brief History of the Rhythm Band

Rhythm bands were groups of young children playing simple percussion instruments formed into ensembles by a music teacher. Sometimes the teacher was a neighborhood piano instructor seeking to expand her studio.\textsuperscript{14} Rhythm bands were also found in grade school classrooms and as a part of local recreation programs. The group played simple percussion instruments such as triangles, cymbals, drums, woodblocks, castanets, and sticks at certain times during recorded music or to music played on the piano. The music was usually rhythmic and children played on specified beats with their instrument. After the piece was learned, the directorship was given to a student.\textsuperscript{15} The rhythm band was popular for a period during the late 1920s and early 1930s and gradually faded into the general music curriculum.\textsuperscript{16}

The rhythm band originated from several different sources. The use of toys in instrumental music dates back to the eighteenth century with \textit{Kindersinfonie} attributed for a long time to Franz Joseph Haydn and now to Leopold Mozart.\textsuperscript{17} Others like this piece using toy instrument in an adult symphonic work existed in the orchestral repertoire. In the late 1800’s and early

\textsuperscript{14} G. M. Stein, “A Toy Symphony That Paid,” \textit{The Etude 47}, no. 6 (June 1927): 473.


\textsuperscript{16} Mathis, “The Emergence of Simple Instrument Experiences in Early Kindergartens,” 98.

1900’s, the kindergarten movement spread through larger cities. Friedrich Fröbel, the German father of kindergarten, advocated the use of music, particularly singing, but not necessarily musical instruments. When kindergartens were established in the US, they included this aspect of his model but were reformed to include opportunities for freedom of expression including the use of simple instruments in rhythm work. This occurred during the rise of Progressivism and the child-centered movement in American education. The turn of the nineteenth century also saw one of the largest waves of immigrants from Europe, and with them came their music, which was largely instrumental. Orchestras and bands increased in schools and communities throughout the country. Instrumental music education for all ages became an important issue for the Music Supervisors National Conference. World War I also contributed to the rise of bands and a variety of instrumental groups. All of these elements converged to set the stage for the rhythm band. High school bands needed children who had been properly trained and prepared– the rhythm band appeared to meet this need. Women such as Frances E. Clark, Eleanor Smith, and Mabelle Glenn, leaders in music


education, were involved kindergarten movement of the period. They also likely opened the door for the rhythm band to extend into the elementary music curriculum. “Simple instrumental performance was championed by music educators who played major roles in the philosophical and practical advancement of school music during the century’s first fifty years.”

The rhythm band developed certain characteristics during its height of popularity. It was common for children to wear uniforms for performances. Photographs from this period reveal the similarities to adult marching band uniforms. Several articles and books for teachers gave ideas and instructions on how to make them. The companies that sold rhythm band instruments determined the types of instruments used. Hand drums, cymbals, tambourines, woodblocks, triangles, and rhythm sticks were the most common. Several manufactures produced them and sold them as sets, often with instruction manuals. The homemade kitchen instruments were used as well. Music was arranged especially for rhythm bands and sold by publishers. The scores often corresponded with recordings for the “talking machine” that had also risen in popularity during this time. These traits changed little after the rhythm band was established in the early 1920s.

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Articles about the rhythm band occurred in all types of widely read publications of the era including: *The Etude, Better Homes and Gardens, School Musician*, and the *Music Supervisors’ Journal*. The articles described how to start a rhythm band, how to conduct a rhythm band, the musical and social values of the rhythm band, and a host of other related topics that often restated the same information. Mathis estimates that close to 75 percent of America’s elementary schools utilized rhythm bands.\(^{28}\) It seemed that everyone wanted to contribute to or be a part of the latest fashion in music education. Even the hard times of the Depression did little to affect the sales of rhythm band instruments and music.\(^{29}\)

Other names for rhythm band were “toy symphony,” “toy orchestra,” “rhythmic orchestra,” “kinder band,” and “percussion band.” These names and variations were used until the late 1920s when Ludwig and Ludwig put an advertisement in the *Music Supervisor’s Journal* informing readers that the term “rhythm band” was the preferred name. The term “toy symphony” still appeared in the 1930s but the term “rhythm band” was the most common from that time forward.\(^{30}\)

The rhythm band remained popular in schools and communities until the late 1930’s and then began to decline.\(^{31}\) The development of elementary music curriculum absorbed the rhythm band into the next “big thing,” music


\(^{30}\) Ibid.

\(^{31}\) Ibid.
The rhythm band was still seen in music texts for the next several decades. As other methods of music education were developed, the rhythm band gradually faded away. Even though it never regained its popularity, its original purpose of accessible instrumental music for beginning students was permanently etched into the typical elementary music curriculum. The use of simple instruments for teaching rhythm is still used in contemporary music classrooms.

The rhythm band developed as a musical activity for young children during a time of focus on instrumental music instruction. It became popular in the Progressive and child-centered movement in education. While the stage was set to make the rhythm band a pervasive tool in music education, the circumstances surrounding its beginnings did not last and the rhythm band was mostly absorbed into the general music curriculum.

\(^{32}\) Ibid.
Chapter 3

Review of the Literature

William Mathis wrote the most complete history of the rhythm band in his dissertation “The Development of Practices Involving Simple Instruments in Elementary Music Programs, 1900-1960.” He explored the beginnings of instrumental use in kindergarten; creative music developed by Satis Coleman, and rhythm band in elementary schools and community recreation programs. He chronicled the major developers of the rhythm band, the instruments, music scores, recorded music and the rhythm band’s connection to other instrumental instruction. Mathis concluded with the assimilation of the rhythm band into the general music curriculum.33

Mathis’s history of the rhythm band is detailed and comprehensive. His collection of rhythm band music is substantial and he reviewed it adequately. However, there were some aspects of the rhythm band music that he did not address. Mathis did not indicate whether or not the music written for the rhythm band effectively accomplished what it was intended to do. His descriptions of some pieces are lengthier than others. There is no standard to which the pieces are compared, and they are not systematically compared with each other.

The rhythm band pieces were reviewed in major music education publications of their time. The reviewers were important figures and leaders in music education. Susan T. Canfield, Karl Gehrkens, and Will Earhart each wrote

reviews of the toy orchestra and rhythm band literature as it was published from the 1920s through the 1930s. The reviews were descriptive and usually included a specific compliment or criticism from the reviewer. Occasionally the reviews mentioned the composer’s expertise in the area of music education, particularly rhythm band. The reviewers also recommended or discouraged the use of the book based on its described merits.

The rhythm band is addressed in two articles published in the *Journal of Research in Music Education* both by William Mathis, “Simple Instrument Experiences In School Music Programs From 1900” and “The Emergence of Simple Instrument Experiences in Early Kindergartens.” The articles used research from his dissertation and do not include new information about the rhythm band or the scores. The term, “rhythm band” and alternate titles of “toy orchestra” and “toy symphony” appear in other journal articles in music education but are not the focus of the writing.

The significance of printed music for the rhythm band has been overlooked. These composers and publishers were among the first to direct the course of instrumental instruction in the primary grades. Their contributions guided music teachers as music education transitioned from a singing curriculum to a curriculum that included instrumental instruction. The genres of music, notation, and instrumentation directed music teaching and learning during the time of the rhythm band’s popularity.
Chapter 4

Context and Description of Selected Rhythm Band Scores

The context of the rhythm band scores is best seen in light of its publishers, arrangers and composers, reviewers, and intended audience. Each of these brought life to the scores and the scores in turn brought life to the rhythm band. Without the scores, the rhythm band may not have gained the status or influence that it did during the height of its popularity. They were distributed in several different ways: the highly influential *Etude* magazine\(^{34}\), loose scores sold individually, collections bound in a book, and music textbooks that were used in a school setting.\(^{35}\)

Publishers

The rhythm band scores were produced by a number of publishers in the 1920s and 1930s: Oliver Ditson and Co, Theodore Presser Co. Raymond Hoffman Co., Ludwig and Ludwing, C.C. Birchard and Co., Carl Fischer, Inc. and G. Schirmer, Inc. These and other publishers had a strong relationship with the Music Supervisor’s National Conference\(^{36}\) whose influence directly affected music educators. A positive review in the *Music Supervisors’ Journal (MSJ)* would most likely increase the sales of a particular piece. Increased sales meant

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more income for the publisher, which in turn spent part of it in advertising in the MSJ. That revenue supported the influential journal that linked a country of music educators together. The sale of rhythm band scores and instruments may have helped the industry through the lean economic times of the Great Depression.\textsuperscript{37} The publishers quickly capitalized on the popularity of the rhythm band and added scores just for these ensembles in their catalogues. The publishers’ choice of material reflected the tastes of the music educators at the time.\textsuperscript{38} Publishers provided a variety of scores for music teachers to purchase. Among the selections were simplified piano renditions of folk songs, arrangements of classical pieces from Grieg and Schubert, and new pieces with themes that would appeal to children, such as the circus. Publishers sold the scores in several formats. There were conductors’ scores that showed the piano part, all of the instrumental parts, and the lyrics, if any. There were individual parts for each instrument and also a child conductor’s score that showed all of the instrumental parts together without the piano or texts. And there were piano parts with the lyrics and instruments or just instruments. Each of these could be purchased from the publisher. Some publishers, such as Ludwig and Ludwig, also sold the instruments that were used in their pieces.

\textsuperscript{37} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 79.

\textsuperscript{38} Karl W. Gehrken, Music in the Grade Schools (Boston: C.C. Birchard & Co., 1934), 115.
Arrangers and Composers

The arrangers and composers ranged from well-known to obscure. Among the well-known arrangers were J. Lilian Vandevere and Angela Diller with Kate Stearns Page. Diller and another pianist, Elizabeth Quaile, founded and operated a successful piano school.\(^{39}\) The Diller-Quaile School of Music is still in existence today; their web-site boasts a picture of a rhythm band.\(^{40}\) Her method of piano instruction was highly regarded and popular among music teachers.\(^{41}\) Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, J. Lilian Vandevere became closely associated with the rhythm band. Vandevere wrote numerous articles about the toy orchestra that appeared in a variety of music journals. She also published many scores for the toy orchestra along with musical plays. Vandevere and Diller had high name recognition both for rhythm band pieces and for other musical compositions related to music education.

Other arrangers were also well associated with the rhythm band, particularly Lyravine Votaw who arranged “Rhythm Band Direction” for Ludwig and Ludwig. This company was among the first to advertise rhythm band instruments and scores in the *MSJ*. All three of these women arranged music from the classical canon and folk tunes. They also composed pieces specifically for rhythm band, but there were not as many of these.

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40 Ibid.

There were lesser known arrangers and composers. Among them was Paul Valdemar who composed “March of the Brigands” and “At the Circus,” both of which appeared in the *Etude* in 1929\(^{42}\). Virginia Peakes Churchill, like Lyravine Votaw, arranged music that could be used in conjunction with Victor recordings. The Victor talking machine was very important in music education and opened the door to music appreciation\(^{43}\), a trend that followed the rhythm band. Although Churchill’s name probably was not as quickly recognized as some of her colleagues, her book, “Eighteen Folk-Tunes,” was still being advertised in the *MSJ* in 1941, ten years after its original publication.\(^{44}\) There were other composers and arrangers whose names were connected to music education who contributed to the rhythm band music collection. Clarice Giddings, Jane Kerley, and Frances Taylor collaborated to produce an album for the rhythm band, “Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio.”

**Reviewers**

The primary reviewers of rhythm band music were Susan Canfield and Will Earhart. Both wrote for the *MSJ* and presented their opinions on the rhythm band literature plus music for band, choir, orchestra and piano. Canfield was a music supervisor in Indiana and also taught at the University of Pittsburgh and

\(^{42}\) Paul Valdemar, “At the Circus,” and “March of the Brigands,” *Etude* 47, no. 4 (April and June 1929): 324 and 476.


Carnegie Institute of Technology (later Carnegie Mellon University).\textsuperscript{45} It is interesting to note that she studied Eurhythmics with Emile-Jacques Dalcroze in Hellerau, Germany in 1913.\textsuperscript{46} She began contributing reviews for the \textit{MSJ} in 1928.

Earhart was a music supervisor in Indiana and Ohio and Director of Music of the Pittsburgh public schools. He also taught at the University of Pittsburgh and the Carnegie Institute of Music.\textsuperscript{47} He was one of the first developers of instrumental music in the public schools.\textsuperscript{48} He was on the board of the \textit{MSJ} when it began in 1914 and was a regular contributor for many years. He was very active in the Music Educators National Conference and worked to improve high school music programs and elevate the standards of professional music teachers and supervisors.\textsuperscript{49} He published four books, a number of articles, and contributed to many other music materials.\textsuperscript{50} He also lectured and taught in colleges and universities, including the University of Pittsburgh where he most likely had an association with Susan Canfield. Earhart and Canfield’s reviews discussed the


\textsuperscript{46} ibid.


\textsuperscript{49} ibid.

\textsuperscript{50} ibid.
musical content of the rhythm band works and offered opinions of the pieces’ worth.

**Audience**

The intended audiences of the rhythm band pieces were first the music teacher and second the student. Books of rhythm band pieces often contained instructions on how to play the instruments, how to arrange the students, how to conduct, how to teach and how to use the piece. The directions to the teacher could be lengthy and very specific, sometimes containing photographs. The score was intended for the teacher’s use. Some pieces offered instrumental parts for the students. More often, the teacher taught each part by rote to the students. The ages of the students typically ranged from primary school up through the late elementary grades. The orchestration and instrumentation of these pieces varied little over time. Instruments typically included were in some combination of: hand drums, rhythm sticks, bells, castanets, cymbals, triangles, tone blocks, whistle, and tambourines.

**Description**

The six collections of rhythm band pieces presented here represent a range of composers, arrangers, styles, and publishers. Each set of pieces has a brief description, information about the composer/arranger, and a synopsis of the reviews it received, if any. They were all published within six years of each other.

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and provide a snapshot into the various forms of pedagogy recommended for the rhythm band. The pieces are compared and further analyzed in the following chapter.

These pieces were selected for several reasons. First, they represent the most widely read publications in music education at the time, the *Etude* and the *Music Supervisors’ Journal*. Second, each piece or collection of pieces was among the composer’s best-known or most widely used publication as indicated by reviews or advertisements. Third, these pieces were chosen because they were published in the height of the rhythm band’s popularity. As a whole, they embody the catalogue of rhythm band scores that were most widely used and most likely shaped the rhythm bands movement.

The description of these pieces encompasses several items: their appearance, their musical content, and a brief background or the composers/arrangers. Attention was given to the aspects of the music that would have most affected the student or teacher.

“*The Boy Scouts*” and “*Anitra’s Dance*”

The first among these pieces were published in 1926 and 1927. “*The Boy Scouts*,” and “*Anitra’s Dance*” were arranged by J. Lilian Vandevere and published by C.C. Birchard & Company. These pieces were published


separately but have several similarities that could easily link them into a set. “The Boy Scouts” published in 1926 and “Anitra’s Dance” published in 1927 have the same cover design. Children playing rhythm band instruments surround the title. A list of instruments needed and an explanation of the abbreviations used in the score are on the inside cover page. Both of these pieces are by other composers. “Anitra’s Dance” is by Edvard Grieg from his Peer Gynt Suite. “The Boy Scouts” is by Franz von Suppé from his overture Light Calvary. It was originally arranged by J. Remington and published in Junior Laurel Songs. Each piece has a piano part (without markings for the other instruments) and a separate part for each rhythm instrument.

The rhythm instrument parts are printed on one sheet of paper lengthwise. Each part is printed as a standard rhythm score, one horizontal line running through each note head with a time signature and bar lines. Directions for how the instrument should be played are written at the bottom of the score. The measures are numbered in various places that correspond to the phrases of the music (see Illus. 4.1).
The layout is simple; the notes are fairly large and evenly spaced. They both include a teacher’s score, which has a single staff showing the melody. There are abbreviations of each instrument in columns below the melody line indicating which beat they are to be played and for how long. “The Boy Scouts” is scored for Triangle, Rhythm Sticks, Drum, Cymbals, Tambourine or Jingle Sticks, Whistle, and Bells. “Anitra’s Dance” includes Triangle, Drum, Woodblock, Bells, Castanets, Tambourine, Cymbals, and Rhythm sticks. Neither piece has a vocal part. “The Boy Scouts” is in 6/8 and is 16 measures long in F major. One or two instruments play on every beat in part A. All or most of the instruments play on the first beat of the measure or on the strong beats of part B. “Anitra’s Dance” is in 3/4 and is 107 measures long in the key of A minor. Vandevere rotates the
instruments so that one or two are playing throughout the piece on every beat. She increases the number to three or four on beat one at the beginning of a new section. All instruments play on the last two measures. The phrases generally follow those in the piano score. Similar instruments or the same instruments play during the phrase. Typically different instruments play as new musical thoughts are begun or finished. These pieces were the first to introduce score reading to the toy orchestra. 

Both of these pieces are listed in an advertisement in the December 1927 MSJ. However, no reviews could be found for them.

J. Lilian Vandevere was a prolific writer as well as composer and lyricist. She contributed poetry and articles to a variety of journals including the *Etude*, *Christian Science Journal*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *School Music*, *Educational Music Magazine*, *The Musician*, *American Childhood*, and *Kindergarten Review*. C. C. Birchard & Co. published most of Vandevere’s compositions and arrangements. Other than her publications, little is known about Miss Vandevere. She was born in 1885. She attended the University of Pennsylvania as a part time student during 1914 and 1915. She was working with kindergartens in Philadelphia when she became associated with Birchard and convinced them of the need for

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55 Ibid, 90.
scores specifically composed for rhythmic orchestra.\textsuperscript{58} By 1930 she had become known as a music educator\textsuperscript{59} and associated with rhythm bands and toy orchestras.\textsuperscript{60} Perhaps it was her experience working with kindergartens that sparked her vision of what rhythm bands could be and could do for children. The lack of appropriate materials might have made her determined to produce material for rhythm bands. Whatever her motives, she successfully propelled the popularity and musicality of rhythm bands through her compositions and articles.\textsuperscript{61}

*The Rhythm Band Series for Kindergarten and Primary Grades*

Lyravine Votaw, Ruth Laederach, and Cora Mannheimer arranged the second set of pieces in *The Rhythm Band Series for Kindergarten and Primary Grades* Volume I published by Raymond A Hoffman Co. in 1928. The cover boasts a decorative boarder with circle insets depicting children playing rhythm band instruments (see Illustration 4.2). Lyravine Votaw wrote the Introduction where she describes the purpose of the book, “to supply music for Rhythm Bands which will meet the needs of every teacher.”\textsuperscript{62} Votaw listed the merits of rhythm

\textsuperscript{58} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 89.


band work and described how two teachers in Chicago public schools, Cora Mannheimer and Ruth Laederach arranged and tested the music in the

Illustration 4.2
schoolroom. The ten pieces were arranged in order of difficulty. The pieces grew progressively more difficult as the number of instruments playing at a given time increased, the complexity of the piano’s rhythms increased, and as different instruments played different rhythms at the same time. The contents are:

Ladita – Folk dance
Klapp Danzen – Folk dance
Bleking – Folk dance
La Czarine – Louis Ganne
Valse Bleue – F. J. Gossec
Pizzicato – Leo Delibes
Intermezzo Russe – Th. Franke
The Alp-Maid’s Dream – Aug. Labitzky

The key to the abbreviations follows the contents. Most of the abbreviations are letters, except a circle that stands for a xylophone solo and a triangle that stands for a triangle tap (see Illus. 4.3).
SCORE KEY

S . . . . . Sticks Tap (on floor)
X . . . . . Sticks Cross (each other)
Δ . . . . . Triangle Tap
D . . . . . Drum or Wood Block
T . . . . . Tambourine Tap
T . . . . . Tambourine Shake
Ct. . . . . Clogs Tap
C. . . . . . Clogs Shake
Cyt. . . . Cymbal Tap
Cy . . . . . Cymbals Crash
B . . . . . Bells 'Tap'
B . . . . . Bells Shake
Z . . . . . Xylophone Sweep
O . . . . . Xylophone Solo
A . . . . . All
There are no separate parts. Each song includes a list of the instruments to be used and how they should be played (e.g. “tambourine tap, tambourine shake”). Indications for when and which instruments are to be played are indicated in the middle of the piano score using the abbreviations listed in the score key. This layout is fairly easy to read but can become cluttered when the music and instrumentation becomes more difficult. The instruments used in these pieces are sticks, triangles, drum or wood block, tambourines, clogs, cymbals, bells, and xylophone. Each piece uses two to six instruments with the majority using four or five. There are no vocal parts for any of the pieces. The first three pieces are in 2/4 time, 32, 24, and 16 measures in length, and all in G major. Four of the subsequent six pieces are in 3/4 time; one is in 4/4, one in 2/4, and one in 6/8. They range in length from 48 to 157 measures. Their tonalities are F minor, E flat major, D major, F major, and G major. “La Czarine”, “Valse Bleue”, “Intermezzo Russe”, and “The Alp Maid’s Dream” all change key signatures in the piece. Instruments are generally played one or two at a time and all instruments play at the end. Instruments usually play on the strong beat, typically a quarter note. Occasionally instruments such as the tambourine will play over two or four beats by shaking the instrument through the indicated measures. Circles around the melody notes in the piano part indicate the xylophone part. There are no tempo or dynamic markings. Instruments in general change with the phrases of the music and are repeated if a phrases is repeated.

It is evident from the introduction and the markings on the score that the instrument parts were to be taught by rote to the students. Players were supposed
to recognize musical themes and use them as a guide to play their instrument.\textsuperscript{63} Mathis noted that this type of rote-play allowed for free alteration and improvisation to suit the needs or preferences of the teacher and player.\textsuperscript{64}

There are only two reviews in the \textit{MSJ} for the \textit{Rhythm Band Series}. Will Earhart reviewed Volume II and considered rhythm bands to be a “good movement.”\textsuperscript{65} His criticism was the “thinness” of the instrumentation and wonders if it is because of the printing style with the instruments in the middle of the piano score. He approves of the choices of music (which are similar to those in Volume I). His final comment is that it “is a worthy publication and will prove thoroughly practicable, for it is written by teachers who have had much successful experience.”\textsuperscript{66}

This collection received more publicity during the Music Supervisors’ National Conference meeting in April of 1932. Raymond A. Hoffman decided to include it the pieces listed in the \textit{MSJ} that would be exhibited among his publication.\textsuperscript{67}

In October of that same year, Susan T. Canfield reviewed all three volumes of the \textit{Rhythm Band Series} and the accompanying teacher’s manual. She nonchalantly described the contents of the volumes. She criticized the seating charts and organization, insinuating that to some they “destroy the last frontier of

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{64} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 94.


\textsuperscript{66} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{67} Exhibitors’ Columns, \textit{Music Supervisors’ Journal} 18, no. 4 (March 1932): 80.
informal school procedure." She also criticized the collected volume’s approach to creative scoring, noting that students were capable of choosing the instruments, perhaps inferring that the instrument selection was not up to her standards. Her summarizing statement was “with these exceptions…the series is a nice contribution to the subject."

Lyravine Votaw was involved in music education as early as 1907. She was listed in *School Music Monthly* among those planning to attend the National Supervisors’ Conference in Keokuk, Iowa. She was the director of School Music at the Bush Conservatory of Music in Chicago, when she addressed the Music Supervisors’ National Conference in 1926 on “Voice Problems in the Junior High School.” The Conservatory was founded in 1901 and flourished during the early 1900s but closed in 1932. She taught Grammar School and Junior High methods classes, as well as rhythmic expression in their summer classes. When Ludwig and Ludwig published *Rhythm Band Direction* in 1932, she was called the Director of Public School Music. She was active in the Music

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69 Ibid.

70 *School Music Monthly* 8, no. 33 (March 1907), 29.


Supervisors’ Conference, speaking at yearly meetings, writing articles\textsuperscript{76}, and serving on committees.\textsuperscript{77} Her writings suggest that she was concerned about pedagogical methods and educating teachers on the various ways to conduct rhythm bands.

Despite their description as “well-known”\textsuperscript{78}, little is known about Ruth Laederach and Cora Mannheimer. Searches for their names only returned their association with \textit{Rhythm Band Series}.

\textit{Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio}

The third set in this series is the \textit{Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio} by Jane Kerley, Clarice Giddings, and Frances Taylor. Carl Fischer, Inc published it in 1929. The simply designed cover gives all of the practical information about the pieces. The Introductory word and Lyrics are by Jane Kerley, Piano arrangements are by Clarice Giddings, and the Orchestrations are by Frances Taylor. This Volume I is for piano, orchestral percussion instruments, and optional class singing. The first page is the table of contents. There are twelve songs in all:

- Musette – J. S. Bach
- Little Hunting Song – R. Schumann
- Scarf Dance – C. Chaminade


\textsuperscript{77} Headquarter Matters, \textit{Music Supervisors’ Journal} 20, no. 3 (February 1934): 64.

\textsuperscript{78} Hoffman Advertisement, \textit{Music Supervisors’ Journal} 16, no. 2 (December 1929): 52.
The Little Marionettes – French Folk-Song

Comes a Maiden – Russian Folk-Song

Adam Had Just Seven Songs – German Folk-Song

The Clock – T. Kullak

Hark! Hark! The Lark! – F. Schubert

Air (from Coq D’or) – N. Rimsky-Korsakow

The Toy Soldier’s March – P. Tschaikowsky

La Cinquantaine – Gabriel-Marie

Little Menuet (in G) – L. van Beethoven

On the next page, the introduction is written to the teacher and also parent. Kerley points out that music is often made in the home. She goes over the rudiments of organization, discipline, and how to beat time by giving examples from the music. Photographs of students from the Brooklyn Music School Settlement illustrate the instructions. Kerley goes on to describe how to play each instrument in painstaking detail also illustrated with photographs (see Illus. 4.4). She gives a brief explanation of how students can be conductors and the various ways of dividing the students into ensembles. A key to the abbreviations follows the introduction. The instruments used in these pieces include: small drum, bass drum, sticks, triangle, castanet, tambourine, cymbals, gong, and sleigh bells. Most instruments are abbreviated by one or two letters except the triangle, which is depicted by the shape of a triangle.

Illustration 4.4

STICKS
The sticks must come apart as once after the stroke or there will be no resonance.

CASTANET STICK
Move stick with flexible wrist and not with movement of entire arm.

TRIANGLE—SINGLE STROKE
The stroke against "outside" of one bar must be light enough to avoid throwing triangle against the arm.

TRIANGLE—TRILL
Rapid wrist play moving stick "inside," to strike two sides.

TAMBOURINE—STRIKE
Hold in right hand and with it strike the knuckles of left hand.

TAMBOURINE—ROLL
Hold high and very rapidly twist wrist back and forth.

In a group of six, use small drum, tambourine, cymbals, gong, triangle and sticks.
In a group of four, use drum, cymbal, triangle and sticks.
The list of the instruments to be used is in the top of the page. Tempo and dynamic markings, some with metronome indications, are at the beginning of the piece. The instrument part is on a standard rhythm score, one horizontal line running through each note head with a time signature and bar lines. This is attached the piano part below. The notes are fairly large and evenly spaced. Lyrics for each piece are written in between the piano staves. Rehearsal numbers are circled at the beginning of most staves. All of these things along with articulation markings make for a visually busy score.

The vocal parts are unison with the treble piano part. Some of them have very wide ranges. The words were composed to correspond with the melody lines and sometimes create awkward leaps and syllable emphases.\textsuperscript{80} Eight of the twelve pieces are in 2/4 meter, two are in 3/4, and two are in 6/8 meter. Most of the songs are in major tonalities- two in D major, 3 in F major, 2 in G major, one in B flat major, one in C major, one in A major, and one in F minor modulating to F major by the end of the piece.

They range in length from 8 to 80 measures long. Each piece varies in how and when instruments are played. The first piece, “Musette” only uses two instruments and each play at separate times. The next piece, “Little Hunting Song” uses nine instruments and two or three play at a time. The groupings of instruments generally tend to follow the phrases of the music. The same

instruments play the same rhythmic patterns when a phrase is repeated. Instruments have rhythms that complement the melody line. Rhythms are usually eighth note and quarter note combinations with eighth and quarter rests. Triangles and tambourines will occasionally play longer note durations, especially the tambourine through shaking. There are a few instances where the instruments play sixteenth-note patterns. Most of the pieces incorporate five or more instruments within the piece. Taylor, who orchestrated each piece, chose to thicken the texture of the students instruments as the texture of the piano part thickened. Only three of the twelve had all the instruments play at the end of the piece.

The piano arrangements, by Giddings, are simplified somewhat so that an older student might be able to play them. She also included fingering suggestions for each piece. Tempo markings are indicated at the beginning of every piece and dynamic markings are throughout each piece on the piano part.

There does not seem to be any indication that the pieces are ordered according to difficulty. In light of the absence of student parts and the short hand markings for the instrument parts, it is clear that the rhythm band parts were to be learned by rote. Some of the pieces, such as “Scarf Dance,” are so long that one wonders if the teacher did not devise her own visual system of teaching the parts. In her introduction, Kerley did not define the goal of the rhythm band for listening to the parts of the music, as much it was to gain a feeling for rhythm.

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82 Kerley, Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio, 6.

83 Ibid.
Earhart and Canfield both reviewed *Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio* in the same issue of the *MSJ*. Earhart reviewed it in five paragraphs. He described the cover of the book and “inferred from the announcement, the music is designed for use by pupils older than those usually enlisted in rhythmic band work.”\(^8\)\(^4\) He goes on to attribute the volume’s unique qualities to the fact that the pieces were intended for an older audience. He cites the length of the pieces, the types of instruments, and song texts as examples. Earhart then describes the introduction and lists the contents of the book and adds their selection “says something for the original character of this work.”\(^8\)\(^5\) He gives his stamp of approval in the final paragraph, applauding the advancement of rhythm band work. He added that older students would also gain a true appreciation of music through participating in these pieces.

Canfield’s reviewed *Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio* in only two paragraphs and two sentences. She began by listing the pieces and noted that some of them were “especially suitable for this medium.”\(^8\)\(^6\) She clearly disapproved of the lyrics for their “range, quality, and difficulty for the child of toy orchestra age.”\(^8\)\(^7\) She found the Introduction to be supportive for beginners. She also approved of the instrumentation and thought it would be helpful to show

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\(^8\)\(^5\) Ibid.


\(^8\)\(^7\) Ibid.
others how to choose instruments. She concluded by suggesting that this book would be good for older students and those using the dictation method.

Mathis added his own opinion of the work. He called the song texts “ill-suited” and did not think that they added to the value of the pieces. The book is also briefly mentioned in “Book Reviews” for *Playground and Recreation Magazine*. The review notes who Miss Kerley is and adds a couple more sentences about the contents of the book but does not give an opinion.

Jane Kerley taught Kindergarten, music play classes, and drama at the Brooklyn Music School Settlement. Settlements such as the Brooklyn Music School and the well-known Hull House founded by Jane Addams were important Progressive institutions that attempted to solve social problems. They were typically located in disadvantaged areas and operated by wealthy or educated women. This institution was founded in 1912 and exists today as the Brooklyn Music School. Kerley had other works published as well as the *Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio*. In 1922, *Marsyas the Faun* was listed in the Catalogue of Copyrights. G. Schirmer published two operettas for children, *The Magic Nutcracker* in 1925 and *One Night in a Nursery* in 1929. Kerley also composed texts for other classical pieces and created stage directions, settings,

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and costume suggestions in her *Miniature Music Dramas* published by Carl Fischer.\(^2\) Beyond these items little is known about her except some descriptions from Robert Lewis in his memoirs, *Slings and Arrows: Theatre in my life*. He remembers Kerley as a “gnome like woman” who was particular about voice and diction.\(^3\) It appears that the rhythm band fit well into Miss Kerley’s involvement with theatre.

Little is known about Clarice Giddings or Frances Taylor other than their contributions to the *Progressive Rhythmic Band Folio*. Searches for their names yielded no relevant information other than their connection with this book.

“*At the Circus*” and “*March of the Brigands*”

The next piece in this series is *At the Circus* and *March of the Brigands* by Paul Valdemar. They were both published in the *Etude* magazine in 1929. *At the Circus* was published in April and *March of the Brigands* followed in June. The caption underneath the titles indicates that it is for “Rhythmic Orchestra”.\(^4\) The *Etude* published many, many musical scores including those for the rhythm band.\(^5\) No additional information about the score or the composer is given. The music is printed on one page. The staves and measures are very close together but still readable. Each staff includes a line for triangle, tambourine, castanets, cymbals,

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\(^3\) Lewis, *Slings and Arrows*, 17.

\(^4\) Paul Valdemar, “*At the Circus,*” *Etude* 47, no. 4 (April 1929): 324.

drum, violin, and piano in that order. *March of the Brigands* omits the violin and adds sand blocks. The percussion parts are written on a standard rhythm score, one horizontal line running through each note head with a time signature and bar lines and a treble clef at the beginning. The layout resembles an orchestral score. There are no vocal parts for either piece.

*At the Circus* is in G major and in 2/4 meter. It is 38 measures long including a *D.C al Fine*. The violin part follows the melody of the piano part but is simplified. The rhythms for the violin are mostly eighth notes and quarter notes with some dotted quarter notes indicating that a student would have played it. It is interesting to observe that the all of the instruments excluding the piano begin on a pick-up, the eighth note before the second beat. The instruments all play at the same time with the exception of two measures. They emphasize the strong beats of the measure by playing quarter notes and eighth notes. Valdemar changes the rhythmic patterns for the instruments with the phrases of the piano parts. The tempo is *allegretto*. There is a *rallentando* in the introduction, which is followed by an *a tempo* in the third measure. He also includes dynamic markings for all of the instruments throughout the piece.

The style and layout for “March of the Brigands” is nearly the same as “At the Circus.” It is in A minor and in 4/4 meter. It is 32 measures long. The introduction begins with piano and drums marked *pp*. In parentheses, Valdemar wrote “In the distance” in between the piano clef, a reference to the brigands. All the instruments join and play quarter notes on the first and third beats for two measures. The next section is marked *p* and in parentheses is “gradually drawing
nearer.” Patterns of quarter notes and rests are written for the instruments emphasizing the first and third beats gradually building up to ff in the middle of the piece and “gradually dying away” to pp by the end of the piece that also has a rallentando and ends with all instruments. Valdemar arranges the patterns of quarter notes to match the changes in phrases in the piano music.

Searches for reviews of either piece yielded no result. However, Bomberger commented in general about the music printed in the Etude:

From the outset, musical scores formed an important component of the magazine’s content. Presser’s original plan was to publish technical etudes for us by piano teacher but within a year this was broadened to included piano compositions. . .There is no denying their significance as a reflection of American culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”

Paul Valdemar was a pseudonym used by Dr. Cuthbert Harris. Harris also used the name Edward Moran but that name is not associated with any rhythm band pieces. He lived in London, England and was born in 1870 and died in 1932. He earned a doctorate in music from Durham College in 1899. He was an organist, composer, and teacher. Along with rhythm band music, he also wrote for organ, piano, and choral music. He also wrote salon music for piano intended for instructional purposes. In 1931 Warren & Phillips published Harris’s A Short

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96 Paul Valdemar, “March of the Brigands,” Etude 47, no. 6 (June 1929): 476.

97 Bomberger, An Index to Music xiii.

98 Donald L. Patterson, One Handed: A guided to one-hand piano music, (Westport, CT Greenwood Press, 1999), 101.

Outline of Musical History From Ancient Times to the Present Day. Earhart reviewed it in the MSJ.100

It is unclear why Harris wrote these pieces for the rhythm band. Toy orchestras and rhythm bands were in place in Great Britain. Perhaps Harris had a grandchild involved in one of these ensembles or perhaps it amused him to write for rhythm band instruments. The Etude certainly favored music from Europe.101 Harris published music under both names in the Etude. He used “Valdemar” for rhythm band pieces and Harris for his other works. One wonders why he chose to distance his name from the rhythm band genre.

Rhythmic Ensemble Band-Books For Children: The Folk Tune Book

Next in the series is the Rhythmic Ensemble Band-Books For Children: The Folk Tune Book by Angela Diller and Kate Stearns Page. This was the second in a series of three books and an instruction manual. The first book, Schubert Band Book was published in 1928, the Folk Tune Book was published in 1929 and Rote Pieces for the Rhythm Band was published in 1930. G. Schirmer, Inc published all three books along with the manual. The Schubert Band Book was the most advanced, then The Folk Tune Book, and the easiest was Rote Pieces.102

The cover is planning and devoid of decoration. It states the title, composers, and publisher. And adds the description “Compiled and Arranged for

101 Bomberger, An Index to Music xiii.
the Cultivation of Musical Taste and the Development of the Sense of Rhythm and Ensemble.”

The Preface has a number of illustrations depicting children playing rhythm band instruments. Below them are the directions and explanations by the authors.

First they describe the object of the band books—development of musical taste at an early age, development of rhythm, concentration, group consciousness, and experience to build upon for creative work. After this is a description of the instruments and how they are to be used. Then Diller and Page go on to explain the phrasing. The lyrics are printed like poetry preceding each piece to give a clearer idea of form. Explanations of counting, rests, and letters and numbers in the score are illustrated with examples. Then, they give a number of specific instructions on how to learn a new piece. There is a piano score, a conductor’s score, and individual instrument parts. At the end of the preface, there is a final warning in italic print: “A percussion band may easily degenerate into mere rhythmic noise, unless teacher and children are very watchful that softness and delicacy be observed when demanded by the music.”

The Index lists eighteen songs. The first eight in part one are labeled “very easy” in parentheses.

1. A-B-C

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104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid.
2. Matches
3. Lavender’s Blue
4. The Bagpiper
5. The White Birch
6. Rain-Drops
7. The Bells of London
8. The Horses of Eger

The next six songs in part two are labeled “easy” in parentheses.

9. The Campbells Are Coming
10. Augustin
11. The Crooked Hat
12. Charlie is My Darling
13. Going Through Lorraine
14. Henry Martin

The last four songs in part three are labeled “Less Easy” in parentheses.

15. The Wraggle-Taggle Gipsies
16. The White Cockade
17. Sedlak (The Peasant)
18. Leezie Lindsay

Each song has a piano page listing, then a score page listing, a parts page listing, and a songbook page listing all in columns beside each other to easily find a song in one of the four books that correspond with each other. The layouts of the scores are spaced generously and clearly laid out. The percussion parts are placed above
the piano score and written on a standard rhythm score, one horizontal line running through each note head with a time signature and bar lines and a treble clef at the beginning.

The vocal parts follow the melody in the piano part. The melodies are mostly stepwise with an occasional leap of a perfect fifth and once an octave. They are mostly diatonic with few altered pitches. The range of each song generally lies within an octave, with some infrequent extensions of a note or two beyond that. They are, as the title indicates, arrangements of folk-tunes from different countries. The melodies stay true to the original tune.107

Of the eighteen songs, seven are in 2/4 meter, seven are in 3/4 meter, two are in 4/4 meter, and two are in 6/8 meter. There are seven tonalities represented: four in G major, five in F major, two in G minor, three in C major, one in A major, two in D minor and one in E minor. The lengths of the songs range from eight measures long to 48 measures long. Most pieces are 16 or 24 measures in length.

There are only five instruments used in the Folk-Tune book: gong, triangle, tambourine, drum, and cymbals. Most songs only use four instruments, one uses all five, and three songs incorporate three instruments. The authors point out that these instruments are ones that are used in a traditional orchestra, only in miniature. The sand blocks and rhythm sticks found in other compilations are not found in these books. The instruments generally play quarter notes and eighth notes with accompanying rests. Some use half notes and dotted quarter notes;

these are in the “easy” and “less easy” parts of the book. Most instruments play on
the beat, only one song uses syncopated rhythms, “Charlie is My Darling.”

The dynamics are clearly indicated on the instrumental parts and the piano
parts as well as the conductors’ scores. Diller and Page followed the phrasing of
the songs with the instrumentation. In lighter parts of the song, there are few
instruments, and in heavier parts of the song, there are more instruments. The
same patterns of instruments play the same patterns of rhythms if there are
repeated phrases in the song (see Illus. 4.5).
Illustration 4.5
Only one review of this book exists in the MSJ. Canfield reviewed it in the October 1929 issue. She begins by calling the book “an altogether useful and delightful collection.” She describes the books that are included and how they may be used in teaching using the “listening method” or “other method.” Canfield comments, “these scores are most carefully and musically made.” Canfield also reviewed the last book in the series, Rote Pieces. In it she compliments the tunes and notes they are within the child range. She notes that the teaching suggestions are both “helpful and right.” Finally, she approved of the overall collection without exception.

Earhart reviewed the Schubert book in the May 1929 issue of the MSJ. He said of the book, “Teachers will find wise counsel and practical help in these pages.” He refers to the piano books from Diller and Quaile and notes that the “competent, conscientious and pedagogically discerning work” is in this book as well. He lists the selections in the book and concludes by saying children can become “little artists” as they “develop these little classics.”

The Band-Books also received attention from Augustus Zanzig in his book Music in American Life, published by the National Recreation Association in New York.

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109 Ibid.

110 Canfield, “Review.” 89-90

111 Ibid.


113 Ibid.

114 Ibid.
York, 1932. He says, “Such lovely folk music and guidance are given in the ‘Rhythmic Ensemble Band-Books for Children’ by Diller and Page.” Zanzig encouraged families playing together, especially including the youngest members of the family.

Mathis discusses these books more than any others in his dissertation. He notes that the instrumentation is “better integrated, in dialogue style, than in scores of other series.” He describes the books and the music in the *Schubert Book* with more detail than the others he lists.

Kate Stearns Page was born in Massachusetts and married Louis Coues Page according to her listing in the *Daughters of the American Revolution*. Mrs. Page collaborated on and wrote other musical pieces for children. She also compiled an anthology of poetry, *My Lady Sleeps*, published by L.C. Page and company in 1899. She taught at the Diller-Quaile School and she shared a home with Angela Diller in New York according to the *Notable American Women: The Modern Period: A Biographical Dictionary*.

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This same reference work gives an entire entry to Angela Diller.\textsuperscript{120} She was born Mary Angelina on August 1, 1877 in Brooklyn, NY. She grew up in a musical household and began playing piano at a young age. She began teaching in 1894. She also studied music with the renowned American composer Edward MacDowell for several years. Like many American musicians of her generation, she studied in Germany with Johannes Schreyer in Dresden. She began teaching at the Music School Settlement in New York in 1899. It was there that she met Elizabeth Quaile with whom she formed a lasting friendship and partnership. They founded the Diller-Quaile School of Music in 1921. They developed a graded curriculum based on their experiences. Diller taught and worked as an administrator there until 1941. She taught and lectured for a number of years throughout the United States and Europe. She received a Guggenheim Foundation award in 1953 and wrote \textit{The Splendor of Music}. She remained involved in music and music education until her death in 1968. The depth of her musical knowledge, training, and experience is evident in her books for rhythm band.

\textit{Eighteen Folk Tunes}

The final book to be considered in this series is \textit{Eighteen Folk Tunes} by Virginia Peakes Churchill. Oliver Ditson Company published it in 1931. It was specifically compiled and arranged to correspond with the Victor Records. The cover boasts a simple design. The title is in bold letters and a silhouette of a

\footnote{\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.}
rhythm band is at the bottom. On the inside cover, there is a box listing the six ways to use the music.

1. Victor Record and Rhythm Band
2. Piano and rhythm Band
3. Unison Chorus and Rhythm Band
4. Unison chorus, Piano and Rhythm Band
5. With any combination of the above
6. Victrola, Piano, Voices and Rhythm Band

Another box lists the instruments used in the pieces: Triangles, Cymbals, Tambourines, Drums, Castanets, and Bells. It also informs the reader that instruments may be purchased from a music store or from the publishers, Oliver Ditson Company.\textsuperscript{121} The title page notes that individual score parts for the instruments can be published separately.

In the introduction, Churchill states that the purpose of the book is to make rhythm band material available to places where there is no piano.\textsuperscript{122} She goes on to say that the piano accompaniment is in the same key as the Victrola recording. If the pitches are different, she suggests that the Victrola should be wound up tighter. Next, instructions on how to teach the pieces are given. Churchill gives credit to Angela Diller for the markings of the parts on the score and how they correspond to the part books. She also notes that the triangle and tambourine parts are the most difficult, then the castanets and cymbals and then the drum and bells

\textsuperscript{121} Virginia Peakes Churchill, \textit{Eighteen Folk-Tunes: Arranged for Childrens Rhythm Band} (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company 1931), 1.

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
are the easiest. She gives more directions on how to conduct and how to arrange the players. She notes that the expression marks may need to be adjusted in order to coincide with the Victrola.

The table of contents precedes the Foreword. The songs are listed in order by meter.

Two-Four Meter: Victor Record 20350 A

The Bell- French Folk Tune
The Hunter- Bohemian Folk Tune
From Far Away- Lithuanian Folk Tune
Memories- Finnish Folk Tune
The Warning- German Folk Tune

Three-Four Meter: Victor Record 20350 B

Springtime-German Folk Tune
Punchinello-French Folk Tune
The Bird A-Flying- German Folk Tune
The Ash Grove- Welsh Folk Tune
In the Valley- Swabian Folk Tune

Four-Four Meter: Victor Record 20351 A

Vesper Hymn- Sicilian Folk Tune
Au Clair De La Lune-French Folk Tune
The Tailor and the Mouse-English Folk Tune
John Peel- English Folk Tune

Six-Eight Meter: Victor Record 20351 B
The Thresher- German Folk Tune
Johnny At The Fair- English Folk Tune
Longing- German Folk Tune
Top O’Cork Road- Irish Folk Tune

The Table of contents lists the page number of the score and the page number of the parts for each song. The layouts of the songs are neat and well spaced on the page. The instrumental parts are written first on a standard rhythm score, one horizontal line running through each note head with a time signature and bar lines and a treble clef at the beginning. Then the piano part is directly under the instrumental parts. The lyrics are placed between the piano staves (see Illus. 4.6).

The vocal parts follow the melody line of the piano. There are leaps of 5ths, 6ths, 7ths and octaves. The melodies are mostly diatonic with an occasional altered pitch. As for the range of the songs, half of them lie within the octave and half of them extend beyond the octave by one to three notes. Churchill adapted or perhaps composed lyrics to fit folk tunes from different countries. Some of them appear to be translations of the original language, such as “Au Clair de la Lune.”

Of the eighteen songs, seven are in G major, three are in D major, two are in A flat major, one in C major, one in E major, one in F major, one in E flat major, one in B flat major, and one in F minor. The lengths of the pieces range from twelve to twenty four measure; the majority are 16 measures long.

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Illustration 4.6
All eighteen songs use all six instruments: bells, castanets, triangle, tambourine, cymbals, and drum. The instruments generally play quarter, dotted quarter, and eighth notes. The tambourine and triangle play extended notes such as half notes and dotted half notes. Most parts play on the beat, emphasizing the meter. The more difficult pieces have syncopated parts. Churchill often has all of the instruments playing on the last measure.

The dynamics are written only on the piano part. Tempo markings are given in English; none are in Italian. Instructions on how to play the instruments, i.e. “crash,” “shake,” “hit” are written on the instrument parts. There are phrase markings on the piano scores. Which instruments play and when they play are linked to the piano score. They typically mimic the rhythms of the melody and the same patterns of instruments appear when their particular phrase appears.124

It is interesting to note the similarities between Churchill’s *Eighteen Folk Tunes* and Diller and Stearns *Folk Tune Book*. They both have the same number of songs, similar layouts, and orchestrations. One wonders if it was a book to supplement the Diller and Stearns books by providing a book that could be used with the Victor recordings.

There is only one review of this work in the *MSJ*. Canfield approved of the pieces that were included, calling them “well chosen and well scored.”125 However, she did not approve of “Au Clair” because it was too legato. She noted


that this was for children “who have made their own instrumentations of many tunes and are ready to read the score.”\textsuperscript{126} She closes by remarking on the clear type and the words being from “best translations or original sources.”\textsuperscript{127} Mathis briefly lists it among Oliver Ditson Company’s contributions to the rhythm band score repertoire, but does not comment on it.\textsuperscript{128}

Virginia Peakes Churchill was the head of the music department at Rydal Hall of the Ogontz School in Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{129} The Rydal School was the lower school that included Kindergarten through sixth grade.\textsuperscript{130} The Ogontz School was a private school for females. It eventually included a high school and junior college before it was given to Pennsylvania State University. Other searches for Churchill returned little than what was connected with her rhythm band books. Her association with the prestigious school and approval from Angela Diller most certainly helped the sales of this book.

Summary

These six collections represent the majority of the rhythm band scores and their most prominent composers and arrangers. The introductions to each piece encompass the ideal values and benefits of the rhythm band. Through the Music

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{128} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 96.

\textsuperscript{129} Churchill, \textit{Eighteen Folk-Tunes}, 1.

\textsuperscript{130} Lillian Hansberry, “The Ogontz School 1850-1950” (Pennsylvania State University). http://www.libraries.psu.edu/digital/ogontz/ (Accessed 30 January 2010). Amelia Earhart was one of the school’s most famous students.
*Supervisor’s Journal* and the *Etude Magazine*, they reached hundreds of music teachers and subsequently students. Without their publication, it is doubtful that the rhythm band would have risen to the importance and popularity that it did in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The scores forecasted the use of rhythm instruments for decades to come in the elementary music classroom. It is significant that these pieces were being published simultaneously with popularity and development of school bands and orchestras and Child Study Movement. Insights into current music education practices can be gleaned from careful study of the scores, the historical contexts, and the composers and arrangers of these pieces.
Chapter 5
Analysis of Selected Literature

An analysis of the rhythm band scores reveals their importance in transferring a particular kind of musical knowledge to teachers and students. The following synthesis and accompanying charts will show three essential features of the scores: rhythms and other musical elements, the Progressive ideal in musical notation, and teacher education. These results not only show which musical fundamentals were most likely taught at the time of their publication, but also how they were transmitted to teachers and students. Principles for analysis of these works were derived from: Harmony and Melody, Music in Childhood, A Practical Approach to the Study of Form in Music, and Guidelines for Style Analysis. The melodies were generally harmonized with I, IV, V chords, with the exception of works by well-known composers or some of the more complex folk songs.

Rhythms and Other Musical Elements

In all, there are sixty-two songs by six different composer/arrangers. There are fourteen different rhythm instruments used throughout the pieces: bells, castanets, clogs, cymbals, gong, drums, rhythm sticks, sand blocks, shakers,

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tambourines, triangles, violin, whistle, woodblock, and xylophone. Of these instruments, the tambourine and triangle were used the most, 59 and 60 times respectively, followed by the cymbals which were used 41 times. These were the only three instruments used by all six collections. Their popularity indicates that these instruments were favored for rhythm band instruction not only by the composers and arrangers but were also likely to be the most widely available and perhaps of the most interest to children. It is also plausible that they were popular for their rhythmic value. They could play short sounds of quarter and eighth notes as well as sustained sounds of half notes and whole notes.

Choosing instruments and how they were to be played was an important topic in the introductions of the books and by the music community in general. Diller and Stearns make an important distinction between the instruments they chose to use and instruments used in other rhythm band collections. “The instruments are not toys, but are the classic orchestral percussion instruments in miniature.”132 Their recommendation for the proper balance was four triangles, three tambourines, two drums, and one pair of cymbals per ten children.133 Other composer/arrangers, such as J. Lilian Vandevere suggested balancing the number of instruments with the number of students. Vandevere did not object to the rhythm sticks and woodblocks that first made their appearance in the

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132 Angela Diller and Kate Stearns Page, How to Teach the Rhythm-Band (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc. 1928), 3.

133 Ibid.
Kindergarten. There was also a plea for quality instruments in most of the introductions. Karl Gehrken also remarked on choosing instruments in *Music in the Grade School*. He informs readers that poor quality instruments will have a “bad effect upon the taste and discrimination of hundreds of children.” Kerley, Giddings, and Taylor, as well as Diller and Page provided photographs and illustrations on how exactly the instruments were to played.

Meter is essential to rhythm. Anne Carothers Halls states the relationship between the two this way, “When rhythm is metrical, the rhythmic patterns are heard against a background of regularly recurring pulses and accents.” There are four meters represented in these six collections: two-four, three-four, four-four, and six-eight. They are ranked by frequency in that order (see Table 5.1).

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As indicated by the table, two-four meter was the most used, but not used by all of the composers/arrangers. The feeling of “strong-weak” pulses is the most evident in this meter and evidently, was the most useful for establishing a feeling for the steady beat and the accompanying rhythms. Diller and Page recommend having the students feel the beats with their bodies by marching and clapping before they are ever given an instrument.\textsuperscript{137} The table also suggests that the composers and arrangers felt that triple and compound meters were important to teach to young music students.

The rhythms of all sixty-two pieces were divided into three categories: simple – comprised mostly of whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, equal eighth

\textsuperscript{137} Angela Diller and Kate Stearns Page, \textit{How to Teach the Rhythm-Band} (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc. 1928), 5.
notes, and their corresponding rest; medium – all of the above plus dotted half notes, dotted quarter notes, single eighth notes, mixed eighth and sixteenth notes, and rhythms that contained a tie, but were not syncopated; complex – all of the above plus syncopated rhythms and duple meter in the rhythm part against triple meter in the piano part. The decision of which rhythmic patterns to use was made by the composer/arranger. Each collection displays a different approach to utilizing rhythm (see Table 5.2).

As would be expected from the writings about rhythm band, most of the rhythms fall in the “simple” or “medium” categories, and few fall into the “complex” category. Most of the composer/arrangers surveyed used rhythmic patterns that recurred with a particular melody, phrase, theme, or section of music. This simple “leitmotif” was effective in teaching students to recognize aurally when they were

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer/Arranger</th>
<th>Simple</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Complex</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Churchill</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diller/Page</td>
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<td>Kerley, et.al.</td>
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<td>Valdemar</td>
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As would be expected from the writings about rhythm band, most of the rhythms fall in the “simple” or “medium” categories, and few fall into the “complex” category. Most of the composer/arrangers surveyed used rhythmic patterns that recurred with a particular melody, phrase, theme, or section of music. This simple “leitmotif” was effective in teaching students to recognize aurally when they were
to play.¹³⁸ James L. Mursell, a leading music educator, commented on the importance of students being able to perceive patterns, “What really matters is not the number of beats in a measure but awareness of the shape of the onward moving flow.”¹³⁹

The phrase forms of the pieces were varied from collection to collection. Nineteen were in “ab” form and fifteen were in “aba” form. The other twenty-eight pieces ranged from rondo to through-composed, with only a few in each category. Most pieces remained in one key, only a few changed tonalities. These phrase forms composed of recurring melodic and rhythmic figures made recognizing and remembering patterns less burdensome for the students.

Three collections included vocal parts and three did not. Of the three that incorporated singing, two used folk tunes that would have been familiar to students. Diller and Page give the words only for feeling the phrasing of the music.¹⁴⁰ Jane Kerley suggested that half of the class sing the text while the other half played the instruments.¹⁴¹ Churchill recommends teaching the words and melody to the students for them to sing but only because they “should be a part of the musical vocabulary of every child.”¹⁴² From the lack of attention to the vocal parts and considerable attention to the instrumental parts, it seems that the vocal parts were another mnemonic device instead of an element to be taught. Without

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¹⁴¹ Kerley, Progressive Rhythmic Band Music Folio, VI.

proper attention to the vocal or melody line, the sense of connection from one note to another might be lost. Susan Canfield alluded to this in her criticism of the rhythm band in an article in *Childhood Education*. She remarked,

“Looking upon the Toy Orchestra as a Rhythm Band, an over stress of measure accent and too great emphasis of the beat invariably occurs. The result is a persistent staccato which does away with the graded stress of group and phrase accents, the very bone and sinew of rhythm.”

However, she went on to say that developing and expressing a feeling for *legato* was possible, “if the instrumentation is well chosen and the melody not buried beneath a bedlam of extraneous sounds.” Perhaps the composers/arrangers assumed that children already had a good foundation in singing and did not see think it important to address it further. In the vocal parts, the majority had eight notes or less, most of them were step-wise or contained leaps of a perfect 5th or less, and the majority of the pieces were in G or F major, tonalities that lie within a child’s range.

**The Progressive Ideal**

Progressivism permeates the writings about the rhythm band. The scores reflect the social consciousness of the time. The ideas of child-centered education where children construct their own knowledge instead of receive it from adults; cooperation and group awareness; and moving from the simple to the complex

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144 Ibid.
were all pervasive ideologies of the Progressive Era.145 These ideals are reflected in the music of the rhythm band. In all of the introductions to the collections, there is some reference to discovery of some aspect of the music. Even though the music was notated, there were many decisions that the students could make through exploration and group discussion.146 Students had to be aware of the other instruments in the group and aware of their role in the group in order for the ensemble to be successful. Vandevere declares, “It is one of the best possible means for developing concentration, and for encouraging whole-hearted team work.”147

All of the collections are arranged in order of difficulty from simple to complex, with the exception of Vandevere’s and Valdemar, which only have two each. Even within their works we see the orchestration beginning simply and gradually becoming more complex.

Teacher Education

The 1920s and 1930s brought a new emphasis on education for music teachers. Summer Courses taught by text book companies and courses in music offered by normal schools and colleges eventually gave way to four-year courses in music due in part to the work of the some of the to some of the members of the


146 Karl W. Gehrkens, Music in the Grade Schools (Boston: C.C. Birchard & Co., 1934), 113.

As music teacher training programs were installed in colleges, they were supported in part by the writings of composers/arrangers of the rhythm band. Jane Kerley, Lyravine Votaw, Lilian Vandevere, and Angela Diller all wrote their introductions and in some cases other articles and books to instruct teachers on the proper way to teach the rhythm band. Their instructions were detailed and contained elements of music pedagogy such as instructions on how to teach conducting skills. They also gave instructions on how to play instruments that might have been new to teachers who had previously only taught singing. There was also an emphasis on teaching quality music, not just entertainment or producing noise.

Summary

The rhythm band music served more purposes than notes on a page. A closer look illustrated pedagogical principles for music education of the student and teacher. It propelled a musical ideal and changed the way elementary music was taught. Students could respond physically to notes on a page through playing a simple instrument that was tailored to their developing needs. Teachers were supported in this new activity through instructional prefaces in the books and

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150 Diller and Page, How to Teach the Rhythm-Band, 3.
visual reminders on the page. The Progressive Era saw an emphasis on child-
centered education and the rhythm band music fit that very well.
Chapter 6

Impact of Selected Literature on Elementary Music Education

Effectiveness

The composers/arrangers of the selected rhythm band scores wrote much about their usefulness: how they could be used to teach rhythm, to enhance music appreciation, to solidify motor skills, to give opportunity for self-expression, to transition students to bands and orchestras, and be used as the basis for creative work. This small activity that became so fashionable for a short period of time boasted a number of desirable outcomes. Were all or some of these goals attained through the rhythm band? How did the scores themselves play a part? History offers some evidence as to their effectiveness.

Mathis traced the steps of the rhythm band through six decades of use in the elementary music curriculum. He observed that,

“Objective assessments of the status of simple instrument programs have been relatively rare, and the study has relied necessarily upon texts, teaching materials, courses of study, and various informed sources of opinion for evaluation of trends and emphases.”\(^{151}\)

Since Mathis wrote those words, a handful of studies have been conducted with simple instruments. In 1997, nearly seventy years after the height of the rhythm band movement, Flowers, Wapnick, and Ramsey found using simple instruments could help teachers see whether or not students understood concepts in music

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such as tempo and dynamics when they lacked the ability to verbalize them.\textsuperscript{152} In 1990, Davidson found that using simple instruments allowed students to unite “notation and performance together with sufficient clarity for them to understand the connection between composition and performance.”\textsuperscript{153} In writing about music and psychiatry, Brickman observed that rhythm band activities help children operate successfully within a group.\textsuperscript{154} These findings indicate that some of the purposes in the rhythm band scores such as reading rhythm, group cooperation, and motor skills were realized. However, the transition from the rhythm band into full orchestras and bands did not happen.\textsuperscript{155} Another step was needed after the rhythm band experience. “Pre-instruments” such as tonettes and flutaphones filled the gap and students experience with melody.\textsuperscript{156} Gerald R. Prescott and Lawrence W. Chidester in their classic 1930’s work on band organization listed the rhythm band as the first step preceding beginning band classes.\textsuperscript{157}


\textsuperscript{155} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 105.

\textsuperscript{156} A.C. Meyers, “Why Pre-Instrumental Instruction is Essential to a Good Band,” School Musician (February 1940): 8.

\textsuperscript{157} Gerald R. Prescott and Lawrence W. Chidester Getting Results With School Bands (New York and Minneapolis: Carl Fischer, Inc, and Schmitt, Hall, & McCreary Co. 1938), 45.
Music Texts Today

Rhythm band scores did much to propel and sustain the use of simple instruments in the music classroom in the beginning of the movement. Mathis found that the instruments were more popular in some cities than in others.\textsuperscript{158} The scores lost their popularity along with the rhythm band by the mid 1930s. A study in 1939 found that the rhythm band scores were “little used.”\textsuperscript{159} While the scores themselves were abandoned, their influence was imprinted in the elementary music textbooks.

Mathis outlined the how the rhythm band was incorporated into the music texts up until 1960. Fifty years later, they still have a presence in music texts that are used throughout the nation. A brief survey of elementary music texts for kindergarten and first grade since 1960 exhibits the impact of rhythm band scores on present day music education. The following texts were pulled from the shelves of a music classroom in Chattanooga, Tennessee. They have been retired as new texts had been adopted. \textit{The Spectrum of Music} published in 1974 by Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc. used simple instruments in a “song story” about Jack and the Bean Stalk. Students were encouraged to make their own rhythm patterns for the characters and events in the story. The text used tambourine shakes to introduce “long sounds” (dotted quarter note) and the wood block for “short sounds” (eighth notes); both are notated for students to read.\textsuperscript{160} Similar uses of simple instruments

\textsuperscript{158} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 223.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid, 105.
and reading rhythm scores were found in *Music* published by Silver Burdett in 1981.\textsuperscript{161} Picture graphs and rhythmic notation are found in the current music text series, *Spotlight on Music*.\textsuperscript{162}

The rhythm band and its accompanying scores were not without criticism. Both Canfield and Earhart warned about the possibilities of disintegration of performance into noise or mere public display.\textsuperscript{163} Even with repetition and practice, the students did not always relate to the other instruments in performance.\textsuperscript{164} And these were only a few of the criticisms of the rhythm band. Even so, a rhythm band in the hands of a perceptive and skilled music teacher could accomplish much with a class of children and child-sized instruments. Mursell, a widely respected music educator of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, summarized by saying,

> Never, under any circumstances, allow yourself to think of easy-to-play instruments as poor substitutes for standard instruments. Never think of them disparagingly. To be sure, they have music limitations, but also they have very positive values of their own, and a very important place in the scheme of music education. Children can learn a great deal about the music from them, because they are, in fact, musical instruments, with most of the psychological values and possibilities common to all instruments, and because they set up no technical problems to speak of. This is their advantage. It is a great one, and can be obtained in no other way.\textsuperscript{165}

\footnotesize

\textsuperscript{162} Judy Bond, et al., *Spotlight on Music: Grade One* (New York: Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 2005.)

\textsuperscript{163} Mathis, “Development of Practices,” 154.

\textsuperscript{164} Ibid, 150.

The rhythm band earned its place in the music curriculum because of these positive outcomes and possibilities.

Summary
For nearly a century, elementary music teachers have relied on simple instruments and their scores to teach the basic concepts of music. The scores have changed in their format and purposes over time yet have remained an integral part of the music educator’s toolbox. The early work of Vandevere, Diller, Votaw, and others to display and promote the possibilities of rhythm band music added small yet important blocks to the foundation of elementary music. Indeed, every music educator who uses simple instruments and their scores must attentively choose the activities they are using to create the musical foundation in students and proceed with care.
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Vita

Rebecca Elizabeth Brown was born in Elyria, OH in 1978 and grew up in Chattanooga, TN. She graduated from Gateway Christian Academy as a homeschooled student in 1997. She attended the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and received a B.S. in music education in 2001. She has taught elementary music for six years and is currently pursuing a Master of Music with a concentration in music education.