

PROPOSAL

for

A Bibliography of Plays

Printed in the United States, 1800 — 1870,

with Particular Attention to the Music They Contain

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ABSTRACT

Proposed is a study in two major sections: an annotated list of plays printed in the United States between 1800 and 1870, and an annotated list of the songs and incidental music associated with them. The principal bibliography will be restricted to works involving two or more characters, printed in English, and clearly intended for performance on the stage (thereby excluding prologues, addresses, many opera libretti, and purely literary works).

For each play, the main entry will include information pertinent to its first publication, an explanation of subsequent issues, a description of their contents, lists of the songs and incidental music called for in the text, and additional comments by the editor as necessary. When different editions of a play differ substantially, each will have a separate entry. The song list will include information about authorship, publication, performance history, and other relevant details. In the case of song parodies (very common at this time), information about the parody will generally appear under the play in which it was performed; information about the original will appear in the song list.

The bibliography will be compiled primarily through library searches and by checking catalogues and advertisements of publishers known to have printed plays. Because of the great overlap between the United States and England, information will be gathered both in America and Britain, though the bibliography itself will be limited to American imprints. Other research techniques (searches of newspaper files, theatre records, papers and manuscripts, etc.) will be employed sufficiently to ensure that the final list is as exhaustive as possible.

RATIONALE

Research into American theatre history is probably more difficult for the period between 1800 and 1870 than for any other time. A major stumbling block has been the lack of bibliographic control over the most fundamental of source materials: the plays themselves. Roger Stoddard has estimated that about eight hundred plays were published in this period: a broad and representative collection of American entertainments that remains largely unexplored.

For the years before 1800, the exhaustive bibliographies of Charles Evans and his followers, coupled with a few specialized studies of their theatrical contents, afford the scholar a reasonably complete summary of materials available. After 1870, the continuing lists of Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States provide the necessary raw data, though difficulties of access and interpretation remain. But between those dates there is no single source to which a researcher can turn, and only a very few scattered articles that are of any help whatsoever.

Yet this period was one of the most crucial in the history of the American theatre. During it there occurred a major reorientation of the drama in society, perhaps best symbolized by the Astor Place riots of 1849. Partly as a result, the theatre and its audience fragmented; a wide variety of genres and styles became popular. Minstrelsy, melodrama, extravagances, parodies, musical comedy — all were of major importance during this time, and all contributed significantly to developments in the twentieth century. The study of any of these genres, either in themselves or as the sources from which modern theatrical entertainment sprung, must rest at least partially on published scripts: it is crucial, then, that a detailed catalogue of these be available.

The diverse idioms of the nineteenth century did have certain characteristics in common, however. Perhaps the most important was their extensive reliance on music.

All major theatres at the time had resident orchestras to provide an overture and incidental music for the evening's entertainment, and the majority of plays incorporated songs, dances, and other music directly into the action. The relationship between the theatre and popular music was intimate and compelling, and the study of nineteenth century music in America ought properly to entail the study of its theatre. Again, though much work has been recently done on American popular music, the period in question has remained one of the least responsive; and again, a primary reason has been the lack of bibliographic control over source materials. Ultimately, what is required is a bibliography of nineteenth century American sheet music, but this is a staggering task (though one that should be undertaken soon). In the meantime, an accurate picture of the songs and incidental music associated with theatrical entertainment would be of major help.

The bibliography proposed would address the needs of both theatre and music historians. A full and accurate description of plays printed during the period would be coupled with a carefully researched list of the songs they contain or make reference to. Exhaustively indexed and annotated, these two lists would allow researchers to easily determine, for example: what percentage of plays in any given year were of a particular type; what plays were related as sequels or parodies; what songs were most commonly performed or parodied in the theatre, and in what circumstances; what songs were typical of particular genres or playwrights; in what situations incidental music was required; which plays were associated with which actors or actresses; in which plays a particular character or character type appeared; and, of course, the publishing and performance history associated with any play or song in particular.

Two features of the bibliography require special mention. First: the American theatre is inextricably interlinked with theatre in Britain; this was especially true of published drama in the nineteenth century because of the vagaries of copyright laws. Hence the bibliography will incorporate for each song or play information about English publication and performance as well as American. Although technically restricted to imprints from the States, the study should therefore be of nearly as much use to British scholars as to Americans.

Second: the best possible way to understand a theatrical piece is to perform it, at the very least in a reading. Performances and readings are difficult, however, if they require access to rare nineteenth century editions of plays and songs; however, many scripts and songs have been reprinted in more recent collections. To encourage reconstructions and revivals, and to help interested readers whose access to source materials is limited, the entry for each play or song will include citations of modern editions or reprints whenever these are available.

In concluding, it is only fair to point out that a very large number of plays and entertainments from this time were never published at all, primarily because authors generally retained no performance rights after publication. Even major dramatic works sometimes remained in manuscript; a prime example is John Augustus Stone's Metamora, only recently reconstructed from several fragmentary sources. However, a careful estimate of the most popular (that is, the most frequently produced) plays in America indicates that these were published, almost without exception; indeed, it suggests that to some extent the most studied plays from the period have not been the most representative.

To summarize: for the years between 1800 and 1870, the entire body of published plays — the most basic source material for theatre research — has so far remained imperfectly catalogued and largely inaccessible. The study of American drama and the society of which it was a part can not proceed accurately without examining these fairly and completely. The single most important tool for such an examination would be a full and comprehensive bibliographical summary. It is this tool that the proposed study will provide.

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PRECIS

I. Music and the theatre, 1800-1870

An interpretive essay summarizing discoveries made in the course of compiling the bibliography.

II. Introduction to the bibliography

Scope, purpose, limitations. How to use the study.

III. The plays

A. Play list

Ordered alphabetically by author, then alphabetically by title. Each title numbered (as P156, P157, etc.); if there are significant variations in different editions, each is a separate entry with a scripted number (P156a, P156b, etc.) and the differences are noted in the comments. Entries follow the following format. In normal type:

Title. Play type (as given on the title page); number of acts (scenes). Publication data, possibly abbreviated (referring to series lists, below). Pagination.

US: US premiere data

UK: UK premiere data

fp: data on first publication

fpUS (or fpUK): data on first US
(or UK) publication, if different
from above

mod ed/repr/in: current sources in
which play can be found

Thereafter, in small type:

Additional information of interest found in the imprint (other plays cited, prefaces, illustrations, cast lists, etc.). Editor's comments and annotations.

Then follows information on the music in the play: first the full score, if published, cited by its number in the music list; then incidental music, if published, similarly cited; then individual songs. For the songs additional information is given as follows (in normal type):

No. (act, scene, type): first line

flc: first line of chorus, if important

US: US publication data, if a parody and published as such

UK: UK publication data, if a parody and published as such

Finally, in smaller type:

References to music other than the above in stage directions or in text, and any editorial comments required on the music.

B. Plays in series

Many publishers issued plays in series or in nonce collections. For each of these, a short-title list of the plays contained is provided. Each series has an abbreviation, so that bibliographic information in the main list, above, can be summarized compactly (eg, FMD 45 refers the reader to play number 45 in "French's Minor Drama"). Format and publishing history are summarized briefly for the series as a whole; a publication date is assigned (when possible) to each play individually.

C. Collections, reprints, and other sources

A list of modern editions, reprints, and other current sources for plays, ordered by abbreviations used in the main entries, above.

IV. The Music

A. Music list

Ordered by title; variant titles (except first lines) included in main entry list but cross-referenced to the principal title. If the score to a show was published in full in a single imprint, there is an entry under the show title itself. Incidental music (marches, dances, etc.) is also entered under the show title unless the music predates the show, in which case it is entered under its own title and cross-referenced from the show. Texts set to more than one melody (eg, "The Old Oaken Bucket") are listed separately for each melody used and cross-referenced. Each entry is numbered (S48, S49, etc; S48a, S48b, etc. for sub-entries under a single show or text title); for each information is given as follows:

No. Title (Variant titles)

fl: first line

flc: first line of chorus, if any

In smaller type:

w: author or source of words

m: composer or source of music

US: American publication (see below)

UK: British publication (see below)

fp: first publication

fpUS (or fpUK): first US (or UK) publication, if different from above

mod ed/repr/in: current sources in which song can be found

In large type again:

performed: plays in which song was sung as printed, cited by playlist number

parodied: plays in which song was parodied

cited: plays in which song was referred to briefly, or only a fragment sung

Finally, in small type:

Compiler's comments and annotations

If there were multiple imprints, "US" and "UK" above indicate the earliest publication associated with early performances of the song in the earliest of the shows listed ("performed"); or if none exist, the earliest publication of the text with them melody to which it was sung in the shows listed.

B. Music which is presumed lost

Ordered by first line, if a song, or by show title, if an incidental piece; or if the music for an entire show is lost, entered by show title. Each entry numbered (L12, L13, etc.), with information as follows:

No. First line

In small type:

w: author or source of words
m: composer or source of music

In large type again:

performed: as above
parodied: as above
cited: as above

In small type:

compiler's comments; in particular,
the evidence that the song is in
fact lost.

C. Song texts for which the music is unidentified

Ordered by first line; each entry numbered (U34, U35, etc.). Number of play, first stanza, and chorus (if any) given as follows, in hopes that others may spot the music eventually:

No. First stanza, in full
 Chorus, if any, in full

performed: as above

D. Collections, reprints, and other sources

A list of modern editions, reprints, and other current sources for music, ordered by abbreviations used in the main entries, above.

V. Appendices

A. Plays chronologically

Three short-title lists, cross-referenced to the main entries, each chronological: the first of first US performances, the second of first UK performances, the third of first US publication (including pre-1800 imprints when relevant).

B. Categories of plays

Listings, using main entry numbers only, of plays belonging to each of the categories in several groups: tragedies, burlesques, melodramas, etc., as listed on the imprint itself; plays with and without music; plays according to the location in which they're set; plays which are parodies, sequels, etc.; plays containing ethnic or racial stereotypes; and any other such categories as may appear useful as the bibliography is compiled.

VI. Indices

All references will be to entry numbers. In index A, entries which are parodies, sequels, or related works will be cited in parentheses for each title. Index B will include character types: soldiers, doctors, nurses, etc. Index D will include both parodies and original versions; for the former, the reference will be to the play; for the latter, to the music. The general index will include theatres, topical references, and other miscellaneous items, and will also index the interpretive essay and introduction.

[] []
[]
[] []

SAMPLE ENTRY

A rather unimportant play with no peculiar features has been chosen to illustrate the various sections of the bibliography. Some information about this play and its songs is still lacking; brackets indicate editorial additions or surmises, or enclose comments on areas in which research remains to be done. Double parentheses set off remarks about this illustration, which would not appear in an actual entry.

Play list (IIIA above)

The main entry would read as follows:

NORTHALL, WILLIAM KNIGHT ([?] - [?])

P481

Macbeth Travestie. Burlesque; II(6,7). TMD 36 [ca. 1850?] =
FMD 36 [ca. 1858?]. [there may have been other issues, which
would appear here]. pp. [7]-36.

US: NY, Olympic Theatre, Oct. 16, 1843

UK: none [?]

fp: TMD 36

mod ed: ((Macbeth Travesite does not appear
in modern editions or reprints; if it
did, the reader would find here abbreviations
such as ALP14 or DAT.))

TMD [1], FMD [i]: also by Northall, "The Magic arrow," "Virginius Travestie," "King Cole."

TMD [3], omitted in FMD: Preface. Play written for Olympic Theatre; success due primarily to Mr. Mitchell; Mrs. Booth also commended; author disclaims literary pretensions.

TMD [5], FMD [ii]: Cast, Olympic Theatre, October 16, 1843:

Macbeth.....Mr. Mitchell
 Macduff....." Graham
 Banquo....." Clark
 Duncan....." Everard
 Malcolm....." Dennison
 Lennox....." Dunn
 Rosse....." Jackson
 Seyton....." Levere
 Officer....." M'Kean
 Fleance.....Master Taylor
 Hecate.....Miss Taylor
 First Witch.....Mr. Nickinson
 Second Witch.....Mrs. Watts
 Third Witch.....Miss Clarke
 Lady Macbeth.....Mrs. Booth
 Gentlewoman.....Mrs. Everard

small
type

Nicholl records a Macbeth Travestie at the Strand, London, May 11, 1842; but this cannot be Northall's play if the latter was indeed written especially for the Olympic Theatre. There seems to have been a flurry of "Travesties" about this time ("Virginius Travestie," "Hamlet Travestie"), and it is likely the two "Macbeths" were unrelated. [This can be checked further in London.]

S142 (I, 2; air): Now let us roam, to see
his home

[S79] (I, 4; air): For we love him — we love
him — and who shall dare

S23 (I, 6; chorus): The King's been murdered
in his bed

S149 (II, 5; air): Go to bed, go to bed, Macbeth,
say I

[S151] (II, 7; finale): There is no luck about
the house

I, 2, opening: "Music and flourish."

II, 1: "Macbeth. What man dare, that I dare, e'en
though it were to tussle
With Shakespeare in a song, quite
a la Russell."

II, 2: "Music — Witches enter — they dance,
&c, and sing the music of the
original."

small
type

Plays in series (IIIB above)

In this section of the bibliography, the reader would find information about the play series abbreviated above as TMD and FMD, reading somewhat as follows:

FMD

French's Minor Drama

Samuel French took over The Minor Drama, published by William Taylor (see TMD, below), in the 1880's, and re-issued the plays under his own imprint. Eventually his own series encompassed 281 numbers, of which at least 206 were reissues of plays printed earlier by other publishers. [A more detailed description of the series would follow, discussing chronology, variant issues, and so forth.] French's standard title-pages read as follows:

- (A) French's Minor Drama / No. [-] /
[Title] / [type], in [number] acts. /
By [author] / To which are added, /
A Description of the Costumes — Cast
of the Characters — Entrances and Exits —
/ Relative Positions of the Performers
on the Stage, and the whole of the /
Stage Business. / New-York: / Samuel
French, / [address]
- (B) ((a second variety))
- (C) ((a third variety))
- .
- .
- .

FMD 1 ((here would begin the short-
 . title list of the plays in the
 . series))
 .
 .
 .
 FMD 36 W. K. Northall: Macbeth P481
 . Travestie (C)
 .

TMD The Minor Drama, issued by William Taylor

((A similar entry, list of title-page formats, and short-
 title list of the series would appear here.))

Collections, reprints, and other sources (IIIC above)

There are no reprints or modern editions of Macbeth Tra-
vestie, so nothing in the main entry would refer to this
 section of the bibliography. If the reader had been re-
 ferred, however, he would have encountered entries like
 the following:

- ALP America's Lost Plays, ed. Barnett H. Clark
 (Bloomington, Indiana University Press,
 1963-63; originally published 1940-41,
 Princeton University Press)
- DAT Dramas from the American Theatre, 1762-1909,
 ed. Richard Moody (Cleveland: World Pub-
 lishing Co., 1966)

Music list (IVA above)

Entries for the songs cited in the main entry above would
 appear as follows. The additional play numbers which appear
 below are arbitrarily assigned, but do represent other known
 occurrences of the music (P68, for instance, has been arbi-
 trarily assigned to Guy Mannering). Brackets and double paren-
 theses are used as before.

S23 Bruce's Address to his Army

fl: Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled

small
type

w: Robert Burns
 m: traditional Scottish, "Hey tutti taitie"
 ("Hey now the day dawes")
 US: William Dubois, New York, 1817 (arr. anon.)
 UK: Goulding D'Almaine Potter & Co., London,
 1816 (arr. Henry Bishop)
 fp: A Select Collection of Original Scottish
 Airs, 4th set, v. iii (George Thomson,
 London, 1801)
 fpUS: The Minstrel (F. Lucas, Baltimore, 1812)
 mod ed: SRB

performed: P68
 cited: P56
 parodied: P481

small
type

Although Burns himself intended that his
 text be set to "Hey tutti taitie", it was
 published several times to a different tune
 before Thomson, in response to public sen-
 timent, restored the original melody in
 his 1801 volume.

* * * * *

The Merry Swiss Boy, see The Swiss Boy

* * * * *

S79 The Old Arm Chair

fl: I love it, I love it, and who shall dare

w: Eliza Cook
 m: Henry Russell
 US: Oakes & Swan, Boston, 1840
 UK: [further research required in London]
 mod ed: MIA

cited: P56
 parodied: P481

* * * * *

Scots wha' hae wi' Wallace bled, see Bruce's Address
to his Army

* * * * *

S142 Some love to roam o'er the dark sea foam

fl: Some love to roam o'er the dark sea foam

w: Charles ackay

m: Henry Russell

US: Firth & Hall, New York, 1836

UK: [further research required in London]

in: Our Familiar Songs and Those Who MadeThem, ed. Helen Kendrick Johnson

(New York, Henry Holt and Company,

1909)

parodied: P481

* * * * *

S149 The Swiss Boy (The Merry Swiss Boy)fl: "Come arouse thee, arouse thee, my brave
Swiss boy" ("Steh nur auf, steh
nur auf, du Schweizerbu'")w: traditional Swiss [?]; English trans-
lation attributed (by Spaeth) to
William Ball

m: traditional Swiss ?

US: Dubois & Stodart, New York 1827 (arr.
Ignaz Moscheles)

UK: further research required

fp: no. 24 in Souvenir de la Suisse, ed.
P. J. Fries [?], Zurich, 182-?

further research required

mod ed: Der Wundergarten, ed. Walter Rein
and Hans Lang (Mainz, B. Schott,
1953) [not yet confirmed]

parodied: P481

* * * * *

S151 There's Nae Luck About the House

fl: But are ye sure the news is true

flc: There's nae luck about the house

w: attributed to Jean Adams

m: traditional Scottish; or Stephen
Clarke [further research required]US: The Scots Musical Museum (John Aitken,
Philadelphia, 1797)

UK: SMM, vol. i, 1787

repr: SMM

parodied: P481, P68

Music which is presumed lost (IVB above)

No songs from Macbeth Travestie are lost, so no entries in this section would refer to it. For an example of an entry here, we could draw from Micah Hawkins's play The Saw-Mill (assigned number P252, for purposes of illustration).

L65 We will be merry

w: Micah Hawkins
m: Micah Hawkins, arr. James Hewitt

performed: P252

William Sydney Mount, Hawkins's nephew and a celebrated painter, wrote that after Hawkins's death, "his good wife, a member of the Presbyterian Church, felt that she would be serving the Lord, by giving her servant his plays and writings in manuscript to heat the tea kettle with. . ." (Alfred Frankenstein, William Sydney Mount, p. 91)

Songs with unidentified music (IVC above)

The music is known for all the songs in Macbeth Travestie, so a reader concerned with it would have no cause to use this section. However, if one had started with the entry for John Brougham's Po-ca-hon-tas (play P82, let us say), one would find, for example:

U96 My love is like a raging hot volcano,
 Vesuvius in a fit of indigestion,
And if you are so cruel as to say no,
 Insane, oh! I shall be without a question.

performed: P82

Collections, reprints, and other sources (IVD above)

The list of modern editions, reprints, and so forth, would include the following items cited by abbreviation in the song entries given above:

- MIA Music in America, ed. W. Thomas Marocco and Harold Gleason (New York: Norton & Co., 1964)
- SMM The Scots Musical Museum, originally compiled by James Johnson (Hatboro, Pa: Folklore Associates, 1962; originally published 1787-1803)
- SRB The Songs of Robert Burns. James C. Dick. (Hatboro, Pa: Folklore Associates, 1962; originally published 1903)

Plays chronologically (VA above)

In each chronological list, Macbeth Travestie would appear in an appropriate location. For example, in the list of first US performances, there would be an entry like the following:

1843, October 16 NY: Olympic Macbeth Travestie (P481)

Categories of plays (VB above)

Macbeth Travestie would be listed in the following categories, and probably others as well: (let Shakespeare's Macbeth be P641)

Play type

Burlesques: P481

Plays and music

With song parodies: P481

With incidental music: P481, P641

Play location

Scotland: P481, P641

Parodies and Sequels

Shakespeare

Macbeth: P481Index to plays by title (VIA above)

Macbeth and Macbeth Travestie would be cross-indexed here, as follows:

Macbeth (W. Shakespeare): P641, (P481)Macbeth Travestie (W. K. Northall): P481, (P641)Index to characters in plays (VIB above)

The list of characters and character types would include, for example (the following is not inclusive, of course):

Banquo: P481, P641
 Macbeth: P481, P641
 Macduff: P481, P641
 witch(es): P481, P641

Index to actors and actresses (VIC above)

All the actors and actresses given in the cast list would be indexed here. Birth and death dates and full names would be provided eventually.

Booth, Mrs. ---- (? - ?): P481
 Clark, Mr. ---- (? - ?): P481
 Mitchell, Mr. William (-): P481

Index to songs by first line (VID above)

In listing the first lines, original texts would be cited by the song number; parodies, by the number of the play in which they appeared:

But are ye sure the news is true: S151
 Come arouse thee, arouse thee: S149
 For we love him — we love him: P481
 Go to bed, go to bed, Macbeth: P481
 I love it, I love it: S79
 The King's been murdered in his bed: P481
 Now let us roam, to see his home: P481
 Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled: S23
 Some love to roam: S142
 There is no luck about the house: P481
 There's nae luck about the house (chorus): S151

Index to composers, lyricists, and sources (VIE above)

Lyricists and composers given in the main entries would appear here. Lyricists who were also playwrights would be cited by play numbers. Included in this index would also be entries for geographical areas from which traditional tunes were taken. The following sample is not inclusive:

Burns, Robert S23
 Clarke, Stephen S151
 Cook, Eliza S79
 Northall, William Knight P481
 Russell, Henry S79, S142
 Scotland S23, S151
 Switzerland S149