

Through all the World the Echo Bounds...

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Through all the World the Echo Bounds...
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## From the Editors

We are pleased to present to the singing public a new issue of The Trumpet. Its songs have been gathered in from the United Kingdom and the United States, from North and South. We hope that classes of singing friends, in the range of tunes newly on offer here, will find more than the excuse they need to come together with open hearts and ears-in joint service to the warm fellow feeling enabled by the composers' work and by their own proper work of forming a congregation in "sweet communion" (as Christopher Coughlin reminds us in his essay for this issue, "The Importance of Listening").

The songs in this issue testify to a growing interest among Sacred Harp singers in sharing new songs and arrangements, introducing seven new composers, along with eight veteran contributors. Composers new to The Trumpet run the gamut from long-familiar presences in the hollow square to the two youngest composers yet featured (The Christian's Entreaty and Centre Hall were authored at the ages of seventeen and nine, respectively). Our new issue's composers have taken lyrical inspiration from a diversity of interesting sources ranging from Moby-Dick (JONAH) to a "new book" song known in bluegrass circles (When I Die, I'll Live Again) to contemporary verse written by a fellow singer (Soldiers' Home) to camp meeting lyrics (We'll Land On Shore) to a section of Tate and Brady's Psalm 42 different from the verses we know in Converting Grace. We also present the firstever publication of a song from more than two hundred years ago, Truman S. Wetmore's WashingTON, which was previously only available in manuscript form.
"I can shout, and I can sing, / Make His praises gladly ring!" Enjoy!

- The Editors ed@singthetrumpet.com


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## Old Paths: Truman S. Wetmore

## By David Warren Steel, Oxford, Mississippi

Truman Spencer Wetmore (1774-1861) spent nearly all his life in the rural community of Winchester, Connecticut, where he pursued a long career as a physician. Between 1798 and 1807, nine of his compositions were published in tunebooks compiled by Asahel Benham and Stephen Jenks. Two of these, America and Florida, are still sung from The Sacred Harp.

The largest source of Wetmore's music is a manuscript, now in The Newberry Library, Chicago, entitled "Republican Harmony: containing The Rudiments of Psalmody; Together With a Collection of Church Music. By Truman S. Wetmore." The formal title and the promise of a rudiments section (which is absent from the surviving version) suggest that Wetmore intended to publish his collection. The book contains 132 pages of music; each opening consists of a single four-stave system of music, extending across the central fold. In its present state "Republican Harmony" contains 55 compositions and four incomplete tunes, over half of them (25) claimed by Wetmore himself. Most of the remaining tunes appear to be the work of relatively obscure composers from northwestern Connecticut, though there is also a group of eight tunes (by Benham, Morgan, Read, Swan and Brownson) previously published in Benham's Federal Harmony (1790).

Wetmore had an abundant gift for melody, often producing tunes reminiscent of folk song, both in modal structure and ornamentation. His melodic imagination frequently outran his ability to control and relate simultaneous melodic lines in a coherent harmonic texture. His unorthodox use of accented dissonance, unisons and heterophonic effects (see The Makers of the Sacred Harp, page 43, for an analysis of one of his tunes) shows an uncompromising sense of melodic line that occasionally conflicts with harmonic considerations. His careful setting of texts demonstrates a ready knowledge of and profound affection for sacred and elegiac poetry which Wetmore shared with his contemporaries.

Among Wetmore's most successful efforts are two tunes, Florida and Sylvia (Shenandoah Harmony, page 396), whose origins are associated with biographical anecdotes. The first emerged from a personal iv
confrontation with almost certain death, while the second was a personal outpouring grief at the death of his wife less than six months after their marriage, an event that led him toward a career in medicine, as well as his legal adoption of his wife's surname as his own middle name. The association of such tunes with these personal events belies the workaday image that the modern term "tunesmith" conjures up; the compositions of Morgan, Swan, Wetmore and others show how even the most meagerly trained provincial composers sought to achieve the greatest possible range of expression within the bounds of a distinctive but limited musical language.

The death of George Washington on 14 December 1799 prompted a national outpouring of public grief, expressed in countless poetic and musical tributes and in memorial observances in nearly every city and town in the nation. One such poetic tribute was read or sung at a 27 December ceremony in Hartford, and was published on 30 December in the Connecticut Courant. A musical setting of this hymn by Stephen Jenks (Mount Vernon, Sacred Harp, page 110) soon appeared, which may have been sung at local gatherings. Wetmore's setting, entitled Washington, may have served a like purpose in his own community. Though never published until now, it appears in "Republican Harmony" and in two manuscript copybooks by Ishmael Spicer, a singing-master active in the Hudson Valley. Like Jenks's setting, the music is a fuging-tune in the "flat key" (minor mode); unlike Jenks's it sets only a single quatrain of the poem. The style is similar to that of Wetmore's America. The opening six notes of the treble and bass are identical; the fuging section, in typical Connecticut fashion, includes three repeated notes, and the treble, which enters last, continues its text over sustained notes in the other parts. In measure 10 , the alto $B$ clashes with C in other parts, but all parts remain melodic.

In "Republican Harmony" an additional quatrain follows the music. This is clearly not part of the original poem: its rhyme scheme is $A B A B$ instead of $A A B B$. It may be the work of Wetmore himself:
Ye pleasant seats on Vernon's mount,
Ye groves and vines that flourish there,
Within your seats will men recount
The deeds of Washington the fair.

## Opinion: The Importance of Listening

By Christopher Coughlin, Charles Town, West Virginia

There are a number of pithy sayings that new singers will come across when initially navigating the shape-note community. One I remember hearing quite soon after I began singing was, "If you can hear the person on your left or your right, you're not singing loud enough!" At the time, as a callow and vivacious singer, this advice felt like a license to dive into this singing headlong. It almost didn't matter whether I was completely correct in singing or not, as long as I was fully contributing to the general sonic wave created by the class. However, as I began to travel to a greater number of singings across the United States and Europe, and moved from the back bench forward, this adage didn't seem to hold true. Those occupying the front-most seats in the square were, in fact, listening to their neighbors-and doing so quite actively. The cohesion that I had always felt defined a good singing was established, it seemed, by the thoughtful interactions and careful attention of those talented singers occupying seats in the front of the square.

Listening is a practice that has been enshrined in the rudiments of shape-note tunebooks for well over a century and a half. Writing in the rudiments of the 1860 Sacred Harp, B.F. White noted, "It is by no means necessary... that good singers should sing very loud. Each one should sing so soft...as will admit the other parts to be distinctly heard. [If] the singers of any one are so loud that they cannot hear the other parts, the parts are not rightly proportioned and ought to be altered." Additionally, William Walker noted when writing in the rudiments for the 1866 Christian Harmony that singers ought to "[mold] the voices together in each part, so that, when numbers are singing together in concert, there should appear to be in each part one uniform voice." The purpose of listening in these historical contexts was to accurately render this then-new music in the way intended by the composer, as well as to sing with the utmost beauty to the glory of God. In singing in contemporary contexts, the words of these rudiments still hold true. While technical mastery of such elements as rhythm and pitch is fundamentally important, in order for a singing to coalesce in that way that makes this music so uniquely striking, each singer must be attentive to the overall dynamics of every other singer, to the best of his or her ability.

In communal singing, emphasis is placed on the congregation, rather than the individual. Singing loudly, in competition with those around oneself, is the antithesis of what this music and tradition intended. The practice of "out-singing" others leads dangerously toward making the experience of singing solely about oneself, with little regard to all the rest gathered in mutual love. Being the one that is heard the most clearly isn't as important as contributing fully and correctly to the singing-keeping the class together and interlocked. From personal experience, I've found that the louder one sings, the easier it is to fall off pitch, to lose rhythm (especially by holding notes too long), and to be ignorant of those singing around oneself. Of course, rarely is this blindness intentional-it's easy to get caught up in the moment, particularly when the class is full of energetic singers. When singing with a full, firm voice one is prone to stay with the class, and can experience the true sense of community that was intended by this music. Shouting and competing with others creates unnecessary noise and changes the dynamic of the singing. The greatest joy should be found in the square, where everyone can see and interact with one another, and the sense of selfish individuality is left behind.

Shape-note music is, as Funk wrote in the rudiments of the Harmonia Sacra, "sweetly tuned and performed in rhythmical order... rich, mellifluent, melodious, and harmonious." As singers, we strive to make singings enjoyable experiences for all in attendance, catering to any who choose to join. Singing, therefore, should be a reflection of this communal experience, and listening, the base. Respect for all who have gathered there to make a joyous noise with one another is most fully achieved by being in sweet communion with each voice present-holding each in regard and love.
Chris Coughlin is an avid shape note singer from near Portland, Maine. Thoroughly enamored with our tradition, Chris has spent much of the past year singing around the United States, Canada, and Europe.

## WE'LL LAND ON SHORE. C.M.

G Minor Traditional camp meeting lyrics.

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JONAH.

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## BRIGHTON (TIVEY'S NOTEBOOK). C.M.D.


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## DANIEL. C.M.D.

D Minor Charles Wesley, 1762; Daniel 12:13
DANIEL.
Bill Hollingsworth, 2013.

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## DANIEL. Concluded.



## DELUGE. P.M.

## E Minor Tate and Brady, 1696.


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## DELUGE. Concluded.



## ROSCOE. C.M.

E Minor John R. Daily, 1902
And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself;

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## WHEN I DIE I'LL LIVE AGAIN.

B $^{b}$ Major James Rowe, 1924.
Ernest Rippetoe, 1924; arr. David Wright, 2014.

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WHEN I DIE I'LL LIVE AGAIN. Concluded.

(I'll live a - gain.)

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## CHILDREN OF A KING. C.M.D.


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HEARNE. 8,6,8,6,8,8.
F Major Josiah Conder, c. 1818.
"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD,
Mary Huffman, 2014 and teachest him out of thy law."-Psalm 94:12

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## CENTRE HALL. S.M.D.

Faiz J. Wareh, 2014.
B $^{\text {b }}$ Major Isaac Watts, 1707.

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CENTRE HALL. Concluded.


GIPSY HILL. P.M.
G Major John Newton, alt., 1779.
for Erin Johnson-Hill and Ed Paton-Williams
Duane Nasis, 2014.

3. Through ma-ny dan - gers toils and snares I have, I have al - rea-dy come;'Tis gracehasbrought me safe thus far And'twill be grace will lead mehome.

4. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and oh,when mor - tal life shall cease; I shall po-sess with-in the veil A life of joy, of joyand peace.
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The man that seeks thy And since my glo - rious

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THE CHRISTIAN'S ENTREATY. P.M.
A ${ }^{b}$ Major Battle's Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs, 1814.
C. Woods, 2014.

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## SOLDIERS' HOME. C.M.

F\# Minor Barbara Hohenstein, 2012.

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\text { G. J. Hoffman, } 2012 .
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## BUCK STREET. C.M.

Rebecca Wright, 2014.

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