

PIONEERS OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN JACKSON COUNTY: 1788-1979

by

DARCE TODD CHANDLER

(Under the Direction of Mary Leglar)

ABSTRACT

The pioneers of education in Jackson County, Georgia provided instruction in music long before it was incorporated into the Jackson County Public School System. Students who sought a formal arts education in Jackson County prior to 1979 were forced to seek out musical authority figures such as Charles T. Barber, Gladys Standridge, Hyman Brown, and Timothy Wheeler. A chapter in this study is dedicated to each of these outstanding musical pioneers, including a description of their musical background, teaching method, didactic sources, musical performances, and philosophy. Because of their efforts, the value of music education became strongly interwoven into the fabric of Jackson County.

Primary sources for this study are comprised of unpublished materials such as notes from personal interviews, personal correspondences, a diary, and family photos. Secondary sources include interviews with family members, friends and colleagues, newspaper articles, and published books. A majority of the artifacts are owned by family members and friends of people covered in each chapter.

This study explores the means by which the pioneers of music education in Jackson County shared their musical knowledge and experiences with others until music education was established in the public schools. It also places Jackson County, a southern school, in historical context compared to national trends and to other schools and systems throughout the United States when music was gradually being incorporated into the nation's public schools. The common agencies of music education, the singing school, the convention, brass bands, and rhythm bands remained the primary sources of music education until 1979 when Timothy Wheeler hired the first full-time band teacher at Jackson County High School.

INDEX WORDS: Charles Theodore Barber, Gladys Standridge, Hyman Brown, Timothy Wheeler, shape-note singing, Jackson County, Georgia, The Phenomenal Barber Boys Band, singing schools, Georgia State Musical Convention, Jackson County Musical Convention

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, Renee, Colin, Chloe, and Carleigh, for their unbounded support. To my parents, Darce and Phyllis Chandler, thank you for your encouragement and providing me with music lessons when I needed them most. I would like to thank my wife, Renee, for her continuous encouragement and for providing unrelenting support for our children as I dedicated much of my time to completing this degree.

I would also like to dedicate this written document to all of the citizens of Jackson County, and above all to those who committed themselves and who continue to enrich the lives of their students through music.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Music was typically one of the last subjects to be integrated into the nation's public school curricula. For example, the Boston Latin School, the first public school in the New World, was established in 1635, but it was not until 1838, 203 years later, "that music was added in the curriculum by public authority, like reading, grammar and arithmetic."¹ Music education in the South was affected by national movements and evolved much in the same manner, though considerably later in most areas.

True to the national and regional patterns, the public schools of Jackson County, Georgia, were slow in introducing music classes. The system did not hire a full time music instructor until 1979, nearly two centuries after the first school opened at Fort Strong (Hurricane Shoals).² In community music, similar parallels, including the development of singing schools, singing conventions, and community brass and marching bands, can be observed as the national movements crept into southern communities. The information in this document is intended to highlight the individuals who led these movements and provided music education in the communities of Jackson County until it was established in the school system.

The earliest mention of a singing school in the United States was in 1723 in Massachusetts, where the churches of Boston and other towns implemented singing by

¹*Boston Latin School*. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Boston-Latin-School> (accessed October 2015).

² Tim Wheeler, personal interview with author, 2015.

“rule of art.”³ As towns and communities expanded with the arrival of European immigrants, singing schools were established. They spread throughout New England and to other colonies in response to the poor state of singing and lack of musicianship within the churches. Eighteenth-century singing masters traveled as far south as Charleston, South Carolina.

The singing school phenomenon did not reach Jackson County, Georgia, until the late 19th century.⁴ The first documented singing school in Jackson County was in 1878 at Oconee Baptist Church, located between Harmony Grove (now Commerce) and Jefferson. Local singing masters such as Asbury H. Brown (1824-1902) and Adolphus “Homer” Purcell (1885-1968) became leading figures in the community. One of the most influential masters, Hyman Brown (1921-1984), from Commerce, became a national figure at the height of the singing school movement in the South. Brown was recognized as a pioneer whose guidance helped southern gospel music expand into what it is today. His accomplishments are commemorated in the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

The first music convention in northeast Georgia, the Georgia State Musical Convention, took place in 1855 and included members from Banks, Madison, Jackson, Elbert, Hart and Oglethorpe counties. They splintered off into smaller organizations, separated by county lines, in 1877. Charles G. Benton (1852-1934), Albert M. Benton (1855-1946) and John I. Ray (1855-1925) were the leading figures who initiated the formation of the Jackson County Musical Convention. A rich history of teaching, singing, and music education developed in this area and time period.

³ Edward B. Birge. *History of Public School Music in the United States*. (Washington, D.C.: Music Educators National Conference, Dept. of the National Education Association, 1966), 6-7.

⁴ Marie Godfrey, interview with author, 2015.

The brass band movement developed in Jackson County in much the same way as it did around the nation. One of the first bands in Jackson County, “C.T. Barber’s Phenomenal Boy Band” formed in the early 1880s in Harmony Grove. Barber (1851-1905), who was musically educated and greatly influenced by John Phillip Sousa (1854-1932), attended the Cotton States Exposition in 1895 to see the Sousa Band performance. Like many others across the nation, Barber heard Sousa’s band play in concert on national tours and followed his example. He attended the concerts when the group visited the Grand Theatre in Atlanta, and he was inspired to teach his children to play with the same kind of precision. His pursuit of musical excellence influenced the children he taught and bolstered music education in Harmony Grove and Jackson County. His teaching techniques, much like those of Luther W. Mason (1818-1896), were logical and sequential. His pupils reaped the benefits of his ability to teach, and many of them went on to be prosperous musicians. Due to Barber’s pioneering contributions and popularity, Harmony Grove sponsored its own community band, and a band class was added at Commerce High School.

Gladys Standridge (1907-2001) taught second grade from 1947 until 1972 at Benton Elementary School. Having taken courses in general music education at the University of Georgia, she understood the value of music in the lives of her students. She initiated a rhythm band that gained local, state, and national recognition. She was able to create memorable personal experiences for her students, and she used every means at her disposal to help her students discover their talent. Believing in the importance of developing excellent work habits and wholesome ideas of conduct, she guided a course that encouraged good citizenship and emphasized music as a form of expression.

Tim Wheeler (b. 1943) brought music education to the public schools of Jackson County in the late 20th century. He was a band teacher for the first ten years of his career beginning in 1966. In 1977 he moved to Jackson County where he became principal of Benton Elementary School. Two years later he accepted the position as principal of Jackson County High School and became the superintendent of the Jackson County School System in 1980. His leadership qualities united a school district, and he added music to the curriculum as a full time subject in 1979 at Jackson County High School.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to illuminate the unsung music education heroes of Jackson County, Georgia and to identify leadership traits that they shared. Beginning with the establishment of the county's first formal school in 1788, this document recounts the story of the events, phenomena, and individuals that culminated in 1979 with the hiring of the first full-time music teacher in the Jackson County School District. That success developed out of a complex system of interconnected elements and people who had different backgrounds but shared the same aim: to offer a high level of music instruction to the people in their community. Its roots reach back to the formation of the singing schools, singing conventions and community bands as well as the efforts of general education teachers who integrated music into the classroom. This document describes in detail the evolution of music education in Jackson County and the leaders who ensured a future for music education for students across the entire county.

The following questions guided the research:

1. Who were the outstanding individuals responsible for teaching music before it was integrated into the schools in Jackson County?
2. What national movements aided in the struggle to establish music in the schools?
3. What community activities fostered music education before its inclusion in Jackson County schools?
4. What socio-economic-political forces exerted influence on the decision to include music in the schools?

The primary focus of the research is on the pioneers of music education in Jackson County. Each demonstrated a capacity to lead and each had the ability to attract other people who were willing and motivated to follow. As they evolved as musicians and established a reputation as leaders in music education, recruiting became easier and more consistent. Many of their pupils became leaders themselves. Foundational skills, leadership skills, and vision combined to enable them to achieve their goal: to provide an excellent music education in the community when it was absent from the classroom.

Organization of the Material

Pioneers in Music Education in Jackson County, Georgia: 1788-1979 is divided into five major parts:

- Chapter 1, “Introduction,” includes the purpose of the study, the organization of the material and sources.

- Chapter 2, “A History of Education and Music Education in Jackson County Schools,” establishes the time and place, touches on events (musical and nonmusical), and individuals.
- Chapter 3, “Hyman Brown,” assesses the contributions of the 20th-century musician and composer who brought shape-note singing to its pinnacle in Jackson County, as well as Brown’s influential predecessors in the singing school movement.
- Chapter 4, “Charles Theodore Barber,” examines an early pioneer of instrumental music education who founded the “Phenomenal Barber Boys Band” in the early 1880s.
- Chapter 5, “Gladys Standridge,” focuses on a visionary classroom teacher who established and directed the Elementary Rhythm Band (1947-1970).
- Chapter 6, “Timothy Wheeler,” examines the career of the 20th-century pioneer who secured a place for music education in the curriculum of the Jackson County public schools. The chapter concludes with a summary and assessment of the people and events that prepared the way for Wheeler’s achievement.

Sources

Primary and secondary sources that support the facts in this historical document include interviews, photographs, handwritten accounts and personal diaries, newspaper articles, magazine articles, and relevant books. Narrative research was used to collect both primary and secondary data. Interviewees include friends, relatives, and former

students of the music education pioneers discussed, as well as Timothy Wheeler, the only music education pioneer still living.

Primary Sources

Primary sources included for this study were collected for the following pioneers of music education in Jackson County: Gladys Standridge, Hyman Brown, and Timothy Wheeler. For Theodore Barber, no primary sources other than photographs and a diary kept by his wife could be located. Standridge's handwritten memoir, entitled "The Greatest Years of My Life," her personal scrapbook and pictures with individual descriptions, were discovered. Her personal music education books, *Orff-Schulwerk*, *Music for Children*, volumes I-V, were provided by one of the interviewees, Margaret Ward, who worked closely with Standridge for many years. Standridge made notes in these books and underscored what she thought was important information. Her personal documents and other artifacts were on display at the Nicholson Public Library in Nicholson, Georgia, but are now the property of Margaret Ward.

Hyman Brown's correspondence with other musicians and colleagues gives great insight into his teaching style and curriculum. Some of Brown's personal teaching tools are currently located at the Southern Gospel Museum and Hall of Fame in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. His favorite didactic source (Vaughan's *Up-To-Date Rudiments and Music Reader*), a mobile chalkboard that he used during his teaching sessions, and photos from his singing schools are on display. It should be noted that Brown encouraged the use of Vaughan's *Up-To-Date Rudiments and Music Reader* and became the standard method book in northeast Georgia for many years.

Interviews with Timothy Wheeler clarify many of the complexities that engulfed education and music education in Jackson County. He describes his role as a former band teacher and his contributions to music education as the principal of Benton Elementary School and superintendent of the Jackson County schools. He provided historical documents, including the notes from his presentation at Brenau University Learning and Leisure Institute, which shed light on the socio-economic forces of Jackson County and its schools prior to 1979. Wheeler's knowledge about the history and state of education in Jackson County is extensive and has proven to be very useful to the study.

Secondary Sources

The study relies heavily on magazine and newspaper articles as well as interviews with former students and colleagues. Articles from the *Forest News*, the *Jackson Herald*, and the *Commerce News* include information on all of the educators highlighted in this document. Other, larger works have also proven to be extremely helpful.

Thomas C. Hardman, in his 1947 history of the county, described the C. T. Barber Band as the “prodigy of Harmony Grove.”⁵ Interviews from his great-granddaughters yielded information about Barber's children and grandchildren, who became respected and famous musicians, founders of a music school (the Barber Institute, no longer in existence), and accolades that his son, Clint Barber, received from John Phillip Sousa.⁶ Tina Harris, an editor for the Jackson County Historical Society, included a collection of pictures in her publication as well as a vignette that depicts the boys of the band and the instruments they played.

⁵ Thomas C. Hardman, *History of Harmony Grove-Commerce, Jackson County, Georgia 1810-1949* (Athens: McGregor, 1949).

⁶ Becky Striggo, personal interview with Todd Chandler, 2016.

Secondary sources for Gladys Standridge include local newspaper articles, interviews with former students and colleagues, and student memoirs. Most of the information about her originates from primary sources.

Information about the Jackson County Musical Convention was published in the *Forest News* and the *Jackson Herald*. The articles revealed details about the events and the people who were leading the movement. The Georgia Musical Convention was also mentioned in these newspapers. Information about the Jackson County Singing Convention was discovered in the minutes gathered by the current president of the convention, Marie Godfrey. Journalists who wrote for local publications and magazines, such as *Foxfire* and *Vaughan's Family Reader*, interviewed Hyman Brown. As he became more popular, he gained nationwide recognition and was featured in popular magazines such as *National Geographic*. He also wrote articles that were printed in many of the same local publications. They include his recollections, singing, rudiments of music, and his joy and love of music. In "Gospel Shape Note Music," written during a period when the singing schools were popular in North Georgia, he claimed, "I believe singers love one another better than anyone you've ever met" therefore making the most beautiful music.⁷ In that article he not only describes the basic skills necessary to be an excellent singer, but also embraces and shares his aesthetic viewpoints. In a published interview with Edith Card, "The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music", she expresses the educational and recreational benefits that students gain from attending the singing school. His teaching resulted in revolutionary changes in the ways other singing schools were conducted, along with heightened performance standards.⁸

⁷ Paul Gillespie, "Gospel Shaped Note Music: Hyman Brown" *Foxfire Magazine* 12, No. 1, January 1978.

⁸ Edith Card, "The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development," *Foxfire* 7: 299-300.

CHAPTER 2

A HISTORY OF JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Creek and Cherokee Indian Territory: 1784-1796

Before European settlers arrived in what is now Jackson County, the land was Creek and Cherokee Indian territory. This section of land served as the boundary between the tribes, and it passed from one tribe to the other depending on the outcome of the battles that took place between them. It was described as “a wilderness, inhabited by wild animals” and “in every direction . . . covered with an almost unbroken forest.”¹

The first white settlement was established in 1784 at Groaning Rock, a community just southeast of the present-day city of Commerce. In the same year, a second small colony was formed at Yamacutah, also known as Tumbling Shoals, located near an Indian holy ground close to modern-day Maysville. When more settlers arrived, the Yamacutah community extended towards Yamtrahoochee, presently Hurricane Shoals. Fort Strong was constructed at Yamtrahoochee and the first school was founded along with the construction of a gristmill and a smelting plant. In 1786 another settlement was formed at Talasee, now Fort Yargo in Winder.

Jackson County was established in 1796.² It was named after James Jackson, a lieutenant colonel in the Revolutionary War and later a congressman, senator, and

¹ Gustavus N. Wilson, *The Early History of Jackson County, Georgia* (Atlanta: Foote & Davies, 1914), 36.

² *Jackson County* (n.d.), from <https://georgia.gov/cities-counties/jackson-county> (accessed February 08, 2016).

governor.³ It originally covered 1,800 square miles but was gradually reduced to 343 square miles to form Clarke, Madison, Walton, Gwinnett and Hall counties.



Figure 2.1: Map of Jackson County, Georgia, with Indian Territories and Modern Names, 1914.⁴

The First School in the Territory: 1788

In 1785 the Georgia legislature set up a *Senatus Academicus* and passed an act to establish some semblance of a school system in the state. Not until 1817, however did the Senatus function as a working body and dispense funds to poor families with children and to schools statewide.⁵

The first formal school in Jackson County opened in 1788 at Yamtrahoochee (Hurricane Shoals) at Fort Strong. Henry Therrauld, an ordained minister, instructed no more than ten students in reading, writing, and arithmetic along with Bible study.

Although Dr. Therrauld was the first teacher at Fort Strong, he was not the first in the

³ George Smith, *The Story of Georgia and the Georgia People, 1732 to 1860* (Macon: G.G. Smith, 1990), 53-54.

⁴ Frary Elrod, *Historical Notes on Jackson County, Georgia* (University of Virginia: F. Elrod, 1967), 139.

⁵ *Ibid.*

area. Josiah Strong was the first teacher in the Indian Territory at Yamacutah. His students were Ruth Lahgoon and Bana, daughters of the king and the queen of the Cherokees.⁶ After Dr. Therrauld's departure, Strong replaced him at Fort Strong until the arrival of Thomas Mitchell. As the number of families increased, a larger teaching space was needed at the fort. The original fort builders made provisions to create a classroom.

Music in the New Settlements of Yamacutah and Groaning Rock

Music education did not exist then as we know it today, but music did flourish in the new small settlements of northeast Georgia. There are several documented accounts of musicians playing and singing for weddings, church services, and other social affairs in what is now Jackson County. It is unknown if they were formally trained, self-taught, or inheritors of family knowledge.

Music served several purposes during the early years of America. During the Revolutionary period, music was often used to excite soldiers and fuel motivation as they prepared for battle. It was also a way to make fun of their British enemies. Even after the war, the music of the Revolution echoed through the wildernesses of Jackson County. For example, there is a story about the members of a neighboring fort, Talasee (Fort Yargo), who visited Yamacutah to obtain marriage licenses. They marched to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" as they approached the settlement, not to scare the British but to signal their arrival to those who lived in the fort. The author of *The Early History of Jackson County, Georgia*, describes the encounter:

Look! Yonder on the outskirts of the still increasing company as the people emerge from the adjacent houses, stands Richard Easley, Abendnego Moore, Edward Belknak and Phelan Lahgoon. They are dressed in the same blood-

⁶ Frary Elrod, *Historical Notes on Jackson County, Georgia* (University of Virginia: F. Elrod, 1967), 138.

stained garments they wore in the battle fields of Brandywine and Saratoga. See! The bullet and saber scars cross upon their hands and faces. They stand at dress parade. In front of Ed Belknap there is an old drum, beaten and bruised by hard service. His fingers clutch the drum sticks, and the spirit of war glitters in his eyes. At his side stands Phelan Lahgoon with a fife in his hand. All eager to peal forth its shrill notes once more, his lips pucker and his fingers move from note to note silently. On the left is Richard Easley, a tall, angular man of iron nerve and immense physical power. He carries a rifle, and at his side hangs a tattered and torn haversack and a dingy wooden canteen. In front stands the tall and elegant Abendnego Moore. He holds the same battle-scarred flag that his brother-in-law, Josiah Strong, carried at the siege of Augusta. All eager to move, Mr. Moore waves the flag back and forth and begins to mark time. The soldiers, all who had seen hard service, make one step forward, the drum roars, the fife screams and the old flag flutters in the brisk evening breeze. Tramp! tramp! tramp! go the men to the thrilling tune of Yankee Doodle.⁷

As the crowd from Talasee marched, the men of Yamacutah waved their hats and the ladies twirled their handkerchiefs in excitement. They were thrilled to see their old friends and family members. As they approached, they were welcomed by “Old Tom,” the fort bell, and “discordant blasts of five or six tin trumpets, about seven feet long.”⁸ The sounds of the bell, the trumpets, the drum, and the fife united to create a fanfare that crescendoed into a “loud acclaim.”⁹

Another documented musical event took place at the first homestead at Groaning Rock. Sometimes—between clearing land and tending to farm duties—large gatherings or ceremonies were held at a home in the settlement. These social occasions were scheduled by word of mouth and included food, music, and dance. Once the settlers finished the day’s work, they congregated at the dinner table, where they would talk about their families, the happenings in the community, and progress. When the meal drew to an end, conversation was interrupted by an impromptu solo concert, usually

⁷ Gustavo N. Wilson, *The Early History of Jackson County, Georgia* (Atlanta: Foote & Davies, 1914), 123-124.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

given by the instrumentalist(s) who played for the dance. This was the cue for everyone to get ready for the main event—the barn dance.

When the families gathered in the yard and the music started, everyone became enlivened. Popular folk tunes such as “Granny Will Your Dog Bite?,” “Billy in the Low Ground,” and “Sally in the Wildwoods” were performed by a small group of musicians or a solo fiddler. The services of Jim Beasley, the “breakdown fiddler” of the time, had been secured to furnish music for the coming dance.¹⁰ It was customary that the men perform the first dance without the females. The first dance of the evening was a rigadon—a fast, lively dance usually in a quickened quadruple time or moderate duple. The leader would call out the moves: “Round and round went the men. Passed through opposite ranks, and then dashed on with the ‘double-shuffle,’ ‘jump jim crow,’ ‘cut the pigeon wing’ and the ‘hop over the moon’.”¹¹ Other dances followed, such as the laeden or leader and the bolero.

The final dance of the evening was to the tune of “Over the Hills and Far Away,” a 17th century traditional folk song. “Jim Beasley is in all his glory, his fiddle trembles to the vibrations of its music, the floor heaves up and down” and the dance came to a close.¹²

Schools in Jackson County: 1796-1827

As the various immediate dangers of the time diminished and colonists became steadily established outside of the fortified areas (Fort Strong and Fort Yargo), each settlement built a school and the families in each community contributed funds for the

¹⁰ Wilson, *The Early History of Jackson County, Georgia*, 211-214.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

teacher's a salary. Many times the community even provided room and board for the instructor. Each school was built in a location that was easily accessible, and private landowners provided the land. Many of these schools were built on land that had proven to be unfit to grow crops or grass for grazing cows, goats, or sheep. These types of schools were called "old field schools" or "brush arbor schools" for that reason. Brush arbor schools were much like modern day pole barns, which are constructed with trees used as poles as well as tree limbs and underbrush used for a roof. Children did not attend school in inclement weather or extreme temperatures.

Initial Funding for Schools in Jackson County: 1810

The earliest funding from the state that the Jackson County government received for schools was in 1810 in the amount of \$504.70. It was used to place teachers in the poorest of communities. In 1817 county leaders received funds to provide an elementary school education to children whose families could not afford to pay for tuition or contribute to a teacher's salary. Wealthy and very poor children could attend school, but many of the children whose families' economic standing fell in between those extremes were unable to attend. In November and December of 1821, the legislature enacted a law to provide for "the permanent endowment of county academies, to increase the funds heretofore set apart for the encouragement and support of Free Schools, and for the Internal Improvement of the State."

§ 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Georgia in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That the sum of five hundred thousand dollars, [Illegible Text] and the same is hereby set apart, the one half for the support and encouragement of free schools, and the other half for the [Illegible Text] sum [Illegible Text] [Illegible

Text] [Illegible Text] dollars, be, and the same is hereby set apart for the internal improvement of the state.

§ 2. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said sum of five hundred thousand dollars, first above named, shall be denominated the school fund, and shall be composed of two hundred thousand dollars of the stock of the bank of Darien, two hundred thousand dollars of the stock of the State Bank, and one hundred thousand dollars of the bank of Augusta.

§ 3. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the principal sums set apart as aforesaid, shall at no time, or for any purpose, be appropriated or used; but the interest arising thereon, shall be applied to the purposes herein before mentioned, as the Legislature may from time to time direct.

§ 4. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That it shall be the duty of the treasurer, comptroller general, trustees or commissioners of County Academies, and the Inferior courts of the several counties within this state, together with the senators of said counties, to examine and make full and accurate report to the next Legislature of the amount received by said counties respectively, in confiscated property or other endowment; and when such returns are made, and information obtained, the dividends yielded by the one half of the school fund aforesaid, shall be apportioned and paid semi-annually to the several counties, as a future Legislature may direct.

§ 5. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That it shall be the duty of all trustees, commissioners, courts, or agents, receiving any portion of the funds aforesaid, to keep regular statements and entries of the manner in which the same may be disbursed, and make annual return thereof to the Senatus Academicus on the second Monday in November.

§ 6. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That nothing in this act contained, shall be so construed as to prevent any future General Assembly from altering or repealing this act, or any part thereof.

DAVID ADAMS,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
MATTHEW TALBOT,
President of the Senate.
JOHN CLARK, Governor.¹³

¹³ Georgia Legislative Documents. (n.d.), <http://metis.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/legis-idx.pl> (accessed June 8, 2016).

Jackson County received the following amounts: \$1,002.51 in 1824, \$637.51 in 1825, \$452.05 in 1826, \$0.00 in 1827, \$0.00 in 1828, \$810.03 in 1829, \$1,090.07 in 1830, \$545.05 in 1831, \$1,012.91 in 1832, \$397.00 in 1833 and \$161.39 in 1834.

Independent School Systems Developed in Jackson County: 1818

As Jackson County developed its schools, some communities continued to operate their own independent school systems. The Jackson County Academy, not affiliated with the Jackson County School System, was a private school that charged students a hefty tuition. It opened in 1818 and was renamed the Martin Institute in 1859.¹⁴ It burned in 1942 and reopened in 1946, as Jefferson Elementary and Jefferson High School. Formal, one-on-one music training and classes were provided at the Martin Institute. An additional fee was charged to students who requested music lessons or classes. Classes in voice, piano, and choir were offered.

The Commerce City School System also remained a separate entity. The first school in Harmony Grove (renamed Commerce in 1909) was the Harmony Grove Female Academy, open from 1824-1874. The Commerce Grammar School was constructed in 1888 but was destroyed by a fire twice, once in 1895 and once in 1903. When it was reconstructed, additional halls were added. In 1936 another high school was constructed on Shankle Street, while in 1957 a high school was erected within the city limits. The Commerce city schools (elementary, middle and high school) exist today.

Individual music instruction was offered to students at Commerce Schools starting in 1903. Like the Martin Institute, a fee was added to the tuition of each student.

¹⁴ Malcom Stafford, "Martin Institute. What It Has Done and What It Proposed To Do," *The Forest News*, (August 1875).

“Two private lessons in Piano and Violin will be given each week and class lessons once a week in Harmony and History of Music. The rates for tuition are \$3.00 per month and \$4.00 per month for Violin.”¹⁵ Band was also offered as a course.

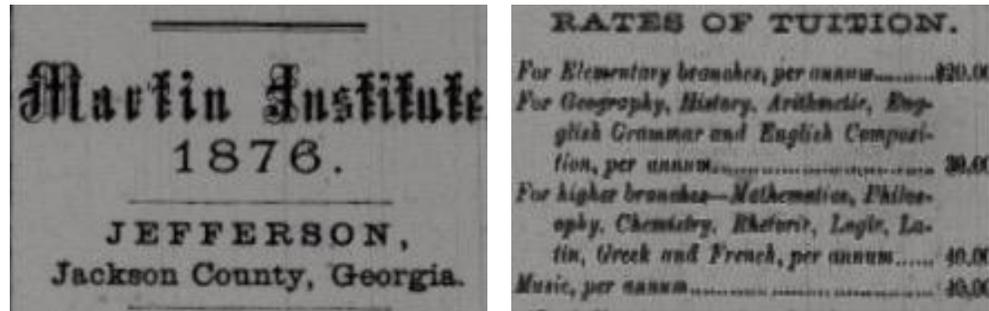


Figure 2.2: Martin Institute rates of tuition, \$40 per class, per semester 1876.¹⁶

The Jackson County School System: 1827-1988

In December 1827, the leaders of Jackson County would unite a vast number of independent schools into a single county public school system. It was divided into 11 districts “and the said districts shall have the same limits of and be distinguished by the present Captains districts in said county.”¹⁷ Section 2 of the law provided for five trustees. Section 3 specified

that said Trustees shall in their respective districts, organise and establish one or more schools, as a majority of them in their discretion think proper for the adoration of poor children, and said Trustees from all the districts a majority of them, shall meet at the court house in the county aforesaid annually, on the second Monday in January, for the purpose of electing a Treasurer, whose duty it shall be to give bond and security in such sum as said Trustees may think necessary for the faithful performance of such duties as may be prescribed by said Trustees, and said Trustees shall have power to regulate and prescribe the manner in which the funds in the hands shall be kept and paid out, and said Trustees at the meeting after aforesaid in each year, after having elected their Treasurer as aforesaid, shall cause a full return to be made to the *Senatus Academicus* including a fair statement of the receipts and expenditures of the funds in each district, as well for

¹⁵ Thirteenth Annual Announcements of the Commerce City School, 1915-1916.

¹⁶ Malcom Stafford, “Martin Institute 1876. Rates of Tuition,” *The Forest News*, December 1875.

¹⁷ Georgia Laws, 1827.

the Academies in said county, the number of scholars, designating their ages and sexes, the state and conditions of the Academies, the number of scholars both male and female, and such other information as they may think proper.¹⁸

Section 4 directs the district captains to divide the funds equally among the trustees of each district. The academy funds were to be “applied to such incorporated academies, male and female in said county, providing for teachers or houses for the same.”¹⁹ Section 5 and Section 6 state that accurate records must be kept on all of the proceedings of the academy and the poor school funds.

William Cowen, who was a Jackson County trustee, filed “The Poor School Report” in 1834. No records can be found that were filed before 1834 from Jackson County. The lack of records or reports from the school or courts leads one to assume that funds were not released until several years after the law. The first report of 1834 included all of the information required by the law, plus the name of the teacher, the number of students in the district, attendance, the amount of money paid out to each individual, and the total amount spent for the Poor School Fund. Judge N. C. Jarrett, Judge Timon Harrison, and Judge Robert Moon found that the information submitted was correct and truthful. “School fund for said County produced to us by McMullin Trustee of said County; find that all Correct and the money all duly paid out of the hand of said Trustee for 1834.”²⁰

In the 1847 report the number of poor children from each district was included. Jackson County served a total of 163 students from six militia districts who were considered poor during the 1846-1847 school year. The same report was amended and

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

included 37 more children. The total of poor children was 197 with two more militia districts added.

Districts	Names of Teachers	No. of Male Scholars	No. of Female Scholars	What Taught	Money Received	Money Paid Out
Capt. Wether spoon's	Wm. Akers	5 Do	13 Do	Do	\$377.10	\$ 28.72
Capt. Rogers	Mary B. H. Bacon	6 Do	5 Do	Do		10.88
Capt. Hollida's	R. McClosky	1 Do	1 Do	Do		3.28
Capt. Miller's	Sterling G. Davis	4 Do	2 Do	Do		3.90
Capt. Hollida's	Hugh McElhannon	2 Do	2 Do	Do		4.20
Capt. Haggard's	Frederic H. Fraser	5 Do	3 Do	Do		12.76
Capt. Lay's	A. G. Garner	5 Do	2 Do	Do		2.68
Capt. Rogers	A. B. Gibson	5 Do	11 Do	Do		63.29
Capt. Wether spoon's	Thomas Y. Gill	3 Do	3 Do	Do		22.80
Capt. Lobdell's	Abner Hammond	1 Do	4 Do	Do		2.90
Capt. Wether spoon's	John G. House	12 Do	7 Do	Do		18.69
Capt. Hollida's	Walton Mitchell	3 Do	1 Do	Do		8.13 1/2
Capt. Rogers	Robert Mullins	3 Do	1 Do	Do		7.32
Capt. Hollida's	Elizabeth Pendergrass	3 Do	4 Do	Do		7.48
Capt. Hiden's	James Ramsey	4 Do	17 Do	Do		20.32
Capt. Wilson's	Madison Strickland	4 Do	4 Do	Do		8.06 1/2
Capt. Miller's	Aaron Lowell	20 Do	12 Do	Do		63.56
Capt. Orr's	A. B. T. White	2 Do	3 Do	Do		23.84
Capt. Bacon	Charles Will	3 Do	3 Do	Do		14.46
Capt. Rogers	James Wetherford	4 Do	5 Do	Do		13.40
Males		94				
Females		109				
Amt. paid out		358.25				
		18.85				
		18.85				
		\$377.10				

Figure 2.3 1834 Jackson County school report submitted October 1835.²¹

A plethora of early schools operated during the time between the opening for Fort Strong and the Civil War. The records that are readily available include information about the schools at Groaning Rock, Arcade, and Jefferson. Lists of teachers and students exist, along with the names of the plantations on which each school was constructed.

In 1864 John Simpkins, ordinary (in 1865 his title was changed to treasurer of the County Fund), created a formal statement concerning school vouchers. He reported that there were a number of 1,512 total free white children between the ages of six and eighteen in Jackson County. The average cost of tuition was \$20 a year for elementary branches and \$27 for the higher branches. He reported that there were 28 schoolhouses, but only 20 were used. There were 20 teachers, 7 males and 13 females, between the ages of 17 and 50. Only one academy existed in the county, the Martin Institute.²²

Five years after the end of the Civil War, in the year of 1870, Georgia created a practicable statewide system. The state board of education, state school commissioner,

²¹ Malcom Stafford, "Martin Institute 1876. Rates of Tuition," *The Forest News*, December 1875.

²² *Ibid.*

and the Jackson County Board of Education (and trustees) were established. The Jackson County ordinary was relieved of his duties as school treasurer. The county school commissioner and board of education absorbed treasury duties. An excerpt from the Act of 1870 states that “the county board of education shall consist of one person from each militia district, and one person from each ward in any city in the county, and one from each incorporated town, who shall be elected by the legal voters of said district, ward or incorporated town, at some suitable place designated therein; and the term of office of said board shall be two years, or until successors are elected, the first election for which all be in the first Saturday in January, 1871, and on the same day every second year thereafter.”²³ The voters elected the trustees as well. The first year, 1871, they elected one trustee who served a term of three years, one for two years and one for one year. Each year after they elected “one school trustee for the term of three years.”²⁴

The school commissioner, appointed by the board of education, was renamed superintendent. The superintendent was not appointed but elected by the voters. The superintendent served for four years, until another election was held.²⁵ Luther Elrod, Sr. (1881-1944) became the first superintendent of schools in 1912 and served for nine years. For a period of 118 years, from 1870 until 1988, the Jackson County system had only seven superintendents.

One of the many goals of the superintendents was to improve the structure of the school buildings and safety. Each school was expected to be equipped with the necessary supplies, such as sturdy student desks, complete and functioning blackboards, adequate lighting, and wood burning heaters. Indoor plumbing was a challenging amenity to

²³ Georgia Laws, 1870, 52-53.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Georgia Laws, 1911, 101.

procure. Many schools were not furnished with indoor restrooms or running water until at least the 1940s and 1950s.



Figure 2.4 Nicholson School, one of 28 school houses in Jackson County, 1910.²⁶



Figure 2.5 Jefferson City School, 1947.²⁷

The first Georgia School Attendance Law was passed in 1916 but initially “was not taken seriously.”²⁸ In 1945 the Compulsory Attendance Law was enacted, and the leaders of the system acted swiftly. “Every parent and guardian, or other person residing

²⁶ Tina Harris, *Portraits of a Southern Place* (Jefferson: Jackson County Historical Society, 2006), 38.

²⁷ Tina Harris, *Portraits of a Southern Place* (Jefferson: Jackson County Historical Society, 2006), 42.

²⁸ Frary Elrod, *Historical Notes on Jackson County, Georgia* (University of Virginia: F. Elrod, 1967), 156.

within the State having control or charge of any child or children between their seventh and sixteenth birthdays, shall enroll and send such child and children to public and private school,” and an “attendance officer” was placed in each school to enforce the school attendance laws of the State.”²⁹

An act passed in 1946 had a large effect on the trustees, and it limited their power and released all funds and property to the Jackson County Board of Education. The trustees could still participate and make recommendations, but the school board was no longer bound to them.

In 1949 the General Assembly enacted the Minimum Foundation Program for Education. It was intended to modernize the counties in Georgia, including Jackson County. Requiring an equal amount of funds for each school system, this act was a substantial reform intended to “equalize educational opportunities throughout the State; to provide a minimum foundation program for the support of public education including the University System of Georgia; to fix a minimum public school term,” which was changed to nine months, and “to provide a schedule of minimum annual salaries to teachers; to permit local units of administration to supplement salaries of teachers; to establish a method of determining the financial needs of local units of administration to support the minimum foundation program as defining terms of salaries for teachers and other school personnel, current expenses, capital outlay, and transportation costs.”³⁰

In 1951 government officials encouraged Jackson County to merge schools by funding the consolidation. Five white schools and one school for the black community were the result. The schools were Benton Elementary, Jackson County Elementary,

²⁹ Georgia Laws, State Department of Education, 1958.

³⁰ Frary Elrod, *Historical Notes on Jackson County, Georgia* (University of Virginia: F. Elrod, 1967), 157-158.

Jackson County High School, Maysville Elementary, South Jackson Primary, and Bryan Elementary and High School. Between the opening of the first school at Fort Strong and consolidation in 1951, a total of 247 school existed.

The Jackson County School System continued to operate the same way until, and beyond, the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision in 1954. Like other schools throughout the nation, the Jackson County system evolved throughout the 1960s. After desegregation they operated in the same manner through the 1970s and mid-1980s. In 1988 Superintendent Timothy Wheeler and the Jackson County Board of Education reorganized the entire system. They adopted the elementary, middle, and high school model. Elementary schools hosted students K-5, middle schools were grades 6-8, and high schools were grades 9-12. In 1988, Jackson County High School accepted state funding to add and maintain a minimum of five vocational classes, which allowed the school to be renamed Jackson County Comprehensive High School.

Music in the Jackson County School System: 1788-1978

There are no official records of any continuous, formal music classes, chorus or band, until 1979. General education teachers who were talented in singing or who could play an instrument may have added music content of some type to their lessons. A part-time choir teacher, Mary Sanders, taught at Benton Elementary School in the early 1950s and 1960s, along with Gladys Standridge, but this was not a formal part of the curriculum. Students at Benton Elementary had a band class on Fridays, but the teacher, the Commerce High School band director, was compensated by the P.T.O. Students who attended Benton went to Commerce High School once they completed 8th grade, and

they were able to join the band. Jackson County's contract with Commerce City Schools was terminated in 1979. Children in the Jackson County School District were not offered organized, bona fide music education until 1979. Music education had to be sought outside of the school.

CHAPTER 3

HYMAN BROWN

Hyman Brown was born in Commerce, Georgia, on September 23, 1921, to a family with a long lineage of singers, music leaders, and teachers. He was the youngest of eleven brothers and two sisters. Each of his siblings grew up singing, and he was immersed in music from the beginning of his life until his death in 1984. His brother Harold Brown (1912-2015) said, “Hyman probably loved music more than all of us. He would sit at the organ as a young boy, where someone would have to pump for him because his legs were too short, and plunk out notes to songs until he could play the melody. We all could see that he was special, and he became one of the best piano players in these parts. It came natural to him. It was in his blood.”¹ Hyman gained a national reputation and became one of the most renowned singing school teachers in the Southeast.

An Evolutionary Lineage: Late 1700s-mid 1850s

The tradition of singing in the Brown family extends back to Andrew Brown (1769-1860) and Margaret Adams Brown (1780-1860). Harold remarked in an interview, “One of my great, great grandfathers attended some famous singing schools before moving to Georgia. My family originated in Virginia, birthplace of Southern Gospel

¹ Harold Brown, interview with author, 2015.

music.”² Adam Brown, son of Andrew and Margaret, lived very close to Mountain Valley, Virginia, the hometown of Joseph Funk (1778-1862). He was a well-known singing school teacher who traveled throughout Virginia. The story, passed from generation to generation, is that Adam attended singing schools led by Funk on a regular basis. The story is plausible as both men lived during the same time period, were from the same region of northeast Virginia, and resided there for over ten years. He composed and published several music books, including the *Harmonia Sacra* (1851).

Andrew and Margaret Brown moved to Elbert County, Georgia from Culpepper County, Virginia in 1794 after receiving 250 acres for fighting in the Revolutionary War (Andrew was only fourteen when he received the “bounty” of land). Their son, Adam Brown, was born in 1801. Although most of Georgia was considered a wilderness during that time, Elbert County was settled before the Revolutionary War and was more advanced than some other parts of the state. It was labeled “The Center of the World” because Cherokee Indian trade routes led to this part of the country and the Savannah River served as a safe migration route. Families had already cleared much of the land and made it habitable for themselves, their farm animals, and crops (primarily tobacco). Adam became a farmer like his father, but he also became a music leader at the Holly Springs Baptist Church (est. 1795) in 1830.

Adam Brown married Nancy Brown, and their son, Asbury H. Brown (1824-1902), was instrumental in bringing music education to hundreds of singers in northeast Georgia, including Jackson County. Asbury grew up singing in church. He became a respected singing school teacher, served as president of the Georgia State Musical

² Ibid.

Convention (1877), and was one of the original founders of the Jackson County Singing Convention.

Georgia State Musical Convention: Professor Asbury H. Brown

The Georgia State Musical Convention was formed in 1855 by a group of musicians from several northeast Georgia counties. Its roots can be traced back to Adam and Asbury Brown and other church and community leaders. The goal was to expand a tradition of singing that would bring communities together by singing four-part anthems.

It was common for communities of people to “gather to sing from the latest publication as well as enjoy old favorites.”³ The singing conventions were not only for musical enjoyment, but also served as social affairs and were an important expression of faith.⁴ The participants came together for hours and/or days at a time. As the singing convention gained popularity, it expanded into events that included potluck dinners, preaching, and concert-style performances presented by small groups. Articles found in the local newspapers reminded the participants of when, where, what time, and to “bring a covered dish” for lunch or supper.⁵ Such events also provided an opportunity for young adults to meet. It was common for couples to meet during “courting days.” One of the founding members of the Jackson County Musical Convention, John I. Ray (1855-1925), married Asbury’s daughter, Mattie Brown (1858-1924), who was the former secretary of the Georgia State Musical Convention.

³ Edith Card, “The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development.” *Foxfire* 7, 1982 280-346.

⁴ Eliot Wigginton. “The shape note singing project” *Foxfire*, 18 (4), 1984, 194-256.

⁵ Malcom Stafford, Jackson County Musical Convention. *The Forest News*, 1888.

According to historians, the shape-note singing convention became firmly entrenched in the people's heritage. "The great vogue of the Musical Convention covered a period of about thirty years beginning in the 1840s. Its influence was felt in every section as far west as Mississippi and as far south as Virginia. Wherever a convention was held, it tended to quicken the musical life of the community and to make it a center of influence."⁶ The convention had the same effect on the people of northeast Georgia, but it had a much longer effect than thirty years. It took root in 1855, and although it is no longer the primary source of music education, it still attracts attention from people from every walk of life who enjoy singing. "Many people say that the convention is dying out, but the Jackson County Singing Convention is well-attended every year."⁷ The convention remains an important part of southern culture.

Asbury Brown served on the Georgia State Musical Convention music selection committee in 1860. They were responsible for choosing music and didactic materials to be used and shared at conventions. Two of the sources listed that year were considered: Funk's seven-note notation *Harmonia Sacra* (1860) and Jesse Aiken's *The Christian Minstrel* (1846). The committee decided to purchase the Aiken publication. The decision to use the Aiken publication would have a long-lasting effect on its future members, including Hyman Brown, because "Aiken's shapes are the shapes that survived and are used today by gospel singers."⁸ Other than the shapes, the differences between the Aiken and Funk publications are minimal. Although Funk's writing is more verbose, both volumes detail the process of singing and share the same basic information about the

⁶ Edward B. Birge, *History of Public School Music in the United States*. (Washington, D.C.: Music Educators National Conference, Dept. of the National Education Association, 1966).

⁷ Marie Godfrey, interview with author, 2016.

⁸ Edith Card, "The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development," *Foxfire* 7.

rudiments and the elements of music. Both use four-part sacred music examples. The differences are in the shapes and the spelling of the solfège syllables.

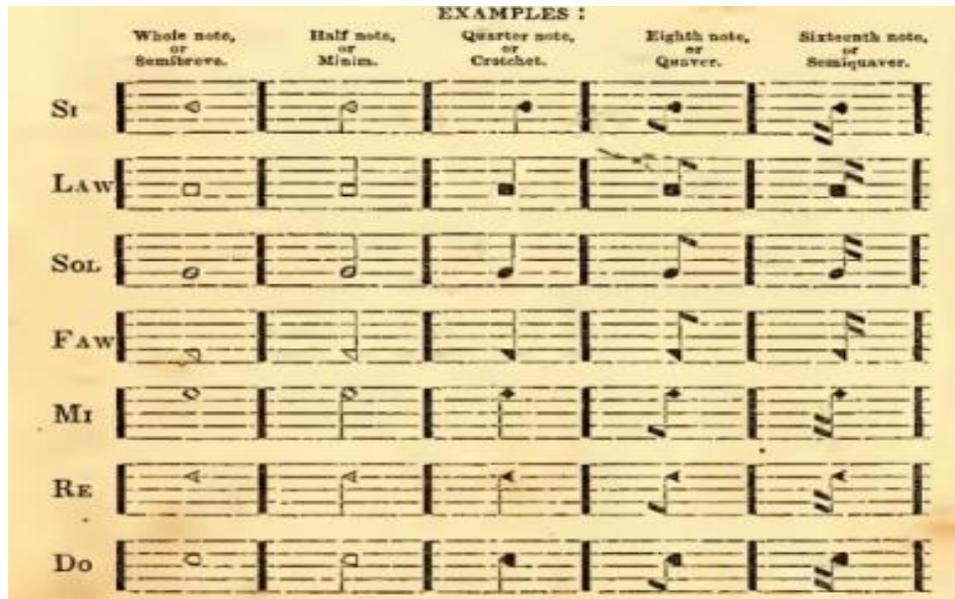


Figure 5.1: Shapes and syllables from *Harmonia Sacra*, 1860.⁹

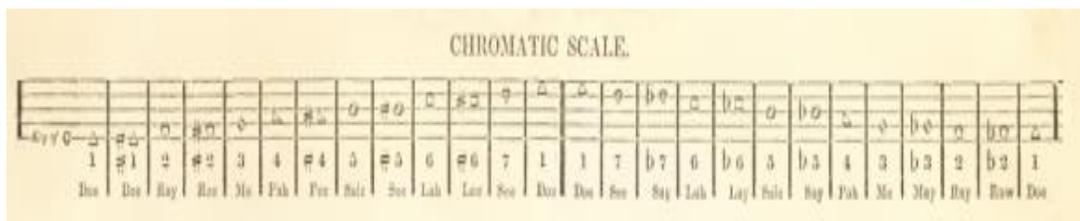


Figure 5.2: Shapes and syllables from *The Christian Minstrel*, 1846.¹⁰

The Georgia Musical Convention consisted of members from Jackson, Elbert, Franklin, Hart, Madison, Oglethorpe, and Banks counties. It gained popularity until the

⁹Joseph Funk *A compilation of genuine church music, comprising a variety of metres, all harmonized for three voices; together with a copious elucidation of the science of vocal music* (Winchester: Published at the Office of the Republican, 1832).

¹⁰Jesse B. Aikin, *The Christian minstrel: A new system of musical notation: With a collection of psalm tunes, anthems, and chants, selected from the most popular works in Europe and America: Designed for the use of churches, singing-schools, and societies* (Philadelphia: T.K. Collins, 1850).

Civil War when the members took a wartime hiatus, and resumed activity around 1868. It continued to grow in the following years, until the leadership decided it had served its purpose—to create a local convention of and for the people of northeast Georgia where they could gather enough people to sing. On October 26, 1877, the officers and business committees decided to split the convention into smaller county conventions. The Georgia State Musical Convention remained for no more than three years, but it continued to serve the smaller conventions while they gained “footing.” The following minutes were printed in the *Forest News*: “‘Georgia State Musical Convention’ in October 1877: ‘The twenty-second annual session of the above Convention, met at Fellowship church, Hart County, Ga. Oct. 26th, 1877. On motion of A.H. Brown, called for delegates and letters, received from Grove Level Church, Banks county, Ga., Mr. H.C. McDonald, Miss M.A. Mangum and Miss M.E. Brown; from Cabin Creek church, Jackson county, Ga. Mr. A. M. Benton and C.G. Benton.’”¹¹ The body then went on to elect and re-elect officers for the Georgia State Musical Convention. A. H. Brown was re-elected as president, and he appointed people to the business committee. The business committee in turn reported “A.H. Brown, H. T. Compton, and D.W. Hutchinson, each led in music 20 minutes.”¹² On December 29, 1877, the *Forest News* reported, “The singers, and friends of sacred music, are requested to meet at Oconee church, Jackson county, Ga., on Friday before the third Sabbath in February, 1878, for the purpose of organizing a Musical Convention for Jackson County. When said Convention is organized, each school, society, club, choir, and each literary school, where music is practiced, will be entitled to representation. Profs. A.H. Brown, W.V. Vickery and others will be present, to assist in the organization

¹¹ Malcom Stafford, “Georgia State Musical Convention,” *The Forest News*, October 27, 1877.

¹² *Ibid.*

and C.G. Benton, A.M. Benton, J.I. Ray, Committee.”¹³ They met again approximately two months later on February 16, 1878, to adopt the Hall County Constitution, but with a few alterations.¹⁴ Under the leadership of Asbury H. Brown, the Jackson County Musical Convention was formed in 1878 and continues to serve a community of singers.

Asbury Brown’s Legacy: the Jackson County Singing Convention, Friday Night Singings, and the Singing School

After the death of Asbury Brown in 1902, the world of singing in Jackson County continued to be strong. The singing school in Jackson County grew out of the Jackson County Musical Convention. They were very compatibly intertwined until the turn of the century as it was routine for the educated musicians, those who usually held some type of leadership position at the convention, to lead the music lessons.

The Jackson County Musical Convention followed a standard format from 1877 until around 1900 that was much like that of the Georgia State Musical Convention: opening prayer usually led by the pastor of the church hosting the event; items of business (purchasing music books, raising funds, electing officers, choosing future guest teachers and music leaders, location and dates of the next convention, etc.); fifteen-minute recess; music lessons (usually no more than three) of unlimited time by numerous presenters on rudiments, shapes, and/or the voice; another fifteen-minute break; song singing from the convention books. The music was led by several members, and an accompanist would play the organ or the piano, depending on what instrument was in the sanctuary. All of the music leaders were expected to “beat” the time and sing. After

¹³ Malcom Stafford, “Georgia State Musical Convention,” *The Forest News*, December 29, 1877.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

several songs, between five and seven at a time, a special guest would perform. At the first Jackson County Musical Convention, the “gallant, esteemed and beloved friend, Hon. A.T. Bennett, together with some five or six of his old scholars, sung the A.B.C’s with GREAT honor to themselves and to the tune.”¹⁵ At this point there was a break for lunch or refreshments and the order was repeated again without the business meeting.

The newly designed county conventions ran smoothly for many years and grew in popularity. As time passed, the convention format changed. In 1919 the Jackson County Musical Convention became the Jackson County Singing Convention. Lessons on rudiments and shapes were left to the singing school masters. Many of the older members “quit attending the lessons” but took part in the song portions of the convention.¹⁶ This practice continues today.

Although the convention became its own entity, it is difficult to completely separate Friday night singings, singing schools, and singing conventions. The same people usually attended all the events. For many years, smaller communities throughout Jackson County gathered at a church or someone’s home throughout most of the year for Friday night singings. They purchased various convention books with shapes from popular publishing companies such as the James D. Vaughan Publishing Company or Stamps-Baxter. The publishing companies printed a new four-part harmony book every year, and they were very affordable. Many of them contained old songs along with new ones composed by songwriters who attended conventions throughout the South. The composers understood what excited the singers and catered to their business. A number

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Edith Card, “The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development,” *Foxfire* 7.

of books were ordered two or three times a year to supply variety in the repertoire. It was not uncommon for the singers to learn all the selections in each book. The same books were repurposed and used at singing schools, scheduled at least once or twice a year, and at the annual Jackson County Singing Convention. The books were used repeatedly and donated to a local church or traded out with other singing conventions at the end of the year.

The conventions drew a larger crowd than the Friday night singings. People from northeast Georgia conventions, and sometimes people from out of state, attended. A large number of singers from Banks, Franklin, Clarke, and Madison counties attended the Jackson County Singing Convention and vice-versa. Accomplished guests were invited to lead songs.

The singing schools in northeast Georgia grew out of the convention. They were intended to teach younger students rudiments of music, including how to read music/shapes, four-part harmony, and the art of singing. In the beginning, schools were taught during the daytime when students were out of school for the summer and when crops had been tended. The instructor was usually a teacher who traveled from town to town. If someone in the community proved to be an excellent teacher who was part of the convention, they would be invited by the Jackson County Singing Convention committee to lead the classes. For example, classes were often led by two of Asbury Brown's students, Charles G. Benton (1852-1934), and Albert M. Benton (1855-1946). Other communities did not rely on the convention and sponsored singing schools independently.



Figure 5.3: Pendergrass Singing School, Hariss Matthis, teacher, date unknown.¹⁷

After the First World War, the Jackson County Singing Convention gave up any influence it may have had on the singing schools. The Convention supported the school by loaning materials, but they no longer sponsored the classes. Music education was completely controlled by the people of each community.

Following the death of Asbury Brown, his son, Claude A. Brown (1875-1965), a farmer, kept all of his children involved in music and the singing school. He and his wife, Nina Clementine Lord Brown (1880-1953), had thirteen children. A close family friend and former student of Asbury, Adolphus Homer Purcell (1885-1969), was the family's mentor and personal teacher.¹⁸ The family would visit several churches in the area when Purcell was in the vicinity. Purcell taught in the areas that formerly took part in the Georgia State Musical Convention.

¹⁷ C. Simmons, Pendergrass Singing School.

¹⁸ Harold Brown, interview with author, 2016.

The Pinnacle of the Shaped-Note Singing Tradition in Jackson County:

Hyman Brown's Legacy

Claude Brown's children were born and raised on a farm outside of Commerce, Georgia, on the Jackson-Banks county line, with cotton their main source of income. They attended singing school at every opportunity. "The old music teacher [Adolphus Purcell] we had growing up used to get up at the singing school and tell everybody that a man couldn't milk the cow at our farm if he didn't go to the barn singing. If he didn't sing, the cow would leave."¹⁹ Singing was more than just a hobby to Hyman; it was a way of life. In addition to participating in singing schools, the Brown boys formed two quartets: Brown Family Quartet No. 1 and Brown Family Quartet No. 2. The quartets sang at local and out-of-state conventions, radio shows, and festivals and traveled to conventions held in Alabama, Tennessee, and the Carolinas. They were considered to be some of the finest singers of southern gospel music. They often performed songs using solfège syllables rather than words, and they always received a great response from the audience.²⁰

Hyman Brown (1921-1984) was in the Brown Family Quartet No. 2. Like their older brothers, they sang in venues all across the southeast. The Brown Family Quartet No. 1 had already made a name for the Brown family, but when the second quartet appeared, the family of musicians became a phenomenon and people flocked to hear them. It was during this time that Hyman began to gain his reputation as a mastersinger, pianist, and teacher.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Don Brown, interview with author, 2015.

In addition to singing in the quartet, he taught singing schools in Jackson, Banks, and Madison counties in the 1960s.²¹ At the height of his career in the 1970s, he taught throughout the Southeast. From his first day of singing school until his last he used Vaughan's *Up-To-Date Rudiments and Music Reader* (1951) as his text and guide. It was a book that was introduced to him by his mentor, Adolphus Purcell. It was concise and sequential, with chapters on expression, tone power, styles, and ear training. It also contained exercises in all keys in "round note" notation. His son, Don Brown, described a week at his father's singing school:

He would teach Monday through Friday. He might start on Sunday afternoons on occasion. The first day he taught the clefs and lines and spaces. He gave everybody a book and expected them to write it down so they could study and practice at home. He would then introduce the singers to the Do Re Mi's. He would write all the Do Re Mi's on his black board, and he would point and sing. He spent most of his time teaching the Do Re Mi's and had us sing them in different patterns before adding the notes. His students picked it up pretty fast. We always got a kick out the new singers. They stumbled, but my dad was patient. By the time they left they could sing the scale from top to bottom. We'd also sing through a few songs on the melody.

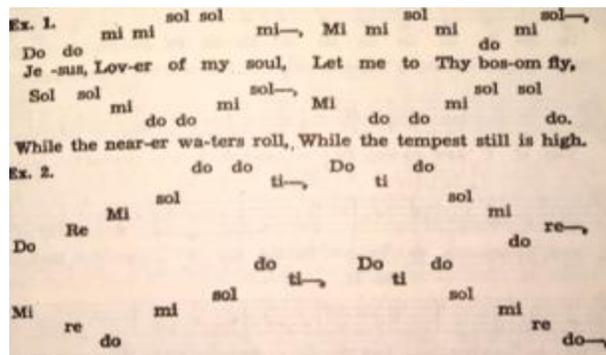


Figure 5.4: Examples of daily warm up exercises.²²

On the second day we'd start with a warm up—he always started by singing the Do Re Mi's—and then he focused on the shapes. Daddy used his own vernacular

²¹ Edith Card, "The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development" *Foxfire* 7.

²² James D. Vaughan, *Vaughan's Up-to-Date Rudiments and Music Reader* (Tennessee: Vaughan Music Publisher, 1951).

to describe the shapes: triangle, half a watermelon, diamond, flag, circle, rectangle, ice cream cone. He knew how to read round notes, and he'd spend a little time on them, but he preferred shape notes. We sang the easier scales and through a lot of easy songs. He usually made everybody sing the melody, but some of us who had been doing it a while threw in harmony.

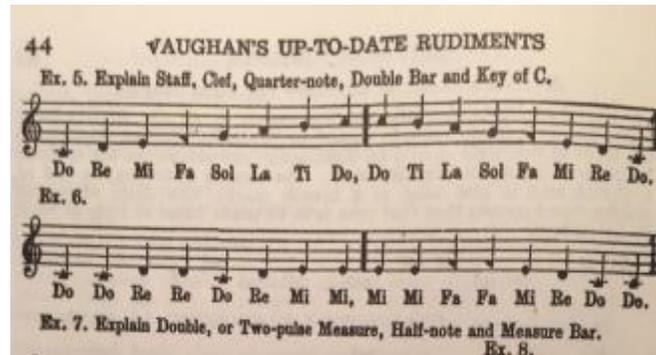


Figure 5.5: Scale patterns and shapes.²³

On the third night he focused on the timing. We still sang the shapes, but he always said that a good pitch at the wrong times was still a wrong note. He used a measuring stick to teach rhythm. He let the advanced students lead the music and demonstrated to us how to mark time. He started to let the younger students sing different parts if they wanted to. We worked on harmony, and he made us sing the Do Re Mi's before we could sing the words to the music.



Figure 5.6: Students “marking time,” 1982.”²⁴

On the fourth night we sang music with different time signatures like 6:8 and 3:4. Everything in the first classes were in 2:4 and 4:4. He taught us how to sing the

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Edith Card, “The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development” *Foxfire* 7.

notes if there were extra sharps and flats. This usually confused everybody to begin with, but he explained it so that we understood it. Usually by the fourth night everybody was more comfortable, and we sang through a lot of music.

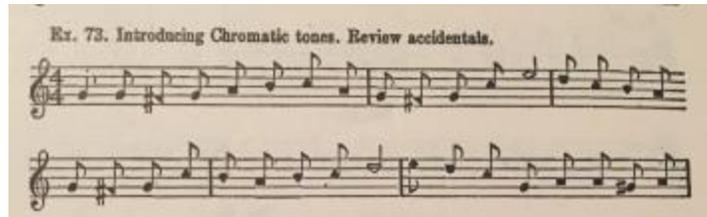


Figure 5.7, Adding accidentals.”²⁵

On Friday night we sang through as many songs needed to give everybody a chance to lead. He expected everybody to get and beat time as the choir sang. The community would come and listen, and those who had been in his singing schools before sang with us. It was a fun social event that everyone looked forward to. Folks would bring food and we’d always have a meal together.²⁶

In the 1970s Hyman Brown reached national status as a singing school teacher.

He taught at the National School of Gospel Music in Roanoke, Alabama, and the Stamp-Baxter Singing School in Dallas, Texas. He taught short-term classes in sight singing, advanced music theory, ear training, and conducting which were intended to prepare singing school teachers. They offered long-term music education classes for normal schoolteachers who wanted to be trained in elementary and secondary general music education.²⁷ Brown continued to receive invitations to teach in the “Metro Atlanta area, Gwinnett, Forsyth, Stephens, Franklin, Banks, Rabun, Habersham, and Jackson Counties just to name a few.”²⁸ He also taught in many other southern states: Alabama,

²⁵ James D. Vaughan, *Vaughan's Up-To-Date Rudiments and Music Reader* (Tennessee: Vaughan Music Publisher, 1951).

²⁶ Don Brown, interview with author, 2015.

²⁷ Jeannette Fresne, “History of the Stamps Baxter Singing Schools and Normal School of Music,” *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, 30(1), 2008, 21-38. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40215347> (accessed March 2015).

²⁸ Don Brown, interview with author, 2015.

Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Hyman Brown was also a composer. His music was published by Stamps-Baxter Music & Printing Company and James D. Vaughan, Music Publisher, the two largest companies in the music printing industry. Both companies are referenced in many convention books published between 1966 and 1981. The lyricists for whom he often composed music were Charles Towler, Reverend Rupert Cravens, and Wanda Irene Owens.

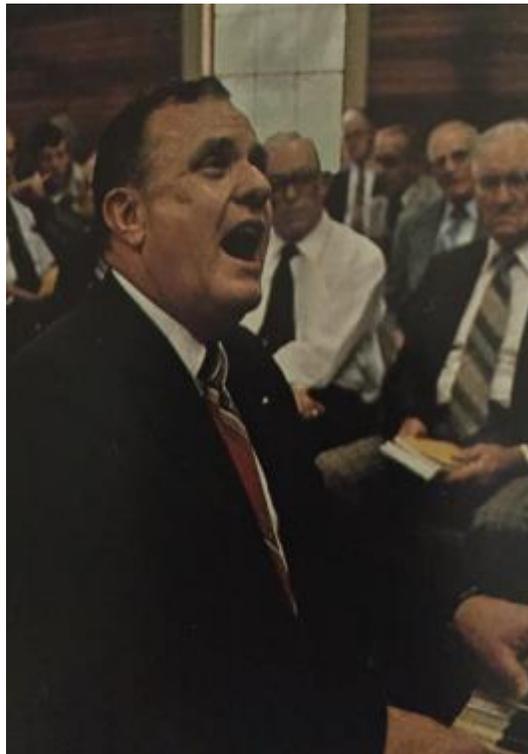


Figure 5.8: Hyman Brown, 99th Rabun County Singing Convention, 1983.²⁹

²⁹ Don Belt and Sam Wall, "Wild Water, Proud People," *National Geographic*, 163 (No. 4), April 1983, 462.

Hyman Brown was recognized as one of the greatest singing schoolmasters in the history of singing schools. Members of the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, recognized his contributions to teaching, composing, and performing. The curators of the museum created a memorial in his name, “The Roots of Southern Gospel Music.” The memorial displays his collection of gospel songs, which are all in shape-notes, *Gospel Music Personified*, his personal copies of Vaughan’s *Up-To-Date Rudiments* and Vaughan’s *Blank Music Tablet*, and his portable blackboard with staves.

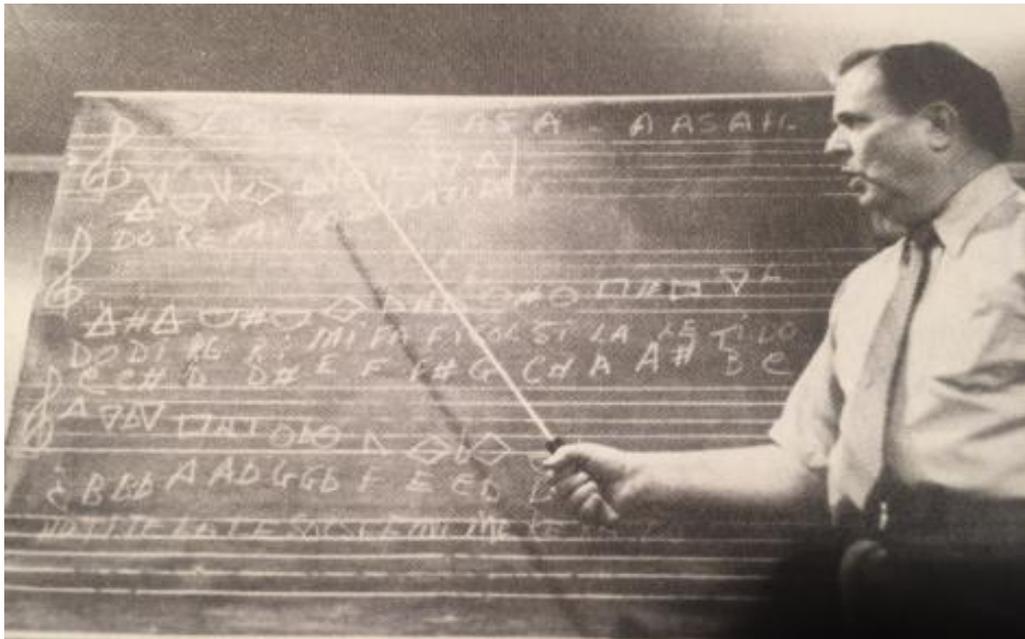


Figure 5.9: Hyman Brown’s collapsible blackboard, unknown.³⁰

³⁰ Edith Card, “The Tradition of Shaped-Note Music: A History of Its Development” *Foxfire*



Figure 5.10: Hyman Brown's collapsible blackboard on display, 2015.³¹

³¹ Todd Chandler. *The Roots of Southern Gospel*.

CHAPTER 4

CHARLES THEODORE BARBER

C. T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band: Early 1880s-1905

Charles Theodore Barber was born in Washington, Georgia in 1851. He and his father, Littleton Barber, prospered after the Civil War as master carpenters repairing infrastructures and buildings in their hometown.¹ In addition to the craftsman skills Charles learned from working with his father, he strived to attain musical skill. Although the baritone horn was his primary instrument, he learned to play several brass instruments and thoroughly mastered percussion, including piano. To round out his musical education, he studied theory and harmony at the Washington Academy for an additional fee of \$60.00 year.

Barber eventually moved to Harmony Grove, Georgia, where he continued work in construction. He married Sarah Jane "Sallie" Nunn, and they had twelve children, nine boys and three girls. Although there was no formal music instruction for the Barber children in Harmony Grove School, this was not a hindrance. All the children learned music at a very early age from their father, the most qualified musician in Harmony Grove, as their teacher. He taught them to play instruments, read music, and explore the

¹ Keith Giddeon, *The Story of Washington-Wilkes-Part V*.
<http://www.giddeon.com/wilkes/history/soww5.shtml> (accessed May 28, 2016).

depths of music theory and harmony. He understood that music “nurtured intellectual growth and aided physical and mental development.”²

In the early 1880s Barber founded C. T. Barber’s Phenomenal Boy Band. The original ensemble included five of his sons: Clint (b. 1874), who played the B flat cornet; Fred (b. 1876), Edward “Theo” (b. 1877), Charles “Wiley” (b. 1879), who played the alto horns, and Robert (b. 1881), who played the bass drum. In accordance with Barber’s philosophy, as the band gained experience all the members learned to play multiple instruments. Clint, the oldest, began by teaching his younger brothers and sisters to play and read music. Teaching became one of Clint’s trademarks like many of the others in his family.³ He focused on the fundamentals that he learned from his father, and he eventually became a master teacher in his own right. The fundamentals of music had been constantly stressed by the senior Barber and were consequently seeded in the minds of his children, becoming “second nature.”⁴



Figure 3.1: Barber’s Phenomenal Boy Band, c. 1885.⁵

² Sallie N. Barber, “May 3, 1892, The family is excited.” [Diary].

³ Don Barber, *A Word from Your Local Announcer* (lulu.com, 2009), 20.

⁴ Sallie N. Barber, “May 3, 1892, The family is excited.” [Diary].

⁵ Tina Harris, *Portraits of a Southern Place* (Georgia: Jackson County Historical Society, 2006), 187.

Charles Barber's system of instruction became well known, earning for him a reputation throughout the southeast as an authority on instrumental music. He created his own teaching course, which emphasized producing good sound and playing simple songs by rote. In the beginning stages, he chose music that was in a comfortable range and required minimal skill. His goal was for his students to play with good tone quality first and then learn the function of the written symbols. When he thought that it was the proper time, he introduced *Palmer's Theory of Music* (1876) and written exercises from dictation. When the child was ready to graduate to the next stage, his lessons integrated dictation and ear training. When the students mastered the music theory fundamentals, he instructed them in harmony, with *Richter's Manual of Harmony: A Practical Guide to Its Study* (1881) as his textbook of choice. By taking what he had been taught as a boy at the Washington Academy and combining it with his self-taught strategies, Charles developed his own logical, comprehensive course. It was this course that directly led to the success of C.T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band. Becky Striggo, the granddaughter of Barber's youngest son, recounts a conversation she had with her grandfather about how the elder Barber taught music:

They played a lot of marches, and they were very fond of Sousa's music. I know that my great-grandfather re-wrote a lot of the music and simplified it for the kids, according to my grandfather, Howard Barber. My great-grandfather used a "talking machine" (the phonograph), and that's how many of his children learned to learn the music. My grandfather said that they would all sit around and learn their parts by listening to wax cylinders and by following sheet music that was written out by Charles or Uncle Clint. He said that music was playing in their house all the time. Someone in the family used to have copies of some of his music and the cylinders, but they are long gone. But we do have a copy of my great-grandmother's diary, and she mentions the band. Since my grandfather was the youngest of all of the kids, the other brothers and sisters would all pitch in and teach him. The entire family read music and most of them could play more than

one instrument. My grandfather talked about how he grew up listening to a lot of music, and he learned to read music before he learned to read books.⁶

The Phenomenal Boy Band evolved into a well-known ensemble that gained the respect of concert-goers, musicians, and politicians alike. They competed in tournaments throughout north Georgia and surrounding states and were invited to march in parades, town celebrations, festivals, commencements, political marches, and assemblies.⁷ Barber insisted that the boys compete during the early stages of the band's life. Their first competition was in Athens, Georgia, on May 17, 1889 at a fundraising event that assisted the firefighters of Athens.⁸ They did not win—the prize was awarded to a group of adults, Wide-Awake, from Americus, Georgia—but the competition served as motivation for the young players.



Figure 3.2: C. T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band, c. 1892.⁹

⁶ Janet Davis and Becky Striggo, interview with author, 2016.

⁷ Thomas C. Hardman, *History of Harmony Grove-Commerce, Jackson County, Georgia 1810-1949*. (Athens: The McGregor 1949).

⁸ Clarke Howell, "The Fireman in Athens: The Great Tournament Brought To A Successful Termination," *The Atlanta Constitution*, May 17, 1889, 2.

⁹ Tina Harris, *Portraits of a Southern Place* (Georgia: Jackson County Historical Society, 2006), 188.

In 1895 C. T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band traveled to Atlanta, where they played at the Cotton States and International Exposition at Piedmont Park. The event attracted thousands of people from across the nation. "The Governor of the State of Georgia, the Senate, Legislature, Exposition Directors, the People of Georgia and Railroad Officials" declared that Tuesday, November 19th would be "Georgia Day at the Cotton States and International Exposition."¹⁰ People from all over Georgia, "big and small, rich and poor," were invited to celebrate "the greatest and most interesting attraction and remarkable event that has ever been recorded."¹¹ It "showcased the latest technology in transportation, manufacturing, mining, agriculture, and other fields. Other attractions included the Liberty Bell and celebrities like Buffalo Bill and the composer John Phillip Sousa, who wrote *King Cotton March* specifically for the occasion."¹² This was an exciting time for the members of the band. They played for a large audience that included John Philip Sousa and some of his band members. Clint Barber was awarded a medal for virtuosity on the cornet, and according to Don Barber, son of David Barber who played the snare drum, Sousa "took a great interest in the Barber Band and was quite impressed."¹³

John Phillip Sousa and his band played their final concert for the Exposition at the Grand Theatre on Sunday, December 8, 1895, and departed the next day for Charlotte, North Carolina. They boarded the Southern Railroad and on their way to Charlotte the

¹⁰ H. Grady, "Railroad Rates Lower Than Ever Known!" *The Atlanta Constitution*, November 17, 1895.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² *Cotton Expositions in Atlanta*, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/cotton-expositions-atlanta> (accessed October 2015).

¹³ Don Barber, *A Word from Your Local Announcer* (lulu.com, 2009), 19.

train paused in Harmony Grove for a “whistle stop.” T. C. Barber’s Phenomenal Boy Band, including his daughters and youngest boys, played an impromptu concert as the train pulled up to the depot. John Philip Sousa, already a fan of the family, gave them his personal pocket watch.¹⁴



Figure 3.3: The Barber Family, Harmony Grove, c. 1895.¹⁵

Charles Barber, a dedicated father and master teacher, understood that the learning process starts with identifying the whole, then dissecting, analyzing, and investigating its component parts. Only then can one return to the whole. His natural teaching method, which allowed his children to learn through listening and intuition at an early age, played an important role in their success. He taught his pupils to listen and enjoy the sounds of music before integrating the signs, symbols, theory, and rules that regulate music. He and his wife created a supportive home environment, which allowed them to explore the pleasures of learning and the gratification that comes from music. He was an exceptional motivator and, with few exceptions, he found joy in the learning process. He taught music from the entry level to a mastery level at the appropriate age

¹⁴ Janet Davis and Becky Striggo, interview with author, 2016.

¹⁵ Becky Striggo, *Littleton Barber*, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~dmorgan/littleton.html> (accessed May 2, 2016).

and time in the lives of his pupils. His comprehensive approach to teaching, including history, theory, arrangement, and philosophy, led to great accomplishments. Charles Barber died May 20, 1905, but not before he had laid a foundation that would affect the people around him for a lifetime. Few people have possessed his rare qualities as a teacher, especially considering his circumstances growing up in the midst of the Civil War and Reconstruction. His legacy lived on through his children and grandchildren. Through festivals and tournaments his pupils developed a sense of pride, and learning music became a self-guided activity and a way of life. He supplied them with knowledge and positive opportunities that served them their entire lives.

The Lasting Influence of Charles T. Barber

A few years before Charles Barber's death in 1905, he enjoyed some of the fruits of his labor. His sons Clint, Calvin, and Wiley began to reach out to people in the community and teach other young men who were interested in playing brass instruments. They formed the Harmony Grove Band in 1899. His wife wrote, "Charles is very excited that the boys have decided to lead the band. The future for the brass band in Harmony Grove is bright!"¹⁶ Charles Barber's influence as a music teacher reached not only his children, but others in the community. Charles agreed to let young men who wanted to play in the band borrow instruments until they could afford to purchase their own. The Harmony Grove Mill, a cotton textile mill, furnished material for their marching uniforms, making this a true community effort.

¹⁶ Sallie N. Barber, "April 3, 1899, Harmony Grove Band," [Diary].

In 1899 the Harmony Grove Band played their debut concert in company with C.T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band for the people of Harmony Grove. Six young men gathered at the town square and presented a free concert for passersby's. For the next five years, the Harmony Grove Band would play alongside C.T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band at events and concerts and would gain their own identity and popularity. They began to add more players and new instruments, such as the tuba and trombone. After its founder's death, C. T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band ceased to exist. Clint Barber then recruited excellent players from surrounding communities and named his newly formed ensemble Barber's Brass Band. He and his two brothers continued to play in the community with the Harmony Grove Band.



Figure 3.4: The Harmony Grove Band, 1907.¹⁷

In August 1904, the town's name of Harmony Grove was changed to Commerce. As the population in Commerce began to increase, due largely to people coming to work at Harmony Grove Mills, so did the number of band participants. Barber's Brass Band was led and nurtured by the Barber boys—Clint until 1909, followed by Wiley and

¹⁷ Tina Harris, *Portraits of a Southern Place* (Georgia: Jackson County Historical Society, 2006), 189.

Calvin—until it ceased to exist in 1914. Each one of them continued music, but they forged a new path.

The Harmony Grove Band was an important asset to Commerce and its growing number of business establishments. It performed at all the major events and celebrations. School officials began to take notice of the growth and popularity of the band and, in 1904, a band class was introduced at Commerce High School with Wiley Barber as the first part-time teacher.¹⁸ The band evolved into a concert band, along with marching and playing for school events and at football games. It also provided a musical outlet for non-singing children.

Like many high school band directors, Wiley Barber had no training in music education other than what he received from his father and Clint. With the exception of instrumentation, the Commerce High School Band was not much different from other such bands of the time. However, many of the Barber Band instruments had been donated to the school and the quality of the instruments was said to be outstanding. In many schools throughout the country, “Instrumentation was inconsistent, and the quality of music low.”¹⁹ Wiley Barber maintained his father’s high standards and formed a reputable band program at Commerce High School.

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¹⁸ *Third Annual Announcement of the Commerce Public Schools Session 1904-1905.*

¹⁹ Emil A. Holz, "The Schools Band Contest of America", *Journal of Research in Music Education* Vol. 10:1 (Spring), 1923, 3.



Figure 3.5: Commerce High School Band led by Wiley Barber, undated.²⁰

As the school began to expand, so did the music offerings. By 1915 Wiley Barber was teaching classes in theory and harmony. He used the same books his father used to train his children: Palmer's *Theory of Music* and Richter's *Manual of Harmony: A Practical Guide to Its Study*. He also incorporated Macdougall's *Twenty Lessons in Writing and Ear Training*.²¹

Wylie's brother Clint continued to direct the twelve-member Barber Brass Band. In April of 1908, they began a mini-tour in the Atlanta metropolitan area, and on April 22 Barber submitted a bid (\$32.50 a concert for twelve men) to play during the concert season at Grant Park in Atlanta.²² They lost the bid to Wedemeyer's Band, but Clint was determined to earn a living playing music. In 1909, he continued to tour with his band and joined the Georgia National Guard. In 1910, he became bandmaster of the Fifth Regiment Band, which described by *The Constitution* as one of the best in the Atlanta area:

²⁰ Tina Harris, *Portraits of a Southern Place* (Georgia: Jackson County Historical Society, 2006), 190.

²¹ *Thirteenth Annual Announcement of the Commerce Public Schools Session 1915-1916*.

²² Clarke Howell, "Busy Session By Park Board" *The Constitution*, April 2, 1908, 3.

The Fifth Regiment Band is universally recognized as one of the best bands in the south, and has on its rosters musicians who have attained distinction in the musical world. It was organized about five years ago, the leader having the pick of the best instrumental musicians in the city and at once became a part of the Fifth regiment, Georgia state troops. The leader, C.E. Barber, is a thorough disciplinarian and requires strict attention to the rules, which are the same obtaining in regular military bands. The band is equipped with the various necessary uniforms and the best instruments obtainable—the same used in the regular army. In the band there are two or three orchestras and like the band, these can be obtained for private entertainments which in no way conflicts with regular duties.²³



Figure 3.6: The Fifth Regiment Band, Clint Barber far right, ca. 1910.²⁴

Clint Barber's reputation as a master band director secured him a spot during the concert season at Grant Park, Piedmont Park, and Lakewood Theatre until the brass band era ended. He continued to direct the Fifth Regiment Band until 1916, and his last recorded performance was June 17, 1923, at Piedmont Park. In 1930 he moved back to Commerce and resided there until his death in 1938. Clint's son Charlie moved to New York and played string bass for Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. The performers traveled throughout Central and North America broadcasting radio shows. Charlie

²³ F. Price, "The Fifth Regiment Band A Well-Disciplined Body," *The Constitution*, May 8, 1910, 8.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

received some teasing, as well as national notoriety, during his travels when he failed to store his instrument securely on the train: “Charlie Barber of Fred Waring’s Pennsylvanians lost, of all things, his bass fiddle just after the Waring troupe arrived in Washington.”²⁵



Figure 3.7: Fred Waring’s Pennsylvanians, Charlie Barber on the bass, 1942.²⁶

Fred L. Barber (b.1876) moved to Lagrange in 1923, and became bandmaster for the Y.M.C.A. Band of Lagrange. His son, Fred Jr., studied trombone with his father and joined the band. The shows they played often on radio station WGM were highly successful:

No program ever heard from this Station WGM, The Atlanta Constitution, was more thoroughly enjoyed than the 6 to 7 o’clock program from this station last night. The LaGrange, Y.M.C.A band and quartet of singers, under the direction of Fred L. Barber, gave the entertainment for the early broadcast. The band is an 18-piece organization, composed of highly trained and talented young men, and is directed by one of the south’s best known bandmasters. Fred L. Barber is well known in band circles and within a comparatively short time has developed the Y.M.C.A band of Lagrange into one of the best organizations of its kind in the south.²⁷

²⁵ “Stuff and Nonsense,” *The Indianapolis Star*, November 28, 1934, 18.

²⁶ *Fred Waring’s America*, Paterno Library, PennState University.

²⁷ Clarke Howell, Jr., “LaGrange Band Heard at WGM Saturday Night,” *The Atlanta Constitution*, January 28, 1923, 8.

Fred Jr. later moved to New York, where he became a well-known trombonist. He played in the Ben Bernie Orchestra and eventually formed his own band. NBC hired him to play various radio shows.²⁸



Figure 3:8: Ben Bernie Orchestra, Fred Barber Jr., undated.²⁹

David Barber (b. 1883) moved to Fort Pierce, Florida, in 1922 to work for East Coast Lumber and Supply Company. While he was there he joined the Fort Pierce Municipal Band. Like his older brother Clint, he played cornet. In 1924, David's job sent him to Melbourne, Florida, where he founded the Melbourne Municipal Band.³⁰ The band flourished until the Great Depression. It was reconvened in 1965.

David's son, Don Barber (1921-2012), was exposed to music daily. He grew up listening to the radio and to his dad playing the cornet. Don said his dad made it a point to play his cornet every day, even when on vacation or traveling: "Lela was driving and dad was sitting in the back seat, playing his cornet while we were all singing."³¹ Don became famous as a radio broadcaster in Georgia and Florida. When he was working at

²⁸ Don Barber, *A Word from Your Local Announcer* (lulu.com, 2009), 189.

²⁹ C. Garrod, *Ben Bernie and his orchestra*. Zephyrhills, FL.: Joyce Record Club Publication, 1991.

³⁰ Don Barber, *A Word from Your Local Announcer* (lulu.com, 2009), 23.

³¹ *Ibid.*

WGST at age 21, he reported the Pearl Harbor attack. Over a career of 74 years, he interviewed countless numbers of famous big band and jazz musicians. He was inducted into the Georgia Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2006.



Figure 3:9: Don Barber inducted into the GAB Hall of Fame, 2006.³²

Theodore Barber's contributions to music education impacted countless lives in Harmony Grove, Jackson County, Georgia and the nation. Generations of Barber musicians owe their success to him. Theodore's love for music and understanding of the importance of fundamentals created a legacy, and his story is the ideal music pioneer narrative.

³² Ibid.

CHAPTER 5

GLADYS STANDRIDGE: BIOGRAPHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL OVERVIEW

My Life as a Teacher: Gladys Standridge



Figure 4.1: Gladys Shankle Standridge, 1947.¹

Gladys Standridge (1907-2001), a native of Jackson County, served the Jackson County School System from 1947-1970 as a 2nd grade teacher and as a special education teacher from 1970-1972 at Benton Elementary School. She was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma Honor Society for teachers, a professional organization that promotes the professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education, and was inducted into the Georgia Teachers Hall of Fame in 1969.² She had a great love for music and attended music education classes and workshops offered at local colleges and

¹ Center for Records, Harold Swindle Public Library, Nicholson, Georgia.

² The Delta Kappa Gamma Society, February 26, 1969.

universities, including Brenau College and the University of Georgia. Convinced that it was her “responsibility to make music a part of the life of every child,”³ she believed that high quality music experiences should take place at all levels of the curriculum, and that teachers should be fluent in music, understand its value as well as its rigorous demands, and be able to articulate that knowledge to students, faculty, administration, board members and community.⁴ In March of 1969, Standridge addressed the Parent Teacher Organization and announced her retirement as a general educator and rhythm band teacher. In her final words to the parents, she outlined her philosophy of music education and expressed her hope that Jackson County would provide more opportunities for students in the future:

When I started the rhythm band I had a vision for the children who attended Benton, and my colleagues, administration and the community helped to make it a reality. Mothers cooked meals and baked cakes, hosted festivals, made uniforms, mended uniforms and provided all the things necessary for field trips. We had to work as a team, and as we did we enhanced the musical development of children and allowed them opportunities that they will remember a lifetime; memories that we will remember for a lifetime. Thank you, moms and dads, faculty, members of the P.T.O.

In the beginning leading the rhythm band was an arduous task. It reminded me of when my father, who was a farmer who inspired me to see the big picture, worked from dawn until the dusk. He would plant seeds, work the fields and nurtured the baby plants until they gave way to fruit and vegetables. How exciting it was when we gathered the crops! It helped me to realize that our children are a lot like little seeds, and someone had to manage children’s education like my father managed his garden. It required nurture and love and one day they would grow into a beautiful garden or a field of daffodils. When I asked the parents and children to sell seeds to raise money, there was a lot more to it than just fundraising. To me it was a reminder of where we all started. Vulnerable, alone but malleable and capable of creating something of beauty and worth. A seed is buried deeply into the dark ground but there’s a little, tiny plant that lies asleep. The sunshine shines down on the ground and the seed moves towards the light. As the rain falls it quickly grows, and as it breaks through the ground it sees what a wonderful world the outside can be. This is education. This is the power of

³ Gladys Standridge, *My life and philosophy as a teacher*, 1969.

⁴ Margaret Ward, interview with author, 2016.

music. My job was to lead children to love music and to teach that which is beautiful. Music is a reflection of the human spirit, that of love, faith, sympathy and hope.

My career has been filled with joy and happiness. When I retire, which will be very soon, I will always think of my students when I pick my book of poems and read Williams Wordsworth's, "Daffodils":

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.
The waves beside them danced; but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:
For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

I was fortunate enough to have music lessons as a child and studied and enjoyed music throughout my entire life. I always wanted to share the joy that music brought me. I have always believed that every child deserves the right to a music education and musical experience. Music is something that can be discussed in social circles that of which contains complex music theory or lengthy discussions about who did what, but to me it's all about enjoying music through performing which brings great joy to the performers, the teacher and those who are listening and watching.

The children of the rhythm band were exposed to a wide scope of popular, folk and art music created by the people from the region in which we live, all across the United States and other civilizations as well. We all need to become better informed about the other aspects of American culture. It is my sincere hope that someone will pick up where I left off and form a rhythm band. I know that the

costumes are old and tattered, but it's well-worth the effort. It is a great thing to offer band and chorus to our students, and our administration should be commended, but it should be an everyday event and not just once a week. This is something that I hope the school system will consider in the future.⁵

Gladys Standridge created a music program that made practical use of the child's environment; each meeting "became an event that had a considerable amount of meaning for the children."⁶ The Rhythm Band developed into more than just a school activity. The ensemble gained local, state, and national recognition. Under her leadership the band earned many accolades; it became a springboard that was directly responsible for the addition of a part-time band class at Benton Elementary.

The Benton Elementary School Rhythm Band: 1947-1970

When the Benton Rhythm Band was first put into action in 1947 it was constricted to the classroom, but Gladys Standridge had a greater vision and set about making it a reality. Other than a few homemade rhythm sticks and blocks, the school had no instruments. She approached the Parent Teacher Organization for help, and they agreed to purchase drums, tambourines, and cymbals. The parents donated a record player, and the students sold garden seed to purchase sheet music and recordings of marches.⁷ She preferred fast-paced "screamers" and popular dance music such as "cakewalks" and "two-steps." Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" and the "Washington Post," Henry Filmore's "Circus Bee," and Edwin Goldman's "The American Bandmaster" are a few examples of the repertoire she selected.

Uniforms were acquired for each student. Corduroy was purchased from Jefferson

⁵ Gladys Standridge, *My life and philosophy as a teacher*, 1969.

⁶ Lynne Wheeler, interview with author, 2016.

⁷ Gladys Standridge, *The Happiest Days of My Life*, 1972, 1.

Mills at a discounted rate, and some of the children’s mothers did the sewing: “Everyone felt so wonderful dressed in the red and white uniforms.”⁸ Lynne Wheeler, former Rhythm Band majorette, said the uniforms were one of the best parts of the experience because it made them feel important and special.⁹



Figure 4.2: Majorettes for the Benton Elementary School Rhythm Band, 1955-1956.¹⁰

Standridge believed that performances were an important part of the individual child’s musical experience and education. After a few years of performing for teachers, students, and administration in the classroom, the rhythm band began to entertain audiences at chapel (located at the school) and at Parent Teacher Association meetings held in the auditorium. Small performances for the school prepared the children to take part in parades, concerts, and talent shows. “Each invitation was a thrilling experience for the second graders.”¹¹ In 1958, as part of the school improvement plan, the band performed on WJJC radio station. The objective was “to communicate with our whole

⁸ Gladys Standridge, *The Happiest Days of My Life*, 1972, 1.

⁹ Lynne Wheeler, interview with author, 2016.

¹⁰ Center for Records, Harold Swindle Public Library, Nicholson, Georgia.

¹¹ Gladys Standridge, *The Happiest Days of My Life*, 1972, 2.

school area through the medium of radio.”¹² Soon after, it became a tradition for the band to march each year in in the Commerce Christmas Parade and the Fat Cow Parade. The band was led by the drum major, followed by the majorettes, the instrumentalists, and then the bass drums.



Figure 4.3: The Rhythm Band marches in the Fat Cow Parade, unknown.¹³

During the 1957-58 school year, with the help of the administration and Mary Sanders, the piano teacher, Standridge entered the Benton Rhythm Band in a music festival held at Brenau College. On February 28, 1958, the Rhythm Band took part in their first festival and earned superior ratings with a performance of “Folk Games.”¹⁴ Standridge expressed her emotion, “Oh happy, happy day for pupils, students and parents!”¹⁵ Under her excellent coaching, the Rhythm Band continued to improve. She began to strive for perfection in all aspects of the art of the Rhythm Band. It became clear to the parents that her students began to have a deeper understanding of music.¹⁶

¹² K. Beal, [Report Jackson County Kellogg of the Georgia Project of APEA]. February 5, 1958.

¹³ Center for Records, Harold Swindle Public Library, Nicholson, Georgia.

¹⁴ J.L. Barnett, “Benton School Wins Superior Ratings at Region 4 Music Fete,” *Commerce, News*, March 6, 1958.

¹⁵ Gladys Standridge, *The Happiest Days of My Life*, 1972, 3.

¹⁶ Margaret Ward, interview with author, 2016.

On March 3, 1959, Standridge entered her band in a nationwide talent show, “Stars of Tomorrow.” They performed a limited routine called “Mulberry Bush” at the Commerce Opera House. The students were chosen to move to the next level, and they appeared on Freddie Miller’s television program at station WLW-A, Channel 11 Atlanta.¹⁷ Charles Bennett expressed his excitement in a letter dated May 20, 1958:

The second grade rhythm band went to Atlanta Sunday. We went to the T.V. Station to play for Mr. Miller. We had the most fun on the way to Atlanta. On the way we saw the lakes. Then we performed on the T.V. Station at five o’clock. We went to Atlanta May 18, 1958. Then we went to Grants Park. We saw black rabbits. And we saw the monkeys too. Then we saw lots of other animals. We had a good time but the best part of the day was the performance.¹⁸

Standridge and the Benton Elementary Rhythm Band won the competition in Atlanta and received an invitation to perform in New York City on the Ted Mack and Arthur Godfrey coast to coast television shows. The parents asked Standridge to decline the invitation because “it was too far away from home.”¹⁹

The strong music program Standridge built made an undeniable impact on students, parents, and the community. She continued the tradition of the Rhythm Band, and its members continued to participate in concerts, parades, and professional organizations, such as Rotary and Lions Clubs, locally and throughout the state. Standridge retired in 1972 and wrote, “These 35 years of teaching at Benton School were the happiest days of my life.”²⁰

¹⁷ L. Ritter, “Stars of Tomorrow” [Letter to Gladys Standridge], 1958.

¹⁸ Charles Bennett, “Our Trip to Atlanta.” [Letter to Gladys Standridge], 1958.

¹⁹ Gladys Standridge, *The Happiest Days of My Life*, 1972, 4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*



Figure 4.4: Benton Elementary School Rhythm Band, 1960-1961.²¹

Carl Orff's Influence

Standridge was a general education teacher who believed music should be incorporated into the life of a child every day. Her degree was not in music, so she attended classes during the summer in the early 1950s to expand her expertise as a music teacher. She was known for maintaining a high standard of excellence, but never grew impatient with the children.²²

Gunild Keetman's *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children* drew her interest. She owned all five volumes because the series was popular during that time and was written for children of all levels of musical intelligence. In the first volume, *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children I Pentatonic* (1950), she highlighted the following lines: "It is in no sense purely musical instruction but represents also a natural outlet for the energy stored up within the ever-growing bodies of children. At the same time it requires the child to use its mind."

²¹ Center for Records, Harold Swindle Public Library, Nicholson, Georgia.

²² Margaret Ward, interview with author, 2016.

In her personal score, Volume I, she circled “1) Cuckoo” and “2) Pat-a-cake.” She more than likely had the required instruments at her disposal (sticks, block, and drums) to play the four parts while the others spoke the nursery rhymes. According to some of the students, they did very little singing, but they spoke and played in unison. As the students mastered their line, they would switch parts, and when they could speak and play the parts separately, speaking and rhythms were combined.

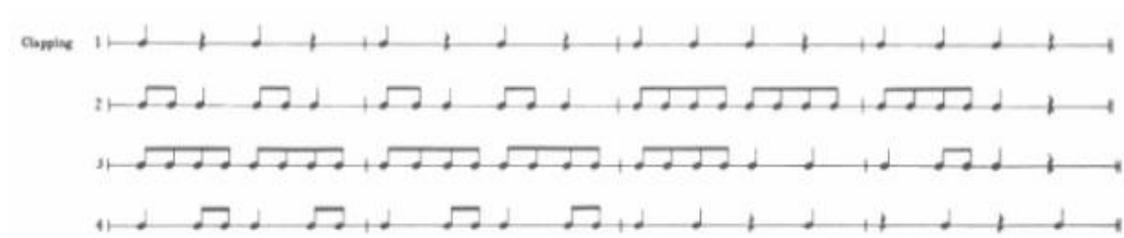


Figure 4.5: Exercises, *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children I Pentatonic*, 1950.²³

“Rhythms for imitation” were also a part of the lessons. On her score she had written “drums” next to the top line and “sticks”, “tambourines”, and “blocks” next to the second line. The strongest leaders were chosen to play the drums, but as they became familiar with the examples she would rotate them. She expected the drum major to be able to play all of the parts on every instrument. As the children mastered the rhythms, she would play marches on the record player and they would play along. After the parts on each instrument were mastered, she taught them to march. Particular about marching formation logistics, pacing, and overall sound, Standridge demanded a consistent sound when the students marched and made them parade around the schoolyard until she was satisfied. She also taught the majorettes posture and how to twirl.

²³ Orff, C., & Keetman, G. (1956). *Music for children*. Mainz: B. Schott's Sohne.

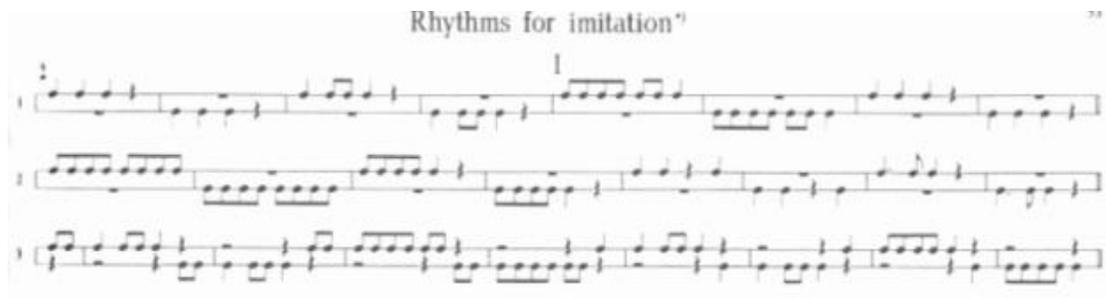


Figure 4.6: Imitation, *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children I Pentatonic*, 1950.²⁴

In the rhythm band, learning ostinato accompaniments was essential. She wrote out a list of several marches that were compatible with Orff’s ostinato examples. She interchanged several of the rhythmic examples for Sousa’s “Stars and Stripes Forever” and Fillmore’s “The Circus Bee.” Orff’s ostinato examples are simple-time common rhythms that can be found or substituted into virtually any popular American march. Accompaniment was added after the children mastered the ostinato pattern.

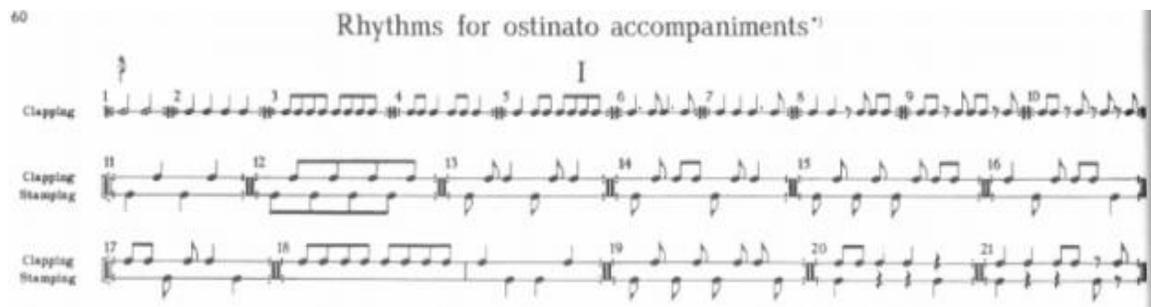


Figure 4.7: Ostinato, *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children I Pentatonic*, 1950.²⁵

Standridge’s accompanist, Mary Sanders, played the xylophone parts on the organ or piano while directing the students which part to play. After they memorized their parts, they would learn to march and play simultaneously. Finally, the majorettes would be added, and a drum major, equipped with a tall hat and large baton, would be appointed

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

to keep time. The final production was an impressive accomplishment.



Figure 4.8: Percussion Parts, *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children I Pentatonic*, 1950.²⁶

Gladys Standridge enriched the lives of hundreds of children through music education. She offered them opportunities and experiences that lasted a lifetime. Her contributions to music education in Jackson County continued long after she retired.

²⁶ Ibid

CHAPTER 6

TIM WHEELER: BAND DIRECTOR, PRINCIPAL, SUPERINTENDENT



Figure 6.1: Dr. Tim Wheeler, Principal of Jackson County High School, 1979.¹

Success Built to Last and Flourish

Tim Wheeler (b. 1943) was a music educator, principal, and superintendent with vision. The bold decisions he made to improve the Jackson County School System while he was principal, and later superintendent, had an immense impact on the students and the surrounding community. Realizing the lack of understanding about the importance of music among the leadership of the Jackson County Schools, he effectively explained the advantages of providing a full-time music staff for each middle school and high school.

The educated and strategic decisions he made in the 1970s were the determining factor that decided whether fine arts would flourish or continue to exist at a minimum

¹Jackson County High School Year Book, 1979-1980.

level. His social, musical, and administrative talents, which he used in the roles of band director, choir leader and accomplished pianist, coalesced with his leadership qualities as principal and superintendent. He compelled people to listen to his articulated vision and was able to generate dynamic teams of students, teachers, administrators, and parents who worked together to bring about positive change to the Jackson County Schools.

Wheeler received a Bachelor of Arts degree in social studies from West Georgia College in 1966 and a Master of Arts in music education in 1970 from Georgia Southern College. He also earned an Educational Specialist degree in administration in 1979 from the University of Georgia and completed a Doctor of Education in 1994 at Nova University. After receiving his baccalaureate degree in 1966, he was immediately appointed band director at Douglas County High School, where he remained for nine years. In 1972 school officials recognized his strong leadership abilities, and he became the Coordinator for Fine Arts for the Douglas County School System. In 1976 he accepted a band position from the Jefferson City schools in Jackson County. A year later he was made principal of Benton Elementary School in the Jackson County School System, and in 1979 he was appointed principal of Jackson County High School. A year later, he became superintendent of the Jackson County School System, a position he held from 1980-1988. No matter what position he held, he made clear that “it was an absolute necessity that I worked at a job that I really, really loved.”²

² Tim Wheeler, interview with author, 2016.

A Meaningful Band Director Career: 1970-1976

Under Wheeler's direction, the Douglas County High School ensemble received numerous local, state, and national honorary accolades as well as invitations to perform across the country. In January of 1970, the marching band traveled to Dallas, Texas where they participated in the Cotton Bowl Parade. The Cotton Bowl Parade was the first large event Tim Wheeler attended as a band director. "I recall the excitement of the students and how hard they worked every day, both in and outside of class. It was a turning point for the program."³ In July of the same year, they represented the state of Georgia at the Lions Club International Convention held in Atlantic City, New Jersey. "We had just traveled to Texas a few months before, but the students were as excited to travel to New Jersey as they were to the Lone Star State. This was a wonderful achievement, and more importantly we maintained momentum going into the next year."⁴ In 1971, they were selected to perform for Richard Nixon's visit to Atlanta. Because of their outstanding performance and their director's outstanding leadership, they were invited to perform for President Nixon's inauguration in Washington, D.C., in 1972. Wheeler laughingly recalled an incident at the inauguration parade: "They allowed the girls to carry wooden rifles, but not before they inspected every single one of them. They joked with the girls in the color guard and told them that if 'any one of you takes them off of your shoulder, you just might be shot!'"⁵ In April of 1972, they traveled to St. Augustine, Florida, where they marched in the Easter Festival Honor Band. On May 31, 1973, his band traveled to Disney World, where they performed and marched in the Memorial Day Concert and Parade.

³ Tim Wheeler, interview with author, 2016.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Wheeler was able to instill an intense appreciation for music everywhere he went. While at Jefferson High School in 1976 he was assigned a study hall duty. After serving in this capacity a short time, he decided the time spent in study hall was not as productive as it might be. After receiving permission from the principal, he organized a chorus of 70 students to fill the timeframe. “Every person should learn to enjoy and come to love music. Doesn’t everyone want to sing or play or listen or even create music?”⁶

The idea to turn study hall into a choir was inspired by Wheeler’s belief that music was intended to be enjoyed by every student, and that, although subconscious, each one of them wanted to be exposed to music in some way. Not all of the students wanted to sing, but he convinced them to listen. Not all of the singers liked the style of music he chose, but he taught them how to appreciate the choral music they performed. “In the beginning, several students did not like the music that I chose, but later in the semester, once they had learned the music, I think one of the pieces was “The Water is Wide,” they said that they loved it. They sang it walking up and down the halls.”⁷

Throughout Wheeler’s career, the bands and ensembles he led consistently received superior and excellent ratings at music festivals. Earning positive ratings was important, but Wheeler’s main goal was to create an experience of lasting value for the students. Ratings and positive comments motivated a high level of performance, but more important was that the students experience personal fulfillment. By working with the students he found a way to realize his full potential and to bring out the full potential

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

of the students. His “I will not settle for less than the best” attitude permeated the lives of his students, while setbacks and failures were considered a “learning experience.”⁸



Figure 6.2: Tim Wheeler marching with the Douglas County Marching Band in Washington D.C., 1972.⁹

Wheeler understood the importance of success in the minds of his students. He connected with parents and created a team of supporters that helped him bring his goals to fruition. With their support, he created a marching band that would have a lasting impact. He did not rely on the approval of every single person with whom he came into contact, nor did he rely on the consent of others to further his cause. He had the courage to take the initiative to do what was best in spite of outside pressures. “There were those on a few occasions who disagreed with me and expressed legitimate concern, but I always listened to those who offered productive, authentic advice or how to make improvements. If it was petty or mean-spirited I ignored it. I did not have time for that

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Inauguration Parade of Richard Nixon, President of the United States and Spiro Agnew, Vice President of the United States [Photograph]. Washington D.C., January 20, 1973.

kind of nonsense.”¹⁰ He remained diplomatic throughout his career but, he did not negotiate his high standards.

Wheeler believed that his class should be a place where students developed principles, good character, ethics, morals, and learned that dedication and hard work paid high dividends. He was convinced that this kind of development could be achieved through performance:

One of, if not the most important piece of a quality music education is performance. Skills learned through performance include teamwork, self-esteem, self-discipline, loyalty, individual and group achievement, and the basics and intricate details of a fine art. All facets of performance tend to prepare the individual for a more successful, enriched, and fulfilling life and in many instances a livelihood. Music and musical performance has a profound effect on the individual from the time one enters this world until departure.¹¹

The continuous success of Wheeler’s marching band was in part due in part to his demands and the rigor he used to meet them. He was a motivator, *par excellence*, who used high-quality musical experiences to inspire: “The quality of a band’s music performance is a direct reflection of the quality of person making the music.”¹²

¹⁰ Wheeler, interview with the author, 2015.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid



Figure 6.3: Tim Wheeler marching with the Douglas County Marching Band in St. Augustine, FL., 1972.¹³

Wheeler was especially interested in the music of other cultures. He was highly aware of world music or “Western popular music incorporating elements of traditional music from the developing world,” as well as customs and artwork.¹⁴ He believed he should share his knowledge of world music with his students because an experience “performing music from cultures other than their own enhanced their musical development.”¹⁵ If children enjoyed music of another culture, he thought they would be more apt to accept the culture as a whole. “I grew up during a time where conflict seemed to affect the whole world; the assassination of J.F.K, the Beatles, the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam. Music teachers had a responsibility to help students look towards to the future and to learn that music was an international language. Music has always been an important part of every culture, and it’s not assigned to just a chosen

¹³ Easter Parade, St. Augustine, FL, January 20, 1973.

¹⁴ Michael Kennedy and Joyce Bourne. Kennedy, *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*.

¹⁵ Wheeler, interview with the author, 2015.

few.”¹⁶ His philosophy is as relevant today as it was in a half a century ago.

From Band Director to Principal: 1977-1980

Wheeler’s philosophy of music education became evident during his tenure as principal. He believed it was the responsibility of educators, general and music, as well as administrators to make music a functional part of each child’s life. Not only did he want every child to experience music, but anyone else who came into contact with him, including staff members. He strengthened the school’s involvement in the community by shaping productive music programs at Benton Elementary School, and he measured his success through students’ ongoing participation in voluntary events outside of school. “The Daisy Festival was a large event that took place every year in Nicholson, and it made me very happy to see many of our students participating.”¹⁷

He was aware that most children attending Jackson County schools were not exposed to formal music education outside of school, and that he was shaping most, if not all, of their musical life. His goal was to incorporate music in all classes, K-8:

When I started work as principal at Benton Elementary we didn’t have much of a choir or a band. The band teacher was being shared between Commerce City Schools and Benton and was funded by the P.T.O. It just wasn’t where I wanted it. In the past there had been a rhythm band, but that was limited to the second grade. And that stopped when Gladys Standridge retired in 1972. I was used to a quality music program, and we didn’t have it in Jackson County. It was time to make a change.

As principal of Jackson County High School, he integrated music classes into the school curriculum. Before his tenure as principal, students were not offered a full time music class, and any sign of a band was mere fantasy. Wheeler had experienced leading

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

great marching bands, and he had a strong desire for the students of Jackson County to experience similar success. One of his first duties as principal was to create and employ a full time band director. He hired a capable former student of his to generate interest and build a band program for Jackson County High School. He also oversaw the installation of the system-wide instrumental music program for all seventh- and eighth-grade students. In 1984, believing that instrumental and choral instruction should be given the same attention as core classes, he supervised the hiring of a full-time chorus director and a visual arts teacher at Jackson County High School.

Superintendent: Building a Legacy in Jackson County, 1980-1988

In 1985 Wheeler's responsibilities as superintendent included overseeing the construction of Jackson County Comprehensive High School. Although the "whole child initiative" was a 21st century effort, he proved to be "whole child" oriented before there was a platform for his views. He championed decreasing class sizes and adding more course offerings. The goal was to create an environment that supported and prepared students for college, career, and citizenship. He emphasized that students' comprehensive needs could be met only through the shared efforts of students, families, schools, and communities.

A testimony to his ingenious leadership is the fact that Wheeler convinced the Board of Education, a construction/planning committee, and a large majority of the community that a fine arts auditorium should be constructed as part of the new campus. Budget constraints did not allow for building all the needed facilities. Wheeler decided that a performance venue should take precedence over any other large structures, such as

the football stadium. “I knew that the people of Jackson County would build a football stadium. I knew they would find a way. I was not so convinced about a performance hall for the performing arts.”¹⁸ Even though he met resistance, the auditorium was constructed.

Due to his tireless efforts and vigilant support, thousands of students were able to participate in the arts and the county’s fine arts programs grew exponentially. Musicals, dramas, concerts, and many other events have been held in the J. L. McMullan Auditorium, and the building has served as a community-gathering place. Due to Wheeler’s foresight, J. L. McMullan Auditorium boasts such luxuries as an orchestra pit, a rehearsal suite, a costume room, and a side stage section complete with loading dock, for building and storing scenery. East Jackson Comprehensive High School was built in 2007. Because of the overwhelming success of the fine arts at Jackson County High School, an expanded and even more elaborate auditorium, designed by the music faculty, became part of the campus.

Since Wheeler launched his vision, thousands of Jackson County students have received instruction in the fine arts. The high school bands have attended marching festivals and played at hundreds of football games and competitions. Jackson County High has produced one of the top jazz bands in the state. The choral organizations have performed at ACDA conferences and numerous local, national and international festivals, gaining a reputation for excellence at all levels. They have had the experience of sharing art experiences in New York, Austria, the Republic of Czechoslovakia, and Germany. The musical theater students have performed with full orchestra in the presentation of musicals such as *West Side Story*, *Grease*, *HMS Pinafore*, *The Mikado* and *Pirates of*

¹⁸ Ibid.

Penzance. Wheeler's visions have come to fruition. The results of his labors continue to enhance the lives of the people of Jackson County.

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APPENDIX A

JACKSON COUNTY MILITIA DISTRICTS: 1881

Jackson County Militia Districts: 1881

JEFFERSON DISTRICT

White

Martin Institute
An unnamed school in Jefferson
Thompson's
Galilee
White plains
Shockley
Virgil
Yearwood
Hancock's
Oconee Fork

Negro

Jefferson
Pleasant Grove
Cedar Grove

HARRISBURG DISTRICT

White

Apple Valley
Harris
Thyatira
Bailey's
Jarrett's
Pittman's
Colquitt's
Merk

Negro

Daniel Grove
New Cedar Grove

NEWTOWN DISTRICT

White

Antioch
Nicholson
Cabin Creek
Sandy Creek
Whitehead
White's Mill
Aramela
Roger's Academy
New Town

Negro

Cross Roads
Nimno
Nances

HARMONY GROVE

White

Harmony Grove
Hudson's
Bold Springs
Line
Shiloh

Negro

Liberty

MILLER'S DISTRICT

White

Dry Pond
Holly Springs
Brock'

Negro

Hurricane Creek
Wilson's

White

Gravelly Creek
Moore's
Diamond Hill

Negro

Jones

CUNNINGHAM DISTRICT

White

Webb School House
Academy
Allen's Fork
Cross Roads
Mountain Creek
White Plains
White's Hall
Pond Fork

Negro
New Hope
RANDOLPH DISTRICT

White
Whitehead's
Bethlehem
New Liberty
The Line
Walnut
Hebron
Barnett's Academy
Patitos
Shoal Creek
Wood's Camp Ground
Bradfences

HOUSE'S DISTRICT
White

Concord
Center Hill
Center
W. B. Johnson School

Negro
Starks
CHANDLER'S DISTRICT

White
Plesant Grove
Beech Creek
Johnson's Academy
Old Ebenezer
Chapell
Perkins

Negro
Old Beech Creek
Cedar Grove
Martin

SANTA FE DISTRICT
White

Rehoboth
Mineral Spring
Barber's Creek
Samson's
Roberson

CLARKSBORO DISTRICT
White

Duke's Academy
Oak Grove
Park
Shield's
Prospect

Elrod School House
Flint
Lawrence
Lebanon

Negro
Poplar Spring
Haywoods

HOSCHTON DISTRICT
White

Hoschton
Randolph Academy

Negro
Gum Spring
In 1889 the following schools
were added, by Militia District,
to the 1881 list:

JEFFERSON DISTRICT
White

Plesant Grove
Elder's
Altama

NEWTOWN DISTRICT
White

Center
Smith
Pine Grove

Negro
Jone's Chapel

HARMONY GROVE DISTRICT
White

Piedmont
Bone

Negro
Johntown
MILLER'S DISTRICT

White
Randolph Hall
Griffeth
Cave Spring

Negro
Mt. Zion
WILSON'S DISTRICT

White
Wilson
Dickson Bridge
Wheeler's

CUNNINGHAM DISTRICT

Turner
Johnnie Hill
Pendergrass
Sage Hill
Plesant Hill
Court House

Negro

New Salem

RANDOLPH DISTRICT

White

McEver

HOUSE'S DISTRICT

White

Ebenezer
Jug Tavern
Mulberry
New Union
County Line
Collins
Graham

CHANDLER'S DISTRICT

White

Oak Grove
Steed's

Negro

Austin
White Oak

SANTA FE DISTRICT

White

Bear Creek
Tucker's

Negro

Fairfield

CLARKSBORO DISTRICT

Crooked Creek
Williamson
Hale

Negro

Oak Grove
Summer Hill

In addition to the schools listed by Militia Districts the following have appeared in the records throughout the years:

White

Arcade
Adams
Archer's Grove
Attica
Bachelors Academy
Berea
Beddingfield
Bolton's Academy
Braselton
Benton
Bethabara
Center Union
Central
Chandler's
Commerce High
Commerce Junior High
Commerce Grammar
Cold Springs
Deadwyler's
Elmwood
Fairview
Fowler's
Gillsville
Gray Hill
Hood's Academy
Hardman Heights

Highfield
Jefferson High
Jefferson Elementary
Jackson Co. Elementary & High
Long View
Liberty
Lord's
Lord's Corner
Lillburn
Marcus
Maysville
Mayne
Massey's
Mount View
Mount Bethel
New Harmony
New Virgil
North Jackson
Plain View
Potter's
Patrick
Orr's Academy
Rockwell
Red Stone
Ridgeway
Statham
Shanon

South Jackson
Talmo
Tyro
Talassee
Thurmond's
Union Hill
Union
Unity
Victory Hill
White Hill
Woodlawn
Wilson Junior High
Walton Hill
Winder Public Schools
White's Academy

Negro

Bryan Elementary & High
Center

Davenport
Hurricane Grove
Hardman Grove
Hoshton Chapel
J. L. Williams Elementary
Kinney's Academy
Little Valley
Maxey's Hill
Montgomery Grove
Neal-Rosenwald
Pendergrass
Paradise
Reunion
Summit Hill
Springfield
Thurmond Grove
White Hill
Will's Academy
Wallace School House

¹⁹ Elrod, Frary. (1967) *Historical Notes on Jackson County, Georgia*. University of Virginia: F. Elrod.

APPENDIX B

CHANDLER DAVIS AND STRIGGO INTERVIEW

Author interview with Janet Davis and Becky Striggo
May 29, 2016

- Chandler: What is your relationship to Theodore Barber?
- Striggo: He was our great-grandfather. Our grandfather was Howard Duval Barber. He was one of the younger members of the Barber Boys Brass Band.
- Chandler: What was your great grandfather's main career?
- Davis: He and his father, Littleton Barber, worked in construction and was a master carpenter. They built large buildings. They worked all over north Georgia constructing buildings like you see in historic downtown areas such as Washington, Georgia, Harmony Grove and Athens.
- Chandler: What can you tell me about your great-grandfather, Charles Barber's, musical background?
- Davis: He was the founder of the C.T. Barber's Phenomenal Boy Band. They were considered to be the prize of Harmony Grove. The band was made up of Charles Theodore Barber, nine boys and three girls. All of them played some type of instrument. The boys played the brass instruments and the bass drum. The girls played the snare-drum and other percussion instruments.
- Striggo: They played a lot of marches, and they were very fond of Sousa's music. I know that my great-grandfather re-wrote a lot of the music and simplified it for the kids, including my grandfather. He used a talking machine (the phonograph), and Charles learned all of their parts. My grandfather, Howard, said that they would all sit around and learn their parts by listening to wax cylinders and by following sheet music that was written out by Charles or Clint. He said that music was playing in their house all the time. Someone in the family used to have copies of some of his music and the cylinders, but they are long gone. We do have the diary of my great-grandmother, and there is mention of the band. Since my grandfather was the youngest of all of the kids, the other brothers and sisters would all pitch in and teach him. The entire family read music and most of them could play more than one instrument. My grandfather talked about

how he grew up listening to a lot of music, and he learned to read music before he learned to read books. He said that learning a musical instrument and playing music was not a choice. It was expected.

Davis: More than likely someone in the family has them stored in a box somewhere.

Chandler: Do you know when he started the band?

Striggo: Somewhere in the late 1880s. I do know that my grandfather [Howard], was born into it. He was born in 1891, and he was played an instrument at a very early age. The family was already playing well before he was born. There are some photographs of the band before my grandfather was born.

Davis: That sounds right.

Chandler: Are there any kind of written records of your great grandfathers experiences such as memoirs or a diary? Maybe his music instruments? Or sheet music?

Davis: Not that I know of. I would guess that it's long gone. My grandfather didn't even like to play. He probably gave his horn to one of his brothers or sisters. You might try my Uncle Clint's family. Clint died years ago, but he was very involved in music in Atlanta.

Striggo: I don't have anything, and I honestly wouldn't know where to start. The family is so large now, and his personal belongings could be anywhere. There were 12 brothers and sisters and a lot of them had children who became involved in music. I know that my Uncle Dave's son became a famous radio announcer. Uncle Clint became a famous musician and played all around north Georgia.

Chandler: What was the extent of your great-grandfather's musical influence on his sons and grandchildren?

Davis: Many of my great uncles and their children went on to be successful in music. A few of his sons joined the army and went on an excursion to Mexico against Pancho Villa. My Uncle Clint was said to be a great cornet player. The C.T. Boys Band played in Atlanta, and it is said that Sousa gave him a medal.

Striggo: Grandfather said that Sousa stopped by Harmony Grove on his way from Atlanta after hearing them play. Sousa was a fan of the T.C. Barber's Phenomenal Boys Band and knew of them. They played locally, but they also traveled and played outside the state of Georgia.

Chandler: I have heard that story by a few other people, and my plan is to research the dates and locations that Sousa would have traveled. I would like to locate a newspaper article, a picture or some kind of written document of Sousa with the Barber Band. If I find something I will let you know.

Striggo: It is said that Sousa gave my uncle a golden watch to Uncle Clint. Sousa liked him that much.

Chandler: I will continue to search for answers, and if the both of you can come up with something, please contact me. I have found that several of your grandfather's brothers made careers from playing music. Do you know anything about your uncle's careers in music?

Davis: One brother played the organ at a theater in Atlanta. I'm not sure which one. Another went on to be a musician in Fred Waring's band.

Striggo: I know that our grandfather wasn't one of them. He was one of the very few that didn't want to play.

Chandler: Thank you ladies. If there is anything else you can think of that you can contribute, please don't hesitate to call or email me. Thank you.

APPENDIX C

“THE BEST DAYS OF LIFE”

Benton School Rhythm Band⁽¹²⁾
1947 — 1970⁽¹³⁾
Mrs. Shankle Standridge, Teacher⁽¹⁶⁾
Second Grade⁽¹⁴⁾

The Benton School Rhythm Band was organized by Mrs. Standridge in the year 1947-48 composed of the members of the Second Grade. Each year a new group of students ~~were~~ ^{was} in the band.

The first few years, the children used only home made instruments and the activities of the band were confined to the classroom.

With the cooperation of the Grade Mothers and interested parents, new instruments, new uniforms, ^{and a} new phonograph, became a dream of the Second Grade Rhythm Band. This project was enthusiastically entered into with Second Grade pupils selling garden seed to help raise money for "store bought" instruments. With all working together, soon a set of (40) pieces

²⁰ Center for Records, Harold Swindle Public Library, Nicholson, Georgia.

Rhythm Band instruments was a reality. The children were so happy; they loved the Band. Our activities now included playing for chapel programs, and when the new uniforms were completed, the Band performed at P. T. A. Programs. One of our parents donated a wonderful new photograph. The red and white corduroy for the uniforms was purchased from Jefferson Mills, with Mr. Morris Bryan giving us a discount price.

← Mrs. Jean Farmer ^{second} ~~made~~ ^{made} the beautiful uniforms, ^{all the items} Every one felt so wonderful, dressed in the red and white uniforms. The children loved to perform.

The Band was by this time receiving invitations to march in parades, to be in a music concert, ^{to be} in talent shows. Each invitation and acceptance was a thrilling experience for the Second Graders.

The year 1957-58 proved to be a "Very Special year" for the Band. Mr. Kent Beal was our

principal. Miss Mary Sanders was our school music teacher.

~~She and Mr. Beal~~ ^{They} made all the necessary arrangements for the Rhythm Band to enter the Region ~~4th~~ Music Festival held at Brenau College in Gainesville, Va. Feb. 28, 1958.

When this date finally arrived (what an exciting day!) ~~The~~ ^{The} Second Grade Teachers, pupils Mrs Annette Braselton, ^{and} twenty-two interested parents accompanied us to Gainesville.

We went on the ~~Bus~~ ^{Bus} and ~~we~~ tried to be calm, but it was hard. The teachers, as well as the pupils, were nervous, but somehow the children managed to give a good performance.

The ~~Bus~~ ^{Bus} is waiting to take us back to school. Each of us anxiously awaits the decision of the ~~Judges~~ ^{Judges}. The decision finally came about 3:30 P.M. The Benton School Rhythm Band was awarded a "Superior Rating" which is the highest rating given.

← Oh, Happy Happy Day! for pupils, teachers and parents!

After this recognition the band received many invitations to perform. ↗

← On March 3, 1959, the Band entered the "Stars of Tomorrow Show" held in Commerce. The Band was chosen as one of the performers to appear on the "Stars of Tomorrow Show" on Television Channel 11A Atlanta, Ga. This also was an exciting time for all of us - to be on National wide television, it was also a great opportunity for us.

A large group of parents and friends accompanied us to Atlanta to watch the Show. The show was very good; we were recommended to appear on the "Stars of Tomorrow Show" in New York City but being "Second Graders" it was decided it was too far away from home.

After the television show the parents planned a "fun time" for all of us, at Grant's Park, Atlanta. The Parents brought baskets of good good food and after the ride to Atlan

APPENDIX D

“OUR TRIP TO ATLANTA”

"Our trip to Atlanta"²¹

May 20 - 1958 Charles Bennett

Our trip to Atlanta

The Second Grade Rhythmland
went to Atlanta Sunday.
We went to the T. V. Station to play
for Mr. Freddie Miller.
We had the most fun on the way to
Atlanta.
On the way we saw the lakes.
Then we performed on the T. V.
Station at five o'clock.
We went to Atlanta May 18 - 1958.
Then we went to Grant's
Park.
We saw white and black rabbits.
And we saw the monkeys too.
Then we saw lots of other
animals.
We had a good time to.

²¹ Center for Records, Harold Swindle Public Library, Nicholson, Georgia.

APPENDIX E

CHANDLER WARD INTERVIEW

Author interview with Margaret Ward
November 15, 2015

- Chandler: What was your relationship with Mrs. Standridge?
- Ward: My daughter, Pam, was involved in the Rhythm Band and Mrs. Standridge was the director. My daughter was a majorette in the Rhythm Band from 1960-1961.
- Chandler: What was your role as a parent in the P.T.O.?
- Ward: I was the President of the P.T.O. for a several years. The parents met to discuss how to raise funds for the school. We had suppers, cakewalks, a fishing pond, BINGO, etc. We raised money for supplies including instruments for the rhythm band, uniform repairs, shoes/boots; whatever they needed. We also assisted and chaperoned the students while they attended parades and performances.
- We really wanted our children to be part of the band when they got into high school so we raised money to hire the band director from Commerce High School, Mr. Reno. He taught basic music one day a week so that our children could be in the band at Commerce High School (after 1957). Our children could not be in the band in high school if they did not have some type of musical training. We couldn't have that so we hired him to teach our kids on Fridays.
- Chandler: Would you describe the importance of the rhythm band to the kids, parents and community?
- Ward: We took pride in Mrs. Standridge and what she was able to do with the children. They loved to dress up as well as play instruments. Each person had their own uniform: the majorettes had white dresses with red stripes on their tops, white boots and white hair bows; the members of the band wore red dresses and red corduroy pants with white stripes on their tops. The leader, usually a boy, wore white pants and a matching white shirt with red stripes. They each had their very own instruments; some home-made, some that were purchased such as flutes, drums, blocks, sticks and each majorette had a baton.
- Chandler: Where did they perform?

Ward: For the first few years they performed only in the classroom. As the band grew in popularity they were invited to march in parades, concerts, talent shows and festivals. In 1959 the band was chosen to perform on the “Stars of Tomorrow Show” on channel 11 television in Atlanta.

Chandler: Wow! How did that come about?

Ward: They were selected to be a contestant on the *Stars of Tomorrow Talent Show*. They won, and they performed on the Freddie Miller T.V. program on channel 11. They won the contest in Atlanta, and had the opportunity to go to New York free of charge, but the parents declined. They thought it was too far for the children to travel.

Chandler: How were you able to acquire all of Mrs. Standridge’s personal letters and scrap book?

Ward: All of her memoirs and pictures were located at the Nicholson Library at one time, but now I have what’s left of it. Someone had gone through and taken pictures out of it and just made a mess of it. I took it before it became destroyed and agreed to put it back together. I also have a few of the music books that she used that might interest you. I brought them with me for you to look at.

Chandler: I’m very interested in all of what you brought me. It will make for a very thorough study of Mrs. Standridge and the Benton Rhythm Band. I particularly like the texts books: *Orff-Schulwerk Music for Children*. She owned all five. That’s great. It all makes sense now. These books were printed in early ‘50s, and her success started in the mid to late 1950s. This is almost as good as lesson plans because she made notes and underlined particular passages.

Ward: I thought you would like that. Did you see the letters that her students wrote about the trip to Atlanta? She kept everything. There’s also a school report that includes objectives and a plan of attack. The Rhythm Band played a large role in the success of achieving those goals. It also includes some articles about her accompanist, Miss Mary Sanders.

Chandler: Did she use Miss Sanders as an accompanist for all of her productions?

Ward:

Some, but she used the phonograph a lot. The P.T.O bought several records and a parent donated a phonograph.

APPENDIX E

CHANDLER DON BROWN INTERVIEW

Author interview with Don Brown
June 16, 2015

Chandler: Hi Mr. Brown. I interviewed your Uncle Harold a few days ago, and he was able to give me a lot of great information. Thank you for meeting with me.

Brown: You're welcome. I'm glad that Uncle Harold was able to meet. He may be 103 but, his mind is still very sharp.

Chandler: How old were you when you started singing?

Brown: It's always been a family tradition to sing or play an instrument from a very early age. We all started singing about the same time we were able to walk and talk. I'd say since I was just a few years old.

Chandler: What styles of singing did you and your family prefer?

Brown: Southern Gospel without a doubt. Our family has had a long tradition of performing and teaching in singing schools and conventions. All of the singing schools and singing conventions I ever attended are based around Southern Gospel music. It was and still is a way of life. My children attended singing schools.

Chandler: Who were your largest musical influences growing up?

Brown: Definitely dad. He was a phenomenal musician, and he pushed us very hard. He was tough on all of us, and he always seemed to have more patience with his students than he did with us. Homer Purcell was also a good influence when I was younger. He was a close friend of my dad, and he visited a good bit. The Brown grandkids always got an extra dose of singing school lessons when he came to visit.

Chandler: What were some of those lessons?

Brown: They taught us how to sing the shapes, challenging rhythms and how to lead [conduct]. They would tell us not to be afraid and to sing out. It was all about how to make the music sound great. We would sing for hours, and they

corrected us when we made mistakes. Both of them were perfectionists, and that's why I'm OCD [laugh].

Chandler:

Did you receive music theory lesson?

Brown:

Yes. That's what set us apart from the others. They expected us to know everything that was on a printed page. Dad would also explain how the music worked together and how the notes would complement each other.

Chandler:

Would you walk me through, step by step and day by day, your dad's teaching routines and procedures?

Brown:

He would teach Monday through Friday. He might start on Sunday afternoons on occasion. The first day he taught the clefs and lines and spaces. He gave everybody a book and expected them to write it down so they could study and practice at home. He would then introduce the singers to the Do Re Mi's. He would write all the Do Re Mi's on his black board, and he would point and sing. He spent most of his time teaching the Do Re Mi's and had us sing them in different patterns. His students picked it up pretty fast. We always got a kick out the new singers. They stumbled, but my dad was patient. By the time they left they could sing the scale from top to bottom. We'd also sing through a few songs on the melody.

On the second day we'd start with a warm up—he always started by singing the Do Re Mi's— and then he focused on the shapes. Daddy used his own vernacular to describe the shapes: triangle, half a watermelon, diamond, flag, circle, rectangle, ice cream cone. He knew how to read round notes, but he preferred shape notes. We sang through a lot of easy songs, and he usually he made everybody sing the melody, but some of us who had been doing it a while threw in harmony.

On the third night he focused on the timing. We still sang the shapes, but he always said that a good pitch at the wrong times was still a wrong note. He used a measuring stick to teach rhythm. He let the advanced students lead the music and demonstrated to us how to mark time. He started to let the younger students sing different parts if they wanted to. We worked on harmony, and he made us sing the Do Re Mi's before we could sing the words to the music.

On the fourth night we sang music with different time signatures like 6:8 and 3:4. Everything in the first classes were in 2:4 and 4:4. He taught us how to sing the notes if there were extra sharps and flats. This usually confused everybody to begin with, but he explained it so that we understood it. Usually by the fourth night everybody was more comfortable, and we sang through a lot of music.

On Friday night we sang through as many songs needed to give everybody a chance to lead. He expected everybody to get and beat time as the choir sang. The community would come and listen, and those who had been in his singing schools before sang with us. It was a fun social event that everyone looked forward to. Folks would bring food and we'd always have a meal together.

Chandler: You are also a singing school teacher. Did you adopt your dad's methodologies?

Brown: Yes. I tried to pass on the same material that he taught us. I just wasn't the piano player he was. Dad also taught advanced music theory at several schools, and after dad died, I taught in his place.

Chandler: Where?

Brown: We both taught, for example, at the National School of Gospel Music in Roanoke, Alabama. That was a great singing school. Dad taught at a lot more schools than me though. He was an instructor at singing schools in the Metro Atlanta area, Gwinnett, Forsyth, Stephens, Franklin, Banks, Rabun, Habersham and Jackson Counties. Just to name the ones off the top of my head. He traveled to teach in a lot of different states: Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Oklahoma, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia. He was so popular that he had to turn some people away, but he never wanted to. He tried to reach as many people as possible.

Chandler: Why was attending and teaching singing schools important to you as a young man? Did you get any of the same training in public school?

Brown: First, it's great music with a great message. It was a way for us to have a lot of fun singing with people who had the same

interests. There was nowhere else to learn how to read vocal music. The ones who attended the singing schools all took pride in knowing how to read music because there were a lot of my friends who could not do it. And no, there might have been a part-time after-school choir at school, but nothing like dad's singing school. My father understood the importance of music, and when he heard there wasn't a real choir class being offered, he went to Commerce City Schools and taught.

- Chandler: Was your dad on staff at Commerce High School?
- Brown: No. He did it for free and to promote his singing schools. He taught there for only a couple of days each year. Sometimes as much as a week.
- Chandler: How did the students respond?
- Brown: They loved it, and many of them came to the singing schools when dad was in town. Many of them just wanted to watch and listen to my dad play the piano and sing. It was an education that none of them had ever experienced. Many of them said that learning the shapes and singing was like learning a different language, but dad had a way of teaching so that the most novice singer could be successful.
- Chandler: What kind of impact did your dad have on music education in Jackson County and surrounding areas?
- Brown: He made a huge impact. He was the only teacher that I knew of that was teaching students how to sing by note [shapes] in this area. He also knew how to teach people the correct way to sing. Everyone knew that he was the best, and they came from miles around to learn from him. His impact reached much greater than Jackson County.
- Chandler: I visited the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame a few days back, and I was able to view the museum's display of your dad. It's obvious that your dad influenced a large number of people all around the southern states. What attributed to his success as a master singing school teacher?
- Brown: He was a great musician, but he had a special way with people. He was extremely patient, and he built their confidence. He took great pride in knowing that people were excited about singing shapes and that it was something

that they could use each and every Sunday at church and Singing Conventions.

Chandler:

Does your family continue the tradition of singing by shapes?

Brown:

Yes. My children and my brother's children still sing by shape. They attend singing conventions all over the Southeast, and they also attend the Stamps-Baxter School of Music in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. They also sing at the North Georgia School of Gospel Music.

APPENDIX G

CHANDLER HAROLD BROWN INTERVIEW

Author interview with William Harold Brown and Dee Tolbert
June 11, 2015

- Chandler: How old are you Mr. Brown?
- Brown: 103. I was born in February 2, 1912.
- Chandler: How old were you when you started singing?
- Brown: For as long as I can remember. Our whole family sang. We sang the Do Re Mi's before we could talk [laughter].
- Chandler: Who taught you solfege, Do Re Mi's?
- Brown: My dad [Claude Brown] used to take us to singing schools that were within driving distance. Homer Purcell, from Franklin County I believe, was one of the teachers who led the singing schools that we attended, but we all used to gather around the piano, and the kids just picked it up. My dad used to talk a lot about my great grandpa [Asbury Brown], and how he loved to sing. He was a founder of one of the singing conventions somewhere here in Georgia. So music has been in my family for a long time.
- Chandler: Did you learn any music in grammar school?
- Brown: Oh no. I don't even think many of my teachers knew anything about music or least they didn't teach us about it. Only reading, writing and arithmetic. We learned music at home, singing schools and conventions.
- Chandler: I interviewed Mrs. Tolbert a few weeks back, and she said that you were involved in the singing schools in some capacity. Would you explain your connection to the singing schools?
- Brown: Like I said my whole family loved to sing, and we used to go to the singing schools and conventions as often as we could. We were all expected to direct and sing four part harmony. We learned all the notes and shapes. I didn't attend the singing schools as much when I became a teenager, but I continued to perform in a gospel quartet with three other brothers at conventions and churches.

Chandler: Your brother, Hyman, made a name for himself as being one of the best singing school masters in this part of the country. Can you describe how he gained his reputation?

Brown: He loved music. He would sit at the organ, where somebody would have to pump for him, as boy and plunk out notes to songs until he could play them. We all could see that he was special. He became one of the best piano players in these parts. He could do it all. He could sing, play and teach. People had a great deal of respect for him. Eventually he was teaching all over the country, and he travelled a lot. He could fill up a room, and everybody knew his name. He had a great way with people. He became so respected that some of the things he used to teach with are displayed in a museum somewhere in Tennessee. He taught for singing schools such as Stamps-Baxter School of Music. That's what really elevated his career.

Chandler: Do you remember the location of the museum and what's displayed?

Brown: No, I don't.

Tolbert: His blackboard and books are on display at the Southern Gospel Museum of Music in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. They have a large exhibit of famous singing school legends and Hyman's one of them.

Chandler: Thank you, Dee. Mr. Brown, did you ever attend any of your brother's singing schools?

Brown: Yes, but not very many. After he became popular, he would travel as far as Texas. I couldn't go because I was working, but he did take my daughters and family members to local singing schools. The day he was killed he asked me to go with him.

Chandler: How did Hyman die?

Brown: He died in a car accident driving to a singing school.

Chandler: What can you tell me about how Hyman taught?

Brown: He would start with making everybody learn the shapes and Do Re Mi's. We would sing the melody and then in parts.

Chandler: Would everybody sing the solfege, Do, Re, Mi's?

Brown: Oh yea. You didn't go if you didn't sing or learn to want to sing the shapes.

Chandler: Did he just teach shape notes or did he teach other things about music?

Brown: He taught everything. He taught them how to count the notes, which part they should sing, harmony, melody, all of the shapes and how to beat time.

Dee: He gave everybody a book with music lines, and he expected us to write everything that he taught us down in it.

Chandler: Do either one of you have your books in which you took notes?

Brown: Not me. That stuff is long gone I guess.

Tolbert: I do. I'll have to dig through my closet, but I'm pretty sure I have it.

Chandler: That would be a great find, Dee. Thank you. Do either of you remember the resources he used in the singing schools?

Brown: He always suggested that the students buy the Vaughan's *Music Reader* if they wanted to learn more about music. There was another one from Stamps-Baxter, but I don't remember the name of it. He wrote then music for songs too. He had several published in shape note song books.

Chandler: Do you remember any of the song books?

Brown: No. But I do now they were published by James Vaughan [music publisher], and he had his own song book.

Chandler: Was it called *Gospel Music Personified*?

Brown: Yes sir! That's it.

Chandler: Did you ever teach, Mr. Brown.

Brown: Oh no. I just sang.

Chandler: Is there anything else that you would like to tell about your family or Hyman?

Brown: Not really. We all just loved to sing, and it's been passed to the next generation and their kids. Oh yea, if you want to find out more about Hyman talk to Charles Towler. I think he's still alive. Hyman used to set music to his words.

Chandler: Thank you for allowing me to interview you.

Brown: Thank you. If you have any more questions feel free to call or come by.

APPENDIX H

CHANDLER TOLBERT INTERVIEW

Author interview with Dee Brown Tolbert
June 2, 2015

- Chandler: When were you born, Mrs. Brown?
- Tolbert: February 27, 1947.
- Chandler: Where did you go to school?
- Tolbert: Davis Academy on Highway 59 and then Banks County High School in Homer.
- Chandler: Were you involved in a chorus class or any formal music classes in school?
- Tolbert: Oh no. There weren't any. The only musical training that I know of in this area was singing schools.
- Chandler: When and where did you attend singing school classes?
- Tolbert: I was around six, and it was at Beaver Dam Church in Commerce.
- Chandler: Who lead the singing school?
- Tolbert: My uncle, Hyman Brown
- Chandler: Describe what it was like being a student in Mr. Hyman's Brown singing school.
- Tolbert: The school led by my Uncle Hyman. I remember trying to sing along with the older kids and learning shapes. He described the shapes so that we all could remember. Let's see. There was the triangle, a watermelon (only half), a diamond, the flag..., a circle, I believe a rectangle, and then the ice cream cone.
- Chandler: Did you learn anything else other than the shapes?
- Tolbert: Yes. We learned to beat the music and we sang a lot of songs. I sang soprano.
- Chandler: Did his students sing in parts?

Tolbert: Yes. Four part harmony.

Chandler: What was your favorite part of the singing school?

Tolbert: I wasn't the best singer, but I really enjoyed watching Uncle Hyman sing and play. I also liked to be a part of a group. I didn't like singing solos. He made us all sound great.

Chandler: Do you have any documentation of the singing schools you attended?

Tolbert: Yes. I have the little book that Hyman would give to each one of his students to take notes.

Chandler: Great! Could I see it?

Tolbert: Yes, of course.

Chandler: Did Mr. Brown make you take notes?

Tolbert: He wanted us to but we were kids. You can tell by my book that there was a lot of scribbling too [laughter]. But yes, we took notes.

Chandler: By looking at your entries it's obvious that he wanted you to have a comprehensive background in music. His lessons included vocabulary and the signs. I see everything from letter names of the bass and treble staves, absolute pitch names, the grand staff, scales and intervals. Do you remember all of this?

Tolbert: I was a part of the singing school up until my teenage year. I remember most of it. I just wasn't very good at it [laughter].

Chandler: He also taught you parts: soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Did he let you choose which part you sang?

Tolbert: He usually put the younger ones on the melody, soprano, and the older kids on parts.

Chandler: He also taught tone-lengths and rest-lengths. In your book you've written, "primary tone-lengths." Do you remember why he called them primary?

Tolbert: Because the books and hymnals we used had mostly primary tone-lengths. They used the same rhythms mostly.

Chandler: Do you have any of the singing books?

Tolbert: I have my daddy's book. But we used what was at the church, the Church Hymnal. It had shapes.

Chandler: I see he had you to write key signatures and the function of flats, sharps and naturals. You have the chromatic scale written out: do, di, re, mi and so forth. At what point did you learn to sing the chromatic notes?

Tolbert: I didn't get it the first few singing schools. It took me a while, but he reviewed his lessons every time we had singing schools. It took me a while to get it.

Chandler: You have several exercises written down in the front of your book. Did you sing these every day?

Tolbert: Oh yeah. Those things got stuck in our heads. We would leave the school singing them in the car.

Chandler: Is there anything else about your experience in the singing school you would like to share with me?

Tolbert: We had a great time, and it was fun. We looked forward to singing with Uncle Hyman each year. He eventually became "big time," and he didn't visit as much as he did when I first started out.

Chandler: Would you tell me about your father's involvement in music?

Tolbert: My dad, Alexander Bealor Brown, was Hyman's brother. My dad sang, matter of fact the entire family sang. There were 13 kids; eleven boys and two girls. There were two male quartets, the older group and the younger group. Hyman was the youngest of the brothers, and he was in the second group. The second group was Truett, John, Fred and Hyman. My dad wasn't in the quartet, but he loved to sing.

Chandler: Did your dad attend singing schools?

Tolbert: Yes. Here's one of his singing school books. He would go to singing conventions in Jackson, Clarke and several other surrounding counties led by Hyman and others.

Chandler: Did your dad ever talk about Hyman becoming a famous singing school teacher?

Tolbert: Yes. I remember when dad told us that Hyman would not be teaching school one year because he was traveling all over teaching at churches and singing schools. My dad jokes about how he was the youngest and how he became the most famous out of all the children. We were all proud of Uncle Hyman.

Chandler: Do your children attend singing schools, Mrs. Tolbert?

Tolbert: Yes sir. I still have all of Alex's books. You can take those too. I also have Uncle Hyman's song book too. You can take it. You may be interested to know that Hyman was featured in the National Geographic. Here, take it. It was written a year just before Hyman died.

Chandler: Are any of your uncles or aunts alive?

Tolbert: Yes, Uncle Harold. He was in the first quartet. the older group. He's 103, and he would know a lot about Hyman. I could call his care-taker and see if you would like to talk to him. He lives right off 53 in Commerce.

APPENDIX I

GEORGIA STATE MUSICAL CONVENTION (OCTOBER 13, 1877)

GEORGIA STATE MUSICAL CONVENTION.

The twenty-second annual session of the above Convention, met at Fellowship church, Hart county, Ga., Oct. 26th, 1877.

On motion of H. H. Brown, called for delegates and letters, and received from Grove Level church, Banks county, Ga., Mr. H. C. McDonald, Miss M. A. Mangum and Miss M. E. Brown; from Cabin Creek church, Jackson county, Ga., Mr. A. M. Benton and C. G. Benton; from Shiloh church, Madison county, Ga., Mr. A. F. Veal, L. C. Breckenridge and Miss S. A. Veal; from Fellowship church, Hart county, W. C. Ginn, T. C. Bowers, Miss T. A. Brown and Miss Tabitha Smith, and from Union church, Madison county, Mr. J. M. Sailors and P. D. Hardeman.

Then, on motion, went into the election of officers by ballot, which resulted in the election of A. H. Brown, President, Nathan Williams, Vice-President, G. W. Strickland, Secretary, R. G. Chambers Assistant Secretary.

The president appointed the following business committee to arrange business for the Convention: R. G. Chambers, J. M. Brown, H. C. McDonald, F. B. Scarborough and D. W. Hutchinson.

The following is the report of the committee: We suggest that A. H. Brown, H. T. Compton and D. W. Hutcherson, each lead in music 20 minutes. Then adjourned to Saturday morning, Oct. 27th, 1877.

10 O'CLOCK, A. M.—The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. One tune by the choir. Prayer by W. B. Vickery. First lesson of music led by C. G. Benton, 15 minutes, followed by H. C. McDonald, 15 minutes.

After a recess of 15 minutes, the Convention re-assembled. First lesson of music led by F. B. Scarborough, 20 minutes, followed by M. W. Vaughn, 20 minutes.

Then a short business session was held, and renewed the invitation to delegates and received from Holly Springs church, Elbert county, Mr. G. W. Ward, H. J. Ginn, Miss M. E. Moss and M. E. Parks; from Union Grove school, Oglethorpe county, Mr. Benjamin Eidson, J. J. McCarty, Miss S. McCarty and M. Eidson. School taught by B. Y. McBea.

The question of organizing county conventions was agitated by W. V. Vickery, and after some discussion the following resolutions were adopted. On motion, volunteers were called for the purpose of organizing such conventions, with following result:

From Jackson county, C. G. Benton, A. M. Benton and J. I. Ray; from Elbert county, I. M. Parks, E. Ward and W. M. Vaughn; from Madison county, F. B. Scarborough, H. T. Compton, G. W. Strickland, R. S. Williams, J. M. Sailors, P. D. Hardeman and R. G. Chambers; from Oglethorpe county, J. F. Butler, Benjamin Epps and John Christian, and from Banks county, A. H. Brown, H. C. McDonald and J. Thompson. Then adjourned 45 minutes for refreshment.

1 O'CLOCK, P. M.—Re-assembled. The first lesson of music led by W. V. Vickery, 30 minutes, followed by Isham Diar, 20 minutes. Recess 10 minutes, after which music was led

²² Malcolm Stafford, "Georgia State Musical Convention. *The Forest News*, October 27, 1877.

Recess 10 minutes, after which music was led by E. Vickery, 20 minutes, followed by J. F. Phillips, 20 minutes, then followed by J. M. Parks, 20 minutes. Recess 10 minutes, after which held a short business session.

On motion, resolved that the next session of this body be held at Liberty church, Madison county, Ga., on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1878.

On motion, a committee was appointed for the purpose of ascertaining of the citizens around Liberty church, as to whether they will entertain said convention. The names of the committee are as follows: A. H. Brown, H. C. McDonald, D. W. Hutcherson and H. T. Compton.

The County Conventions will be organized at the following churches: At Harmony church, Elbert county, on Friday before the third Sunday in November, 1877, W. V. Vickery and John Diar to attend; at Veal's Chapel, Oglethorpe county, on Friday before the third Sunday in January, 1878, W. V. Vickery, Isham Diar and A. H. Brown to attend; at Union church, Madison county, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in March, 1878, A. H. Brown, W. V. Vickery, Isham Diar and H. C. McDonald to attend; at Oconee church, Jackson county, on Friday before the third Sunday in February, 1878, A. H. Brown, W. V. Vickery, H. C. McDonald and D. W. Hutcherson to attend, and at Grove Level church, Banks county, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in February, 1878, D. W. Hutcherson, W. V. Vickery, G. W. Strickland and Isham Diar to attend. Then ad-

journed till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

SUNDAY MORNING, Oct. 27, 1877.—Convention met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by Rev. Asa Duncan. The first lesson in music was led by G. W. Strickland, 20 minutes; followed by H. C. McDonald, 15 minutes; followed by D. W. Hutcherson, 15 minutes; then followed by J. V. Vickery, W. E. McCurry and H. T. Compton, each 15 minutes. Then adjourned 45 minutes for refreshments.

1 O'CLOCK, P. M.—The first lesson in music led by Isham Diar 20 minutes; followed by W. V. Vickery, 20 minutes; then followed by A. H. Brown, time unlimited, to be adjudged by the President.

A vote of thanks was tendered to the people around Fellowship church, after which the convention adjourned.

A. H. BROWN, Pres't.

G. W. STRICKLAND, Sec'y.

APPENDIX J

JACKSON COUNTY MUSICAL CONVENTION (DECEMBER 29, 1877)

[COMMUNICATED.]

JACKSON COUNTY MUSICAL CONVENTION.

According to previous appointment, the singers and friends of sacred music met at Oconee church, Jackson county, Ga., Feb. 16th, 1878, and organized themselves into a Musical Convention.

On motion, Prof. A. H. Brown was called to the Chair, and J. R. Benton requested to act as Secretary, *pro tem*. On motion, the Hall county Constitution was read and adopted as the Constitution of this Convention—by making a few alterations.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE 1. This Convention shall be called the Jackson County Musical Convention.

2. The officers of this Convention shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, who shall be chosen annually, by the members present, and, to continue in office until their successors are elected.

3. It shall be the duty of the President to preside over all meetings and to perform the duties which shall devolve upon him. If he be absent, the Vice President shall act in his place.

4. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to record the proceedings of each meeting.

5. The Treasurer shall receive all fees, and distribute the same as the body may direct.

6. Any person may become a permanent member, by subscribing to this Constitution.

7. It shall be the duty of all teachers and leaders, who are members of this body, to attend each meeting; and, if any member shall fail to attend two consecutive meetings without a good excuse, his or her name shall be stricken from the roll.

8. The members of this Convention, shall be only those who subscribe to this Constitution.

9. Each Singing school, Singing society, Sunday school, Choir, Club, and all Literary schools, where music is practiced, shall be entitled to a representation of four delegates each, who by presenting credentials, shall be entitled to seats in the Convention.

10. All Ministers of the Gospel shall be entitled to membership and seats gratuitous.

²³ Malcom Stafford, Georgia State Musical Convention. *The Forest News*, December 29, 1877.

10. All Ministers of the Gospel shall be entitled to membership and seats gratuitously.

11. The officers of the Convention shall be an Executive Committee, who, with such other members as they may call to their aid, shall have power to manage and care for the interests we have in charge; and during the interim of the Convention they shall have power to fix the time and place of meeting, to invite individuals and other societies, by delegation, to meet with us. They shall also make, and report in writing, to the annual sessions of the Convention, with such remuneration for the action of the Convention, as they may deem advisable. They shall also report their acts and doings during the interim.

12. Alterations and amendments of this Constitution may be made by a two-third majority.

Next went into the election of officers, by ballot, which resulted in the choice of B. S. Blackwell, President; Wylie Yarbrough, Vice President; James I. Ray, Secretary; J. R. Benton, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer.

Recess of fifteen minutes; after which the President proceeded to appoint an arranging committee, to wit:

M. A. Benton, W. Yarbrough, C. G. Benton, M. G. Wilhite and A. M. Benton.

First lesson in music, conducted by the President, followed by M. A. Benton and Prof. A. H. Brown; time of each undivided.

Adjourned, to meet Feb. 17th, 1878.

SUNDAY MORNING, Feb. 17.—Convention met according to adjournment.

First lesson conducted by Prof. Brown; followed by C. G. Benton, M. T. Dalton and M. G. Wilhite, twenty minutes each.

Recess of ten minutes; after which Prof. Brown made some appropriate remarks, explaining the object of Musical Conventions.

Lessons in music were conducted by M. A. Benton, W. T. Bennett and J. R. Benton, twenty minutes each.

Recess of thirty minutes for refreshments.

Convention met; first lesson in Music was conducted by D. C. Roberts, twenty minutes, followed by the President and Prof. Brown. By special request, our gallant, esteemed and beloved friend, Hon. A. T. Bennett, together with some five or six of his old scholars, sang the A. B. C's, with GREAT honor to themselves and the tune.

On motion, the Secretary was requested to have the proceedings published in our beloved home enterprise, *The Forest News*.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Convention be due, and is hereby tendered to the membership of Genesee church and citizens of the community for their courtesy and generous hospitality extended us, during our stay among them.

Minutes adopted. Convention adjourned sine die.

R. S. BLACKWELL, Pres't.
 JAMES I. RAY, Sec'y.
 J. R. BENTON, Ass't Sec'y & Treas'r.

APPENDIX K

JACKSON COUNTY MUSICAL CONVENTION (March 2, 1878)

Jackson County Musical Convention.
The singers, and friends of sacred music, are requested to meet at Oconee church, Jackson county, Ga., on Friday before the third Sabbath in February, 1878, for the purpose of organizing a Musical Convention for Jackson county. When said Convention is organized, each school, society, club, choir, and each literary school, where music is practiced, will be entitled to representation.—Everybody is invited—and **ESPECIALLY** leaders and teachers of music.
Prof. A. H. BROWN, W. V. VICKERY and others, will be present, to assist in the organization.
C. G. BENTON, }
A. M. BENTON, } **Comm.**
J. I. RAY, }
Jan. 14th, 1878.

²⁴Stafford, Malcom, "Georgia State Musical Convention," *The Forest News*, December 29, 1877.

APPENDIX L

CHANDLER WHEELER INTERVIEW

Author interview with Tim Wheeler
June 2, 2015

Chandler: When were you born?

Wheeler: August 26, 1943

Chandler: What is your educational background?

Wheeler: I received a degree in Social Studies in 1966 and a master degree in music education from Georgia Southern College in 1970. I have a degree in administration from the University of Georgia and Educational Leadership from Nova University.

Chandler: What is your employment experience?

Wheeler: I was the band director at Douglas High School from 1966-1976, Lithia Springs one year (1975-1976), the Fine Arts Coordinator for Douglas County Schools from 1972 until 1976 and the music director, where I taught band and a small chorus class, at Jefferson City Schools from 1976-1977. Funny thing about the chorus class was it started out as a study hall [laughter]. I was the principal of Benton Elementary School [Jackson County, Georgia] from '77 to '79 and principal of Jackson County High School in 1979. I then became the superintendent of the Jackson County School System for 8 years (1980-1988). I was superintendent of Carroll County schools from 1988-1990, Assistant Superintendent in the Elbert County School System from 1991-1993 and I ended my career in public education as principal of Elbert County Comprehensive High School in 1997. I then became the Director of Elbert county Family Connection (1991-1997) and then I started teaching post-secondary at West Georgia College, Truett-McConnell and Piedmont College.

Chandler: What were some of your most outstanding achievements as a band director?

Wheeler: Well, we earned several national honorary performances. In 1970 we were selected to perform at the Cotton Bowl Festival in Dallas, Texas. I recall the excitement of the students and how hard they worked every day in and outside of class. It was a turning point for the program. We were the State of Georgia representative to the Lions Club

International Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, the same year. We had just traveled to Texas a few months before, but the students were as excited to travel to New Jersey as they were to the Lone Star State. This was a wonderful achievement, and more importantly we maintained momentum going into the next year. We were selected to perform at President Richard Nixon's visit to Atlanta in 1971 and then selected to perform in the inauguration of President Nixon the following year in Washington, D.C. A funny story happened while we were in Washington. They allowed the girls to carry wooden rifles, but not before they inspected every single one of them. They joked with the girls of the color guard and told them that if any one of you takes them off of your shoulder, you just might be shot! In April of '72 we traveled to St. Augustine, Florida where our students performed in the Easter Festival Honor Band. In 1973 we performed at Disney World during the Memorial Day Concert and Parade.

- Chandler: In all of your years of teaching music, did you ever face opposition?
- Wheeler: Of course! There were those on a few occasions who disagreed with me and expressed legitimate concern. I always listened to those who offered authentic advice or a better way of doing things. If it was petty or mean-spirited I ignored it. I did not have time for any nonsense.
- Chandler: You were able to build successful music programs. What attributed to your success?
- Wheeler: Parents. If you could convince them and the community that you were trying to make a difference and create a lasting impact they would do whatever was necessary. From day one a successful teacher must build a strong relationship and connect with everybody involved in the program. It's also extremely important, and was a main priority in my life, to do things and make decisions that were well-thought-out and meaningful. If I did that and committed to a greater cause I believed in, it also meant that I was engaged in a career and life that was fulfilling because most of the time it worked out. It's also crucial to learn from the times when things did not work out. Students needed to accept their failures, that included me, and if there were setbacks or mistakes we did not run away from them or try to cover them up. And whatever happened one should never compromise his beliefs or abandon one's passion. We also had a motto: "the quality of a band's music performance is a direct reflection of the quality of person making the music."

Chandler: What type of music did your ensembles perform?

Wheeler: I was and still am a Sousa fan. We played several marches of his along with world music. It was important for the students to know music composed by great American composers, but it was also vital that they perform music from cultures other than their own because it enhanced their musical development.

Chandler: Your music background is extensive along with your success as being in leadership positions. Why did you leave music to become a principal and eventually superintendent of Jackson County Schools?

Wheeler: I felt leadership was my strong suit, and I always thought that I would be a good example for others to follow. I enjoyed teaching music, and I am still very involved in music at the church and in the school system, but leadership was my passion. I was unhappy with what was happening, but I saw the possibilities, and I wanted to bring positive change to Jackson County schools.

Chandler: What type of changes? Specifically with music education?

Wheeler: Todd, when I started work as principal at Benton Elementary we didn't have much of a choir or a band. The band teacher was being shared between Commerce City Schools and Benton and was funded by the P.T.O. It just wasn't where I wanted it. In the past there had been a rhythm band, but that was limited to the second grade. And that stopped when Gladys Standridge retired in 1972. I was used to a quality music program, and we didn't have it in Jackson County. I had experienced the effect of music on students, and the result was a phenomenon that assisted in opening new thoughts and avenues for kids. I wanted to create a school, an environment, that served to unlock and channel, not marginalize, a whole new world. It was about serving the whole child, not just selected parts.

Chandler: What steps did you take to build the band and chorus at Benton?

Wheeler: I started by putting the right people in place. I was most successful when the folks on my team shared my beliefs and values. I convinced them (mostly by doing) that I wanted to do a great job. For those who disagreed with me I continued to encourage them to share their views even when they

didn't agree with mine. The chorus and band positions were not full time until 1979, but it was a good start. It was necessary to articulate to the people just how important music was and how it could serve our students. The programs became rooted my first year because we made the necessary changes and planted the seeds. Music became a very important part of the curriculum, and I personally oversaw that it happened.

Chandler: When you became the principal at Jackson County High School in 1979, what was one of your first priorities?

Wheeler: To hire a full time band teacher. In the history of Jackson County schools, there had never had a full time music teacher. The band was small and disorganized. They had accumulated only a small number of instruments and music. I had been a part of a successful band programs, and I believed that music was an essential part of a student's education. The students should have an opportunity to experience a strong music education.

Chandler: Why do you think students should receive a quality education? What were your goals in establishing a solidified fine arts program at Benton Elementary and Jackson County High School?

Wheeler: Most people love music and that is why our world is filled with dancing, playing and singing. Individuals have enjoyed music for centuries and will continue to enjoy music. We may not be able to understand the speech of other races or read their books but we can understand their music of yesterday and today. Music is the "universal language" and this designation makes it imperative that all our students and stakeholders are exposed to and have the opportunity to listen to, enjoy, study and if they choose, to perform in the musical arena of their choice. Fortunately, we live in a world of beautiful music with wonderful ways of making and hearing music. Therefore, it is imperative that the students are provided with a quality program of music education.

Chandler: When should students be exposed to a music education and what did you do to grow the music programs in Jackson County?

Wheeler: One of my priorities was to get music in place at Benton, where we added general music in K-5, chorus and band in

grades 6-8. When I got to the high school, my goals were to have a full time music staff, chorus and band for grades 9-12. As far as when students should start, a quality program of music education should begin with pre-kindergarten and continue through the secondary level of schooling. The rationale for early childhood, elementary, and middle school music education is varied, complex, demanding, and of absolute necessity. Music education and the development of fine motor skills is an inseparable part of early childhood education. Rhythmic instruction, proper vocal production, and how to listen to and move with music are necessary elements of early childhood, elementary, middle and secondary music education programs. Additionally, as the student progresses in their educational development, music education strengthens the auditory, visual, and kinetic learning process. Reading and reading comprehension is strengthened and the mathematical concepts of fractions and decimals are more easily taught and a proper understanding developed through the teaching and use of time signatures. These concepts also facilitate the development of critical thinking skills which improve standardized test scores.

An additional aspect of a quality music education program is the history of music. The exposure which students receive from the study, listening, and performance of musical genera from the pre-baroque through the ultra-contemporary expands and deepens a student's knowledge and understanding of the social, political, and religious developments and changes and their impact on society. Through this process thinking, reasoning, and totally educated individuals are developed. Therefore, society as a whole is improved.

- Chandler: With these types of changes—the addition of music classes—along with budget constraints, how did you convince the board members, community and teachers to Follow your vision?
- Wheeler: They knew that I was dedicated to finding ways to provide a quality music education to Jackson County students. I stated my beliefs as to why music education was and is of great importance and why it should be in our schools.
- Chandler: What were those beliefs? What do you think was the most important piece of music education?

Wheeler: I explained the importance of group performance, and that if one of, if not the most important piece of quality music education is performance. Skills learned through performance include teamwork, self-esteem, self-discipline, loyalty, individual and group achievement, and the basics and intricate details of a fine art. All facets of performance tend to prepare the individual for a more successful, enriched, and fulfilling life and in many instances a livelihood. Music and musical performance has a profound effect on the individual from the time one enters this world until departure.

Music education is a must to produce a literate and functional society. It is a necessary aspect of education which cannot be ignored.

Chandler: I agree 100%. Why do you think it took so long to have music education integrated into Jackson County classrooms?

Wheeler: Students who attended Jackson County schools were poor. It wasn't like the wealthier kids that attended Jefferson City schools formerly known as the Martin Institute. The Martin Institute was expensive, and if you could not afford to pay, you attended the Jackson County schools. It took someone who understood the importance of music education to come in and make a change.

APPENDIX M

CHANDLER GODFREY INTERVIEW

Author interview with Tim Wheeler
June 30, 2015

- Chandler: What is your role with the Jackson County Singing Convention?
- Godfrey: I am president
- Chandler: How long?
- Godfrey: This is my first year.
- Chandler: How long have you been involved with the Jackson County Singing Convention?
- Godfrey: Ever since my mom and dad started taking me as a little girl. At least 25 years.
- Chandler: When did the first Jackson County Singing Convention take place and where?
- Godfrey: The late 20th century. The 1877 is the earliest recorded meeting, and it took place at Oconee Baptist Church. I have some of the printed information, the minutes, but a lot of that has been lost or is in the possession of the former presidents.
- Chandler: What is the primary purpose of the Jackson County Singing Convention?
- Godfrey: It's a time to join together with folks who love to sing convention music from all around Jackson County and visitors from all around the southeast. It's social fun, it's an outlet and a way to carry on a tradition of gospel music. We sing, worship, and laugh together as well as eat together. It's a day of fun. Many people say that the convention is dying out, but the Jackson County Singing Convention is well-attended every year.
- Chandler: Which books do your convention singers prefer and why?
- Godfrey: *Ready...Sing* has a combination of classics and new music.
- Chandler: How many times a year does the Jackson all meet and where?

Godfrey: The convention is held once a year during the summer, usually in July. This year it is at Talmo Baptist Church.

Chandler: Do people still sing songs using solfege syllable?

Godfrey: On occasion we might have a small group to sing using the Do Re Mi's. The Brown family does it on occasion.

Chandler: Is there a fee to sing at the convention?

Godfrey: No. It is free. We provide the song books, but a lot of the people purchase their own. We also share with other conventions such as Gwinnett.

Chandler: May I look at the minutes and programs from past convention meeting and conventions?

Godfrey: Sure!