

# THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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## CONTEMPORARY VIRGINIA COMPOSERS

VIRGINIA has about thirty composers of recognized merit, although she is scarcely aware of their existence. Not even our prominent musicians know of them, and the composers themselves do not seem to know their contemporaries.

Should anyone wish to know who the Virginia composers are, he would probably find many difficulties in his search, for no books nor magazine articles have been written concerning this subject.

In searching for the material for this paper, I have written to the composers themselves, thus obtaining first-hand information. Those who graciously replied to my requests for material are indicated in the list by an asterisk before the name.

This list of Virginia's composers came from Mrs. James H. Hirsch of the National Federation of Music Clubs; she in turn obtained it from Mr. C. M. Tremaine, director of the National Bureau for the Advancement of Music. The list follows:

- Hans L. Bilger, Roanoke
- Charles Borjeo, Norfolk
- \*Annabel Morris Buchanan, Marion
- W. J. Burleigh, Petersburg
- Alice Cornelius, Collands
- Ernest Crosby, Richmond
- \*Evelyn M. Davis, Stewart
- \*Arthur Fickenscher, Charlottesville
- Mrs. Ward Freeman, Norfolk
- J. Lamont Galbraith, Richmond
- Katherine Miller Gunn, Richmond
- \*William Edwin Haesche, Hollins
- F. Flaxington Harker, Richmond
- Kathleen Kelly, Bristol
- \*Wythe Leigh Kinsolving, Richmond

- \*Janie MacMillan Lewis, Fredericksburg
- \*Leslie Loth, Richmond
- \*Carrie Norvall, Bristol
- \*John Powell, Richmond
- \*Harry Rogers Pratt, Charlottesville
- \*Eugen Putnam, Danville
- Catherine Roberts, Lynchburg
- Virginia Roper, Norfolk
- Sam Simmons, Norfolk
- \*Samuel Sours, Chatham
- Harry Vanderhersch, Norfolk
- \*Charles Insco Williams, Fredericksburg

### ANNABEL MORRIS BUCHANAN

Annabel Morris Buchanan (Mrs. John P. Buchanan) has written a number of art songs, sacred songs, and encore songs. Some have been used by concert artists, among them Miss Marie Tiffany, Miss Sue Howard, and Miss Louise Stallings. Mme. Francesca Zorad and Mr. Charles Marshall have accepted the dedication of several. Mrs. Buchanan was a pupil of Chas. W. London, of London Conservatory, Dallas, Texas, where she had a full course in piano, violin, and theory. After her graduation in 1907 she had special courses in piano with Edward Baxter Perry and Emil Leibling. After studying alone for some years she went to New York for courses in composition with Dr. Cornelius Rybver, and in organ with Dr. William S. Carl. Some of her best known songs are *Come, Pansies*, and *Peace*, published by H. W. Gray & Co.; *Tonight*, published by Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge; *A Place of Dreams* and *An Old Song* and *The Lamp* published by the Edward Morris Publishing Co.

### EVELYN M. DAVIS

Mrs. Evelyn M. Davis, a semi-classical song writer, has written the music to a num-

ber of poems by our modern poets. Among them are *The Road to Home* by Joyce Kilmer; *All in the Day's Work*, by Edgar Guest, and *Can't Help Thinking*, also by Guest.

Mrs. Davis received her musical education under Mrs. Ernest Trent of Washington, and Professor Jacob Reinhard of Richmond, graduating from Woman's College with the B. M. degree.

ARTHUR FICKENSCHER

Arthur Fickenscher, head of the McIntire School of Music of the University of Virginia, has not only been lauded at home, but he has won the praise of German critics for his composition, *Willowood*, written for voice, violin, and piano. One critic wrote, "This work shows power in the handling of all the mediums, coupled with a poetic gift seldom heard in our modern music." Another said, "Strength, beauty, and musicianship are combined in a composition of rare melodic outline and subtle harmonization, which, however, never becomes too involved."

Professor Fickenscher is now working on a symphonic poem for the augmented orchestra, and about forty minutes will be required to play this composition.

WILLIAM EDWIN HAESCHE

William E. Haesche, of Hollins, has won an important place among American composers. After graduating from Yale with a B. M. degree, he studied violin with Bernard Listmann, piano with Ernest Perabo, and composition and theory with H. W. Parker. He was one of the organizers of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra. At present he is in charge of the theoretical courses at Hollins College.

His orchestral works are *A Faust Idylle*, *Frudthjox*, and *Inglebord* (symphonic poem and prize composition). *Springtime* (overture), *Symphony in A-flat*, *Young Lovel's Bride* (women's chorus and orchestra), a symphonetta in four movements, and

*The South* (symphonic poem). Other compositions are *Sonata in E Minor* for violin and piano (prize composition), pieces for piano and violin, as well as songs and anthems.

WYTHE LEIGH KINSOLVING

A composer unique in the type of work he produces is Wythe Leigh Kinsolving, of Richmond, a writer of sacred music, marches, waltzes, and music for pageants. He has written *University of Virginia March*, *Virginia Waltz*, *Reverie*, *Two Bright Eyes*, *The Sea Dream*, *Violets*, and *My Little Lady*. The first two have been published by the Music Publishing Co. of Philadelphia. He has also written the original pageant music used in St. Paul's Church at Jackson, Mich.

JANIE MACMILLAN LEWIS

Janie MacMillan Lewis (Mrs. H. Warder Lewis) is a writer of semi-classic and patriotic songs. She has had four of her songs published herself. They are *The Pride of Our Country*, *Dear Heart When Near Thee*, *Why Me?*, and *I Love You, Virginia*. The last song, a new state song, has been used by Mrs. Perkins, former president of the Virginia Federation of Music Clubs, at Petersburg during the convention.

LESLIE LOTH

A composer who has won international fame because of his pianistic and creative abilities is Leslie Loth. His studies in piano and composition have been pursued in both Europe and America. However, he, like most artists, is self-taught.

His compositions are about three hundred in number and are published by G. Schirmer, Oliver Ditson Co., John Church Co., Carl Fischer, White-Smith, Clayton F. Summy, Arthur P. Schmidt, Theodore Presser Co., Enoch & Sons, Composers Music Corporation, American Composers, Inc., Edward Schuberth & Co., Hatch Music Co., Willis Music Co., C. C. Church, and Boston Music Co.

His works range from easy teaching pieces and other teaching material to large orchestral works for concert performances. Among them are works for the piano, voice, violin, and trio, as well as operettas, quartets, and orchestral compositions. Those for the piano range from imaginative works for young pianists to brilliant concert numbers for the virtuoso.

Mr. Loth's first symphony was first produced in Breslau, Germany, in 1914. Other symphonic works and smaller works have been played in both America and Europe.

The *Schlesische Zeitung* of Breslau says of his *First Symphony*, "The composer employs a rich variety of mood pictures. In building up and developing climaxes he has attained splendid results. The work ends with magnificent rhythmic sway." The *New York Musical Courier* hails him as the "second MacDowell."

#### CARRIE NORVALL

A composer of the German *leid* song, the art song, and the simple ballad is Miss Carrie Norvall. Her studies of piano, theory, and music history were directed by Professor H. Eugene Parsons at Sullins College. After her graduation there she continued to study alone. Unfortunately, her songs have never been offered for publication. They have been sung by local singers in the Bristol Music Club in several recitals and in a neighboring town. Some of her best ones are *A Little Gentleman*, *O Sand! O Sky!*, *Come Choose the Road and Away*, *One Lake So Calm and Placid*, *Raining*, *The Night Hath a Thousand Eyes*, *A Southern Lullaby*, *Stars With Little Golden Sandals*, and *Lass and Lad*.

#### JOHN POWELL

Perhaps the foremost of our Virginia composers is John Powell of Richmond, although much of his fame rests upon his powers at the piano.

Mr. Powell studied music at first with his sister, Mrs. Brackenbrough. Later he

studied piano and harmony with F. C. Hahr of Richmond. At the University of Virginia, where he took the B. A. degree, he played the pipe organ. Mr. Powell then went abroad to Vienna and was a pupil of Leschetizky, pianist, and of Nawratil in composition.

In 1907 John Powell made his *début* in Berlin. He later included Vienna, London, and Paris, and still later, all the leading cities of Europe and America.

As a composer, he ranks as one of the leaders in America. He has written twenty-eight large works for piano, violin, stringed quartets, overtures, and symphonic dramas. Some of the best known are *In the South* (piano suite), *Variations and Double Fugue*, *At the Fair* (suite), *Sonate Psychologique*, *Violin Concerto in E-Major*, *Sonata Teutonica*, *Sonata Virginianesque* (piano and violin), *Rhapsodie Negre* (piano and orchestra), *In Old Virginia* (overture for orchestra).

#### HARRY ROGERS PRATT

Harry Rogers Pratt of the University of Virginia has written for the piano, voice, and orchestra. These compositions have been published by G. Schirmer and the Composers Music Corporation. He studied at Harvard under Percy Goetschius and George W. Chadwick of Boston. His songs have appeared on the program of Paul Althouse.

#### EUGEN PUTNAM

Eugen Putnam, quite a unique figure in the musical world, has gained a position through his folk-song settings in order to prove to the public and to his fellow musicians that a given theme can be handled according to the laws of classic composition, and at the same time preserve its individuality.

Mr. Putnam studied under Ernest Hutcheson, Percy Goetschius, Joseph Henius, and Lewis Hubbard, all of New York; and in Paris under Camille Decreus and Isadore Philipp. His compositions are for the piano

and voice. His *Quill Dance*, *Novelette*, and *The Humoresque* (for piano) have all excited much favorable comment by the New York critics.

Besides songs and piano solos he has written an oratoria, *Jehovah's Servant*. His works are published by Carl Fischer.

*The Humoresque* has been played extensively throughout America by Harold Henry. The *Quill Dance* was introduced to the American public by Edwin Hughes at the American National Music Festival. The *Novelette* is being featured on the programs of Leslie Hodgson, pianist, of New York.

#### SAMUEL SOURS

A composer of the old school is Samuel Sours, whose works as yet unpublished are for the voice and piano. He was a pupil of Howard Mather of Peabody Conservatory. His *Nocturne* and *Waltze in A* were played in Charlottesville at the Virginia Composers Concert, and his *Octave Study* and *Emylean Waltz* have been used at Judson College in Marion, Alabama.

#### CHARLES INSCO WILLIAMS

Charles Insko Williams, losing his voice because of illness, and consequently all hopes for an operatic career, turned his attention to composition, and in forty years composed over three hundred works for voice, violin, stringed quartet, trios (one for the orchestra), a three-act operetta, and a large number of solos as well as choruses for the Episcopal service. His earliest musical training was given him by his mother, who was then a concert pianist. Serious study began under Dr. Mason. Later he studied singing with Franz Arens of Berlin.

Unfortunately, Mr. Williams never offered any of his work for publication, except for private distribution among his friends. Some have been produced from the manuscripts by Max Heinrichs, Eanes and Nordica, the Schliewen Quartet, and Olivia Hillard Pierce.

The *Reverie in F* in particular is used by

artists. A copy of it was sent to Edward Greig, who was so impressed by it that he invited Mr. Williams to come to Bergen and write under his criticism, an invitation he was never able to accept.

#### HYMN WRITERS

In addition to the list of composers obtained through the National Federation of Music Clubs, I have discovered a group of song and hymn writers, all of whom were born in Rockingham County. They are:

Jacob Henry Hall, Harrisonburg  
Ephraim Timothy Hildebrand, Roanoke  
Anthony Johnson Showalter, Dalton, Ga.  
J. Henry Showalter, West Milton, Ohio  
James Hott Ruebush, Dayton  
William H. Ruebush, Dayton

#### JACOB HENRY HALL

Jacob Henry Hall, musician, composer, author, and publisher, studied music at the Normal Music School at New Market, Va., to prepare himself for teaching.

His work has been the collection of songs and hymns into volumes, and the composition of gospel hymns. Some of his better known publications are *Hall's Songs of Home*, *Choir Anthems*, *The Vocal Gem*, *Crowning Day*, *The Normal Banner*, etc. Some of his most popular gospel songs are *The Gospel Invitation*, *Open the Windows to Heaven*, *Helpers Are Needed*, and *Hurry and Tell Him*. He has also written a biography entitled *Gospel Song and Hymn Writers*.

#### ANTHONY JOHNSON SHOWALTER

Anthony Johnson Showalter, author and composer, studied with B. C. Unseld and H. R. Palmer, New York, P. J. Merges, Philadelphia, and Dr. G. F. Root and F. W. Root, Chicago. He also spent a summer in England, France, and Germany, studying methods. He is the author of many books on harmony and the rudiments of music. His most popular composition is the gospel song, *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*, which has been published in more than one

thousand collections of songs, and translated into every language where Christianity is known.

J. HENRY SHOWALTER

J. Henry Showalter, singer, teacher, composer, and publisher, has written hundreds of beautiful songs and anthems. The best of these are *At the Golden Gate of Prayer*, *The Blood of the Lamb*, and *Breathe Upon Us, Holy Spirit*. He is the brother of Anthony Johnson Showalter.

EPHRAIM TIMOTHY HILDEBRAND

Ephraim Timothy Hildebrand is a teacher, editor, publisher, and singer, as well as a composer of music. He has written many sacred and secular pieces. His best known one is *Hills of Tennessee*.

JAMES HOTT RUEBUSH

James Hott Ruebush received his musical education at the Grand Conservatory of Music in New York. He later continued his studies under Bartlette, Root, and Palmer. He has headed the music departments of several colleges of the South. His best known works are *Choir and Concert*, and *Glory Songs*.

WILLIAM H. RUEBUSH

William H. Ruebush, the brother of James Hott Ruebush, has written a number of popular pieces for male and mixed voices. He is the author of the music to the beautiful state song, *Old Virginia*.

BENJAMIN CARL UNSELD

Benjamin Carl Unsel, editor and composer, was born in Shepherdstown, W. Va., at the time when that town was a part of Virginia. He was taught by Dr. Eben Taiujee, Dr. Wm. Mason, James G. Webb, and Theodore Seward. He is the progenitor of the system of normal music schools. At present he is the principal of the Vaughan Normal School of Music and editor of the *Musical Visitor*. He has edited over twenty musical works, including the *Temple Star*, the *Tonic Solfa*, the *Music*

*Reader*, *Progress in Song*, and *Practical Voice Culture*. His song, *Twilight Is Stealing*, is sung by hundreds of people, and is included in many collections.

HELEN M. WALKER

## INTERSCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATIONS

*What They Do and What They Are*

INTERSCHOLASTIC press associations offer an increasing evidence of the development of journalism as a profession. Their chief purpose appears to be the advancement of journalistic work in schools and colleges through the co-operation of their members. The associations are interested in improving school papers and in providing worth while experience for staff members.

My observations are based upon a few of the existing organizations. I have first listed the associations with which I have had correspondence and in a second list have placed other similar associations. These lists were made available through the courtesy of N. W. Ayer and Son, Advertising Experts, 300 Chestnut street, Philadelphia, Pa.

### List 1

Central Interscholastic Press Association  
Columbia Scholastic Press Association  
Iowa College Press Association  
Minnesota High School Press Association  
North Carolina Collegiate Press Association  
College Press Association of South Carolina  
Southern Interscholastic Press Association  
Western Conference Editorial Association  
Women's Intercollegiate Press Association

### List 2

American Association of College News Bureaus