WHAT BESIDES HYMNS?
THE TUNE BOOKS OF EARLY METHODISM

ANNE BAGNALL YARDLEY

Methodists have always been a society of singers. Centered in the wealth of hymns penned by Charles and John Wesley, hymn singing has been a distinguishing feature of Methodist worship. The American Methodist Episcopal Church began to publish hymnals soon after its formation in 1784. Methodist hymnody was characterized by the great variety of meters employed, necessitating a greater number of hymn tunes.¹ Throughout the history of American Methodist publishing, the provision of adequate musical resources has been of great importance. Early Methodist tune books did not, however, confine themselves entirely to hymn tunes. In the manner of many music books of the time, they usually included a section on the rudiments of music and a section of "anthems and set pieces,"² as well as the lengthy section of hymn tunes arranged by meter. While the hymn tunes were listed in meter order to correspond with the texts in the hymnal, the section of anthems and set pieces included a variety of types of musical compositions in no discernible order.³

From the publication of The Methodist Harmonist in 1822 until the publication in 1864 of an entire collection of anthems, the publication of anthems and set pieces in tune books formed an important and often overlooked repertoire that was presumably intended for performance by a choir. An analysis of this repertoire provides valuable insights into the changing musical tastes of the 19th century and the interaction of one denomination with the host culture.

¹Hymnals of the time included only the texts to the hymns; the tune books were arranged by the meter of the tunes and people could mix the texts and the tunes as they liked.
²The distinction between anthems and set pieces is made on the basis of the text. Both are through-composed pieces (i.e., the music changes throughout) as opposed to hymns where the music repeats for each stanza of poetry. The texts of anthems are prose whereas the texts for set pieces are poetry. Often the set pieces are simply more elaborate musical settings of hymn texts. The terminology was not always clearly defined in the 19th century.
³For a study of the hymn repertoire of the Methodist collections, see Fred Kimball Graham, "With One Heart and One Voice:" A Core Repertory of Hymn Tunes Published for Use in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States: 1808–1878, PhD Dissertation, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 1991.
The Methodist Book Concern, founded in 1789, was the official publishing arm of the Methodist Episcopal Church. As such it was often asked to carry out the directives of the General Conference. Table I illustrates the relationship between the musical volumes that are the subject of this paper and the publication of hymnals. It can be seen that a close relationship exists initially between changes in the hymnal and new editions of the tune book. Prior to the 1849 hymnal, the hymnals and tune books referenced each other, providing suggestions as to which tunes and texts went well together. By mid-century the proliferation of volumes reflects an expanded role for the Book Concern in keeping pace with the market for new music.

The Methodist Harmonist—1822

The first official publication of a tune book by the Methodist Book Concern resulted from a directive from the 1820 General Conference. As the title page of this publication makes clear, the collection includes not only hymn tunes adapted to all of the meters found in the Methodist hymn book, but also "a choice selection of Anthems and Pieces, for particular occasions." Among the four members of the committee who chose the music for the book was Daniel Ayres, leader of the choir of the John Street Church in New York City. Thirteen selections are listed in the index under "Anthems and Pieces" of which three are more accurately described as hymns.

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4 The Agent of the Book Concern was chosen by the General Conference and thus served a four-year term with the possibility for reappointment to multiple terms. The Agent was responsible for running the operation on a sound financial base. Often times the actual books bear the name of the particular agent(s) when it was published.

5 From the full title which is given in Table I. I examined an 1831 copy of the hymnal in the Music Research Collection of the New York Public Library. It contains the same music as the 1822 edition.

6 The other members were John M. Smith, John D. Myers, and G. P. Disosway. Ayres and Disosway were still on the committee who edited the 1837 edition.

7 One of these hymns, the "Hymn for Ministers," is specifically mentioned by Samuel Seaman, A.M., in *Annals of New York Methodism: being a History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York from A.D. 1766 to A.D. 1890*, New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1892, p. 470. He comments that "Not unfrequently a hymn or set piece would be sung by the choir while the congregation was gathering. If a new preacher was to occupy the pulpit, especially if he were one the people were pleased with, he was likely to be greeted as he entered with the verses beginning. 'Welcome, welcome! blessed servant,' etc." (I am especially indebted to Kenneth Rowe of the Methodist Archives for calling Appendix W "Singing and Choristers" to my attention.) Hymns were often included in the anthem and set pieces section if their texts were not in the Methodist Hymnal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td><em>A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church</em>, principally from the <em>Collection of the Reverend John Wesley, M.A., late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford</em>&lt;br&gt;[1832] Slight revision including cross-references with <em>The Methodist Harmonist</em></td>
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<td>1822</td>
<td><em>The Methodist Harmonist</em>, containing a great variety of tunes, collected by the best authors, adapted to all the various meters in the Methodist hymn-book, and designed for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. To which is added a choice selection of Anthems and Pieces, for particular occasions.* New York, 1822. Edited by John M. Smith, Daniel Ayres, John D. Meyers, G. P. Disosway.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td><em>The Methodist Harmonist</em> . . . (2nd ed.)&lt;br&gt;Edited by G. Coles, D. Ayres, G. P. Disosway</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td><em>Sacred Harmony</em>, edited by Samuel Jackson</td>
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<td>1849</td>
<td><em>The Devotional Harmonist</em> edited by Charles Dingley</td>
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<td>1853</td>
<td><em>The Lute of Zion</em>, edited by I. B. Woodbury and Rev. H. Mattison</td>
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<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td><em>The New Lute of Zion</em> edited by I. B. Woodbury</td>
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<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td><em>Hymns for the Use of the Church with tunes for Congregational Singing</em>, edited by Wm. C. Brown and Sylvester Main [no anthems and set pieces]</td>
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<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td><em>The Church Singer</em>, edited by Karl Reden &amp; S. J. Goodenough</td>
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<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td><em>The Anthem Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church</em>, edited by C. C. Converse &amp; S. J. Goodenough</td>
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<td>1864</td>
<td><em>The Sacred Lute</em>, edited by T. E. Perkins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td><em>Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church</em> [with tunes—no anthems/set pieces]</td>
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</table>
The second official publication of tunes was prepared in response to the General Conference of 1832 which ordered a revision of the 1822 publication. The title page makes it clear that in addition to the hymn tunes which were included, the publishers added “a selection of anthems, pieces, and sentences, for particular occasions.” The index includes twenty-five pieces in this section, up from the thirteen in the 1822 edition. The volume is closely connected with the 1822 edition from which six anthems and set pieces were included. An examination of the texts indicates that funerals, indoor revivals, and Easter were among the “special occasions” for which these pieces were intended. One copy of the 1833 The Methodist Harmonist in the United Methodist Archives belonged to the choir at the Union Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia and includes a set of rules governing choir behavior affixed to the flyleaf.

The Harmonist—1837

This 1837 edition of the official Methodist tune book was put together by a committee “composed of suitable persons with respect to Sacred Music” who were chosen from “our principal cities.” The committee included Gabriel P. Disosway and Daniel Ayres from New York, William C. Brown of Boston, and Samuel Ashmead of Philadelphia. Ayres and Disosway were both on the committee for the 1822 and 1833 volumes also. Of the thirty-five pieces included in the section of “Anthems and set pieces,” sixteen are more properly designated hymns because they are strophic musical settings of poetic texts with multiple verses. The book gives the appropriate numbers for texts from the new edition of the hymnal which was published in 1836. By 1838 the new printings of the 1836 hymnal included cross-references to The Harmonist as well.

Sacred Harmony—1848

The 1848 offering of the Methodist Book Concern was again chosen by committee, only one of whose members, Daniel Ayres, served on the 1837 committee. Ayres was joined by George Coles, S. J. Goodenough, John W. Hoyt, and Abiathar M. Osbon. Working with the committee as music editor was Samuel Jackson, a New York musician, whose name appears on the title page. The compilers’ stated purpose is an indication of the continuing effort to incorporate the “better music” movement of Lowell Mason. They mention that the volume includes “… as great a number of excellent Sentences, Anthems, Motets, and Chants, as will be thought necessary for all purposes

*From the Preface to The Harmonist.
of public worship. The names of the greatest masters in the sacred science are affixed to a large proportion of the tunes." In addition to several sentences, anthems, and set pieces, this work shows a particularly strong interest in the publication of "service music"—music for the chants of Morning and Evening prayer and other liturgical occasions. Thus, thirty-three chants for the canticles (e.g., Venite, Te Deum), Gloria Patri, and responses are included. These chants are taken from the Anglican repertoire and include the works of Boyce, Tallis, Thomas Purcell, Croft, Farrant, and Soaper among others. The emphasis on European, primarily continental, "masters" of music is very strong; however, this does not stop the committee from featuring also the work of Samuel Jackson, a local composer/arranger who edited this volume.

The Devotional Harmonist—1849

Subtitled "A Collection of Sacred Music, comprising a large variety of New and Original Tunes, Sentences, Anthems, etc. . . .," The Devotional Harmonist of 1849 paralleled the publication of a new meter hymnal in 1849. The Devotional Harmonist consciously attempts to include a very different repertoire than the 1848 Sacred Harmony. Daniel Ayres in his article in the Christian Advocate of August 9, 1866 commented that Sacred Harmony was "considered much too advanced in style." The emphasis that we find on the "better music" of European composers in the 1848 volume has been replaced by homegrown compositions. In the editor's preface, Charles Dingley writes "While the music generally is flowing and melodious in its character, it is of a style perfectly simple and intelligible, so as to be easily sung. All points of imitation and needless difficulties in the construction of the harmony have been avoided. . . . Sacred music should be like the gospel, which commends itself, by its simplicity and sublimity, alike to the learned and the unlearned." Apparently the music in Sacred Harmony was too difficult for many congregations so The Devotional Harmonist sought a simpler repertoire. Except for the ever-present anthem by Harwood, "The Dying Christian," no other overlaps occur in the anthems and set pieces found in the two volumes. Several of the anthems seem to be for specific occasions—Easter, Thanksgiving, and Deductions all being mentioned.

The Lute of Zion—1853

The Lute of Zion seems to have sprung primarily from a market-share study which indicated that Methodists were not all buying their church music books from the official Methodist Episcopal Church publications! The Pastor
of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City, the Rev. Hiram Mattison, explains in the preface to the work that, "notwithstanding the repeated and praiseworthy efforts of the Book Agents to meet the demands of our wide-spread connection, large numbers of other musical publications go into Methodist choirs every year . . . . Hundreds of Methodist choirs have all the Book Room music, and several other works beside." In a bold attempt to co-opt the competition, therefore, the agents of the Book Concern asked Professor Woodbury, one of the most popular of American composers in the mid-19th century, to edit a "Collection of Sacred Music designed for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Mattison was to work jointly with Woodbury to ensure that the work dovetailed well with the Methodist hymnal and contemporary worship styles.

The work is laid out in five sections: Hymn tunes; Anthems and select pieces; music for Love-Feast, Prayer, and class meetings; Sabbath-school Hymns and Music; and selections for the Singing-school, Social Circle, and Concert Room. Thus, the scope of this publication is much wider than the earlier volumes which we have considered: It includes, in one volume, the repertoire for Sunday morning services, less formal services, concerts, Sunday School, and other occasions.

The New Lute of Zion—1856

The success of the 1853 collection led to a new edition in 1856. The Preface from the 1856 edition states: "The 'New Lute of Zion' will, we trust, be welcomed in every church and domestic circle, where its predecessor has found favor, and where the praises of the Most High are wont to be offered! The music is not designed for the fastidious and scientific musician whose highest delight, and perhaps sole worship, is music as an art, but for those who love to worship God in the simple song of praise." Sylvester Main, Esq. is given credit in the preface for actually compiling this volume even though The New Lute of Zion continued to carry the name of I. B. Woodbury as the principal author on its title page. Since Woodbury was severely ill with tuberculosis at this time, it is unlikely that he participated in the production of the collection. The back of both this volume and the earlier edition list the many other publications by Woodbury which are carried by F. J. Huntington. Clearly Huntington (and Woodbury?) hoped that his involvement with a Methodist publication would increase his sales, while the Methodist Book Concern hoped that the inclusion of the works of this most popular com-

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1"The Lute of Zion," p. 2.
2Isaac Baker Woodbury (1819–1858) published several collections of music including The Dulcimer (1850), Liber musicus (1851), Cottage Glees (1853) and Harp of the South (1853) as well as individual hymns, anthems, and dramatic works.
3"The Lute of Zion," title page.
poser would boost its sales. The existence of the new edition which retains the format of the 1853 edition is probably evidence that both parties were satisfied with the outcome of The Lute of Zion.

Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church with Tunes for Congregational Worship—1857

Although this volume does not contain any anthems or set pieces, it forms an important link in the chain of publications by the Methodist Book Concern. It is carefully referenced to both The New Lute of Zion and Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church (1849). The preface focuses on the importance of congregational singing concluding, “Good-natured perseveration will surmount all difficulties, and insure good earnest congregational singing both where there are choirs and where there are none.” Sylverster Main and William C. Brown were the editors of this volume.

The Church Singer—1863

The title page of this collection begins in the fashion of the time with a scriptural quote across the top: “Praise God in his Sanctuary.” It continues: “The Church Singer: A Collection of Sacred Music by Karl Reden and S. J. Goodenough.” In the Preface, the compilers list a number of features of the work including some that are of interest to this study. They stress that no one type of musical taste has been followed but that “the collection embraces the standard tunes in general use among all Evangelical Denominations.” They mention that music from the best composers of a variety of nationalities has been included. Regarding the section of anthems they comment: “The number of ANTHEMS, CHANTS, etc., is unusually large, and in this department may be found pieces suitable for every occasion of public worship.” Finally, they mention that the copyright protects not only original music but their arrangements as well.

The collection seems in many ways a step backward in the evolution of these collections towards more anthems. Of the forty-eight pieces in this section, only eight would really qualify as anthems or set pieces. Most are strophic hymn settings, presumably added in this section because they were not part of the standard hymn repertoire. Quite possibly the smaller percentage of anthems resulted from the planned volume of anthems which was due to be printed the following year.

"Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, p. 4.
"The Church Singer, p. iv."
Just a year after the publication of *The Church Singer*, Carlton and Porter (agents for the Methodist Book Concern) published their first book devoted entirely to the anthem repertoire. The publisher’s notice at the beginning of this volume indicates that they viewed this book as the third in a series which, taken together, will provide music for any church occasion:

The cordial reception given to the First and Second Books of our new Musical Series, the “SWEET SINGER” and “CHURCH SINGER,” encourages us in the work we have undertaken of supplying the Church with a standard Musical Literature. We now issue the Third Book of the Series, entitled, “THE ANTHEM BOOK OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.” An examination of its contents will show that they embrace the widest range of subjects, providing every occasion of Public Worship with appropriate Anthems, as well as a great variety of pieces for use in Conventions, Concerts, etc. Taking the three books together, they form a repertory of sterling Music such as every lover of Sacred Song must highly prize.

Edited by C. C. Converse and S. J. Goodenough, this volume again contains many of Converse’s works under both the pen name Karl Reden and C. C. Converse. All of the sixty-eight selections in this volume are anthems, making it the largest collection by far of any of the Methodist publications to this point.

*The Sacred Lute—1864*

Published during the same year as *The Anthem Book*, *The Sacred Lute* was published by three publishers: F. J. Huntington & Co. in New York, Poe & Hitchcock in Cincinnati, and J. B. Lippincott & Co. in Philadelphia. Poe & Hitchcock were the western office of the Methodist Book Concern and it is significant that they were perhaps declaring some independence from the New York branch by teaming with F. J. Huntington, the New York publisher of I. B. Woodbury’s works among others. The title page of this volume carefully describes the work as “designed for the use of congregations generally” so as not to limit it to Methodist congregations. In the preface, however, T. E. Perkins, the compiler of the work, acknowledges that,

To meet the wants as well as furnish tunes for the meters of the M. E. Church, the author has had the able assistance of Mr. Sylvester Main, so widely and favourably known as Mr. Woodbury’s assistant in the compilation of the ‘New Lute of Zion,’ and subsequently as one of the compilers of the *Methodist Hymn and Tunes Book*, and whom the agents of the book room, Messrs. Carlton and Porter, in the preface to that work, justly commend as ‘one of our most experienced and popular choristers, selected in view of his known interest in the objects of the work, his attainments in the science of music, and his acquaintance with our denominational tastes.'

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17 *The Sacred Lute*, p. 2.
What Besides Hymns?

The repertoire of anthems draws upon a wider and more representative sample of American composers including Bradbury, Woodbury, and Perkins than does *The Anthem Book* which features Converse’s works.

**New Hymn and Tunes Book—1866**

Edited by Philip Phillips, the preface to this volume is a real polemic in favor of congregational singing. The book is arranged in a few format with three hymn tunes on the left hand side and six hymn texts on the right. All are meant to be used interchangeably so that the old favorite tunes and some new possibilities are side-by-side. The texts are given with their numbers from the 1849 *Hymns for the Use of the Church*. An Appendix at the back includes anthems because, although the work would be complete without them, “it has been deemed indispensably requisite to supply a deficiency in Anthems and Set Pieces, so much needed by our Churches and desired by Choristers.”

II

Just who were the musicians who were responsible for the musical choices of the many tune books published by the Methodist Book Concern? The great majority of them worked primarily in New York City, but musicians from Boston and Philadelphia were also included. Biographical information about some of these men is scant, but the following brief notes give some indication of the people behind the books.

*Daniel Ayres*

Daniel Ayres was clearly considered a leader among his peers. The cho­rister [musical leader] of the John St. Church in New York City from 1809 to 1839, he held that position by virtue of his longevity and his prominence at the mother-church of American Methodism. In 1866 he gave an address on church music as part of the centennial celebrations at John Street. Fortunately, the text was reprinted in the August 9, 1866 edition of *The Christian Advocate*. His own description of the history of the Methodist volumes gives valuable information on the subject:

For No. 2 (first *Harmonist*) the committee were John M. Smith, G. P. Disosway, J. D. Myers, and D. Ayres; for No. 3, William C. Brown, of Boston; Samuel Ashmead, Philadelphia; G. P. Disosway, and D. Ayres; for No. 4 (*Sacred Harmony*) Rev. Messrs. G. Coles and A. M. Osbon, S. J. Goodenough, J. W. Hoyt, and D. Ayres. Here my services in that line terminated. No. 5 was the production of all the ten choristers in our neighborhood. Messrs. W. C. Brown and S. Main were the committee for the *Hymn-Tune Book*, which

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*18 Taken from the “Notice” at the beginning of the volume.*
still maintains a respectable standing. The *Church Singer* has since also been issued by C. C. Converse and S. J. Goodenough, committee, with several others also issued from our Book Concern, furnishing in all, including Sunday school and other hymn-tune books, at least fourteen musical publications from our Church, making a fair contribution to the sacred music of our country for sixty years past, and we need not be ashamed of any of them.

It can be seen by this account, as well as the information in the books themselves that Daniel Ayres was involved in the first five tune-books listed in Table I.

*Samuel Ashmead*

Ashmead was a member of the committee for the 1837 volume and was active in Philadelphia.¹⁹

*William C. Brown*

William C. Brown of Boston was on the committee of the *The Harmonist* [1837] and also of *Hymns for the Use of the Church* [1857]. The preface to the latter work comments that the volume was “prepared by two of our most experienced and popular choristers, namely: Sylvester Main, of New York, and William C. Brown, of Boston, Esqrs. They were selected in view of their known interest in the object of the work, their attainments in the science of music, and their acquaintance with our denominational taste.” I have not located the church which he served.

*G. Coles*

G. Coles [George Coles] is listed as part of the committee for the 1833 edition [not included in Ayres, description] and for the 1848 *Sacred Harmony*. Coles was born in England in 1792 and emigrated to America in 1818. He was ordained a deacon and an elder in the American Methodist Episcopal Church and supplied several churches in the New York area. He was an editor of the *New York Christian Advocate* from 1837 to 1849 and also the editor of *The Sunday School Advocate*. He composed several hymn tunes among which are “Greene St.” and “Duane St.” He died in New York City in 1858.²⁰

*C. C. Converse*

Charles Crozat Converse (1832–1918) was born in Warren, MA and became a lawyer as well as a composer. He studied extensively in Germany

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¹⁹I have not located any other reference to Samuel Ashmead except that a Samuel Ashmead from Philadelphia made a donation to Dickinson College in 1846.

What Besides Hymns?

and wrote in a variety of forms. His best known piece is the hymn, "What a friend we have in Jesus." He used a variety of pen names including Karl Reden and the anagrams C. O. Nevers and C. E. Revons. Working with S. J. Goodenough he produced both The Church Singer and The Anthem Book. 21

G. P. Disosway

Gabriel P. Disosway is specifically mentioned as participating in the committees for the 1822, 1833, and 1837 volumes. His name also appears as secretary at the Greene St. Methodist Episcopal Church on a bulletin from October 3, 1839. 22 There are several references to him in the Christian Advocate. He seems to be a popular speaker, an ardent abolitionist, and a founding member of the New York Chapter of the Bible Society. It is not clear what role he played on the committee for these volumes.

Samuel Jackson

Fred Graham describes Samuel Jackson (1818-1885) as "active as an editor and as composer for organ and choir in New York." 23

Sylvester Main

Sylvester Main was described in the passage cited under William C. Brown. Further than that he is listed third (chronologically) among the eight choristers who served the 86th St. Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City from 1837 to 1877, but no specific dates are given for his service. 24 He was the main compiler of The New Lute of Zion and worked with Brown on Hymns for the Use of the Church.

Hiram Mattison

Hiram Mattison (1811-1868) was a Methodist Episcopal clergyman and reformer. Despite suffering from a chronic illness, he was known for his powers of debate and his willingness to tackle the issues of the time. He was against slavery and intemperance and spoke out on doctrinal matters as well. He served the John Street Church in New York from 1852 to 1854 during

22 Bulletin in the Methodist Archives, Drew University, in the Local History pamphlets under New York City, Greene St. MEC.
23 Graham, p. 28.
24 Forty Years of Methodism in 86th St., NY: Nelson & Phillips, 1877.
which time he provided the Methodist stamp of approval on the work of I. B. Woodbury in editing *The Lute of Zion.*

*T. E. Perkins*

Theodore E. Perkins lived from 1831 to 1912. Little else is known about him.

*Philip Phillips*

Philip Phillips was born in Cassadaga, NY in 1834. He learned to play a melodeon as a teenager and by the time he was twenty had started a singing school. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church after his marriage in 1860. He was called a "singing pilgrim" and sold music and instruments to passersby after playing on street corners. After the Civil War he moved to New York City, becoming the musical editor of the Methodist Book Concern. He published several collections of music between 1860 and his death in 1895.

*I. B. Woodbury*

Isaac Baker Woodbury (1819–1858) was born in Beverly, MA. He studied music in Boston and abroad. Around mid-century he lived in New York City for a few years and was active as an editor as well as a composer. He compiled a number of collections of music including *The Dulcimer* (1850) and *The Lute of Zion* (1853). *The Dulcimer* sold 125,000 copies in two seasons.

**III**

Through the nearly five decades spanned in our study of American Methodist anthem collections, the repertoire of anthems and set pieces expanded both in quantity and in the range of compositions available. The general trend was to expand the section of the book devoted to set pieces and anthems from the original twelve in *The Methodist Harmonist* (1822) to the approximately twenty-five in *The Lute of Zion* (1853). We see the culmination
of this trend with the publication of an entire volume of anthems, *The Anthem Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, in 1864.

The repertoire in these publications reflects the changing musical tastes of the time. From the early publication of English set pieces and anthems from the parish choir repertoire, American volumes moved to include more works by American composers and, somewhat paradoxically, a “better” class of European music which incorporated music of the “great” composers and some anthems from the English cathedral tradition. By the 1860s, however, the appreciation of the sentimental, melodic American style found in the works of Woodbury, Bradbury, and Charles Crozat Converse had clearly reached into the pews of Methodist churches, causing the church to ask non-Methodists to edit their publications.

In these trends we see the adaptation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America to the cultural environment in which it found itself. The choice of music was strongly influenced by the many popular American collections, sacred and secular, which flooded the music market in mid-century. The music publishing business was very competitive. The Methodists, with their emphasis on a greater variety of hymn meters than other denominations, needed a tune book that would meet the needs of their congregations for a variety of tunes and at the same time appeal to the desire to be *au courant* in musical tastes.

The many publications described herein reflect the changing circumstances of the churches in the Methodist Episcopal tradition. Methodists had become considerably more “main stream” than in their early days. The virtually exclusive choice of urban musicians, lay people, and clergy as members of tune book committees insured that the books would reflect the most developed music programs of the time, many of which had choirs. Musicians from the smaller, rural churches, while they undoubtedly did not purchase all of these books, would gradually have been affected by the decisions made by their urban counterparts. Daniel Ayres’ comment that the 1848 *Sacred Harmony* was “considered too much advanced in style” is a good indication that on at least one occasion, those in the vanguard of church music went too far from their roots. But this one example seems merely to confirm the overall success of the Methodist Book Concern in keeping new and appropriate musical works in the church.