

THE LIFE AND WORK OF
LUTHER ORLANDO EMERSON
1820 - 1915

KAIN S. BLANDFORD

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by
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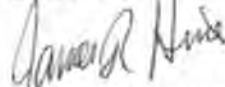
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ABSTRACT

Luther Orlando Emerson (1820-1915), along with many other New England composers, was a pioneer in the field of music education. Compiler and composer of music for churches, singing schools, choral societies, and public schools, and through his work at music conventions, and teaching positions in various institutes throughout Massachusetts, Emerson played a major role in the promotion of music education for the masses. Widely popular in his day, Emerson made great contributions in sacred music, as he was devoted to elevating the standards and general character of church music.

The objective of this thesis is to explore the life and work of this most prolific, nineteenth-century composer. The content of the first chapter is the early life of Emerson: his home life, early musical experiences, and his early education. The second chapter's subjects are his formal music education, beginning professional work in teaching and conventions, and his first books. The subjects of the third chapter are Emerson's main convention work and his later life. The fourth chapter sheds light on Emersonian doctrines, beliefs and opinions, and Emerson's respected reputation in the nineteenth-century music community. The final chapter concentrates on the compositions and collections of Emerson. This chapter is complemented by Appendix III, which includes a detailed summary of Emerson's publications.

This thesis gives the most recent, and to the best of the

author's knowledge, most complete account of this accomplished composer, teacher, and conductor's life and work available. This thesis demonstrates that Emerson was not only a man of great talent, but also a musical figure of imposing stature during his lifetime.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly indebted to my thesis instructor, Dr. Clyde W. Brockett; it is his assistance, guidance, wisdom, and most of all his infinite patience that has allowed this project to flourish. I would like to thank Dr. James Hines, Professor of Music at Christopher Newport University for interesting me in American Music. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Mark Reimer for offering support and encouragement when it was most needed.

The staff of the Captain John Smith Library have been extremely helpful, especially Patricia Kearns, Serials Cataloger, who provided the VTLS Online System research and Paul Pival, Collection Development/Reference Librarian, who provided assistance with the thesis maps. The indispensable Theodore Presser list of Emerson's publications was provided by Mrs. Martha K. Cox, Permissions/Archives Department of Theodore Presser Company. Ms. Diane Parr Walker, Music Librarian at the University of Virginia furnished the RIPM references to Emerson in Dwight's Journal of Music. Gratitude is expressed to Ms. Amal Shorrosh, Music Librarian of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for sending the article of Emerson in The Choir Herald. The staff of the Boston Public Library, especially Music Librarian, Metro Voloshin whose prompt and valuable correspondence and the obituary of Emerson in the Hyde Park Gazette Times have my sincere thanks. Another valuable obituary was sent by Ms. Bridget Knightly, Library Assistant of the Bostonian Society. Ms. Naomi Adams, Reference

Librarian, University of Findlay, searched the University's archival holdings and produced the 1889 Catalogue of Findlay College.

Genealogical research assistance was afforded by Ms. Helen Kessler, Research Librarian, Massachusetts Historical Society. Her continued interest in the project and helpful correspondence has been indispensable. Ms. Peggy Haile, Research Librarian of the Sergeant Memorial Room in the Kern Memorial Library, Norfolk, also researched and supplied invaluable genealogical information on the Emerson family. Ms. Kathleen D. Leslie, Archivist of Mount Auburn Cemetery was especially helpful by providing the genealogical and cemetery information. Her regular correspondence and interest in the project is most appreciated.

Diane Morrill, Deputy Clerk of the Town of Parsonsfield was particularly helpful in the abundant information she sent on Emerson and his birthplace, Parsonsfield, Maine. For valuable counsel on the relationship between A.N. Johnson and George Root during the period Emerson studied with Root, thanks is expressed to Ms. Jacklin Stopp. Thanks go to Mrs. Wilma Cipolla, Professor of Music emeritus, SUNY for her information on music publishing. I also would like to acknowledge Lawrence P. Hall for the specifics on publication concerning Effingham, New Hampshire.

Mr. Richard C. Foplau, Reference Archivist of Massachusetts State Archives willingly researched his files, as did Ms. Joanne D. Chaison, Head Reader's Services of American Antiquarian Society; Mr. William Lamoy, Director of The Essex Institute; Mr. Hobart

Holly, Historian of the Quincy Historical Society; and Ms. Karen Robinson, Library Special Collections of Regents University. Gratitude is also expressed to Harry Eskew, Professor of Music at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for pointing my research in the right direction on more than one occasion.

I also wish to thank my parents for their encouragement, especially my father, Gill Blandford, for his many hours spent by my side at the computer. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Shawn P. Halifax for his help during my travels to New England and especially his endless support throughout this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	ix
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I: EMERSON'S EARLY LIFE	7
CHAPTER II: EMERSON'S EARLY TEACHING POSTS, THE SALEM YEARS, AND HIS EARLY CONVENTION WORK	17
CHAPTER III: EMERSON'S CONVENTION WORK AND LATER LIFE	31
CHAPTER IV: EMERSON'S CONCEPTS; HIS REPUTATION	49
CHAPTER V: EMERSON'S PUBLICATIONS	61
Conclusion	75
APPENDIX I	78
APPENDIX II	80
APPENDIX III	82
BIBLIOGRAPHY	89

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1 Photograph of Emerson taken in December 1908 at age eighty-eight	6
2 (a & b) The Emerson homestead, Elmswood Farm, pictured in 1784 and in 1884	10
3 Sketch of Emerson at the height of his career	34
4 The organizing committee for the 1885 Parsonsfield Centennial	40
5 Advertisement for the Parsonsfield Centennial concerts	41
6 Program for the Order of Exercises, August, 29, 1885	43
7 Photograph of Emerson's Hyde Park Residence, Boston, Summer 1993	47
8 Emerson's grave in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts	48
9 Manual Signs technique found in Emerson's books	69

Map

A: Sites familiar to Emerson in his youth	14
B: Sites associated with Emerson's early career	18
C: Sites in New England associated with the height of Emerson's career	36

Family Tree

Emerson Family Tree	8
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INTRODUCTION

The present research has been undertaken in order to restore the of name Luther Orlando Emerson to a place of prominence. Hymn and anthem books by Emerson appear in hymnal and anthem collections by nineteenth-century, American composers with imposing frequency. Yet, somehow Emerson's name has been posthumously lost in a realm of obscurity. This researcher began to shed the needed light by checking references to Emerson. Only a few were listed under his name in the New Grove Dictionary of American Music, however one, an article entitled "Dr. L.O. Emerson" by E. S. Lorenz which appeared in The Choir Herald, became a major source of information for this thesis. Its date, 1916, was one year after Emerson's death, and the article serves as almost a eulogy written by not only a colleague, but also an admirer of Emerson. This is the most recent substantial record on Emerson that can be found. And it is one of the most obscure.¹

The evident lack of information on Emerson at local libraries dictated the need for correspondence to archivists and librarians in New England.² It was anticipated that the representatives of New England institutions contacted would have at least partial information on Emerson. However, the requests, either by telephone

¹ After many interlibrary loan attempts and some correspondence the article was finally located in Texas, at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

² Preliminary research was conducted at the Captain John Smith Library, Hughes Library of Old Dominion University, and Swem Library of the College of William and Mary.

or letter, were met with little success with a sole exception that yielded the valuable obituary of Emerson from the Boston Transcript. This lengthy obituary offers a wealth of information from which the thesis has drawn. But early in the data-gathering phase it became increasingly apparent that the documentation was too limited and, consequently travel to the Boston area would be necessary. Although the Boston-area institutions initially visited confirmed that there was little additional information to be gained, a visit to the Massachusetts Historical Society produced a small amount of genealogical information and a contact interested in the project.³

The final on-site research in Boston was at the Boston Public Library where the rare article by another colleague, W.J. Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson An American Pioneer With A Study of The Musical Convention and Its Educational Value" was examined. Although this article in The Musician is long, its importance lies in the fact that it was written while Emerson was alive, 1909. It includes quotes of Emerson's current opinions and doctrines. But perhaps its most valuable aspect is its discussion of Emerson's prominent involvement in music conventions. Indeed this article is the most important and fruitful data source used in this thesis. Following these studies in Boston, work at the Essex Institute in Salem, Massachusetts, concluded the author's on-site research.

A Falk Seminar paper, entitled "L.O. Emerson: A Preliminary

³ The institutions first visited while in Boston were the Boston Conservatory and the New England Conservatory.

Study" was the immediate result of this collection of data in New England. The transition from this preliminary study of Emerson to a thesis involved more detailed study in which more general information could be converted into more specific facts. For example, details of Emerson's We Are Coming Father Abraham in Irwin Silber's Songs of The Civil War put songs of the period, and Emerson's songs in particular in relief.

Specific information was accessed under Emerson's name itself in a number of books, most dating from the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, many of these provided repetitive information. The Bio-Bibliographical Index of Musicians in the United States of America Since Colonial Times, edited by Leonard Ellinwood and Keyes Porter, contains twenty entries on Emerson. Theodore Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, F.P. Jones's A Handbook of American Music and Musicians, William Hubbard's History of American Music, William Fisher's One Hundred and Fifty Years of Music Publishing in the United States, John Tasker Howard's Our American Music, Granville Howe's (W.S.B. Mathews) A Hundred Years of Music in America, and Frank Metcalf's Stories of Hymn Tunes and American Writers and Compilers of Sacred Music served to inform the author.⁴

⁴ A few entries in the Ellinwood and Porter Index were not available to the author attributable to the fact that they are quite old: these are Waldo Seldon Pratt, Supplement to Groves (New York: MacMillan Press, 1930), John W. Moore, Encyclopedia of Music. Appendix (Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1875), and Louis Charles Elson, The History of American Music (New York: MacMillan Press, 1925), 86. Additionally, information pertaining to Emerson appears in Charles H. Gabriel's Gospel Songs and Their Writers published in 1915 that duplicates information already found in sources of later dates. One could be surmise that the unavailable references contain no information beyond what has

Also valuable in the research on Emerson were lists provided from various sources. Combining the VTLS Online System of Christopher Newport University, Ellinwood's Bibliography of American Hymnals, and the Theodore Presser list furnished a detailed summary of Emerson's publications located in the thesis in Appendix III. The Presser list was the most valuable data source, because this was the company that absorbed the Oliver Ditson Company in 1931.⁵

In all research there are always dead-end streets, as was the case with this thesis. Genealogical material following Emerson's death is lacking; information on Emerson's children, Charles Wesley Emerson, Mary Gove Emerson, Luella Parsons Emerson, Elizabeth N. Emerson, Mabel Holmes Emerson, and John Gove Emerson, has not been uncovered.⁶ During my travel to New England, Emerson's still inhabited last residence in Hyde Park (Boston) was discovered.

already been found. Surprisingly, J.H. Hall's Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers was not indexed for Emerson by Ellinwood and Porter.

⁵ Donald W. Krummel and Stanley Sadie, eds. Music Printing and Publishing, ser: The Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 217-218. For the Theodore Presser documentation, thanks is expressed to Ms. Martha Cox, of the Permissions/Archives Department at Theodore Presser Company.

⁶ Although no biographical information was found on Emerson's children and heirs, correspondence with Ms Kessler and Kathleen D. Leslie, Archivist of Mount Auburn Cemetery, provided a detailed list of descendants. Ms. Leslie contributed two cemetery plot cards which lead to the discovery of living descendant. In hopes of unearthing further genealogical information, an attempt was made to contact this descendant thought to be living in New England. Unfortunately, this relative had moved to a new address and the letter was returned unanswered.

Correspondence sent to the current resident in hopes of finding out something of the history of the house or its previous residents unfortunately received no reply. On the other hand, genealogical information found before Emerson is plentiful, as shown in the family tree in Chapter I to which this thesis now turns.

Figure 1



Photograph of Emerson at taken in December 1908 at age
eighty-eight

CHAPTER I

EMERSON'S EARLY LIFE

Luther Orlando Emerson (1820-1915), pictured at age eighty-eight in Figure 1, was born the son of Elizabeth Usher (Parsons) Emerson and Captain Luther Emerson on August 3, 1820. Luther Orlando was born in the hamlet of Parsonsfield, Maine. He was the youngest of seven children: five sons and two daughters. Emerson was born not only into a large family but, also a family with ancestors who were among the earliest settlers of the Massachusetts colony. These ancestors, coming from Durham, England, settled in Ipswich around 1635. These Emersons were of the earliest Puritan strain. The Puritan Emersons themselves claimed descendance from Sir Ralph Emerson, of York, England, who in 1535, was knighted by Henry VIII.¹ The family of Ralph Waldo Emerson, an older branch of the family, inherited the heraldic arms.²

Luther Orlando belonged to the seventh generation of New England Emersons. Following the first, Thomas and Elizabeth Emerson of Ipswich, the family branched into the older Malden-Boston line and the younger Topsfield (Massachusetts)-Maine line starting with the fourth generation. The family tree is charted below. In view of the importance to the field of

¹ Benjamin Kendall Emerson, The Ipswich Emersons: 1636-1900 (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1900), 17.

² Frank Johnson Metcalf, Stories of Hymn Tunes, 173.

Thomas Emerson (d.1666) and Elizabeth (nee ?) Emerson

Joseph Emerson (1620 or 1621-1680) and Elizabeth Woodmansey Emerson

Edward Emerson (1670-1743) and Rebecca Waldo Emerson

Joseph Emerson (1700-1767) and Mary Moody Emerson ----- John Emerson (1706 or 1707-1774) and Elizabeth Pratt Emerson

William Emerson (1743-1776) and Phebe Bliss Emerson

Luther Emerson (1782-1875) and Elizabeth Parsons Emerson (1787-1875)

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

LUTHER O. EMERSON (1820-1915) and Mary Gove Emerson (1830-1902)

literature of Luther Orlando's third cousin Ralph Waldo, his Massachusetts branch is included in the chart.³

As seen on this chart, Emerson's father, Captain Luther Emerson, was the son of Joseph and Lydia (Durrell) Emerson, and grandson of the Reverend John Emerson of Topsfield, Massachusetts. Luther Emerson earned the rank of captain through his service in the militia.⁴ After marrying Elizabeth Parsons, Captain Emerson settled in Lyman, Maine, where their son, Joseph Pratt Emerson, was born. When Captain Emerson's father-in-law, Thomas Parsons died, he and Elizabeth relocated in 1814 to Parsonsfield, Maine. He purchased the Parsons homestead, Elmswood farm, where he remained for the rest of his life.⁵ This estate, seen in figure 2, is where Luther Orlando was born.

³ As the chart shows, Luther Orlando's and Ralph Waldo's grandfathers were first cousins. The chart is derived from Benjamin Kendall Emerson, The Ipswich Emersons, pp. 25-6, 32, 35, 50-1, 74-5, 77-9, 126, 129, 143, 176, 202, 265, 296-99.

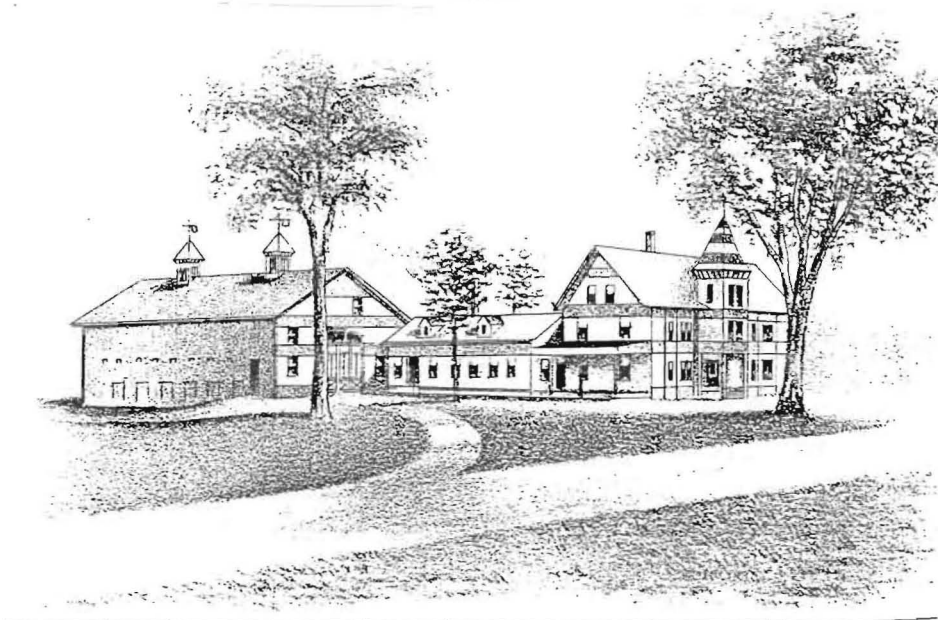
⁴ Benjamin Kendall Emerson, The Ipswich Emersons, 202.

⁵ The house is reported to be in ruins, located on Emerson road, now a logging road through a wilderness virtually rendering this part of western Maine inaccessable to all but special vehicles (See map).

Figure 2 (a & b)



EMERSON HOMESTEAD
1784.



EMERSON HOMESTEAD
Elmswood Farm.

Emerson Homestead, Elmswood Farm in 1784 and in 1884

Elizabeth Emerson died in 1857, and in 1868 the Luther Emerson, Sr. remarried. He was interested in politics and held fast the views of the Whig political party and later those of the Republicans. His son, Luther, seems to have inherited many common traits from this man, described as "ambitious, energetic, of sound judgement, passionately fond of poetry and a great lover of music, hospitable and kind, a good friend and a worthy citizen, neighbor, father and husband."⁶ And, we might add, longevity. Emerson's father died on July 4, 1875 at the age of ninety-two years and two months.⁷

As is the case of many accomplished, past composers, little is known of the childhood of this composer. However, it is known that Emerson's home life was quite musical. It was reported by family and friends that his father and mother were good singers. Owing to the family's large number they were able to create a complete choir. The family would sometimes sing church music, glees, and folk songs in their hours of recreation. Lending to the already rich musical atmosphere of the Emerson household, Captain Emerson would to play the violoncello while Elizabeth played the flute and violin. But Luther Emerson had not a great deal to say about instrumental music in his home and town. He recounts that the household possessed some not commonly found instruments: a bass viol, flute and tenor viol. The cabinet organ on the other hand,

⁶ J.W. Dearborn, A History of the First Century of the Town of Parsonsfield, Maine (Portland: Brown Thurston and Company, 1888), 245.

⁷ Ibid.

"now found in so many homes, was not known in my young days."⁸ The root of Emerson's lifelong love for music would indeed seem to have come from such early musical family experiences with those aforementioned melody instruments on hand.

Outside his home, other than in church, Emerson had few opportunities to pursue his love for music in Parsonsfield. Later in life he was to report that in the town one would invariably find a large choir with good singers who would always perform "with as much good taste and enthusiasm as I have known it to be in larger towns and cities."⁹ Emerson learned to play the bass viol and played for each Sunday service at the Parsonsfield Congregational Church whose choir could boast amassing up to twenty-five voices.¹⁰ Emerson's brothers also played at church, one played violin the other, flute, while his father would play the cello.¹¹ Perhaps such experiences were a foreshadowing of what was to become the great passion of Emerson's life, church music.

Emerson was not the only one in his family to pursue music at a higher level. His older brother Joseph shared also his love for

⁸ L.O. Emerson "Music and Musicians of Parsonsfield," address delivered on the occasion of the centennial of the town, August 29, 1885, quoted in toto in Appendix II.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ W.J. Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson An American Pioneer With a Study of the Musical Convention and Its Educational Influence," The Musician 5 (May, 1909): 203.

¹¹ No names are given as to which brothers played with Emerson during these services. Although, it can be assumed that perhaps one of them could have been Joseph Pratt Emerson, who later made a career of teaching and performing music. See Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 203, also Appendix II below.

music. Joseph was born in Lyman, Maine, on November 10, 1810. Unlike Luther, Joseph pursued agriculture as his vocation, yet it was reported that "music with him [Joseph] was not only a passion but a part of his being."¹² Music was indeed a large part of Joseph's life in that he taught over two hundred classes and in the singing school traditions. Although Joseph did teach mostly near his home in Parsonsfield, he was said to have been willing to travel thousands of miles "to render service to others in times of need, in this capacity, without charge or remuneration."¹³ He married Sarah Dunfield in 1829, and the couple was blessed with a rather large family of eight children. Joseph resided at the family homestead in Parsonsfield until he was killed by being thrown from a mowing machine in 1884. Like his father he held fast the views of the Republican party and was a religious man, a Baptist by denomination. Joseph was a man remembered for his unselfishness, generosity, "cheering wit," and good humor.¹⁴

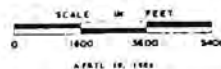
Luther Orlando Emerson's early education was simple but adequate enough for the times and the best his surroundings could provide. He attended the district school, subsequently the Parsonsfield Seminary and Effingham Academy. Effingham Academy was located in Effingham, New Hampshire. Seminary, Academy and Homestead are shown in their geographical sites on Map A. The purpose of Effingham Academy was to educate men of high school age

¹² Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 1885, 245.

¹³ Ibid., 246.

¹⁴ Ibid.

ROAD NAME MAP



who could not travel the distance--in that country which was still a wilderness--to larger academies: to the north in Fryeburg, Maine or the east in Limerick, Maine. The local populace wanted "more education at a higher level."¹⁵

As a student, Emerson was a quick learner and he showed himself to be a capable scholar at these institutions attended in his formative years.¹⁶ It can be assumed that Emerson remained at Effingham until about the age of eighteen at which time he went home to Parsonsfield and helped his father with the farm.

Although little is known about Emerson's early music-education experiences, there is evidence that some of Parsonsfield's music-oriented population had an influence on him. As Appendix II records, Emerson mentions one Harvey Moore whom he can "well remember" as being "considered a most excellent chorister and teacher of singing schools."¹⁷ The mention of Moore's name implies that he had an effect on Emerson, however, the wording "considered" infers that Emerson did not actually study with Moore. As recorded in Appendix II, Emerson states:

Among former residents were a good many musical families and teachers of music, with some of whom I had no personal acquaintance and cannot name. I can name, however, as

¹⁵ John Hall, Tales of Effingham, (Freedom, New Hampshire: Freedom Press, 1987), 44-5. Appreciation is expressed to Lawrence P. Hall, son of the author, for the specifics of publication. Isaac Lord (Squire Lord of Lord's Hill) was the original benefactor and sponsor of the Effingham Academy founded on June 18, 1819. Lord's Hill Church was its overseer.

¹⁶ [Unsigned article] "L.O.Emerson," The Musical Messenger 1 (January, 1892): 8.

¹⁷ Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 163.

always associated more or less prominently with the service of song in the sanctuary, the Parsonses, the Garlands, the Moores, the Rickers, the Pipers, the Wedgwoods, the Colcords, the Parksies, and the Emersons.¹⁸

Emerson also makes mention of Joseph and the fine work that he accomplished as a music teacher. Even without names of Emerson's early music teachers, it is plain that Moore and the aforementioned families heightened his enthusiasm and love for music which unfolded from this point on.

¹⁸ Ibid, 164.

CHAPTER II

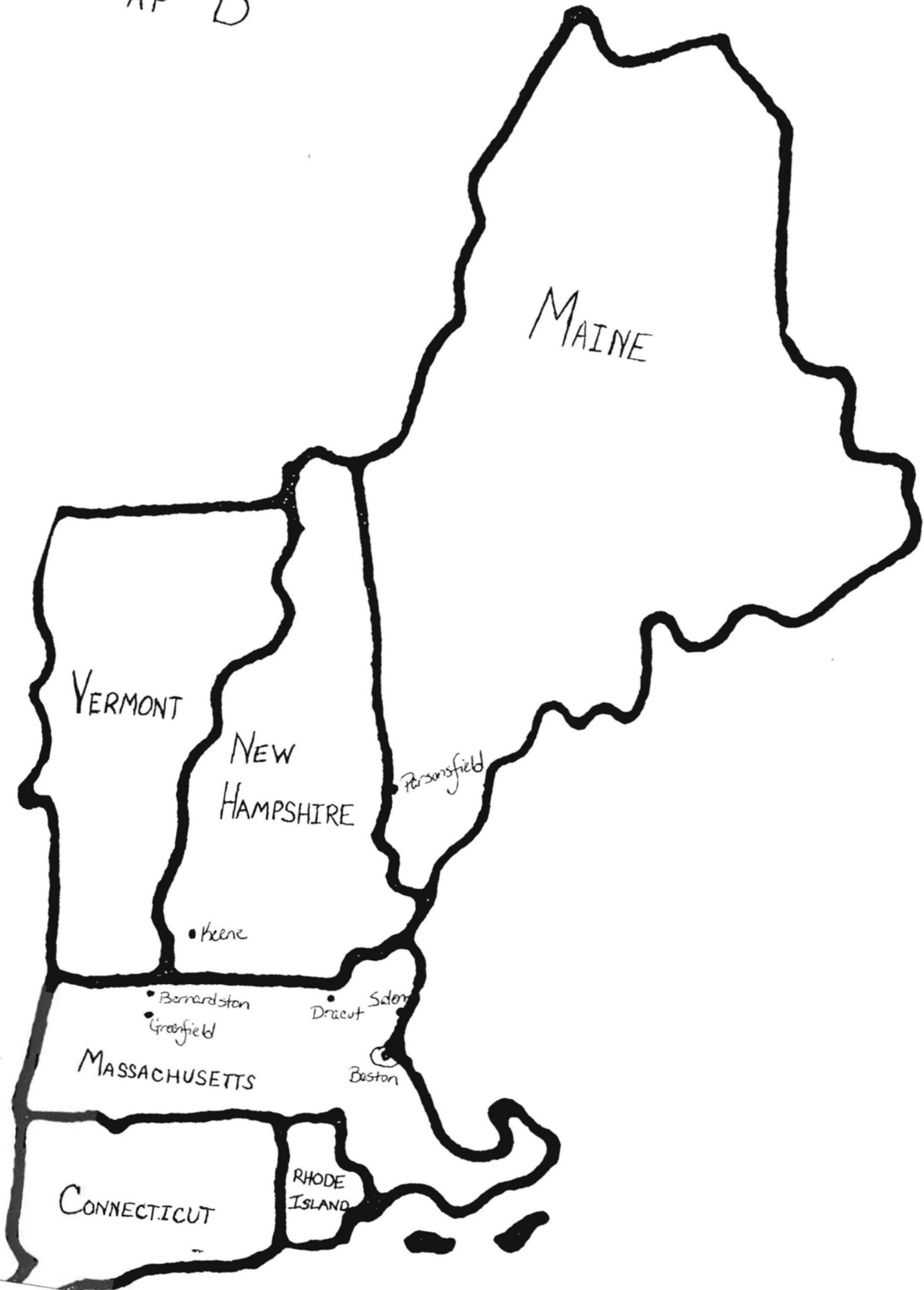
EMERSON'S EARLY TEACHING POSTS, THE SALEM YEARS, AND HIS EARLY CONVENTION WORK

Emerson's formal musical education came rather late, largely due to his father's desire for him to stay home and work on the family farm. But a love for music eventually won him over, and while working on the farm Emerson began to save money to attend a nearby academy. Originally, his intentions were to teach in district schools, but when he decided to go to Boston to receive a college-level education, he began the study of medicine instead of music. Emerson arrived in Boston in the spring of 1841 with only eight dollars to his name. During that summer he took a job on a farm near Roxbury, Massachusetts in order to earn enough to enter Dracut Academy, located in the town of Dracut, in the fall. Dracut lies near the New Hampshire border just west of Lowell; from the modicum of information available, it appears that its academy did not possess a particularly enviable reputation.¹ Dracut, and other

¹ Dracut Academy, originally known as the Central Village Academy, was formed consequent to the town's need for better educational facilities for its children. The school opened in 1836 with ninety-one students, but its success was short-lived, by 1839 there were only twenty one students. The Free Will Baptist Church took control of the school and placed an advertisement in a Lowell newspaper. The announcement read, "The location of this school is surpassed by few if any in New England. There is connected with it a large and convenient boarding house, a workshop, a small track of land, and a cap shop for ladies...". Silas R. Coburn, History of Dracut, Massachusetts (n.p., 1922), 234-35.

1 AP B

19



locations discussed in this chapter are shown on Map B. However, its convenient location, so near the city of Boston, might have attracted Emerson to this institution.² But as Emerson began to embark on his medical studies, he soon discovered Boston's rich, and not too distant, musical atmosphere. The city offered numerous opportunities for him to hear and participate in a wide range of musical enterprises. These offerings rekindled his ardor for the musical art.

In the early winter of 1842, Emerson attended a singing school held by Benjamin Franklin Baker who later became a leader in musical conventions and an editor of music books. Perhaps Emerson's interest in editing books and leading conventions on his own resulted from such an invaluable contact.³ Later in that

² Moreover, one could speculate that a putative relative Dr. Luther Emerson may have had a hand in Emerson's professional training at Dracut Academy. A record of Dr. Luther Emerson as having married in Dracut in 1812, transcribed from the First Congregational Church Records, appears in Vital Records of Dracut (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1907), 173. Whether this doctor was residing in Dracut in the brief interim that Emerson was studying there remains uncertain.

³ Benjamin Franklin Baker was a prominent, nineteenth-century teacher, singer, conductor, and composer of the New England area. He settled in Boston in 1837 where he eventually replaced Lowell Mason as superintendent of musical education for the Boston public schools. Baker also played an active part in the musical convention which eventually led to his involvement, as a soloist and later the vice-president, of the Handel and Haydn Society. In 1868 he created the Boston Music School of which he was the principal until his retirement. In addition to his many other activities, Baker also served as editor of the *Boston Musical Journal* and he also collaborated in compiling over 25 collections of songs, anthems, and hymns. A few examples of Baker's own composing and compiling include, Baker's Church Music, The Storm King, and The Burning Ship. See William E. Boswell, "Baker, Benjamin Franklin," The New Grove Dictionary of American Music, (New York: Macmill

same winter, Emerson entered another singing school co-directed by Artemus Nixon Johnson and a very young George F. Root.⁴ These two had started a private conservatory next to the Park Street Church that same year with Lowell Mason's blessing.⁵ But Johnson and Root were conducting their classes in church music, that Emerson probably attended, in the vestry of the Park Street Church.⁶ Root

an Press, 1986), Volume I, 113.

⁴ George F. Root was only twenty-two while he was teaching in this singing school. See E.S. Lorenz, "Dr. L.O. Emerson," The Choir Herald, 1916, 63. Richard Crawford and David Warren Steel, ("Singing-schools," The New Grove Dictionary of American Music, Volume IV, 233) state that the "first half of the 19th century saw the decline of singing-schools in the Northeast. From 1838, when vocal music was established as part of the public school curriculum in Boston, singing-schools, along with most of their repertory, disappeared from New England." These authors offer no information about any subsequent interest in the movement in the Northeast, therefore, one may conclude that a singing-school such as Baker's and the Johnson-Root partnership would have been taught on an individual basis, or, if offered as a class, would have been private and altogether outmoded.

⁵ Jacklin Bolton Stopp, "A.N. Johnson, Out of Oblivion," American Music, Vol.3, No.2, (Summer 1985), 154. Although this private conservatory was destined to fail, the partnership between Johnson and Root proved to be a successful arrangement. It afforded Johnson more free time to study music in Europe. Johnson remained in Europe for one year. While Johnson was abroad, Root formed a close relationship with Mason. Mason took over the Winter Street Church and reassigned Root to his former Bowdoin Street Church. This new arrangement left Johnson solely in charge of the Park Street Church.

⁶ Stopp, presently completing a book on A. N. Johnson notes in a telephone conversation on October 27, 1993, that Johnson's primary concern and, apparently Emerson's also was cultivating church music. While Mason's became increasingly interested in school music. This unestablished connection between Emerson and Johnson invites further research. The Park Street Church's name has been preserved in the name of a still current hymn tune in Long meter attributed to F.M.A. Venna. The tune has been used to set such texts as "Come, O my soul in sacred lays" and "Great God! attend, while Zion sings."

had been Lowell Mason's assistant in the public-school music classes, but now was conducting his own classes in vocal technique.⁷

After having embarked upon teaching singing schools on his own in Wakefield, New Hampshire, Emerson returned to Boston and began to take music lessons with Isaac Baker Woodbury. Woodbury's education in Italy may have enhanced his reputation as a renowned organist, composer, convention leader, editor of popular music books, and teacher in Boston.⁸

With his earnest and methodical study of voice, piano, organ, and harmony under Woodbury as credentials, Emerson launched his professional career in music. In the fall of 1844 he formed a quartet with some of his fellow music students. The quartet christened themselves the "Wanderjahr".⁹ Relying on their musical skills to provide them with what they needed, they embarked on their travels. The four young men journeyed first to Albany, then decided to follow the extent of the Erie Canal. While travelling the Canal they stopped at many small towns, sometimes playing to good-sized audiences. After a short stop in Buffalo the quartet went to Cleveland. They arrived there by boat, having payed their

⁷ In 1844 Root left Boston and carried Mason's methods of musical education to New York. See H. Wiley Hitchcock, "Root, George Frederick," The New Grove Dictionary of American Music, New York: Macmillan Press, 1986, 85.

⁸ It was commonplace for many nineteenth-century American composers or musicians to train or study music in Europe. Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson", 203.

⁹ Ibid. Another name for this quartet was Wanderlust.

fare by performing on board. In Cleveland the group gave two performances, then journeyed to their final destination, Cincinnati.

With their prestige as Bostonian musicians to aid them, the "Wanderjahr" stayed in Cincinnati and devoted themselves to finding professional work. Cincinnati was not a city rich with organists and music teachers; thus, finding employment was not a difficult endeavor for the New-England musicians. The four created a method of finding paying positions, evidently staying together in order to take further advantage of a paying proposition. One member of the "Wanderjahr" would meet with the authorities of a local church and offer to present a concert or to initiate a singing school; the other three would assist, once the post was secured. In the spring of 1845, after filling a few such positions, the quartet departed Cincinnati and travelled back to Boston to resume their studies.

With the "Wanderjahr" behind him and his studies recommenced, Emerson began to look for professional work in the eastern New England region. He accepted a position in Salem, Massachusetts, as a choirmaster and organist in the Crombie Street Church. Emerson earned a salary of \$100 a year; his choir consisted of twenty-five voices.¹⁰ Emerson held this post for five years, from 1845 to around 1850, and then accepted another choirmaster position in the Episcopal church for the remaining three years that he lived in

¹⁰ Ibid.

Salem, that is, until 1853.¹¹

On March 4, 1847 Emerson married Mary Jane Gove, daughter of a prominent Boston merchant. The marriage took place in Salem after Emerson had met his fiancée in Boston where she was living at the time.¹² She was born January 14, 1831 in the Fort Hill section of Boston, to Mary (Burgess) and John Gove and was the eldest of four daughters. Although her life in music was no mean achievement, it lies outside the scope of this thesis.¹³ She is said to have been

¹¹ After on-site research at the Essex Institute in Salem and correspondence in early March, 1993, and telephone calls in late March, 1993, with William Lamoy, the Director of the James Duncan Phillip Memorial Library of the Essex Institute, the exact dates that Emerson worked and resided in Salem remain unknown. L.O. Emerson's name and address are, however, listed in the 1851 and 1853 Salem Directories. Directories are not available for every year, unfortunately, leaving any other Salem years unverifiable. The telephone inquiries to Mr. Lamoy about Salem newspapers of this time brought the response that in his estimation newspapers would be of little or no further assistance. Unfortunately, The Essex Institute Historical Collections: Name, Place and Subject Index (Salem: Newcomb and Glass, for the Essex Institute, 1954) gathered data only from 1859, and The Bulletin of the Essex Institute commenced publication only in the 1870s.

¹² The record of intent to marry is preserved in Vital Records of Salem, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849 (Salem: The Essex Institute, [1924]), III (Marriages), 437, where the following item is entered: "GOVE. . . Mary Jane, of Boston, and Luther O. Emerson, [intention of marriage], February 14, 1847." After contacting the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Office of the Secretary of State, the author could not learn the exact church where the Emerson wedding took place.

¹³ Mary Gove was educated at the old Charleston Academy, was exposed to music at an early age, and by the time she was twelve had played the Hallelujah Chorus on the largest organ of its day in Boston at the Odeon. After her marriage she continued being considered quite an accomplished musician. For many years she sang in the church choir while Emerson played the organ, but as her family increased in size she was forced to devote the majority of her time at home. In her later years she still kept up an active social life, as there was always a large circle of

"a lady of much musical taste and ability".¹⁴ She is also claimed to have composed music.¹⁵

By 1851, Emerson was an established music merchant in Salem. His name and work address appear in the Salem directory of that year, as follows:

Emerson, (Luther O.) and Whitmore (Benjamin),
Piano-forte and Music Store,
146 Essex Street
House 8 East¹⁶

Also in this directory, an advertisement appears for Emerson's music store, which he ran with Benjamin Whitmore:

No. 146 Bowker Place, Essex Street, Salem,
Music Store,

A good assortment of piano-fortes, musical instruments, and sheet music of every description.

Church music books, glee books, juvenile singing books, instruction books in harmony and thorough bass, piano-forte instruction books: together with a variety of music usually found in a music store. A good assortment of canes and umbrellas. Also, piano-fortes to let.

By two years later, Emerson had comfortably settled in Salem where he had now hung out his sign at his home address:

friends gathering about the Emerson home. She and Emerson celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on March 4, 1897. Mary Gove Emerson died at the age of seventy on January 14, 1902. See J.H. Hall, Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers (New York: AMS Press, 1914), 46.

¹⁴ Unsigned [Obituary], "Mrs. L.O. Emerson," Boston Transcript, January 14, 1902. John Gove purchased the plot where his children and L.O. Emerson's descendants are buried.

¹⁵ Unsigned [Obituary], "L.O. Emerson Dies Suddenly," Boston Transcript, September, 1915.

¹⁶ George Adams, Salem Directory (Salem: Henry Whipple, 1851), 70.

Luther O. Emerson, Teacher of Music
House 14 Lynde¹⁷

From this notice one observes that while in Salem, Emerson had ventured into another realm of music by offering lessons. His fee for these lessons was ten to twelve dollars for twenty-five lessons, presumably fortnightly excepting Christmas. His first pupil was a woman, whom references do not name, who took lessons for six months. She then decided to take up a career by teaching herself, however, she neglected the fact that she never paid Emerson for the lessons she had received. Evidently, as it was announced, "teachers had their difficulties then as now," a mid-nineteenth-century condition worthy of remarking, as Baltzell does, in the early decades of the current century.¹⁸ Even as Emerson taught such lessons and held the post of choirmaster, he also found time to conduct singing schools in surrounding towns.¹⁹

Although quite involved in the musical ambiance of Salem, Emerson was now beginning to probe the area of composition and to see to the publication of his music. While he was employed at the Crombie Street Church, he composed hymn tunes and anthems, which were frequently sung by his choir and "heard by the congregation

¹⁷ Adams, Salem Directory (Salem: Henry Whipple and Sons, 1853), 69. Whether or not Emerson's partnership with Whitmore continued thereafter is not ascertainable from the 1853 directory.

¹⁸ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson", 203.

¹⁹ Ibid.

with high approval".²⁰ Perhaps motivated by this praise, Emerson, at the age of thirty-three, compiled The Romberg Collection.

After residing and working in Salem for eight years, Emerson moved back to Boston. There he accepted a post as organist and choirmaster, under the Reverend William R. Alger, at the Bulfinch Street Church where he worked for four years at a salary of \$600 a year.²¹ While holding this position, Emerson continued teaching, studying, and writing music. It was also at this post that he produced his first successful song book, The Golden Wreath, published in 1856 by the well known Boston publisher, Oliver Ditson.²² This collection was reported to have "struck the public fancy," and forty thousand copies were sold in the first year alone.²³ The success of The Golden Wreath not only secured Oliver Ditson as his publisher but also brought Emerson his earliest renown in the Boston hymn-singing community.

In 1857 Emerson moved from Boston to Greenfield, in central Massachusetts, where he held two important posts. The first position was that of organist and musical director at the Second Congregational Church. Shortly after this, Emerson was selected to

²⁰ Lorenz, "Dr. Emerson", 63.

²¹ Hall, Biography, 46. While conducting research at the Massachusetts Historical Society, the author found that there is no church called Bulfinch Street church in existence presently, nor does Bulfinch street itself exist today.

²² The established reputation of the Oliver Ditson publishing company is attested by numerous entries in Dwight's Journal of Music that mention the firm.

²³ Lorenz, "Dr. Emerson", 63.

head the music department of the Powers Institute in neighboring Bernardston, Massachusetts. He held both positions simultaneously for a total of eight years during which his talents as a composer, conductor, and teacher matured. This maturation process, as far as concerns his composing, manifests itself through the publication of his second successful music hymn book, The Golden Harp. Compiled in 1857, this was a Sabbath School book, a class of publication to be discussed in Chapter IV.

With the success of the two previous books, Emerson published his second purely church-music repertory, Sabbath Harmony in 1860. This compilation was also a great success. It broke ground in that it contained many hymns and anthems which Baltzell describes as different in style from the works of his contemporaries and predecessors in the field of church music.²⁴ It was perhaps this book that inspired Emerson's most successful attempt yet, Harp of Judah. This hymn book, published in 1863, was successful in that it had a sale of fifty-thousand copies in the first year.²⁵

The popularity of Harp of Judah, helped decidedly to establish Emerson as a recognized and respected composer. But despite his flourishing career in composition, Emerson began to take a keen interest in an occupation with a broader public appeal but now more rural approach: the musical convention. At a time when most

²⁴ Baltzell, "L.O.Emerson", 204.

²⁵ Ibid. A second source contains contrasting information on the sales of The Harp of Judah; J.W. Dearborn (History of Parsonsfield), 248, reports a sale of fifty thousand copies in just the first three months.

composers were using the conventions to launch the sales of their own music books, Emerson's efforts indicate the contrary: his books were already so successful that the conventions opened to him.

Emerson was called to the vocation of the musical convention first in 1862 while he was an associate of E.H. Frost, a well-known convention leader of the time. On this occasion, Emerson was afforded the opportunity to conduct a musical convention in Keene, New Hampshire.²⁶ The convention in which he began his career as a leader was the Tenth Annual Session of the Cheshire County, New Hampshire, Musical Institute and Convention, one of the largest and most distinguished of its day.

Emerson did not come by the prestigious post easily. There was much opposition to his being one of the conductors, opposition attributable to his still not firmly established reputation. L.B. Starkweather, one of Emerson's close associates, relates the story of the prospective appointee's selection:

Your reference to L.O. Emerson causes me to write this letter.... I have known him for nearly sixty years -- three years as his pupil, and then spending considerable time afterwards in conventions with him in different parts of the country. I have always been in touch with him during this long period. Outside of his immediate family, probably no one knew him so well as myself -- yes, it was forty and fifty years, when I was active -- I knew all of the prominent leaders and soloists personally, including Bradbury, Root, Baker, Zerrahn, Frost, Hamilton, Wyman, Palmer, Foster, Sabin, Whitney, Perkins Brothers, etc. and now they are all dead. It may interest you to know more about the early work or history of Emerson. When I first knew him the only book which he had published that gave him any reputation, was the "Golden Wreath," which in its first or original form was not

²⁶ E.H. Frost is listed among such well known convention leaders as are Carl Zerrahn, William Bradbury, George Root, and Benjamin Franklin Baker. See Lorenz "Dr. L.O. Emerson", 86. *One Convention, one of the largest in New Hampshire in 1862, was held in Keene, N.H. and was conducted by Emerson. See Lorenz "Dr. L.O. Emerson", 86.*

creative on his part but a compilation of works of other authors, principally if not wholly. However it pleased. . . . At Keene, New Hampshire, we always had an Annual Musical Convention composed of the best singers and singing-school teachers, and we employed the best directors in the country. In 1862 (I think), I suggested Emerson's name as director to the committee of five, who had the power to employ, but they said "No, that he had no reputation as an author or director and it would not do." [sic, quote] At the close of the session, when a new committee was elected for the following year, I managed to get two of my and Emerson's friends on the committee, and two others were for Root, but the fifth man was non-committal. The following spring, when the committee reported for the director, it stood three for Root and two for Emerson. I went forty miles to see the strongest man for Emerson and persuaded him to go sixty miles in a horse and buggy to interview the fifth man in Emerson's behalf. I think he took a new book which Emerson had just gotten out, as an argument. At all events, the gentleman reversed his decision and gave a letter voting for Emerson. This opened the way for Emerson's reputation, which was made at that convention of six hundred singers, the cream of New England. He gave them pointers in church music which they never saw before. Emerson never forgot my efforts in his behalf, took me as a partner in one book, and made use of many of my compositions.²⁷

Starkweather's report is accurate in that Emerson did indeed return the year after he was originally denied and was given the position as one of the leaders of the convention. In fact, he was recalled as an associate of first teacher, Benjamin Franklin Baker.²⁸

Emerson was so successful that he became the sole conductor at Keene in 1864, and in 1865 he was additionally granted the privilege of conducting with one of the most prominent convention leaders, Carl Zerrahn.²⁹ Emerson went on to conduct the succeeding

²⁷ Lorenz, "Dr. Emerson", 86-87.

²⁸ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson", 204.

²⁹ Carl Zerrahn was a flutist who came to the Boston with the Germania Musical Society. He remained in Boston and went on to become the conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society until 1898.

sessions of the Cheshire County Musical Convention for seven years. This highly rated first effort in the work of musical conventions seems to have paved the way for the many appointments as a leader that Emerson would receive throughout his long and productive career.

Zerrahn also led such respected orchestras as the Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestral Union, and the Harvard Musical Association orchestra. He did much for the development of choral singing. In addition to his orchestral conducting, he also conducted the Salem Oratorio Society, and choruses of such immense numbers as 10,000 and 20,000 at Patrick Gilmore's peace jubilees held in Boston in 1869 and 1872. He was a sought-after leader of musical conventions and even converted the singing school conventions held in Worcester, Massachusetts into thriving Musical festivals. See H. Earle Johnson "Zerrahn, Carl," The New Grove Dictionary of American Music (New York: Macmillan Press), Volume IV, 1986, 592.

CHAPTER III

EMERSON'S CONVENTION WORK AND LATER LIFE

The New Hampshire State Musical Convention was officially recognized in 1864 at Concord and normally took place in the first week of January. The convention was organized in response to the desire of a pair of Concord music teachers J.H. Morey and B.B. Davis, who wanted to offer an opportunity for the singers in various parts of the state to come together for one week; the goal in mind was "mutual improvement."¹ This first New Hampshire convention was quite effective in attracting the state's chorally inclined population; it trained a three hundred-voice chorus. Emerson was called upon to lead the chorus of this convention. Again Emerson's performance proved to be a success.

The second New Hampshire State Musical Convention was held on January 2, 1865, once again in Concord, at Eagle Hall which was filled to capacity with singers. Emerson was recalled to conduct the chorus, that--depending upon the source read--numbered between five hundred and seven hundred and fifty voices.² By the conclusion of the convention that number had grown to nearly a thousand. Emerson's performance was said to be "beyond the most sanguine expectations," and his ensemble was claimed to be the

¹ John S. Dwight, "New Hampshire State Musical Convention," Dwight's Journal of Music 23 (February, 1865): 392.

² Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson", 204. Cf. Dwight's Journal, "New Hampshire Convention," 392.

largest gathering of singers in New England outside the Boston area.³

A portion of each day was dedicated to the practice of church music. While Emerson conducted, he would use his own book of church music, The Harp of Judah. The rest of the day was divided into the rehearsing of songs, piano and quartet music, and the choral masterworks, Messiah, Creation, and Elijah. Emerson was especially empathetic with his choir in their rehearsing of church music Dwight notes:

Mr. Emerson conducted the various exercises with evident satisfaction to the singers, and much credit to himself. He is especially happy in his manner of rendering church music, much attention being given to the sentiment of words.⁴

And such a complimentary review from Dwight must have produced a separate satisfaction.

There were public performances on the evenings of January 4, 5, and 6, with high compliments directed toward the conductors and convention managers by the citizens of Concord. The convention came to an end on January 7, but there were announcements in the daily newspapers that the entire body would temporarily remove to Boston to give a concert at the Music Hall. Although the concert in Boston never occurred, speculation arose that it undoubtedly would have brought a full house.

The third New Hampshire convention in 1866 gained its impetus from the previous year's astounding success, and once again the

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

chorus's number increased, this time to over a thousand voices. Emerson was the natural choice for conductor that year. Although the convention was again successful, Emerson did not return to conduct in 1867. He did, however, return the following year in 1868 and went on to conduct the New Hampshire convention for several more years.⁵

The peak of Emerson's convention career may have been occasioned by the National Peace Jubilee and Musical Festival which took place in Boston in 1869. Figure 3, appearing apocryphally in the Parsonsfield history, portrays him at this height of his career. Patrick S. Gilmore assembled the peace festival, which is often referred to as the "Great Peace Jubilee."⁶ With an orchestra of about 1,000 members and chorus of 10,000 voices, this festival was until then the largest ever seen in Boston. The jubilee lasted five days and took place in a coliseum built specifically for the event. The coliseum covered over three acres and at capacity held 50,000 persons. Among the audience members present were President Grant, cabinet appointees, several governors, and numerous United States military leaders.⁷

Emerson conducted the gigantic chorus in a performance of his popular hymn, "Sessions", from his first hymn book, the Romberg

⁵ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson", 204.

⁶ Hall, Biography, 46.

⁷ Leonard Burkat, "Boston," Stanley Sadie and H. Wiley Hitchcock, eds., The New Grove Dictionary of American Music (New York: MacMillan, 1986), Volume I, 265.

Figure 3



L. O. Emerson
PROF. L. O. EMERSON.

Sketch of Emerson at the height of his career

Collection. The chorus was accompanied by an orchestra of two hundred members and a great pipe organ.⁸ The success of the convention was not to be repeated by its sequel, the World Jubilee and International Musical Festival of 1872. That festival, in which Emerson did not participate, featured an orchestra of 2,000 and chorus of 20,000 in productions that might be described as overwrought. Perhaps the previous Peace Jubilee could attribute its success to the hundreds of still earlier musical festivals being held in New England and around the country. Gilmore's Peace Jubilee certainly offered the largest ensemble and audience that Emerson had ever worked with, and his successful performance just as certainly exhibited his talents as both a composer and conductor. Indeed, his interpretation was reported to be "sublime beyond expression."⁹

The next decade saw Emerson remain in Massachusetts to participate in the Worcester County Musical Association's convention. The location of this convention, the New Hampshire Convention and Boston's National Peace Jubilee are shown in Map C. The main objective of this festival was to elevate the stature of the church choir, and, year after year with this purpose, a few selections from popular operas and oratorios had helped create the

⁸ The number 200 is given by Hall (46) but whether or not this is a contingent of the 1,000 total instrumentalists for the grand festival is uncertain.

⁹ Hall, Biography, 46. Further praise of Emerson's performance in this grand event has not been found. Even Dwight's does not mention Emerson in his coverage of the Great Peace Jubilee of 1869.

MAP C

36



convention's own special history. Its first session, in 1857, had been conducted by Charles Hamilton, a well-known convention leader. Hamilton conducted for many years and invariably steered the focus of the convention toward change. No longer would easy church music alone dominate a musician's studies; participants would have the chance to study entire operas and oratorios in addition to the customary fare of anthems, chorales, and songs. Not unlike many conventions of the time, the Worcester version grew in popularity each year until its program became of the largest of their kind in New England.

With his reputation as one of the most prominent convention leaders firmly intact, Emerson once again crossed musical paths with Carl Zerrahn. This time they conducted together at the fifteenth annual Worcester County Musical Association in October, 1872. Perhaps owing to their dynamic joint effort and their reputation in the field of musical conventions, both were recalled to co-direct the Worcester proceedings the following year.

The 1873 events occurred during the second week of October, opening on Monday morning and closing on Friday evening. Mornings were devoted to study, which would continue after each day's matinee performance and on Monday and Tuesday evenings. All other evenings were reserved for performances. The afternoon and evening of Wednesday were reserved for performances by the New York Glee Club, their specialty being madrigals, glees, and English songs. The Glee Club was divided into two sections, one of all male voices and the other a mixed-voice chorus. The convention chorus joined

the two sections of the Glee Club in performance. The combined ensembles performed a few selections from Emerson's latest hymn and anthem book, The Standard, published the previous year. Dwight, accustomed to berating the convention's fare, praised the mixed chorus, noting "the perfection of four-part singing, being evenly balanced, the voices blending perfectly, the enunciation good, and the shading exquisite."¹⁰ The sixteenth annual festival of the Association was highly successful financially with receipts totaling \$4,500, a success far surpassing the previous festivals. But it was the opinion of some of the performers, members of the audience, and critics that the musical program of the sixteenth Worcester festival was not as tasteful as the previous years. Although reports on the performances were glowing, a few negative comments were, nevertheless, circulating. Complaints were being uttered that the music was too simple or too ordinary. Dwight, with customary disgust, commented that some of the repertoire that the singers performed was no more than "everyday hackneyed songs."¹¹ After the convention association stomachached the criticism, it decided to add a concert, within the convention week, which would feature more music of a class that Dwight and others were calling 'historical', by which they meant featuring European masterworks.

Perhaps the most special musical convention for Emerson

¹⁰ John S. Dwight, "The Worcester Festival," Dwight's Journal of Music, 15 (November, 1873): 115.

¹¹ Ibid., 116.

occurred in late August, 1885, when he offered to conduct a three-day event in his hometown in Maine. He donated his services in honor of Parsonsfield on the occasion of its Centennial, complemented by a special convention. Although the site for the main activities was a spacious place called "Piper's Field" in north Parsonsfield, the original site in mind for the events was Emerson's birthplace, Elmswood Farm, located on the western side of Parsonsfield, near the New Hampshire border. (See Map A in Chapter I). Elmswood Farm had been completely renovated and was now owned by James W. Cook, married to a great-granddaughter of Parsons; its state in 1884 is seen in Figure 2b. Cook generously offered his estate, rebuilt at "a large expense," for the Centennial, but the organizers decided against the site because of the difficulty of access.¹² The organizing committee is shown in Figure 4.

The Parsonsfield Musical Convention took place on August 26, 27, and 28. Its main purpose was for "drilling" a chorus for two "grand concerts" to be given as part of the Centennial events and the Centennial commemorative music on Saturday, August 29. Emerson was aided by another conductor and native, Dr. J.T. Wedgewood, of Cornish, Maine. The pianists of the Parsonsfield convention were Elizabeth U. Emerson and Rosa K. Wedgewood, daughters of the two conductors.¹³ The two special concerts took place on Thursday evening at eight o'clock and Friday at three o'clock in the afternoon. Figure 5 shows an advertisement for these concerts.

¹² Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 4.

¹³ Ibid., 4, 6.

Figure 4

Officers of General Committee.

J. W. DEARBORN, Chairman; John W. PIPER, Rec. Sec.;
WM. E. MOULTON, Treas.

JOHN BENNETT,	} Cor. Sec'ys;	SAMUEL MERRILL,	} Com. on Finance.
L. T. STAPLES.		DOMINICUS RICKER,	
C. F. SANBORN,		GILMAN LOUGEE,	
E. S. WADLEIGH,			

Committee on Music.

Dr. J. W. Dearborn.	Mrs. S. L. Dittrick, Springfield, Mo.
Prof. L. O. Emerson, Boston, Mass.	" Ada M. Towle, Newfield.
Dr. J. T. Wedgewood, Cornish, Me.	" N. M. Leavitt.
T. W. Burnham.	" E. A. Smart.
Mrs. J. W. Cook, Boston.	" D. O. Blazo.
" B. F. Haley, Cornish.	" O. B. Churchill.
" C. F. Sanborn.	" E. E. Lord.
" Jesse Gould, Limerick.	" D. H. Hill, Sandwich, N. H.
Robert Merrill.	Miss Margaret Bullock.
Dr. J. O. Moore, Haverhill.	J. W. Piper.
	Mrs. Joseph Roberts.

Executive Committee.

JOHN BENNETT. L. T. STAPLES. C. F. SANBORN.
E. S. WADLEIGH. J. W. DEARBORN.

General Committee.

Dr. J. W. Dearborn,	Dominicus Ricker,
Dr. Moses E. Sweat,	*Samuel Merrill,
Rev. L. T. Staples,	Gilman Lougee,
John Bennett, Esq.	C. O. Nute,
*John M. Ames,	Hon. C. F. Sanborn,
*Hon. John Brackett,	T. W. Burnham,
Thos. B. Wentworth,	Jos. Wedgewood,
S. G. Dearborn,	Chas. A. Rand,
J. S. Newbegin,	S. F. Perry,
Lorenz Moulton,	Jos. Moulton,
Capt. A. O. Smart,	Robert Merrill,
J. W. Tru-worthy,	Nehemiah Libby,
Jeremiah Bullock,	H. L. Merrill,
Thomas C. Huntress,	A. R. Leavitt,
Ivory Fenderson,	Wm. E. Moulton,
H. G. O. Smith,	Joseph Parsons,
John W. Piper,	William K. Doe,
Eben Foss,	*Hon. Alvah Doe,
O. B. Churchill,	Robert T. Blazo, Esq.
E. S. Wadleigh,	Thos. C. Randall,
S. H. Cartland,	Israel Banks,
Wm. B. Davis,	John Neal,
J. A. Pease,	Luther Neal,
John U. Parsons,	*S. D. Marston,
Chase Boothby,	John Devereaux,
T. S. Churchill,	E. B. Wadleigh,
Marston Ames,	Geo. P. Davis,
H. W. Colcord,	David M. Chase,
E. E. Lord,	Jacob Taylor.

*Deceased.

A Praise service on the Sabbath, Aug. 30, led by Prof. Emerson, followed by
serm. on by Rev. R. H. Conwell, of Philadelphia, commencing at 10.30 A.M.

The organizing committee for the 1885 Parsonsfield Centennial

Figure 4

Officers of General Committee.

J. W. DEARBORN, Chairman; John W. PIPER, Rec. Sec.;
Wm. E. MOULTON, Treas.

JOHN BENNETT,	} Cor.	SAMUEL MERRILL,	} Com. on
L. T. STAPLES,		DOMINICUS RICKER,	
C. F. SANBORN,		GILMAN LOUGEE,	
E. S. WADLEIGH,			
	} Sec'ys;		} Finance.

Committee on Music.

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Prof. L. O. Emerson, Boston, Mass.	" Ada M. Towle, Newfield.
Dr. J. T. Wedgewood, Cornish, Me.	" N. M. Leavitt.
T. W. Burnham.	" E. A. Smart.
Mrs. J. W. Cook, Boston.	" D. O. Blazo.
" L. F. Haley, Cornish.	" O. B. Churchill.
" C. F. Sanborn.	" E. E. Lord.
" Jesse Gould, Limerick.	" D. H. Hill, Sandwich, N. H.
Robert Merrill.	Miss Margaret Bullock.
Dr. J. O. Moore, Haverhill.	J. W. Piper.
	Mrs. Joseph Roberts.

Executive Committee.

JOHN BENNETT. L. T. STAPLES. C. F. SANBORN.
E. S. WADLEIGH. J. W. DEARBORN.

General Committee.

Dr. J. W. Dearborn,	Dominicus Ricker,
Dr. Moses E. Sweet,	*Samuel Merrill,
Rev. L. T. Staples,	Gilman Lougee,
John Bennett, Esq.	C. O. Nye,
*John M. Ames,	Hon. C. F. Sanborn,
*Hon. John Brackett,	T. W. Burnham,
Thos. B. Wentworth,	Jos. Wedgewood,
S. G. Dearborn,	Chas. A. Rand,
J. S. Newbegin,	S. F. Perry,
Loreoz Moulton,	Jos. Moulton,
Capt. A. O. Smart,	Robert Merrill,
J. W. Troworth,	Nehemiah Libbey,
Jeremiah Bullock,	H. L. Merrill,
Thomas C. Huntress,	A. R. Leavitt,
Ivory Feilderson,	Wm. E. Moulton,
H. G. O. Smith,	Joseph Parsons,
John W. Piper,	William K. Doe,
Eben Foss,	*Hon. Alvah Doe,
O. B. Churchill,	Robert T. Blazo, Esq.
E. S. Wadleigh,	Thos. C. Randall,
S. H. Catland,	Israel Banks,
Wm. B. Davis,	John Neal,
J. A. Fense,	Luther Neal,
John C. Parsons,	*S. D. Marston,
Chase Boothby,	John Devereaux,
T. S. Churchill,	E. B. Wadleigh,
Marston Ames,	Geo. P. Davis,
H. W. Colcord,	David M. Chase,
E. E. Lord,	Jacob Taylor.

*Deceased.

A Praise service on the Sabbath, Aug. 30, led by Prof. Emerson, followed by
serm on by Rev. R. H. Conwell, of Philadelphia, commencing at 10.30 A.M.

The organizing committee for the 1885 Parsonsfield Centennial

Figure 5

In honor of Parsonsfield's Centennial, which is to be celebrated at North Parsonsfield, Me., August 29th, there is to be a

GRAND
PREPARATORY MUSICAL FESTIVAL,

—37—

EAST PARSONSFIELD.

AUGUST 26th, 27th and 28th.

DIRECTORS:

Prof. L. O. Emerson, of Boston, Mass.
Dr. John T. Wedgewood, of Cornish, Me.

Soloist, Miss Alice Crouch, Boston.

PIANISTS:

Miss Elizabeth U. Emerson, Boston.
Miss Rosa K. Wedgewood, Cornish, Me.

Exercises will commence on Wednesday, at 10 o'clock, A.M.

TWO GRAND CONCERTS.

THURSDAY EVE, at 8 o'clock, and *FRIDAY AFT'N*, at 3.

All singers are cordially invited to join the chorus, and participate in the festivities of the occasion, *free*.

Concert Tickets, 25 cts.

It is highly important that all who contemplate joining the chorus, should be present at its organization, on Wednesday, August 26th.

Advertisement for the Parsonsfield Centennial concerts

On Saturday, August 29, the main exercises of the Centennial took place. Emerson conducted the chorus in a performance of his anthem, "Praise the Lord", Rossini's "God of Israel", and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus". Emerson's tune from his hymn, "Sessions", was performed with a text written for the occasion by Frank Herbert Pease.¹⁴ Figure 6 displays the entire program, including these verses, for the exercises on August 29. The day's activities concluded with Emerson's lecture entitled, "Music and Musicians of Parsonsfield," which is discussed in the next chapter.¹⁵

The Centennial celebration closed on Sunday, August 30, with a church service led by Emerson which was followed by the Reverend R.H. Conwell's sermon. The performances and the Centennial exercises were reported to have been quite successful and the townspeople impressed. They were proud to have their distinguished professor returned home to conduct the music of all the festivities.

Emerson's reputation as convention leader, much like the musical convention itself, continued to grow. His advice was regarded as a treasured word among the ranks of soloists, vocal and instrumental, music teachers, and other convention leaders of comparable esteem. It was esteem for Emerson that produced invitations to conduct outside New England, even outside the United

¹⁴ Frank Herbert Pease, a native of Parsonsfield and a graduate of Tufts College, was an accomplished writer of verse. His centennial hymn was an especially difficult project in that he had only twenty four lines into which to put a century's worth of history. See Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 445.

¹⁵ Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 7.

Figure 6

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29.

MUSIC,	CHANDLER'S BAND, Portland, Me.
ADDRESS OF WELCOME,	DR. J. W. DEARBORN, President of the Day.
INVOCATION,	REV. WM. RICKER THOMPSON.
MUSIC, Festival Anthem, "Praise the Lord," (L. O. Emerson.)	CHORUS.
*SUMMARY OF GRANTS AND SURVEYS. EARLY SETTLEMENTS,	H. G. O. SMITH.
*ACT OF INCORPORATION AND ORGANIZATION,	H. G. O. SMITH.
MUSIC, "God of Israel,"	(Rossini.) CHORUS.
ORATION,	HON. JAMES W. BEADBURY.
MUSIC,	CHANDLER'S BAND.
AGRICULTURE OF PARSONSFIELD,	JOHN TUCK.
SCHOOLS OF PARSONSFIELD,	HORACE PIPER, A.M., LL.B.
MUSIC,	Selected.

REFRESHMENTS.

MUSIC,	CHANDLER'S BAND.
COLLEGE GRADUATES,	JOS. RICKER, D.D.
MUSIC, "Hail to Thee, Liberty,"	CHORUS.
*CHURCHES AND MINISTERS,	JAMES M. BUZZELL, M.D.
MUSIC, (Selected)	CHORUS.
†PROGRESS OF SCIENCE FOR THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS,	PROF. C. F. BRACKETT, A.M., LL.D.
POEM,	MRS. ISADORE E. MERRILL.
MUSIC,	CHANDLER'S BAND.
‡LAWYERS OF PARSONSFIELD,	HON. L. D. M. SWEAT.
MUSIC, "Hallelujah Chorus,"	(Handel.)
PHYSICIANS OF PARSONSFIELD,	REV. L. T. STAPLES.
MINERALOGY AND GEOLOGY OF THE TOWN,	H. L. STAPLES, A.M.
REMARKS OF CELEBRITIES.	
MUSIC, (Original Hymn.) Tune, "Sessions."	
PARSONSFIELD SEMINARY AND PUPILS,	PROF. G. H. RICKER.
MUSIC AND MUSICIANS OF PARSONSFIELD,	PROF. L. O. EMERSON.

HYMN.

In the broad forest's trackless wild, With ready hand and hearty cheer, Our fathers cleared their rugged farms.— Their humble homes they builded here.	O meadows green! O friendly wood! Each happy bird, and hum-buzzing ill, Each breeze that sweeps through sighing pines, Our restless souls doth sweetly thrill.
How changed the time! How changed the scene! Where once their sturdy axes rang! Above the forest's gloomy shade, A busy town to life has sprung.	Here first we saw the light of day, Our lisping prayer we nightly said:— In yonder, sacred, silent spot, Lies many a loved one, long since dead.
In these fair fields, first tilled by them, With grateful hearts we sing our lay, That memory may their worth preserve When we, like them, have passed away.	O Faith that crowned our sires of old, Be with us in each coming year. While others come again to find Their joys, their hopes, and memories here. —FRANK HERBERT FRASE.

* See History of Parsonsfeld, Part II.

† In the absence of Prof. Brackett, responded to by Rev. R. H. Conwell, of Philadelphia.

‡ Paper by P. W. McIntire, Esq., of Portland.

States.¹⁶ Other conventions led by Emerson included the Northern and Western Vermont Musical Association at St. Alban's and Middlebury, the Northern New York, the Wisconsin State, and the Penobscot Musical Association in Bangor, Maine.¹⁷

In addition to his many other talents, Emerson was also a noted lecturer. Lowell Mason arranged some appearances for Emerson, most likely in the early years of his career, as a guest lecturer.¹⁸ As Emerson's convention activities decreased (along with the decreased interest in conventions on the national plane), he took time to speak to New England's young vocalists and instrumentalists. His best known lecture was "The World of Music" in which he traced the origin and progress of music. His lectures are discussed in Chapter IV.

Emerson's residences during periods when he led the life of a musical circuit-rider are not always known. Before his Parsonsfield homecoming he resided, perhaps briefly, in Boston. His name and profession as a teacher of music appear in an 1880 listing at: 281 Columbus Avenue.¹⁹

In 1888, Emerson was invited to head the voice department of the Findlay College Conservatory, in Ohio, where he taught solo

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Carol Pemberton, Lowell Mason His Life and Work (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985) 185, 93.

¹⁹ Boston Directory Embracing the City Record and a Business Directory (Boston: Adams, Sampson & Company), 1880. Emerson's name was not found for any other year in Boston.

singing and served as choral director. In 1990 it became the University of Findlay, but exactly a century earlier when it opened (on January 1) it then already had a respectable enrollment of eighty-four students.²⁰ Emerson was happy to accept the position, but he had reservations as to whether a vocal department would succeed. These fears were soon dispelled as his amiable and distinctive teaching style gave the department permanency. Although Emerson only taught at Findlay College for the 1890 academic year, he made a favorable impression on the institution's music department. The academic schedule not only brought new teaching experiences for Emerson, but also learning ones and resultant honors. Emerson received the honorary degree of Doctor of Music in 1890 from Findlay College. His lectures, ideas, and teaching methods at this school are reviewed in Chapter IV.

Even in his later years, Emerson's composing career did not falter. He produced a music book entitled Emerson's New Century in 1899. Other late works include The Coronet of Song (1895) and Singer's Favorite (1899). His Mass in C, composed in 1898, and later his Mass in B-flat, in 1900 were both late works that give written testimonies of Emerson's unwillingness to abandon his goal of elevating the standards of music.

At a later unascertainable year Emerson moved to 182 Fairmount Avenue in Hyde Park south of Boston, where he spent the rest of his

²⁰ The Fourth Annual Catalogue of Findlay College (Harrisburg: House of The Church of God, 1889,) 35.

life.²¹ Figure 7 is recent photograph of the house. He remained active and healthy even in his last years; he suffered only from failing sight and hearing. He celebrated his ninety-fifth birthday on August 3, 1915, in good health, yet only a month and half later, on Wednesday, September 29, he died from pneumonia. His obituary stated that his death was quite sudden:

L.O. Emerson Dies Suddenly. . . Veteran American Composer Succumbs to Attack of Pneumonia After Only a Brief Illness. . . L.O. Emerson, the veteran musician and composer, died suddenly this forenoon at his home in Fairmount Avenue. . . . Mr. Emerson was in his accustomed good health and was quite active and vigorous for his advanced years, but a slight cold, which became evident Tuesday, quickly developed into pneumonia, to which he succumbed. Up to the moment of his death the venerable man retained his consciousness and interest in his surroundings.²²

The characterization "active and vigorous" may serve as a fitting epitaph, since, as Figure 8 shows, there is none on his gravestone in Cambridge's Mount Auburn Cemetery.

²¹ Written correspondence to the present residents at this address in hopes of information on the house or Emerson, unfortunately failed to bring response.

²² Obituary, "Emerson," 1915.

Figure 7



Photograph of Emerson's Hyde Park Residence, Summer 1993

Figure 8



Emerson's grave in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge,
Massachusetts

CHAPTER IV

EMERSON'S CONCEPTS; HIS REPUTATION

Alongside pioneers in America's music education L.O. Emerson played several largely passive, though not unimportant roles, especially through his thoughts about music and his concepts of its art and craft. The significance of one of these roles, the musical convention, lies in these conventions initial exporting of music and music education from the Boston area to people in the remotest parts of the country. But more importantly, the musical conventions brought about the growth of music throughout the nation and swelled the ranks of teachers and musicians.

Lowell Mason's musical conventions were initially destined for people in rural areas. These people did not have the opportunity to get to cities like Boston to receive a more formal music education. Emerson upheld this point of view, but he also believed that musical conventions should travel to towns more substantial in population. Emerson felt that larger towns often provided the common meeting place for many of the small villages and their surrounding countryside. In his view, larger country towns were those with a population of at least two thousand persons. With that population the convention reached a substantial number of people at one time and insured financial stability. Along with the town's population, the conventions drew from the surrounding areas, and the result was a larger number of people--whether performers or

audience--in attendance.¹ These rural country towns, with their combined population, yielded many members from the local church choirs. The conventions provided an opportunity for many of the choirs to sharpen their singing and note-reading abilities, bringing into their fold many pleased and supportive clergymen.²

The type of convention that Emerson helped institute lasted either four or five days, with three daily classes. Emerson followed a basic schedule with mornings being devoted to exercises in voice culture, which involved tone production, articulation, breathing, and vocalization. There followed study of church music, its meaning, style and interpretation of text, and subsequently the implementation of the music with particular emphasis placed on church music. Afternoons and evenings were devoted mainly to intensive chorus practice in preparation for the concert given at the close of the convention.

That critical opinion such as the words of Dwight which berated the Worcester Association's convention could counter public taste brought about problems for conventions, plunging Emerson into a torrent of uninvited and unwanted polemics. It was often the view of critics, more so than the public or performers, that the music being performed in conventions of the mid-nineteenth century,

¹ Emerson did not solely cultivate such conventions. However, his support and unquestionable talents helped the leaders make this type of convention a success. Ample evidence of this interest has been shown in the earlier discussion of the New Hampshire Musical State Convention, which took place in Concord.

² Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson", 204.

was tasteless and cheap. Dwight's Journal of Music went so far as to launch a personal attack on such prominent figures as Lowell Mason and I.B. Woodbury along with many ranking convention leaders of the time, reportedly including Emerson.³ Compelled to some sort of rebuttal, Emerson wrote a lengthy letter, entitled "The Work of Lowell Mason and Assistants."⁴ This defended his own and including Mason's colleagues' compositions and convention work, against potential future attacks. Its tenor is that Dwight does not do himself a favor by deploring the very sort of musical activity that promotes his own campaign for improving musical taste.

So it was Dwight's Journal of Music that said Lowell Mason and other psalm-tune writers were degrading and cheapening music? Well, we could not have expected anything better than that from that source, for Mr. Dwight was not in sympathy with the good work we are doing.

In reality we were doing more to help his cause than he himself was doing. . . . He could talk about the musical giants of the past and of his own time, if there were any, criticize the performances of their music, the soloist, etc., which was all very well.

While he was doing this, we were carrying the best choral music of the various kinds, from church music to the oratorio and opera, and also the best soloists obtainable, to thousands of musically hungry singers and people all over the country, teaching them how to render it and giving them opportunities to hear the best solo singers of the country.

If this kind of work was degrading and cheapening music, then revive the convention and musical festival and let the good work go on, for it is still needed.

If thousands of singers who attended these festivals and the greater number of thousands who attended the concerts, could speak with one voice, they would send up a shout in

³ Although Lorenz's article references the attack made by Dwight ("Dr. Emerson", 86), research of Dwight's Journal of Music has yielded no information containing this attack in any volume.

⁴ Lowell Mason's "assistants" are not named in Emerson's letter to Dwight but it can be assumed that among them such names as George Root and Benjamin Franklin Baker were intended.

their favor that would be heard across the continent.

When Lowell Mason organized the Musical Convention in Boston and carried it from thence into the country, he set in motion an influence that for forty years or more did more to make this nation a musical one than any one thing else has done. [emphasis mine] ⁵

And Emerson never ceased to emphasize the important role that the convention played in the musical history of the United States. In his words:

The conventions and musical festivals have been one of the greatest factors in the growth and development of music among the American people. I believe that they did more in their day than any one other influence toward making our nation a musical one by creating a greater love for music, and bringing the whole of the people into active sympathy with it. They did much to elevate and dignify music as an art and to educate the people to understand, appreciate, and enjoy the very best. Of course, the many choral and instrumental organizations, opera companies, the thousands of concerts given by the great artist [sic], the numerous schools of music have all been great factors in bringing music up to its present high state of cultivation.⁶

By the late nineteenth century, conventions were no longer in demand, with the exception of a few towns where music education had not yet colonized. Activities of this kind were gradually being replaced by public schools that took responsibility for teaching elementary music. Although music education then became more readily accessible to the masses, Emerson still felt there were flaws in the new system.

Emerson felt that the note-reading of public-school singers

⁵ Lorenz, "Dr. Emerson", 86, also Frank Metcalf, American Writers and Compilers of Sacred Music (New York: Abingdon Press, 1925,) 216. However, Metcalf states that Emerson's reply to Dwight was made in 1916, the year after Emerson died.

⁶ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 204.

and choirs was not as accurate as that instituted by the conventions. He felt that newer-generation singers were "less certain of what they should do."⁷ They faced increased difficulties. Compared to anthems performed in the conventions, "modern" church anthems were more chromatic and modulated more freely, allowing a far greater margin for error. Given a listener's greater expectations of the latest choirs, Emerson claimed that these newer singers were not exceptional even in their performances of the large-scale works of Haydn, Handel, or Mendelssohn, as the singers of the previous forty or fifty years had been. He even thought that the then antiquated singing schools, in session before the emergence of the conventions, had produced better singers than the public schools were producing.

Although Emerson was pleased with the "present high state" that music had attained by the turn of the century, he was disappointed in the shift of attention from church music to popular secular music of the day. It was his lifelong purpose that the church music, which was then being neglected, should raise its level of quality and its standards. Baltzell reports that when having a conversation with Emerson on American church music, it was quite evident that the subject lay "close to his heart."⁸ Emerson allowed his energies for the elevation of church music to carry him to the "highest rank among those who loved the pure and beautiful

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

in song."⁹ Appendix I bears testimony to his feelings on this topic.¹⁰ Emerson's love for church music remained unshakable, while Mason's interests had begun to shift toward the secular concert camp. Such devotion to church music was even reported to be the cause for Emerson's refusing Mason's requests to become his associate.¹¹

In addition to his many talents, Emerson was also a noted and sought-after lecturer. Perhaps his lectures served as an opportunity to express his opinions about many different aspects of music; subjects ranging from its history to its moral character. Emerson's most recognized lecture was the unpublished "The World of Music."¹² In it he explores the origins and progress of music and furnishes some fine examples of this development derived from the lives of great composers. In this lecture Emerson expounds upon several topics: "the design of music; how it has been prized in every age of the world, among all nations; its power in the church and state and the need of its influence in the family."¹³

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Appendix I quotes the part of the article by W.J. Baltzell entitled "Mr. Emerson's Tribute to Music."

¹¹ Hall, Biography, 47.

¹² After a series of searches for this lecture, coupled with the fact that it is mentioned in only one of the sources obtained, the author has assumed that this document was never unpublished. There has been very little found about Emerson's lectures themselves or even specific dates. It is particularly disappointing that the Emerson upon whose stature as lecturer Margaret Fuller glowingly comments, as quoted in Dwight's Journal of Music (March 25, 1871), seems to be Ralph Waldo.

¹³ Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 249.

It is assumed that Emerson did much of his lecture work during his prominent convention career. Appendix II quotes in toto an admirable lecture delivered near the end of this career: "Music and Musicians of Parsonsfield" for Parsonsfield's centennial celebration.¹⁴ Even though beyond these data little is known about Emerson's lectures, it is clear that he must have been a dynamic speaker from the repeated mentions of his name in the realm of lecturing.

By the late nineteenth century more and more colleges were adding music to their curriculums; Findlay College was no exception. Findlay College's administration thought of music as an art with a "refining influence."¹⁵ Those persons seeking a higher education in music or wanting to become professional musicians were expected to know the music's subject matter and understand its history. Following this demand, conservatories were emerging throughout the country. Thus, when the Findlay College Conservatory was formed, its aim was to provide music students with a concentrated program of music courses rendered by instructors with national reputations.

Under Findlay College's religious aegis, its conservatory sought to guide its pupils in a virtuous and religious direction.¹⁶

¹⁴ Dearborn, History of Parsonsfield, 163-164.

¹⁵ Catalogue of Findlay College, 34.

¹⁶ The Fourth Annual Catalogue's cover states that the College was established by the General Eldership of the Church of God in North America. Further, on page 35, this part of the college's mission is stated as follows: "the College being under religious

Moreover, the College's supervisors felt it important for music students to be well versed in literature and science, which were seen as a necessary component of a complete musical education. Perhaps it was these ideals combined with the religious principles held by the Findlay College Conservatory that persuaded Emerson to answer the call to head the voice department, teach solo-singing, and direct the chorus there for a year.

Emerson was very well received by the students and faculty alike. His drills in articulation and pronunciation were thought to be educational, artistic, and distinctly his own. It was reported that he was able to turn "weak and uncultured voices into full, round and resonant" voices in a matter of one year.¹⁷ The following excerpt from the 1889-1890 catalogue is an example of the college's expectations and opinion of voice culture and a few words about Emerson and his reputation.

The full development of the voice is considered a rare accomplishment. We are at sea, so to speak, when we endeavor to fully estimate the power of song. It is a gift that we are unable to appreciate to the extent that its place in art justifies. Although the gift of song is a natural power, yet it requires judgment and discretion on the part of the teacher, coupled with experience and culture, to bring forth its capabilities, and mold it into a full, round, smooth, powerful, and symmetrical form. All adult voices are more or less defective, and, therefore require well-directed skill to place them upon a plane which will claim the recognition of the cultured in song. The voice department is under the personal supervision of Prof. L.O. Emerson, and with due propriety we shall christen the department "Emerson's School in Singing." We need no word of commendation in presenting

influences, and governed by religious principles, affords security and gives strength to the student in moral and religious training."

¹⁷ Catalogue of Findlay College , 36.

the above name to the public. A name known to all musical people through the many works which he has edited. All of which have gained an immense popularity by their general worth and practicability. Encomiums are useless under such circumstances. Suffice to say, that the best methods are used in voice teaching.¹⁸

In Emerson's work with the chorus of Findlay College he selected works of the masters, and the experience of performing them was open to anyone in the voice department. In fact, anyone in the college able to read music was admitted to the group without cost. It may have been more than Emerson's adherence to standards in teaching voice culture that enhanced his reputation in these later years; it may have been his congeniality and his personal code of conduct that won's student's favor and respect.

Luther Orlando Emerson was not a large man; he was average in height and quite thin. But he was a man of large reputation. Words such as "vigorous", "passionate", and "dedicated" reappear endlessly in descriptions of him. It would seem that almost every composer, musician, teacher, and conductor in the New England area knew Emerson personally or by reputation. He was known for his friendly disposition and magnetic personality. One colleague even states that "there is personality in every inch of Mr. Emerson's body."¹⁹ Lorenz, another colleague, paints a somewhat less positive picture of the great conductor in his early convention days:

He had no weight and dignity of manner, but was nervous, vivacious, witty, a little self-conscious in manner, all

¹⁸ Ibid., 36-37.

¹⁹ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 239.

traits that found the old, sedate generation of New England singers a little suspicious and unresponsive. But they were responsive to his music and presently began to realize a man with a message, a man who stood for musical feeling, religious genuineness, and keen insight into fundamental principles.²⁰ [emphasis mine]

Although he initially seems to have had this nervous and unprepossessing disposition, over time his dignity and poise seem to have grown so much that he would be at ease around large groups of singers whose attention he held rapt.

Emerson was an expressive man and did not hesitate to expose his enthusiasm for music. His ardent emotion brought by music is clear in his letter explaining how he wrote his famous anthem "Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah":

I was glad to see 'Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah' [in a new book we had just issued]. Very often, as I lie awake nights, and I do hours every night, my mind goes back to the night when I awoke and the words, 'Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah,' were on my lips. I can never forget how I felt at the time. It was dark yet there seemed to be a halo of light in the room. It really seemed that God himself was in the room; and he was there, by the sweet influence of his Holy Spirit, and helped me write the anthem. For years afterwards, when I had that anthem sung by my choir or a convention chorus, I could not repress the tear drops from coming. It moved the whole chorus, too.

When I told Dr. Lowell Mason about it, he said it was really an inspiration from God.²¹

and the guidance behind his tune "Sessions":

So was old 'Sessions.' I am as conscious that God and my Savior have helped in my composition as that I am now a living being. Oh, what do we not owe to God, our Heavenly Father, and to Christ, our Savior?²²

²⁰ Lorenz, "Dr. L.O. Emerson," 64.

²¹ Lorenz, "Dr. L.O. Emerson," 64.

²² Ibid., 85.

As shown in the spirituality of these and many of his compositions, Emerson was a deeply religious man. His combination of religious sincerity, realism, and authentic feeling makes his music far from mechanical or dull. Indeed, while conducting his chorus, "his own heart strings were vibrating, as his choirs sang the music in hand, and very naturally those of his singers vibrated in unison."²³

In addition to his great love of music, Emerson also had an intense interest in poetry, in particular that of a sacred nature. He spent many nights going over cherished poetry that he stored in his exceptional memory. He was reported to be able to quote this poetry "with feeling and earnestness by the hour."²⁴ Emerson was also a zealous amateur student of the sciences, especially that of astronomy. His interest in viewing the heavens was so strong that he habitually visited the home of a friend who owned a telescope. Upon one of these visits, while focusing the telescope on a comet, Emerson remarked to his friend, "If I owned that instrument I would never go to bed."²⁵

In Emerson's later days his trade mark, in appearance, was his long white hair and beard. He was not a somber or bitter old man, but rather one of a cheerful, bright, and clever nature. These hallmarks of a vigorous disposition lead us to understand why he could accept a teaching position in Ohio at the age of sixty-eight. The catalog of Findlay College hails him, at that age, with words

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Obituary, "Emerson," 1915.

that indeed characterize vigor:

. . .scholastic in his general demeanor, and to the student he is an inspiration, infusing into the learner ambition that resolves to attain to greater heights in the educational sphere. Before a chorus of voices his baton becomes a magic wand, directing and controlling the singer at will. His interpretation and conception of music are intensely artistic.²⁶

Perhaps owing to his once busy career, Emerson was not content to spend his last days in idleness. He was born a gifted teacher of music and therefore made his last years ever active. He was reported to have made his ear trumpet a veritable *vade mecum* as he "sought out young people with promising voices and gave them lessons gratuitously."²⁷ Emerson loved to visit the homes of his friends and to try to motivate young people to develop their voices. In spite of his deteriorating eyesight and his deafness, Emerson still made trips from his home to various points in Boston by himself. He once said "if it was necessary, I would start for the Pacific Coast tomorrow, or around the world, without anxiety."²⁸ Emerson's life was rich with longevity and happiness, as is evident in a letter written in 1911 by Emerson, "I am nearing the ninety-first milestone in my journey through this Beautiful Land of Beulah. Should I live to see the third of August I shall reach that point".²⁹

²⁶ Catalogue of Findlay College, 35.

²⁷ Lorenz, "Dr. L.O. Emerson," 85.

²⁸ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 239.

²⁹ Frank J. Metcalf, Stories of Hymn Tunes, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1928), 174.

CHAPTER V

EMERSON'S PUBLICATIONS

A detailed and complete table of Emerson's publications has been drafted from a list that this writer has compiled in a preliminary study dealing with his life and publications.¹ This list may be consulted in Appendix III. It represents an expansion of the preliminary tabulation through the inspection of the Bibliography of American Hymnals and the incorporation of lists supplied by Theodore Presser Incorporated and the VTLS Online System.² Appendix III is indexed by year of publication. Appendix III, further, groups Emerson's publications by their markets: Hymns, Anthems, and Liturgical Books, Song Books, Pedagogical/Children's Books, Song Sheets, and Large-Scale and Instrumental Works. Of course, not all of the books that Emerson published were exclusively his material; other composers and works that fit a particular book's purpose have been included. However, the claim was once voiced that it was Emerson's own compositions "whose charm gave the books their vogue."³

The first category of Appendix III is Hymns, Anthems, and

¹ Kain S. Blandford, "Luther O. Emerson (1820-1915): A Preliminary Study," Falk Seminar Research Paper, 1992, 7-9.

² Credit is due and thanks is expressed to Mrs. Martha K. Cox, Permissions/Archives Department, Theodore Presser Incorporated and Patricia Kearns, Serials Cataloger, Captain John Smith Library, Christopher Newport University.

³ Lorenz, "L.O. Emerson," 63.

Liturgical Books. The reason that these genres have been grouped together is that their content is sacred. In accordance with Emerson's goal to raise the standard of church music, it is only natural that the majority of his output was devoted to this category, and Emerson was best known for the work he did in these genres. This listing begins with Emerson's first published book entitled, The Romberg Collection, 1853. With the exception of just a few works, including the Romberg Collection Emerson's usual publisher was the Oliver Ditson company.⁴

Beginning the second category, Song Books, is Emerson's very successful effort, The Golden Wreath, 1856. The reason that these books have been grouped together is that they are all collections of secular songs. Emerson was known as a prolific melodist, and many felt he was most gifted in song writing. As seen in this category Emerson composed songs for a variety of different voices. Examples include written solely for the male voice, the female voice, quartets, and chorus. Although Emerson did produce a number of song books, it is apparent that his heart leaned more towards the sacred collections.

The third category is Pedagogical/Children's Books.

Emerson spent a great deal of his life in the teaching profession,

⁴ The Romberg Collection was published by B.B. Mussey, and two other music books appear to be published by companies other than the Oliver Ditson. The first is a book entitled Songs of the Golden Cross which was published by Supreme Command in 1893. And the second, is book entitled Emerson's New Century, published in 1899 by Chicago Music, a company not further identifiable. These works along with their publisher have appeared only on the VTLS Online System list, therefore no further data are available.

and it should be expected that he would provide the public with a significant number of pedagogical books. Along with his wish to assist the growth of church music, he also wanted to improve music education. Emerson felt that one was never too young or too old to learn music, therefore the pedagogical books range from adult to juvenile levels. Emerson had a great interest in the youth of his time and felt it was important to expose them to music of appreciable quality at an early age; consequently, he wrote many books for children. Emerson's pedagogical and children's books were highly acclaimed and were used in many schools and Sunday schools.⁵

The fourth category of the inventory of publications is Song Sheets. It begins with Tell Me Not In Mournful Numbers. Published in Boston by Oliver Ditson in 1854, this song is identified as "Longfellow's beautiful Psalm of Life" and purported to have been adapted "from a beautiful melody by Schubert."⁶ The next song to appear, is dated 1856. Although Emerson did not compose as many songs as he did hymns or anthems per se, his efforts in this genre harvested some fairly successful results. One example of such a success is Emerson's war song, We Are Coming Father Abraham, which is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The fifth category is Large-Scale and Instrumental Compositions. It includes a few masses written by Emerson and a

⁵ Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 204.

⁶ Harry Dichter and Elliot Shapiro Early American Sheet Music: Its Lure and Its Love, 1768-1889 (New York: Bowker, 1941), [unpaginated, under "Songs of Literary Interest"].

work entitled Silver Spring Polka, probably composed for piano. These works have appeared on the Theodore Presser and VTLS lists, but have not been located therefore little is known about them.⁷

Works found with no date indicated are collocated at the end of each category. Some of the compositions appearing in this category are not obscure works. Let Me Kiss Him For His Mother and Negro Boatman's Song were both highly popular songs of the time and are repeatedly mentioned, regrettably undated, in various sources. Last, in fact mentioned only in Emerson's obituary, the undatable song, A Nest Among the Graves was hailed as his first noted "effort" in music composition.⁸

While researching Emerson's copious publications in catalogs, many that were found lacked any indication of assignment. In many cases only the title was listed, making it difficult to determine the assignment of the work in Appendix III.⁹ Based upon the titles of these works, the author has assigned them to what appears to be the most appropriate category in Appendix III. The majority of the titles, which are of both sacred and secular

⁷ Efforts to locate the Silver Spring Polka score have not been successful. An entry does not appear in the LYNX e-mail Library of Congress catalogue, but the incompleteness of those files, ever in process of being updated, must be taken into consideration.

⁸ [Obituary], "Emerson", 1915.

⁹ This mainly occurs in the Theodore Presser list, in which many titles have been categorized under the heading "other."

nature, appear under the Song Sheets category.¹⁰ The discussion of the remainder of this chapter centers on available historical data that complement Appendix III.

Emerson's first publication was, as noted, The Romberg Collection. Although Emerson was highly respected as a musician and director, his reputation was only local and did not at this juncture attract a substantial publisher. Emerson was living in Salem in the early 1850s. Consequently, he sought out a local publisher, B.B. Mussey, which may explain why this is one of the few known works not published by the Oliver Ditson Company.¹¹ Yet Emerson had trouble convincing Mussey to publish his book. Only under the condition that he provide plates for the printing did Mussey agree to print The Romberg Collection in 1853.¹²

Although the book did not gain much acclaim, it did produce one memorable hymn, "Sessions." The tune of this hymn was actually written in 1847 while Emerson was employed at the Crombie Street Church in Salem, Massachusetts. The pastor of this church was the

¹⁰ These works are: Come Unto Me When Shadows, Jesus Loves Me, Land Of Light Ajar, Lord Is My Shepherd, O Restless Heart, Rock Of Ages, Sleep My Baby, Tarry With Me, Twilight Falls, Waiting For Loved, Waves Of Ocean, When The Times Of Daylight, O Praise The Mighty, Star Of Descending Night, May Morning, King Winter, Come Unto Him, Father, Oh Hear Us, I Want No Stars In Heaven, In Heavenly Love, Nearer My God, See The Light Is Fading, Tell The Glorious Tale Of Old, and Thine Earthly Sabbaths. Only two other works have been assigned outside of Song Sheets: Celestial Treasures, which is listed under Liturgical Books, and the previously mentioned Silver Spring Polka, which is listed under Large-Scale and Instrumental Works.

¹¹ B.B. Mussey's name also appears spelled B.B. Muzzy. Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 203.

¹² Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson," 203.

Reverend Alexander A. Sessions for whom the hymn was named. Even though the collection itself was never very successful, this tune gained popularity through the years, so much so that it was sometimes used in worship in place of the stalwart "Old Hundredth" for a doxology. Another example of its popularity was its performance at the Peace Jubilee in 1869, where it was well received. The essence of this composition is best described in Emerson's own words, as he explains the story behind the composition.

One pleasant summer Sabbath day, after returning from church, being alone in my house, I took up my hymn book, and on opening it my eyes fell upon the hymn beginning, 'Sinner, O why so thoughtless grown?' My attention was at once fixed upon it. I read the whole hymn through several times, and the impression it made upon me grew stronger and stronger at each repetition. I had a longing to give expression in some way to my emotions. After a season of prayer I went to the piano, and at once played the tune just as it came to me. There was no hesitancy about it, no effort was made. I played it again and again, and felt at the time it had life-giving power, and would live.¹³

Interestingly enough, the Romberg Collection, with its humble beginnings, is one of only a few works by Emerson listed in Leonard Ellinwood's Bibliography of American Hymnals.

Emerson's first successful book was The Golden Wreath published in 1856. It was this book that launched Emerson's composing career, even Dwight's Journal of Music acknowledged the book by publishing a review. It begins by comparing Emerson's book with another book which was also being reviewed entitled, The American School Melodist, and Pestalozzian Teacher, composed by

¹³ Metcalf, Stories of Hymn Tunes, 173.

Joshiah Osgood.

A book very similar to the above and for a similar object. The Elementary part covers less ground, but seems well arranged. The songs are of like variety of subjects, only the music is more familiar, consisting mostly of little pieces already favorites in schools and singing circles. They are harmonized in the same simple way for three voices. Every good addition to the stock of school songs should be welcomed; perpetual novelty in this department seems a more reasonable aim than it does in the matter of plain psalmody.¹⁴

Following Emerson's success with The Golden Wreath another notable work emerged, his anthem, "Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah." This work first made its appearance in Emerson's successful book of 1863, Harp of Judah. Unlike "Sessions," this work gained popularity almost instantly and was considered to be one of his finest compositions.¹⁵ It was not only an instant success but also a longstanding one. The anthem was in such demand that it appeared in many of Emerson's books after Harp of Judah. Emerson refers to this famous work in a venerable letter quoted in Chapter 4 in which he describes his experience of composing this work. Perhaps it was the effect of that experience itself that gave the composition its standing as one of his "great classics."¹⁶

Emerson's enthusiasm for education not only appeared in his pedagogical books, but also in his song and liturgical books. Emerson would include in the preliminaries of many of his books

¹⁴ Dwight, "Musical Review: Popular Collections," Dwight's Journal of Music 13 (June, 1856): 103.

¹⁵ Lorenz, "Dr. Emerson," 64.

¹⁶ Ibid. Emerson's hymn, "Sessions" is also referred to in this manner.

several different types of musical teaching and learning techniques. Most of these techniques included such simple aspects of music as the notes of the treble and bass clef or the relative value of notes. However, he did include an unusual technique called the "movable do" system.¹⁷ Emerson believed strongly in the "movable do" system which was used in many music conventions. He felt this system was the only one that guaranteed success and should thus be retained in the public schools. Another technique Emerson included in his books was the "Manual Signs" as seen in Figure 7. These consisted of various forms of hand positions used to indicate the several tones of the scale.¹⁸

Emerson's composing was not limited only to his music books, but extended to an area with quite a different format, song sheets. A popular lyric of the middle part of the nineteenth-century was Let Me Kiss Him For His Mother, for which Emerson offered his own setting. The song was originally written by John P. Ordway in 1859. The text was written by Ordway but derived from the following story:

The verses of this ballad were suggested by a touching incident which is said to have occurred at New Orleans during a dreadful fever season. A young man, who had died there, lonely and a stranger, was about to be carried to the grave

¹⁷ The Movable Do system is defined as "generally, any system of solmization so designed that the syllables can be used in transposition for key, as distinguished from Fixed Do(h), in which the syllables correspond to invariable pitches of notes." Willi Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979), 547.

¹⁸ The "Manual Signs" technique appears in such books by Emerson as the Choral Worship, Emerson's Royal Singer, and The Singer's Welcome.

Figure 9

MENTAL EFFECTS AND MANUAL SIGNS OF TONES IN KEY.

NOTE.—The Diagram shows the right hand as seen by the pupils sitting in front of the teacher towards his left hand.



SOH.

THE GRAND or bright tone.



ME.

THE STEADY or calm tone.



DOH.

THE STRONG or firm Tone.—The Major Tonic.



TE.

THE PIERCING or Sensitive Tone.
The Major LEADING TONE.



RAY.

THE ROUSING or hopeful tone.



LAH.

THE SAD or weeping tone.



FAH.

THE DESOLATE or awe-inspiring tone.

when a lady passed to the coffin and pressed her lips to his forehead, saying, "Let me kiss him for his mother."¹⁹

Ordway's song appears in the key of B flat and was written for a soloist with the characteristic choral ending. It is a simple melody and has an even simpler accompaniment, nevertheless -- or more likely as a result -- it captured the public's fancy. Perhaps this was Emerson's motivation to reset the song at a later date.²⁰ Although Emerson extended his own rendering of the song to the masses, there is little difference between his and Ordway's. Emerson's song is set in the key of A major and has almost the same structure as Ordway's. The only significant difference is that Emerson wrote a four-measure conclusion to the work in the accompaniment. Also in 1859, another version of this song appeared with the music by W.C. Peters and the text by W.W. Fosdick.²¹ Peters's interpretation of the song is quite different from Ordway's and Emerson's, with its D major tonality and different text. Indeed, the story upon which the text is based is more specific.

During the prevalence of the Yellow Fever in New Orleans, a young man from one of the Eastern States was stricken down with the fatal malady. In his delirium he called imploringly for his Mother. An aged and kind Matron on being informed of the youth's wishes, glided softly to his bed-side, laid her hand gently on his brow, and exclaimed, "Let me kiss him for his Mother." Alas, the vital spark had fled. He died and was

¹⁹ Michael R. Turner, The Parlour Song Book A Casquet of Vocal Gems (New York: Viking Press, 1972) 293.

²⁰ Although the song is frequently noted in sources where Emerson has appeared, no date is ever listed.

²¹ Preliminary research was conducted on both Peters and Fosdick, no information on either man was found.

buried among strangers, in a strange land.²²

The song became so popular that a parody was written entitled Let Me Spank Him For His Mother. It is unclear as to which version this parody is aimed, however it seems most likely it was meant to spoof all of them. Whether Emerson produced the song first it is unclear, but it is safe to assume it was one of his more noted efforts in the area of songwriting.

Perhaps, Emerson's most renowned song was the civil war song, We Are Coming Father Abraham, composed in 1862.²³ In that year President Lincoln issued a call for three hundred thousand volunteers to enlist in the Civil War. It was an event that did not go unnoticed by the nation, especially some of its important writers and composers. James Sloan Gibbons, an Abolitionist writer, wrote a poem entitled, "We Are Coming Father Abraham, 300,000 More." Gibbons was a Quaker and also a well-known and outright New York abolitionist. He was often associated with antislavery figures. His poem "We Are Coming Father Abraham, 300,000 More" first appeared in the July 16, 1862 edition of the New York Evening Post.²⁴ Resulting from its issuance, unsigned, the better known abolitionist writer, William Cullen Bryant, was

²² This story appears on a copy of "Let Me Kiss Him For His Mother," located in the Christopher Newport University American Music Archives. The copy was composed by Peters with text by Fosdick; it bears the date 1859.

²³ Also in 1862 Stephen Foster's setting of the same words appeared. One facsimile may be consulted in Richard Jackson, ed., Stephen Foster Song Book (New York: Dover, 1974), 152.

²⁴ Irwin Silber, Song of the Civil War (New York: Bonanza Books, 1960), 92.

mistakenly credited with the poem. Byrant happened to be the editor of the Evening Post at the time when Gibbons's poem was published.²⁵ The poem's popularity began to grow, and soon it appeared in several other publications, all attributing it to Bryant. Byrant went so far as to sign a public denial of authorship of these verses, giving proper credit to Gibbons.²⁶ Besides Emerson, many wartime composers and performers noticed that the words of this poem were quite rhythmical and could easily be put to music, among them the Hutchinson Family Singers.²⁷ On virtually the day of their appearance Oliver Ditson secured and dispatched to Emerson the words of this famous poem with a message saying, "Set these words to music instanter."²⁸ Almost instantly also, Emerson's setting of We Are Coming Father Abraham became a huge success and was said to be "resounding throughout the nation."²⁹ On one performance of the song by a Baltimore official, President Lincoln pronounced that it "contained an excellent sentiment, and was sung in manner worthy of the sentiment."³⁰ A

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ John Tasker Howard, Our American Music (New York: Thomas Crowell Company, 1931), 271. Blandford, "Emerson," Falk Seminar, 17.

²⁷ Silber, Songs of The Civil War, 92.

²⁸ [Obituary], "Emerson," 1915.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Silber, Song of the Civil War, 92. It may be concluded that it was Emerson's version that was performed for President Lincoln. This conclusion may be drawn from the evidence that Emerson's setting was the most popular at the time.

most dramatic rendition of the song occurred in Washington D.C. at the Grover's Theatre while the President was attending a performance of "The Seven Sisters." During the performance Lincoln's son, Tad Lincoln, stole away from his father to appear on stage wearing an oversized army uniform, waving an American flag, and conducting the cast in this poignant chorus of We Are Coming Father Abraham.³¹

As with most popular songs of the time, parodies of We Are Coming Father Abraham soon began to emerge; many of them were of an anti-Lincoln nature. One such parody, entitled How Are Your Greenbacks?, was authored by the opposing party chiding Lincoln's choice of Union officers, the state of the economy, and his use of negro troops. Whereas this version is more satirical, the southern soldiers used their own song and verse that depicted a more dismal mood of the Civil War. This Confederate version was printed in the Philadelphia Evening Journal as follows:

We are coming, Abraham Lincoln,
From mountain, wood, and glen,
We are coming, Abraham Lincoln,
With the ghost of murdered men.
Yes we're coming, Abraham Lincoln,
With curses loud and deep,
That will haunt you in your waking
And disturb you in your sleep.

There's blood upon your garments,
There's guilt upon your soul,
For the host of ruthless soldiers
You let lose without control.
Your dark and wicked doings
A God of mercy sees,
And the wail of homeless children
Is heard on every breeze.

³¹ Ibid.

You may call your black battalions
To age your stinking cause,
And substitute your vulgar jokes
For liberty and laws.³²

As a note of irony Gibbons's home was a victim of the 1873 draft riots. Gibbons lost his house to fire in these riots, however, he and his family escaped and enjoyed a full life and successful career, as did Emerson the composer.

³² Silber, Songs of the Civil War, 93.

Conclusion

The intent of this thesis has been to demonstrate the historical value in the study of Luther Orlando Emerson. Emerson's childhood as a member of an early, rural New England family imbued with strong religious convictions had a profound influence on his preferences for New England archetypes in his composition of music. As his formal education in music occurred relatively late--in his late twenties--Emerson's natural abilities and experiences in music were only accelerated by European doctrines which still dominated music studies.

Emerson's The Golden Wreath was a milestone in his musical career. It not only secured the renowned Oliver Ditson Company as his lifelong publisher, but also seems to have led to his later posts as convention leader. It seems fortunate that Emerson was presented this opportunity for the disseminating of his work which allowed him to enter the then selective circle of the musical elite and opportunity led to a prolific output in various genres of music, his pioneer work in the field of music education in America, and his determination to enhance the character of church music.

Emerson's background, education, and his life's experiences all played a significant role in forming his musical philosophy of growth and quality. A review of his lectures, compilations, and compositions readily reveals his dedication to heighten the very nature of the music being studied in American schools, churches, and conventions.

This thesis treats a type of historically consequential public music event that was current during Emerson's life: the music convention. Conventions were not only important cultural events, but also a much anticipated and enjoyed social occasion of their day. They were grand outdoor concerts. Certainly, the volume and excitement generated by a production that attracted 11,000 participants must have been an occasion of magnificence as well as magnitude.

It is significant that Emerson presided as producer, director, coordinator, and even composer for such events. His successful leadership of these mass performances and the quality of their music is an indication of the importance of the man. Considering the difficulty in staging conventions, it is much to Emerson's credit that he was able to produce such grand occasions in a matter of weeks. The ingeniousness of his music guaranteed a favorable reception, one that could please all palates from those of the populace to that of the highest ranking member in his audience, the President of the United States.

Emerson's compositions reflect not only a composer and writer of great talent, but also the spirituality, growth, and history of nineteenth-century America. In a time of shorter life spans, it can be concluded that spiritual aspects of life were ever closer and dearer to Emerson's fellow man. It was a time in which religion played a much larger role in one's life. Emerson was quite religious, which probably accounted for his striving to keep sacred music alive and at the same time upgrade its quality. His

devotion to the church was manifest in not only the large amount of sacred material composed, but also his determination in bettering its very character. "Sessions" and "Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah," are proof of this determination and its successful outcome. Although not all of Emerson's compositions are of a sacred nature, it can be surmised that he felt his dominant inspirations were for the betterment of music and the glory of God. Emerson best describes this sentiment while talking of composing "I am as conscious that God and my Savior have helped me in my composition as that I am now a living being. Oh, what do we not owe to God, our Heavenly Father, and to Christ, our Savior?" This fervor seems to translate into his musical self.

APPENDIX I

"MR. EMERSON'S TRIBUTE TO MUSIC"

[extracted from W.J. Baltzell, "L.O. Emerson An American Musical Pioneer with a Study of the Musical Convention and its Educational Influence"]

Notwithstanding the high pedestal upon which music stands to-day, the world does not fully realize its power for humanizing and civilizing man and lifting him heavenward. I regard music as one of God's noblest and best gifts to the human family. It is not only contributes largely to enjoyment and happiness, but it also refining and elevating in its influence, ennobling to the soul. We can say of it what cannot be said of any other art, -- that it is never suggestive of evil. You may twist it into the comic or grotesque as much as you please, but, after all, there is a background to it which reaches into the depths of the human heart and touches the very springs of life.

My life work, has been in the interest of music for the people, and my great desire has been that my work should be educational and helpful in its influences. Church music with me has been a specialty, and my aim has been to elevate its standard, and to give to church choirs music of a devotional, uplifting character, and of that grade which the average choir could use to the best advantage.

As music enters largely into the exercises of the sanctuary, great care must be taken as to the character of whatever is selected for such purposes. We must not think that all kinds of music become sacred by being introduced in to the sanctuary; some may have been contaminated by bad associations. The purer the character of the music, the more perfectly will it accomplish its true mission.

There seems to be a tendency with some musicians to sing music for its own sake, making it the end instead of the means to an end, claiming that the best music only should be used. I yield to no one in my love for the very best and most beautiful in everything. But sometimes the very best may be so good as to be nothing but astonishing nonsense to others, because not understood, not appreciated, and not enjoyed.

Sacred music has certain characteristics which should be recognized by every one. It should be characterized by a chaste and natural simplicity; not weak, devoid of character, or unscientific, but free from all unnecessary embellishments and mere mechanical difficulties. While it should be comparatively simple, it should also be devotional, dignified, and grand, for its themes are the most sublime.

No two arts can be more closely and beautifully allied than poetry and music, both having the same descriptive language. Poetry is sublime, figurative kind of music; and music has a poetry as well as a prose of its own. When

devotional poetry and devotional music are happily united and rendered in the spirit of true devotion, they become an irresistible power.

Sometimes, when pulpit logic and pulpit eloquence fail, a simple, fervent song completes the work; and sometimes, when, by the prayer or sermon, a deep, devout feeling pervades the whole congregation, all is dissipated by an inappropriate selection of music, or by the unskillful attempts of the choir in rendering it.

Singing in the sanctuary is the nearest akin to worship of any of its exercises, and should stand upon the same platform as prayer --which may or may not be worship--and be treated with the same reverence. No mere exercise, of itself, is worship. Devotion, worship, should be the controlling end if all the exercises of the sanctuary, from the first to the last, all forming one harmonious whole tending to the same end.

I know of nothing in the whole world realm of art or nature which has a better or more controlling influence over the passions and emotions of the human heart than good music. The family, the sanctuary, the community, the whole world needs influence. Music soothes the restless hours on infancy, and makes the long and weary days of age pass more serenely by. It pours consolation into the bosom of trouble and lifts the soul to God in praise. Yes; upon its wings we may rise far above the groveling things of earth to the very gates of Paradise. Nor will we stop even there; for, when man's finite faculties fail him here, when his immortal part lays aside its cumbersome tenement, and soars to the empyrean heights, who can tell what raptures of joy await its entrance into the City of Light; for there the angelic choirs are tuning their voices to an immortal song, and it is only there that the music of earth will find its full expression.

APPENDIX II

[extracted from J.W. Dearborn, A History of the First Century of the Town of Parsonsfield, Maine]

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS OF PARSONSFIELD

By Prof. L.O. Emerson

Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen:--

I am happy to respond to the call to say a few words on so interesting an occasion as this, an occasion of which every son and daughter of this grand old town of Parsonsfield may well feel proud. While the institutions of learning of this town, its doctors, its ministers, and its lawyers have all received their well merited meed of praise, it is but just that a passing tribute should be paid to those who have labored in that not less important sphere, the field of music.

On the subject of music in this town I can say but little. The most that I can do is give my own personal recollections. So far back as I remember (and this period covers over half a century), Parsonsfield was noted for its musical talent. Go where you would, you invariably found a large choir of good singers; and this part of divine worship was always performed with as much good taste and enthusiasm as I have known it to be in larger towns and cities that had greater facilities for its cultivation. In my young days a good deal of pride was taken in having the service of song in the sanctuary performed correctly and in good taste; and while musical culture since that time has made great progress, and there has been great productiveness in musical composition, and great additions to the solid and enduring treasures of sacred song, yet, I believe that this part of public worship is not, even now, generally performed to more edification and inspiration than it was fifty years ago. This is true, not only of country towns, but of large cities.

I recall with much pride the standing of this, my native town, in this respect at that time; and also some of those, who as teachers of singing schools and conductors of the song service in the sanctuary, did a great deal for the cultivation and improvement of musical taste.

I well remember that in my very early years Mr. Harvey Moore was considered a most excellent chorister and teacher of singing schools. He did much in his day, which stretches back into the latter part of the last century. At a later date his son, Dr. John Moore, was a successful teacher and chorister. I recall, also, Mr. Charles G. Parsons, a grandson of the proprietor of this town, and Mr. John Garland, as for many years prominent and excellent teachers of singing schools and conductors of singing schools and conductors of choirs. Mention should also be made of my brother, Joseph P. Emerson, lately deceased. There has been no singing

master in this town who has been as prominent in this department as he was; no one who was better qualified for his work, no one who for so many years occupied so wide a field as a music teacher in this section of the country. He was always very enthusiastic on the subject of music, and did more, probably, than any one man in the town to stimulate and promote its cultivation. Dr. John T. Wedgwood, also in his earlier life, taught much and enjoyed an enviable reputation as a teacher of vocal music--a reputation which he still sustains.

In all parts of this town the singing school was ever a great institution. It was always well patronized, and was the source of much culture and enjoyment.

Among former residents were a good many musical families and teachers of music, with some of whom I had no personal acquaintance and cannot name. I can name, however, as always associated more or less prominently with the service of song in the sanctuary, the Parsonses, the Garlands, the Moores, the Rickers, the Pipers, the Wedgwoods, the Colcords, the Parkses, and the Emersons.

Of instrumental music there is not much to be said. We had sometimes the bass viol and the flute and the tenor viol, but these were not very common. The cabinet organ that is now found in so many homes, was not known in my young days.

Let us hope that in the future of Parsonsfield, that in the house of God, about the hearth of home, and wherever brave men and women may congregate, as always in the past, the purifying, ennobling and gladdening influence of music may be felt with that power for good from which it is never separated.

We have no useless regrets for the past, we need not sigh vainly for the good old days that are gone forever, but with an unwavering faith that our birth-place is capable of as noble works, as grand songs, and as wide-spreading an influence in the future as in the best days of her past. We look forward with steady hope to what our sons and daughters -- those who will come up and follow you and me when our voices no more are heard -- will do for this town of Parsonsfield, dear with many sacred memories, not only along the line of music, but along the lines of all true progress that works with that law that maketh for righteousness here and hereafter.

APPENDIX III

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WORKS BY EMERSON THUS FAR STUDIED OR LISTED
IN VARIOUS SOURCES:

HYMNS, ANTHEMS, AND LITURGICAL BOOKS

Copyright	Publisher	Title
1853	B.B. Mussey	<u>The Romberg Collection</u>
1860	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Golden Harp</u>
1860	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Sabbath Harmony</u>
1863	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Harp of Judah</u>
1865	Oliver Ditson	<u>Merry Chimes</u>
1866	Oliver Ditson	<u>Jubilate</u>
1869	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Choral Tribute</u>
1869	Oliver Ditson	<u>Glad Tidings</u>
1870	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Sabbath Guest</u>
1871	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Singing Schools</u>
1872	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Standard</u>
1873	Oliver Ditson	<u>Chants and Responses</u>
1873	Oliver Ditson	<u>Episcopal Chants</u>
1874	Oliver Ditson	<u>Leader</u>
1876	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Chorus Book</u>
1876	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Salutation</u>
1877	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Sacred Quartets</u>
1878	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Church Offering</u>
1878	Oliver Ditson	<u>Onward</u>
1879	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Voice of Worship</u>
1879	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Book of Anthems</u>
1881	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Ideal</u>

1881	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Herald of Praise</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>Choral Worship</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>Song Worship for Sunday School</u>
1886	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Anthems of Praise</u>
1887	Oliver Ditson	<u>Jehovah's Praise</u>
1888	Oliver Ditson	<u>Easy Anthems</u>
1888	Oliver Ditson	<u>Easy Chants</u>
1888	Oliver Ditson	<u>Praise in Song</u>
1889	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Temperance Crusade</u>
1891	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Choice Anthems</u>
1893	Supreme Command	<u>Songs of the Golden Cross</u>
1895	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Anthem Tribute</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Celestial Treasures</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Chorus Wreath</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's New Responses</u>

SONG BOOKS

1856	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Golden Wreath</u>
1862	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Hummingbird</u>
1867	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Greeting</u>
1871	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Hour of Singing</u>
1871	Oliver Ditson	<u>The National Chorus Book</u>
1872	Oliver Ditson	<u>Cheerful Voices</u>
1874	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Song Monarch</u> (Co-compiled by H.R. Palmer)
1876	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Chorus Book</u>

1876	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Encore</u>
1880	Oliver Ditson	<u>Song Bells</u>
1881	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Quartets and Chorus</u>
1881	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Male Voice Choir</u>
1883	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Singer's Welcome</u>
1886	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Royal Singer</u>
1887	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Male Voice Gems</u>
1887	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Part-Song and Glee</u>
1888	Oliver Ditson	<u>Song Harmony</u>
1891	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Victory of Song</u>
1892	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's New Male Quartets</u>
1895	Oliver Ditson	<u>Coronet of Song</u>
1899	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Singer's Favorite</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Concert Selections</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Vocal Selections</u>

PEDAGOGICAL / CHILDREN'S BOOKS

1871	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Singing School</u>
1872	Oliver Ditson	<u>Method of Reed Organ</u>
1873	Oliver Ditson	<u>American School Music Reader, Book 1</u>
1873	Oliver Ditson	<u>American School Music Reader, Book 2</u>
1873	Oliver Ditson	<u>American School Music Reader, Book 3</u>
1875	Oliver Ditson	<u>The High School Choir</u>

1879	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Vocal Method</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>Gems For Little Fingers</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>Gems For Little Singers</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>School Bells</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>Song Greeting for High School</u>
1884	Oliver Ditson	<u>Song Worship for Sunday School</u>
1887	Oliver Ditson	<u>United Voices</u>
1890	Oliver Ditson	<u>Vocal Method</u>
1899	Chicago Music	<u>Emerson's New Century</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Emerson's New Method For Reed Organ</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Emerson's Vocal Method For Contralto, Baritone, and Bass Voices</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Piano Method</u>

SONG SHEETS (SACRED AND SECULAR)

1856	Oliver Ditson	<u>Tell Me Not In Mournful Numbers</u>
1856	Oliver Ditson	<u>I'll Paddle My Own Canoe</u>
1858	Oliver Ditson	<u>Out in the Cold</u>
1862	Oliver Ditson	<u>Lo, the Day of Rest Declineth</u>
1862	Oliver Ditson	<u>We Are Coming Father Abraham</u>
1867	Oliver Ditson	<u>When the Hues of Daylight Fade</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Come, Holy Spirit</u>

---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Come Unto Him</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Come Unto Me When Shadows</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Come Ye Blessed Children</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Father, Oh Hear Us</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>In Heavenly Love</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>I, Want No Stars in Heaven</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>In Silent Mead</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>In This Hour of Softened Splendor</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>I Will Lift Up My Eyes Unto The Hills</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Jesus Loves Me</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>King Winter</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Land of Light Ajar</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Let Me Kiss Him For His Mother</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Lord Is My Shepherd</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>May Morning</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Nearer My God</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Negro Boatman's Song</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>O Be Joyful In The Lord</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>O I Am A Merry Sailor Lad</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>O Praise The Mighty God</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>O Restless Heart</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Over The Bright Blue Sea</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Praise The Lord</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Rock of Ages</u>

---	Oliver Ditson	<u>See The Light Is Fading</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Sing Jehovah's Praises</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Sleep My Baby</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Softly Now The Light Of Day</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Star of Descending Night</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Tarry With Me</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Tell The Glorious Tale of Old</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Ten Responses</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Day is Past and Over</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Love Of Christ</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Mariner's Song</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Song Of Welcome</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>The Mountain Land</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Thine Earthly Sabbaths</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Twilight Falls</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Waiting For Loved</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Waves Of Ocean</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>We Rock Away On The Billows Gay</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>What Reward Shall I Give Unto The Lord</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>When The Times of Daylight</u>
---	-----	<u>A Nest Among The Graves</u>

LARGE-SCALE AND INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

1898	Oliver Ditson	<u>Mass in C</u>
1900	Oliver Ditson	<u>Mass in B</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Mass in E Flat</u>
---	Oliver Ditson	<u>Silver Springs Polka</u>

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