THE LIFE AND WORK OF ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT

by

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ABSTRACT

Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981) was the foremost orchestrator of Broadway musicals from 1922 until about 1970, arranging the music for the great majority of the most successful works in that art form. In addition, he composed original music for a variety of genres including operas, symphonies, concerti, chamber music, choral music, band music, music for solo piano, and songs. He also wrote a significant amount of music for radio, television, and motion pictures.

Based on Bennett's unpublished memoirs, this study documents the events of his personal and professional life, providing insight into contemporary critical attitudes toward his work. The study establishes a body of basic information from which future scholarship may bring forth more detailed knowledge of each of Bennett's many fields of endeavor.

Included in this study is a catalogue of Bennett's original compositions, including all known information regarding title, medium, date of composition, premiere performance, publisher, and location of manuscript.

PREFACE

Robert Russell Bennett (1894-1981) is generally recognized to have made an unparalleled contribution to the stylistic development of the music of the American stage. He orchestrated the most influential works to have appeared on Broadway between about 1920 and 1970. During his career, Bennett collaborated with Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Frederick Loewe, and literally dozens of other luminaries of the "Golden Age" of the American musical. He created the orchestral timbres that defined the sound of Broadway for generations of audiences.

Bennett is also widely known for his pioneering work in music for television, especially for the background scores for the landmark documentary Victory at Sea and the acclaimed Project XX series. Prior to his experience in television, he contributed a number of motion picture sound tracks and spent several years as a radio personality.

Less familiar is Bennett's output of original compositions: operas, symphonies, concerti, overtures, suites, and other works for orchestra, band, chorus, solo voice, and solo piano, as well as chamber music for a host of instrumental combinations.

The purpose of this study isto document the life and musical output of Robert Russell Bennett. This focus was formulated in an indirect, almost accidental, fashion. The author first became familiar with

Bennett's work as a high school student, performing several pieces for concert band and some of the many orchestral arrangements and "symphonic pictures," as he called them, of Broadway show music with which his name is so closely associated. As an undergraduate, Bennett's book, Instrumentally Speaking (1975), became a source of much information about techniques for arranging music for bands. As a conductor of bands, the author has had the opportunity to study, rehearse, and perform the same works found so attractive as a high school student.

When the time came to select a dissertation topic, it was natural for the author to cast about among those musicians in whom he had an interest and of whom little had been written. Robert Russell Bennett was one who fit these criteria, and eventually the author settled on Bennett as a suitable subject for the current study.

In the initial stages of research, the author contacted the American Society of Composers, Arrangers and Publishers (ASCAP), who referred him to Barbara Duffy of the Personal Trust Division of the Philadelphia National Bank, the executors of the Bennett estate. When contacted by telephone, Ms. Duffy mentioned the existence of an unpublished autobiography by Mr. Bennett, and referred the author to Bennett's grandson, Kean K. MacDonald, of Philadelphia. Mr. MacDonald graciously gave his permission for the author to borrow a photocopy of the handwritten first draft of the autobiography. (Citations in this study which include only page numbers refer to that page in the handwritten draft). In addition, he shared two thick ring binders full of

newspaper clippings, copies of correspondence, and other material about Bennett, stating that this material had been compiled by Gayle Harris, a researcher in the Copyright Division of the Library of Congress.

Ms. Harris had known Bennett when both worked at the National Broadcasting Company in the early 1960s. Upon his death, she took the initiative to collect the scrapbook material in an act of homage to a man whom she both liked and respected greatly. In addition, she gathered information about the majority of his compositions and arrangements into a catalogue, "Another Russell Bennett Notebook." (The title is a reference to the radio program that Bennett hosted in the early 1940s, Russell Bennett's Notebook.)

Provided with such a wealth of pertinent material and considering that little factual information about Bennett's life and work has heretofore been available, a decision to proceed with the present study was easily taken. However, such a course of action has not been without obstacles, some of which it has not been possible to resolve. Three problems have been especially frustrating.

First, while a fair number of Bennett's compositions were published, those that have do not constitute a representative sample of his work. Very few of his most ambitious works are readily available. The whereabouts of a number of his manuscripts is unknown. Those that can be located are scattered in libraries and private collections in New York City; West Point, New York; Washington, D.C.; Iowa City, Iowa; Pullman, Washington; and Los Angeles, California.

Almost certainly the largest collection of manuscripts of Bennett's original compositions is held by the Philadelphia National Bank. Many of these manuscripts had been deposited by Bennett at the Library of Congress in 1972. However, for reasons unknown to the author, they were withdrawn by his estate following his death.

Unfortunately they are now stored, uncatalogued, in large crates in a warehouse in a deteriorating neighborhood in Philadelphia. The author made two daylong visits to the warehouse, but this was barely enough time to make a sketchy inventory of the material. Examination of the many arrangements for musicals in the collection was not even attempted. Further study was precluded by distance, travel expense, and by the inconvenience to the storage company caused by repeatedly having to transport material to a place within the building where it could be examined. In addition, the material could be examined only in the presence of a representative of the bank. While all concerned were most generous with time and assistance, the author was loath to presume upon their generosity.

A second difficulty was that of establishing important dates with precision. Bennett's autobiography gives virtually no dates for any important event discussed. Moreover, his memory of chronology was often confused, and in the absence of corroborative evidence, the author was sometimes required to make educated guesses as to dates. This problem was compounded by the fact that, to the author's knowledge, Bennett refrained completely from dating any manuscripts after about 1920. More

"blind alleys" were created by the inability of the editors of various dictionaries and encyclopedias to agree on dates of some compositions.

The third challenge involved developing a relatively complete list of musicals with orchestrations by Bennett. The difficulty lies primarily with the fact that, prior to 1933, orchestrators' names rarely, if ever, appeared in the credits of Broadway shows. Since Bennett was involved with more shows per year prior to this date than afterward (by his own account, he scored nearly ninety shows in one four-year span), the nature of the problem is clear.

Once again, Bennett himself fails to clarify the situation. As he did not sign the manuscripts of his Broadway arrangements, it would be necessary to make a stylistic analysis of many scores to be able to determine exactly which Broadway shows (and songs within shows) were orchestrated by Bennett. He himself claimed variously to have worked on between two hundred forty and three hundred musicals. The present study identifies approximately one-half that many. For this reason, the author has not attemped to include Bennett's arrangements in the Appendix, but only his original compositions, about which there is more complete information available.

Despite these pitfalls, and the author's inability to overcome them completely, it is hoped that this study will provide a basic framework for future investigations, the outcome of which will be a more thorough understanding of Robert Russell Bennett and of the value of his creative legacy.

CHAPTER I

A MIDWESTERN BOYHOOD

(1894-1916)

The listing of births in the Tuesday, June 19, 1894, edition of the Kansas City (Missouri) Star included mention of the first child, a boy, born to George Robert and May Bradford Bennett of that city. The new arrival debuted the previous Friday, June 15, according to the Star, at the family's residence at 2426 McCoy Street. (While this address is also given in another source [Hoye, 1894], Bennett himself mentions Cherry Street as the place of his birth in his unpublished autobiography [p. 6], and also in the title of the first movement of his composition Autobiography for Band [1977].) His parents chose for him the family name Robert. His middle name, Russell, was selected in honor of James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), a New England poet and essayist whom the young mother admired, and Missouri-born comic actor Sol Smith Russell (1848-1902), a favorite of the father.

To say that Robert Russell Bennett was born into a musical environment would be a significant understatement. His paternal grandfather, A. Jackson Bennett, played what Russell (as he would come to be called) referred to as "low-down fiddle"--a folk style in which the tailpiece of the violin is held against the player's chest, rather than under the chin. A farmer who owned five hundred acres of land south of Kansas City, he encouraged his four sons to enter the business world and sent

all of them to the Spaulding Business College in Kansas City, but all four became professional musicians instead.

Born in 1867, George (Bennett's father) was the oldest. He played the trumpet well enough to be the principal player at the Kansas City Grand Opera House, and also played the violin and other instruments. The second boy, Charles, played the tuba. Jim, the third son, was also a trumpet player, and the youngest, Louis, was a trombonist. The closeness of the brothers is evidenced by the fact that at the time of Russell's birth, Louis was living in the same house with the new parents, and Charles lived on the other side of the street in the same block (Hoye, 1894).

Musical ability was by no means limited to the father's side of the family. Bennett's mother, May, was an accomplished pianist and teacher who maintained a studio throughout much of her life. She also saw to it that both her son and his younger sister, Beatrice, whose arrival followed Russell's by two years, were well-trained pianists. (According to information provided by the family for the U.S. Census of 1900, the Bennetts also had a third child who did not survive.)

Bennett's mother, whom he adored, came from a background very different from that of her husband. Born in Boston in 1870, she traced her family ancestry back to William Bradford (1589?-1657), who came to America on the Mayflower and later served as the second governor of Plymouth Colony. It is not known when or why she moved west, although,

according to her son, she graduated from an unnamed college in Kansas (p. 21).

As the Bennett family was so artistically inclined, it is no surprise that an interest in the theater was one component of their life. George Bennett's professional engagements included a number of performances with theater orchestras, primarily at the Coates Theatre. Doubtless he was acquainted with a number of actors, directors, producers, and other theater people, both professional and amateur. Most likely it was one of these contacts that occasioned Russell's first involvement with a dramatic production--at the age of three.

Although Bennett later professed not to remember the event, his mother told him that he was carried across the stage during a performance by actress Julia Marlowe (the stage name of Sarah Frances Frost, 1866-1950). According to the November 13, 1897 Kansas City Star, Marlowe appeared at the Coates between November 15 and 20, in three plays: Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Francois Coppee's For Bonnie Prince Charlie, and Ingomar, by Friedrich Halm.

Information is unavailable as to which of the three plays the boy appeared in. There is some slight irony in the fact that while he was involved with nearly three hundred productions in his career, this is the only documented instance in which he actually appeared on stage in a play.

If the young man's acting career ended virtually as soon as it had begun, another event that occurred shortly thereafter may safely be said

to have been a more accurate harbinger of his future. May Bennett had been practicing a movement from a Beethoven piano sonata when her four-year-old son went to the piano and played the first phrase from memory. (As Bennett related that he was unable to reach the black keys, the effect must have been strangely modal.) His mother was very pleased, and his parents had him repeat the trick several times for various guests in the home. Bennett, somewhat facetiously, dated the beginning of his musical career from this event. The passage was from the Sonata, Opus 14, Number 2, third movement (p. 12).

During the summer of Russell's fifth year he accompanied his parents and younger sister to Boulder, Colorado, where his father had an engagement playing with a Chatauqua band. Upon their return, the family moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where they lived for about a year during 1899 and 1900. The reason for this move is not known, but the brevity of the stay was probably caused by the complication of young Russell's life by an intruder that had taken up residence in his body and would accompany him for the remainder of his life: poliomyletis.

Neither Beatrice nor Russell had ever been particularly healthy children, but this new situation which beset him shortly before his fifth birthday was one for which the family was completely unprepared. Not only was the boy stricken more than fifty years prior to the development of any techniques for dealing with the disease, but neither the Bennetts nor their physicians even knew the correct term for the affliction. It was diagnosed as "typhoid malaria."

In the absence of an effective treatment, Russell's parents sought out anything that held out even the slightest hope of being helpful. One effort that conjures up an especially pitiable image consisted of an attempt to stimulate the boy's leg muscles by using electrical charges. Around the turn of the century, electricity was apparently perceived as being a panacea for virtually any infirmity, and Russell's mother applied these treatments faithfully for several months--to no avail, of course. If anything positive can be said to have come from this period, the time spent in bed provided the opportunity and the motivation--boredom--for Bennett to learn to read.

Although Russell's condition had improved somewhat, it was nevertheless a possible motivation, leading the family to take up residence on grandfather Bennett's farm. The idea was to allow Russell, who did not suffer as badly from the virus as did many children, the opportunity to experience the abundance of fresh air, sunshine, and exercise that farm life affords. In contrast to all of the well-intentioned but ultimately futile gimmickry which had been tried previously, the years on the farm almost certainly had a salubrious effect. In later years, Bennett himself professed the belief that his time as a farmboy had prevented the effects of his illness from being significantly more inhibiting (p. 33a).

The farm was near Freeman, Missouri, a town of some two hundred inhabitants. The main farmhouse was approximately a mile from the village. This, of course, was the house where George Bennett had grown

up, and he was no stranger to the trials of agrarian life. His spouse, however, was completely unfamiliar with the rudiments of being a farm wife. Not surprisingly, she hated it, but her Puritan sense of duty was strong, and she gradually adapted to her new environment.

In this effort she undoubtedly received assistance from the matriarch of the family, Russell's grandmother, Eliza Jane Painter Bennett, or "Granamie," as she was fondly known. The strength of this woman is well attested to by the fact that she lived to the age of one hundred, outlasting all but the youngest of her four sons. She died of a heart attack in 1950, having lived to know of Russell's triumphant return to Kansas City earlier that same year, when his Kansas City Album, a work commissioned by the Kansas City Philharmonic, was premiered by that ensemble in honor of the city's centennial (Kansas City (Missouri) Times, 2/27/50, p. 3).

The Bennett family's first two years on the farm did not meet with great success. The first summer brought a severe drought, and the second a flood which destroyed all of the crops. These vicissitudes notwithstanding, the family survived due to May's piano teaching and George's various musical activities. Although Freeman was a small farming community, music played a large part in the lives of the people.

Soon after the Bennetts' arrival in the area, Russell's father had formed a band which performed for such events as ball games and picnics, and whose members were frequently paid in food. Later, there was also a

family orchestra for, in addition to having begun piano lessons in about 1902, both children had been given half-sized violins and were being taught to play them. For Russell's ninth birthday, he received a cornet. This instrument occasioned what he later referred to as his first effort at arranging. When he tried to play along with Beatrice a tune she was practicing on the piano, he discovered that he had to transpose up a step to play in the same key as his sister (p. 24). In fact, ensemble playing of any kind fascinated the young man. In his autobiography he writes:

> One person could practice all day and not be more than noticed, but as soon as more than one started to tune up or give other signs of duets or trios they were sure of having an audience of one: me. This seemed so natural to me that I never even thought of it. . . . Any kind of ensemble playing was more exciting than climbing fences and trees. (p. 13)

At about this same time Bennett (age nine) composed his first piano piece--"'composed' meaning that its all three strains could be repeated any number of times without changing from playing to playing" (p. 39). With his father's help, he scored the opus, and the band played through it at the next rehearsal, which surely must have had the effect of fueling young Robert Russell's creative fires.

Amazingly, these musical opportunities were not the only ones that Freeman, Missouri, had to offer. There were enough competent players in the area that a reading orchestra frequently met to play through some of the standard orchestral repertoire, including such works as Rossini's overtures to William Tell and Semiramide. Bennett was particularly

taken with the tone of the local clarinetist, an experience which resulted in a lifelong fondness on his part for the sound of that instrument (p. 25).

As his cornet playing improved, Russell often performed with his father's band, and eventually he progressed as a musician to the point that his father would use him to substitute for a missing player on just about any instrument. This was certainly excellent experience for a future composer/arranger, and as he, like many young people, detested practicing, he never achieved the degree of proficiency on any of the band instruments that he might have. He did, in his words, "meet a lot of nice horns" (p. 24).

During this time, Russell continued his piano study with his mother. In fact, for most of the ten years or so that the family lived on the farm, May Bennett was the only teacher of any subject that the two children had. While Freeman had a public school system, Mrs. Bennett may not have been satisfied with its quality. Whether for this or some other reason, she opted to tutor her children herself. She received criticism from some, but was able to justify her position to the authorities on the grounds that the children, particularly Russell, were "invalids."

Evidently she brooked no nonsense. After morning piano practice, there were three hours of academic instruction for the children, followed by more music. That her pedagogical methods were effective is

attested to by Russell's record when he finally attended the public schools at about age twelve. After one year of grammar school and two of high school, which was all the secondary education the Freeman schools had to offer, he graduated as the valedictorian of his class. His progress as a pianist must have been equally impressive in that he recalled playing four-hand arrangements of symphonies for piano with his mother, as well as having to play through a complete Beethoven sonata every night before retiring. His ability became well-respected enough in the area that he developed his own clientele of students, to whose homes he would travel by horse and buggy.

If there was plenty of Beethoven, there was no tolerance of some other musical styles. Perhaps as a result of her patrician upbringing, May Bennett had an abhorrence of ragtime and other popular musical genres that she apparently expressed strongly and often. Bennett recalls in his autobiography an incident in which his mother "hit the ceiling" when she heard Russell, at age ten, sightreading a ragtime piece entitled The Lady With the Red Dress. She called it "trash," and told young Russell that if he "ever hoped to be a musician, [he'd] better not play one more bar of it. Incredible as it seems," he continues, "I don't remember ever playing one more bar of it" (p. 1). It is to this incident that Bennett attributed the genesis of what he referred to as a lifelong musical snobbishness on his part, although he was in fact to play not only one but many measures of ragtime throughout his life and to compose in that style, as well.

It was also these years in Freeman that witnessed the beginnings of Russell's great love of sports, especially baseball. In view of his bout with polio, it was amazing that he could play at all. In fact, it took a long time for his peers to accept the idea that he could compete. However, his natural ability and his tenacity eventually earned their respect. He was to remain an avid fan throughout his life, and claimed that the experience of "listening to a great performance of Beethoven's Ninth and seeing a no-hit, no-run ball game are awfully well-matched as thrills" (p. 26).

At some time in his mid- to late teenage years, probably in 1911, Bennett moved back to Kansas City with his mother and sister. George Bennett chose to remain on the new farm, also near Freeman, which the family had purchased the previous year. Whether these developments resulted from any estrangement between husband and wife is pure speculation, although it does seem to have been an unusual turn of events. Since Russell had virtually overcome his physical infirmities and he and Beatrice had completed as much education as was available in Freeman and because May Bennett was not well-suited to country life in the first place, it is plausible that it merely seemed a propitious time to return to the city, where Russell would be able to find more avenues for fulfilling his musical aspirations. However, it is also possible, although it cannot be substantiated, that circumstances had converged to create a watershed situation in the relationship between husband and wife, particularly in light of the marked differences in their respective backgrounds.

In any event, the Kansas City of the early twentieth century to which the Bennett family returned was surprisingly rich in artistic opportunities. Not only did opera companies, orchestras, and outstanding solo performers frequently pass through the city on tour, but the local talent was capable of creditable performances in a number of musical mediums (Crabb, 1967). One of the prime movers of this rich musical life was Sir Carl Reinholdt Busch (1862-1943).

A native of Denmark and a student of Niels Gade and Engelbert Humperdinck, Busch came to the United States in 1887 and settled in Kansas City. He organized both choral and orchestral concerts in the city; composed; and taught string instruments, theory, and composition. In 1911, he founded the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra, later to become the Kansas City Philharmonic. His wife taught piano, at one time numbering among her students one May Bradford (later Bennett).

Soon after his return to Kansas City, Bennett began the study of harmony and counterpoint with Busch. He also took a position as a pianist/organist at the Victor Theatre across the river in Kansas City, Kansas. His duties there included improvising background music for the silent films of that era. Three reels of film would alternate with two vaudeville acts, for which Bennett was joined by a small orchestra consisting of violin, trumpet, and drums. The leader and violinist was Leo Forbestein, who was later to be involved with Bennett's life in the late 1930s as general music director of Warner Brothers Pictures.

Some time later, Bennett moved with Forbestein's group to a new theater, The Royal, which had a three-manual organ. His performance schedule was hectic: 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. and 5 until 7:30 p.m. Another musician, named Harry Frank, would play from 2 until 5 p.m. and from 7:30 until midnight. Each week, the two would exchange schedules.

Recreation for the young man during this period was primarily in the form of tennis, a game to which he eventually became as devoted as he was to baseball. He would rise every morning early enough to play some tennis with fellow pianist Harry Frank until one of them would have to leave to play the 9 o'clock show at the theater.

This arrangement ended sometime in 1914 when they changed their schedules so that Bennett could take the early shift consistently, a change that was necessitated by his taking a second job--playing at The Auditorium, a legitimate theater. In addition to his responsibilities with Forbestein at The Royal, he now had a performance each evening as well as two or three matinees every weekend playing at The Auditorium. The role of this ensemble was apparently to provide incidental music to the plays, which were changed weekly.

In spite of all of these responsibilities, Bennett managed to keep up with his studies with Busch, doing his assignments while the actors performed on stage. His facility at his lessons was quite impressive. One source maintains that he executed his counterpoint exercises in ink, rather than pencil, and that Busch was so impressed with his pupil's

skill in this area that he dedicated a piano trio to Bennett's aptitude for polyphony (Bennett, quoted in Lowe, 1972).

If Busch was impressed with Bennett's abilities, so was the latter pleased with the quality of instruction he received. In a letter to Busch's biographer, Donald Robert Lowe, Bennett wrote:

> As a teacher, Sir Carl was very thorough and preached the gospel of the old fundamental rules. When you studied with him, you could say that you had studied harmony, counterpoint and fugue without blushing. (Lowe, 1972, p. 271)

In 1913, Bennett began to reap some of the rewards of his training. He submitted several piano pieces to The Etude magazine, but these were courteously rejected. Suspecting that these works might have been too complex for the readership of the magazine, he tried again with a much simpler piano piece, and soon received a letter accepting the composition and offering fifteen dollars and fifty printed copies as payment. Bennett adopted the successful formula wholeheartedly, and promptly submitted another piano solo and a duet for violin and piano, both of which were also accepted.

Examination of these pieces quickly reveals the characteristics for which the editors of The Etude were looking. All three are in the key of D major, and the most adventuresome harmonies are secondary dominant and secondary leading-tone seventh chords. All are in clear-cut sectional forms. The titles evoke a romantic mood of the "hearts and flowers" sort: June Twilight (Reverie), Echoes of Palermo (Serenade-Romance), and At Sundown (Romance for Violin and Piano).

Manuscripts of a number of unpublished works lead one to suspect that they date from this same early period of Bennett's life. These pieces are not only similar in length and character to the pieces mentioned above, but the apparent age of the paper compared to other samples of which the date is known tend to support such a conclusion.

Included in this group of works is A Dream Is Wings for piano solo. The numeral "4" which appears on the score and the extreme brevity of this piece--sixteen measures--suggest that it may have been intended as one movement of a larger work. Also for piano solo are the slightly more substantial A Fleeting Fancy, Melody, Spring Spirits, and Wildwood (Scherzo for Piano).

Two other piano works from the Kansas City years bear dates on the manuscripts. A Nocturne appears to be dated April 28, 1911, although the date is only semilegible. Spirit of the Dance carries the dedication, "For Mlle. Anna Pavlova's Dance Music Contest, July 29, 1914." Nothing more is known about the contest.

Another composition from this general period is a Pianoforte Trio in F. This work, of which two movements are extant, is interesting in that it is the only Bennett score known to the author which bears an opus number, as well as being one of the few upon which is noted a date of composition. Bennett was known to be a humble man, and perhaps he felt that to assign an opus number or to note a date of composition in the manner of the great composers that he so admired would be presumptuous. If so, then this exception could perhaps be explained as an

example of youthful exuberance about the completion of the first work that he deemed worthy of claiming as a mature expression of his art, for it is designated "Opus 1." It is dated July 7-December 22, 1915.

As one might suspect, the pace that Bennett maintained eventually resulted in exhaustion, which manifested itself in a respiratory attack. On his doctor's orders, he gave up his day job, keeping the position with The Auditorium orchestra. In addition, he joined a tennis club, renewing an activity that he had given up when he took his second job. He also took up handball at the local YMCA, and played third base on a semiprofessional baseball team (Kansas City Star, 5/4/13, p. A13).

Due to poor management, the theatrical stock company at The Auditorium foundered after a couple of seasons, but Bennett did not suffer for lack of work. Under Busch's baton, he spent two seasons in the second violin section of the Kansas City Symphony, with which he also appeared as an organ soloist during the 1914-1915 season (Crabb, 1967, p. 278). Additionally, he played the trombone and euphonium in various bands, and worked two summers as pianist/conductor for an orchestra in a beer garden in Fairmount Park, "near where Harry Truman, who also played the piano, lived" (p. 50). He was also the pianist in a dance orchestra at the Muehlebach Hotel, as well as in such nightspots as McClintock's and The Blue Goose Cafe.

While the value of such a breadth of professional experience to a young musician is obvious, the degree of Bennett's involvement with his

craft also had a negative side. He writes somewhat ruefully in his autobiography with respect to how his busy musical life and his innate shyness and tendency to idealize women prevented him from making much contact with the opposite sex. Something of a dreamer, he would fantasize about women that he did not even know. The most prolonged of these episodes concerned soprano Felice Lyne (1887-1935), a native of Slater, Missouri, who had built an international reputation and whom Bennett once heard in a Kansas City performance and subsequently followed through newspaper accounts. This infatuation lasted for several years, and must have been intense, as Bennett's mother was moved to send him a copy of Lyne's obituary when she died years later.

Bennett's dreams were by no means limited to romance, for it was about this time that he clarified his ambition to be an opera conductor. It may be that this goal turned his thoughts toward moving to New York City; however, it was a Kansas City performance of Jerome Kern's musical Nobody Home that would turn out more accurately to portend the professional future of Robert Russell Bennett.

CHAPTER II

MAKING A MARK IN THE BIG CITY

(1916-1926)

In late August 1916, at the age of twenty-two, Robert Russell Bennett collected his savings of one hundred seventy dollars and boarded a train for New York City. Upon his arrival at Pennsylvania Station, he rode a streetcar to the West Side YMCA and took a room there. He found his new surroundings very much to his liking. He had an appealing choice of social companions, and the facilities at the "Y" included such amenities as handball courts on which he could continue an interest he had developed in Kansas City.

Shortly after he moved in, another new arrival took up residence next door. Brown Schoenheit came to New York from Boston to study the flute with Georges Barrere (1876-1944), a noted virtuoso of the time. Like Bennett, his home town was Kansas City, Missouri. The two became friends, and through Schoenheit, Bennett was introduced to the New York Flute Club. This association prompted Bennett to compose a new work for flute quartet, entitled Rondo Capriccioso. This piece was given its premiere at a meeting of the Flute Club by Barrere, William Kincaid, George Possell, and a fourth (unknown) performer (undated 1976 letter from Bennett to New York Flute Club, quoted in what appears to be an addendum to program notes for a performance of the work). These players, according to Bennett "could easily have been ranked 1, 2, 3, 4

in the world if flutists were tennis champs" (p. 54). Schoenheit was denied the opportunity to enter this level of the flute world, as he lost his two front teeth in an accident. He remained in the music business, however, becoming the business manager of the Kansas City Symphony. (Although Bennett implies that the Rondo Capriccioso was written and performed soon after his arrival in New York in 1916, the New York Flute Club was not founded until 1920. Whether the premiere occurred later than 1916 or 1917, or whether it took place at the earlier date by some of the flutists who would later become founding members of the New York Flute Club, is not known.)

The Rondo Capriccioso is a fairly extended work in a loose rondo form, interpolating a set of three variations on one of the contrasting themes. This formal tangent in particular, as well as the almost perfunctory nature of the composer's adherence to the formal model in general, is probably the "caprice" to which the title refers. This whimsical character is reinforced by the humorous, but never trite, musical style. Referring to the Rondo Capriccioso, De Lorenzo (1951, p. 13) called it "splendid. . . . one of the finest in the literature for the flute."

Another work probably from this same year of 1916 is the Travel Sketches for piano solo. The titles of its three movements, "In a Missouri Woodland," "Rolling Fields," and "Indiana Villages," suggest that it was composed in response to Bennett's trip from Kansas City to New York by rail. It is an early example of the composer's tendency to

write program music, especially music which is inspired by a particular place.

There are two additional compositions that probably also date from 1916. While the manuscripts bear no date, photocopies of the originals in the Library of Congress are catalogued under this year. As both manuscripts were deposited by the composer himself, it is reasonable to assume that it was Bennett who gave the year 1916 as the date of composition.

The two works are Celebration Festive, subtitled "Danse Joyeuse for Piano Solo," and Columbine, a ballet. The former, while laid out in a simple ABA plan with coda reminiscent of Bennett's early and admittedly commercial music, nevertheless reveals a significantly more mature harmonic practice. This new breadth is probably due to the influence of the years of study with Busch which intervened between the earlier pieces and the works discussed here.

Columbine is Bennett's earliest known orchestral piece and one of the few he wrote calling for anything smaller than a full-blown ensemble of late Romantic proportions. This is, of course, due to the nature of the theater orchestra with its limited performance space. The work may be of some interest as a prototype of orchestration for a group with resources closely approximating those of the type of ensemble of whose sound Bennett was later to become an undisputed master.

Specifically, Columbine is scored for flute, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, trombone, tympani, percussion, and

strings. There are but two characters: Columbine, a coquettish young woman, and her avid suitor, Pierrot. The story line is a melodramatic one typical of the genre, wherein true love and selflessness triumph over material riches and self-indulgence. (In Bennett's stage directions of the score, it is not difficult to detect the influence of the composer's idealized view of women.)

In his first weeks in New York, Bennett tried unsuccessfully to find employment through the American Federation of Musicians. However, a dance band leader whom he met in the course of this effort suggested that he talk to a man named Otto Flaschner at the publishing company G. Schirmer, who might be able to help him find work as a music copyist. When Bennett went to see Flaschner, he was referred to an associate, Charles Greinert. Greinert gave him an assignment extracting a piano part from a score, and he was satisfied enough with Bennett's work to offer him a position. He was paid by the page, and the ten to twelve dollars he managed to earn each week in this fashion was enough on which to live.

Early in his tenure at Schirmer, Greinert sent Bennett to Freeport, Long Island, on a special assignment. He was to help William Furst, a film composer, complete the orchestration of a score he had composed to accompany Cecil B. De Mille's silent film, Joan the Woman. Furst was pleased with Bennett's work and rewarded him with a chair in the second violin section when the film opened at the Forty-fourth Street Theatre on Christmas Day, 1916. He was also allowed to conduct one performance,

but inexperience caused him to miss an important cue, and he was relieved of that responsibiliity and assigned, instead, to coordinate the special effects for the film's battle scene from backstage. He eventually decided that the stagehands could get along without him, and spent most of his time during this period in the audience at the Metropolitan Opera, while still drawing a check from the film's producers. (According to Connelly [1986, p. 128], this film is "one of De Mille's finest works, a landmark.")

The copying work continued to provide a small but steady income, and Bennett found other outlets as well. He became involved as an orchestra pianist and did some arranging for a production of Peter Ibbetson, by John Nathan Raphael (1868-1917), starring John and Lionel Barrymore. One of his duties in this presentation included a scene in which he played something that was allegedly Liszt's Fourteenth Hungarian Rhapsody backstage while Lionel Barrymore feigned performing it on stage. Rather than playing Liszt, Bennett improvised something suitably bombastic each evening, and Barrymore was apparently a good enough faker that few members of the audience were any the wiser.

During the nine-week run of Peter Ibbetson which began on April 18, 1917 at the Republic Theatre and continued at several other houses in the city, Bennett was paid the union scale of thirty-one dollars per service--better money than he had made at any time until then. This income allowed him to move out of the "Y" and into a two-room apartment on West 69th Street with two friends, cartoonist Harold Probasco and

lawyer and sometimes poet John Marony, whose poem Romance Bennett set for high voice and piano in 1917. Part of his income also went into enhancing his new relationship with Winifred Bambrick, the harpist in the Ibbetson orchestra. This twosome was more often a threesome, as Bambrick's mother invariably accompanied the couple on their outings.

When the New York theater season ended for the summer, Bennett went back to Missouri to visit his family. His sister, Beatrice, was by now a professional artist who had received a commission to paint a large mural at the Pickwick bus terminal in Kansas City, and she was involved in this project during the summer of 1917. Bennett found short-term work in a local movie theater, and corresponded faithfully with Winifred Bambrick. Bennett's letters to the lady were apparently not ardent enough to suit her, for on his return to New York in the fall she expressed her dissatisfaction with the development of their relationship. He felt that the war, in which the United States was becoming increasingly involved, prohibited the possibility of a total commitment, and he and Bambrick parted company. She later spent ten years as a member of the Sousa Band, and at least once she played in the pit orchestra of a musical for which Bennett had done the orchestrations.

The season of 1917-1918 was to be an even more eventful one for Bennett. One day at Schirmer, he was introduced to an imposing woman named Winifred Edgerton Merrill. Mrs. Merrill held the distinction of being the first female to earn a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Columbia University. This she did in 1886, in spite of great resistance

on the part of many in the university community (New York Times, 3/26/33, sec. 2, p. 2). Her fields were mathematics and astronomy, but what brought her to Schirmer was work that she was doing on something called "musical autograms," which may best be described as a combination of music, analytic geometry, and the occult.

Her work consisted of obtaining the signatures of famous people and superimposing these on a two-dimensional graph. By graphing the end-points of straight lines, points of intersection of lines, and defining curves by graphing three points on each of them, she obtained a unique set of points representing each autograph.

It was at this stage that she needed the assistance of a musician. Her theory was that each of these sets of points, when superimposed on a musical staff, would provide the outline of a melody which she suggested would somehow reflect the personality of the individual. Farfetched as this sounds today, it was not thought to be particularly absurd at the time. Schirmer even published Mrs. Merrill's book on the subject, with the melodies derived by Bennett. Among those whose signatures were included were Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson, as well as John Philip Sousa, Enrico Caruso, and Thomas Edison.

During the course of their collaboration on musical graphology, Bennett was Mrs. Merrill's guest for lunch at her home, a magnificent estate at Orienta Point on Long Island Sound near Mamaroneck, New York. This was the site of "Oaksmere," Mrs. Merrill's fashionable girls'

boarding school for about one hundred students from all over the United States.

On this occasion, Bennett met Mrs. Merrill's daughter, also named Winifred, and her son, Hamilton Merrill. Hamilton was a captain in the army, and his uniform stirred Bennett's patriotic fervor (p. 65). Absent that day was the younger of the Merrill girls, Louise. Her introduction to Bennett was to occur somewhat later at a luncheon with Mrs. Merrill at the Biltmore Hotel. Louise seemed to find the musician much more interesting than had her older sister, and her interest was reciprocated on Bennett's part.

Several musical works, two of them rather curious, may also be traced to the early period of Bennett's relationship with Winifred Merrill. One of these, entitled A Belasco Sonata for the Piano, lists three composers: Bennett, Merrill, and David Belasco (1853-1931), a successful playwright and producer best known to musicians as having had two of his plays, Madame Butterfly (1900) and The Girl of the Golden West (1905), adapted by Puccini as opera libretti.

The sonata is in three movements, and is subtitled "Christmastide of 1917 at Oaksmere." There is an inscription "to the Oaksmere girls, November 15, 1917" as thanks for flowers sent by them to Belasco when he was ill. It is not known what the relationship was between Belasco and his two "co-composers," nor what role each played in the composition of the sonata, although the most likely scenario would have Bennett constructing a piece using themes of others' creation.

Another piece, Water-Mirror, bears the names of both Louise Merrill and Bennett. A short (twenty-one measures) impressionistic work also for piano solo, its manuscript bears the note, "with apologies to Percy Grainger, et al." A third piano work almost certainly from this period is a march, The Oaksmere Spirit.

Any relationship that may have grown out of the mutual interest between Bennett and Louise Merrill was interrupted by Bennett's induction into the army. He had tried several times previously to enlist, but the condition of his feet as a result of his polio discouraged the examining physicians from doing anything but recommending him for limited service and deferring him. Anxious to serve his country, he was unhappy with this turn of events, but devoted his energies to working for a clientele of songwriters which he had developed.

His efforts on behalf of these men consisted of anything from taking down the tunes that they sang or played at the piano with one finger, harmonizing, or writing arrangements suitable for submission to publishers. Many popular songwriters then, as today, were not trained musicians, but at that time they did not have the luxury of electronic recording devices on which to develop their ideas. This was a fortuitous situation for Bennett, especially as he no longer had his steady income from G. Schirmer, which had closed down its copying operation.

After some months of this, Bennett received a letter from the army which, to his great surprise and delight, had reclassified him as fit

for service. He was assigned to Jacksonville, Florida, as a teamster, due mainly to his background as a farmer. For some unexplained reason, however, he was not sent to Jacksonville, and he went to Kansas City to visit his family and await further orders.

From there he was ordered to Camp Funston, Kansas, and was made bandmaster of the 70th Infantry Band. "And what a band it was," he later reminisced, "fifty-one men, one of whom could play" (p. 71). The colonel in command of the camp called the band "a disgrace to the army" (p. 71). Even sadder than the performance of this ensemble is the fact that before Bennett was discharged from the army less than two years later, twenty-two of the fifty-one died as a result of an influenza epidemic that swept the camp.

Bennett did not remain with the band for his complete term of service. He still yearned to see action, but he failed his overseas physical, again because of his feet, and was sent to a detention camp where he was assigned to guard duty and clerical work. He also occasionally entertained his fellow soldiers on the piano, played in a cafe orchestra on the base, and served as pit pianist for a visiting vaudeville troupe.

He also continued to correspond with Mrs. Merrill, as well as with her younger daughter Louise. After the war had ended, and the troops were merely passing time prior to demobilization, Mrs. Merrill wrote asking Bennett if he might be able to obtain leave to assist her with a

presentation on musical autograms to be given in Chicago. He asked his captain's permission, and that officer was apparently so impressed with his refined manner (no doubt an unusual trait in those surroundings) that he took it upon himself to recommend a discharge for Bennett.

After assisting with the presentation in Chicago, he moved back to New York. He spent the summer of 1919 trying to reestablish himself in the music business there, but his absence had cost his career a good deal of momentum. His financial condition was the worst it had ever been, and his shortage of funds was the primary reason for a significant weight loss over that summer. Well over six feet tall, Bennett must have looked almost emaciated at the figure of one hundred fifty-nine pounds that he gives as his weight at the end of that summer (p. 82). One saving grace, in terms of his diet, was the meals that he took at Oaksmere every week or so. He became something of a fixture at the Merrills', having become engaged to Louise Merrill in June.

Bennett's professional fortunes, as well as his personal ones, also took a positive turn that year. On the advice of Charles Greinert (his former boss at Schirmer), he went to another publishing house, T. B. Harms, to see a supervisor named George Moody. Moody gave Bennett a lead sheet for a tune called An Old-Fashioned Garden, from Cole Porter's new review, Hitchy-koo 1919. Bennett arranged this tune for what was known as the standard "fifteen and piano," a misnomer in that there were sixteen instrumental parts--two violins, viola, cello, bass, flute, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, trombone, and

drums--and the "piano" part was really intended as a condensed conductor's score (Bennett, 1975).

Harms published it in a series of arrangements for dance band. Show tunes were the principal repertoire of these organizations in towns and cities around the country, and, given the existence of such a large potential market for his work, Bennett was soon back in the music business full time. He received twelve dollars for that first arrangement, which was followed by other assignments. Soon he was turning out two arrangements a day for fifteen dollars each.

In addition to his arranging, he began to teach two days a week at Oaksmere, where he was responsible for harmony lessons and some piano instruction. Among his harmony students were Pauline and Elsa Heifetz, sisters of the renowned violinist Jascha.

The big house at Oaksmere was the scene of the wedding of Robert Russell Bennett and Louise Merrill on December 26, 1919. The reception afterward was, in Bennett's words, "unique in that I was not asked to play the piano" (p. 90). The honeymoon included a train trip to Kansas City to introduce Louise to her new in-laws. Upon their return to New York, Bennett resumed his arranging at Harms, and husband and wife adjusted to their new status. The first year, according to Bennett, was marked by three major events: 1) a burglary while they were away for the Decoration Day weekend that totally relieved them of their personal belongings, which fortunately were insured; 2) a plane crash that they

witnessed while seated in the crowd at the United States Tennis Championships at Forest Hills, and 3) the birth of their daughter, Beatrice Jean (p. 91).

The next few years were otherwise relatively uneventful. Arranging for Harms and part-time teaching at Oaksmere occupied Bennett's time. Summers were spent at Oaksmere where among the Merrills' many guests were a number of the best-known figures of show business.

Eventually, more substantial professional opportunities began to present themselves. Bennett was hired to write incidental music for ambitious productions of three of the most famous Shakespeare plays. Each of these featured one of the respected Barrymore family: Ethel, John, and Lionel. Of these, the most successful by far was Hamlet, starring John Barrymore. Opening at the Sam H. Harris Theatre on November 16, 1922, it ran for one hundred and one performances and could have sold out even more. Only one American production of the play had ever run longer (by one performance), and John Barrymore's portrayal of Hamlet has been called "an epochal performance . . . [which] has never been equaled in general esteem by any other American actor" (Leiter, 1985, p. 367). Neither Lionel's Macbeth, which played the Apollo Theatre for only twenty-eight performances beginning on February 17, 1921, nor Ethel's Romeo and Juliet, which opened at the Longacre Theatre on December 27, 1922, and ran for twenty-nine performances, fared nearly so well. Summers during this period were spent at Oaksmere, where the Merrills and the Bennetts entertained many of most prominent people in the music business.

An important opportunity was created for Bennett by the death of Frank Saddler on March 28, 1921. A senior arranger at Harms, Saddler had occupied a preeminent position in that field of endeavor. Max Dreyfus, who along with his brother Louis owned Harms, assigned Bennett to the musical Daffy Dill. This show starred Frank Tinney and featured lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II and music by Herbert Stothart. Bennett was assisted with the orchestrations by Maurice dePackh. The opening at the Apollo Theatre on August 22, 1922, signaled not only the beginning of a long and productive relationship between Bennett and Hammerstein, but turned out to be the first of nearly three hundred musicals orchestrated in whole or in part by Bennett.

Nearly ninety of that number were produced over the next four years. By Bennett's account, he was associated with an average of twenty-two productions per year for the next four years (p. 104), although most of these remain impossible to document as orchestrators' names generally did not appear in production credits at that time. After Daffy Dill came Greenwich Village Follies of 1922, the fourth in a series of revues produced by John Murray Anderson (1886-1954) which were considered the principal rivals of the Ziegfeld Follies (Bordman, 1984). The music for this edition was written by Louis Hirsh.

Another 1922 revue, George White's Scandals of 1922, was important for Bennett in that it was his first opportunity to arrange the music of George Gershwin (1898-1937), who composed all of the music in the show. George White (stage name of George Weitz, 1890-1968), a successful

producer during those years, produced thirteen editions of Scandals between 1919 and 1939. Another of his best-known shows, Runnin' Wild, included a number entitled The Charleston, which became one of the most popular dances of any era and embodies for many people the essence of the spirit of the "Roaring Twenties." Bennett probably orchestrated at least a part of Runnin' Wild, as he arranged several selections for publication (Harris, 1981).

In 1923, Bennett was involved in the first of three Oscar Hammerstein productions in which composer Herbert Stothart was paired with each of three of the most important songwriters of the age: Vincent Youmans (1898-1946), Rudolf Friml (1879-1972), and George Gershwin. The "other" song-writer of the first of these, Wildflower, was Youmans, with whom Bennett would work many times. One performance of Wildflower is of special interest, as it was heard live over the radio, a concept that was quite new at the time. Another characteristic worthy of note is the fact that Bennett wrote a soft ending for the overture. While this was a common area of experiment at the time, Bennett was proud of the comment of his fellow arranger, Steve Jones, who declared that of all the soft overture endings he heard that season, the Wildflower overture was the only one "that [got] applause every performance" (p. 113).

The second of the three jobs with Stothart was Rose-Marie, for which Stothart collaborated on the music with Rudolf Friml. Bennett was not originally supposed to orchestrate the show, but when Oscar

Hammerstein II, who co-authored the book and lyrics with Otto Harbach, heard Friml's arrangements, he threw them out and engaged Bennett to make new ones. Rose-Marie was, according to Bennett, the biggest box-office success in the history of Broadway up to that time (p. 110).

The third Hammerstein/Stothart show that Bennett arranged also had a second songwriter--George Gershwin. This was Song of the Flame, which opened late in 1925. These three shows were by no means the only productions with which Bennett was involved during the early twenties.

Another composer with whom Bennett was to enjoy a long and productive relationship employed Bennett's talents for the first time in 1923. The show was Stepping Stones, a revue featuring the father/daughter dance team of Fred and Dorothy Stone, and the songwriter was Jerome Kern (1885-1945). As luck would have it, Bennett's next effort with Kern was Sitting Pretty in 1924, which was the last cooperative effort of a team that had by them become quite famous: Kern and playwright/lyricists P. G. Wodehouse and Guy Bolton.

As orchestrator of these productions, Bennett was not working as a free agent. He was still employed by Harms, and the owners, Louis and Max Dreyfus, would assign him to particular shows as they were asked to supply an orchestrator. As Bennett's reputation grew, however, producers and songwriters began to request him specifically, and when someone was as successful as Jerome Kern, for example, he generally got the arranger he wanted.

Among the most successful shows for which Bennett arranged music during the period 1922-1925 were Clinging Vine, with music by Harold Levy, and Hotel Mouse, music by Armand Vecsey and Ivan Caryll, both dating from 1922; The Battling Butler (Walter L. Rosemont), Little Miss Bluebeard (E. R. Goetz and George Gershwin), and Mary Jane McKane (Youmans and Stothart) from 1923; Andre Charlot's Revue of 1924 (Noble L. Sissle and James Hubert "Eubie" Blake), Dear Sir (Kern), and Lady Be Good (Gershwin), 1924; and from 1925 No, No, Nanette (Youmans), Sunny (Kern), and George White's Scandals of 1925 (Wells and White). Bennett also composed incidental music for another play, The Firebrand, by Edwin Justus Mayer, which had a very successful run at the Morosco Theatre beginning October 15, 1924. The Firebrand was named Best Play of 1924, according to Leiter (1985).

Bennett's productiveness during these years was by no means limited to the Broadway theater. An orchestral piece, Ballade Moderne, dates from 1922. An unpublished Dance for flute and piano, while impossible to date precisely, may be another result of the composer's association with the New York Flute Club. At any rate, the manuscript of the piece appears to be old enough to date from these years; so too the manuscript of a Clarinet Quartet. This work is in three movements, marked "Quite vigorously," "In 'slow movement' style," and "In American March Time," respectively.

Also undated, but very likely from around 1920, are manuscripts of three solo songs. My Garden, on a text of unknown origin, bears a

dedication to a Miss Eunice Sexton, which has been unsuccessfully erased. The text of the second, My Star, is by Robert Browning ("All that I know of a certain star"). The third is the Sonnet 111 of Shakespeare ("Oh, for my voice do you with fortune chide").

The financial success brought on by his work in the theater allowed Bennett to consider taking steps to further his more serious artistic efforts, and his thoughts turned to the city to which so many young American musicians were flocking at the time: Paris. In a decision that is indicative of his attraction to the occult, he consulted an astrologer, Madame Marie Juliette Pontin. This woman impressed Bennett by what he took to be a real prescience on her part with regard to his situation, and at her advice he committed himself to taking what would prove to be the next crucial step in his life: a pilgrimage to Europe.

CHAPTER III

A PILGRIMAGE TO EUROPE

(1926-1929)

The Bennett family--Robert Russell, Louise, and daughter Jean--departed New York for the French port of Le Havre on April 17, 1926. They chose as their mode of transport the French Line ship De Grasse. Their date of departure was one of four suggested by Mme. Pontin, the newly discovered oracle who had supported the idea of Bennett's going to study in Europe.

Among their fellow passengers was Quinto Maganini, a flutist in the New York Philharmonic, who also intended to study in France. He told Bennett that he planned to enroll with a teacher of whom Bennett had never heard. Maganini had met her when she had recently visited New York to appear as solo organist with the Philharmonic and Walter Damrosch in a Symphony for Organ and Orchestra by her student, Aaron Copland. Her name was Nadia Boulanger.

Boulanger (1887-1979) had by that time already built a reputation in Europe as a master teacher, and had attracted as students such promising young Americans as Copland and Bennett's fellow Kansas Citian, Virgil Thomson. She taught at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris and the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau, as well as giving private instruction in her home.

Bennett, however, had hoped to study with Paul Antonin Vidal (1863-1931), a composer who taught at the Paris Conservatoire, and had already petitioned Vidal to accept him as a student. However, he received no reply prior to his departure for France. Maganini's glowing praise of Boulanger impressed him, but to retract his request to Vidal would have been awkward, so he took no immediate steps to change his plans.

Upon their arrival in Paris, the family stayed for a few days at the Hotel des Deux Mondes while they sought more permanent lodging. They found a house to rent in St. Cloud, a suburb of Paris, with the assistance of Roger Salabert of the publishing house of Salabert et Cie., a firm which had connections with Bennett's former employer, Harms.

Bennett had still received no reply from Vidal, so he sent a note to Boulanger asking that she take him on as a student. She accepted, and he had already been under her tutelage for some weeks when he finally heard from Vidal. This message was too late, for Bennett and Boulanger had begun to form a strong relationship of mutual respect.

At their first session, in Boulanger's home at 30, rue Ballu in Montmartre, Bennett showed her a symphony that he had entered in a composition contest sponsored by the magazine Musical America in 1926. The New York Times (6/8/28) account of the contest refers to the piece as Uke, and this is most likely the Symphony that is inscribed "to Carl

Busch" and calls for four ukeleles in its second movement. Wind (1951) says that Bennett took another work, Sights and Sounds, to this first meeting, but it is doubtful that it had been written at this time.

In any event, the contest had been won by Ernst Bloch with his work, America, but Bennett had been awarded an Honorable Mention. Boulanger's reaction to this was blunt: "And what does that get you?" (p. 125). Other "Honorable Mentions" included Broadway, by Samuel Gardner; Jazz Suite, by Louis Gruenberg; and The Piper, by William Watts (New York Times, 6/8/28.)

During this first lesson, Bennett informed Boulanger that he was far more interested in conducting than in composing because, as he put it, "there was already too much music being written" (p. 125). Although she indicated that she understood his feelings, she made it clear that she saw in his work "so many ideas that I don't think you have a right to make that decision" (p. 125).

Her respect for Bennett was such that he wrote that "she refused to call me her pupil" (p. 126). Boulanger's biographer, Leonie Rosenstiel (1982), indicates that Boulanger was respectful of commercial success, and, as such, would have had reason to treat Bennett differently than her younger, less experienced charges.

At that first lesson, Boulanger gave him his first and only formal assignment, some contrapuntal exercises in various modes on themes of Frescobaldi. After that, their time together was generally filled with

discussion not only of current musical trends, but of poetry, philosophy, and theology, as well.

The family remained in St. Cloud for only a few months, just long enough to attend the French National Tennis Tournament which was played there. In June they moved to a house at 30, rue de la Saix, and according to Bennett, "I don't think we ever lived where we felt more at home" (p. 132). The house was across the street from a cavalry headquarters, and Bennett never forgot the frequent bugle calls he heard.

By no means did Bennett cease his involvement with musical theater during this time in Paris. In fact, he broadened his interests, orchestrating a number of shows for the London stage during these years. The first of these was Princess Charming, which opened at the Palace Theatre on October 21, 1926, after a run in Budapest. The music was by Albert Szirmay, and the book and lyrics were adapted for the English production by Arthur Wimperis and Lauri Wylie. In the course of adapting the play, a number of songs were to be replaced from the Hungarian version. It was in the course of this process that Bennett inadvertently became a songwriter.

One evening he wrote three "dummy songs," which were intended to suggest what styles of music and lyrics might be appropriate for certain points in the show. However, the producers, Herbert Clayton and Jack Waller, decided that the songs were just what were needed and, much to

Bennett's embarrassment, insisted that they go into the production. His discomfort was compounded when he was accused of plagiarizing another tune (Rudolph Friml's The Vagabond King), and even more so when, shortly thereafter, he was introduced to Sergei Rachmaninoff who had just been to a performance of Princess Charming and heard Bennett's "dummy songs." Rachmaninoff's only criticisms, however, concerned the play's libretto (pp. 161-162).

Bennett also continued to work on Broadway during this time. During the fall of 1926, the family returned to New York at the request of Jerome Kern and Max Dreyfus for the purpose of orchestrating Kern's latest project, an adaptation of Edna Ferber's Show Boat. They took an apartment in Bronxville, New York, where both Kern and Dreyfus lived.

Show Boat was being produced by Florenz Ziegfeld, and the adaptation and lyrics were being prepared by Oscar Hammerstein II. Paul Robeson, the outstanding bass, and a number of other members of the cast had been signed when Ziegfeld ran out of money and the project was suspended (p. 133). Bennett wrote that they stayed on in New York while he orchestrated several other musicals before returning to Paris (p. 134). One of these was almost certainly Oh, Kay, which opened on November 8, 1926, at the Imperial Theatre, but it is not known what the other show(s) might have been.

When the family did return to Europe, this time on the liner France, Bennett resumed his studies with Boulanger. She suggested that

he apply for a Guggenheim Fellowship, and he apparently chose his recently completed Violin Sonata to support his application. According to Bennett (p. 166), Jerome Kern and Max and Victoria Dreyfus attended a performance of the piece on their way through Paris. The performance featured violinist Claude Levi with Bennett playing piano. Bennett, who referred to the piece as "experimental," wrote that his guests did not enjoy the "then-modern idiom" (p. 167).

The musical theater beckoned again in 1927, when Richard Rodgers asked Bennett to orchestrate a show on which he was working with Lorenz Hart in London. The play, One Dam Thing After Another, opened at the London Pavilion on May 19 or 20, 1927, and was to be the first of many musical collaborations between Bennett and Rodgers.

At about the same time, the Show Boat project was revived, necessitating Bennett's return to New York--or more accurately Bronxville. Bennett related an ironic anecdote about a subject that was at that time a heated topic of conversation among the theater crowd--sound movies. He wrote that following a long discussion of this phenomenon, during which Kern had remained uncharacteristically quiet, the songwriter abruptly got up to leave with the pronouncement that Vitaphone, as the process of putting sound on film was known commercially, "[would] never amount to anything" (p. 142).

The first performance of Show Boat, which took place at a preview in Washington, D.C., ended at 12:43 a.m., which meant that the show was

of a previously unheard-of length and needed extensive editing before opening in New York. Remarkably, during this time Bennett was working on orchestrations not only for Show Boat but for two other musicals as well. These were: Funny Face (music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, book by Fred Thompson and Paul Gerard Smith) which opened at the Alvin Theatre on November 22; and Golden Dawn (music by Kalman and Herbert Stothart, book and lyrics by Otto Harbach and Hammerstein) which opened on November 30. He also rejoined Show Boat in Pittsburgh in order to score a tune that had been added to the second act. According to Wearing (1984), Bennett had also orchestrated The Girl from Cook's (music by Jean Gilbert; book and lyrics by R. H. Burnside, Greatrex Newman, and Raymond Hubbell) which opened in London on November 1, 1927. The speed at which Bennett was capable of writing made this tremendous workload feasible. At one point, he wrote in Modern Music (May-June, 1932), he averaged sixty-two pages of full score per day for nine days while working on Show Boat.

Such an intense level of activity was apparently not unusual for those involved with the development of a major production for the musical stage. Bennett gives a vivid account of the process of preparing the music for such a venture:

> We had a room full of music copyists at the publishers and they had none of the equipment of today: duplicating machines, mechanical erasers, transparent tapes, why go on? We brought in our scores of the last twenty-four hours and they wrote the parts for the musicians to read and play. When the time came to hit the road one arranger went with the show and one copyist went with him to change routines, put in new material as the directors and choreographers needed it, or even put in whole new songs or dances. (p. 147)

Show Boat opened in New York at the Ziegfeld Theatre on December 27, 1927, and was a huge success. The show is generally credited as representing the birth of the modern American musical theater, in great part because the songs in Show Boat are not only superb songs in and of themselves, but because, unlike those in earlier musicals, they are completely integrated into the story as vehicles for the development of plot and character. Byrnside, Lamb, and Root (1986) considered it "perhaps the most influential Broadway musical play ever written," calling its effect on subsequent shows "inestimable . . . in that it compelled composers of Broadway musicals to concern themselves with the whole integrated production as opposed to writing Tin Pan Alley songs for interpolation" (p. 624). Show Boat has been produced innumerable times all over the world, has been filmed several times, and was the first musical comedy ever to enter the repertory of a major opera company, that of the New York City Opera in 1954.

After assisting with the orchestrations for yet another show, Rosalie (music by George Gershwin and Sigmund Romberg, lyrics by P. G. Wodehouse and Ira Gershwin, book by McGuire and Guy Bolton), which opened at the New Amsterdam Theatre on January 10, 1928, Bennett returned to Paris, stopping in London on the way to work on Blue Eyes with Kern and librettists/lyricists Guy Bolton and Graham John. Blue Eyes opened at the Piccadilly Theatre on February 27, 1928.

Bennett scored another London musical in 1928, That's a Good Girl (music by Philip Charig and Joseph Meyer; lyrics by Ferber, Ira

Gershwin, and Desmond Carter; book by Douglas Ferber), for an opening at the London Hippodrome. Wearing (1984) writes that this occurred on June 5, while Jablonski and Stewart (1973) give the date as March 19.

Despite the amount of work he was doing for the theater, Bennett did not neglect his original composition during these months, and when he learned in midyear that he had been awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship for which he had submitted the Violin Sonata, he decided to devote more of his time to his serious works. According to the Kansas City Times (5/3/29), there were more than one hundred applicants for the fellowship, which included a stipend of twenty-five hundred dollars.

At about this time, RCA Victor announced a contest for orchestral compositions with a total of twenty-five thousand dollars in prize money. Contestants could enter more than one work, and the judges would not be aware of the identities of the entrants.

The judges themselves were a distinguished group: Rudolf Ganz, a noted pianist and composer who had recently served as conductor of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra; Serge Koussevitsky, conductor of the Boston Symphony; Olga Samaroff, one of the premier pianists and teachers of the era; Frederick Stock, conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; and Leopold Stokowski, conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Stock was certainly aware of Bennett's earlier work Uke, and may have thought well of it for, in reference to the Musical America contest for which the piece received an Honorable Mention, he said, "There were a

half a dozen scores entered in this contest I would like to conduct next season" (quoted in Musical America, June 9, 1928, p. 1).

Bennett decided to submit two works for consideration. The first of these, Sights and Sounds, was composed in Paris, almost certainly during 1928. Subtitled "An Orchestral Entertainment," Sights and Sounds is scored for a very large orchestra. Its seven movements, entitled "Union Station," "Highbrows," "Lowbrows," "Electric Signs," "Night Club," "Sky Scraper," and "Speed," are intended to depict the character of an American metropolis of the period.

The second entry, Abraham Lincoln, was written after the Bennetts moved to Berlin in mid- to late 1928. This move was prompted by Bennett's continuing desire to be a conductor of opera. He had also expressed a desire to study with Paul Hindemith, but the family's financial situation would not permit it (p. 165).

Bennett's conducting aspirations were not to be realized either. He had hoped to make contact with an influential impresario named Hugo Boyk, who Bennett hoped would assist him in obtaining a position with a minor opera company in Germany. As luck would have it, Boyk became embroiled in a scandal stemming from his secretary's suicide and was in no position to help Bennett in his search for employment.

Despite these setbacks, Bennett continued to compose, first in the family's rooms at the Pension Regina and later in an apartment near the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. In early 1929 he completed a program

symphony entitled Abraham Lincoln: A Likeness in Symphonic Form. Goss (1952) quoted Bennett as saying that he got the idea for a work concerning Lincoln from Godfrey Charnwood's 1916 biography of the sixteenth President.

Like Sights and Sounds, Abraham Lincoln is scored for a very large orchestra. It is in the standard four movements, each of which is intended to convey a different side of Lincoln's character. The first, "His Simplicity and His Sadness," is meant to represent Lincoln's humble origins and create a sense of foreboding about the great difficulties of his years as President. The second, "His Affection and His Faith," "suggests Lincoln's tragic early love affair [and] conveys something of the sentiment of young Americans of that day when women were worshipped" (Bennett, quoted by Gilman in New York Herald Tribune, 10/11/31, p. 7). "His faith is in the climax of every passage, interrupting any tendency toward resignation and sustaining every advance toward a realization of ambition and idealism" (Program of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, 2/23/33, p. 237). The weakness mentioned in the third movement, "His Humor and His Weakness," refers to what Bennett called "his tendency toward Rabelaisian anecdotes" (Gilman, 1931). In the fourth movement, "His Greatness and His Sacrifice," Bennett "intended the music to proclaim . . . the triumph of a great soul--rich, unbending, inevitable." He also sought to "[tell] orchestrally the story of his assassination, and . . . suggest the realization by the world of its loss, ending with the sound of a thousand chimes and a final chant in

memory of a great soul that has passed away" (Program of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, 2/23/33, p. 237).

The family remained in Berlin through "five months of poverty" (p. 165), although poverty does not seem to have precluded employing a maid (p. 166). This period ended in early to mid-1929, when the Bennetts returned to Paris, where Bennett was to supervise a production of Show Boat in French at the Theatre Chatelot. At about this time, the Guggenheim Fellowship was renewed (Kansas City Times, 5/3/29), but Bennett asked to be excused from accepting this responsibility, as he did not feel that he would be able to produce enough original work in addition to meeting his supervisory responsibilities with the Paris show. This decision was met with chagrin by his old teacher, Carl Busch, who wondered publicly when Bennett was going to "stop that cheap business," meaning working in the realm of popular music (Kansas City Times, 5/3/29).

Despite Bennett's efforts, the Paris production of Show Boat never reached fruition due to insurmountable difficulties in translating the colloquial black idiom into French. Even the title would have had to be changed--the show was to have been called Mississippi.

With the failure of Show Boat (Mississippi), the Bennetts returned to the United States, probably in the late spring or early summer of 1929. The pilgrimage to Europe had not resulted in the hoped-for conducting career, but (in Bennett's words) the experiences there had nurtured "a broader and more intelligent love for music" (p. 170).

It was also true that "for a man who was not anxious to be a composer, I turned out a lot of music in Paris" (p. 133), for, in addition to Sights and Sounds and Abraham Lincoln, he had composed nearly twenty works in a wide variety of genres.

For the stage, there was a one-act opera entitled An Hour of Delusion, and Endimion was an "Operetta-Ballet a l'Antique." The libretto of An Hour of Delusion, by Bennett's fellow "Boulangerie" member, Arthur Train, Jr., concerns a Mexican peasant, Pedro, who gets drunk and dreams that he experiences a string of good fortune that begins with winning the lottery and culminates in his becoming Emperor of Spain. Endimion, in five acts, was based on a 1728 poem by French essayist and popularizer of science Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657-1757). The poem was adapted into English by Bennett and Robert A. Simon (1897-1981), then music editor of The New Yorker magazine. The music is predominantly modal in character, perhaps reflecting the influence of the country in which the composer was living.

Additional orchestral works from the years in France include A Charleston Rhapsody, for chamber orchestra, and Paysage ("Landscape"). The latter is for symphony orchestra, although it does not call for an ensemble of the proportions demanded for either Sights and Sounds or Abraham Lincoln.

Several choral works also date from the years in Paris. Theme and Variations in the Form of a Ballade About a Lorelei is written for

soprano, mezzosoprano, and alto soloists; women's chorus; and piano. The soprano serves as the voice of the Lorelei, and the other solo voices tell the story, the clever and insubstantial nature of which leads one to believe that it was probably written by Bennett himself. Aux Quatre Coins de Paris is scored for four women's voices. Whether it is intended for solo singers or for a larger chorus is unclear, although it is possible that, like the Lorelei variations, it was composed for The Women's University Glee Club conducted by Gerald Reynolds. The specific university affiliation of this group is unknown.

Aux Quatre Coins begins with a clever device of a variety favored by Bennett. One vocal part begins on A-440, followed by the others, each in turn, sliding by half- or wholestep into the three other pitches of the open strings of the violin. The "tuning-up" effect is very well imitated, as one would expect from a musician with such extensive theater background.

One other choral work is mentioned in several sources, but the author has not been able to find a score or any specific information other than a title, Nietsche Variations.

In the area of chamber music, two works other than the Violin Sonata have been identified from these years. Like the Nietsche Variations, little information is available about A Toy Symphony, for woodwind quintet, except that it was apparently performed in Philadelphia in 1932 (Kansas City (Missouri) Journal-Post, 3/6/33). The

other work, Three Songs from Chaucer, is for high voice and string quartet. Subtitled "Merciles Beaute," its three movements are entitled "Captivity," "Rejection," and "Escape."

Bennett explored the keyboard idiom during the late 1920s, as well. He composed an extensive organ work, the Sonata in G for his friend and fellow Boulanger student, Barrett Spach. This piece is in one long movement although there are double bars to define the important formal divisions. With the exception of a middle section in six-eight time, there are no meter signatures. Bennett wrote that he took the sonata to Boulanger when it was finished, and that "she gave it a very good performance--at sight, of course" (p. 130).

In addition to the organ sonata, Bennett composed two piano pieces in Paris, Seven Fox Trots and Vu (Seen in Paris). The latter work, which the composer called "Twenty Etudes en miniature pour piano," is dedicated "to José Iturbi in great admiration." According to Bennett (p. 211), Iturbi (1895-1980) performed several movements of Vu and one of the Fox Trots in New York at some unspecified date in the 1930's, but exactly when and which movements are not known. Each movement of Vu is meant to depict a different building or neighborhood in the French capital, including the Louvre, the Opera, Montmartre, and the Elysee.

Finally, the medium of solo song attracted Bennett's attention. His earliest effort was The Easter Egg, for baritone voice and orchestra on a poem by A. A. Milne. Unfortunately, when Bennett wrote Milne after

the fact and requested permission to use the text, Milne informed him that another composer had already attained the rights to it. Other solo vocal music includes Seven Love Songs with Ukelele and the Four Songs from Lyrics by Sara Teasdale. The movements of the latter are entitled "The Tune," "If I Could Snatch a Day," "On the South Downs," and "An End."

As busy as he obviously was with his composition and arranging, Bennett and his family did find time to enjoy themselves socially during the time that they resided in Europe. As always, Bennett found time for tennis. Among his playing partners in Paris were the American composer Roy Harris and Lucien Bloch, daughter of Ernest Bloch. In fact, the Bennetts spent a good deal of time with Lucien, her mother, and her sister Suzanne (p. 166).

Another pleasant association for the Bennetts was the friendship that developed between them and the family of composer Albert Roussel. Bennett admired Roussel's compositions greatly, calling him "one of my favorites . . . a truly great artist" (p. 169). Bennett was also highly impressed with Roussel's sincere humility.

One of the social high points of life in Europe for the Bennetts was an invitation to a reception given by the American Ambassador for Charles Lindbergh on the day after he landed in France following his famous trans-Atlantic solo flight of May 20-21, 1927 (p. 127). Bennett also recalls fondly the weekly Wednesday afternoon teas given by Boulanger at which her mother, Raissa, was a great attraction (p. 127).

Bennett's relationship with Boulanger was not exclusively musical. Bennett admired Boulanger in the extreme, as did virtually all of her students, and he spoke warmly of their conversations. It is difficult to ascertain just how close the two became. They did continue to correspond after Bennett left France as Boulanger had a reputation for keeping in touch with and providing support for her students.

Wind (1951) wrote that Bennett studied with Boulanger one summer at Gargenville, the village north of Paris where she kept her summer residence. That suggests that Bennett was a favorite student, as only Boulanger's closest, most well-regarded students had the opportunity to live in Gargenville and study with her (Rosenstiel, 1982).

Bennett, however, does not mention ever having been in Gargenville, although this does not entirely preclude the possibility. He did study with her at the American Academy in Fontainebleau as well as at her home in rue de Ballu, but that is all that can be said with authority.

With regard to their relationship, it seems safe to believe Bennett's affirmation that it was never more than friendship, despite the fears of Mme. Pontin, the fortune teller in New York whom Bennett had consulted prior to the decision to move to Europe. In what Bennett considered an inexplicable flaw in Pontin's otherwise infallible record, she had predicted for Bennett a relationship with a "dynamic woman" that might threaten his marriage (p. 123). Bennett assumed that she must have meant Boulanger, and in an inscrutable simile he wrote that

"eloping with Nadia Boulanger would be just like falling in love with Pike's Peak" (p. 124).

Whatever the degree of closeness between them, the relationship had certainly been a profitable one for Bennett, and he returned to New York with his wife and daughter in mid-1929, feeling satisfied that his investment of time and energy had been well worthwhile.

CHAPTER IV

AT HOME ON TWO COASTS

(1929-1939)

Robert Russell Bennett returned to New York in the middle of 1929 to find that the style of arranging for musical theater had changed in a significant way. The sounds of "big band" jazz had become popular throughout America, and Broadway had not escaped the influence of the new musical fashion. In particular, the predominance of the saxophone and especially of what had become known as "the three-trumpet sound"--in which the orchestral texture is dominated by that section filling both melodic and harmonic functions--were the major differences between the theater orchestra that Bennett had handled so masterfully in Show Boat and that for which he was now called upon to write. Wind (1951) cited especially the creative team of B. G. DeSylva (book and lyrics), Lew Brown (lyrics), and Ray Henderson (music), as being responsible for this stylistic innovation in the Broadway musical, particularly in such shows as Good News (1927) and Hold Everything (1928).

Bennett's facility in working with instrumental sounds was equal to the task of adapting to the new trends, and he was soon back in his accustomed place of eminence as a theater arranger. The year 1929 saw the opening of at least two shows for which he had scored the music: Sweet Adeline (music by Kern, book and lyrics by Hammerstein) at the Hammerstein Theatre on September 3, and Heads Up! (music by Richard

Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, book by John McGowan and Paul Gerard Smith) at the Alvin Theatre on November 11.

The following year was to be at least as eventful. Bennett's longtime friend and client, Jerome Kern, had, despite his lack of faith in the future of music in the movies, agreed to write the music for a motion picture entitled Stolen Dreams, arranged to have Bennett accompany him to Hollywood to do the orchestrations. Waiting until daughter Jean completed the school year in May, the three Bennetts joined Kern, his wife, Eva, and their daughter, Betty, on Kern's boat moored off Palm Beach, Florida, and they set sail for California via the Panama Canal. After spending a few days at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles, the Bennetts rented a house on Crescent Heights Boulevard (p. 178).

Unfortunately for Bennett and Kern, Stolen Dreams (the title was changed to A Man of the Sky and finally to Men of the Sky) was eventually released as a songless drama. Bennett attributed this to economic conditions resulting from the Depression, but Kern's biographer, Gerald Bordman (1980), suggested that the decision to excise the music from the movie was based on the belief that the many Broadway musicals made into movies over the two or three preceding years had sated the public's desire for that particular form of entertainment.

Again, Bennett was able to maintain his compositional activities even while devoting a large amount of time to more commercial endeavors. The reputation that he had earned prior to his move to Paris had not

disappeared. Indeed, Nadia Boulanger had become so well known on both sides of the Atlantic that it is likely that his stock had increased during this absence as a result of his connection with her. Despite there being no record of any performances of his original compositions in America during the late 1920s, he was mentioned in an article by Irving Weil in Modern Music (May-June 1929) as a representative American composer, along with such notable figures as Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Virgil Thomson, and George Antheil, saying that Bennett had "already proved himself to be interesting" (p. 6).

It is not a complete suprise, then, that Bennett was considered important enough to have a work performed at the Hollywood Bowl Concerts on July 19, 1930. The piece was Three Marches for Two Pianos and Orchestra, marked "Vigoroso e marcato," "Poco lento e misterioso," and "Tempo giusto di marcia," respectively. In the program notes, Bennett referred to the piece as "an orchestral entertainment" (Program of the Hollywood Bowl Concerts, 7/19/30, p. 30).

Bennett performed the work with Oscar Levant, who was appearing in his first of what were to be many performances at the Hollywood Bowl. Levant wrote in his autobiography, The Importance of Being Oscar (1968), that he and Bennett "felt sure [the Three Marches] would be a hit" (p. 143). Unfortunately, according to Levant, the conductor, Karl Kroeger, "messed up the ending, and we took no bows at all" (p. 143).

Bennett's disappointment over the performance of the Three Marches was soon to be followed by much better news. About the time of the

Hollywood Bowl concert, he received a telegram from Boulanger which read simply, "So happy. Nadia" (p. 177). Bennett had no idea what she was referring to until one night soon after he was awakened by a telephone call from Max Dreyfus' secretary in New York telling him that he had been named a co-winner of the RCA Victor composition contest. The award had been divided five ways. From over one hundred fifty entries (Pakenham, 1930), the judges had selected a Symphony by Louis Gruenberg, Aaron Copland's Dance Symphony, and Ernest Bloch's Helvetia. Bennett's two entries, Abraham Lincoln and Sights and Sounds, had both been named, so he received ten thousand of the twenty-five thousand dollar prize money. Bennett attributed this double success to his use of manuscript paper from France for Sights and Sounds and from Germany for Abraham Lincoln, believing that the judges must have assumed that the works, which were submitted anonymously, were by two different composers (p. 164).

The decision to remove the music for Men of the Sky must have come during the late summer or early autumn of 1930, as Bennett left California with his family to return to New York in time to do the orchestrations for Girl Crazy (music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, book by Bolton and McGowan), which opened at the Alvin Theatre on October 14 of that year. This was a remarkable musical for many reasons: its cast, which included Ethel Merman and Ginger Rogers; its outstanding songs, such as I Got Rhythm and Embraceable You; and its orchestra, including members of the Red Nichols Orchestra--Nichols on

trumpet, Benny Goodman on clarinet, Glenn Miller on trombone, and Gene Krupa on drums (pp. 173-174).

December of 1930 marked the opening of another Bennett-orchestrated musical, Ever Green (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, book by Benn Levy). This show opened in London at the Adelphi Theatre on December 3. No source mentions whether or not Bennett actually went to London to work on the play, although it is likely that he did, both because it would have been standard procedure and because he writes (p. 191) that he was in Europe when he read a review which appeared in The New Yorker on January 3, 1931, of a performance of his Three Songs from Chaucer ("Merciles Beaute").

The performance of Three Songs from Chaucer was given on December 18, 1930, by the Women's University Glee Club under the direction of Gerald Reynolds, whom the Bennetts had known when both men were studying in France in the late 1920s. Writing in Modern Music (Jan.-Feb. 1931), Marc Blitzstein opined that, along with Virgil Thomson's Rosemary, Bennett's songs were "the best things [on] the program," hearing in them "a certain melancholy, a wild and remote sadness, not unlike the Hebridean folk-tunes, though more definitely moyen age in content" (p. 41). Of the "Lorelei Variations," which were also performed, Blitzstein was less complimentary, calling the work "too pretentious to be low-down, and too low-down to be serious" (p. 41).

Bennett wrote (p. 191) that he met the author of The New Yorker review, Robert A. Simon, as a result of this event. This statement may

be the result of some confusion on Bennett's part, however, as Simon had collaborated with Bennett on the libretto of Endimion in 1927, according to Harris (1981). Whenever their first meeting, however, they were soon to become involved on a major project together--an opera.

Before that was to come to pass, there would be many other projects to occupy Bennett. In the first half of 1931, the pace was not too hectic, including only two shows to orchestrate. America's Sweetheart (music by Rodgers, lyrics by Hart, book by Herbert Fields) opened at the Broadhurst Theatre on February 10, and The Band Wagon (music by Arthur Schwartz, book and lyrics by George S. Kaufman and Howard Dietz) opened at the New Amsterdam Theatre on June 3.

Later in the summer, there was a performance of the Three Marches scheduled for Lewissohn Stadium on August 10, but the program was apparently changed at the last minute for reasons unknown to the author. Levant was again to have performed the piece with Bennett.

In the fall of 1931, Bennett was involved with two of the most important musical comedies of the period. The first of these, The Cat and the Fiddle (music by Kern, book and lyrics by Otto Harbach), opened at the Globe Theatre on October 15. The most unique aspect of this show was the size and makeup of the orchestra. In contrast to the standard thirty-six-member group of the time, the orchestra for The Cat and the Fiddle used only eighteen players, including three pianists--two in the pit and one on stage. John Hutchens, writing in the New York Times

(10/18/31, sec. 8, p. 2), quotes Kern as saying that the orchestra consisted of "all soloists. They cost a lot more than 36 ordinary musicians would. And you would swear there were fifty of them in there when an ensemble effect is needed, which, thank God, is not often."

The other show, Of Thee I Sing (music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, book by Kaufman and Ryskind), was a crazed political satire which holds the distinction of having been the first musical to win a Pulitzer Prize. It opened on December 26 at the Music Box Theatre.

Of Thee I Sing was notable in that it marked the first venture of the Broadway musical into politics. Conceived as an outcry against the impotence of the government's response to the Great Depression, Of Thee I Sing ridiculed literally dozens of revered institutions, including patriotic songs and motherhood. Beyond its political intentions, the musical achieved a unity of music and drama in the manner of, and perhaps even surpassing that of, Show Boat. According to Cecil Smith (1981):

> The songs and the accompanimental music were much more than frosting on the cake: To a degree hitherto unknown, in the musical-comedy theatre, the mood, pace, and placing of the musical numbers was an integral part of the construction of the play as a whole. If the music were removed, the structure would collapse. In its loud and raw way, Of Thee I Sing was a genuine music drama. (p. 162)

Olin Downes felt that Gershwin was revealed at his best. "Of Thee I Sing," he wrote, "is much finer and better integrated and more

reflective of period and environment" than Porgy and Bess (New York Times, 6/6/43, sec. 2, p. 5).

With four hundred forty-one performances, Of Thee I Sing ran longer than any other Gershwin show. It was the only Gershwin musical to have two productions running simultaneously, and its book was the first of American musicals to be published independently of the music. It has been revived numerous times, often during election years, and was produced on television in 1972.

Bennett, as composer, received attention on October 23, 1931, when his Abraham Lincoln symphony was premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Leopold Stokowski. Bennett attended the concert in Philadelphia with his wife and Robert Simon and his wife, Madeleine Marshall (p. 184). New York Herald Tribune critic Lawrence Gilman welcomed the piece, calling it "unashamedly expressional," as if the composer were unaware of what Gilman perceived as the current attitude that music "must not, in the concert room at least, remember its ancient worship of beauty and mystery and spiritual greatness" (10/11/31, sec. 8, p. 7). Shortly after this performance, Bennett was elected to the American Society of Composers, Arrangers and Publishers (ASCAP), having been nominated by Jerome Kern on November 5 (letter from Kern to ASCAP, 11/5/31).

Bennett spent the early months of 1932 in New York at his accustomed task of theater orchestration. Face the Music (book, music, and lyrics by Irving Berlin and Moss Hart) opened on February 17 at the New

Amsterdam Theatre. Bennett considered the music of this show a cut above most of its type, for he wrote that it "could be used by teachers of composition for a fine example of contemporary harmony" (p. 213). Another show with which he was involved, Hot-Cha! (music by Brown and Henderson; book and lyrics by Lew Brown, Ray Henderson, Mark Hellinger, and H. S. Kraft), opened on March 8 at the Ziegfeld Theatre.

On April 2, the third movement of Abraham Lincoln, "His Humor," was broadcast by the Philadelphia Orchestra with Stokowski conducting. Pitts Sanborn wrote in Modern Music (May-June 1932) that the music "suffered from too much clue. I believe I should have enjoyed it more as an anonymous symphonic scherzo without the attribution to the much debated Lincoln" (p. 178).

Three Songs from Chaucer was performed on April 30 or May 1 at the first Festival of Contemporary American Music at Yaddo, near Saratoga Springs, New York. (This four-hundred-acre estate had been established as an artists' colony and music festival site in 1924 under the will of its owner, banker and philanthropist Spencer Trask.) Alfred H. Meyer, in Modern Music (May-June 1932, p. 174), pronounced them "fine songs . . . . Low-toned, downcast moods dominate the first two, great exuberance the last. Yet one found them inherently less interesting than the songs of Ives, Bowles or Thomson" with which they shared a program.

At this point, Bennett began to focus his attention on the opera that he had been planning with Robert Simon. Simon had written a

libretto based on the life of operatic soprano Maria Malibran (1808-1836), and Bennett decided to devote his energies exclusively to its musical realization. On May 11, 1932, he and his family sailed yet again for Europe (New York Times, 5/12/32, p. 23).

On this visit, the Bennetts lived in a rented house in the Viennese suburb of Grinzing while Bennett worked on the opera. They stayed there through the summer and probably into the fall, during which time Bennett composed without interruption with the single exception of a one-week trip to Berlin to orchestrate Fritz Kreisler's operetta Cissy, based on the courtship of Elizabeth of Bavaria and Emperor Franz Joseph. This show (libretto by Ernst Deosy and Gustav Holm, adapted by Ernst and Hubert Marschka) opened at the Theatre An-der-Wien in Vienna on December 22. By then, the first two acts of Maria Malibran had been completed, and the Bennetts had returned to New York, having stopped on the way to visit two friends in Paris: Raoul Breton of the famous publishing family, and Arthur Train, Jr., librettist of Bennett's one-act opera, An Hour of Delusion (1928) (p. 197).

The Bennetts returned to an America in the throes of the Great Depression. However, the economic situation seemed to have little or no effect on Bennett's individual fortunes, for he had a great deal of theater work in the late months of 1932. Among the plays that he orchestrated in whole or in part were: Music in the Air (music by Kern, book and lyrics by Hammerstein), which opened at the Alvin Theatre on November 8; Gay Divorcé (music and lyrics by Cole Porter, book by Dwight

Dwight Taylor), which opened at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on November 29; and the revue Walk a Little Faster (music by Duke, lyrics by Harburg, book by Perelman and MacGunigle), which opened at the St. James Theatre on December 7. By New Year's Day 1933, six of the seven musicals running on Broadway had been orchestrated by Bennett, according to the New York Times (1/1/33, sec. 9, p. 3). (Due to the fact that orchestrators had not at this time achieved sufficient stature to be mentioned in a play's credits, confirmation of this statement would require a detailed stylistic analysis of the orchestrations--if they still exist--that is outside of the scope of this study.)

Two other men continued to fare well in the troubled economy. Louis and Max Dreyfus had had the prescience, or perhaps the good luck, to sell Harms, Inc., to interests from the west coast just before the stock market crash. Later, they bought another music publishing company, Chappel and Company, and were to publish many of Bennett's later works.

In addition to the first two acts of Maria Malibran, Bennett produced two other works during 1932. One, Early American Ballade on Themes of Stephen Foster for chamber orchestra, received little attention; but that certainly cannot be said of the other, a Concerto Grosso for Small Dance Band and Symphony Orchestra, subtitled "Sketches from the American Theatre."

The work is in five movements. The first is a "Praeludium (Opening chorus, vigoroso e con brio)," and the second, marked "Moderato con

anima," is called "Dialog, ingenue and juvenile." The third, "Andante con moto," is a "Theme Song." The fourth, marked "Allegro scherzando," is called "Comedy theme and blackout," and the fifth, indicated "Marcia," is a "Finale with Flags."

The Concerto Grosso was premiered on December 9, 1932, by the Rochester Philharmonic under the direction of Howard Hanson. An unnamed reviewer in Musical Courier called it "a witty composition" (1/7/33, p. 21). Hanson also conducted the work in Berlin sometime in early 1933, and repeated it with the Rochester orchestra at a festival of new American music in early May. Of the Berlin performance, H. H. Stuckenschmidt wrote that the piece "[did] not achieve more than a witty, humorous Ravel-Stravinsky eclecticism," while taking Bennett to task for using a title which he felt did not accurately describe the composition (Modern Music, March-April 1933, p. 167). Upon hearing the latter of the two Rochester performances, Adelaide Hooker called the Concerto "an unusual departure in a classical form. It . . . reek[s] of 'show business' atmosphere. Mr. Bennett's skill is unquestioned, his music is clever. It is a fine work if one's taste runs to symphonic jazz" (Modern Music, May-June 1933, p. 208).

The Abraham Lincoln symphony also received a performance in early 1933. Artur Rodzinski conducted it with the Los Angeles Philharmonic on February 23 and 24. Most of Bennett's time that year, however, was devoted to a musical which is unique in Bennett's career in that he not only did the arrangements, he wrote the songs, as well.

The show, Hold Your Horses, opened on September 25, 1933, at the Winter Garden. The book, by Corey Ford and Russell Crouse, was intended as a vehicle for Joe Cook, an eccentric comic actor of the day who had developed a faithful following on Broadway. What there was of a story was set in the New York City of the "Gay '90s," but there was a definite emphasis on the spectacular, including elaborate costumes, ensemble dance numbers, pratfalls, and a ventriloquist.

Stagg (1968) provides some important insights into the development of Hold Your Horses in The Brothers Shubert. J. J. ("Jake") Shubert had turned over responsibility for the production to his inexperienced son, John. Although John had some clever ideas for the play, he was not able to unify the multiple elements of the production, and when his father arrived at the dress rehearsal for the preview in Boston, he found the company in some confusion. He took over the production, in the process alienating his son completely and permanently, and began to order changes that everyone concerned with the production believed to be counterproductive. He was dissuaded from the worst of these--inserting a version of a then-popular type of western ballad into a musical that was obviously completely unrelated to anything of the sort--but the show never achieved the kind of unity that would have meant great success.

Hold Your Horses ran for only eighty-eight performances, in spite of generally favorable reviews. Brooks Atkinson, while calling the play "a little labored," nevertheless pronounced it "a handsome musical show . . . [that] offers a full counter of show-stop novelties" (New York

Times, 9/26/33, p. 26). An unnamed writer, also from the Times, wrote in a review of the Boston preview that the play "included many excellent tunes by Russell Bennett" (8/31/33, p. 20). New Outlook magazine (Nov. 1933, p. 43), although less than impressed with the libretto and the singing, suggested that "with good comedy and excellent dancing . . . eye-pleasing costumes and scenery, what more do you need?"

During the remainder of 1933, Bennett orchestrated one musical, Roberta (music by Kern, book and lyrics by Harbach), which opened at the New Amsterdam Theatre on November 18. He also had two works premiered, both in December. On the third of that month, Bernard Hermann conducted the New York Chamber Orchestra in a performance of the Six Variations in Fox-Trot Time on a Theme of Jerome Kern ("Blue Room"). Ewen (1934) quotes one critic, Francis D. Perkins, as describing the setting of the theme as "broad, almost hymn-like . . . as if he were to embark on a series of . . . orthodox variations, but hints of various whimsical ideas to come are soon realized . . . ." Bennett had apparently had earlier success with this type of work, for in a reference to an otherwise undocumented work, a set of variations on I Got Rhythm, Marc Blitzstein wrote, "Of all the jazz orchestrations of the last ten years, commend me to Russell Bennett's variations on I Got Rhythm . . . this surely is the high-water mark of a highly-developed, perfectly mature craft" (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1933, p. 102).

On December 15, 1933, Paysage, an orchestral tone poem from the Paris years was finally heard in a concert of music by American

Guggenheim fellows at the Eastman School of Music. Reviewer Amy H. Croughton found in the work "much of interest" (Rochester Times-Union, 12/16/33, p. 4), while the Musical Courier's unidentified critic called it "derivative music, French in feeling and style, and representing in an interesting way an early period of Bennett's creative life (1/6/34, p. 7).

Although Bennett spent several weeks in London preparing the score of Three Sisters (music by Kern, book and lyrics by Hammerstein), which opened at the Theatre Royal on April 9, his name was uncharacteristically absent from the credits of new Broadway musicals during the first half of 1934. One is led to the conclusion that this is the period during which he composed the third act of Maria Malibran. Although no dates are given, he wrote (p. 206) that he completed the work while renting a small house on a farm belonging to a friend, journalist William Field, in Mendon, Vermont. These months seem to have been the only ones during which Bennett was not occupied with his usual full schedule of activities.

He returned to New York by July of that year, as he orchestrated some of the songs in Life Begins at 8:40 (music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Ira Gershwin and E. Y. Harburg, book by David Freedman), which opened at the Winter Garden on August 6. Bennett conducted a performance of the Concerto Grosso in New York in July as well. This occurred at the Lewissohn Stadium on Independence Day.

In reference to the subtitle "Sketches from the American Theatre", Bennett said that "the Concerto speaks to musicians in a rather unflattering manner concerning the substance of our theatre music." Nonmusicians, he added, "are at liberty to take its implications and ironies literally and to derive what pleasure they may from it" (quoted in New York Times, 7/5/34). The Times' reviewer was not convinced, averring:

> The composer's amiability is disarming. It seems ungentlemanly, then, to say that this concerto, taken literally or in satire, was thin. The second movement, "Dialogue--Ingenue and Juvenile," was skillfully wrought, and did comment with bite on an obvious insipidity of our stage. But other sections did not come off. Perhaps Mr. Bennett forgets that much of our theatre music is sufficient travesty in itself; to attempt to satirize it is like trying to paint the lily. (p. 20)

Two Bennett-orchestrated musicals opened on Broadway in November. On the twenty-first Anything Goes (music and lyrics by Cole Porter; book by Bolton and Wodehouse, revised by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse) opened at the Alvin Theatre. Opening on the twenty-eighth at the New Amsterdam Theatre was Revenge With Music (music, book, and lyrics by Dietz and Schwartz).

Given the lack of evidence of any public activity in early 1935, it seems logical to assume that Bennett's time was consumed with the preparations for two major productions of his largest-scale works: the "operetta-ballet" Endimion and the three-act opera Maria Malibran.

The subject of the opera, mezzosoprano Maria Felicia Garcia Malibran, made her debut in London at the age of seventeen in the role

of Rosina in Rossini's The Barber of Seville in 1825. Later that year she journeyed to New York with her father's opera company and sang leading roles in Mozart's Don Giovanni, several Rossini works, and a number of other operas in what were among the earliest performances of Italian opera in the United States (New York Times, 4/9/35, p. 24). According to Tawa (1986, p. 163), she was "unquestionably the finest singer that Americans had yet heard." She "electrified audiences with her fresh voice, pure tones, and flexible execution of ornaments; not a little of her popularity was owing as well to her admirable figure, convincing dramatic gesticulations and ability to project strong emotions."

Maria married a French merchant, Eugene Malibran, in New York in 1826, writes Tawa, in order to escape her despotic father, Manuel Garcia. Howard (1941) states that Garcia actually conspired with Malibran in the marriage in return for one hundred thousand francs.

Garcia and his opera company left the United States in 1827, but it was only a few months before Maria's husband went bankrupt. She returned to Europe in October, where she had an active and highly acclaimed career. After the dissolution of her first marriage, she married violinist Charles-Auguste de Beriot in 1836, and, only months later, at age twenty-eight, she died from injuries received in a riding accident.

As with many operas based on historical subjects, librettist Robert A. Simon added both characters and events to the story. He

introduced a young, handsome, well-to-do New Yorker, Philip Cartwright, with whom Maria falls in love on the eve of her impending marriage to Malibran. She fulfills her obligation to her fiance, however, and when she next meets Cartwright it is at his own engagement reception. Asked to sing for the guests, she complies with Una voce poco fa from Rossini's The Barber of Seville (Simon's poetic license included changing a mezzosoprano into a coloratura). For a second selection, she intends to perform an aria from Zingarelli's Giulietta e Romeo, but when she enters clad in tights, the assemblage is scandalized. Philip rises to her defense, thus causing his engagement to be broken, and he escorts her from the scene. Later, as she prepares to depart New York, he pleads with her to marry him, saying that he has discovered grounds upon which to have her marriage to Malibran annulled. She knows, however, that she is not intended for domestic bliss, but for the stage.

Maria Malibran was given the first of four nights of performances at the Juilliard School of Music in New York on April 8, 1935, by students of that institution. It was the third in a series of four American operas produced there in the mid-1930s, being preceded by Louis Gruenberg's Jack and the Beanstalk and George Antheil's Helen Retires, and followed by Albert Stoessel's Garrick. Helen Marshall sang the title role, with Allen Stewart as Philip. Albert Stoessel conducted, Alfredo Valenti directed, and Frederick J. Keisler designed the sets.

The reviews were mixed, with most critics expressing at least some positive opinions. The opera had certain experimental aspects that some

found interesting while others felt had a negative dramatic effect. Foremost among these were Simon's use of a prosaic, declamatory style of dialogue and Bennett's employment of the Baroque dance forms throughout the work as accompaniment to the text, much of which is spoken, although every word is assigned a precise rhythmic value whether spoken or sung.

Bennett wrote that Simon and he "felt we were on the right track when the audience reaction was so good, but we both wanted to sit right down and do it right over" (p. 223). For the composer's part, he felt that there were serious issues of balance between cast and orchestra, in that the orchestra had to be suppressed constantly while the singers/speakers were forced to project their voices extremely loudly to be heard. According to Bennett (p. 224), "the evening was far from a total loss. It felt like a pretty good show, but as a work of art it was only a nice try."

Much critical attention was addressed to the work. The New York Times' reviewer called the libretto "effective . . . . The lines are simple and singable. The situations have dramatic impact." He did, however, chide Simon for what he seemed to feel was a humorous style of repartee inappropriate to the situation and setting (4/9/35, p. 24).

Of the music, which he found "sententious," he wrote that the score contained "movement, dramatic contrast and vitality . . . [the] orchestral writing is shrewd and resourceful," the latter comment revealing the apparent success of the company's adjustment to the

balances. The vocal writing, he continued, "is not always grateful." The critic was most impressed with the third act, finding in it "tenderness, emotional substance, and by way of contrast, one deliciously satiric scene" (p. 24). He believed Maria Malibran to be the best of the three Juilliard operas produced to that point and felt that it promised "finer accomplishments" from its creators.

Oscar Thompson (Musical America, 4/25/35, p. 16) was not so complimentary, believing that "the characters were sketchily drawn," that there was "little or no attempt at musical characterization," and that the music as a whole was "expert but tenuous." What he felt was a "lack of melodic inspiration" was underscored by "the protracted applause bestowed upon the Barber of Seville air," which he saw as "a commentary no amount of theorizing could explain away."

Marion Bauer applauded Simon's use of the "'homely' idiom," commenting that if America was to have native opera in the vernacular "we must grow accustomed to commonplace words not veiled by the colorful sounds of a foreign language" (Modern Music, May-June 1935, p. 195). Bauer thought Bennett's approach to setting the text "novel," noting that although "to many who have set notions of what opera should be, this unexpected shift [from song to speech and vice-versa], frequently in the middle of a phrase, was disturbing," it had "elements of surprise and novelty." He agreed with the Times' critic that the third act was the most successful, calling it "spontaneous and sincere."

The Musical Leader was less reserved in its praise of Maria Malibran, using such terms as "appropriate and well-written." It also embraced the vocal style as "a thoroughly interesting experiment," and said of the work as a whole, "Its charm is potent" (4/27/35, p. 8). The Musical Courier's R. M. Knerr concurred, writing that the score "shows definite promise," although expressing doubts about the austere vocal writing (4/20/35, p. 5).

Writing slightly later, in 1937, Virgil Thomson panned the Juilliard operas as a group. He found in them common characteristics that precluded artistic success, such as an exclusive dependence on what he called "early twentieth-century comedy-drama" (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1937, p. 171). This genre, he believed, "usually lands in a morass of petty placid sentimentality [which] seldom inspires composers to the higher flights of musical invention." Thomson also felt the conversational style of Simon's text did not have the capacity to communicate emotional meaning in a sufficiently concentrated manner for opera, and that what he described as the late-German musical style of all four of the Juilliard operas was well-suited neither to the patterns of American English nor to the character of the Americans whose experiences the works were intended to communicate.

Another commentator, Paul Rosenfeld (1936), singled out Maria Malibran for criticism in a discussion of American operas of the era. He laid the bulk of the blame for its shortcomings at the feet of Bennett, for, although he considered the libretto "no jewel" (p. 308),

he correctly stated that successful operas with weak libretti exist in significant numbers, but that Bennett's music failed to transcend Simon's libretto in the manner of such works.

Rosenfeld was not unreservedly critical of Bennett and Simon, however. He wrote:

> This orchestration is expertly brilliant. The harmony is unhackneyed, very modern, and in places subtly managed. There are even evidences of an original dramatic feeling . . . . But in most cases the germinal ideas fail to develop or expand, and the numbers hang fire, leaving the drama to its own devices. (p. 309)

George Gershwin attended the first performance of Maria Malibran, according to Bennett (quoted in Theatre Arts, Nov. 1956, p. 24). His reaction was notable both for its brevity and its ambiguity. The statement, "Russ, you've gone far with what you had" (p. 25), leaves open to interpretation whether Gershwin referred to Bennett's talent or Simon's libretto.

The premiere of the opera was not the first time that portions of the music from Maria Malibran had been heard in performance. On February 7, 1935, Alfred Wallenstein had conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a collection of "orchestral fragments" for the opera consisting of a number of the Baroque dance forms that Bennett employed. The Los Angeles Times (2/8/35, sec. 1, p. 13) reported that the movements were Bourree, Fugue, Gavotte, a Pastorale in five-eight meter, and a Gigue with coda. Musical America's critic, Hal Crain, wrote, however, that the orchestra played a Bourree, Passacaglia, Gigue, Gavotte,

Intermezzo, and Finale without interruption (2/25/35, p. 34). Newsweek (2/16/35) reported that the concert was broadcast on the radio.

The music was well received in Los Angeles. The Times pronounced it to be "of unusual interest" (p. 13). Crain was more guarded, calling the music "straight-forward, almost bold in spots, bizarre and without color" (Musical America, 2/25/35, p. 34).

Shortly after the premiere of Maria Malibran, Bennett and Simon's earlier project, Endimion, was performed for the first time. This took place on April 5, 1935, at the Festival of American Music in Rochester, New York, where the "operetta-ballet" shared a program with Deems Taylor's Circus Day. It was directed by Nicholas Konraty and choreographed by Thelma Biracree. The Rochester Civic Orchestra performed under the direction of Howard Hanson, along with soloists and chorus from the Eastman School.

Of Endimion, Thomas Gorton declared, "The Bennett score fluently suggests a definite pagan atmosphere, yet it is not entirely consistent in the realization of the story's dramatic possibilities . . . [so] much recitative makes the ballet action static." However, he did think the climax "effective" (Musical Courier, 4/20/35, p. 5). Adelaide V. Hooker, writing in Modern Music (May-June 1935), described the music as being "in a remote neo-classic manner lacking the red-blooded quality that we today expect from Bennett." Apparently, some revisions had been made, for she writes that "in its original form the opera seemed

unwieldy, but it was deftly rearranged to make the most of every choreographic possibility by Konraty and Biracree." Hooker allowed that "the music is rhythmically well adapted to the dance, there are two charming pastoral choruses and the production was exceedingly able," but she criticized the score as being beset with "the French mannerisms of ten years ago," and lacking "the dramatic force of other ballets presented at these festivals" (pp. 202-203).

A third Bennett piece was premiered in April, this one in Philadelphia, where José Iturbi conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra in the Adagio Eroico on the twenty-fifth of that month. This piece bears the dedication "to the memory of a soldier." In a letter to a Mrs. Mead (2/21/40), Bennett acknowledged that the soldier he had in mind was George Washington. Iturbi also conducted the work in New York on the Lewissohn Stadium series on July 17, 1935 (Harris, 1981).

After a spring filled with so much activity, Bennett took his family to a dude ranch near Sheridan, Wyoming, to relax for the summer (p. 216). During that time he spent three days in Hollywood setting routines for the film I Dream Too Much, which he went back to Wyoming to work on (p. 221). The film was released by RKO Pictures on November 28, 1935. He also wrote (p. 216) that during that summer he composed songs for a musical book by José Ruben, but there is no corroboration for this statement.

Returning to New York in the fall, Bennett worked on orchestrations for Jubilee (music and lyrics by Cole Porter, book by Lorenz Hart),

which opened at the Imperial Theatre on October 12; May Wine (music Sigmund Romberg, lyrics by Hammerstein, book by Mandel), which opened at the St. James Theatre on December 5; and George White's Scandals of 1935 (music by Henderson, lyrics by Yellin, book by White, Wells, and Schiebler), which opened on Christmas Day at the New Amsterdam Theatre.

The early months of 1936 brought a personal tragedy with the death of Bennett's beloved mother, May Bradford Bennett, on February 12 in Kansas City. The death certificate lists the cause as cancer of the stomach, liver, and pancreas.

It has been observed that events of great emotional import are often followed by life-changing decisions. Whether this link is a valid one for Bennett is open to question. However, in mid-1936, shortly after his mother's death, the family moved to Los Angeles. What was to be Bennett's last Broadway project for several years was On Your Toes (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, book by Rodgers, Hart, and Abbott), which opened at the Imperial Theatre on April 11, 1936.

According to Bennett, the move west was prompted by a revival of the movie musical and a resulting general exodus of Broadway songwriters to Southern California. He felt that he had to move in order to make the most of his abilities (p. 224).

He writes that his first assignment was a film version of Show Boat, the great Kern musical of 1927. His inexperience with motion pictures was the cause of an amusing episode at the first preview of

Show Boat. Unaccustomed as he was to the tendencies of film audiences, unlike audiences in live theater productions, to talk and move around during a performance, he assumed the picture was a failure. He was stunned after arriving at the studio the following day to discover that the producers were sure that they had a hit. Bennett wrote that he continued to wonder if he had been at the same screening as they were (pp. 227-228). Bennett also worked on the film Swing Time, which starred Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, composing The Swing Waltz, which served as one of their famous dance numbers (p. 241).

The Bennett family settled into a house at 505 North Arden Drive in Beverly Hills that had been designed for them by architect Sumner Spalding. They joined the Los Angeles Tennis Club, for Bennett's love for the game was still with him. In fact, he remained a playing member of that club until 1975, maintaining his membership even while living in New York, where he also held membership in the West Side Tennis Club until 1979.

During the approximately three years that Bennett lived and worked in Hollywood, he was associated with more than twenty films, either as composer or orchestrator. Limbacher (1974) lists Bennett's name as having appeared in the credits of only five, but Harris (1981), using such sources as production scripts on deposit at the Library of Congress, identified many others. Many of the films were considered "B" pictures. Bennett writes that he was assigned to these for the most part because he was not very interested in composing film music, preferring to limit his work to orchestration (p. 242).

Bennett worked primarily, although not exclusively, for RKO Pictures. Those movies listed which were made by other studios are so noted.

In 1937, Bennett worked on Shall We Dance (released 5/7/37); High Wide and Handsome (Paramount, 7/22/37); Thin Ice (Twentieth Century-Fox, 9/3/37); Ali Baba Goes to Town (Twentieth Century-Fox, 10/29/37); A Damsel in Distress (11/19/37); and Hitting a New High (12/17/37).

Releases in 1938 with which Bennett was involved include Joy of Living (4/4/38); Vivacious Lady (5/13/38); Career (7/7/38); Fugitives for a Night (9/23/38); and Annabel Takes a Tour (11/11/38).

Bennett worked on eight films that were released in 1939 and 1940, some after he had returned to New York to live. These were: Pacific Liner (1/6/39); Gunga Din (1/27/39); The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle (3/3/39); Stanley and Livingstone (Twentieth Century-Fox, 8/18/39); Fifth Avenue Girl (9/8/39); The Hunchback of Notre Dame (12/29/39); Rebecca (Selznick International, 4/16/40); and Brigham Young--Frontiersman (Twentieth Century-Fox, 9/27/40).

As with his experience on Broadway, Bennett found that in Hollywood periods of relative inactivity alternated with spans that were extremely frenetic. He relates a tale of having to arrange for from sixty to seventy hours at one sitting, while teams of copyists were changed every eight hours (p. 234).

During his stint with motion pictures, Bennett did not totally forego his compositional activities. In 1936, he received a commission from the League of Composers, the result of which was an orchestral scherzo entitled Hollywood. In a letter to the National Orchestral Association (1/21/43), he wrote that he intended to depict the entertainment capital from three different perspectives: "As the world sees it--Girls, Glitter, Goofiness"; "As it sees itself--Divans, Divorces, Deviltry"; "As I see it--Mountains, Motors, Morality" (Norman and Shrifte, 1946, p. 368).

Hollywood was premiered on November 13, 1936, by the NBC Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. Bennett (p. 251) wrote of the work that "it was full of rhythm and quite warm melody but was scuttled by a section written personally by the chip on my shoulder," by which he meant the element of musical snobbery that he felt was a part of his personality.

At some point in the late 1930s, Bennett travelled by train to New York for a reunion of the "Boulangerie." He wrote (p. 256) that for most of the way he rode with Igor Stravinsky. Bennett wrote, "I've been told that he only discussed his music with people he liked and I must have qualified. It was a fine three-day trip" (p. 256). This may have occurred in April of 1937. Rosenstiel (1982) states that Boulanger was in New York during that month (as well as in each of the next two years), and according to Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Music and Musicians (Slonimsky, 1978), Stravinsky was also there at that time to conduct his Jeu de Cartes at the Metropolitan Opera. It is possible,

of course, that both Boulanger and Stravinsky were in New York in 1938 and 1939, so the date of this reunion cannot be stated without reservation.

Although the precise date is not known, the Abraham Lincoln symphony was performed in that spring of 1937. Frank Black conducted the Illinois Symphony Orchestra of the WPA (Works Progress Administration) in Chicago. Cecil Michener Smith's only comment in Modern Music (May-June 1937) was to lump the symphony in with a group of pieces that he described as "interesting, though not invariably exciting" (p. 225).

The death of George Gershwin on July 11, 1937, was a tragic loss for the musical world in general. It was a personal loss for Robert Russell Bennett. Bennett and Gershwin had collaborated on many of the latter's musicals. Bennett had been very important to Gershwin, although Gershwin may not have realized just how important. Schwartz (1973) states that Gershwin may have had an ear defect, as he was unable to hear subtle distinctions in orchestral sonorities and would be too easily satisfied. Of Thee I Sing, for example, required almost daily revision, in spite of Gershwin's expressions of satisfaction. Schwartz also suggests that the trial readings that Gershwin presented of some of his "serious" works such as the Concerto in F, the Second Rhapsody, and Porgy and Bess were a result of this handicap. Schwartz (p. 306) quotes Bennett as saying that Gershwin "orchestrated a number now and then for a few shows but that was it." Bennett himself, however, wrote that for Girl Crazy, "I had no need to revise or re-do anything" that Gershwin

had orchestrated (p. 174b). However, Bennett speaks kindly of everyone in his autobiography, which may explain this apparent discrepancy.

Bennett expressed his feelings about Gershwin's death in a telegram, dated July 11, 1937, to Gershwin's brother and lyricist, Ira. "I can only say I feel completely crushed. The loss is too great for words."

Later in 1937, Bennett received another prestigious commission, this one from the Columbia Broadcasting System. CBS commissioned Bennett, along with Quincy Porter, Leo Sowerby, R. Nathaniel Dett, Jerome Moross, and Vittorio Giannini, to compose music for the second year of the network's Everybody's Music series to be performed during the summer of 1938. The inaugural season of the series featured music by Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Louis Gruenberg, Howard Hanson, and Walter Piston.

Bennett is quoted (Program notes of the Philadelphia Orchestra, 1/10-11/42) as saying that the Eight Etudes for Orchestra "are designed to serve an orchestra in much the same way as etudes for solo instruments serve those instruments . . . to present an attractive exterior filled with problems in orchestral playing" (p. 323). Each etude bears a dedication at the end, in the manner of the Debussy Preludes, having been named, according to the composer, after it was written. The dedications are, in order, to Walter Damrosch, Aldous Huxley, Noel Coward, baseball pitcher "King" Carl Hubbell, "to all dictators," the Grand Lama, the painter Eugene Speicher, and "to the ladies."

The Eight Etudes was premiered on CBS on July 17, 1938, with Howard Barlow conducting the CBS Symphony Orchestra. Goddard Lieberson (Modern Music, Nov.-Dec. 1938, p. 67) condemned all of the commissioned works (except Giannini's, which had not yet been broadcast) as "a slough of indifferent music."

Eight Etudes was the only new work completed by Bennett during 1938. However, the New York Times (10/23/38, sec. 9, p. 7) reported that Bennett and Robert A. Simon were collaborating on yet another dramatic musical work, this one based on a story by O. Henry. In addition, an older work received another performance later that year when Sights and Sounds was heard in Chicago as played by the WPA Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon on December 13 (Harris, 1981).

In either late 1938 or early 1939, Bennett flew to New York to discuss the possibility of his writing the music for a fountains and fireworks display designed by Princeton University architecture professor Jean Labutut for the 1939 World's Fair (p. 257). He met with the chairman of the Fair's Board of Design, Stephen Frank Voorhees. Bennett was awarded the commission at least in part, he believed, because Voorhees' wife was impressed by the strong liking taken to Bennett by her cats (p. 257).

According to Olin Downes (New York Times, 8/27/39, sec. 9, p. 5), the initial idea had been to plan the flow of the fountains to correspond with already existing pieces of music. When this was deemed

unworkable, the responsible parties sought to edit existing works to fit the actions of the fountains. Eventually, it was decided that the best course was to hire a composer to write music to fit the displays.

As a result, Bennett and his family checked in to the Hotel La Sable on East Sixtieth Street at some time in the spring of 1939 so that Bennett could work on the fountain music. The intent was to have a new visual/musical display each week (p. 259). There were six different fountain displays, each with its own music. There are two short fanfares, Call to the Nations and Fountain Lake Fanfare and a slightly longer Postlude. The longer pieces, each of which is exactly fifteen minutes in length, are entitled The Hunt, Spirit of George Washington, Story of Three Flowers (subtitled "A Morning Glory," "Daffodil," and "Moonflower"), Garden of Eden, The World and the Cathedral, and From Clay to Steel.

All of the pieces were scored for concert band. The ensemble that performed at the Fair was conducted by Joseph Littan (p. 258). It is significant that these pieces were Bennett's first venture into the medium of the concert band, one in which he was later to experience great success.

Howard (1941) reported that "defects in synchronization largely spoiled [the spectacle's] chances for success" (p. 317). Downes was more specific in assigning blame, writing "what has happened all too frequently [is] inexact synchronization, poor control of quantity of

tone and a general lack of understanding . . . by engineers and mechanicians" (New York Times, 8/27/39, sec. 9, p. 5).

Downes goes on to praise Bennett's score in exalted terms, referring to the "exceptional character" of the music, in terms of its "brilliant inventiveness, suppleness and modernity of workmanship and instrumentation," comparing it favorably to scores which had recently been created for a similar display in Paris by Arthur Honegger, Florent Schmitt, and Darius Milhaud.

Elliott Carter could hardly have disagreed more. Writing in Modern Music (May-June 1939, pp. 240-241), he lamented that the music was by Bennett, as opposed to "such originals as Auric and Milhaud." He complimented Bennett's choice of a concert band, which Carter felt did not sound unnatural when amplified, as he apparently felt to be the case with other media. As for the music itself, he wrote, "I deplore the conscious writing down to musical taste which has led him in his George Washington piece to do up all the national anthems . . . in Wagnerian style, as if the World of Tomorrow were the Dusk of the Gods." The reader may perceive some irony here if this opinion is considered in light of Bennett's oft-stated position that his musical snobbery was a recurring problem to him in trying to communicate with his audience as a composer.

That summer the Bennetts returned to Los Angeles (p. 259), but did not remain for long, as they were to move back to New York within a very

few months. Wind (1951) states that Bennett returned to New York prior to the production of Jerome Kern's last musical, Very Warm for May (music, lyrics, and book by Kern and Hammerstein), which opened--with Bennett orchestrations--on November 17, 1939.

Bennett's tenure in Hollywood, although busy, was short. If he left any legacy to the world of movie music, it was the sound of the alto flute, according to De Lorenzo (1951), who credits Bennett with popularizing that instrument among composers and arrangers for the medium of film.

The story of Bennett's departure from California is flavored by yet another episode involving a seer. This time, it was his wife, Louise Bennett, who witnessed the apparent prescient event when she went to visit a local soothsayer, who told her (p. 259), "I see a great big 'W'. Is your husband going to work for Warner Brothers?"

The coincidence--or perhaps more, depending on one's point of view--was to involve not Warner Brothers, but two other "W's": Alfred Wallenstein and WOR, the Mutual Broadcasting System's immensely popular flagship station in New York.

CHAPTER V

A RADIO PERSONALITY AND OTHER ADVENTURES

(1939-1952)

There was little creative output by Robert Russell Bennett between the fall of 1939 and the fall of 1940, with the exception of one Broadway orchestration, DuBarry Was a Lady (music and lyrics by Porter, book by DeSylva and Fields), which opened on December 6, 1939, at the Forty-sixth Street Theatre. Bennett was occupied in preparing the new radio program that he was to host on the Mutual Network. One interesting anecdote exists from that time period.

In a letter to Serge Bertensson (10/29/49), Bennett wrote that Serge Rachmaninoff came to him to learn how to write for the saxophone, an instrument that he wanted to use in his Symphonic Dances (1940). Bennett wrote that, on the basis of this encounter, he "considered Rachmaninoff as my pupil, or at least so I boast to my friends."

According to Bennett, Rachmaninoff played through the score for him at the piano. Bennett wrote that he

> was delighted to see his approach to the piano was quite the same as that of all of us when we try to imitate the sound of an orchestra at the keyboard. He sang, whistled, stomped, rolled his chords and otherwise conducted himself not as one would expect of so great and impeccable a piano virtuoso.

In the same letter, he related that several days later, the two met for lunch. Rachmaninoff met Bennett at the train station, and "after

driving about one hundred yards, he stopped the car, turned to me and said, 'I start on A-sharp?' I said, 'That's right,' and he said, 'Right,' and drove on out to his place."

One major Bennett composition received its premiere in 1940, although it was probably written in 1939. Bennett wrote that during his final weeks in California, he and his wife had occasion to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Kaufman. Kaufman was one of the leading studio violinists of the time, and he and Bennett had become acquainted while working together on several films. During the course of their dinner conversation, Kaufman suggested to Bennett that he "compose something that would clothe American dance-hall material in the respectable garments of educated music" (p. 261). Bennett decided to use an all-but-dead form of dance music, the jitterbug. Bennett wrote that the piece, Hexapoda: Five Studies in Jitteroptera for violin and piano, was composed between the Friday night dinner with Kaufman and the following Sunday morning (p. 261).

The title of the work is derived from the six-legged nature of the insect family, of which the "jitterbug" is presumably a member. The five movements each have titles: "Gut-Bucket Gus," "Jane Shakes Her Hair," "Betty and Harold Close Their Eyes," "Jim Jives," and "...'Till Dawn Sunday."

Hexapoda was first performed at Carnegie Hall on October 30, 1940, by Jascha Heifetz and Emanuel Bay. Virgil Thomson praised the music enthusiastically:

> Robert Russell Bennett's musical sketches of the jitterbug world are pretty music. Also, they are evocative of swing music without themselves being swing music. They manage with skill and integrity to use swing formulae as a decor for the musical depiction of those nerve reflexes and soul states that swing lovers commonly manifest when exposed to swing music. They are, in addition, magnificently written for the violin. They come off, as the phrase has it, like a million dollars. (New York Herald-Tribune, 10/31/40, p. 18)

Olin Downes called Hexapoda "highly modern . . . resourceful . . . [and] very amusing . . . . They make an uncommonly piquant effect" (New York Times, 10/31/40, p. 28). Downes also reported that two of the movements were so well received by the audience that they had to be repeated.

Donald Fuller (Modern Music, Nov.-Dec. 1940, pp. 40-41) found the work "polished, charming and sophisticated." However, he took issue with the titles of the individual movements, which he found too cute. He also found the jazz influence "of a definitely early vintage and somewhat too refined," and expressed a preference for the "slower numbers with their charming feeling of nostalgia."

As had been the case in his previous years in New York, Bennett was active in the theater in addition to his compositional activities, orchestrating Louisiana Purchase (music and lyrics by Irving Berlin, book by Morrie Ryskind; opened May 28, 1940, Imperial Theatre); Boys and Girls Together (music by Fain, lyrics by Yellen and Kahal, book by Wynn and Flick; October 1, 1940, Broadhurst Theatre) for which Bennett shared the arranging duties with Donald Walker; and Panama Hattie (music and lyrics by Cole Porter, book by Fields and DeSylva; October 30, 1940,

Forty-sixth Street Theatre). These seem to have been the last shows he was to work on for some time, as he became deeply involved with his first project in radio, a series of which he was the "star." It was entitled Russell Bennett's Notebook.

According to Bennett (p. 260), the idea for the Notebook was suggested by his friend, Alfred Wallenstein, who had introduced the "fragments" from Maria Malibran in Los Angeles in 1935. He had returned to New York City to become the music director of radio station WOR, the Mutual Broadcasting System's flagship station in New York. Wallenstein's idea was for Bennett to have one half-hour per week to showcase contemporary American music. Bennett was to do all of the commentary, and he was to have a free hand in deciding what music would be played on the program.

The program premiered on November 17, 1940. It was broadcast live over the Mutual network on Sunday evenings at seven o'clock. For the Notebook, Bennett had at his disposal four solo singers, a chorus, and the WOR Symphony Orchestra, which Bennett called "as fine as any I ever heard" (pp. 259-260). In fact, he wrote that "the joy of the series . . . was the quality of the singers and orchestra" (p. 264).

The greatest challenge of the show, according to Bennett, was simply writing or finding enough material to fill thirty minutes per week (p. 264). There were virtually no interruptions during each program. Russell Bennett's Notebook and its successor, Music for an

Hour, were "sustaining hours," which, according to Bennett, were "nonsponsored programs, often produced to fill up unsold air time, with a gesture toward culture" (p. 263). Clearly, there was pressure merely to develop enough material to fill the assigned time.

Bennett had originally assumed that composers would appear with scores in hand, hoping for an opportunity to have their music heard (p. 264). With only a few exceptions, this was not the case, and according to Bennett (p. 264), "the programs settled into a groove of browsing around Indian tunes, Negro spirituals, almost-forgotten song hits, and, once a month, a Music Box Opera."

The Music Box Operas did not, in fact, appear on a monthly basis, as there were only five presented over the year and a half that the Notebook was on the air. These were one-act operas, each developed through the process of expanding upon the dramatic possibilities of a traditional American folk melody, which generally appeared in its familiar form at the climax of the work. The folk songs he chose were My Darling Clementine, The Man on the Flying Trapeze, The Band Played On, and My Old Kentucky Home. The remaining piece, the fourth in the series, is entitled Kafoozalem. It can perhaps best be described as a parody of a story one might associate with the tales from Arabian Nights.

Russell Bennett's Notebook, like a number of his compositions, may have suffered from indecision with regard to whether its primary goal

was art or entertainment. Time after time, one gets the impression that Bennett tried either to suppress his self-admitted streak of musical snobbery or to present his serious musical ideas in such a way that they would have the sort of broad popular appeal not usually associated with, for lack of a better term, "art music" in this century. Perhaps, in spite of his best intentions, his experience on Broadway had skewed his innate aesthetic judgment.

For whatever reason, Bennett's guiding principle for the program seems to have been untenable to begin with. Lanfranco Rasponi quoted Bennett as saying, with regard to the repertoire of the Notebook: "My purpose is not to give either popular or classical music. How can one draw a dividing line there? My purpose is to awaken Americans to American music" (New York Times, 4/27/41, sec. 9, p. 10). From the vantage point of the 1980s, when there exists a vast dichotomy between the creative impulse and the consumer mentality, such a crusade seems a bit quixotic.

A perusal of one commentator's opinions regarding the content of Russell Bennett's Notebook points up a growing frustration on the part of the observer that may well have stemmed from Bennett's inability or unwillingness to choose either a clearly artistic or a frankly commercial goal. During the run of the program, Charles Mills had several occasions upon which to comment on it in his "Over the Air" column which appeared regularly in Modern Music. His first remarks (Jan.-Feb. 1941) were laudatory. Referring to the concept of the

Notebook as "a healthy step in the right direction" (p. 131), he praised the network for offering "an entertainment value strikingly different from the overplugged commercial affairs." He called the week's Music Box Opera, My Darling Clementine, "amusing . . . charming fun," although he expressed mild disappointment in what he heard as a lack of textural variety in the scoring.

Mills still saw reason for hope two issues later (May-June 1941, p. 274), although he was beginning to express some doubts. He allowed that the second Music Box Opera, The Man on the Flying Trapeze, was "obvious fun," but criticized Bennett's Theme and Variations ("My Lost Youth") as "too long and too weak," its device of reading the poem on which it is based between variations "almost embarrassingly monotonous." He was pleased with two other Bennett works, a Suite for Clarinet and Orchestra and a Dance Scherzoso for woodwind quintet, the latter of which he called "a fairly amusing and clever work."

By late 1941, Mills had had quite enough. "If there is to be a change for the better," he wrote of Mutual's music programming (Nov.-Dec. 1941, p. 61), "the pile of Music Box Operas by Robert Russell Bennett cannot continue indefinitely." Of the Notebook as a whole, he stated:

> These harmless, hopeless programs got off to a fair start, but they grow progressively weaker as an entertainment venture. What holds them up at all is the business of amusing plot and dialogue. The vocal lines are curiously mechanical, dull in musical interest, often awkwardly unsuited to verbal inflections and meanings. (p. 61)

In Mills' opinion, 1942 brought some improvements, due in part to the inclusion of a pair of Bennett's early works, the Rondo Capriccioso (in an arrangement by Bennett for two flutes and two clarinets) and the Charleston Rhapsody. Of the former, Mills thought it "a beautiful little piece for radio," despite the fact that it had "little discipline of form, poor thematic development, no economy;" still "it manages to come off, it is fluid, inventive and extremely well-scored" (Modern Music, Mar.-Apr. 1942, p. 204). With regard to the Charleston Rhapsody, he wrote: "This makes far better entertainment than the usual run of Bennett programs. Also somewhat derivative, with many charming moments a la Milhaud, it shows a kind of integrity that seems convincing and sincere" (p. 204).

Mills' final comments on the Notebook contained faint praise for one humorous work, while unknowingly he was delivering an epitaph for the program in general:

> Bennett offered his own Railroad Cantata with the amusing and familiar Casey Jones tune used to fairly good advantage. The instrumental railroad effects were not too obvious and came off fairly well, which is more that I can say for this series of programs as a whole. (Modern Music, May-June 1942, p. 282)

This review may have been of the final program of the series, as Wind (1951) states that it ended in March of 1942. Bennett wrote that the Notebook was cancelled as a result of the onset of World War II, although it is not clear precisely why this may have been so. Bennett's explanation that WOR could no longer spare the air time seems

unsatisfactory, given that he was immediately assigned to another unsponsored show, this one an hour in length (p. 265).

Music for an Hour was presented each Sunday afternoon. Bennett conducted the WOR Orchestra, as well as the choir and vocal soloists from the Notebook. Bennett's close friend and librettist Robert Simon, who was then Director of Continuity for the station, chose what was to be performed. The repertoire consisted of a wide range of music "from Schumann's First Symphony to Pistol-Packin' Mama" (p. 265).

These noncommercial radio programs were not particularly lucrative, for either Bennett or the performers. By that point in his career, Bennett was accustomed to commanding a very high salary by the standards of the period. For the radio shows, "the salaries were as small as the various unions would countenance" (p. 263). Nevertheless, he relished the opportunity to conduct such fine players and singers, and he later looked back on the experience as "a period of great personal satisfaction" (p. 264).

In addition to those works discussed, Bennett composed a number of other works during his time with Russell Bennett's Notebook and Music for an Hour, both for the Notebook and independent from it. Among the works composed for radio was his third venture into the symphonic form, the Symphony in D for the Dodgers.

This work was first heard live in a concert at Lewissohn Stadium on August 3, 1941. Gayle Harris (personal communication, 10/23/87) quotes

sportscaster "Red" Barber's recollection that the symphony had been performed in June on the radio. Barber served as narrator of the work's fourth movement. The conductor was William Steinberg.

The Symphony in D for the Dodgers was commissioned by WOR to honor the 1941 Brooklyn Dodgers baseball team. The Dodgers were a "hot" team during that summer, having been rescued from a period of mediocrity by club president and general manager Larry MacPhail.

The symphony opens with a joyous movement in standard sonata form, which depicts the happiness of the team's followers when the Dodgers win. The second movement is a funeral march, meant to reflect the feelings of the faithful on those occasions when the team loses. The third movement is a scherzo which pays homage to the wily MacPhail. In the finale, Barber was called upon to narrate an imaginary baseball game between the Dodgers and their bitter crosstown rivals, the New York Giants. The Dodgers emerge victorious as a result of a two-run home run in the bottom of the ninth inning.

Noel Straus expressed disappointment with the musical results, believing that the piece would have been more successful had Bennett been "less repressed and restrained in his reproach [sic] and keener in his humor." Although he expressed satisfaction with the scherzo, "the rest," he wrote, "was pretty tame" (New York Times, 8/4/41, p. 10).

In a telephone conversation with the author (5/17/88) Barber expressed the opinion that any lack of humor was on the part of Straus,

who, according to Barber, "had no humor or sense of proportion." Barber also recalled that MacPhail "loved" the piece.

There was a bit of irony in the choice of Bennett to write a piece in praise of the Dodgers. He was an enthusiastic Giants fan throughout his life. Wind (1951) quoted Bennett in reference to the Symphony in D:

> I'm the victim of warring emotions every time I hear the damned thing. Up to a certain point, I'm rooting for the symphony. I want the ball game to hit the listener like a real flesh-and-blood event. But when Camilli unloads that homer and the Brooks win it, the Giant fan in me takes quite a beating. (p. 66)

At least two new works by Bennett were premiered during the period of his radio programs. The Violin Concerto in A was first performed on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) radio network on December 26, 1941 (Baker, 1958). The work was played with piano accompaniment by Lewis Kaufman in the early months of the following year. Ewen (1969) wrote that Kaufman introduced the Concerto on February 14, 1944, which must be incorrect, owing to the existence of a review of an earlier performance. The author suspects that Ewen refers to Kaufman's performance of the work discussed here, which may have occurred on February 14, 1942. In reflecting on that performance, Donald Fuller commented that "Bennett's material seems best adapted to short pieces. Though he manipulated the form of his Concerto with dexterity and interest, the matter, as usual, missed filling the lines" (Modern Music, May-June 1942, p. 259).

Another new work, the Nocturne and Appassionata for piano and orchestra, was given for the first time in the late months of 1941 by

the Philadelphia Orchestra. Saul Caston conducted, and Milton Kaye was the soloist. In Modern Music, Charles Mills gave this analysis:

> [Kaye gave] a beautiful performance of this somewhat uneven work. The scoring of the nocturne, a very sleepy fantasy, is neater and less thick than most of Bennett's work. The outer sections are done with sentimental lines which sound acceptable enough by virtue of their sensitive thinness and depend largely for their appeal on a kind of crisp melodic design. The rhythmically nervous and choppy middle section saves the pieces from lapsing into dreamy improvisation. But the appassionata seemed a less successful movement, sagging, after a good start, in quality of materials as it approached its unconvincing ending. (Jan.-Feb. 1942, p. 137)

An older work, Eight Etudes for Orchestra, received at least three performances in 1941 and 1942. Of these, two were by the Philadelphia Orchestra, which performed the Etudes in New York on January 6, 1942, and in their home city on January 10. In New York, Donald Fuller heard a compositional technique that he found

> slick rather than pondered. Since no great care has been taken about the seams, these morceaux do not hang together tightly, the continuity is sometimes too easy-going. But as the intention is always clear, and what is offered direct, natural and winning, everything comes off. (Modern Music, Mar.-Apr. 1942, p. 173)

Of the Philadelphia performance, Arthur Cohn was effusive in his praise:

> Robert Russell Bennett's Eight Etudes proved a delight. There's no doubt the fellow can score. Bennett manipulates the orchestra so as to make it a full-blooded seething mixture. There were concise contrasts, pithy contours to the melodic lines, and suavity in the humor. I found the sixth, an orchestral personification of the Grand Lama, best. This piece and the Violin Concerto convince me that Bennett at some time will be up front where he belongs. (Modern Music, Mar.-Apr. 1942, p. 187)

In the fall of 1942, Howard Barlow conducted an unnamed orchestra at Carnegie Hall in the Eight Etudes (Kochnitzky, 1942). Kochnitzky mentioned the work as an example of what he saw as a trend toward the depiction of individual personalities in music of the time.

Bennett acted in a manner uncharacteristic of his own personality at one point in 1942 when he published a popular song entirely of his own creation. Bennett often wrote poetry, and some of it was set to music by others, but this is the only instance of a published "pop" song for which he wrote both words and music. According to Wind (1951), Sue Ann came to Bennett in his sleep, complete with words and music. He awoke, got out of bed and committed the song to manuscript paper. However, the light of day revealed to Bennett that the song was something less than a gem. Wind quotes the composer as calling Sue Ann "just an obvious little tune. Max Dreyfus, at Chappell, published it as a gag more than anything else. It entirely fulfilled our expectations. I think it sold fifty copies" (p. 52).

Examination of the sheet music lends credence to Bennett's assessment. The music is harmonically static, and the lyrics are banal. Sue Ann was published on June 8, 1942.

Bennett returned to the Broadway stage in the fall of 1942, when he provided orchestrations for Count Me In (music by Ronell and Irwin, book and lyrics by Kerr, Brady, and Hamilton), which opened at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on October 8. The remainder of that year was no doubt

taken up by a large project originated by Fritz Reiner, Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture.

When Reiner first asked Bennett to arrange Porgy and Bess, Bennett was reticent because, he wrote, the music "was to me a little short of what I wanted a great symphony . . . to play" (p. 266). However, Reiner exerted pressure on Bennett through Max Dreyfus, and Bennett capitulated. According to Bennett (p. 267), Reiner planned the form of the Symphonic Picture, which does not coincide with the plot of the musical, but aspires to a satisfying musical form independent of its relationship to the play.

Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture was given its premiere by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, under Reiner, in that city on February 5, 1943. Ralph Lewando called it a "brilliantly executed synthesis . . . a paragon of achievement" that "evoked tempestuous applause" (Pittsburgh Press, 2/5/43, p. 6).

The work was played frequently around the country after its first performance, and though it was popular with audiences, reviewers were not so enthusiastic. After hearing a performance by the San Francisco Symphony under Pierre Monteux in late 1943, Alfred Frankenstein condemned it as "horribly pompous" (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1944, p. 110). Less acerbic was Lawrence Morton, who attended a concert by the Los Angeles Philharmonic in early 1944 conducted by Wallenstein, dismissing Bennett's effort as "an orchestral rosary of song hits"

(Modern Music, Mar.-Apr. 1944, p. 170). Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture has remained a favorite with "pops" audiences and with record buyers, having been professionally recorded more than twenty times (Harris, 1981).

Bennett's Hollywood scherzo received attention, albeit negative, during this period. It was conducted by Leon Barzin at a concert of the National Orchestral Association in the early weeks of 1943. Arthur Berger wrote: "Robert Russell Bennett's Hollywood began with a grandiose, dull introduction, continued with brilliant fast passages superbly orchestrated, and collapsed later in crude burlesque" (Modern Music, Mar.-Apr, 1943, p. 178).

Bennett contributed his orchestrational skill to a new Rodgers and Hammerstein musical in early 1943. The show started out with the title Away We Go, under which it appeared in both New Haven and Boston. During one of these shakedowns, a new name was chosen for it in a contest among audiences' members. The new title chosen for its New York premiere was Oklahoma!.

Bennett was uncharacteristically laudatory of the music of Oklahoma!. He was very impressed with the purity of the melodies. In fact, he wrote, "I only heard one note . . . that I was sure Irving Berlin would never have written" (p. 250). From Bennett, this was high praise indeed, as he considered Berlin the greatest of all popular songwriters.

If Bennett found Rodgers' melodies praiseworthy, Rodgers expressed his admiration for Bennett's taste and skill with an example from Oklahoma!. Wind (1951) quoted Rodgers at length regarding what Rodgers called Bennett's "compositional lack of ham":

> Take Surrey with the Fringe on Top. There was a beautiful chance for a guy to get corny--to use temple blocks to simulate horses' hoofs, and all those lousy little pizzacato tricks with the strings. Not Russell. 'He'll make those wheels go round,' I told myself, and, of course, he did. He managed to keep that open-air, farm feeling, and that carriage really rolled. There isn't a note in that orchestration, or any orchestration of Russell's, that doesn't justify itself. (p. 48)

In September 1943, a new Bennett symphony was introduced to the public. Goss (1952) referred to this work as Bennett's fifth in the symphonic genre. She also mentioned a fourth, Symphony On College Themes, which was "a radio commission, written for Football Day" (p. 184).

The fifth symphony, like its predecessors, was a programmatic work. Entitled The Four Freedoms, it was commissioned by The Saturday Evening Post, and was intended to be a musical companion piece to Norman Rockwell's set of paintings of the same name.

Rockwell's pictures, painted to benefit the War Bond program (Goss, 1952), depict four freedoms enjoyed by Americans as enumerated in a speech by President Franklin D. Roosevelt: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear. Bennett's symphony has four movements, each of which he intended to correspond to

its painting "as a motion-picture score follows the idea of a film" (Bennett, quoted in the New York Times, 9/27/43, p. 23).

Slonimsky (1971) wrote that the first movement, marked "allegro vigoroso," is a tonal portrait of a street orator. The second, an "andante sostenuto," is a stately anthem, in which Bennett said he tried to combine "the religious utterances of a Jewish cantor, a Catholic prayer, a Protestant hymn and a Negro spiritual" (New York Times, 9/27/43, p. 23).

According to Slonimsky, the third movement (scherzo) is a prosperous dance tune. The fourth opens with a passacaglia marked "lento tranquillo," characterized by Slonimsky as a cradle song, which leads into a march which is symbolic, according to Bennett, "of the advance of the United Nations to victory" (New York Times, 9/27/43, p. 23)

The Four Freedoms was premiered on September 26, 1943, by the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Frank Black on the General Motors Symphony of the Air. According to the Times, Bennett received a telegram from Rockwell indicating that he was "deeply impressed," calling the symphony a "significant contribution" that exhibited "complete fidelity to the spirit underlying the Four Freedoms themselves" (9/27/43, p. 23).

Charles Mills, as usual, found little to like. "Without going into painful detail over its four movements," he wrote, "I might note that I

found none of them good, all of them stale and pretentious (Modern Music, Nov.-Dec. 1943, p. 59).

Mills' opinion was apparently not shared by all who heard the new work. Goss (1952) wrote that Eugene Ormandy programmed it "a dozen times the following season with the Philadelphia Orchestra" (p. 185).

Two other performances of the Four Freedoms are documented. Alfred Wallenstein conducted it with the Los Angeles Philharmonic on December 16, 1943, in what was probably the first performance of the piece in a concert hall. Moses Smith expressed mixed emotions when he wrote:

> Bennett's symphony sounded much better in the concert-hall than it did on the air. I am not at all tempted to dispose of it with the usual reference to slick orchestration, especially after observing the clumsiness of some of Creston's scoring and the naivete of much of Schuman's. What I regret most in Bennett's music is its constant wittiness, as if it were addressing itself mainly to the smart set. It covers every feeling with a bon mot, and one senses that he is missing something if he has not read the last issue of The New Yorker. Surely Bennett's talents and skill were intended for something more serious than this. (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1944, p. 101)

In early 1944, the Four Freedoms was performed by the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. Writing in Modern Music, George H. Lovett Smith kept in mind Mills' and Moses Smith's opinions:

> Robert Russell Bennett's Four Freedoms Symphony has received such cordial panning in these pages that I need not add further commentary on its tasteless pomposities, which, after all, have no less to do with President Roosevelt's formulation of the "four essential human freedoms" than Norman Rockwell's obvious paintings that inspired them. Mr. Bennett's creative ability has not yet caught up with his great skill as an arranger and orchestrator. (Mar.-Apr. 1944, p. 179)

Shortly after the radio premiere of Four Freedoms, Bennett again found himself involved in radio on a regular basis as a conductor on the Paul Winchell and Jerry Mahoney Show (Dunning, 1976), which debuted November 29, 1943, on the Mutual Network (Harris, 1981). The stars of the program were a ventriloquist and his dummy. The program was short lived, according to Dunning, due to the preeminence in the field of ventriloquism of the Edgar Bergen/Charlie McCarthy act. Dunning holds that Winchell was actually better than Bergen, but came along too late, after Bergen's popularity had solidified.

The Winchell/Mahoney program began three days prior to the opening of a very different kind of Broadway show. Oscar Hammerstein had the idea of writing English lyrics to the melodies in Bizet's Carmen. The setting is a wartime parachute factory in North Carolina. All of the characters are black, with Carmen a factory worker and the toreador a prize fighter. Billy Rose decided to produce the show, which was called Carmen Jones. In a divergence from his usual working credo, Rose declared that for this play, "the artistic thing is the commercial thing" (p. 273). To that end, Bennett declared in the Playbill for Carmen Jones:

> My effort has been to carry out Bizet's intention of color and balance, and when the excitement of the stage becomes so great that the orchestra is in danger of being forgotten I have merely added a few broad strokes of the same colors as are in the original.

Upon learning of the project, Elliott Carter expressed some misgivings. "I have always loved Carmen and don't see any reason for

changing it," he wrote. "It will be interesting to see whether the Bizet music will not seem out of place" (Modern Music, Nov.-Dec. 1943, p. 51).

Carmen Jones opened at the Broadway Theatre on December 2, 1943. Lewis Nichols was so entranced by every aspect of the production that he declared that "going to the theatre seems again one of the necessities of life" (New York Times, 12/3/43, p. 26). Chase (1955) called it "one of the most extraordinary musical productions that ever struck Broadway" (p. 633).

Paul Bowles, on the other hand, thought the show "uninspired," feeling that the voices of the cast were not adequate to execute the vocal demands of the operatic score. He averred that the show's hybrid nature left it with "practically no style of its own . . . the speech and song [are] completely stilted . . . . [it is] a clever tour de force, but not one which makes good opera or really good Broadway either" (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1944, pp. 118-119). The public apparently felt differently, as Carmen Jones enjoyed a strong, if not spectacular, run of two hundred thirty-one performances (Chase, 1955).

The early months of 1944 saw the release of a film for which the score was arranged by Bennett. The music for Lady in the Dark (Paramount, 2/9/44) was composed by Kurt Weill, who by then was a successful and well-known composer of both Broadway shows and film scores. Lawrence Morton, while calling Weill's music "a full-blown concession to patterns established long ago for musical success" (Modern

Music, May-June 1944, p. 265), nevertheless singled out Bennett's arrangements for praise, opining that they were "as one expected, superior in skill and taste to anything that has been turned out for similar pictures" (p. 264).

Little is known of Bennett's activities until later in 1944, when he orchestrated a new Broadway show, Bloomer Girl (music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by E. Y. Harburg, book by Sig Herzig and Dan James), which opened at the Shubert Theatre on October 5. Bloomer Girl was an important show, according to George McCue (1976), because it was one of the first of what he considered a "musical renaissance" on the Broadway scene.

McCue went so far as to call Bloomer Girl an "American opera" (p. 45), a distinction he bestowed on such other plays as Bernstein's On the Town, Loesser's Guys and Dolls, Berlin's Annie Get Your Gun, Lane's Finian's Rainbow, and Porter's Kiss Me, Kate, the latter three of which were also orchestrated by Bennett. Bennett orchestrated a much less successful show shortly thereafter. Rhapsody (music by Fritz Kreisler) opened at the Century Theatre on November 22, 1944.

In late 1944, pianist Jacob Gimpel performed what was probably the premiere of Bennett's Second Sonatina. In his review, Donald Fuller dismissed the work curtly: "There were new ideas every few measures, none treated to development and none really worthy of it" (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1945, p. 106). In the same issue of that magazine, the perennially caustic Charles Mills took another opportunity to

denigrate Bennett's music while reviewing the work of another composer, Morton Gould. Mills rated the stylistic treatment of Gould's Spirituals as being "slightly better in taste than Robert Russell Bennett, somewhat lower in level than . . . William Grant Still [and] far removed indeed from the Copland plane which it so obviously aspires to" (Modern Music, Jan.-Feb. 1945, p. 138).

Bennett's name was mentioned in a more humorous light in connection with yet another Broadway opening in late 1944. Billy Rose had purchased the National Theatre and renamed it the Billy Rose Theatre. For its first show under the new marquee, Rose had conceived of a review called The Seven Lively Arts, which opened on December 7, 1944 (Slonimsky, 1971). One of the elements of the revue was Igor Stravinsky's Scenes de Ballet, which Rose had commissioned for the show. Following the opening night performance, Rose sent Stravinsky a telegram. It read: "Your music great success. Could be sensational success if you would authorize Robert Russell Bennett to retouch the orchestration. Bennett orchestrates even the works of Cole Porter." Stravinsky's reply was succinct: "Satisfied with great success" (Stravinsky & Craft, 1968, p. 50).

Bennett returned to the airwaves on December 8, 1944, with Stars of the Future, a program designed to give young, less well-known (also, undoubtedly, less expensive) performers a chance for wider public exposure. Two singers, Jo Stafford and Lawrence Brooks, were regulars on the show. Bennett conducted the orchestra. He also arranged,

according to Ewen (1969), "each week a different orchestral fantasy based on American folk tunes," a procedure that was very reminiscent of his work on Russell Bennett's Notebook.

The New York Times called Stars of the Future "unpretentious yet polished," while suggesting that the show "could do with a little more of the work of Mr. Bennett, being perhaps a little too heavy on the singing side" (12/24/44, sec. 2, p. 7). Musical Courier was less inclined to constructive suggestion in its comment on an early installment: "The arrangement of The Boy Next Door, a vocal duet by Brooks and Green, was anything but smooth as was the dull and involved score of the Arkansas Traveler performed by the orchestra. The introductory build-up of this number was also far too long" (1/15/45, p. 20).

Stars of the Future was renamed The Ford Hour (after its sponsor) in April 1945. It continued on the air until the end of September of that year.

The early months of 1945 saw a performance of the Concerto Grosso for Small Dance Band and Symphony Orchestra ("Sketches from the American Theatre") at a retrospective edition of the annual Festival of American Music in Rochester, New York, according to Bernard Rogers (Modern Music, May-June, 1945, p. 262). Two other works received their first performances. Water Music, for string quartet, was heard on May 12, 1945, at a festival of contemporary music at Columbia University sponsored by the Alice M. Ditson Fund. Elliott Carter, remarking that "saying what

has often been said, only more skillfully, seems to be the goal of many of the members of the new generation," called Water Music "cutely clever" (Modern Music, Winter 1946, p. 55). The Enchanted Kiss, a one-act opera with libretto by Robert A. Simon was performed on the Mutual Broadcasting System's Operatic Revue on December 30. This work, based on a story by O. Henry, had been conceived in the late 1930s as a vehicle for Lawrence Tibbett. However, by the time it was completed, he had retired from active performance (p. 250).

Bennett was apparently busy enough with Stars of the Future and The Ford Show that he did not have time for much Broadway arranging during 1945, although he did work on two shows. Carousel (music by Rodgers, book and lyrics by Hammerstein) opened at the Majestic Theatre on April 19, 1945. Bennett shared the arranging load with Donald Walker and Hans Spialek. The other show, In Gay New Orleans (music by Carl Frederickson, book and lyrics by Forbes Randolph), never made it to New York, as it closed after a week of previews in Boston (Harris, 1981).

Bennett's Broadway activities began to increase significantly the following year. From 1946 through 1951, he was to orchestrate no fewer than twenty musical comedies. The first year of that period begat Three to Make Ready (music by Lewis, book and lyrics by Hamilton), which he shared with four other arrangers, and which opened at the Adelphi Theatre on March 7; Annie Get Your Gun (music by Irving Berlin, book and lyrics by Herbert and Dorothy Fields), which employed two orchestrators in addition to Bennett, and which opened at the Imperial Theatre on

May 16; Around the World (music and lyrics by Cole Porter, book adapted by Orson Welles from a novel by Jules Verne), which opened at the Adelphi Theatre on May 31; and If the Shoe Fits (music by Raskin, lyrics by Carroll, book by Carroll and Duke), which opened at the Century Theatre on December 5. In addition, Bennett composed incidental music for the play Happy Birthday, which opened at the Broadhurst Theatre on October 31.

Original creative activity continued during 1946 with the Overture for an Imaginary Drama. This orchestral work received its premiere by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on May 14 under the direction of Fritz Mahler, to whom the work was dedicated. The work "suggests what can be done with themes usually appropriated by boogie-woogie," according to the reviewer for the Toronto Globe and Mail. "It was well-received . . . . Many, like this reviewer, would like to hear it again" (5/15/46, p. 10). Ewen (1969) referred to the piece as "one of Bennett's most popular short works for orchestra" up to that time (p. 56).

A work for a friend, flutist Lamar Stringfield, was introduced in 1947 by the Knoxville Symphony with Stringfield as soloist. The piece was called A Dry Weather Legend. A composer himself, Stringfield (1898-1959) won a Pulitzer prize in 1928 for his From the Southern Mountains. He also founded the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra.

According to Baker (1958), Bennett's Sonatine for Soprano and Harp also dates from 1947. This is a work in three movements, with an original French text by the composer.

The busy arranging schedule continued in 1947 with Finian's Rainbow (music by Burton Lane, lyrics by E. Y. Harburg, book by Harburg and Fred Saldy) opening on January 10 at the Forty-sixth Street Theatre. A revival of a 1913 show, Sweethearts (music by Herbert, lyrics by Smith, book by Smith and Gresac), opened on January 21 at the Shubert Theatre. Louisiana Lady (music and lyrics by Carlo and Sanders, book by Green and Burton), on which Bennett again shared the arranging tasks with Spialek, opened on June 2 at the Century Theatre. Allegro (music by Rodgers, book and lyrics by Hammerstein) opened at the Majestic Theatre on October 10.

In addition to these Broadway plays, Bennett did the orchestrations for a film, Carnegie Hall, which was released by Federal-United Artists on August 8.

The year 1948 opened with an event that was to prove of great importance not only to Bennett's future compositional output, but to concert bands and band musicians everywhere. On January 3, 1948, the League of Composers gave a concert of original works for band at Carnegie Hall in honor of the seventieth birthday of Edwin Franko Goldman, founder and conductor of the Goldman Band and a champion of the band and its music. The concert was conducted by Walter Hendl, with Percy Grainger guest conducting the premiere of his The Power of Rome and the Christian Heart. Aaron Copland delivered a tribute to Goldman following the intermission.

Bennett was in the audience at this concert with his wife, Louise. About his feelings that day, he later wrote:

> I suddenly thought of all the beautiful sounds the American concert band could make that it hadn't yet made . . . . [these sounds] were so new to me after all my years with orchestra, dance bands and tiny "combos" that my pen was practically jumping out of my pocket begging me to give this great big instrument some more music to play. (p. 380)

The result of this inspiration was the Suite of Old American Dances, although that was not its original title. Bennett called it Electric Park, after a park of that name in the Kansas City of the composer's youth. According to Bennett, the park "was a place of magic to us kids. The tricks with big electric signs, the illuminated fountains, the big band concerts, the scenic railway and the big dance hall--all magic" (p. 381). The title was changed at the suggestion of the publisher, who felt that the name that was eventually chosen would be more marketable.

Bennett was only able to work on the Suite intermittently due to the demands on his time of other work (Fennell, 1979), so the work was not played until the summer of the following year. According to Baker (1958), another multimovement piece dates from 1948. Composed for two flutes and piano, each of the Six Souvenirs is dedicated to one or more of Bennett's flutist acquaintances. Each movement bears a subtitle: "...thinking of Brown Schoenheit," "...remembering Georges Barrere," "...at a barn dance with the Baxters," "...a serenade for Billy Kincaid," "...a Fontainebleau evening with Quinto and Lamar," and

"...trading jokes with Verne and Eddie Powell." The manuscript carries the inscription: "written for Mr. and Mrs. John Wummer."

Bennett continued his Broadway orchestrating at the same impressive pace of the previous three years. In 1948, he scored Inside U.S.A. (music and lyrics by Dietz and Schwartz, book by Auerbach, Hart, and Horwitz), which opened at the Century Theatre on April 30; Sally (music by Kern, lyrics by Wodehouse and Grey, book by Bolton), which opened at the Martin Beck Theatre on May 6; Heaven on Earth (music by Jay Gurney, book and lyrics by Barry Trivera), which opened at the Century Theatre on September 16, and on which Bennett again shared the arranging duties with Donald Walker; and Kiss Me, Kate (music and lyrics by Cole Porter, book by Bella and Samuel Spewak), which opened at the New Century Theatre on December 30.

On October 11, 1948, a personal tragedy befell Bennett. His father, George Bennett, died when he was struck by a train on the family farm near Freeman, Missouri.

No evidence was found of any original compositions by Bennett that received first performances in 1948. However, the following year saw the premieres of several. On February 22, 1949, violinist Marc Brown played Bennett's Five Tune Cartoons on a recital in Carnegie Hall. Each of the movements of this piece is named for a famous cartoonist: Al Capp (creator of Li'l Abner), Peter Arno of The New Yorker magazine, Edgar Martin (who drew a long-running, syndicated strip called Boots and

Her Buddies), New Yorker cartoonist Charles Addams, and Walt Disney. Musical Courier quoted Bennett as saying that the work's central idea was "to recall in sound some of the gay moments of a few of our comic artists, without in any way trying to reproduce their substance or their primitive simplicity" (3/15/49, p. 17). The New York Times reviewer, who felt that the piece received the only good performance in an otherwise only fair recital, called the Five Tune Cartoons "lightweight creations, which hardly belonged on a serious program" (2/23/49 p. 16).

The Suite of Old American Dances was finally heard in concert on June 6, when it was played by the Goldman Band in Central Park for an audience of over five thousand (International Musician, July 1949, p. 15). The reviewer for the International Musician wrote that "the piece has infectious good humor, imaginative and masterful scoring, and creates a nostalgically pleasant mood" (p. 15). Writing in the New York Herald-Tribune, Francis D. Perkins said: "The skillful and effective scoring is of today, while preserving the flavor of an earlier period in what the composer describes as a modern version of some of the dance moods of his early youth" (6/18/49, p. 6).

The five dances that make up the suite are entitled "Cakewalk," "Schottische," "Western One-Step," "Wallflower Waltz," and "Rag." The Suite of Old American Dances remains a staple of the band literature to this day.

A third Bennett premiere took place in Louisville, Kentucky, on November 30, 1949. Aaron Rosand appeared as violin soloist with the

Louisville Orchestra conducted by Robert Whitney in the Concert Variations on a Crooner's Theme for Violin and Orchestra. The piece may not have been performed in its entirety. According to Musical America, the work consisted of "five variations on a lullaby-like theme" (12/15/49, p. 17), but when the author inspected the manuscript score of the piece, seven variations were found. In any event, Musical America's reviewer found the Concert Variations "agreeably lighthearted . . . . The variation representing the 'four-beat bounce' is especially delightful" (p. 17).

Bennett scored two Broadway shows in 1949. By far the more successful of the two was South Pacific (music by Rodgers, book and lyrics by Hammerstein and Logan), which opened at the Majestic Theatre on April 7. The other was Texas, L'il Darlin' (music by Dolan, lyrics by Mercer, book by Whedon and Moore), which opened at the Mark Hellinger Theatre on November 25.

A commission that one suspects might have meant a great deal to Bennett resulted in a work that was first performed under his direction in his native Kansas City on February 26, 1950. Kansas City Album was commissioned to commemorate the centennial of the city. According to Bennett, these "impressions of childhood" (quoted in Kansas City Times, 2/24/50, p. 3) constitute a tone poem, although the piece is in seven movements.

The idea for the first movement, "Westport Landing," came from Bennett's memories of his grandmother's stories of the early days of

Kansas City. The next two movements are entitled "Missouri Pacific" and "Cable Car Ride." The fourth movement, "A City Under the Trees," is a nocturne inspired by the memory of the view from a second-story window of the house inhabited by the Bennett family when Russell was a child. The fifth movement, "Twelfth Street," contains elements of ragtime, blues, and be-bop, probably as a tribute to Kansas City's importance in the history of jazz. The sixth, "The Great Gallery," is in honor of William Rockhill Nelson, founder of the Kansas City Star. The final movement is entitled "The Big Town Today" (Bennett, quoted in the Kansas City Times, 2/24/50, p. 3).

According to Clyde B. Neibarger (Kansas City Times, 2/27/50, p. 3), the piece "succeeds marvelously" and was enthusiastically received. In fact, there were four curtain calls, and spontaneous applause erupted after the "Twelfth Street" movement. Sadly, whatever pleasure Bennett felt as a result of his triumphant return to his home town was marred by the death of his beloved grandmother, "Granamie," less than one month after this concert. She, like Kansas City, had recently celebrated her one hundredth birthday.

Back in New York, Bennett resumed his usual routine of scoring Broadway shows. There were at least four of these in 1950. One, a revue entitled Dance Me a Song, had opened prior to his trip to Kansas City, on January 20 at the Royale Theatre.

Two others opened shortly after his return. These were Paris '90, a one-woman show starring Cornelia Otis Skinner with music by Kay Swift,

which opened at the Booth Theatre on March 4, and Great To Be Alive (music by Ellstein, lyrics by Bullock, book by Bullock and Regan), which opened at the Winter Garden on March 23. On the latter, Bennett shared the arranging duties with Donald Walker. The fourth show that year, Out of This World (music and lyrics by Cole Porter, book by Taylor and Lawrence), opened on December 21 at the New Century Theatre.

Bennett also reworked one of his Broadway orchestrations for the movies. Annie Get Your Gun was released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer on May 23, 1950.

Broadway activity continued in 1951 with The King and I (music by Rodgers, book and lyrics by Hammerstein), which opened on March 29 at the St. James Theatre, and A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (music by Schwartz, lyrics by Dorothy Fields, book by Abbott and Smith), which open ed at the Alvin Theatre on April 19. Bennett's arranging for the stage ceased at this point, however, and was not to resume for a year, due to a project of gigantic proportions for the one medium in which Bennett had not yet worked: television.

CHAPTER VI

A TELEVISION PIONEER, AN ELDER STATESMAN

(1952-1981)

The new endeavor upon which Robert Russell Bennett was about to embark stemmed from the National Broadcasting Company's commission of a former Navy officer to produce a documentary series on the naval aspect of World War II. The producer, Henry Salomon, asked Richard Rodgers to compose the music for the series. As the project was quite unlike anything Rodgers had ever done before, most people--including Rodgers himself--were skeptical of Salomon's choice.

According to Richard Hanser (1981), who was to collaborate with Salomon on the script for the series, Rodgers was initially hesitant to risk his enormous reputation on a project that was so remote from his area of expertise--musical theater. However, he became intrigued when Salomon showed him some samples of the extraordinary, unedited wartime film footage which was to be the raw material for the documentary, entitled Victory at Sea.

His interest thus aroused, Rodgers composed three themes, which he played for Bennett. By his own account, Bennett found these tunes both very attractive and well-suited to the depiction of the events described in the first several episodes. He also told Rodgers, much to the latter's surprise, that the three themes would be sufficient for these first programs of the series (p. 304).

Bennett began the work of arranging Rodgers' music in synchronization with the film, a task for which his arranging experience in Hollywood during the 1930s doubtless served him well. As the project progressed, Rodgers contributed new themes as Victory at Sea delved into different events and aspects of the war.

When completed, Victory at Sea comprised twenty-six episodes, each of thirty minutes' duration. Music is present at virtually every moment, except while people are offering their personal observations on screen. In all, Victory at Sea contains over eleven hours of music.

Examination of Richard Rodgers' manuscripts from Victory at Sea reveal a total of seventeen pages of music, including some duplications. There are eleven different themes represented. It must be assumed, then, that at least in terms of quantity, Bennett's contributions to Victory at Sea far outweighed those of Rodgers. Bennett likened his responsibilities for Victory at Sea to "orchestrating a complete Broadway musical every ten days to two weeks, instead of [the customary] three to four weeks" (p. 302). Moreover, as the symphony orchestra utilized for the production was much larger than the usual Broadway pit orchestra, the job of scoring was even more of a challenge.

Donald Hyatt, associate producer of Victory at Sea, indicated to the author (personal communication, 7/23/87) that Bennett worked even faster than he claimed. Later, when the group that produced Victory at Sea began to make documentaries on various aspects of twentieth-century

life, under the name of Project XX, Bennett would take no more than a week to turn out music for each of the fifty-two-minute programs. Furthermore, when viewing the films prior to writing the music, Bennett would rarely take notes, and then only when there was dialogue to be underscored. At that, Hyatt said, the music was so good that text would often be deleted so that the music could be featured.

The Rodgers/Bennett Victory at Sea score was performed by the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Bennett's direction. Recording sessions sometimes took place on the same day as the orchestra had rehearsed under its music director, Arturo Toscanini. Apparently, Bennett as conductor suffered little by comparison to the maestro.

Donald Hyatt recounted to the author that at the conclusion of the first reading of the music for the first episode, the orchestra erupted in a standing ovation. He further stated that these seasoned professionals openly expressed their admiration for Bennett. In fact, they "flocked to him like little kids." Their esteem for him was such that, after Victory at Sea was finished, they would find players to substitute for them at other engagements in order to do a recording session with Bennett.

Hanser (1981) alluded to possible reasons why Bennett commanded such respect and affection on the part of the orchestra players. According to Hanser, Bennett could

> catch the slightest misplay in the strings or reeds even in the most tumultuous passages. Correction would invariably follow, but there was never an outburst, never any scolding or ranting. The recording sessions lasted all day, take after meticulous take, and at the end everyone was exhausted . . . . But nobody was ever down, or vexed. One felt that one had participated in an event. (p. 51)

For his own part, Bennett was extremely proud of Victory at Sea. Newsweek (7/20/53, p. 86) quoted him as saying, "It is the first time I have ever urged my friends to see a work of mine." Bennett felt that the most fulfilling part of the project for him was having the opportunity to conduct. "Conducting," he wrote, "is still the top for me" (p. 310).

The first episode of Victory at Sea aired on October 26, 1952, and the series was completed on May 3, 1953. The production was received with an exceptional degree of enthusiasm. Newsweek (7/20/53, p. 86) applied to it such terms as "magnificent" and "great" in an article on Bennett (p. 86). Philip Hamburger, writing in The New Yorker (4/4/53, p. 77), eschewed that publication's usual guise of ultrasophicated reserve, anointing the production "one of the most ambitious and successful ventures in the history of television," going on to single out its musical score as "an extraordinary achievement--a seemingly endless creation, now martial, now tender, now tuneful, now dissonant, but always reflecting the action taking place in the films."

The public responded with equal enthusiasm, despite the undesirable broadcast time assigned to the show (Sundays at 3:00 p.m., referred to

by Hyatt as the "intellectual ghetto" [personal communication 7/23/87]). Hyatt told the author that many complaints were received that viewers were forced to plan their weekends around the program's air time. He also said that Victory at Sea was so popular at this early stage in the history of the medium that, in many areas, those who did not yet own television sets gathered at their local fire stations each week to watch together. As a result of this response, the show was repeated in its entirety the next season during prime time.

In his autobiography, Richard Rodgers (1975) paid tribute to Bennett's work on Victory at Sea: "[He] fully deserves the credit, which I give him without undue modesty, for making my music sound better than it was" (p. 279).

According to Bennett (p. 302), the music for the final episode was barely finished in time for the broadcast. Despite this seemingly unbearable workload, he had found time in early 1953 to orchestrate Three Wishes for Jamie (music and lyrics by Blane, book by O'Neal and Burrows), which opened at the Mark Hellinger Theatre on March 21. In addition, Bennett had filled a commission by the United States Military Academy on the occasion of its sesquicentennial. The Choral Overture was first performed at West Point on March 14 by the United States Military Academy Band and the Cadet Glee Club under the direction of the composer. This work, with an original text by Bennett, was one of thirteen composed for the Academy's sesquicentennial. Among the other commissioned composers were Henry Cowell, Morton Gould, Roy Harris, Darius Milhaud, and William Grant Still.

Another work for band by Bennett received its first performance in 1952. Mademoiselle, subtitled "A Ballet for Band," was commissioned by the League of Composers in honor of Edwin Franko Goldman, and was premiered by the Goldman Band at The Mall in Central Park on June 18. The composer conducted the new work, the three movements of which are entitled "Barcarolle and Hornpipe," "Marche Militaire," and "Can-can." Musical America's reviewer, "A.H.," found the piece "urbane, witty and wholly delightful," calling it "the work of a master craftsman guided by imagination rather than the dreary conventions of most band composing and scoring" (July 1952, p. 18).

Presumably due to the demands of Victory at Sea, Bennett produced none of his own compositions during late 1952 and early 1953. The single exception is the unaccompanied flute solo A Flute at Dusk, which was published in July.

Bennett's television work did not end with the completion of Victory at Sea. He served as host and musical director of the Scott Music Hall, a musical variety show on NBC. The new program featured such outstanding guests as William Warfield and Leontyne Price, who performed "Bess, You Is My Woman Now," from Porgy and Bess on the show's debut on June 3, 1953. Other guests on that first show included mezzo-soprano Rise Stevens, dancer Danny Daniels, and Oscar Hammerstein II (NBC Program Analysis Card No. 3, 6/3/53).

The Scott Music Hall was to be short lived. After a second program on June 17, NBC cancelled the show for reasons which Bennett professed

not to know (p. 321). This second show featured, among others, the Eva Jessye Choir in performances of Negro spirituals. Given the tenor of the times, one must at least consider the possibility that either the network, the sponsor, or the television audience found the high profile given to black performers unacceptable. The fact that the credits for the two programs in NBC's archives include the letter "X" beside the names of Price, Warfield, and the choir lends credence to this possibility (NBC Program Analysis Card No. 4, 6/17/53). It seems unlikely that Bennett, in his prominent position on the program, would have been totally ignorant of the reason for such an abrupt cancellation. Furthermore, his apparent aversion to offering any negative opinions on any topic is evident throughout his autobiography and suggests a possible explanation for his failure to mention such an objectionable action, if, in fact, the author's theory is accurate.

Bennett's compositional endeavors during this year included a new piece for flute, as well as what was likely the premiere performance of a work for that instrument written the prior year. The Nocturne for flute and piano was played by Bennett's friend, Lamar Stringfield, and pianist Jean Robinson Callaghan at American University in Washington, D.C., on October 3, 1953 (Pan Pipes of Sigma Alpha Iota, January 1954, p. 30). The above-mentioned A Flute at Dusk was performed for what may have been the first time on October 25 at the New York Flute Club by Paul Renzi, Jr.

A third work, Four Dances for Piano Trio, probably received its premiere in late 1953, as it appears on the 1953-1954 tour program of

the Columbia Concert Trio. The movements of this work are entitled "Dance of Life," "Dance of Love," "Dance of Cats (Hep)," and "Dance of Delirium."

In early 1954, Bennett was back on Broadway orchestrating By the Beautiful Sea (music by Arthur Schwartz, lyrics by Dorothy Fields, book by Herbert and Dorothy Fields), which opened at the Majestic Theatre on April 8. That year also saw the release of a record album on the RCA Victor label, An Adventure in High Fidelity, written entirely by Bennett. It seems that the commercial success of the abridged sound track of Victory at Sea had made Bennett a saleable commodity in the recording field, for this record was the first of several that were to feature Bennett's music during the 1950s and 1960s.

After the triumph of Victory at Sea, NBC decided to employ the same creative team on an ongoing basis to write and produce more documentaries. Under the leadership of Salomon, the Project XX group, as it was called, began to produce a program dealing with energy and power (p. 310). After some preliminary work on Project XX, Bennett went to Hollywood to adapt the score of Oklahoma! for the movie version of that musical. According to his own account (pp. 313-315), he asked to be released from the film contract prior to its completion in order to return to Project XX, and the remainder of the revised orchestration was done by Adolf Deutsch. The film, which was released on October 11, 1955, won an Academy Award for musical direction, which was shared by Bennett, Deutsch, and conductor Jay Blackton.

Back in New York, Bennett resumed full participation in the Project XX group. The group eventually was to produce more than thirty documentaries over a twenty-year span. Initially, the plan was to deal with important aspects of life in the twentieth century (hence the group's name), but later the choice of subject matter was to be broadened considerably. According to Hanser (1981):

> Various narrators were chosen over the years for their compatibility to the program themes--Bob Hope for The Story of Will Rogers; Gary Cooper for The Real West; George Burns for Laughter, USA; Alexander Scourby for scripts with a poetic element; or someone directly from the milieu involved, such as the clown Emmett Kelly for Circus. (p. 48)

Bennett composed or arranged all of the music for all of the Project XX documentaries. Although he had apparently left for California before the first program was completed, his name does appear in the credits for it. Three, Two, One...Zero!, aired on September 13, 1954. Bennett's involvement in the series began in earnest with Nightmare in Red (12/27/55) and continued with The Twisted Cross (3/14/56), The Great War (10/16/56), The Jazz Age (12/6/56), Call to Freedom (1/7/57), and The Innocent Years (11/21/57). Three, Two, One...Zero! and The Twisted Cross were rebroadcast with updated commentary in 1957.

There were no Project XX productions in 1958, probably due to the death on February 1 of that year of Henry Salomon, the man who had conceived and brought to fruition Victory at Sea and its Project XX offspring. Assistant producer Donald Hyatt was named to head the group, and its work resumed.

The first program under Hyatt's leadership was Meet Mr. Lincoln (2/11/59), which was followed by Life in the Thirties (10/19/59), Not So Long Ago (2/19/60), Mark Twain's America (4/22/60), Oscar Hammerstein II: An Appreciation (8/26/60), and Those Ragtime Years (11/22/60).

Project XX began to expand its initial twentieth-century focus with its next effort, The Coming of Christ (12/21/60). This broadening notwithstanding, the shows retained a primarily American flavor with a ninety-minute condensation of Victory at Sea (12/29/60) and such programs as Circus (1/21/61), The Story of Will Rogers (3/28/61), The Real West (3/29/61), Laughter, USA (9/17/61), and Music of the Thirties (11/5/61). The following year saw presentations of Cops and Robbers (3/18/62) and He Is Risen (4/15/62), for which Bennett was awarded an Emmy for his original score.

Project XX continued with The Tall American--Gary Cooper (3/26/63), That War in Korea (11/20/63), and The Red, White and Blue (6/9/64). The latter was followed by several years of inactivity before production resumed with The Island Called Ellis (1/13/67), and continued with The End of the Trail (3/16/67), The Law and the Prophets (4/23/67), Down to the Sea in Ships (12/13/68), Meet George Washington (4/24/69), Mirror of America (5/11/69), The West of Charles Russell (1/7/70), and The Shining Mountains (5/27/70).

Bennett wrote (p. 336) that Project XX "died with Chet Huntley," following the completion of the first three of a planned ten-program

series commemorating the Bicentennial of the United States. These final shows were entitled The Fabulous Country, Strange and Terrible Times, and Faith of Our Fathers. Only the first two of these were shown, on October 20, 1972, and April 27, 1973, respectively. Einstein (1987) reported that the shows' sponsor, American Airlines, was unhappy with the series' ratings and may have cancelled it even if Huntley, who was to narrate the programs, had not died on March 20, 1974.

The longevity of Project XX attests to its success. It was a respected television institution, as indicated by Time magazine's reference to its productions as "television masterpieces" (12/26/60, p. 39).

As might be suspected by anyone familiar with Bennett's work habits, his involvement with Project XX did not preclude his involvement with other activities. For the Broadway stage, he orchestrated Rodgers and Hammerstein's Pipe Dream, based on John Steinbeck's novel, Sweet Thursday. This show opened on November 30, 1955, at the Shubert Theatre. In a letter to Bennett, dated the same day that the play opened, Steinbeck wrote "good luck to all of us, but . . . your contribution is the certainty beyond luck."

Bennett did not neglect his composition during the time he worked with Project XX. Both the March of Might for band (taken from the soundtrack of Nightmare in Red) and Rose Variations for cornet or trumpet and band were published in December 1955. The author was unable to find dates of the first performance of either work.

A premiere for which information is available was that of a String Quartet, which was first performed on November 19, 1956, at a concert sponsored by "The Bohemians" in memory of that organization's last surviving founding member, Hugo Grunwald. The work, which was performed by the Guilet String Quartet, is in three movements: Con brio, moderato in tempo; Andante alla serenata; and Rondo: allegro con ritmo.

Founded in 1908, "The Bohemians" (the organization's name officially includes the quotation marks) is a social and philanthropic group that also goes by the name The New York Musicians' Club. Its roster includes many of the most familiar names of the musical world. The club meets monthly to hear performances and socialize. It also supports the Musicians Foundation, the purpose of which is to give financial help to musicians who have come upon misfortune, or to their surviving spouses in time of need. Bennett was elected to membership in 1947, and served "The Bohemians" over the years as a member of the Board of Governors, as Vice President, and as President.

The year 1956 saw the introduction of two Bennett-scored musicals to the New York stage, the earlier of which became one of the most successful shows ever produced. My Fair Lady (music by Loewe, book and lyrics by Lerner) opened at the Mark Hellinger Theatre on March 15. Bennett shared the orchestration of the play's music with Philip J. Lang. On November 29, Bells Are Ringing (music by Jule Styne, book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green) opened at the Shubert Theatre.

Bennett's Broadway activities continued in 1957 with a revival of Ziegfeld Follies, which opened at the Winter Garden on March 1, and New Girl in Town (music and lyrics by Merrill, book by Abbott), which premiered on May 14 at the Forty-sixth Street Theatre. Of much greater impact, in commercial terms at least, was a musical produced especially for television.

Cinderella was televised on March 31, 1957. Bennett orchestrated the score, which was the only one ever written by Rodgers and Hammerstein for television (Ewen, 1977). According to Ewen, the two hundred and forty-five station network assembled by CBS to present the musical was, at the time, the largest ever assembled for a single program. Rodgers (1975) wrote that the show was seen by one hundred seven million people. This success was at least partly due to a stellar cast which included Julie Andrews, Howard Lindsay, and Kaye Ballard.

Bennett was back in the recording studio in 1957, making the first of five RCA Victor albums that featured him in the role of conductor. Apparently, since the great success of Victory at Sea and as a result of his continuing identification by the public with the Broadway stage, Bennett was perceived by RCA executives as being someone who could "sell" classical music to a wider public. The first two albums he conducted were Classical Music for People Who Don't Know Anything About Classical Music (1957) and It's Classic But It's Good (1958). (This image is one that Bennett had cultivated fairly consistently from his choice of an accessible compositional vocabulary to his efforts to make

classical music "palatable" to his radio audience on Russell Bennett's Notebook.) Other recordings he conducted for RCA Victor were two different albums of dance music from West Side Story (1959, 1970) and Songs at Eventide with Marian Anderson (1964). In his autobiography (p. 299), Bennett writes of having made two albums with Anderson, but the author is only aware of one.

In addition to the recordings which he conducted, Bennett arranged the music for a series of popular recordings made by the Robert Shaw Chorale during the late 1950s and early 1960s, also for RCA Victor. Bennett and Shaw had first worked together when Bennett orchestrated and Shaw served as chorusmaster for Carmen Jones, the 1943 adaptation of Bizet's Carmen for the Broadway stage. Bennett had also conducted on a record album of excerpts from Porgy and Bess made by the Robert Shaw Chorale in 1950 (Mussulman, 1979).

Between 1958 and 1965, Bennett arranged the music for six albums for Shaw: On Stage with Robert Shaw (1958), The Immortal Victor Herbert (1960), This Is My Country (1962, reissued in 1964 as America the Beautiful), The Many Moods of Christmas (1963), Songs of Faith and Inspiration (1964), and The Robert Shaw Chorale on Broadway (1965). Mussulman (1979) quotes Shaw as recalling the recording sessions as "very warm and happy times" because of Bennett's "great dignity, charm and taste" (p. 173).

In a tribute to Bennett included in the program for A Salute to America's Veterans, a Veterans' Day celebration presented by the United

States Army Band shortly after Bennett's death in 1981, Shaw enumerated specific qualities of Bennett's arrangements that caused him to be "without peer in his field."

> Let me list here three things which from a musician's point of view are his in unique degree and combination.
>
> First--his unrivalled knowledge of the orchestra: because of his vast experience and know-how everything sounds: it balances, it blends or it isolates, it does what it's supposed to do, it needs no doctoring. And because of his great imagination--everything sounds fresh . . . .
>
> Second--his gift for the development of subsidiary and--until he touches them--hidden musical elements: the just-right accompaniment figure, the second chorus with an accumulative device that makes the song and the show a "hit," overtures or "symphonic syntheses" out of a fistful of disparate tunes, hours upon hours of distinguished motion picture scoring from a moment or two of "original" themes.
>
> Third, and rarest of all--his great good taste: he matches manner to the material, style to content. Like charity, his music "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Patriotism is not allowed to become pompous. Musical comedy is not confused or compounded with Schubert or Mozart, nor operetta with Verdi. No great classical composer has been caricatured or demeaned by Bennett's expertise, though few speak the language so well. Music for fun is to be taken seriously and precisely as music for fun.
>
> Of course it is exactly because he knows the vast classical symphonic, operatic and chamber music literatures so intimately and so lovingly that this taste and invention remain unique in their entertainment roles.

As ever, Bennett kept up his composition while he was involved in his commercial pursuits. A Song Sonata for violin and piano was submitted for copyright on June 19, 1957. Whether it received a live performance is not known. It was, however, recorded by Lewis Kaufman, the violinist and longtime friend of Bennett for whom it was written, on an album that also included two earlier Bennett violin works, Hexapoda (1940) and Violin Concerto in A ("in the popular style"). Kaufman was

accompanied by the London Symphony, Bernard Hermann conducting, on the Concerto, and by his wife, pianist Annette Kaufman, on the others.

A Song Sonata is in five movements: I. Quiet and Philosophic; II. Same Tempo but Belligerent; III. Slow and Lonely; IV. Madly Dancing; and V. Gracefully Strolling. One reviewer called it "a solid recital piece . . . personal and by no means private (Fanfare, Sept. 1973, p. 20). The same review described the Concerto as "eminently pleasant indeed . . . reflect[ing] a naive delight in popular sources . . . . Few but Scrooges could cavil at its happy prance." The reviewer wrote that A Song Sonata had been recorded by Jascha Heifetz, but he may have been confusing the work with Hexapoda, which Heifetz performed, but probably never recorded.

Another new work, the Symphonic Songs for Band, was first performed in Salt Lake City on August 24, 1957, by the one-hundred-sixty-member Kappa Kappa Psi/Tau Beta Sigma National Intercollegiate Band, conducted by William F. Santelmann. The piece, which was commissioned by Kappa Kappa Psi, is in three movements. Smith and Stoutamire (1979) quote Bennett:

> Symphonic Songs are as much a suite of dances or scenes as songs, deriving their name from the tendency of the principal parts to sing out a fairly diatonic tune against whatever rhythm develops in the middle instruments. The Serenade has the feeling of strumming, from which the title is obtained, otherwise it bears little resemblance to the serenades of Mozart. The Spiritual may possibly strike the listener as being unsophisticated enough to justify its title, but in performance this movement sounds far simpler than it is. The Celebration recalls an old-time county fair with cheering throngs (in the woodwinds), a circus act or two, and the inevitable mule race. (p.23)

Symphonic Songs was recorded by Frederick Fennell and the Eastman Wind Ensemble in 1958, along with works by Morton Gould, Julian Work, and Clifton Williams. John Clark, the reviewer for Musical America (Aug. 1961), was venomous:

> None of the four American works included in this release can bear much repeated playing. Mercury's publication of them amounts to domestic noblesse oblige to American composers, but who chose such shoddy compositions for this perpetuation? The same sounds have been stirring the American air all too long; all the pieces sound stillborn. Fennell's performances are better than the scores deserve. (p. 49)

If durability is held to be an important criterion, the reviewer's opinion is not borne out in the case of Symphonic Songs. In a study of the repertoire of college and university bands during the period 1975 to 1982, Hornyak (1985) found that Symphonic Songs was performed forty-three times over that period. (Bennett's Suite of Old American Dances was played one hundred five times, making it one of the most performed works mentioned in the study. Of the other three works on the recording, Williams' Fanfare and Allegro was performed thirty-nine times. Specific numbers of performances for the other pieces were not cited, as they were not among the most-performed works that were the focus of the study.)

During the latter half of 1957 and for most of 1958, Bennett seems not to have been involved with any new Broadway shows. While this absence was not as extended as the one necessitated by Bennett's involvement with Victory at Sea, the lack of any similarly imposing project makes the latter gap more difficult to explain. This is

especially true in light of the interruption of the Project XX series precipitated by the death of producer Henry Salomon in early 1958 .

One product of 1958 worthy of mention is the Concerto Grosso for Wind Quintet and Wind Orchestra. This work came into being as a result of a commission from the conductor of the American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Robert Austin Boudreau,

Founded in 1957, this unique and visionary ensemble, the name of which was changed in 1986 to the American Waterways Wind Orchestra (AWWO), travelled the navigable rivers of the United States, performing at cities and towns along the way from the deck of the Point Counterpoint, a barge especially designed for the purpose. The newer, larger, self-propelled, Point Counterpoint II is capable of ocean travel, enabling the group to perform on other continents.

The AWWO generally performs for large and enthusiastic audiences while introducing to them many new works, some by composers such as Krztsztof Penderecki and Henk Badings, whose music is far more challenging to the listener than one might believe would be successful in such circumstances. Another virtue of the group is that it draws its personnel from the ranks of college music students and young, unestablished professionals, ensuring a high performance standard while providing valuable professional performing experience at a relatively low cost to the organization, which is supported largely by corporate contributors. One aspect of the AWWO that may be considered a drawback is its unusual, indeed one-of-a-kind instrumentation, which differs from

that of the usual wind band in the absence of saxophones and the inclusion of large numbers of double reed instruments, often including multiple English horns and contrabassoons, as well as the occasional heckelphone and oboe d'amore. While this characteristic makes for a most unusual and exciting sonic palette, it also prevents the works composed for it from receiving as many other performances as would otherwise be possible.

Bennett's Concerto Grosso was premiered on July 6, 1958, in Pittsburgh, the home city of the Wind Symphony. The composer conducted. Donald Steinfurst, writing in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, found the work attractive: "The first two movements are serious in character, stolid but nicely apportioned to the wind soloists. The latter two movements, a Scherzo and a rapid Finale, are more syncopated even jazzy in character, and are thoroughly enjoyable in this medium." He also complimented the conductor and ensemble for their performance: "Mr. Bennett conducted with ease . . . . The orchestra responded . . . with gusto" (7/7/58, p. 9).

The Concerto Grosso commission was the beginning of a long relationship between Bennett and the American Wind Symphony. Many of the works that he subsequently composed for the group have either a "river" theme or are related in some fashion to one of the "river" states where the group frequently performs. The first of these was the Ohio River Suite, which was first performed on July 8, 1959, in Pittsburgh, with Boudreau conducting.

The Suite was repeated on June 15, 1961, as a part of an all-Bennett program given by the Wind Symphony in honor of the composer's birthday. In addition to the Concerto Grosso, and the Ohio River Suite, Bennett conducted the premieres of three works: Song of the Rivers (which uses such "river" music as Blue Danube, Swanee, Volga Boatmen, and the Eton Boating Song); Overture to Ty, Tris and Willie, dedicated to the then-owner of the Pittsburgh Pirates, William Benswanger; and Three Humoresques, each movement of which is composed for one of the three large instrumental divisions of the Wind Symphony--percussion, woodwinds, and brass. Steinfurst's comments in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette suggest that the pieces premiered are engaging, but not deep (6/16/61, p. 8).

Bennett continued to write for the Wind Orchestra throughout the remainder of his life. The year 1963 saw the first performance of West Virginia Epic (June 6, Fairmont, West Virginia). This was followed by Kentucky (June 13, 1965, Pittsburgh), Twain and the River (June 22, 1968, Pittsburgh), and Overture and The Pickle from The Pickle Suite (June 14, 1969, Pittsburgh).

The last work, a bizarre opus of six movements, was written in honor of the one hundredth anniversary of the H. J. Heinz Company, a leading corporate citizen of Pittsburgh and a consistent supporter of the AWWO. Bennett's contributions served as the outer movements of the piece. The inner movements were: Oliver Nelson's A Cucumber's Pickle, Meditation for a Pickle Suite by Shulamit Ran, Rhyme for the Very

Pickled by Jacques Casterede, and Henk Badings' Polly Picklenose. Save for the Overture, each is intended to accompany a poem in honor of this humble condiment. It is probably safe to assume that there has never been such an array of compositional talent enlisted to contribute to such an unusual project.

Bennett's association with the American Wind Symphony resumed with Zimmer's American Greeting (May 26, 1974, Pittsburgh). What were probably his last works were first performed by the ensemble in Pittsburgh on June 7, 1981, less than three months before his death. The pieces were Fanfare and A Christmas Overture. The occasion was the Wind Symphony's twenty-fifth anniversary concert.

One other work, A Florida Nocturne, exists in manuscript and bears the subtitle "for harmonica and the American Wind Symphony Orchestra." The most likely date for this piece would be in the last decade of Bennett's life, as he displayed an interest in that instrument during that time, composing a Concerto for the Chinese virtuoso Cham-Ber Huang (letter from Bennett to Mel Nixon, 5/18/71; letter from William Steinberg to Bennett, 1/13/72; letter from Robert Shaw to Bennett 3/23/72; letter from Cham-Ber Huang to Bennett, 11/24/80), as well as arranging Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue for harmonica and orchestra, a copy of which is included in the composer's personal papers.

Toward the end of the relatively inactive year of 1958, Bennett again picked up the pace with his orchestrations for Flower Drum Song (music by Rodgers, lyrics by Hammerstein, book by Hammerstein and

Fields), which opened at the St. James Theatre on December 1. Broadway activity continued in 1959 with Redhead (music by Hague, lyrics by Fields, book by Fields, Fields, Sheldon, and Shaw; opened February 5, Forty-sixth Street Theatre), Juno (music and lyrics by Blitzstein, book by Stein; March 9, Winter Garden), and The Sound of Music (music by Rodgers, lyrics by Hammerstein, book by Lindsay and Crouse; November 16, Lunt-Fontanne Theatre). As time passed, Bennett began to share the task of arranging each show with other orchestrators. He worked with Philip Lang on Redhead and with Hershey Kay and composer Marc Blitzstein on Juno. However, Bennett wrote (p. 339) that he did all of the work for The Sound of Music himself, at the insistence of Richard Rodgers.

A few days after The Sound of Music opened, a new Bennett piece for an unlikely medium was given its first performance. Four Nocturnes, for solo accordion, was performed by Carmen Carozza at a meeting of the National Association of Composers and Conductors on November 21, 1959.

On July 7 of the following year, Bennett conducted the premiere of a large work with the Naumburg Orchestra of New York. The piece, a Concerto for Cello, Harp and Orchestra, was performed by soloists Assunta Dell'Aquila and Daniel Vandersall (Pan Pipes of Sigma Alpha Iota, Jan. 1961, p. 42). (The author has been unable to determine which performer played which instrument.) Examination of the manuscript score indicates that this piece is a reworking of a Concerto for Viola and Harp. The manuscript of the latter bears the inscription "for Notebook." This is presumably a reference to the radio program Russell

Bennett's Notebook, which was broadcast on the Mutual network in 1940 and 1941.

The score of the Concerto notes the composer's intention of "describing a bus ride across the United States," a concept that recalls a much earlier work recording Bennett's impressions of his first trip from Kansas City to New York in 1916, Travel Sketches for piano solo. The Concerto is in six movements: "Chorale," "Dialogue enroute," "Chicago," "Under Wyoming Stars," "Reno Revelry," and "Chorale."

Bennett's second major premiere of 1960 came as a result of a commission from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra for a work to commemorate that city's bicentennial. The piece was entitled (appropriately enough) A Commemoration Symphony, and was based on songs of Stephen Foster, a native of Pittsburgh.

In the program notes for the first performance on December 30, 1960, Bennett describes the first movement as being in sonata form, the second as being in "song form," and the third as "a straight-ahead scherzo with trio." The finale he characterizes as "a montage . . . ending in a real 'ode to joy' with chorus."

Record reviewer John Tasker Howard took issue with Bennett's terminology. Mentioning Bennett's professed intention to act as a contemporary of Foster's, orchestrating the latter's melodies, Howard wrote, "[Bennett] has done just that with his customary mastery . . . [but] he has not written a symphony at all . . . . there is a cyclic

recurrence of themes . . . [but] one cannot feel that each successive melody grows from its predecessor." Howard indicated that Bennett had used too many songs to allow for development of any of them (American Record Guide, June 1960, p. 810). Indeed, no fewer than twelve Foster tunes are employed, five in the first movement alone, lending credence to Howard's objections.

The recording of A Commemoration Symphony was one of two recordings of Bennett's music released in 1960. The second work recorded, the Armed Forces Suite, employs music that was popular during each of America's military conflicts from the Revolution through World War II in its eight movements.

Bennett's other major projects in 1960 included orchestrating Camelot, (music by Loewe, book and lyrics by Lerner; opened December 3, Majestic Theatre), although, according to Bennett (p. 340), the lion's share of the arranging was done by Philip Lang because of scheduling conflicts. He also wrote music for a television documentary that was not a Project XX effort. It was entitled Assault on Antarctica and it aired on January 30, 1960.

A Sonatina for Flute, Harp and Cello received its premiere on February 6, 1961. The performance by the New York Concert Trio took place in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. This work is of interest due to the fact that its three movements follow a slow-slow-fast format, rather than the standard fast-slow-fast pattern. A band work, Track Meet, was

also produced and published in 1961. Another non-Project XX documentary with a Bennett score, Merrily We Roll Along, appeared on October 22.

In the arena of musical theater, Bennett arranged music for Thirteen Daughters (music, lyrics, and book by Eaton Magoon; opened March 2, Fifty-fourth Street Theatre) and The Happiest Girl in the World (music by Offenbach, lyrics by Harburg, book by Saidy and Myers; April 3, Martin Beck Theatre). The following year he orchestrated We Take the Town (music by Harold Karr, lyrics by Matt Dubey, book by Bauer and Dubey), which closed before it ever got to New York.

It will be noted that Bennett's Broadway involvement had diminished considerably by the early 1960s. This was due in part to the fact that Project XX was in its most prolific period at that time and that Bennett also had other television work, such as the music he did for the special The World of Sophia Loren (February 27, 1962, NBC). Beyond this, it may be that Bennett's writing style was beginning to be perceived as somewhat dated. It is also true that many of the songwriters and lyricists with whom he had collaborated had died, or were no longer active in the musical theater.

No new Bennett compositions were premiered during 1962. That he was still actively writing original material is demonstrated by three new works that were performed in early 1963 (in addition to West Virginia Epic for the American Wind Symphony, mentioned above). On March 18, the Portland Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of

Jacques Singer, gave the premiere of Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra with soloists Benno and Sylvia Rabinof. Like the Sonatina for Flute, Harp and Cello, its three movements also deviate from the usual tempo relationships. In the case of the Concerto, the movements are marked "Moderato tranquillo," "Vivo," and "Lento."

Less than a month later, Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra performed Bennett's Symphony. This work did not come about as the result of a commission. Bennett was quoted in the program notes as saying the piece was "written on personal orders from myself, and dedicated to Reiner out of long friendship and admiration." He emphasized that the work was not experimental in nature, and even a brief examination of the score bears this out. It is in the standard four-movement format, the first movement being in sonata form, the second a slow movement in ABA structure, the third a scherzo with trio, and the finale a rondo with a slow introduction.

The only possibly unorthodox aspect of the Symphony is the seven-eight meter of the scherzo. According to the program notes, this music was the genesis of his motivation to write the piece. "A sort of wall-paper pattern of sixteenth notes in the seven-eight part started going through my head as I walked along Madison Avenue some years ago, and interested me in doing the whole symphony" (Program of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, April 11, 1963, p. 20).

At the premiere, which Bennett attended, the audience responded with enthusiasm for the Symphony, and according to the composer, the

orchestra members were complimentary, as well. However, Bennett wrote that the critics responded with "the most contemptuous reviews I ever read. Claudia Cassidy, famous for damning criticisms, was by far the least vicious" (pp. 388-389). Cassidy characterized the work as "a handsomely orchestrated sufferer from schizophrenia. At its best it suggests a Chinese festival--all orchestral fireworks, tart percussion, flaring winds and quivering strings caught in a brazen blur. At its worst it sounds like a sumptuous orchestration not quite hiding the shallower Broadway style" (Chicago Daily Tribune, 4/12/63, sec. 2, p. 11). Cassidy confirmed Bennett's assertion that the audience was favorably affected, reporting that he was asked to take several bows.

A third new work was first performed less than two weeks after the Symphony, this one for a most unusual instrumental ensemble, a string quartet plus accordion. The piece was also given an unusual title: [Quintet] Psychiatry. Each of the four movements bears a subtitle: "Trying to find oneself," "Not loved and wanted," "Crazy, mixed-up kid," and "Well-adjusted--to what?"

Psychiatry was commissioned by Sigma Alpha Iota and was premiered in Kansas City by accordionist Ivan Cochrane with Hugh Brown and Helen Hollander, violins; Lucinda Gladics, viola; and Catherine Farley, cello (Pan Pipes of Sigma Alpha Iota, Jan. 1964, p. 45). In spite of generally negative reviews of his other works from this period, there runs a common thread of admiration for Bennett's skill at orchestration.

In the case of Psychiatry, however, even this was found deserving of criticism by Sandor Kallai of the Kansas City Times (4/22/63):

> The Bennett composition, however sincere an effort to enlarge the serious accordion literature, was ill-conceived texturally. The voice of the accordion dominated the quintet even when its part was definitely subordinate, and its tone quality simply refused to blend into the fabric of sound.
>
> The style of the work drew liberally from many twentieth-century musical developments. Easily traceable were impressionistic influences and those of Broadway. Bennett's satirical sense, as evidenced in the third movement . . . is too obvious and therefore ineffective. (p. 11)

What must have been a disappointment at the critical response to his newest works was offset to a degree by an honor bestowed on Bennett by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. On May 26, he was presented with an Emmy Award for outstanding achievement for his original score for the Project XX documentary He Is Risen, which had aired on April 15, 1962.

Two musicals orchestrated by Bennett opened during 1963: Jennie (music and lyrics by Dietz and Schwartz, book by Schulman; opened October 17, Majestic Theatre) and The Girl Who Came to Supper (music and lyrics by Coward, book by Kurnitz; December 8, Broadway Theatre). That year also marked the appearance of Americans in Crisis: Eisenhower on Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief. This documentary, not produced under the aegis of Project XX, was televised on February 11, 1963.

At this point, Bennett's work on Broadway began to diminish even more significantly. Despite a relatively light schedule in 1964, which

included only one recording with Robert Shaw and one Project XX broadcast, Bennett appears to have arranged no more music for the theater until late 1965, when On a Clear Day You Can See Forever (music by Burton Lane, book and lyrics by Lerner) opened at the Mark Hellinger Theatre on October 17. The only remaining shows known to the author for which Bennett arranged were The Grass Harp (music by Richardson, book and lyrics by Elmslie; opened November 2, 1971, Martin Beck Theatre) and a revue, Rodgers and Hart (May 13, 1975, Helen Hayes Theatre).

Robert Russell Bennett reached the age of seventy in 1964, so it is not surprising that his pace began to slow somewhat. His involvement with Project XX remained a constant, although the production schedule became somewhat sporadic. From time to time, he composed a new work for the American Wind Symphony.

Occasionally, he would write a piece in some other medium. A short Impromptu for piano solo, bearing the dedication: "for Carol Jane Rapp," dates from 1965 (Harris, 1981). Dartmouth Overture for band was first performed by the Dartmouth College Band under Donald Wendlandt on April 17, 1966. A trio piece for flute, viola, and piano dates from 1966. Entitled Seven Postcards to Old Friends, the individual movements are dedicated to Berlin, Kern, Rodgers, Youmans, Porter, Coward, and Gershwin. (Perhaps Bennett's absence from Broadway was inspiring his inherently sentimental nature.) This work was written for the Musical Arts Trio sometime prior to October of that year (letter to Bennett from David Jackson, 10/17/66).

To note that Bennett's creative output slowed to some degree is not to say that he was by any means inactive. In 1965, he served on a committee to raise money to build a Nadia Boulanger Auditorium in Ogunquit, Maine. Other members of the committee included Senators Edmund Muskie and Margaret Chase Smith, Aaron Copland, Ross Lee Finney, Yehudi Menuhin, Walter Piston, William Schuman, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, and Virgil Thompson. The project was abandoned when Boulanger withdrew her blessing from the project, saying that she could not accept any kind of monument to her before there was one to commemorate her beloved sister, Lili (Rosenstiel, 1982).

Guest conducting was an activity which Bennett enjoyed very much, especially when it involved working with young people. During one period in 1966, he conducted a program of his band works at Kansas State Teachers College in Kansas (May 10) and the Symphony written for Fritz Reiner at Indiana State University (May 25). Perhaps his most unusual engagement occurred during the first week in August when he conducted a combined high school band of approximately seven hundred players at the National Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio. The band performed the Star-Spangled Banner and the premiere of a march Bennett composed for the occasion, The Soap Box Derby (letter from A. M. Bell to Bennett, 7/12/66).

The year 1967 was primarily devoted to television work. Not only did Project XX produce three documentaries, but Bennett also orchestrated two television musicals for NBC: Annie Get Your Gun

(March 19) and Androcles and the Lion (music and lyrics by Rodgers, book by Peter Stone; November 17).

In 1967, Bennett launched a project more ambitious than any he had attempted for years--an opera. Bennett wrote the libretto for Crystal in Palm Springs, California, where he and his wife spent several winters in the mid-1960s (p. 398). The libretto was submitted for copyright on March 23, 1968, and the piano-vocal score was submitted on June 20, 1972. In an article in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (5/27/74, p. 16), George Anderson quoted Bennett as saying that he had finished scoring his new opera "the day before yesterday." Most of the work was completed in Scottsdale, Arizona, which had, by then, supplanted Palm Springs as the Bennetts' winter home (p. 399).

Bennett wrote that his aim in composing Crystal was to create an opera that, unlike most works in that genre, would "make prior acquaintance with the entire story unnecessary . . . . Mainly," he wrote, "it is a statement of my idea of the form a new American opera could take" (p. 399). It is an opera conceived on a grand scale, "guaranteed to make potential backers blanch with horror, with its elaborate scenery, large chorus and large orchestra" (p. 399). Whether for this reason, or some other, Crystal was not produced, although Bennett discussed the possibility with the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Opera, the Houston Grand Opera, and the Minnesota Opera during the early 1970s.

A highlight of 1969 for Bennett was a pair of Goldman Band concerts in honor of his seventy-fifth birthday. Given on July 16 and 17 (about a month after his actual birthday), the concerts entitled The Musical Worlds of Robert Russell Bennett were devoted to compositions and arrangements by Bennett. Included were two premieres, one a five-movement suite entitled Down to the Sea in Ships, drawn from the Project XX documentary of the same name. Like much of his music for television, it employs a number of preexisting melodies related to the subject. In addition to a number of folk tunes, Down to the Sea in Ships prominently features Schubert's Am Meer ("By the Sea").

The other work premiered on the program was Jazz? (also known as New York--Jazz?). According to the program notes, this piece is a theme with six variations, preceded and followed by an instrumental recitative, for which a text was printed in the program. It reads, "Was there anything in jazz worth saving? or in rock 'n' roll? or in music teacher's music like the twelve-tone row?" With Bennett's characteristic wit, the last phrase utilizes all twelve pitch classes without any recurrences. The variations each treat the theme in a different style, according to the program notes, including the three styles alluded to in the recitative text.

Bennett was asked to conduct these performances, but apparently did not feel well enough to take on that responsibility (letter to Bennett from Richard Franko Goldman, 4/16/69). He did, however, attend the concerts, as he had attended many by the Goldman Band, of which he was

an honorary member. According to Ainslee Cox, then associate conductor and later music director of the band, Bennett was always in the audience for each season's opening concert, as well as for others (personal communication, 7/24/87).

Bennett's opera, Crystal, was occupying his creative energies during the early 1970s, and he generated little other than that. He did write Eastern Airlines' well-known Wings of Man jingle in 1970, and he published a Suite for flute and clarinet in 1973.

With the completion of Crystal, Bennett turned his attention to other matters. One movement exists of a Sonata (Ragtime) for piano, and a receipt for duplication bears a 1974 date. (It is possible that this is a complete work in one movement.) A new band work was first performed by the Goldman Band in July of that year. Four Preludes is another of the several pieces that are dedicated to Bennett's longtime friends and business associates in the musical theater. Its movements, "George," "Vincent," "Cole," and "Jerome" pay tribute, respectively, to Gershwin, Youmans, Porter, and Kern. Each movement concludes with a different setting of a single "salutation" theme. In the author's view, Four Preludes is at least as well constructed as Bennett's two better-known band works, Suite of Old American Dances and Symphonic Songs, and its melodies are quite beautiful. It is unfortunate that it does not receive the same degree of attention as the other two works. (An investigation into whether the Four Preludes bears any resemblance to the earlier Seven Postcards to Old Friends suggests itself.)

The completion of his new opera, Crystal, may have provided the stimulus for Bennett to consider a reworking of his 1935 opera, Maria Malibran. Several letters sent to Bennett by the librettist of Malibran, Robert A. Simon, indicate that Bennett had suggested such a project and that Simon was interested in undertaking a revision of the work. Simon believed that the principal shortcoming of the original lay in a dramatic weakness in the final scenes of Act II, and he suggested a new scenario which he believed would strengthen the book while requiring very little new music. (Simon felt strongly that Bennett's music needed no revision.) This correspondence took place in middle and late 1973. The projected restructuring of Maria Malibran never took place, perhaps as a result of an incident recounted by Bennett which involved the manuscript score of the opera.

During this period, Russell and Louise Bennett moved from their apartment to a suite in the Warwick Hotel in order to relieve Louise of the burden of housekeeping (p. 396). On the day that they vacated the old apartment, they left several boxes that they planned to return for on the following day. However, when they went to get the boxes, they had disappeared. Among the missing items was the original score of Maria Malibran.

According to Bennett, this unfortunate incident took place in 1972, which would have been before Simon and Bennett communicated about revising the opera. However, there are numerous inaccuracies with respect to dates in Bennett's autobiography, and it is quite possible,

although not provable, that the loss of the score precluded any further thoughts of reworking Malibran. In any event, the planned revision never came to fruition.

The year 1975 was marked by the publication of Bennett's only book, Instrumentally Speaking. Written as a guide to aspiring arrangers, it deals with such topics as ranges and transpositions and transcribing piano music for band or orchestra.

Critical response to the book was mixed. The Strad magazine's reviewer wrote that Bennett possessed "the fullest knowledge of which he speaks, [and he] speaks with compassion, with light humour, yet with seriousness" (August 1975, p. 335). However, Michael Hurd, writing in Music in Education, chided Bennett for "a Tin Pan Alley style that may exasperate even when it instructs," "unfunny anecdotes and depressing snippets of autobiography," and "moments of musical naivety that boggle the mind." Still, he felt the book "[had] something to offer--if you are prepared to dig for it" (May-June 1976, p. 133). The Composer (Summer, 1976) identified what the reviewer saw as an inconsistency in the level of expertise that the author assumed of the reader, but felt that the book was not without merit.

In the area of composition, Bennett produced a band work in 1975. Born of the Navy was used as a sound track to a recruiting film produced by the U.S. Navy. It was recorded in Washington, D.C., on November 24, by the United States Navy Band, Commander Ned Muffley conducting.

Bennett's most important musical product of 1975, however, was a work written for a commission from the National Symphony Orchestra as one of a series of twelve commissions to commemorate the Bicentennial of the United States. This large work for orchestra with chorus, entitled The Fun and Faith of William Billings, American, received its premiere on April 29, 1975, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Antal Dorati conducted the National Symphony Orchestra and the University of Maryland Chorus. In the manner for which he had become so well known, Bennett utilized the music of Billings, perhaps the most famous composer of the era of the American Revolution, in a piece of large proportions. Among the Billings tunes included are When Jesus Wept, I Am the Rose of Sharon, and Be Glad Then, America.

Conductor Dorati called the work "sensational . . . a hit!" (letter to Bennett from William Denton, Managing Director of the National Symphony, 5/6/75). Critic Paul Hume of the Washington Post was less enthusiastic: "Because there is a certain built-in squareness if you listen to Billings too long at a time, the work would gain by the removal of either one of the two slow lamenting tunes at its center, "Anthem from Isaiah" or "Anthem From Fast Day." These prolong it by just the wrong amount. He also called the introduction to the final chorus "banal," although he found the choice of the finale, "Independence," to be "ideal" (4/30/75, p. B1).

As he approached the end of a long and full life, Bennett's productivity, not unexpectedly, declined. Few works followed The Fun and Faith of William Billings, American. In 1977, the Goldman Band under Ainslee Cox premiered Autobiography for Band, a seven-movement work intended to characterize the composer's life to 1935. He completed a two-piano reduction of the Rachmaninoff Fourth Piano Concerto, Op. 40, at the request of the composer's widow (Harris, 1981). He also wrote the Carol Cantata, the first of two large works commissioned by the First Presbyterian Church of Orlando, Florida, for its one hundredth anniversary. The Easter Story followed in 1979.

On June 7, 1981, Bennett attended the twenty-fifth anniversary concert of the American Wind Symphony Orchestra in Pittsburgh, where he heard the first performances of his Christmas Overture and Fanfare. Later that summer, on August 18, Robert Russell Bennett died in his suite at the Warwick Hotel in New York. The cause of death was not reported.

During the last two decades of his life, Bennett received awards and tributes of many types from many sources. In addition to the Academy Award and the Emmy Award already mentioned, these included a Christopher Award in 1960; honorary membership in Kappa Kappa Psi (February 19, 1960); an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Franklin and Marshall College in 1965; the George Friderick Handel Medallion for contributions to cultural life from the City of New York in 1967; the Henry Hadley Medal for outstanding contributions to American music from

the National Association of American Composers and Conductors (of which Bennett was a founding member) in 1969; citations of achievement from Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia (1972), Kappa Kappa Psi (1976), and the City of Los Angeles (1979); and the Golden Score Award from the American Society of Music Arrangers in 1979.

Within a year of his death, two musical events were held in part to honor Bennett. Mentioned above was A Salute to America's Veterans, which featured a program exclusively devoted to compositions and arrangements by Bennett, performed by the United States Army Band at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., on November 10, 1981. In July of 1982, the Goldman Band presented a Grainger/Bennett Festival in memory of Bennett and to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of Percy Grainger's birth. This was a week-long event that featured performances of the composers' music, scholarly lectures by various experts, and personal reminiscences by individuals who had been acquainted with the two men.

Both composers would probably have been pleased to be included with the other for such an occasion. In a letter to Grainger (7/31/56), Bennett praised Grainger's music: "It never loses any of its young charm, and is obviously the unforced expression of a real poet." Grainger's reply (8/11/56) returned the compliment: "I always enjoyed every note of yours I have heard and am always electrified by your warmth, originality, skill and mastery."

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

To attempt a comprehensive evaluation of the work of Robert Russell Bennett would be premature. As an arranger, particularly in the genre of musical comedy, his reputation could hardly be more secure. Even those who criticized his original work frequently lauded his finesse as an orchestrator. His longevity in this arena and the status of the songwriters who sought out his talents virtually negate any potential erosion of his reputation in this field.

This is not to say, however, that further investigation into his output as an arranger is not warranted. First, it would be useful for some interested scholar to compile a comprehensive catalogue of Bennett's arrangements for the Broadway stage. Owing to the fact that Bennett did not sign the manuscripts of his arrangements, this presents no small challenge. Authenticity will have to be established through the laborious process of stylistic analysis, perhaps even comparing Bennett's orchestral procedures with those of his colleagues in the arranging business. Even procuring the manuscripts, some of which were written in the 1920s, will be a significant problem.

However, the problem may not be as insurmountable as it seems. Many of Bennett's theater orchestrations are in the possession of the Philadelphia National Bank, and (it is hoped) may be made available for study in the near future. Some of Bennett's account books, which are

fairly detailed, are included in his papers, and will provide helpful information to the investigator working on such a project. Another encouraging development is the recent discovery of many original manuscripts of Broadway musicals in the Warner Brothers warehouse in Secaucus, New Jersey. Some works in Bennett's hand are included, according to Tim Page of the New York Times (3/10/87, p. A1).

Although Bennett's reputation as an arranger is secure, his stature as a composer is in serious question. Despite some very positive critical reaction to a few of his works, the overall reaction of reviewers to his compositions was lukewarm, and more than a few critics were scathingly negative.

One must always be hesitant to accept contemporary opinion as the final word on the value of any composer's output. History is replete with examples of composers whose reputations have changed radically after their deaths--several times, in some cases. This is not to suggest that Robert Russell Bennett is likely to assume a place among the pantheon of master composers. However, before a more objective judgment can be made, his works will have to be evaluated from a historical distance. Before that can be accomplished, those works will have to be performed, listened to, and studied. Unfortunately, until the manuscripts in the possession of Bennett's estate are made more readily available for such purposes, this is unlikely to occur. While acknowledging the inconclusiveness of the current degree of understanding of Bennett as a composer, it is possible to make some preliminary suggestions upon which to muse as his music is evaluated.

Even the most perfunctory acquaintance with Bennett's original 9music reveals two important characteristics. First, he wrote music with incredible facility. This was true from his days as a student of Carl Busch, when it is said that he did his counterpoint exercises in ink on the first draft during breaks between playing accompaniments for silent films (Lowe, 1972), through his years in the theater and television when the rapidity with which he produced arrangements astonished all who knew of it. The volume of his compositional output alone is impressive, but when one considers the hours of music he arranged for radio, television, motion pictures, and the stage, it is entirely possible that Robert Russell Bennett wrote more music than anyone who ever lived.

Quantity, of course, is not to be confused with quality, and it may be that the ease with which he wrote music was more a curse than a blessing and that a more reflective creative process would have resulted in greater artistic accomplishments. Over the course of his life, Bennett's compositions were often criticized as being too obviously clever; or lacking coherence as a result of a profusion of themes juxtaposed, but rarely developed in a systematic way; and of being too closely akin to the music of Broadway to be taken seriously. The extent to which any of this is true may depend on one's view of the validity of Bennett's artistic aims.

This brings one to the second central characteristic of Bennett's music: it is obvious that he wanted above all else to communicate with the listener. His often-claimed "musical snobbery" notwithstanding, he

clearly sought to write music that the average person would enjoy hearing. Much--perhaps most--of his output is programmatic in nature, providing the audience with some extramusical reference to aid in relating to what is being heard. In terms of the content of the music itself, based on the small sample which the author has examined, it is true that Bennett's music is full of "catchy tunes," which are rarely developed in the fashion of traditional Western art music.

Can this music therefore be dismissed as second rate? Perhaps. However, absent an objective evaluation, one other possibility may be considered. Investigation of Bennett's music has prompted the author to reflect on a possible parallel between Bennett's work and that of his contemporary and fellow Missourian, painter Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975).

Benton's realistic depictions of American life, especially in the Midwest, were extremely popular during the 1930s. His style fell out of favor with the intelligentsia as the emphasis in the visual arts moved away from the representational during the later part of his life, but his work has regained stature in recent years. Whether or not Robert Russell Bennett deserves recognition as an artistic "populist" in the mold of Thomas Hart Benton, or whether the bulk of his work is relegated to a status of deserved neglect is an intriguing question. It is one that must be left to future generations to decide.

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[1]This entry is problematic, but it is retrievable and contains much useful information. Therefore, the author has decided to list it. The Kansas City Public Library, Missouri Valley Room, provided a photocopy of this article with the date typewritten on the original printed newspaper page from which the photocopy was made. However, the original article (which is untitled) is not in the cited newspaper on the date listed, and the author was unable to find it.

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Chicago Symphony Orchestra. April 11, 1963.

Columbia Concert Trio. 1953-54 season.

Goldman Band. July 16, 1969. ("The Musical Worlds of Robert Russell Bennett.")

Guggenheim Concert Band. July 20-23 and 25, 1982. ("Grainger-Bennett Festival.")

Hollywood Bowl Concerts. July 19, 1930.

Illinois Symphony Orchestra (of the Works Progress Administration). 1938-39 season.

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Stagebill, September 1981.

Kansas State Teachers College Symphonic Band. May 10, 1966.

Lewissohn Stadium Concerts. August 12, 1931.

Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. February 23-24, 1933.

Philadelphia Orchestra. October 23, 1931.

Philadelphia Orchestra. April 1-2, 1932.

Philadelphia Orchestra. January 10-11, 1942.

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. February 5 and 7, 1943.

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. December 30, 1960-January 1, 1961.

Playbill for Carmen Jones, Broadway Theatre, December 2, 1943.

Rochester Civic Orchestra/Eastman School Chorus. April 5, 1935.

United States Army Band. November 10, 1981. ("A Salute to America's Veterans.")

United States Military Academy Band. March 14-15, 1952.

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Robert Russell Bennett to Percy Grainger, July 31. 1956.

Percy Grainger to Robert Russell Bennett, August 11, 1956.

A. M. Bell to Robert Russell Bennett, June 3, 1966.

A. M. Bell to Robert Russell Bennett, July 12, 1966.

David Jackson to Robert Russell Bennett, October 17, 1966.

Rudolf Bing to Robert Russell Bennett, April 16, 1968.

John Gutman to Robert Russell Bennett, April 7, 1969.

Richard Franko Goldman to Robert Russell Bennett, April 16, 1969.

William Revelli to Robert Russell Bennett, October 16, 1969.

Eubie Blake to Robert Russell Bennett, June 19, 1970.

Robert Russell Bennett to Julius Rudel, February 19, 1971.

Robert Russell Bennett to Melbern Nixon, May 18, 1971.

William Steinberg to Robert Russell Bennett, January 13, 1972.

Robert Shaw to Robert Russell Bennett, March 23, 1972.

Nadia Boulanger to Robert Russell Bennett, July 4, 1972.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX: CATALOGUE OF THE ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS OF ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT

The entries in this appendix include only original musical works by Robert Russell Bennett. As Bennett often drew on preexisting musical material for his compositions, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between compositions and arrangements. The author has made such distinctions as best he could. Readers desiring information on Bennett's many arrangements should consult "Another Russell Bennett Notebook" by Gayle T. Harris, 3204 Sharon Chapel Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22310.

Each entry includes whatever information is available regarding title, medium, date of composition, premiere performance, publisher, and whereabouts of the manuscript which are known to the author. Abbreviations for locations of manuscripts (Ms) are:

AWWO:	The American Waterways Wind Orchestra, Pittsburgh, PA.
GBL:	The Goldman Band Library, University of Iowa Bands, Iowa City, Iowa
LC:	The Library of Congress, Music Division, Washington, DC
NYPL:	The New York Public Library, Special Collections, New York, NY
PNB:	The Philadelphia National Bank, Personal Trust Division, Philadelphia, PA
TUSMAB:	The United States Military Academy Band, West Point, NY
WSU:	The Washington State University Library, Manuscripts Department, Pullman, WA

In general, only those works have been included which are intended to be performed as independent works. Therefore, motion picture and television sound tracks have been omitted, but music orginally composed for radio presentation is included.

Availability for performance or study of unpublished works included herein varies greatly. Most works for wind orchestra are available on a rental basis through the C. F. Peters Corporation of New York. Other works are more difficult to obtain, especially those held in Bennett's estate by the Philadelphia National Bank. It is greatly to be hoped that steps will be taken to make these scores available to performers and scholars in the near future.

Bennett's compositions are presented as follows:

I. Dramatic Works
II. Works for Orchestra
III. Works for Band
IV. Works for Wind Orchestra
V. Other Instrumental Works
VI. Works for Chorus
VII. Works for Piano Solo
VIII. Songs
IX. Miscellaneous Works

I. DRAMATIC WORKS

Columbine
Ballet, chamber orchestra, ca. 1916.
Ms/PNB.

Crystal
Opera, 1972.

The Enchanted Kiss
Opera, 1945.
Libretto by Robert A. Simon, based on a story by O. Henry.
Premiere: December 30, 1945, Mutual Broadcasting System.

Endimion
"Operetta-Ballet a l'Antique," 1927.
Libretto by Bennett and Robert A. Simon, based on a poem by Bernard le Bovier de Fontanelle.
Premiere: April 5, 1935, Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY.

Hold Your Horses
Musical comedy, 1933.
Lyrics and music by Bennett, Robert Simon, Louis Alter, Arthur Swanstrom, Ben Oakland, and Owen Murphy.
Book by Russell Crouse and Carey Ford.
Premiere: September 25, 1933, Winter Garden, New York.

An Hour of Delusion
Opera in one act, ca. 1928.
Libretto by Arthur Train, Jr.
Ms/PNB.

Maria Malibran
Opera, 1935.
Libretto by Robert A. Simon.
Premiere: April 8, 1935, Juilliard School of Music, New York.
Ms/PBM (piano-vocal score).

Music Box Operas:
For Russell Bennett's Notebook, Mutual Broadcasting System, 1940-41.
1. My Darling Clementine (December 8, 1940)
2. The Man on the Flying Trapeze
3. The Band Played On
4. Kafoozalem (March 30, 1941)
5. My Old Kentucky Home

No. 1--Ms/PNB (score and parts).
Nos. 2, 4, 5--Ms/PNB (score only).

II. WORKS FOR ORCHESTRA

Abraham Lincoln: A Likeness in Symphonic Form
Orchestra, 1929.
Premiere: October 23, 1931, Philadelphia Orchestra.
Published by T. B. Harms, Co., 1931.
Ms/WSU.

Adagio Eroico ("to the memory of a soldier")
Orchestra, 1934.
Premiere: April 25, 1934, Philadelphia Orchestra.

An Adventure in High Fidelity
Orchestra, 1954.
Commercial recording, An Adventure in High Fidelity, RCA Victor, 1954.

Andante and Allegro
Violin and orchestra, 1944-45.
(Based on themes of Stephen Foster.)
Premiere: January 26, 1945, The Ford Hour.
Ms/PNB.

Ballade Moderne
Orchestra, 1922.

Charleston Rhapsody
Chamber orchestra, 1926.

Classic Serenade ("Portraits of Three Friends")
String orchestra, 1941.

A Commemoration Symphony
Orchestra, 1960.
Premiere: December 30, 1960, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.
Ms/PNB (photocopy).

Concert Variations on a Crooner's Theme for Violin and Orchestra
1949.
Premiere: November 30, 1949, Aaron Rosand, violin, with the Louisville Philharmonic Orchestra.
Ms/PNB.

Concerto for Cello, Harp and Orchestra
ca. 1940 (Transcription of Concerto for Viola and Harp, with Orchestra).
Premiere: July 7, 1960, The Naumburg Orchestra with Assunta Dell'Aquila and Daniel Vandersall, soloists, New York.
Ms/PNB.

Concerto for Harmonica and Orchestra
ca. 1971.
Ms/PNB (vellum master only).

Concerto for Viola and Harp, with Orchestra
ca. 1940.
Ms/PNB.

Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra
1963.
Premiere: March 18, 1963, Benno and Sylvia Rabinov with the Portland (OR) Symphony Orchestra.
Ms/PNB (vellum master only).

Concerto Grosso for Small Dance Band and Symphony Orchestra ("Sketches from the American Theatre")
1932.
Premiere: December 9, 1932, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

Concerto in B Minor for Piano and Orchestra
Date unknown.
Ms/PNB (vellum negative only).

Cowboy Overture
Orchestra, 1945 (for The Ford Hour).
Ms/PNB.

A Dry Weather Legend
Flute and orchestra, 1947.
Premiere: 1947, Knoxville Symphony Orchestra.
Ms/PNB (also, arrangement for flute and piano).

Early American Ballade (Fantasia on Melodies of Stephen Foster)
Early American Ballade on Themes of Stephen Foster
Chamber orchestra, 1932.

Eight Etudes for Orchestra
Symphony orchestra, 1938.
Premiere: July 17, 1938, CBS Symphony Orchestra.
Ms/PNB.

The Four Freedoms
Symphony orchestra, 1943.
Premiere: September 26, 1943, NBC Symphony on General Motors Symphony of the Air.
Ms/PNB (reduction for 2 pianos, 4 hands).

The Fun and Faith of William Billings, American
Orchestra and chorus, 1975.
Premiere: April 29, 1975, National Symphony Orchestra, Washington, DC.
Published by Chappel & Co., Inc., 1976.

The Grey Flute Song
Orchestra, 1940-41 (for Russell Bennett's Notebook).
Ms/PNB (orchestra parts only).

Guitar Concerto
No specific information available.

Hollywood
Scherzo, orchestra, 1936.
Premiere: November 13, 1936, NBC Orchestra.

Kansas City Album
Suite, orchestra, 1949.
Premiere: February 26, 1950, Kansas City Philharmonic.

A March for America
Orchestra, 1940-41 (for Russell Bennett's Notebook).
Ms/PNB.

Mill Potatoes
Orchestra, 1940 (for Russell Bennett's Notebook).

Nocturne and Appassionata
Piano and orchestra, 1941.
Premiere: late 1941, Milton Kaye with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Orchestral Fragments from Maria Malibran
Suite, orchestra, 1935.
Premiere: February 7, 1935, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

Overture for an Imaginary Drama
Orchestra, 1946.
Premiere: May 14, 1946, Toronto Symphony Orchestra.
Ms/PNB.

Overture to the Mississippi
Orchestra, ca. 1977.

Paysage ("Landscape")
Orchestra, 1928.
Premiere: December 15, 1933, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.
Ms/PNB.

Prayer--For a Boy and a Girl
Orchestra, 1945 (for The Ford Hour).

Railroad Cantata (on "Casey Jones")
Contralto and orchestra, ca. 1940-41.
Premiere: Russell Bennett's Notebook, Mutual Broadcasting System.
Ms/PNB.

Sights and Sounds
Suite, orchestra, 1928.
Premiere: December 13, 1928, Illinois Symphony Orchestra, Chicago.
Published by T. B. Harms, Inc., 1931.

Six Variations in Fox-Trot Time on a Theme of Jerome Kern
Chamber orchestra, 1933.
Premiere: December 3, 1933, New York Chamber Orchestra.
Ms/PNB.

Sixth Symphony
1948.

Sodom By the Sea
Orchestra, 1940-41 (for Russell Bennett's Notebook).

Suite for Clarinet and Orchestra
ca. 1940-41.
Premiere: Russell Bennett's Notebook, Mutual Broadcasting System.

Symphony ("On College Themes")
ca. 1941.

Symphony ("to Carl Busch")
ca. 1926.
Probably same work as Uke, for orchestra with four ukeleles.
Ms/PNB.

Symphony ("to Fritz Reiner")
Orchestra, 1963.
Premiere: April 11, 1963, Chicago Symphony Orchestra.
Ms/PNB (photocopy only)

Symphony in D for the Dodgers
Narrator and orchestra, 1941.
Premiere: August 3, 1941, Lewissohn Stadium Concerts, New York.
(May have been broadcast in June 1941.)

Theme and Variations (On "Father, Dear Father")
Orchestra, 1940-41 (for Russell Bennett's Notebook).
Ms/PNB.

Three Marches for Two Pianos and Orchestra
Premiere: July 19, 1930, Bennett and Oscar Levant, pianos, with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra.
Ms/PNB.

Uke--See Symphony ("to Carl Busch")

Variations on "I Got Rhythm"
Orchestra(?), ca. 1930.

Violin Concerto in A ("in the popular style")
Premiere: December 26, 1941, NBC Radio Network.
Ms/PNB.

Vocal Variations
Mezzosoprano, baritone, and orchestra, 1940-41(?).
Ms/PNB.

III. WORKS FOR BAND

Autobiography for Band
Concert band, 1977.
Premiere: 1977, Goldman Band, New York.
Published by G. Schirmer, 1979.

Born of the Navy
Concert band, 1975.
Recorded November 24, 1975, United States Navy Band, Washington, DC.

Choral Overture
Men's chorus and concert band, 1952.
Text by Robert Russell Bennett.
Premiere: March 14, 1953, United States Military Academy Band and Cadet Glee Club, West Point, NY.

Dartmouth Overture
Concert band, 1966.
Premiere: April 17, 1966. Dartmouth College Band, Hanover, NH.

Down to the Sea in Ships
Suite, concert band, 1968.
Premiere: July 16, 1969, Goldman Band, New York.
Published by W-7 Music Corp., 1969.

The Fabulous Country
March, concert band, 1974.
Published by W. B. Music Corp., 1975.

Four Preludes
Concert band, 1974.
Premiere: July 1974, Goldman Band, New York.
Published by Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 1974.

Jazz? (New York--Jazz?)
Variations, concert band, 1969.
Premiere: July 16, 1969, Goldman Band, New York.
Ms/PNB (vellum master only).

Lagoon of Nations:
Concert band (for the New York World's Fair, 1939).
Call to the Nations
Fountain Lake Fanfare
From Clay to Steel
Garden of Eden

The Hunt
Postlude
Spirit of George Washington
Story of Three Flowers
The World and the Cathedral

Mademoiselle ("A Ballet for Band")
Concert band, 1952.
Premiere: June 18, 1952, Goldman Band, New York.
Ms/TUSMAB.

March of Might
Concert band, 1955.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1955.

New York--Jazz?--See Jazz?

Rose Variations
Solo cornet or trumpet and concert band, 1955.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1956.
Arrangement for cornet or trumpet and piano published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1956.

S.S. Eagle March
Concert band.

The Soap Box Derby March
Band, 1966.
Premiere: August 6, 1966, combined bands from eight Akron, Ohio, high schools, Akron.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1966.

Suite of Old American Dances
Concert band, 1948-49.
Premiere: June 6, 1949, Goldman Band, New York.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1952.

Symphonic Songs for Band
Concert band, 1957.
Premiere: August 24, 1957, Kappa Kappa Psi/Tau Beta Sigma Intercollegiate Band, Salt Lake City.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1958.

A TNT Cocktail
Concert band.
Ms/GBL.

Track Meet
Concert band, 1961.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1961.
Ms/LC.

IV. WORKS FOR WIND ORCHESTRA

A Christmas Overture
Wind orchestra, 1981.
Premiere: June 7, 1981, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Concerto Grosso for Wind Quintet and Wind Orchestra
1958
Premiere: July 6, 1958, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Fanfare (for the American Wind Symphony Orchestra)
Wind orchestra, 1981.
Premiere: June 7, 1981, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

A Florida Nocturne
Hamonica and wind orchestra, 1970-1981(?).
Ms/PNB (vellum master only).

Kentucky
Wind orchestra, 1965.
Premiere: June 13, 1965, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Ohio River Suite
Wind orchestra, 1959.
Premiere: July 8, 1959, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Overture and The Pickle (from The Pickle Suite)
Wind orchestra, 1969.
Premiere: June 14, 1969, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Overture to Ty, Tris and Willie
Wind orchestra, 1961.
Premiere: June 15, 1961, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Song of the Rivers
Wind orchestra, 1961.
Premiere: June 15, 1961, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Three Humoresques
Wind orchestra, 1961.
Premiere: June 15, 1961, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

Twain and the River
Wind orchestra, 1968.
Premiere: June 22, 1968, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

West Virginia Epic
Wind orchestra, 1963.
Premiere: June 6, 1963, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Fairmont, WV.
Ms/AWWO.

Zimmer's American Greeting
Wind orchestra, 1974.
Premiere: May 26, 1974, American Wind Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh.
Ms/AWWO.

V. OTHER INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

Arabesque
Brass quintet.
Ms/PNB (vellum master only).

At Sundown (Romance)
Violin and piano, 1913.
Published by Theodore Presser Co., November 17, 1913.

Clarinet Quartet
ca. 1922.
Ms/PNB.

Dance
Flute and piano, ca. 1922.
Ms/PNB.

Dance Scherzoso
Woodwind quintet, 1940-41.
Premiere: Russell Bennett's Notebook, Mutual Broadcasting System.

Five Improvisations for Flute, Cello and Piano
No specific information available.

Five Tune Cartoons
Violin and piano, 1949.
Premiere: February 27, 1949, Marc Brown, violinist, New York.

A Flute at Dusk
Flute unaccompanied, 1952.
Premiere(?): October 25, 1953, Paul Renzi, Jr., New York.

Four Dances for Piano Trio
Piano, violin, cello, 1953.

Four Nocturnes
Accordion solo, 1959.
Premiere: November 21, 1959, Carmen Carozza, New York.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1960.

Hexapoda: Five Studies in Jitteroptera
Violin and piano, 1940.
Premiere: October 30, 1940, by Jascha Heifetz and Emanuel Bay, New York.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1941.

Nocturne
Flute and piano, 1953.
Premiere: October 3, 1953, Lamar Stringfeld, flute, Jean Robinson Callaghan, piano, Washington, DC.
Ms/PNB.

Pianoforte Trio in F, Op. 1
Violin, cello, and piano.
Two movements. July 7-December 22, 1915.
Ms/PNB.

Quintet (Psychiatry)
Accordion and string quartet, 1963.
Premiere: April 21, 1963, Ivan Cochrane, accordion; Hugh Brown and Helen Hollander, violins; Lucinda Gladics, viola; Catherine Farley, cello.

Rhythm Serenade
Snare drum, 1968.
Published in Studies in Solo Percussion (Goldenberg, ed. Satz), Chappell & Co., Inc., 1968.

Rondo Capriccioso
Four flutes, ca. 1916.
Published by the New York Flute Club, 1922. Revised ed., Chappell & Co., Inc., June 16, 1922.
Ms/LC.

Second Sonatina
Piano solo, 1944.
Premiere: late 1944, Jacob Gimpel, pianist.
Ms/PNB.

Seven Postcards to Old Friends
Flute, viola, and piano, 1966.
Ms/PNB.

Six Souvenirs
Two flutes and piano, 1948(?).
Ms/PNB.

Sonata in G
Organ, 1928.
Published by Cos Cobb Press, Inc., 1934.
Ms/PNB.

Sonatina for Flute, Harp and Cello
1961.
Premiere: February 6, 1961, New York Concert Trio, Bloomfield Hills, MI.

A Song Sonata
Violin and piano, 1956.
Ms/PNB.

String Quartet
1956.
Premiere: November 19, 1956, Guilet String Quartet, New York.
Ms/PNB (vellum negative only).

Suite
Flute and clarinet, 1973.
Premiere(?): July 8, 1973, William Menkin, clarinet; Richard Hawkins, piano; Palo Alto, CA.
Published by W. B. Music Corp., 1973.

A Toy Symphony
Woodwind quintet, ca. 1928.
Premiere: 1932, Philadelphia.

Violin Sonata
Violin and piano, 1927.
Premiere: 1927 or 1928, Paris.

Water Music
String quartet, 1945.
Premiere: May 12, 1945, New York.
Ms/PNB (parts only).

VI. WORKS FOR CHORUS

Aux Quatre Coins de Paris
Women's chorus, ca. 1930.
Ms/NYPL.

Carol Cantata
Chorus with orchestra or piano, 1977.
Premiere: December 24, 1977, First Presbyterian Church, Orlando, FL.
Published by Lawson-Gould Music Publishers, Inc., 1977.

Crazy Cantata ("Three Blind Mice")
Contralto and baritone with chorus, ca. 1947.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1947.

Crazy Cantata No. 2 ("I Took a Spanish Lesson")
Mixed chorus with piano and percussion.
Ms/PNB (photocopy).

The Easter Story
Mixed chorus with orchestra or piano, 1979.
Premiere: Date unknown, First Presbyterian Church, Orlando, FL.
Published by Lawson-Gould Music Publishers, Inc., 1979.

Nietzsche Variations
Women's chorus, ca. 1929.

Theme and Variations in the Form of a Ballade About a Lorelei
Women's chorus with piano, ca. 1929.
Ms/PNB.

United Nations All Faith Prayer for Peace
Mixed chorus, solo voice, and piano, 1953.
Text by John Golden.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1953.

VII. WORKS FOR PIANO SOLO

A Belasco Sonata for the Piano ("Christmastide of 1917 at Oaksmere")
Piano solo, November 15, 1917.
Written in collaboration with David Belasco and Winifred Merrill.
Inscribed: "to the Oaksmere girls, November 15, 1917."
Ms/NYPL.

Celebration Festive ("Danse Joyeuse for Piano Solo")
Piano solo, ca. 1916.
Ms/PNB.

A Dream Is Wings
Piano solo, ca. 1915.
May have been intended as fourth movement of a longer work.
Ms/PNB.

Echoes of Palermo (Serenade-Romance)
Piano solo.
Appeared in The Etude, 33/9, September 1913, p. 692.
Published by Theodore Presser Co., October 13, 1913.

A Fleeting Fancy
Piano solo, ca. 1915.
Ms/PNB.

Impromptu
Piano solo, 1965.
Ms/Carol Jame Rapp Pittman, 5220 Agnes Avenue, N. Hollywood, CA 91607.

June Twilight (Reverie)
Piano solo, 1913.
Appeared in The Etude, 33/7, July 1913, p. 500.
Published by Theodore Presser Co., July 12, 1913.

Melody
Piano solo, ca. 1915.
Ms/PNB.

Nocturne
Piano solo, appears to be dated April 28, 1911.
Ms/PNB.

The Oaksmere Spirit (March)
Piano solo, ca. 1917.
Ms/PNB.

Seven Fox Trots
Piano solo, ca. 1928.
Ms/PNB.

Sonata (Ragtime)
Piano solo, 1974.
Ms/PNB (vellum master only).

Spirit of the Dance
Piano solo, 1914.
Inscribed: "For Mlle. Anna Pavlova's Dance Music Contest, July 29, 1914."
Ms/PNB.

Spring Spirits
Piano solo, ca. 1915.
Ms/PNB.

Tema Sporca con Variazioni
Piano solo.

Travel Sketches
Piano solo, ca. 1916.
Ms/PNB.

Vu ("Seen in Paris--twenty etudes en miniature pour piano")
Piano solo, ca. 1928.
Published by Publications Raoul Breton & Co., Paris, 1934.

Water-Mirror
Piano solo, ca. 1917.
Written in collaboration with Louise Edgerton Merrill.
Inscribed: "with apologies to Percy Grainger, et al."
Ms/PNB.

Wildwood (Scherzo for Piano)
Piano solo, ca. 1915.
Ms/PNB.

VIII. SONGS

The Bartender
Solo voice and piano, date unknown.
Text by Bennett(?).
Ms/PNB.

Four Songs from Lyrics by Sara Teasdale
High voice and piano, ca. 1929.
Ms/PNB.

My Garden
Voice and piano, ca. 1920.
Ms/PNB.

Kisselberry Pie
1956.
Text by Harold Orlob.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1956.

My Star
Voice and piano, ca. 1920.
Text by Robert Browning.
Ms/PNB.

Romance
High voice and piano, 1917.
Text by John Maroney, Jr.
Ms/PNB.

Seven Love Songs with Ukelele
Voice and ukelele, ca. 1930.
Published by T. B. Harms, Inc., 1931.

Sonatine for Soprano and Harp
1947(?).
Ms/PNB.

Sonnet 111
Voice and piano, ca. 1920.
Text by William Shakespeare.
Ms/PNB.

Sue Ann
Voice and piano, 1942.
Published by Chappell & Co., Inc., 1942.

Three Songs from Chaucer ("Merciles Beaute")
High voice and string quartet, 1926.
Premiere(?): December 18, 1930, Women's University Glee Club, New York.
Ms/PNB.

Wings of Man Theme
1970.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

Dance Sonata
No specific information available.

Fugues de l'ecole
Five- and six-part fugues on subjects of Cherubini and Marcello, ca. 1915.
Ms/PNB.

Hamlet
Medium unknown, 1922.
Incidental music for a play by William Shakespeare.
Opened November 16, 1922, Sam H. Harris Theatre, New York.

Theme and Variations ("My Lost Youth")
Medium unknown, ca. 1940-41.
Premiere: Russell Bennett's Notebook, Mutual Broadcasting System.

The Wedding Sextet
Oboe, alto saxophone, and four solo voices, 1940-41.
For Russell Bennett's Notebook.
Ms/PNB.