

The art of sheet music : American life in our piano benches : Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin--Madison, 21 September-10 November 1985.

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American Life in Our Piano Benches

THE ART OF SHEET MUSIC



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Jean M. Bonin

Elvehjem Museum of Art
University of Wisconsin–Madison
21 September–10 November 1985

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Foreword

In the fall of 1985, the University of Wisconsin–Madison celebrates the one-hundredth anniversary of the Wisconsin Bands, the ninetieth anniversary of the School of Music, and the reopening of the renovated "Old Music Hall." To celebrate these events the Elvehjem Museum of Art is proud to present the exhibition *American Life in Our Piano Benches: The Art of Sheet Music*.

In discussing the exhibition with colleagues during its early stages of preparation, not unusually, their response, although favorable to the idea, contained an element of surprise at the fact that a museum was concerned with sheet music at all, and was frequently accompanied with the further somewhat incredulous comment, "Oh, but we have some of those in our attic." This ambivalent attitude neatly encapsulates some of the historical questions that *American Life in our Piano Benches: The Art of Sheet Music* is intended to address. The very popularity of the music itself, as well as its primary appeal to musicians rather than "art collectors," has too frequently excluded sheet music from consideration as a visual art form. Yet, the illustrated and highly decorative covers encasing the majority of these musical scores are very much a visual art form. Produced for commercial distribution in the United States and abroad, they, in fact, effectively reflect the stylistic tastes and historical attitudes of their time. The covers of these musical scores were from the very beginning designed by some of the leading artists of their respective periods and utilized some of the most sophisticated and advanced printing techniques then being developed. This exhibition, accompanying catalogue, and symposium are intended to present the artistic values inherent in American sheet music, to explore the interdisciplinary significance of these values, and to make us all more aware of the visually as well as musically rich heritage that is to be found "in our piano benches."

Exhibitions are usually the coordinated efforts of numerous individuals, however, the Elvehjem would like to acknowledge a special debt of gratitude to Jean Bonin, who walked in off the street one cold winter day with the proposal that has

lent itself so exceptionally well to our needs. Without Ms. Bonin's scholarly expertise, love for her subject, and dedication to the project, this exhibition could never have taken place. Special thanks must also be extended to Earl Madden from the University of Wisconsin–Madison Publications Office, who designed the catalogue, as well as to the University Publications staff, who have been exceptionally generous with their time.

The Museum staff has diligently assisted the project in all aspects. Much of the initial organizational work and publicity was coordinated by Kathy Parks, Assistant to the Director. Stephen C. McGough, Associate Director, edited and oversaw the overall production of the catalogue; other curatorial details were handled by Carlton Overland, Curator of Collections, and Lisa Calden, the Museum's Registrar. Preparation of the musical scores for exhibition was done by Jacqueline Captain, Project Assistant, and Shirley Scheier, Student Assistant. Typing and other administrative matters were in the capable hands of Ruth Struve, Administrative Assistant, and Sandra Pierick, Museum Secretary. Carpentry and other details of installation were resolved by the Staff Carpenter, Henry Behrnd. Laura Vanderploeg, Staff Photographer, produced all the photographs for the catalogue.

Partial funding for the exhibition was provided by the Wisconsin Humanities Committee and through the generosity of the Brittingham Fund, Inc.

The Elvehjem would also like to express its special gratitude to the various individuals and institutions that so generously lent their works of art to this exhibition. These include Jean Bonin; John A. Jaeger; Howard Kanetzke; Mills Music Library, University of Wisconsin–Madison; The Museum of Norman Rockwell Art, Reedsburg, Wisconsin; The State Historical Society of Wisconsin; and Steve Sundell.

Russell Panczenko

Director

American Life in Our Piano Benches

By Mrs. Trollope's account, we were a "busy, hustling, industrious population, hacking and hewing" our way through the country.¹ She suggests that we had no desire for pleasures, that we took no pleasure in the moment. But ample evidence is extant to show that in fact we did not, in Hawthorne's words, simply "hang on the world's skirts;" we actually "belonged to it."² That at least is the view of American life found in our piano benches.

The keyboard itself is a vital force in our American tradition. Statistics cited frequently at the time document the fact that from the early nineteenth century on it became a fixture in the American household. In 1860, for example, seventy Americans bought a new piano every working day.³ But even more provocative are the personal accounts of the acceptance—even the urgency—of the keyboard in our lives.

Her little melodeon set up in the crude new home became a shrine of delight to the family and to the neighborhood as well. I have never seen more graceful or instant response than she was wont to give to a request for its music, whether from a family guest, a child, or some crude stranger under our roof for the night and hungry for the sobering and almost forgotten pleasure of music.⁴

It was the piano, Schorer argues, that "unlocked the doors of the family's prim parlor and let some warmth into that room."⁵ At a slightly later and more lively period, the piano served our pleasure as ragtime's "tool of choice."⁶ None of this is consistent with a depiction of dogged "hacking and hewing."

As convincing as these references are, the evidence of the popular sheet music in our piano benches is even more telling, and is certainly voluminous. The sheet music industry was in its heyday in the Tin Pan Alley era, but it had forged a notably aggressive surge of development about the middle of the nineteenth century, due to developing technology and enterprise as well as to public demand. In 1870 a survey of the twenty largest music publishers in America showed a total of 80,000 pieces of sheet music in print.⁷ Major bibliographic studies since then are confirming the existence of large quantities of American sheet music in private collections and institutional archives throughout the United States, and these studies are collaborating splendidly in the widespread scholarly and popular interest in diverse aspects of American popular sheet music.⁸

It is possible to a great extent to analyze the pleasure we found then at the piano and find now in our piano benches. We took great delight, it is clear, in acknowledging historic events (e.g., *World's Columbian Exposition March*, Catalogue No. 33; *The Acquisition of Louisiana*). We commented on the dizzying pace of progress in America (*The Atlantic Cable Telegraph Polka*; *King of the Air*, Cat. 58; *In My Merry Oldsmobile*). We needed song through our wars (*When This Cruel War Is Over*; *Just before the Battle*, *Mother*; *Union, God and Liberty*, Cat. 13). We brought attention to all sides of issues of social concern with pieces on abolition, temperance, women's rights (*Get Off the Track*; *King Alcohol*; *What'll We Do on a Saturday Night When the Town Goes Dry*, Cat. 69; *We'll Show You When We Come to Vote*). We were always fascinated with people, particularly the famous (*We Take Our Hats*

Off to You, Mr. Wilson; *The McKinley Song*, Cat. 36; *Honest Old Abe*). We told of heroic achievements (*Grace Darling, or The Wrecker's Daughter*, Cat. 2; *Perry's Victory March*). We grieved at the piano (*Lost on the Lady Elgin*, Cat. 22), and we yearned for days past and the familiar (*Home Sweet Home*; *Toyland*, Cat. 41; *The Old Arm Chair*, Cat. 4; *Summer's Sweets Shall Bloom Again*, Cat. 21). We sang of love: new love, old love, lost love, found love (*Love Me To-Night*, Cat. 71; *The Letter That Never Came*, Cat. 29; *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, Cat. 73).

These are the themes and subjects that captivated our attention.⁹ It is equally tantalizing (though less directly revealing) to speculate what else it is about this sheet music that made it so appealing in its time—and makes it such a valuable and pleasurable artifact and work of art today. It would seem safe to assume that the sheet music trade knew what the public wanted. Indeed, it is instructive to see just what points of emphasis these enterprising professionals made in promoting their publications. The Chicago firm of Root and Cady, in 1868 for example, offered their series *Songs of the Present Time* as "melodies of beauty, words of sense, ideas of progress." But overall, from these tradesmen's statements on the sheet music itself, it is abundantly apparent that even from the early days of what would be termed "calculated efforts" to appeal to the public, one point of information is very frequently conveyed and emphasized: the presence of the decorated or illustrated sheet music cover. Catalogue listings on the sheet music regularly singled out pieces that had "picture titles," "embellished titles," "elegantly illuminated title pages"—all of this in the era which Charles K. Harris later claimed as predating the Tin Pan Alley age, when "the elaborate and illustrated title page had come into vogue!"¹⁰

American Life in Our Piano Benches shows the artistry of sheet music title-page decoration, illustration, and design. By and large it appears that practices in American sheet music illustration matched British usages in that they generally reserved decorative titles for serious music and employed pictorial representation for popular music.¹¹ Publishers' classified catalogue listings in the nineteenth century almost never indicate the "opera songs" as having illustrated covers. Of the thousands of extant pieces from the English and Italian opera repertoire in our piano benches, few have much more than a straightforward title page.

There seems to have been a definite pattern of allowing the immediately popular and wildly successful pieces to stand without the added enhancement of an attractive cover page. Our piano benches hold innumerable issues of *Home Sweet Home*, *Listen to the Mocking Bird*, *Silver Threads among the Gold*, *Old Folks at Home*—all with merely functional title pages. Likewise, "embellished" covers time and again occur on titles of unknown and lesser-known composers, leaving the plain cover as quite adequate for the celebrated composer. This happens often in the music of Stephen Collins Foster (but see his *Ellen Bayne*, Cat. 10). Henry Clay Work, on the other hand, appears to be an exception to this pattern, and it is also intriguing to note that Henry Russell, who was widely known as both performer and composer, enjoyed the artistic collaboration of Fitz Hugh Lane (three of Lane's fourteen known sheet music covers appear on Russell's music).

Finally, by way of overview, there is a discernible cyclic evolution in sheet music

illustration from the very earliest days of caption titles (having only slight decoration of the title statement) through to the latest covers shown here, which return in a certain sense to that purely utilitarian service, evidencing only a limited measure of imaginative design (e.g., Cat. 71, 75).

Our piano benches hold sheet music illustration done by artists who had or who later established reputations in other genres: Winslow Homer, William Keesey Hewitt (Cat. 2), David Claypoole Johnston, Fitz Hugh Lane (Cat. 4), Thomas Nast (Cat. 23), James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Joseph E. Baker (Cat. 15), Norman Rockwell (Cat. 55), Charles Parsons (Cat. 7). Some artists, especially in the twentieth century, seem to have built their professional reputations largely, if not exclusively, in sheet music illustration, e.g., the ubiquitous Starmer, John Frew (Cat. 50), E. H. Pfeiffer (Cat. 49), Albert Barbelle (Cat. 62, 69). Virtually all of the great nineteenth-century lithography firms offered sheet music illustration among their professional services. Exemplars to be viewed in this exhibition include pieces from the firm of Sarony (Cat. 8, 10, 11, 12), N. Currier (Cat. 1), Thayer (Cat. 3, 4), Endicott (Cat. 5, 7, 13), Kurz (Cat. 16, 17, 18, 21), Duval (Cat. 19), Sinclair (Cat. 6), A. Hoen (Cat. 44, 45), and J. H. Bufford (Cat. 26).

In fact, however, the history of sheet music illustration is largely faceless.¹² Many imprints from the nineteenth century carry only the name of the lithography firm, which is at least a thread of evidence. This lead is one that is being pursued by scholars in attempting to match the names of firms with their known employees or apprentices in order to identify the artists of anonymous works. But a whole range of inherent complexities makes attribution in these nineteenth-century lithographs a challenging task. Tatham has pointed out the confusion caused by the lack of uniform practices among artists and printers in signing their works.¹³ In addition, artists commonly made free borrowings and silent adaptations (as may be seen in Cat. 4). A third hindrance is the frequent appearance of a lithographed cover bearing a title which is different from that of the music. As the techniques for creating cover art developed beyond lithography, the question of the artist's attribution becomes practically moot. Only rarely in those days is there an artist's signature. The cover artist quite selflessly placed his art at the service of the sheet music.

In any case, identified or not, pictorial art was clearly a valued and coveted part of American popular sheet music.¹⁴ Its pieces merit our attention because of their widespread historical presence in our parlors and dance halls and for the imagination and craftsmanship which they exhibit. Some few covers in this exhibition, for example, Cat. 32, carry only the most elemental ornamentation. Others such as Cat. 9, make artful use of imaginative title lettering. In fact, a wide range of design results in these works, depending upon whether the artist puts his pictorial emphasis on the title, the lyrics, or the music. Some of the early lithographs, for example, develop the classic vignette into elegant and elaborate depictions (see Cat. 7, 10). Similarly, one should note the skill of the illustrator in conveying pictorially the extreme discomfort described in the lyrics of *Tea in the Arbour*, Cat. 6, and the fact that the artist chose to portray only a minor aspect of the lyrics in *Poor Tom's Lament*, Cat. 3. At another extreme is the cover on *At the Fountain of Youth*, Cat. 56, which is a strange and erroneously contrived collaboration by the pictorial artist.

Some cover art here resorts to adopting a currently fashionable image (despite the marginal relevance to its sheet music). In the 1910s, for example, "pretty girls" were appearing everywhere to appeal to America: from advertisements, magazine covers, packaged goods, and sheet music, such as Cat. 59 and 60. Some of the covers portray classic scenes, as in Cat. 12, while others, incorporating photography, are more of the given moment, as in Cat. 43 and 61. Many of the covers can be admired simply for their directness, the vibrant and vigorous intensity of their visual impact (see Cat. 38 and 63, and the two E. T. Paull covers, Cat. 44 and 45).

Just what was it, for example, that made Gaby Deslys, the great French entertainer, so immensely popular among American audiences in her day? Gilbert Seldes, in *The Seven Lively Arts*, says "she had something irreducible, not to be hindered or infringed upon—her definite self."¹⁵ American Life In Our Piano Benches offers us a chance to pleasantly reminisce, of course, but also to puzzle over our American popular sheet music to reach new understandings of *our* definite selves.

An Old Song

*You laugh as you turn the yellow pages,
Of that queer old song you sing,
And wonder how folks could ever see
A charm in the simple melody
Of such an old-fashioned thing.*

*That yellow page was fair to view
That quaint old type was fresh and new,
That simple strain was our delight,
When here we gathered, night by night
And thought the poetry of our day
An endless joy to sing and play
In our youth, long, long ago.*

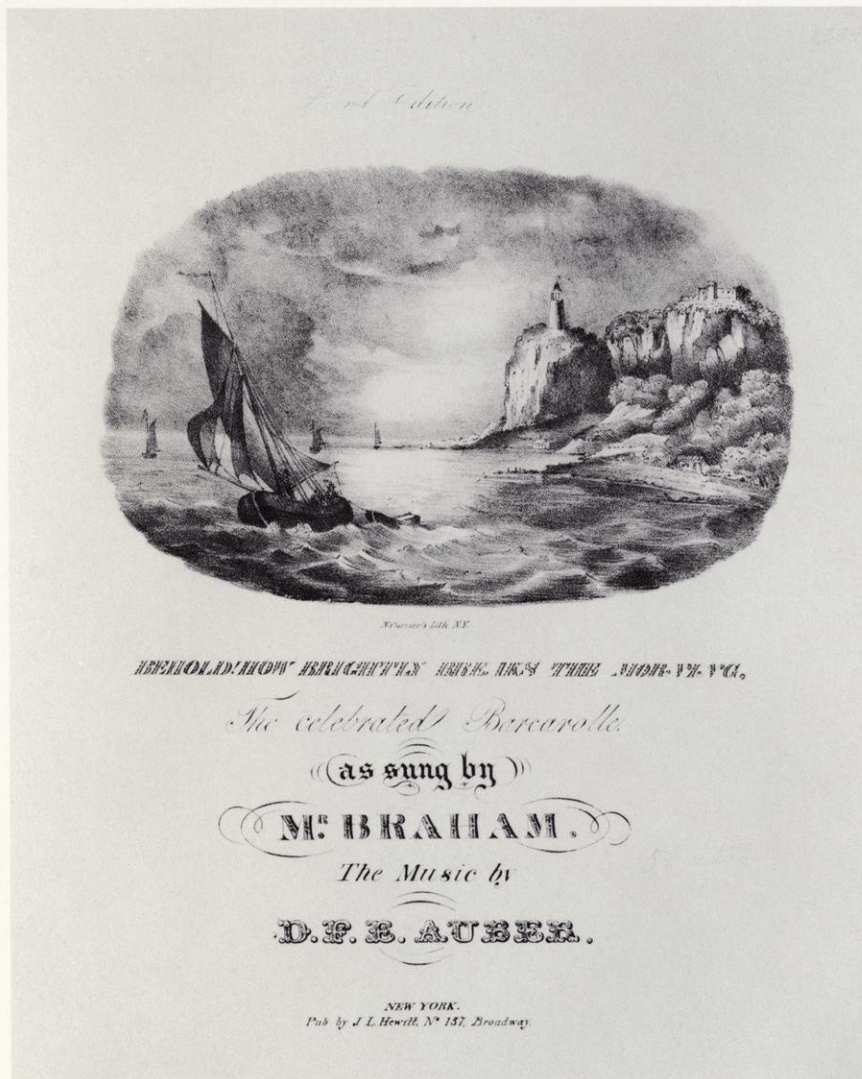
*A joyous group we loved to meet,
When hope was bright and life was sweet;
When romance shed its golden light,
That circled, in a nimbus bright,
O'er Time's unwrinkled brow.*

.....
*'Tis not alone when music thrills,
The power of thought profound that fills
The soul. 'Tis not all art!
The old familiar tones we hear
Die not upon the listening ear;
They vibrate in the heart.¹⁶*

Footnotes

1. Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1894) 2:139.
2. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *Our Old Home and English Note-books* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1863), 76.
3. Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 512.
4. Joanna Stratton, *Pioneer Women: Voices from the Kansas Frontier* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1981), 131.
5. Mark Schorer, *Pieces of Life* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 99.
6. J. C. Furnas, *Great Times: An Informal Social History of the United States 1914–1929*. (New York: Putnam, 1974).
7. *Board of Music Trade of the United States of America: Complete Catalogue of Sheet Music and Musical Works*, reprint with a new introduction by Dena J. Epstein (1870; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1973), ##
8. D.W. Krummel et al., *Resources of American Music History: A Directory of Source Materials from Colonial Times to World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981).
The classics to be acknowledged are Wolfe and Sonneck-Upton: Richard J. Wolfe, *Secular Music in America, 1801–1825, A Bibliography*, 3 vols. (New York: The New York Public Library, 1964) and Oscar George Theodore Sonneck, *A Bibliography of Early Secular American Music*, revised and enlarged by William Treat Upton (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, 1945). A benchmark study is the *Computer Catalog of Nineteenth-Century American-Imprint Sheet Music*, compiled by Lynn T. McRae (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1977).
9. No one has done more engaging or insightful work in American history and lore as seen through our popular sheet music than has Lester Levy. See his *Flashes of Merriment: A Century of Humorous Songs in America, 1805–1905* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971); *Give Me Yesterday: American History in Song, 1890–1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975); *Grace Notes in American History: Popular Sheet Music from 1820–1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967); and *Picture the Songs: Lithographs from the Sheet Music of Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

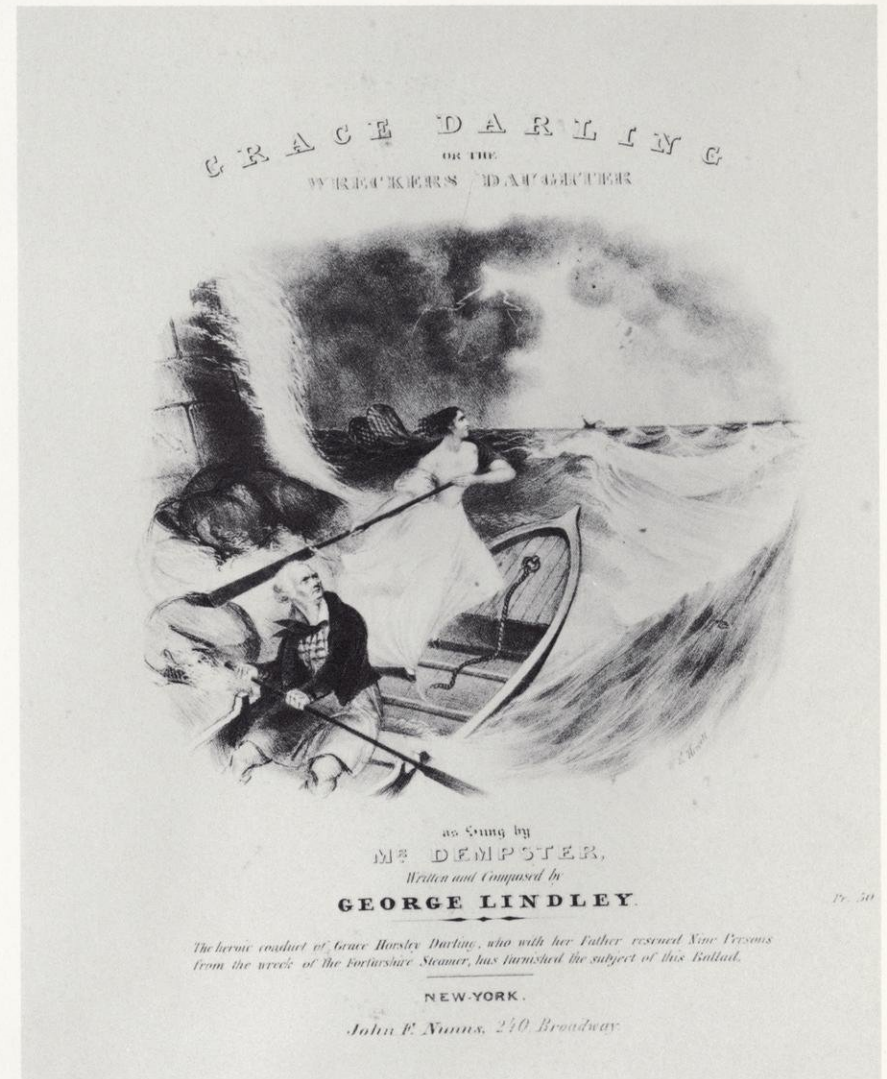
10. Charles K. Harris, *After the Ball. Forty Years of Melody* (New York: Frank-Maurice, 1926), 76.
11. Alexander Hyatt King, "English Pictorial Music Title-Pages, 1820–1885, Their Style, Evolution, and Importance," *The Library*, Series 5:4 (1949–50): 263.
12. For magnificent reproductions and stunningly enlightening analyses by a visual arts scholar, see David Tatham, *The Lure of the Striped Pig: The Illustration of Popular Music in America, 1820–1870* (Barre, Mass.: Imprint Society, 1973). It is also interesting to note that studies of American artists who were at some time involved in sheet music illustration often include appropriate references to this aspect of their subject's profession. See especially Thomas Beckman, "Louis Kurz: Early Years," *Imprint, Journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society*, 7:1 (Spring 1982): 14–25.
13. The term *del* ("he drew it," abbreviated from the Latin, *delineavit*), Tatham advises, was used to describe three quite different activities. Often times it meant an artist had put his own original design on stone. But it was used as well to mean that the artist in question was the original author of the design and that it now was copied onto stone by another hand. Finally, Tatham says, *del* also has been used to indicate the copyist who has put on stone another artist's original design. (Tatham *The Lure of the Striped Pig*, 24n).
14. The subject has been treated in the following sources: Marian Klamkin, *Old Sheet Music: A Pictorial History* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1975); Nancy R. Davison, "The Grand Triumphant Quick-Step; or Sheet Music Covers in America," in *Prints in and of America to 1850*, ed. John D. Morse (Winterthur, Del.: Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, 1970), 257–96; and Max Wilk, *Memory Lane, 1890–1925; Ragtime, Jazz, Foxtrot and Other Popular Music and Music Covers* (London: Studioart, 1973). John Thomas Carey stands alone in his negative perspective on the subject. See his "The American Lithograph from Its Inception to 1965, With Biographical Considerations of Twenty Lithographers and a Check-List of Their Works" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1954).
15. Gilbert Vivian Seldes, *The Seven Lively Arts* (New York: Sagamore Press, Inc., 1957), 75.
16. From an undated, yellowed newspaper clipping found in the collection of sheet music owned by Joseph Philbrick Webster, the composer of *Lorena*, *The Sweet By and By*, and many other mid-nineteenth-century songs.



1 *Behold! How Brightly Breaks the Morning*
The Music by D. F. E. Auber,
Arranged by Mr. T. Cooke

Written by Mr. Kenny
N. Currier's Lithography, New York
J. L. Hewitt, New York, [1835]
Coll: John A. Jaeger

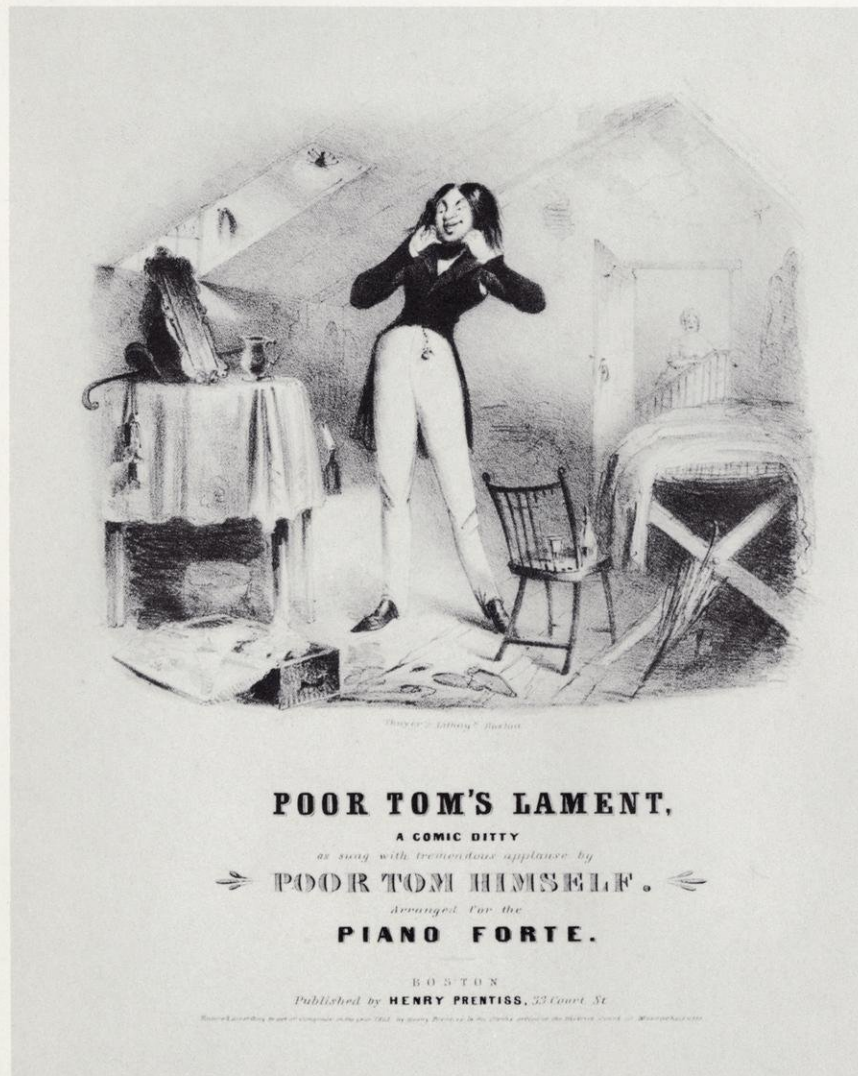
The lithograph title page, marked as a second edition, must be one of the earliest to come from Currier's newly established business in New York. (The first edition print was made during a short-lived alliance between William Stodart and Nathaniel Currier, the latter having recently concluded his apprenticeship with the Pendletons in Boston.) According to the noted scholar David Tatham, although music illustrations were a staple of the Currier shop in the 1830s and 1840s, they were rarely printed during the later Currier and Ives partnership. The caption title of the music, cited as the fourth edition, is *Take Heed, Whisper Low: Barcarole* [sic] in *Masaniello*.



2 *Grace Darling, or The Wrecker's Daughter*
Written and Composed by George
Lindley [Linley]

Artist: W. K. Hewitt
John F. Nunns, New York, [ca.1840]
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

The depiction captures the horror of the event ("this fearful night the storm is raging the breakers roaring despairing calls of the hapless crew") rather than the happy ending of the heroic efforts of "that gentle girl" ("The danger past, her heart beats lightly, Her silent transport no pride betrays").

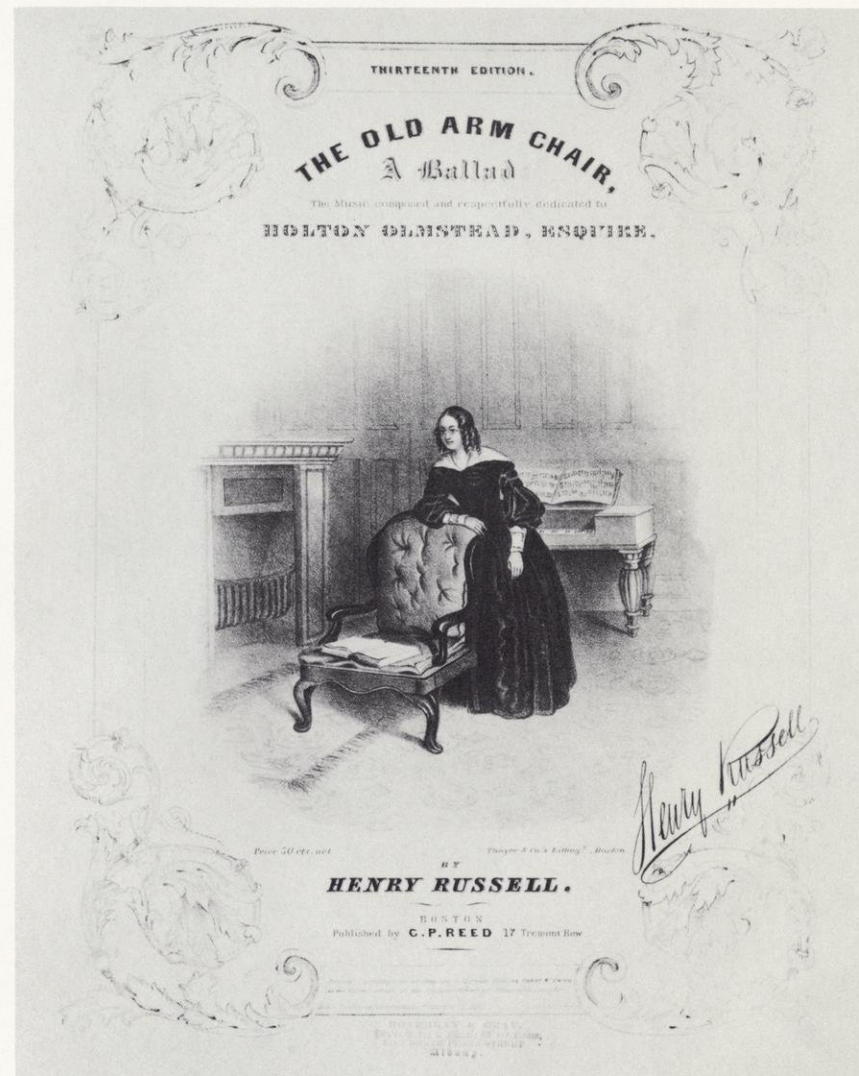


3 *Poor Tom's Lament*
Thayer's Lithography, Boston

Henry Prentiss, Boston, [ca. 1840-44]
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

"... she with softest guile, Lured me among rocks, near love's bright Isle, And then she cut me dead. " But Poor Tom, appearing now fully recovered from his late-lamented woes, dandies himself in this illustration, ready for a fresh start ("Well! Thank the fates, once more I'm free

"). The distinguished Thayer lithographic firm represented here counted the following artists among its apprentices or employees: John H. Bufford, Benjamin Champney, David Claypoole Johnston, Fitz Hugh Lane, and William Sharp.



4 *The Old Arm Chair*
By Henry Russell
Thayer and Co's Lithography, Boston

C. P. Reed, Boston, 1840
Coll: Jean Bonin

Fitz Hugh Lane (1804-1865), who is best known as a marine painter, also did at least fourteen sheet music illustrations—three, interestingly enough, for music of Henry Russell, a major figure in the history of early American popular song. Lane's drawing for the immensely successful *Old Arm Chair* was the standard rendition, altered considerably on some editions and at other times only slightly modified. Here an unknown artist has replaced the gaunt, flat face of Lane's original.



5 *The Soldier's Funeral*
Melody by L. Heath,
harmonized by C. W. Beames
Lithography of Endicott

Firth and Hall and J. L. Hewitt and
Company, New York, 1843
Coll: Jean Bonin

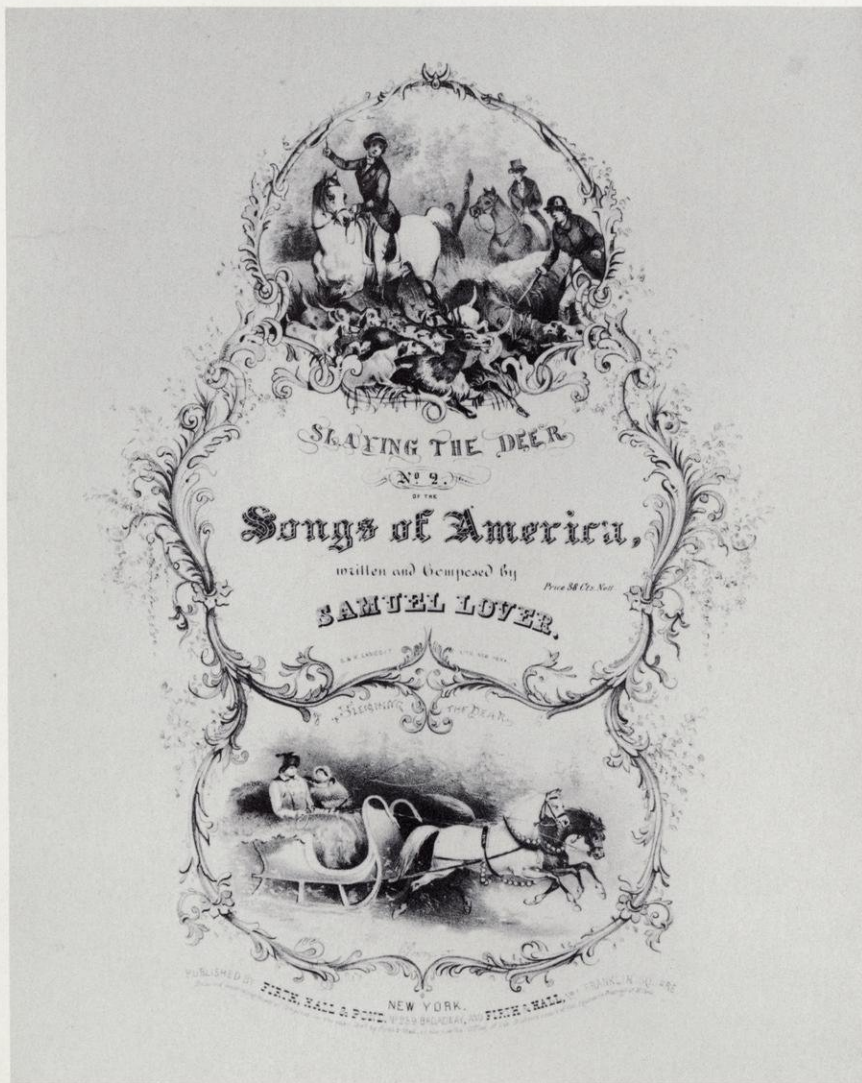
The famous Hutchinson Family Singers as depicted here had, in fact, exacted from the prestigious Endicott lithography firm a revision of their original cover design which they felt showed uncharacteristic and unbecoming fashions, inaccurate proportions of height among the members, and which lacked the background view of the New Hampshire mountains from their beloved Granite State. *The Soldier's Funeral* is only marginally representative of the Hutchinson Family Singers' repertoire, which was largely comprised of propaganda songs for the causes of abolition, temperance, and women's suffrage.



6 *Tea in the Arbour*
Written by J. Beuler
Lithography of T. Sinclair, Philadelphia

George W. Hewitt and Co.,
Philadelphia
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

Thomas Sinclair, one of the few lithographers in early America who was not trained in Germany, spent most of his life in Philadelphia, a prolific and respected practitioner of the art. Sinclair's painfully uncomfortable guest in the arbour (clearly no "lover of rural delights") is in clever coincidence with the six-versed discomfort ("... a bee put me all in a flutter, A great daddy long legs stuck fast on my toast, And left one of his limbs in the butter ...").



7 *Slaying the Deer*

Written and composed by
Samuel Lover

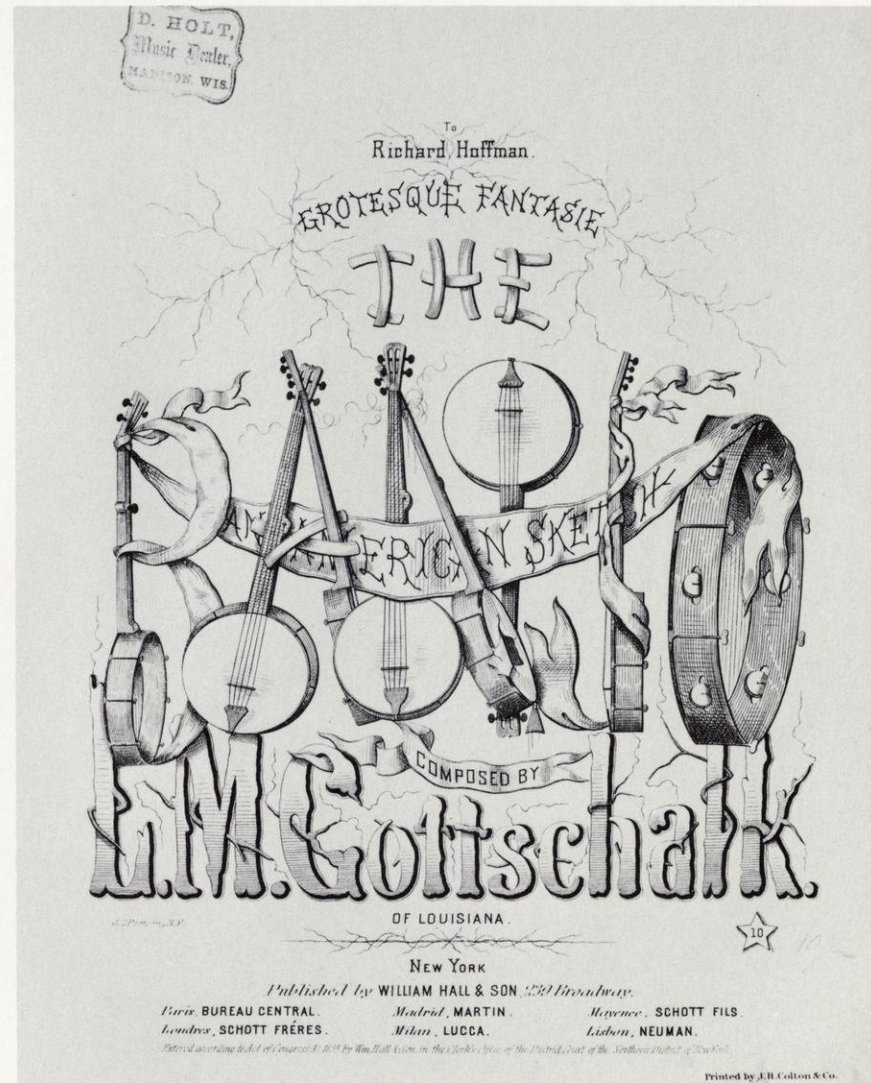
Charles Parsons, artist

George and William Endicott
Lithography, New York

Firth, Hall and Pond, New York, 1847

Coll: Mills Music Library, UW–Madison

Two classic vignettes connected by graceful ornamentation depict a clever pun on the title of this piece created by Charles Parsons (1821–1910), who illustrated at least ten sheet music covers during the 1840s. The Irish composer and lyricist Samuel Lover was a popular and successful songwriter in the tradition of Thomas Moore.



9 *The Banjo*

Louis Moreau Gottschalk

Coll: Mills Music Library, UW–Madison
New York, 1855

Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829–1869), a native of New Orleans, impressed Europeans and Americans alike with his virtuosity at the keyboard and his true ingenuity as a composer. (Note the range of international secondary imprints stated on the cover page.) The stunningly clever title illustration here, rarely matched by other cover design attempts of its type, is fully the equal of Emile Masson's *Brilliant Polka*, which uses a rebus in its title statement.



10 *Ellen Bayne*
Written and composed by
Stephen C. Foster

Lithograph of Sarony and Company
Firth, Pond and Co., New York, 1854
Coll: John A. Jaeger

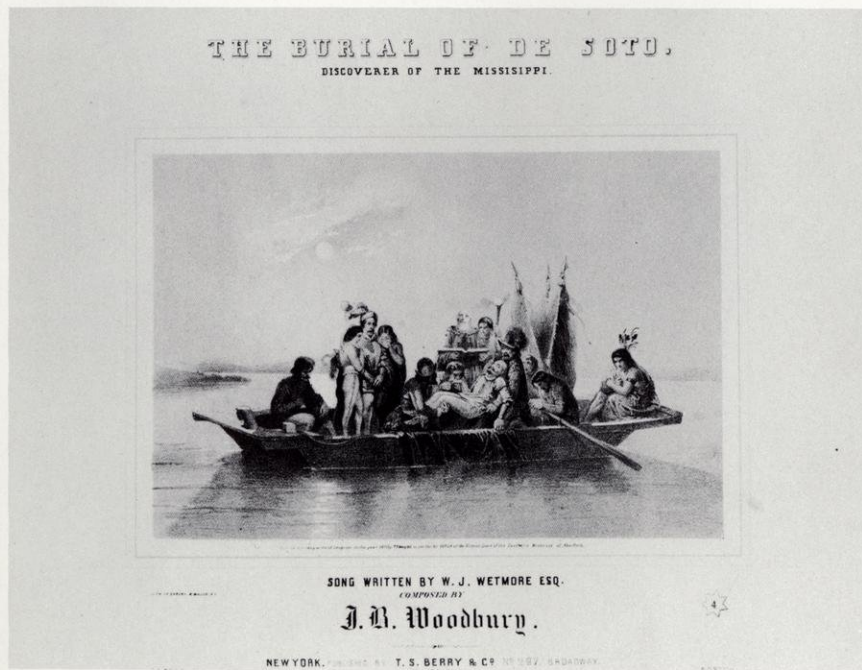
In the words of William Austin, the songs of Stephen Collins Foster "mean many things to a great many people" and, it might be added, they mean a lot to a lot of people. The immediate success of so many of Foster's songs (for example, *Old Folks At Home* and *Oh! Susanna*) is fully matched by the way his masterpieces bear up under analytical scrutiny, repeated performances, and a sustained familiarity. This cover design, consisting of a central vignette, elaborate surrounds, and subsidiary vignettes, came to be a frequently used formula on sheet music covers.



11 *I've Left the Snow-Clad Hills*
Composed by George Linley
Lithograph of Sarony and
Major, New York

William Hall and Son, New York, 1849
Coll: Jean Bonin

Jenny Lind, singing both operatic excerpts and simple ballads, took the United States by storm in her concert tour (arranged by P. T. Barnum). Naturally her picture appeared on countless sheet music covers of the time. One depiction from the lithographic firm of J. H. Bufford purports to be drawn from a daguerrotype. If the fidelity and craftsmanship of that artist are to be trusted, Jenny was quite plain—almost matronly. However, no one in the Jenny Lind-crazed mid-nineteenth century would have objected to this elegant, romanticized likeness of the famed "Swedish Nightingale" from the firm of Sarony and Major.



12 *The Burial of De Soto*

Song written by W. J. Wetmore

Composed by J. B. Woodbury

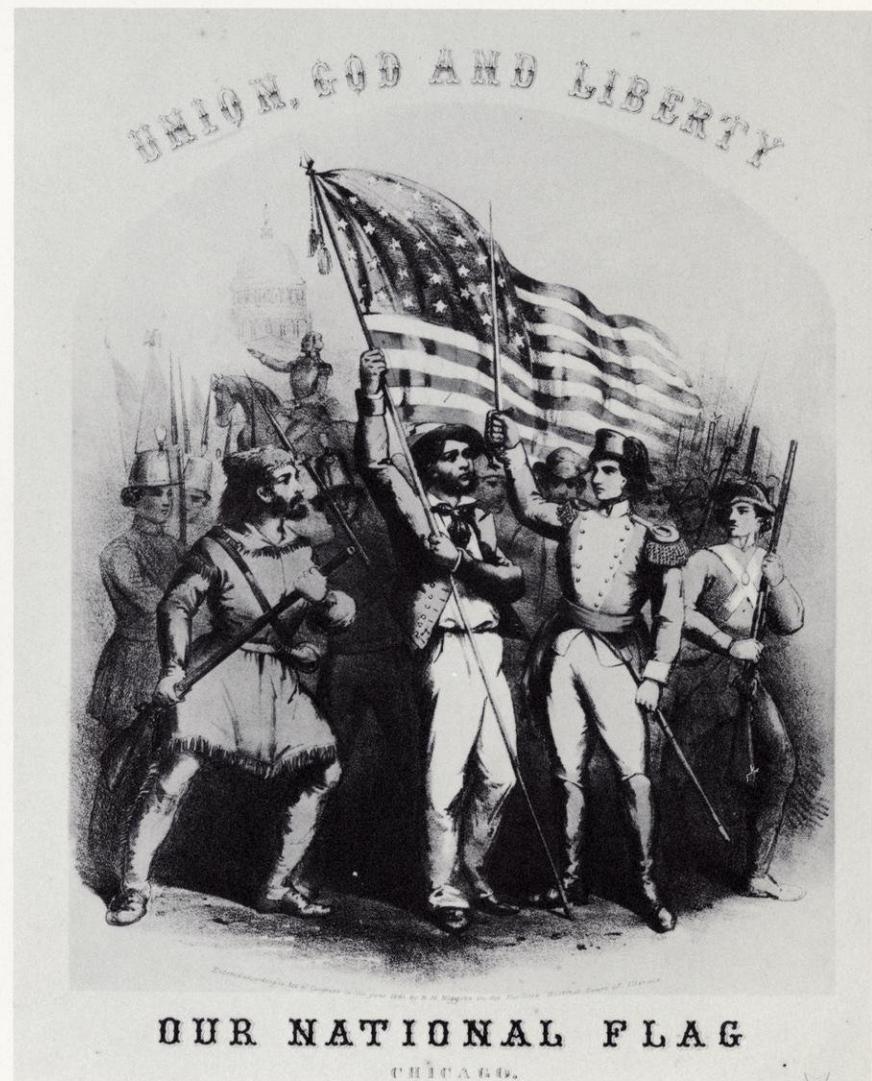
Lithography of Sarony and

Major, New York

T. S. Berry and Co., New York, 1853

Coll: John A. Jaeger

This simple strophic song, with lyrics equally straightforward, is an account of the burial of the great Spanish explorer in the Rio del Espíritu Santo, matched eloquently by the literal, sparse, tinted lithograph from the firm of Nathaniel Sarony and Henry B. Major.



13 *Union, God and Liberty*

Music composed by S. Wesley Martin

Words written by Alvin Robinson

Endicott and Company Lithography,

New York

H. M. Higgins, Chicago, 1861

Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

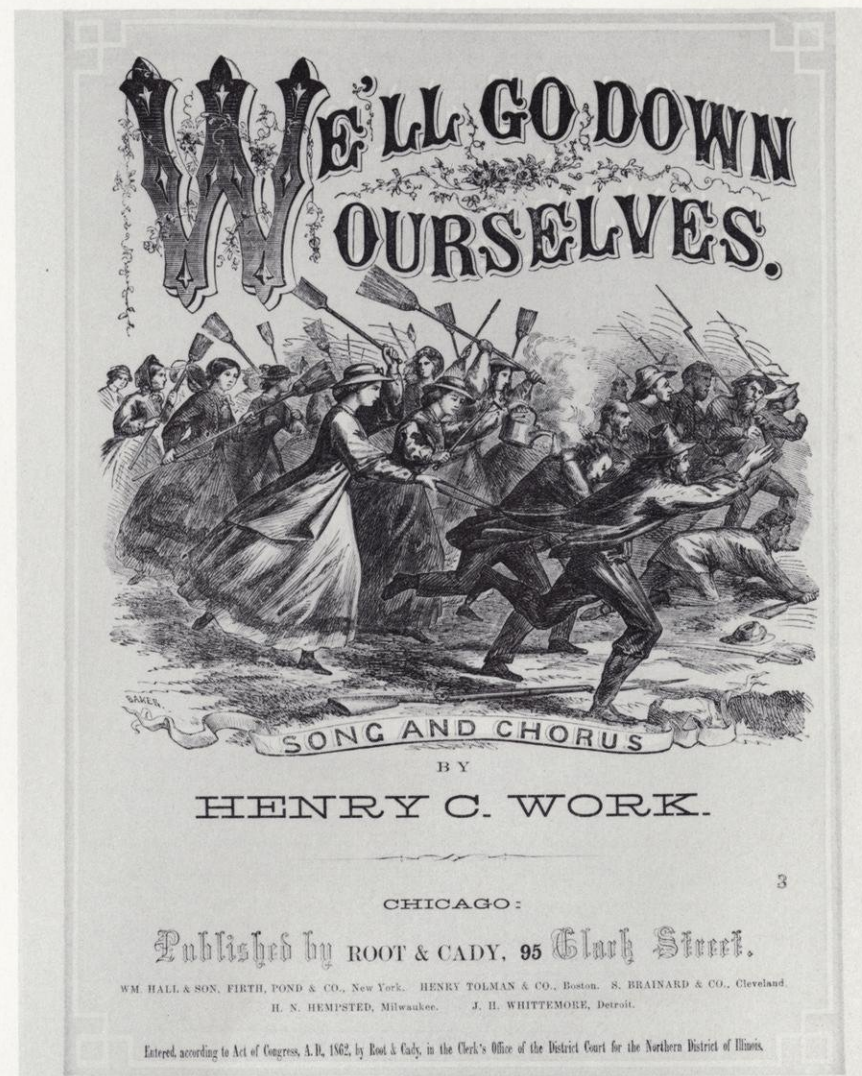
A brilliant depiction suggesting the unwavering nobility and rightness sought by all good citizens, this color lithograph may have been as inspiring and persuasive as the rallying songs in the parlor and the marches of the brass band.



14 *Grafted into the Army*
Words and music by Henry Clay Work
Lithography of Cha. Shober, Chicago

Root and Cady, Chicago, 1862
Coll: Howard Kanetzke

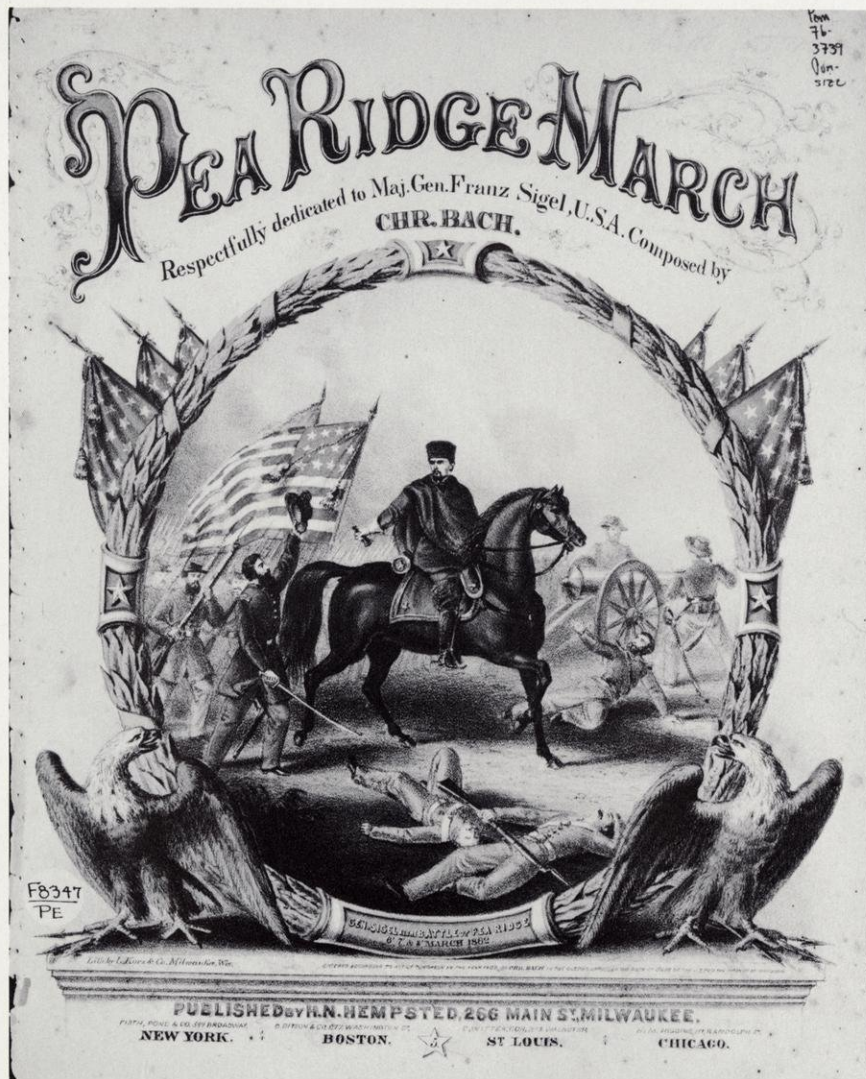
We needed humor to help us through the horrors of the Civil War. War-related comic songs in the 1860s included the still-familiar *Goober Peas*; a Confederate publication of A. E. Blackmar entitled *Short Rations*, dedicated to the Corn-fed Army of Tennessee; and Henry Clay Work's relatively light-hearted *Grafted into the Army*. But even more than humor, we needed song. Our midwestern piano benches still today hold many sheets of the most active songwriters Henry Clay Work and George Frederick Root.



15 *We'll Go Down Ourselves*
Song and chorus by Henry Clay Work
Artist: Baker

Root and Cady, Chicago, 1862
Coll: John A. Jaeger

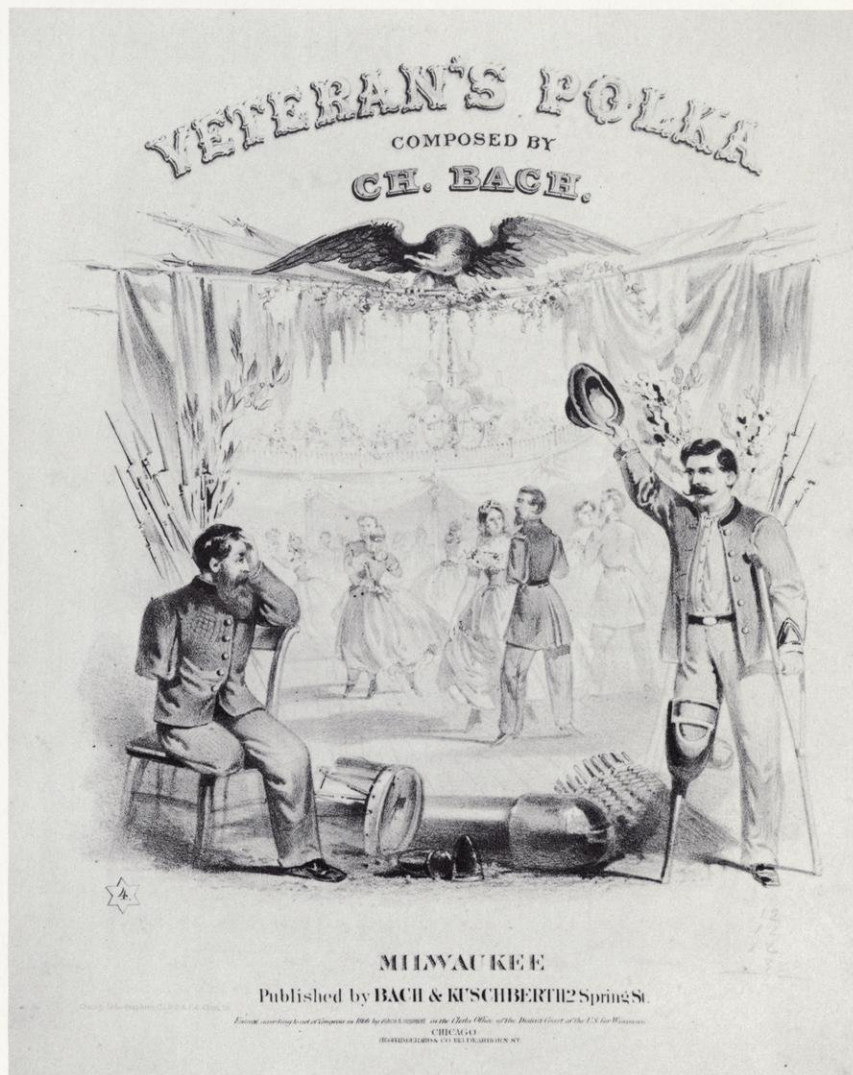
The cover art carries the signature of *Baker*, presumably Joseph E. Baker, who is known to have illustrated at least a dozen sheet music covers. This depiction of feisty, battle-ready females is a stark contrast to the usual war-time depiction of women as the grieving mothers. One of the surprising gaps in topical popular music revolves around the cause of women's rights, although one piece, *We'll Show You When We Come To Vote*, strikes an aggressive pose similar to Baker's illustration shown here.



17 *Pea Ridge March*
Composed by Chr. Bach
Lithograph by L. Kurz and Company,
Milwaukee

Louis Kurz must be acknowledged as a major figure in the early arts world of the Midwest. For one thing, the gallery attached to his business firm was Milwaukee's first art museum, and also he was one of the founders of the Chicago Academy of Design. The lasting reputation of Louis Kurz, however, probably is based on the brilliant success of the lithographed series of Civil War battle scenes issued in the 1880s and 1890s by the Chicago firm of Kurz and Allison. But the scholar Thomas Beckman—and catalog numbers 16 (page 22), 17, and 18—argue convincingly for the strength of his earlier, though less well known, work. Beckman states that Kurz's prints reveal him to be "one of America's most engaging lithographers."

H. N. Hempsted, Milwaukee, 1862
Coll: The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin Museum

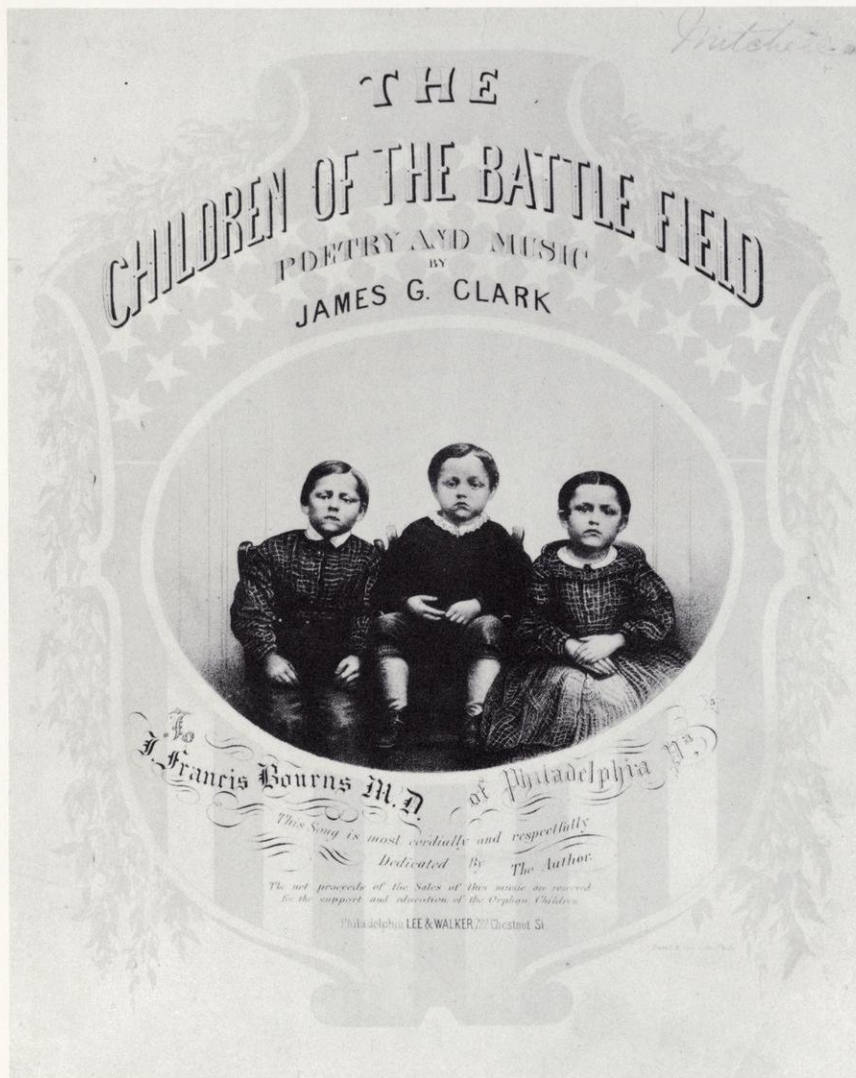


18 *Veteran's Polka*
Composed by Ch. Bach
Chicago Lithographing Co., Chicago

Bach and Kuschbert, Milwaukee, 1866
Coll: Steve L. Sundell

The *Pea Ridge March* was composed by Christoph Bach, one of the most visible musicians in Milwaukee's populace, which was dominated by arts-loving Germans. At about this same time Louis Kurz was doing a series of panoramic views of Wisconsin towns. His delicately tinted Milwaukee scene was selling for fifty cents, as was the sheet music for the *Pea Ridge March*.

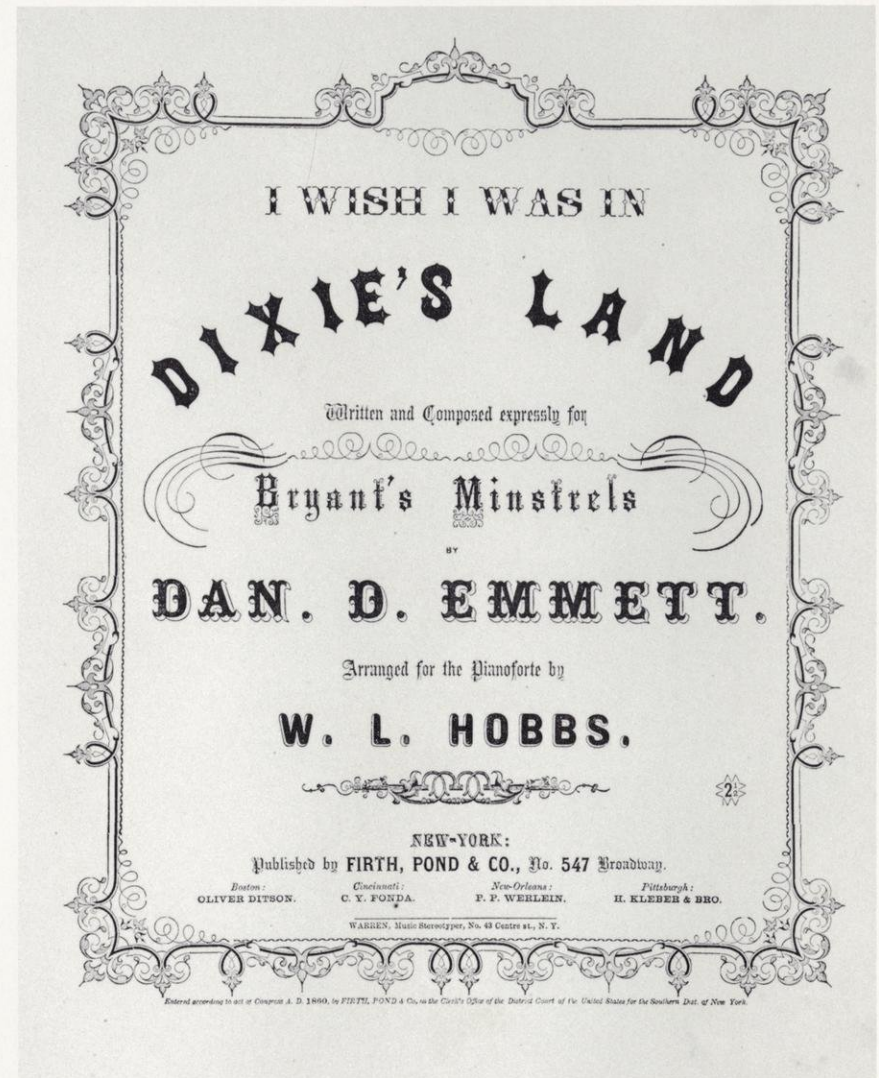
Louis Kurz moved to Chicago in 1864 and soon thereafter formed the Chicago Lithographing Company, with Otto Knirsch and Edward Carqueville as his principal partners. Their most celebrated work at this time, according to Beckman, was a series of Chicago views, drawn and lithographed by Kurz and published as *Chicago Illustrated*. But Kurz had not been forgotten by his Milwaukee colleague Bach, who engaged Kurz to print the cover of his *Veteran's Polka* for publication by the Milwaukee firm of Christoph Bach and Emanuel Kuschbert.



19 *The Children of the Battlefield*
Poetry and music by James G. Clark
Duval and Son Lithography,
Philadelphia

Among the most unfortunate tragedies of the Civil War were the orphaned children. Frank, Frederick, and Alice, children of Amos Humiston, sergeant in the 154th New York Volunteers, appear here in a lithograph made from an ambrotype carried by their father into his last battle. The Duval and Son lithograph firm was founded by Peter S. Duval, thought to have been the first trained professional in lithographic art in Philadelphia.

Lee and Walker, Philadelphia, 1864
Coll: Howard Kanetzke



20 *I Wish I Was in Dixie's Land*
Written and composed by
Dan. D. Emmett

Arranged for the Piano by
W. L. Hobbs
Firth, Pond and Co., New York, 1860
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Daniel Decatur Emmett's most successful walk-around (the finale of a minstrel show) was *I Wish I Was in Dixie's Land*, which was first performed by Bryant's Minstrels in New York in early 1859. This fact disproves the popular belief that *Dixie* was composed purposefully for the Southern cause during the Civil War. The terribly perfunctory cover design, although on an 1860 New York imprint, is strangely similar to so many war-year Southern imprints, the Confederates having had only extremely limited access to printing talents and equipment.



21 *Summer's Sweets Shall Bloom Again*

Words by L. J. Bates

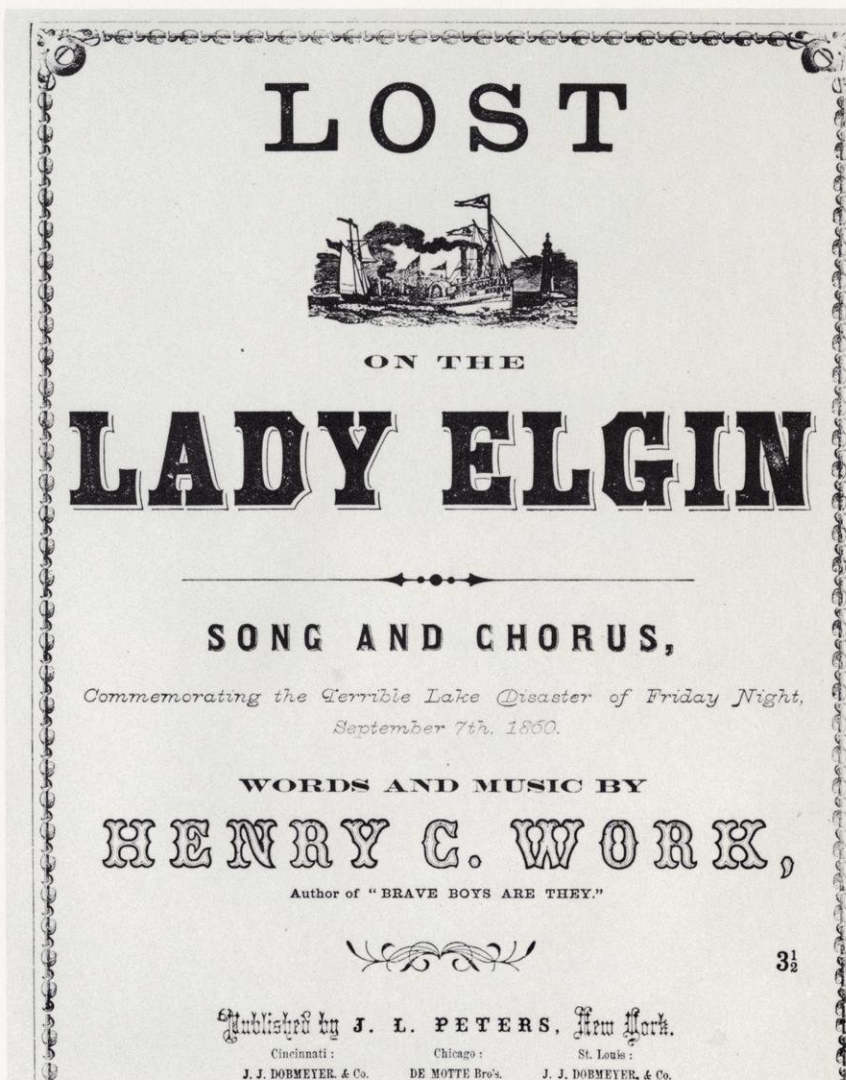
Music by J. P. Webster

Chicago Lithographing Co., Chicago

Root and Cady, Chicago, 1868

Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

Lorena, by Joseph Philbrick Webster (1818-75), was without any doubt the most popular ballad of the Civil War—admired by Northerners and Southerners alike. Webster's famous hymn *The Sweet By and By* and *Summer's Sweets Shall Bloom Again*, the song and chorus cited here, were among the dozens of pieces Webster composed while residing in Wisconsin (principally in Elkhorn). This copy carries the signature of Mrs. J. P. Webster and was perhaps a piece particularly favored by her for its pretty cover page. ("Elaborately illustrated title pages" were exchanged as gifts and eagerly collected by young women, many of whom had little interest in the music under the cover.)



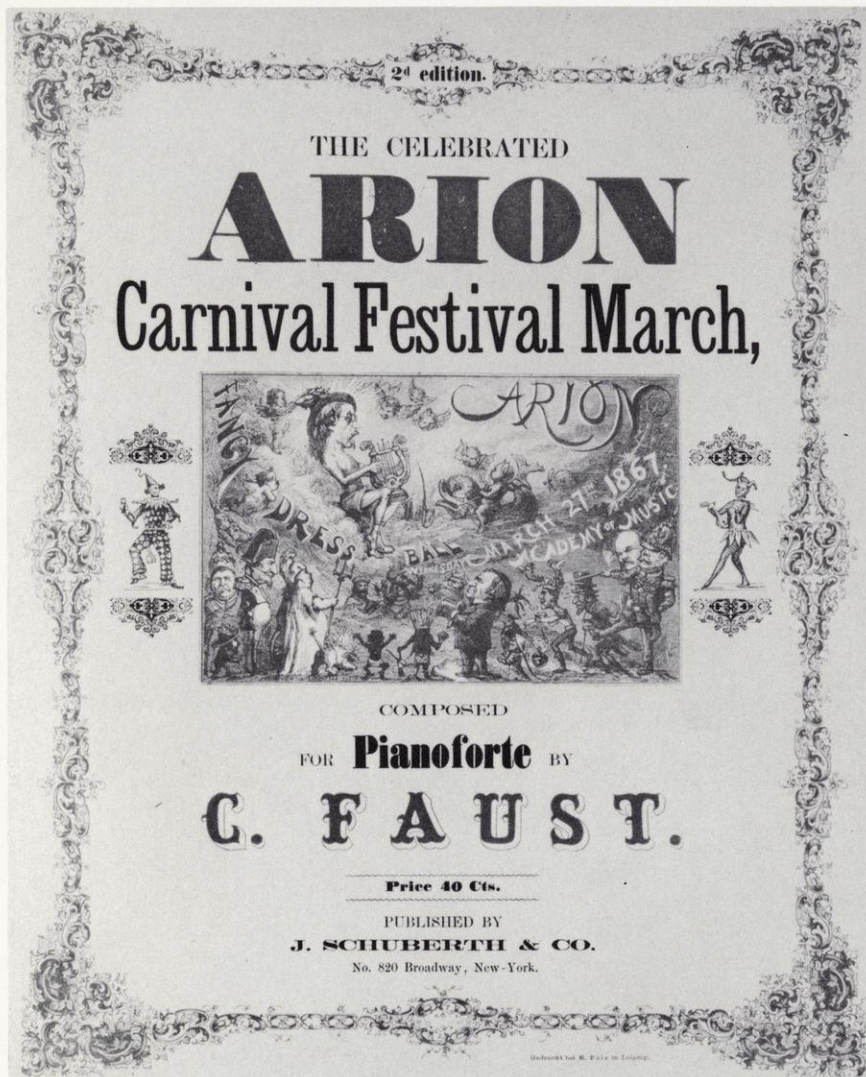
22 *Lost on the Lady Elgin*

Words and music by Henry C. Work

J. L. Peters, New York, 1861

Coll: John A. Jaeger

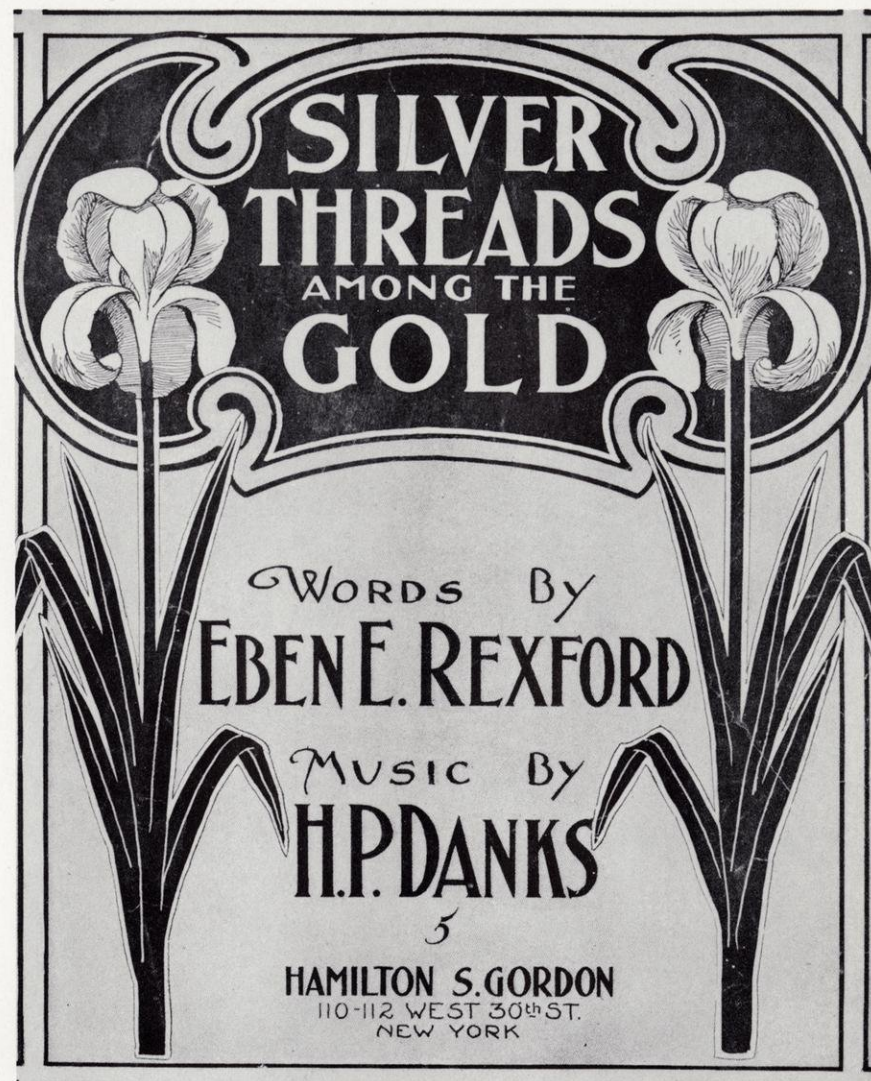
Henry Clay Work's eulogy to those lost on the *Lady Elgin* and its somber, dignified cover design are in marked contrast to the shrieking emotionalism with which tragedies were more often treated in popular song. The *Lady Elgin* was a steamer hired for an excursion across Lake Michigan by four hundred Milwaukeeans to attend a Democratic rally in Chicago. Enroute home the *Lady Elgin* was struck by the steamer *Augusta* and, as Work reports in his three verses and chorus, three hundred lives were lost.



23 *The Celebrated Arion Carnival Festival March*
Composed by C. Faust, arranged
by Geo. Gipner

Printed from a wood engraving by
John Parker Davis and Joseph Spear,
after a drawing by Thomas Nast
J. Schuberth and Co., New York, 1869
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Thomas Nast, who so markedly influenced public opinion with his political cartoons, here softened the satire of his pen considerably while yet sustaining his easily identified style. As an Arion, a member of the German-American singing society, Nast's contribution to their annual pre-Lenten Carnival shows the Greek poet namesake in the guise of the Society's musical director, Carl Anschutz, entertaining a diverse audience of creatures.




24 *Silver Threads among the Gold*
Words by Eben E. Rexford
Music by H. P. Danks

Hamilton S. Gordon, New York, 1873
Coll: Howard Kanetzk

Hart Pease Danks was an East Coast singer and composer. Eben Eugene Rexford a noted authority on gardening and floriculture. It was in one of the specialized journals that Rexford was editing from his Wisconsin home that Danks first read Rexford's poem, *Silver Threads among the Gold*. He set it to music and it was an immediate success—not only as the well-known song but also in countless arrangements including a *Fantasia de concert* for piano, arranged for trombone and piano, for two mandolins, in a paraphrase for orchestra, and as a medley waltz for brass band.

"GOLDEN WEDDING" By BLAND. The Sequel to "GOLDEN SLIPPERS," and selling by thousands. Price 40 cts.
Chorus.
All the dar - kies will be there, Don't for - get to curl your hair!

1. Carry Me Back to Old Virginny. (Song & Chorus.) 4
2. In the Morning by the Bright Light. (End Song.) 4
3. Oh dem Golden Slippers. (Song & Chorus.) 4



Words and Music by JAMES BLAND, of Sprague's Georgia Minstrels.

BOSTON:
JOHN F. PERRY & Co., Music Publishers.
13 West Street.

Copyright 1879, by JOHN F. PERRY & Co. J. E. Simonds, Printer, 50 Brimfield St.

25 *Oh Dem Golden Slippers*
Words and music by James Bland
John F. Perry and Company Music
Publishers, Boston, 1879

Coll: Dousman Family, Villa Louis,
The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin

The three best-known songs of James Bland, a Black composer/lyricist and minstrel performer of the post-Civil War era, are listed on the series title page shown here. The grotesque caricature in a certain way reflects the lyrics, which suggest that all former slaves desired to return to their beloved plantation life.



POLES POLKA
JIMMIE'S SCHOTTISCH
WILLIE'S SCHOTTISCH
FREDDIE'S GALOP

EIGHT
LITTLE SCAMPS,
BY CHARLES KINKEL

HARRIE'S POLKA
JOHNNIE'S MARCH
GEORGIE'S WALTZ
CHARLIE'S GALOP



J. H. BUFFORD'S LITH. 480 WASH ST. BOSTON.

Published by J. L. PETERS, New York.

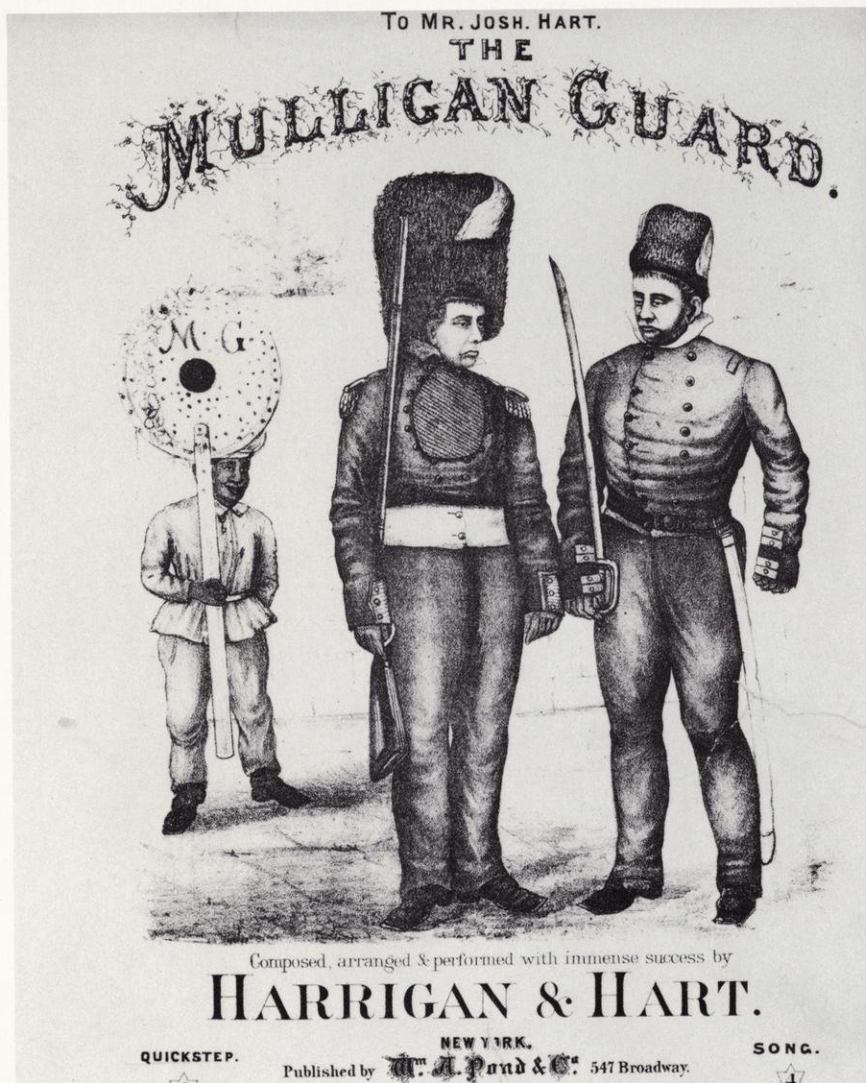
T. A. BOYLE, SAINT LOUIS
DOBMEYER & CODY, CINCINNATI
M. GRAY, SAN FRANCISCO
JOHN FARRIS, HARTFORD
T. GOGGAN & BRO., GALVESTON

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1872, by J. L. Peters, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

26 *Johnnie's March*, from Eight
Little Scamps
By Charles Kinkel

J. H. Bufford's Lithography, Boston
J. L. Peters, New York, 1872
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

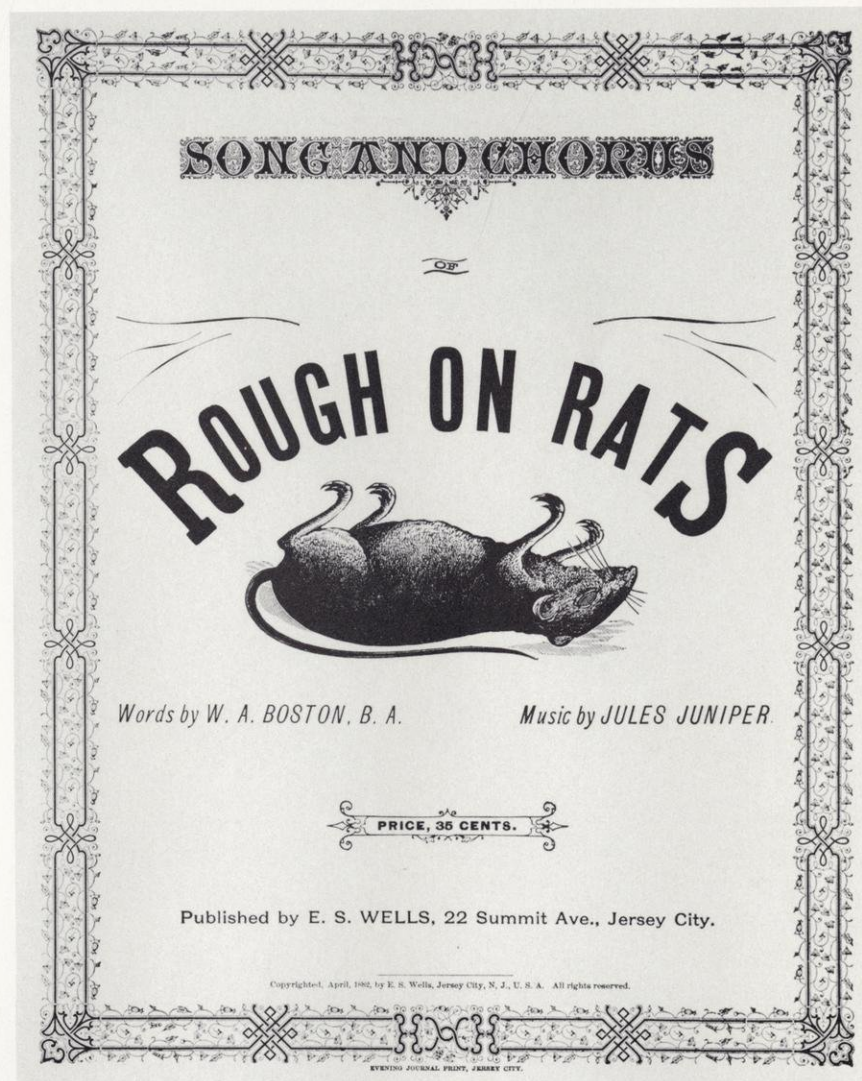
Little rogues were in vogue when J. L. Peters published the musical series Eight Little Scamps: Thomas Bailey Aldrich's *Story of a Bad Boy* (1870) and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1871) showed that any boy could be a rascal. Perhaps, with this terribly simple music the publishers were instead attempting to entice little boys to the piano bench—a kingdom decidedly dominated by young women.



27 *The Mulligan Guard Quickstep*
Composed, arranged and performed
by Harrigan and Hart

Edward Harrigan and Tony Hart, along with the composer Dave Braham, created some of the greatest hits of the New York stage in the 1870s and 1880s through their humorous yet sympathetic sketches, plays, and songs about urban people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. In *The Mulligan Guard* they poke fun at an Irish paramilitary group organized by the fictitious Dan Mulligan, whose family and friends subsequently evolved on the stage "with immense success."

William A. Pond and Company,
New York, 1873
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison



28 *Rough on Rats*
Words by W. A. Boston, B.A.
Music by Jules Juniper

E. S. Wells, Jersey City,
New Jersey, 1882
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Ephraim S. Wells, chemist, skillfully marketed an impressive array of sure-cures: throat and lung balsam, worm syrup, etc. But to promote his sure-fire poison, *Rough on Rats*, Wells had a proper three-verse-and-chorus song created, put a no-holds-barred illustration on the cover, and had what must be one of the earliest commercial jingles known.

It was not uncommon for a retailer to offer complimentary copies of a popular song, which would have been previously stamped by the generous entrepreneur (for example, "Compliments of the Kalamazoo Corset Company"). And every piano bench holds one piece from the famous Bromo Seltzer Collection of Popular Songs, distributed by local drug stores. But for other enterprises, simply creating some vague good will was not enough, and so we find pieces such as *The Eureka March* (from the Eureka Vacuum Cleaner Company) and *When Jap Rose Takes Her Sunday Morning Bath* (from the manufacturers of the bath soap, Jap Rose).



29 *The Letter That Never Came*

Words by Paul Dresser

Music by Max Sturm

T. B. Harms and Co., New York, 1886

Coll: John A. Jaeger

The songs of Paul Dresser were exceedingly popular throughout the 1880s and 1890s. *The Letter That Never Came* was one of his first hits and was always subsequently billed as well as the "first and famous success" of the singer May Howard. Following quickly on the coat tails of the success of *The Letter That Never Came* was another songwriter's *The Letter Came At Last*. This practice of writing so-called reply songs (what today would be called spin-offs) was rampant throughout the nineteenth century. Frequently these reply songs were shameless adaptations.



30 *Maple Leaf Rag*

Scott Joplin

John Stark and Son, St. Louis, 1899

Coll: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

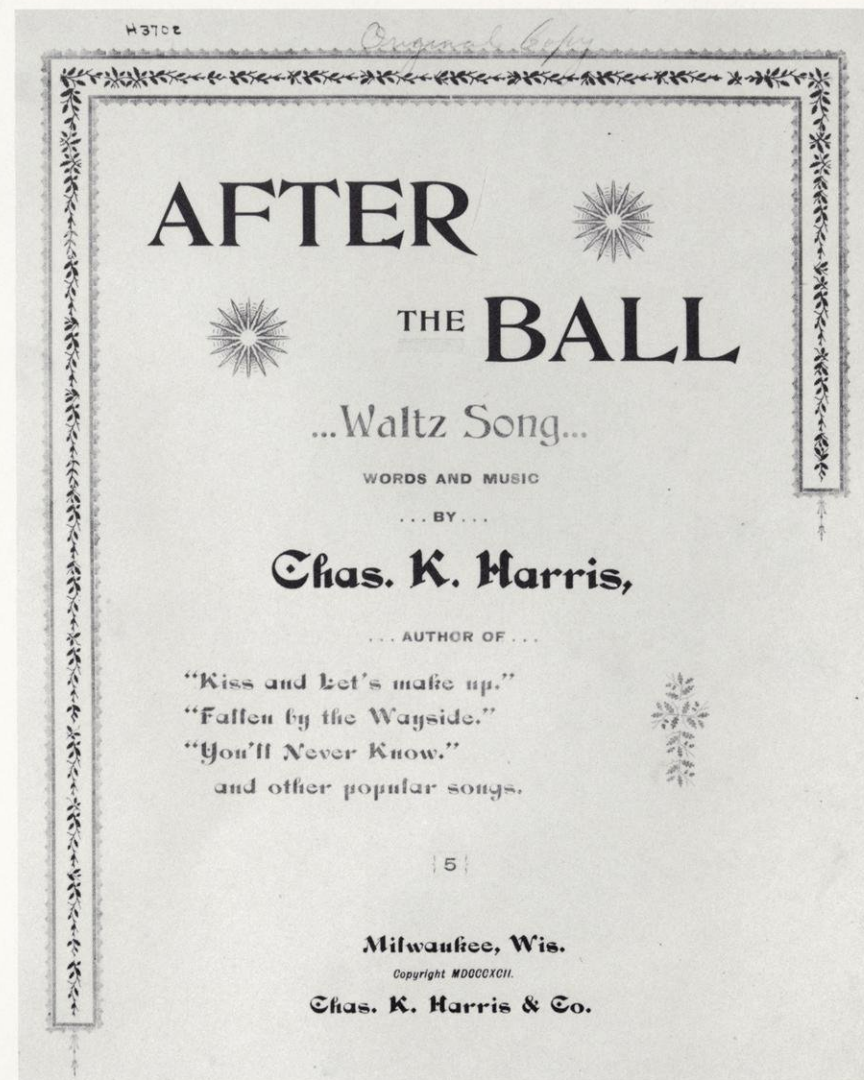
Scott Joplin, according to the noted authority Rudi Blesh, is the "central figure and prime creative spirit of ragtime, a composer from whom a large segment of twentieth-century American music derived its shape and spirit." The immediate success of the *Maple Leaf Rag* forced the publisher to relocate from Sedalia, Missouri, to St. Louis, from where this early edition was issued.



31 *No More Chop Sewie for Me*
Words by John Queen
Music by Hughie Cannon

Whitney-Warner Publishing Company,
Detroit, 1901
Coll: Dousman Family, Villa Louis,
The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin

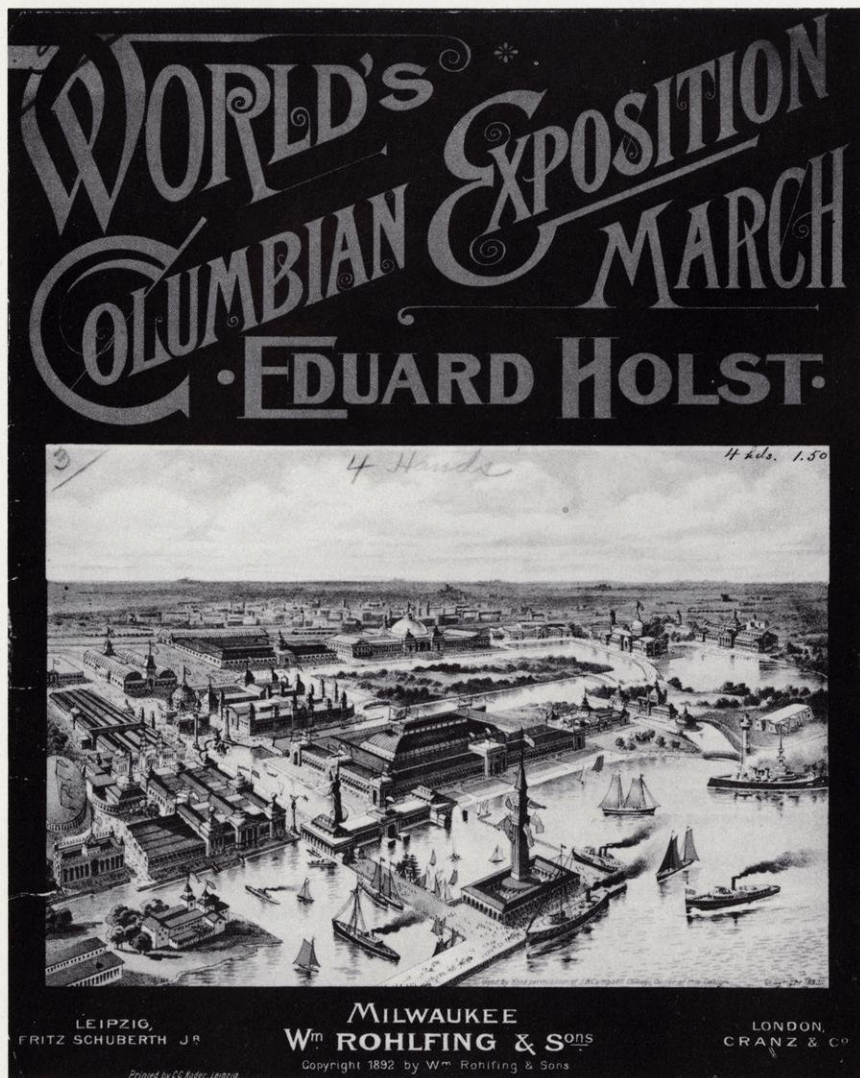
Written in the Black dialect that was so popular at the time, this song is principally a negative social commentary on the large numbers of Chinese immigrants settling in the United States. The cover artist shows the speaker literally stepping out of that picture!



32 *After the Ball*
Words and music by Chas. K. Harris
Chas. K. Harris and Company,
Milwaukee, 1892

Coll: The State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

"After the Ball"—which was to become a catch-phrase of its era, and the ever-present tag of Harris—had an inauspicious beginning. Written originally as a "special song" for the annual convention of the national Wheelman's Club, held that year in Milwaukee, the famous ballad was premiered by Sam Doctor, an amateur singer and Harris's tailor.



33 *World's Columbian Exposition March*

By Eduard Holst

Wm. Rohlfing and Sons,
Milwaukee, 1892

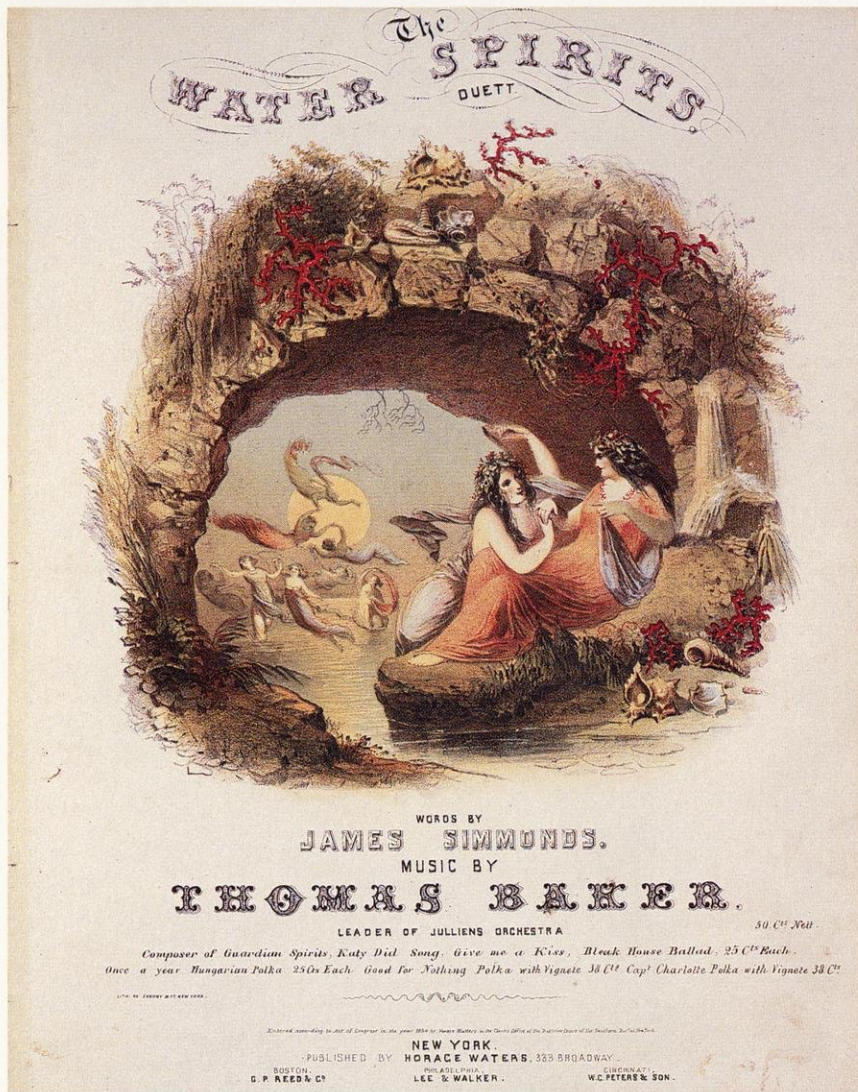
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

The Columbian Exposition, a World's Fair commemorating the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America, was an enormous gesture in all its aspects. One of thousands of keepsakes was this *March*, expressly composed for the Grand Opening. Although carrying a shared international imprint, the production work was done in Leipzig. Indeed, as this cover illustrates, our piano benches held a lot of foreign work, some of which was less easily recognizably so than here.

34 *Manhattan Beach March*
By John Philip Sousa

John Church Company, Cincinnati,
New York, Chicago, 1893
Coll: John A. Jaeger

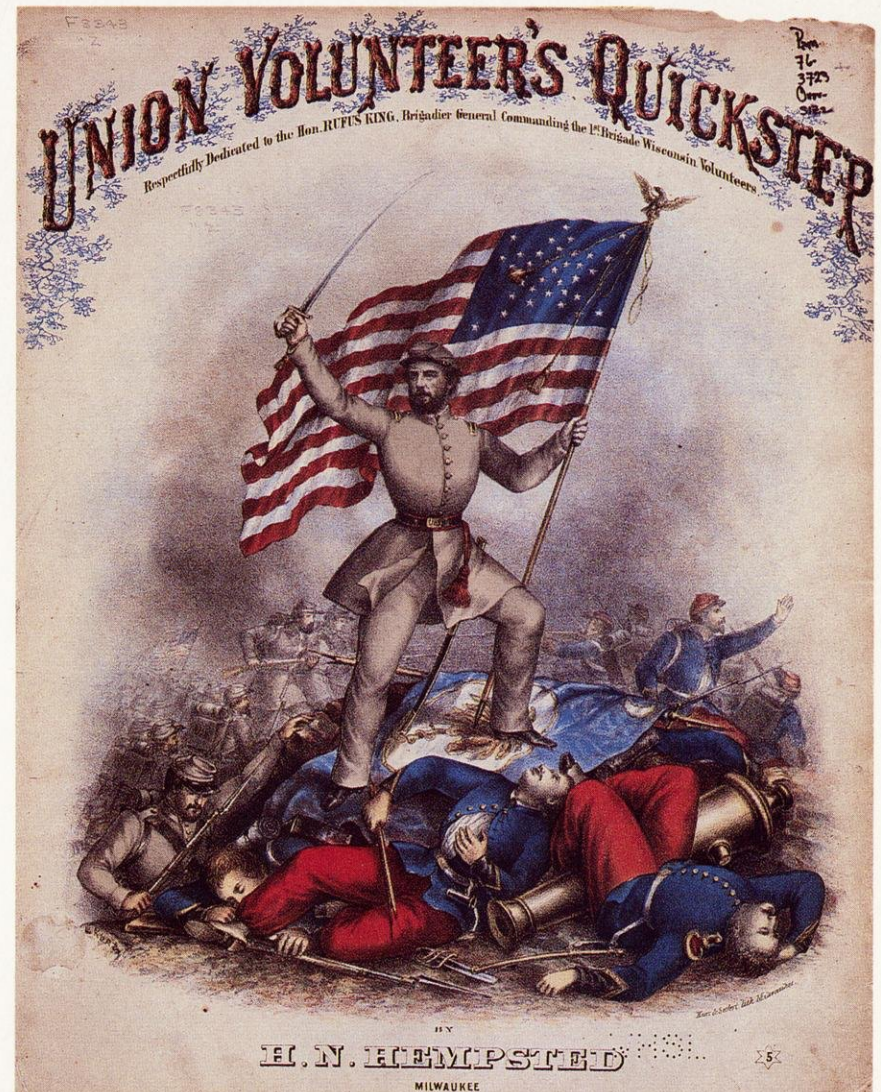
Even grade-school children can name The March King—or at least they know his music from their weekly band rehearsals. Sousa had a long career as conductor of the Marine Band and then of his own world-famous band. His name lives on as the composer of more than one hundred marches, including *Semper Fidelis*, *The Washington Post March*, *El Capitan*, and *The Stars and Stripes Forever*.



8 *The Water Spirits*
Words by James Simmonds
Music by Thomas Baker

Lithography of Sarony & Co., New York
Horace Waters, New York, 1854
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW–Madison

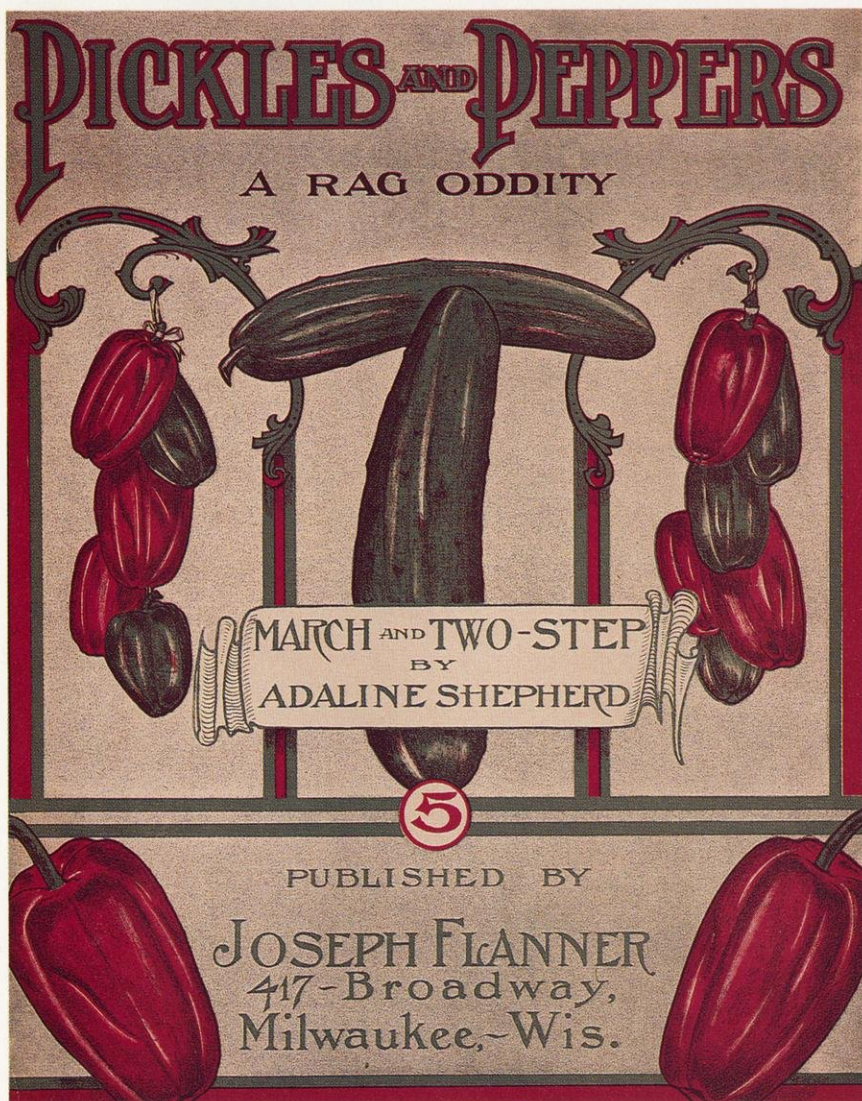
A sheet music cover illustration was frequently used as a unifying element for a series of music pieces (see, for example, cat. 26), but the design was just as often borrowed directly or adapted for various subsequent uses. It is also known that some sheet music cover illustrations existed first as independent entities. One strongly suspects the latter was the case with *The Water Spirits* and that the duet was composed later to allow the sheet music publishing industry to profit from the attractive color lithograph cover.



16 *Union Volunteer's Quickstep*
By H. N. Hempsted
Kurz and Seifert, Lithographers,
Milwaukee

H. N. Hempsted, Milwaukee, 1861
Coll: The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin Museum

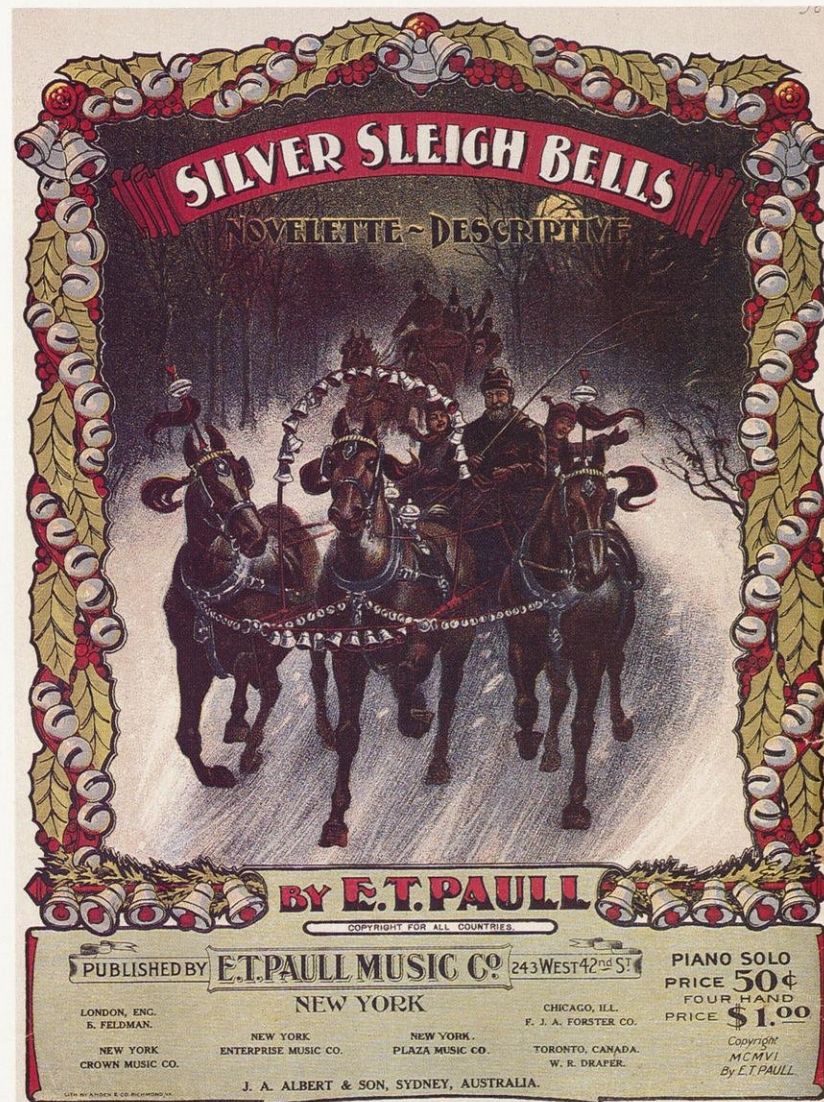
The brilliant lithograph on the *Union Volunteer's Quickstep* came out of a short-lived business alliance between Louis Kurz and Henry Seifert. Seifert, who studied lithography in Germany, established his firm in Milwaukee in 1852. A late-nineteenth-century history of Milwaukee hailed Seifert as "the pioneer lithographer of the West." H. N. Hempsted is likewise a pioneer, having been a very early composer, music publisher, and dealer in Milwaukee.



38 *Pickles and Peppers*
By Adaline Shepherd

Joseph Flanner, Milwaukee, 1906
Coll: Howard Kanetzke

Rags by Adaline Shepherd (1883–1950), a Wisconsinite, and by May Aufderheide were probably the best-known such pieces by female composers during the ragtime years, according to Max Morath, who has kept *Pickles and Peppers* in his repertoire for years and considers it “definitive ragtime.” (“Its elaborate syncopations are carefully scored and reveal themselves in straightforward reading without improvisation.”)

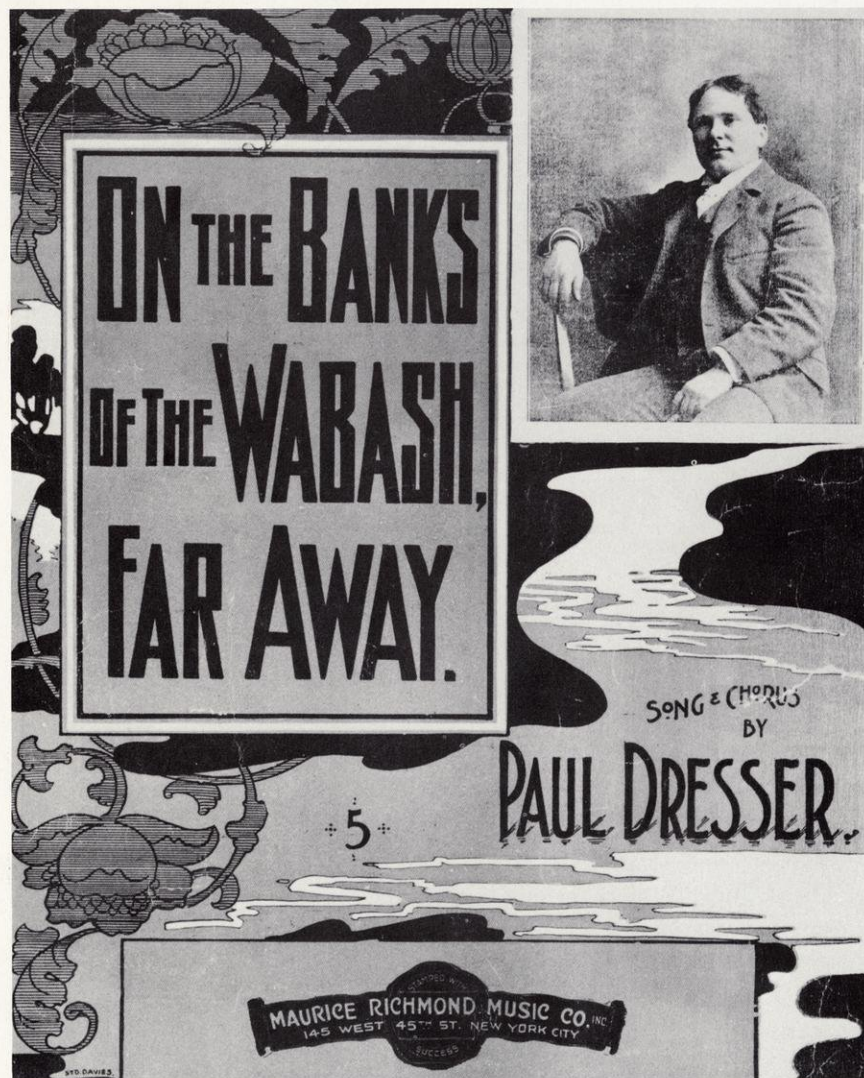


44 *Silver Sleigh Bells*
By E. T. Paull

E. T. Paull Music Co., New York, 1906
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Lithography by A. Hoen and
Company, Richmond, Virginia

E. T. Paull covers are among the pieces most universally coveted by popular collectors today, for, as a contemporaneous ad said, they are “magnificently lithographed in five colors.” The riveting pictorial effect of the lithographed cover is matched by Paull’s descriptive music which, although it doesn’t need the reiteration, is annotated throughout, as in the *Battle of the Nations*: “Bands begin to play,” “Soldiers marching,” “Troops in full retreat,” “Horses galloping,” etc. As is suggested by catalog numbers 44 and 45, Paull’s publications are usually one of two
(text continues on page 28)



35 *On the Banks of the Wabash
Far Away*

Song and chorus by Paul Dresser
Artist: Syd Davies

Maurice Richmond Music Company,
New York, 1897

Coll: John A. Jaeger

Paul Dresser, having left his Indiana home for Tin Pan Alley, ironically owes a large measure of his great success to nostalgic songs that admit the pain that "many years have passed since I strolled by the river" and that need the assurance that "the moonlight's fair to-night along the Wabash." Theodore Dreiser, author of *Sister Carrie*, and Paul Dresser's brother, also wrote perceptively but not always sympathetically about the magnetic mystique of popular song.



36 *The McKinley Song*

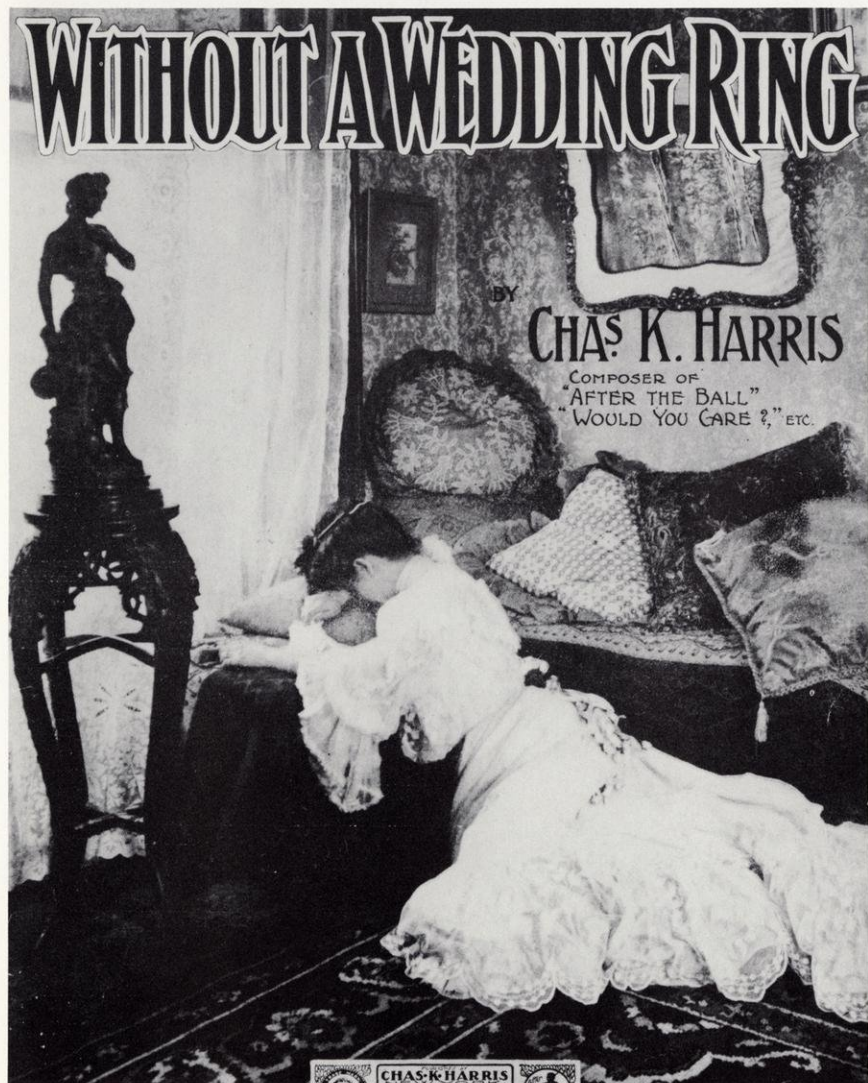
Music by Charles Kunkel

The Sanders Company, St. Louis, 1896

Coll: The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin Museum

Politicians and presidents have been vilified and glorified in the American popular arts with regularity and gusto. President Andrew Johnson, for example, was ridiculed in Henry Clay Work's *Andy Veto* and, on the other hand, was enshrined in a stunning image created by Winslow Homer for the cover of a piece entitled *The Wreath*.

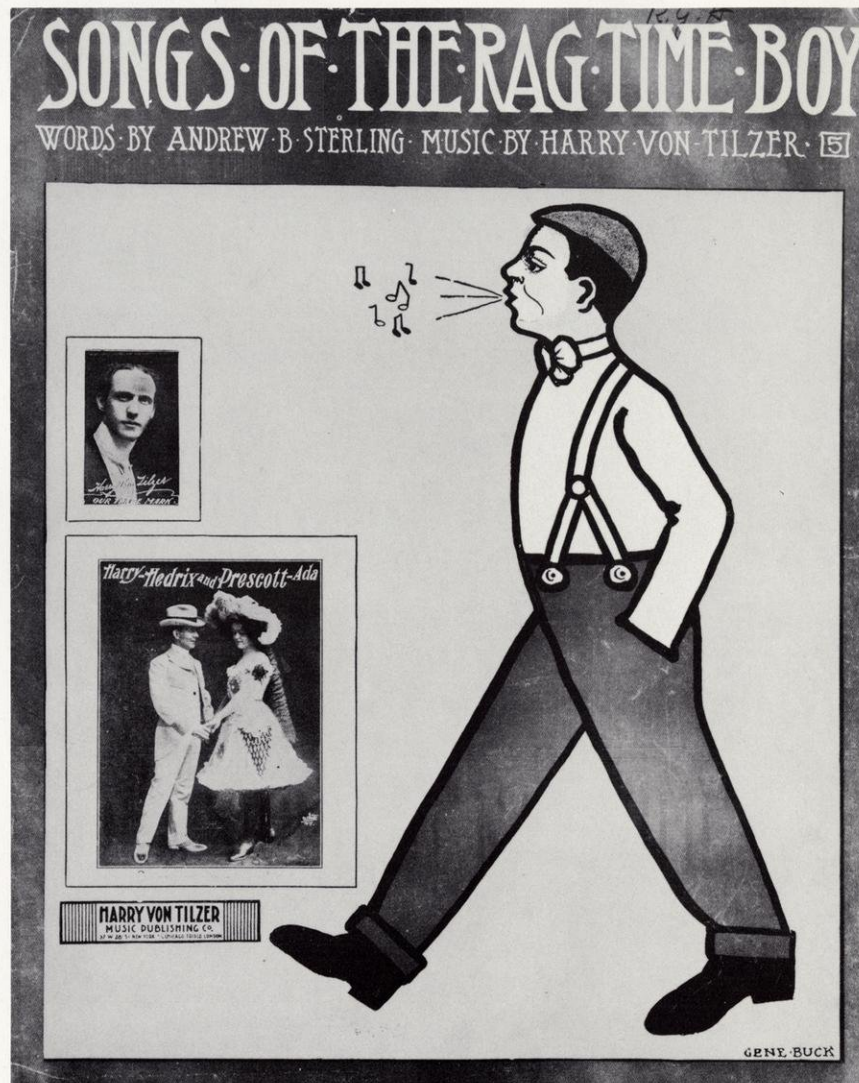
The McKinley Song, shown here, was dedicated to the candidate who, it was hoped, would "settle vital questions on a sound and fair basis, advancing liberty and prosperity, and . . . save the country from the danger of crucifixion on any cross, whether of Blunder, Bluster and Bluff, or of Blandism and Blarney."



37 *Without a Wedding Ring*
By Chas. K. Harris

Chas. K. Harris, New York, 1906
Coll: Howard Kanetzke

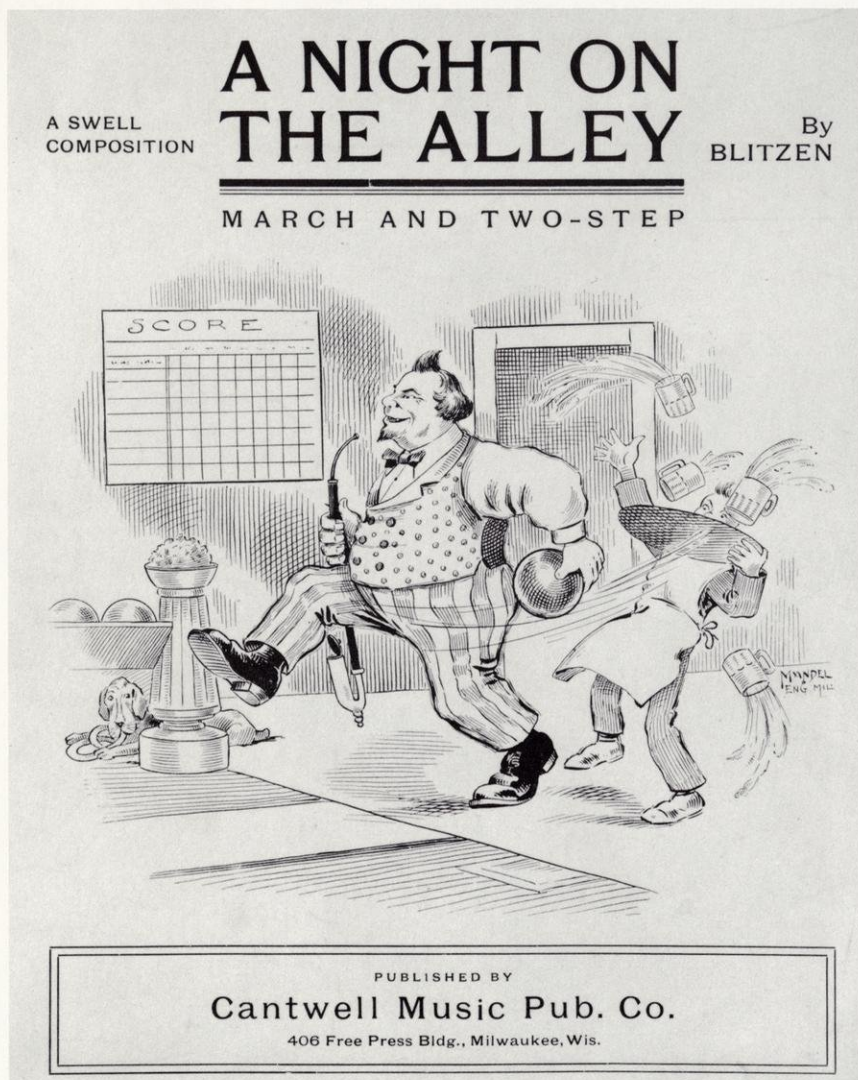
Judging from the phenomenal success of his efforts as composer, lyricist, and publisher of popular songs, Chas. K. Harris's axioms merit attention. "In all my ballads," he wrote in his autobiography (*After the Ball*), "I have purposely injected goodly doses of sentiment, and invariably the whole country paused." Another Harris credo, typified in the tale of the distraught woman depicted here, was "My songs always told a story . . . and always contained a moral."



39 *Songs of the Rag Time Boy*
Words by Andrew B. Sterling
Music by Harry Von Tilzer
Artist: Gene Buck

Harry Von Tilzer Music Publishing
Company, New York, 1906
Coll: John A. Jaeger

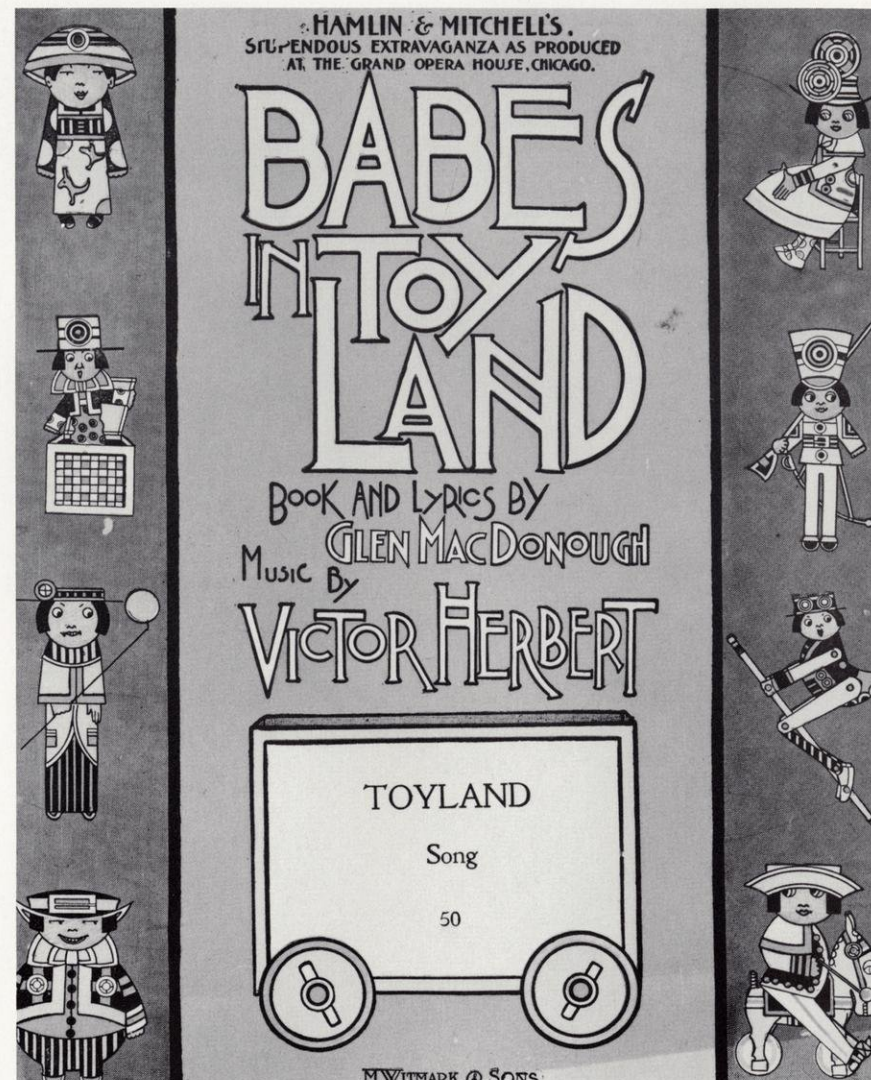
Gene Buck, the artist of this cover, was later to become very active in musical collaborations for the stage and in popular song. The lyrics of the chorus of the *Ragtime Boy* are comprised of a string of snatches of currently popular songs—presumably criticized only by those who simply *didn't know*.



40 *A Night on the Alley*
A swell composition by Blitzen,
arranged by Jac. L. Schetter
Illustration by Mandel

Cantwell Music Publishing Company,
Milwaukee, 1904
Coll: John A. Jaeger

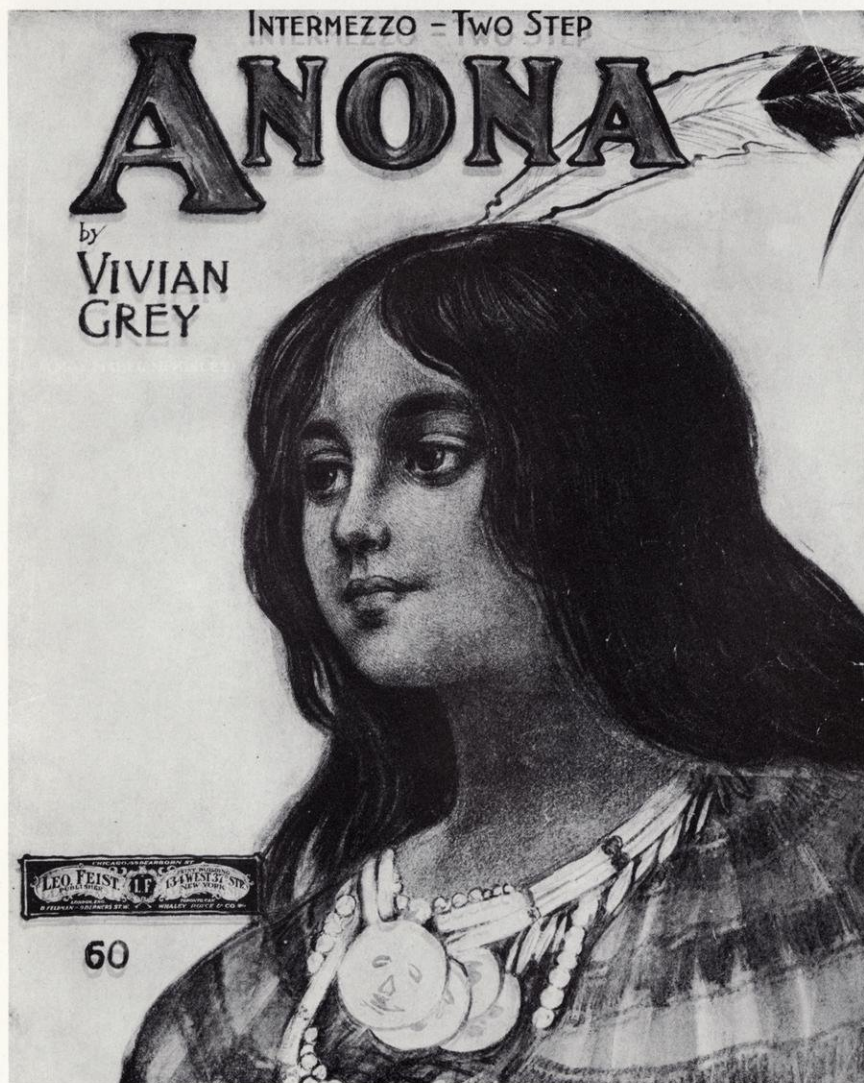
Bowling is one of the oldest sports and is perhaps nowhere more popular than in German communities such as Milwaukee, where bowlers still today are known as "keglers." The illustration correctly depicts "a night on the alley" as a man's sport, since bowling halls were then generally dingy, cramped, smoke-filled establishments, not considered fit for women or children.



41 *Toyland*
Book and lyrics by Glen MacDonough
Music by Victor Herbert

M. Witmark and Sons, New York, 1903
Coll: Dousman Family, Villa Louis,
The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin

Billed as an "extravaganza," *Babes in Toyland* is more precisely defined in the history of American musical theater as a British-style pantomime, an elaborate and varied show with a plot revolving around children's nursery rhymes. Victor Herbert, trained in the classical tradition, created music that had genuine intrinsic interest as well as wide popular appeal.



42 *Anona*
By Vivian Grey

Leo Feist Publisher, New York, 1903
Coll: John A. Jaeger

With the westward expansion of the frontier came a surge of interest in the American Indian, celebrated, naturally, at the piano bench in *Navajo*, *Indian Characteristique*, *My Pretty Little Kickapoo*, *Silver Star*, *Os-Ka-Loo-Sa-Loo*, *Indian Love Song*, *Lawanna*, and dozens of other pieces. Although he did not create *Anona*, Starmer, the ubiquitous illustrator of sheet music covers in this era, did have a particular fascination with the Indian theme and scenes of the West.



43 *Mister Dooley*
Words by William Jerome
Music by Jean Schwartz

Shapiro, Bernstein and Company,
New York, 1902

Coll: Dousman Family, Villa Louis,
The State Historical Society
of Wisconsin

Based on tales of American history and current events (Christopher Columbus, George Washington, the wireless telegraph, the notorious Dr. Munyon, etc.), this song was almost certainly inserted into the British play *A Chinese Honeymoon* to make it more appealing to American audiences—a common (and successful) practice of the time. Mr. Dooley was himself an American institution, the creation of the Chicago columnist Finley Peter Dunne. Dunne's satire and humor have been favorably compared with that of the supreme master Ring Lardner.

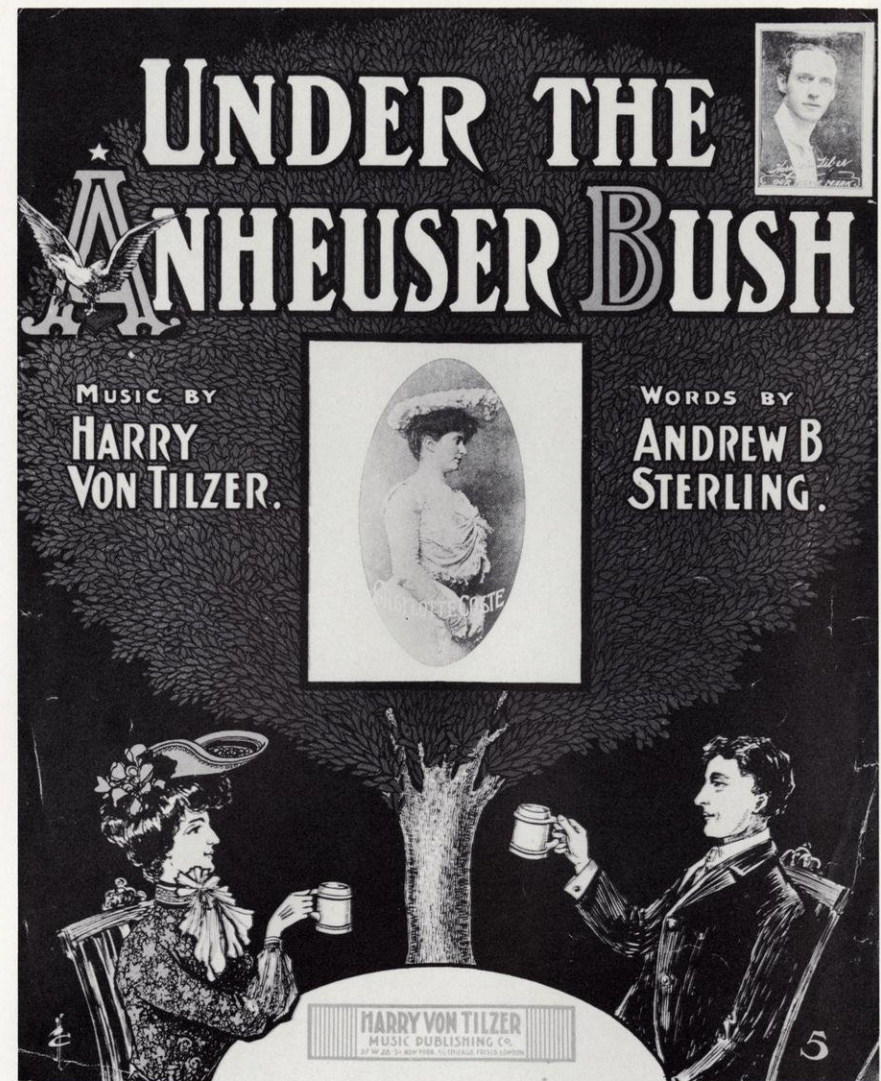


45 *Battle of the Nations*
By E. T. Paull
Lithography by A. Hoen and
Company, Richmond, Virginia

(text continued from page 23)

types: the classic (e.g., *Ben Hur Chariot Race*, *The Burning of Rome*), or the homespun (e.g., *Dance of the Fire Flies*, *The Circus Parade*). It is unfortunate that only very rarely is a cover signed and that so little is known about the lithography firm of A. Hoen. We do know, however, that the company was in business as early as the 1830s in Baltimore, moving later to Richmond, Virginia.

E. T. Paull Music Co., New York, 1915
Coll: John A. Jaeger



46 *Under the Anheuser Bush*
Music by Harry Von Tilzer
Words by Andrew B. Sterling

Harry Von Tilzer Music Publishing
Company, New York, 1903
Coll: The State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

Harry Von Tilzer is perhaps best known for his *Bird in a Gilded Cage*—except by those who appreciate his enthusiasm for the pleasures of “two seidels of lager, or three” and a “sandwich and stein.” He scored two successive hits with such indulgences in his *Down Where the Wurzburger Flows* (1902) and *Under the Anheuser Bush* (1903).

BY THE WRITERS OF "BLUE FEATHER, ON A MONKEY HONEYMOON," ET

HE'S A COLLEGE BOY

CHORUS

HE'S A COLLEGE BOY
WITH HIS COLLEGE WALK AND HIS COLLEGE TALK
HE COMES HOME TO TELL
THAT HE'S LEARNED HIS COLLEGE YELL, RAH! RAH!
GIRLS SHOUT FOR JOY
LIFE TO HIM IS LIKE A TOY
THO' HE SETS THE PACE THAT KILLS
FATHER HAS TO PAY THE BILLS
BECAUSE HE IS A COLLEGE BOY

A
ROLICKING
RAH! RAH! RAH! SONG

WORDS BY
**JACK
MAHONEY**

MUSIC BY
**THEODORE
MORSE**



47 *He's a College Boy*
Words by Jack Mahoney
Music by Theodore Morse
Artist: Hirt

Theodore Morse Music Company,
New York, 1909
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Why didn't this fashion provoke the controversies that the Dolly Varden ensemble and the Bloomer outfit had in the nineteenth century? In the early twentieth century, American men became more fashion conscious, and "good dressers requiring neat, dressy, up-to-date wearing apparel" had only to turn to the Sears catalog (custom-tailoring department). For about twenty of his father's dollars, the College Boy ("... dresses nobby, that's his hobby") could become the "snappiest." Rah! Rah! Rah!

ON, WISCONSIN!

MARCH SONG



CARL BECK

WORDS BY
CARL BECK

MUSIC BY
W. T. PURDY

PUBLISHED BY
**JOSEPH FLANNER,
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN**

48 *On, Wisconsin!*
Words by Carl Beck
Music by W. T. Purdy

Artist: Carl Beck
Joseph Flanner, Milwaukee, 1909
Coll: Howard Kanetzke

The subject of sports has long been attractive for the popular arts—some times treated quite casually, other times with a meticulous stylishness (as in the frequently reproduced 1849 lithograph by William Sharp and Company for *The Knickerbocker Saloon Quickstep*). *On, Wisconsin* is perhaps the most well-known college football song, and it is probably one of the most parodied as well.



49 *He'd Have to Get Under—Get Out
and Get Under*

Words by Grant Clarke and
Edgar Leslie

Music by Maurice Abrahams

Artist: E. H. Pfeiffer
Maurice Abrahams Music Company,
New York, 1913
Coll: John A. Jaeger

"A dozen times they'd start to hug and kiss, And then the darned old engine, it would miss, And then he'd have to get under, get out and get under. . . ." Frequent roadside repairs kept the pleasure ride of Theodore Dreiser's *Hoosier Holiday* (The Magic of the Road: "Tr-r-r-r, how the miles do fly past, to be sure") a bit in the future. The illustration by E. H. Pfeiffer is one of approximately 1,000 sheet music covers he created in a thirty-year career.



50 *Alexander's Ragtime Band*

By Irving Berlin
Artist: Frew

Ted Snyder Company Music
Publishers, New York, 1911

Coll: John A. Jaeger

Irving Berlin's impact on popular music is not adequately represented by mere mention of some of his song hits (*Always*, *Easter Parade*, *God Bless America*, *White Christmas*) nor by entitling him "The King of Tin Pan Alley," nor by highlighting here one of his most famous pieces. Irving Berlin simply cannot be succinctly eulogized. *Alexander's Ragtime Band* was an immediate popular success. Over sixty early printings used this same cover design by John Frew, with a different performer's picture replacing that of Emma Carus, who introduced the song.

WHEN MOTHER PLAYS A RAG ON THE SEWING MACHINE



WORDS BY
JOE MCCARTHY
AND
JOE GOODWIN

MUSIC BY
CHRIS. SMITH

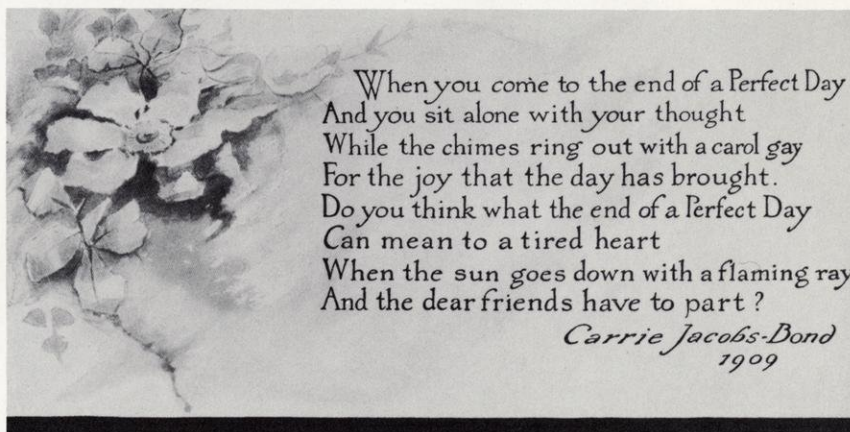
5

LEO FEIST NEW YORK
ASCAP, INC. HOPKINS & CREW, LTD. LONDON, ENGLAND

51 *When Mother Plays a Rag on
the Sewing Machine*
Words by Joe McCarthy and
Joe Goodwin

Music by Chris. Smith
Leo Feist, New York, 1912
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Lyricists Joe McCarthy (better known for his *Oui, Oui, Marie*) and Joe Goodwin ask us to believe that Mother's solo on her old machine was the big attraction at the annual concert of the village band. But, one might object, the sewing machine had been a household staple since the mid-nineteenth century! Who but the most innocent observer would question the claim, though, knowing full well that the attraction was the rag, not the machine.



When you come to the end of a Perfect Day
And you sit alone with your thought
While the chimes ring out with a carol gay
For the joy that the day has brought.
Do you think what the end of a Perfect Day
Can mean to a tired heart
When the sun goes down with a flaming ray
And the dear friends have to part?

Carrie Jacobs-Bond
1909

2460

A PERFECT DAY

Words and Music

by

CARRIE JACOBS-BOND

* High
Medium
Low

Published at
THE BOND SHOP
BY
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THE FREDERICK HARRIS CO.
Authorized Agents for the British Empire
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89 NEWMAN STREET, LONDON, ENGLAND

60
2-Net

52 *A Perfect Day*
Words and music by Carrie
Jacobs-Bond

The Bond Shop, Inc., Chicago, 1910
Coll: Mills Music Library, UW-Madison

As "unpretentious as the wild rose" was the keynote theme carried out by Carrie Jacobs-Bond, composer, lyricist (and frequently, as here, illustrator of the sheet music cover). *A Perfect Day*, the Janesville, Wisconsin, author says, was written in the dusk of an inspired day viewing Mt. Rubidoux in California. Of the many other songs of Carrie Jacobs-Bond, probably two are as well known as *A Perfect Day*. They are *I Love You Truly* and *Just A-Wearyin' for You*.



53 *My Cousin Caruso*
 Lyric by Edward Madden
 Music by Gus Edwards, with apologies
 to Leoncavallo [sic] and Verdi

Original drawing by Enrico Caruso
 Gus Edwards Music Publishing
 Company, New York, 1919
 Coll: John A. Jaeger

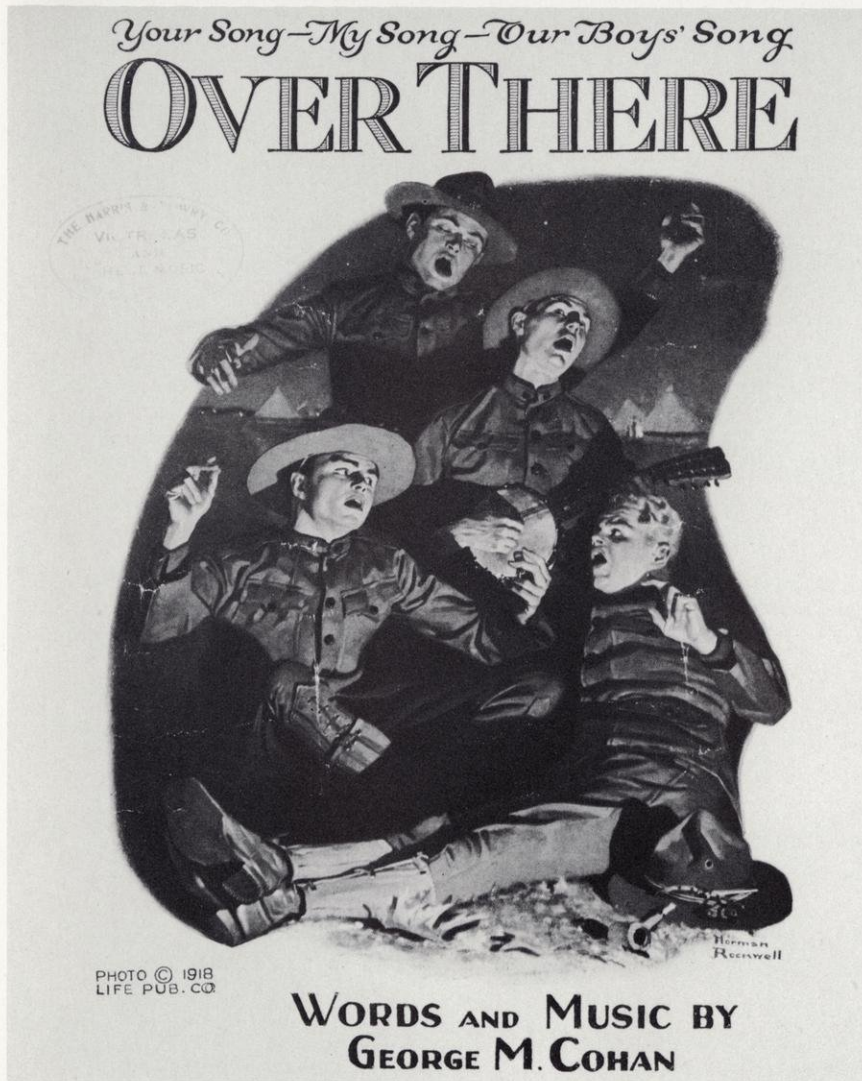
The lyrics of this tribute to the celebrated Italian tenor Enrico Caruso (1873–1921) boast his fame in a pseudo-Italian dialect ("... when he cut loose, dat op'ra house justa shaka like-a dis-a, lika dat ..."). However described, Caruso's artistry as an interpreter of lyrical parts and his stage characterizations were phenomenally successful. Caruso's talent as a caricaturist, however, was not so widely known. His published collection includes the self-portrait shown on this cover.



54 *At the Ball That's All*
 Words and music by J. Leubrie Hill

Jerome H. Remick and Company,
 New York and Detroit, 1913
 Coll: John A. Jaeger

Florence Ziegfeld initiated his annual revues in 1907. Each year a classic spectacular was produced, Ziegfeld having a particular talent for knowing what the public wanted. And in 1913 what they wanted was dance: the bunny hug, the turkey trot, the tango jiggle with a Texas Tommy wiggle. In the hall. At the ball. That said it all.



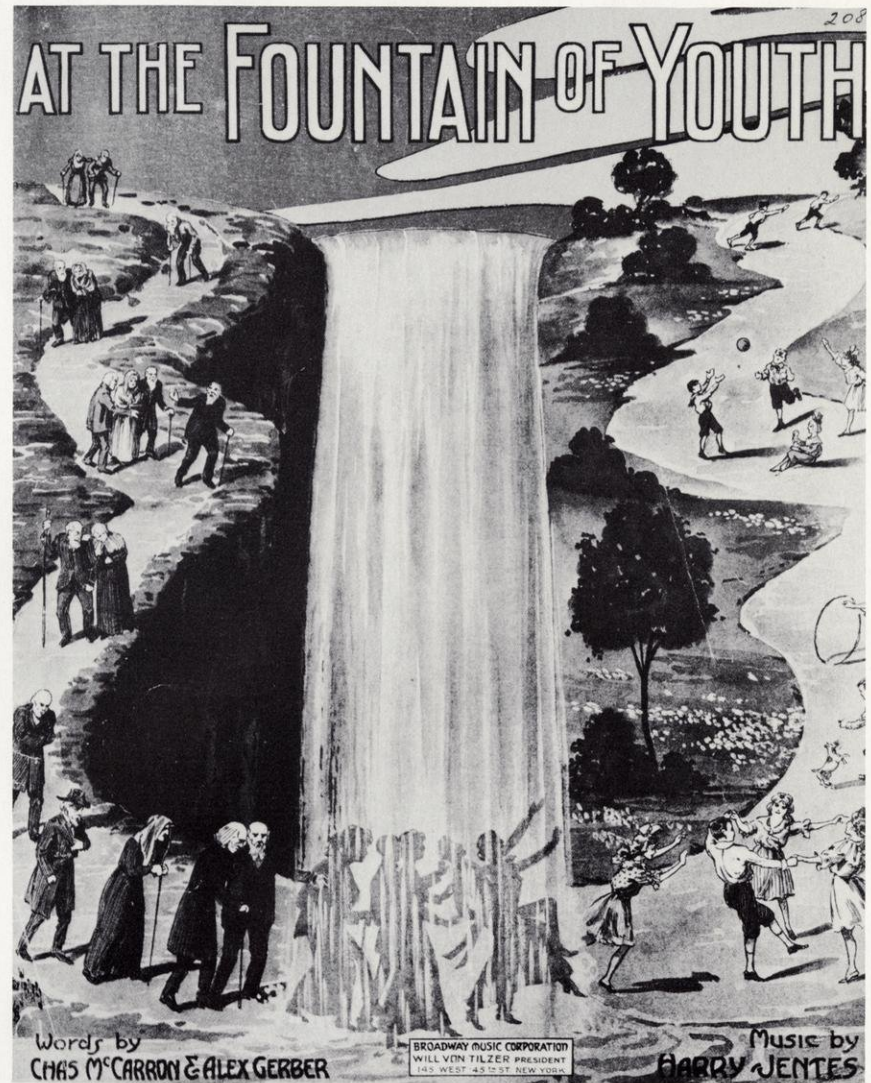
55 *Over There*

Words and music by George M. Cohan
Artist: Norman Rockwell

Leo Feist, Inc., New York, 1917

Coll: The Museum of Norman Rockwell Art, Reedsburg, Wisconsin

For Americans, World War I was a singing war long before it was declared on our side of the water. Cohan's *Over There* was first published on June 1, 1917, just two months after the United States had entered the war. It touched the American spirit in the same way as do Norman Rockwell's painted versions of American life. This illustration, done originally for *Life* magazine, was an ideal match with Cohan's song. Rockwell also did cover illustrations for *Down Where the Lilies Grow* and *The Lady Bird Cha Cha Cha*, and then astutely turned his attention to where the public interest was: records and their jacket covers.



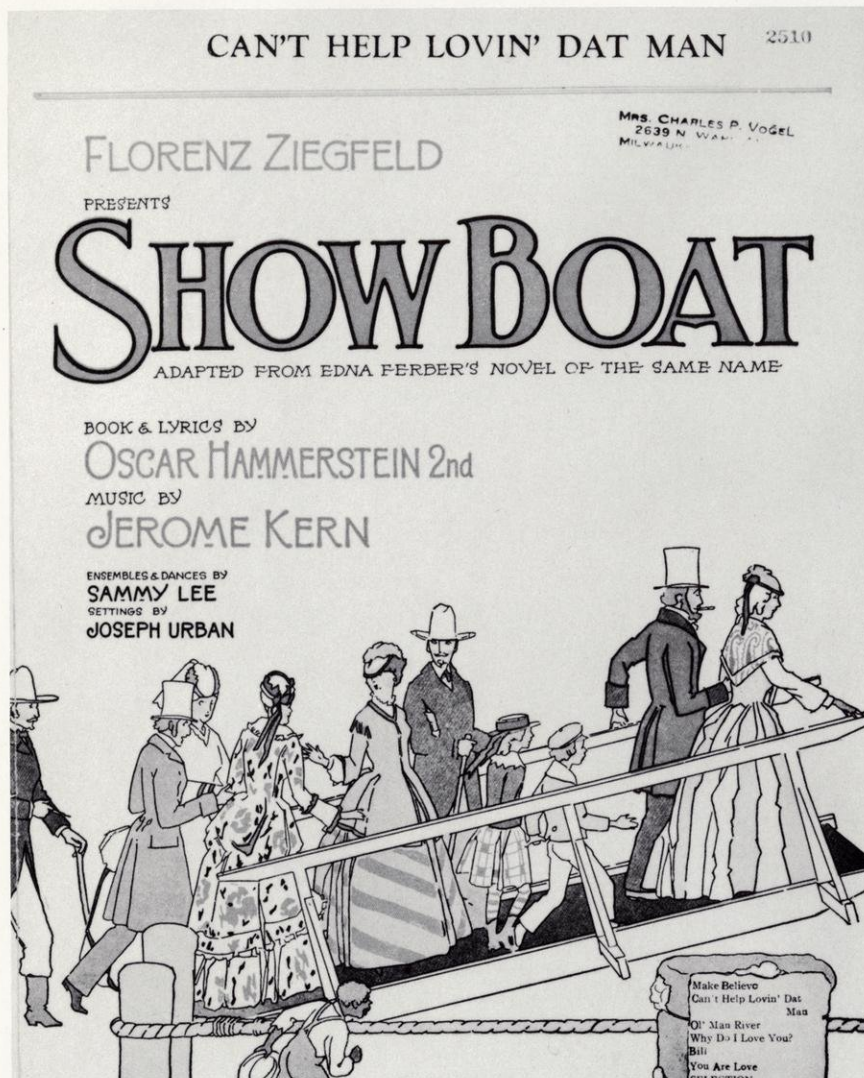
56 *At the Fountain of Youth*

Words by Chas. McCarron and Alex Gerber

Music by Harry Jentes

Broadway Music Corp., New York, 1915
Coll: John A. Jaeger

The song title clearly points to the glorification of youth in the style of the Roaring Twenties. But the cover illustrator not only was out of touch with the times but, furthermore, apparently was ignorant of the song lyrics which foretell not games of ring-around-the-rose but of boys "trooping to the poor 'Old Ladies Home, because it would look like a chicken coop"—after the fountain of youth.



57 *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man*

Book and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein, II

Music by Jerome Kern

T. B. Harms, New York, 1917

Coll: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

Hammerstein and Kern selected *Show Boat*, the great novel of Edna Ferber, as their vehicle out of New York City (which had come to be the predominant setting for so many of the early works for the American music stage). Contrary to what is often said, none of the music of *Show Boat* is from the folk tradition. The lovely extended cover design shows a rare use of the back page, which traditionally was used strictly for plugging other publications, at first in drab, tightly spaced title listings, but later in more selective and attractive displays.



58 *King of the Air*

By Julius K. Johnson
Artcraft, Cleveland

Koninsky Music Co.,
Troy, New York, 1915

Coll: John A. Jaeger

Glenn Curtiss, flier and designer, was among the boldest and most accomplished of the experimenters in the early days of America's aviation industry. *The King of the Air March and Two-Step* applauds his daring mastery of a previously unconquered stretch down the Hudson River.



59 *There Must Be a Way To Love You*

Words by Harry Hoch

Music by Ted Snyder

Artist: Armstrong

Waterson, Berlin & Snyder Company,
New York, 1919

Coll: John A. Jaeger

The daughters of the famed Gibson Girl and Fisher Girl captivated America as the "pretty girl" flirted from posters, magazines, advertisements, and sheet music covers.

A.J. Stasny, publisher of *My Gal*, issued a series of such pieces, not always feeling it necessary to call on the finest talents among songwriters. The composer Ted Snyder grew up in Boscobel, Wisconsin, and collaborated with some of the great names during his career in popular song.



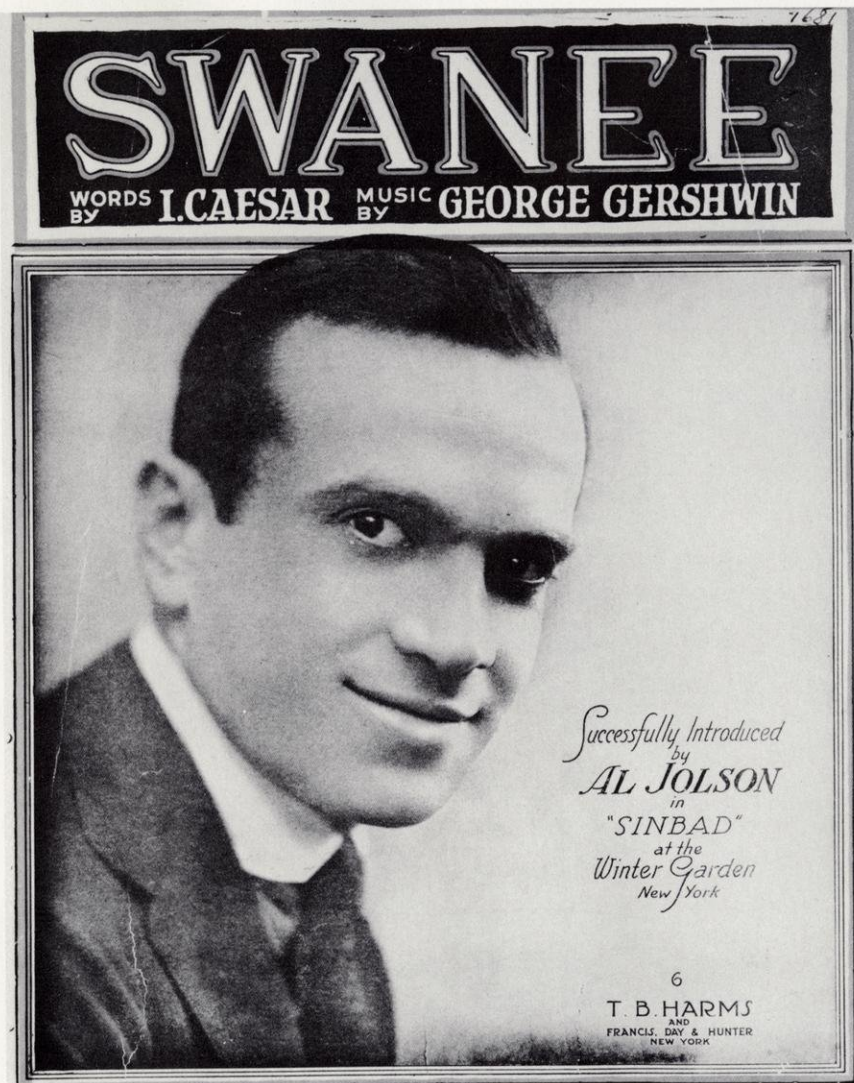
60 *My Gal, She Has Some Wonderful Ways*

Words and music by Ed. Nelson
and Bud Cooper

Artist: Gustav Michelson

A. J. Stasny Music Company,
New York, 1919

Coll: John A. Jaeger



61 *Swanee*
Words by I. Caesar
Music by George Gershwin

T. B. Harms and Francis, Day and
Hunter, New York, 1919
Coll: John A. Jaeger

Publishers of popular sheet music draw on a dazzling array of tactics to sell songs. No practice was more common and perhaps none more successful than linking a song with a well-known performer. And it was said that a cover picture of the great Al Jolson would guarantee the success of any song. Jolson's rendering of *Mammy* (also from *Sinbad*) in the 1927 movie *The Jazz Singer* was a historic event and an absolute blockbuster.



62 *Mickey*
Words by Harry Williams
Music by Neil Moret
Artist: Albert Barbelle

Waterson, Berlin, and Snyder
Company, New York, 1918
Coll: John A. Jaeger

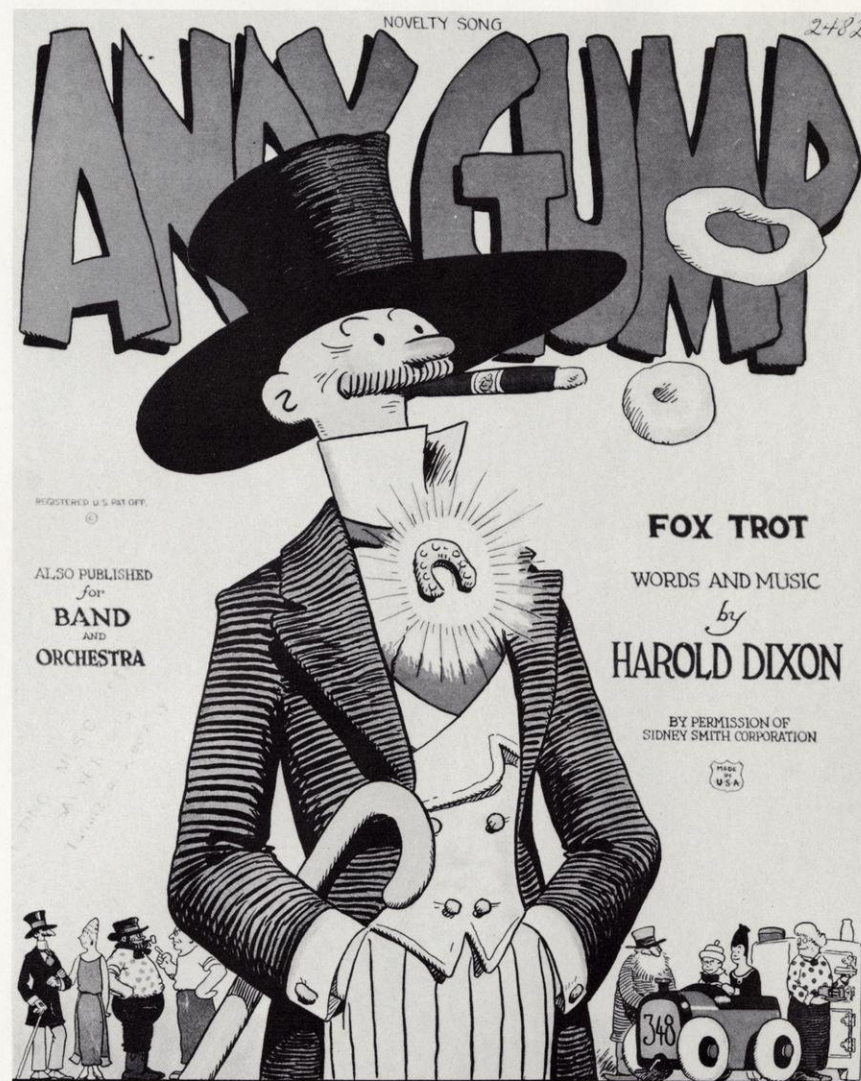
Hollywood was now at about day five of its creation, and music publishers began their long tradition of capitalizing on the relatively recent innovation in "moving pictures" of naming the featured personalities. The cover design is by Barbelle, one of the most active artists on sheet music covers in the first quarter of the twentieth century.



63 *Some Smoke*
By S. Romberg
Art: Mont and Cahan

Joseph W. Stern and Company,
New York, 1913
Coll: The State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

Some Smoke would probably truly qualify as one of "society's favorites" and likely was indeed "featured by the leading orchestras and dancing masters" just as the advertising hype of the day said. Sigmund Romberg began his musical life as a staff composer for J. J. Shubert and later wrote the music for *Blossom Time*, *The Student Prince*, and many other Broadway musicals.



64 *Andy Gump*
Words and music by Harold Dixon
Illustrations by Sidney Smith

Dixon-Lane Music Publishing Co.,
Chicago and St. Louis, 1923
Coll: John A. Jaeger

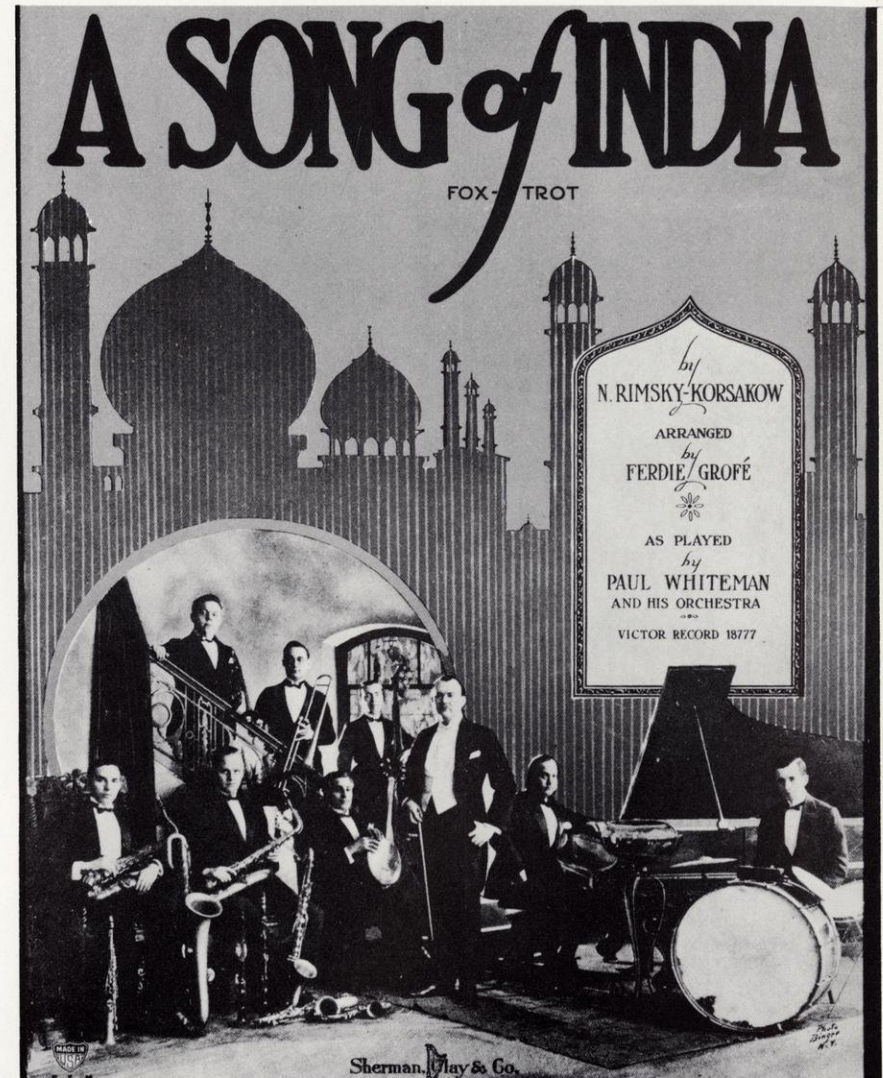
In 1918 *Andy Gump*, the "well-known chinless wonder," had been pictured as one of the guests *At the Funny Page Ball* (lyrics by Jack Frost and music by Robert Speroy). Here, however, the Gumps, as created by their originator Sidney Smith, are the main feature. The unusual illustrations within the music pages are a rare return to an occasional practice of the very early days of sheet music decoration.



65 *Barney Google*
Song by Billy Rose and Con Conrad
Illustrator: William Morgan DeBeck

Jerome H. Remick and Company,
New York, Detroit, 1923
Coll: John A. Jaeger

The comic strip page was a staple of nearly every major daily newspaper and the funnies were still comical when Rose and Conrad put DeBeck's Barney Google on our piano racks. At approximately the same time John Alden Carpenter took Krazy Kat to the ballet in a score first performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



66 *A Song of India*
By N. Rimsky-Korsakow
Arranged by Ferdie Grofé
Photo: Binger, New York

Sherman, Clay and Company,
San Francisco, 1921
Coll: John A. Jaeger

In *Yesterdays, Popular Song in America* (W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1979, p. 368) Charles Hamm quotes Paul Whiteman on the subject of the dependence of popular song of the 1920s on classical music: "Do you not know that . . . at least nine-tenths of modern jazz turned out by Tin Pan Alley is frankly stolen from the masters?" Whiteman cites the debt of Harry Carroll to Chopin for his *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*, perhaps the best-known example in a trend of such adaptations.

LOVE WILL FIND A WAY

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Lyrics & Music by
*Noble
Sissle
and
Eubie
Blake*

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*M. Witmark & Sons
New York*



67 Love Will Find a Way

Lyrics and music by Noble Sissle
and Eubie Blake

M. Witmark and Sons, New York, 1921

Coll: The State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

Eubie Blake, composer and performer, in a conversation with Alec Wilder, said "People ask me where did ragtime come from and I say I don't know, I heard it all my life. . . . When my mother would go out and wash white folks' clothes, I'd play music lessons the way I liked and when she came home and heard me, she'd say 'you take that ragtime out of my house, don't you be playing no ragtime.'" Wilder also recalls early performances of Sissle and Blake's *Shuffle Along* (before it became a smash hit) where "you could sit where you pleased. I used to move down to the front row during the first act and listen to Mr. Blake play the piano in the pit." (Alec Wilder, *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900-1950*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1972)

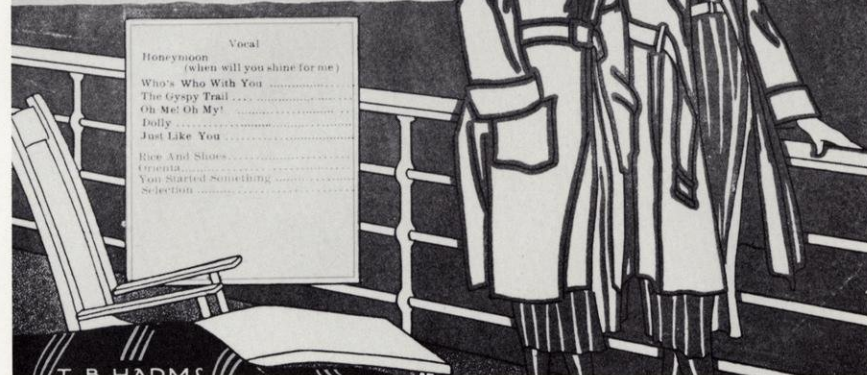
WHO'S WHO WITH YOU



A. L. ERLANGER presents
THE NEW MUSICAL COMEDY

TWO LITTLE GIRLS IN BLUE

BOOK BY
FRED JACKSON
MUSIC BY
**PAUL LANNIN &
VINCENT YOUMANS**
LYRICS BY
ARTHUR FRANCIS
STAGED BY NED WAYBURN



68 Who's Who with You

Lyrics by Arthur Francis
Music by Vincent Youmans

T. B. Harms and Francis Day and
Hunter, New York, 1921

Coll: The State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

Early in his career, as is chronicled in his *Lyrics on Several Occasions*, Ira Gershwin used the pseudonym Arthur Francis. That autobiographical account also refers to many of the Broadway shows for which Ira Gershwin was the lyricist (*Lady Be Good*, *Funny Face*, *Of Thee I Sing*, *Porgy and Bess*, etc.). Ira's first collaboration with his brother George was in 1924, and the team produced many song hits, including *S Wonderful*, *I Got Rhythm*, etc.

WHAT'LL WE DO ON A SATURDAY NIGHT WHEN THE TOWN GOES DRY

WORDS and MUSIC

HARRY RUBY



69 *What'll We Do on a Saturday Night When the Town Goes Dry*

Words and music by Harry Ruby

Artist: Albert Barbelle

Thanks to the firmly held and aggressively advanced convictions of the Anti-Saloon League, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and others, prohibition legislation came to pass, and a fifteen-year era began.

While enabling legislation was still pending, the prolific songwriter Harry Ruby worried aloud "What'll we do on a Saturday night when the town goes dry?" The ubiquitous sheet music illustrator Barbelle offered a humorous reply from the ice cream parlor. Note particularly the advertised Saturday Special, a Billy Sundae. (The Reverend Billy Sunday had been zealously

Waterson, Berlin and Snyder,
New York, 1919

Coll: John A. Jaeger

I'LL SEE YOU IN C-U-B-A

By
IRVING BERLIN



70 *I'll See You in C-U-B-A*

By Irving Berlin

Irving Berlin, Inc. Music Publishers,
New York, 1920

Coll: John A. Jaeger

vocal in evangelizing against the liquor trade, calling it "the most damnable, corrupt institution that ever wriggled out of hell.")

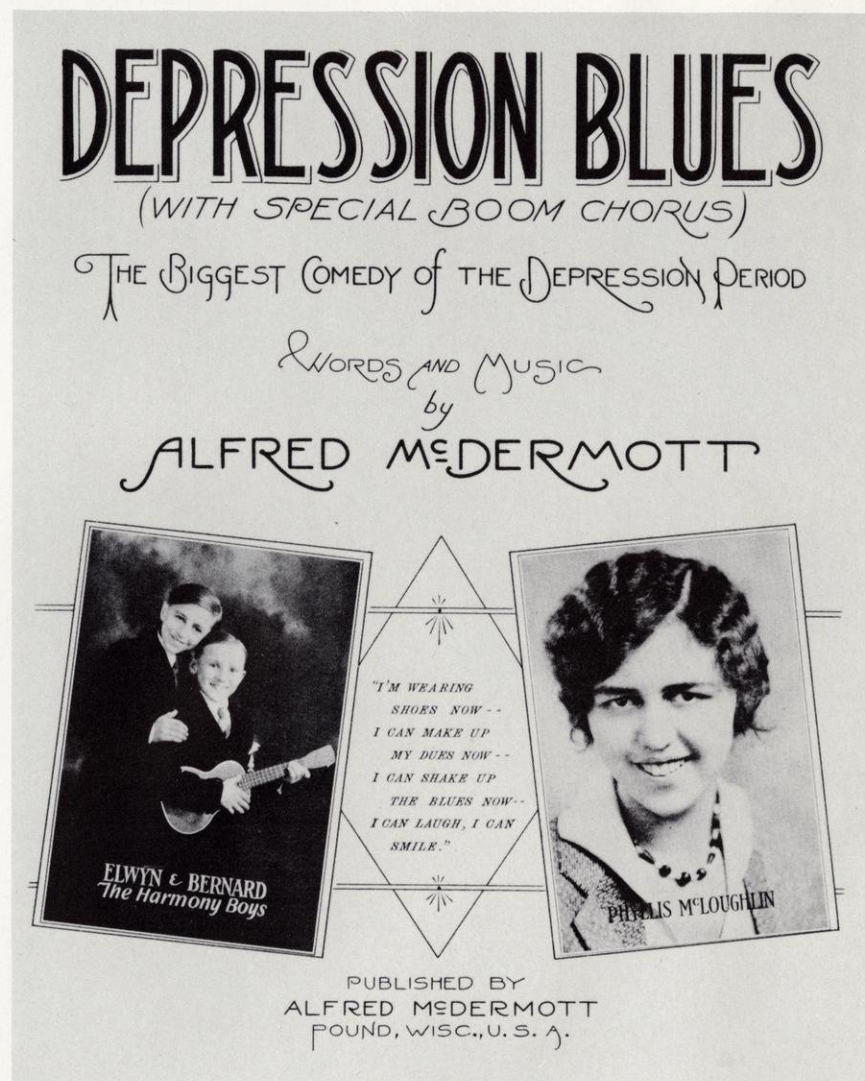
Then in 1920 Irving Berlin's question was "Have you been longing for the 'smile' that you haven't had for quite a while?" Slipping from a glum D minor into a happy D major, Berlin sees the answer in C-U-B-A. "Everybody's going there this year. And there's a reason. The season opened last July. Ever since the U.S.A. went dry."



71 *Love Me To-Night*
Lyric by Lorenz Hart
Music by Richard Rodgers

Famous Music Corp., New York, 1932
Coll: The State Historical Society of
Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

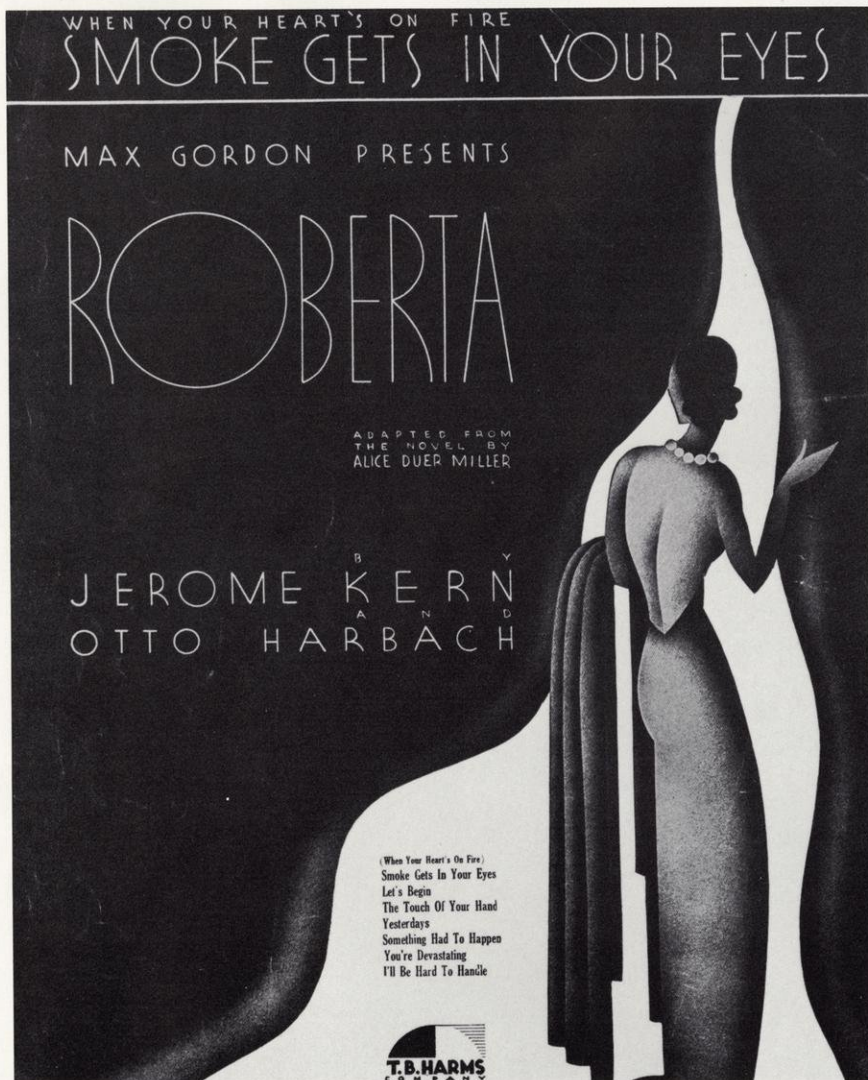
A show bill doubling as a sheet music cover gives hardly adequate prominence to the creators of *Love Me To-Night*. Rodgers and Hart are regarded as particularly outstanding talents in American popular music. Their other joint efforts include *A Connecticut Yankee* and *On Your Toes*.



72 *Depression Blues*
Words & Music by Alfred McDermott
Coll: Howard Kanetzke

Alfred McDermott,
Pound, Wisconsin, 1931

The patchwork-quilt history of musical Americana, when it is completed, will have many squares from small towns and rural communities—along with those from Tin Pan Alley and Broadway. This very local piece, dedicated in 1931 to “the unemployed,” is mainstream Americana in the upbeat optimism of its chorus, which confidently foresees a “boom” coming.



73 *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*
By Jerome Kern and Otto Harbach

T. B. Harms, New York, 1933
Coll: John A. Jaeger

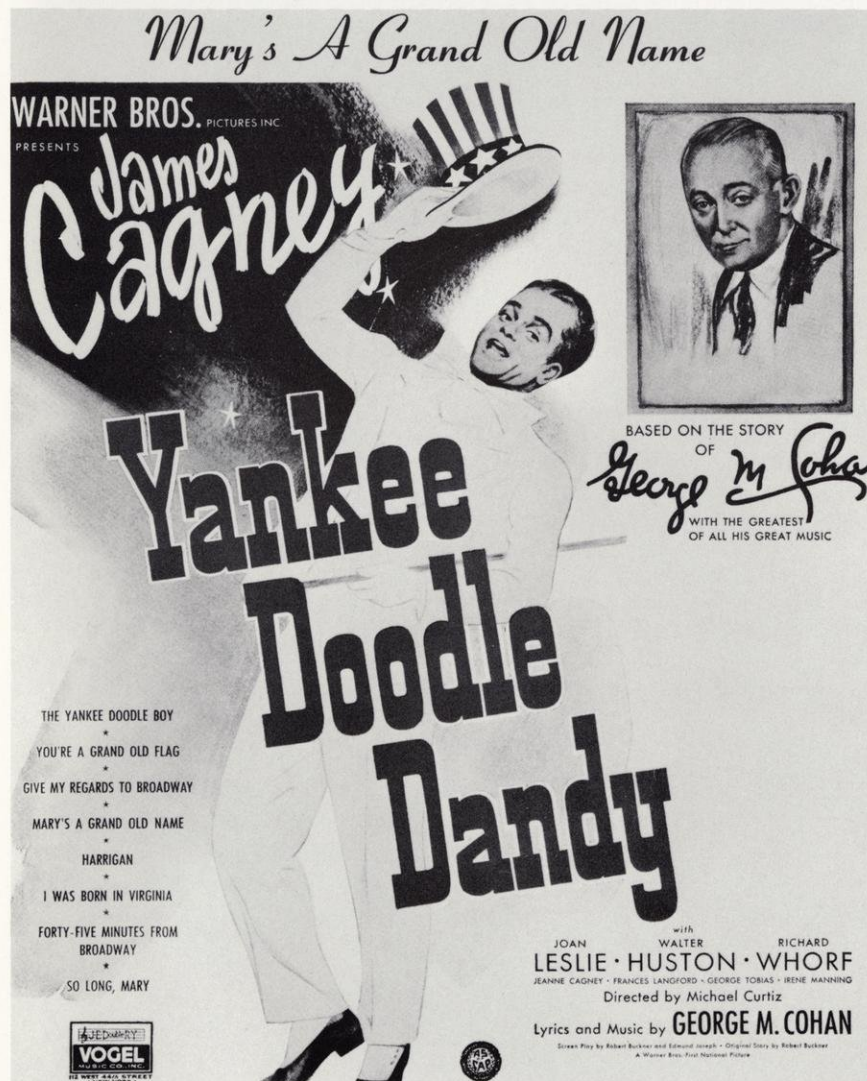
Alice Duer Miller, whose novel *Gowns By Roberta* was adapted by Kern and Harbach, is perhaps better known as the author of the sentimental but heartfelt poem *The White Cliffs of Dover*. Up to this time, the verse-chorus structure had been the prescribed formula for popular song. *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, however, demonstrates the dissolution of this tradition.



74 *You're the Top*
Words and music by Cole Porter
Harms, Inc., New York, 1934

Coll: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Iconographic Collections

Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*, one of his earlier successes, opened on Broadway on November 21, 1934, and had a respectable run of 420 performances. As composer and lyricist, Porter was a true genius in an era when that term is not tossed off lightly. His many hits include *In the Still of the Night*, *Begin the Beguine*, and *What is This Thing Called Love*.



75 *Mary's a Grand Old Name*

Words and music by George M. Cohan

Jerry Vogel Music Co., New York, 1932

Coll: John A. Jaeger

George M. Cohan, songwriter and showman *par excellence*, published more than five hundred songs during what became a life-long fascination with popular music. Cohan's Mary, "square and ordinary," made a direct hit on the American spirit. "Now, when her name is Mary, there is no falseness there. When to Marie she'll vary, She'll surely bleach her hair . . . Don't ever fear sweet Mary, beware of sweet Marie."

Elvehjem Museum of Art
University of Wisconsin-Madison