

The background of the cover is a light yellow-green color with several stylized leaf motifs scattered across it. Each motif consists of a short stem with two leaves pointing upwards and to the right. The motifs are rendered in a slightly darker shade of the background color.

HENRY F. GILBERT

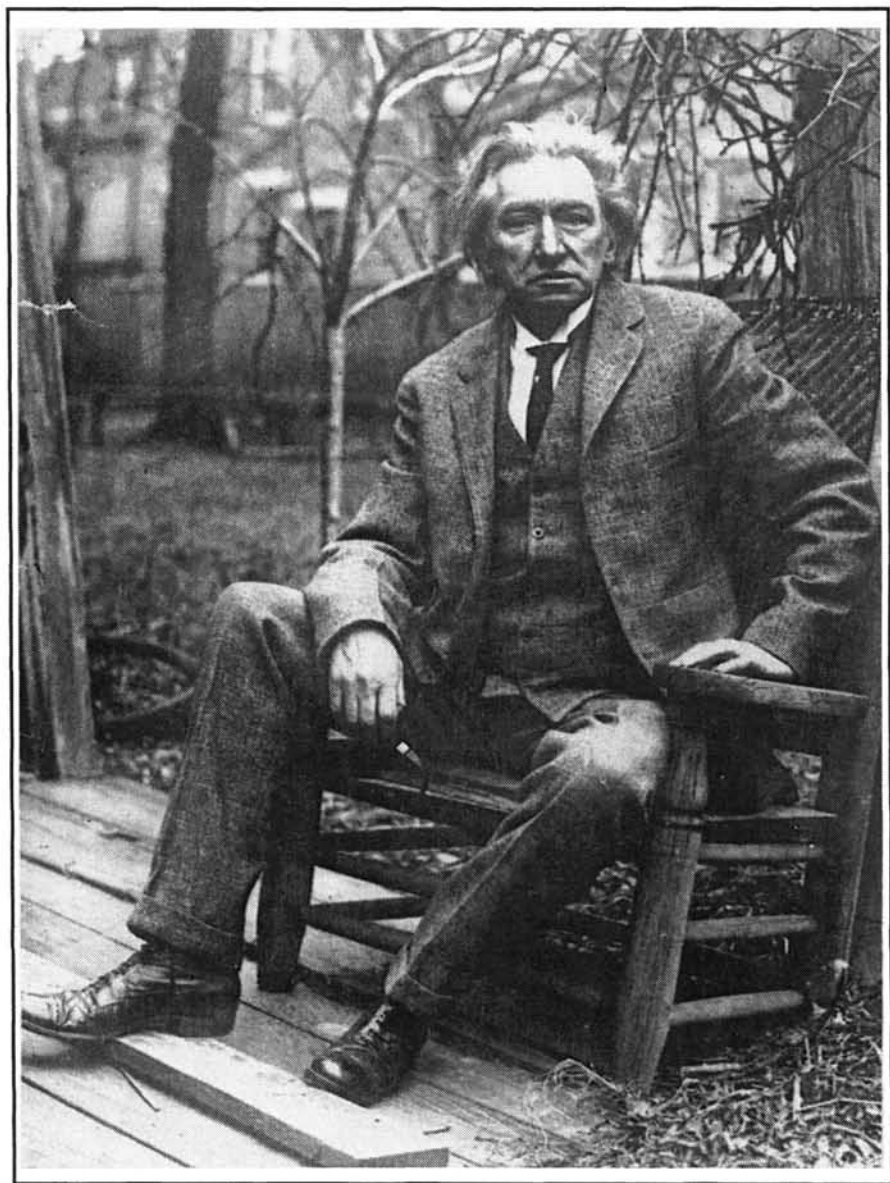
A Bio-Bibliography

Sherrill V. Martin

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Henry F. Gilbert

A Bio-Bibliography

Sherrill V. Martin

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*Dedicated in loving memory to my parents,
Jewell and "Chummie" Martin*

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Preface

This volume is divided into six main sections: (1) Biography; (2) Works and Performances; (3) Discography; (4) General Bibliography; (5) Bibliography of Gilbert's Writings; and (6) Bibliography of Works and Performances. Also included are three appendices: (I) Alphabetical Listing of Compositions; (II) Gilbert's Sketchbooks; and (III) Music by Others Arranged by Gilbert. An Index concludes the book.

The Biography section includes a sketch of Gilbert's life and career, presented in chronological order, with a brief discussion of his most important works, and his importance in establishing an American school of composition. This section concludes with a hypothesis for his not retaining the renown that he received during his lifetime.

In the Works and Performances section, compositions are arranged first by genre (Orchestral Music, Operas and Incidental Music, Band, Chamber and Instrumental, Voice and Piano, Voice and Orchestra, Choral Works, and Keyboard), and then alphabetically within each category. For "Works and Performances," the mnemonic "W", followed by sequential numbers, designates compositions. Information for each composition includes: the name of the work; the publisher and date, when appropriate; the revisions of the work; the names of the compositions or movements within the work; the scoring for the composition; cross references to Gilbert's program notes and reviews; the holding library; and references to arrangements of the work by Gilbert. A listing of premieres and other performances, including the location, conductor, orchestra, and any other pertinent information follows. "W", plus successive lowercase letters, identifies performances of each work.

The Discography ("D") lists all recordings of Gilbert's compositions in alphabetical order. The title, the performing orchestra, the conductor, the length of the composition, and the label name and number are given. In addition, the names of other composers and their compositions represented on the recording are listed.

The General Bibliography section consists of writings about Gilbert and his career. Each entry is preceded by a "B" number and includes a brief annotation.

An annotated Bibliography of Writings by Gilbert summarizes his philosophy of American music, and illuminates his own compositional style. Included in this section are letters, drafts of articles, and copies of publications. The mnemonic "BG" precedes each citation.

The Bibliography of Works and Performances ("BW") is divided into the following genres: Orchestral Music, Chamber and Instrumental, Voice and Piano, Voice and Orchestra, Choral Works, and Keyboard. Each includes a brief annotation.

It is my hope that this volume will be a useful tool for scholars and American enthusiasts, providing the stimulus to explore the music, publications, and lectures of this presently neglected composer, who contributed so much to the creation of "American" music.

Acknowledgments

A most remarkable event occurred in 1988, when, as a participant at an NEH Seminar (on jazz) at Yale, Kendall Crilley, Yale's Andrew W. Mellon Music Librarian, introduced me to the significance of the major, but neglected, American composer, Henry F. Gilbert, whose Papers are in the Irving S. Gilmore Music Library. Mr. Crilley's generosity with information, and his willingness to grant me access to the Henry F. Gilbert Papers inspired me to devote many thousands of hours over the next decade-and-a-half, searching for insights into Mr. Gilbert's rare contributions to the establishment of an American school of composition.

The bulk of the Papers consists of six gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Philip C. Horton (Gilbert's daughter and her husband), including music holographs, manuscripts, published music of Gilbert and others, correspondence, notebooks, sketches, financial and legal items, scrapbooks, musical games, pamphlets, programs, photographs, published books and music from his library, a suitcase, a violin case, and two portraits. The "Register to the Henry Gilbert Papers," compiled by Adrienne Nesnow in 1983, has proven invaluable.

A rare discovery was the interview by Caitriona Bolster, December 31, 1976, with Isolde Gilbert Horton. This interview is a part of the Major Figures in American Music, Oral History, American Music, Yale University, Vivian Perlis, Director.

Wayne Shirley, music specialist at the Library of Congress, not only allowed me access to the manuscripts and letters of Gilbert and his family, but also very generously referred me to manuscripts and letters pertaining to Gilbert from numerous other composers.

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington graciously provided me with financial and professional support: a 1994 Charles L. Cahill Award for Faculty Research and Development; a Faculty Reassignment Award for four months of Gilbert research in 1996; a 1996 Summer Initiative; and a 1997 Charles L. Cahill Award.

My colleagues and students at UNCW have been extremely helpful, especially Jo Ann Seiple, Dean, School of Arts and Sciences; Frank Bongiorno, Chair, Department of Music; Steven Errante, who not only created the Czech character font "ř" for me, but rescued me when my limited computer efforts went awry; Barbara Furr, piano teacher extraordinaire; and Barbara Nicely, who was always ready to lend a helping hand. And my students—what can I say, except that they are absolutely the very best!

I also have the highest respect for the librarians at the Randall Library, University of North Carolina at Wilmington. The expertise, willingness, and ability of Louise Jackson, Sue Cody, Arlene Hanerfeld, and the Interlibrary Loan librarians and staff, made this project possible.

In addition, other colleagues and scholars have been a constant support, extending sympathetic ears and inexhaustible patience. George Keck, Professor of Music, Ouachita University, not only introduced me to Greenwood Press when we edited *Feel the Spirit* (Greenwood, 1988), but similarly encouraged my Gilbert research. His invaluable *Francis Poulenc: A Bio-Bibliography* (Greenwood, 1990) has served as a launching pad for my own project.

Carole Fink, Professor of History, Ohio State University, deserves special thanks: she not only proof-read my manuscript, but her dedication, professionalism, and guidance encouraged me throughout.

Many friends, extended family, and neighbors have been sources of inspiration, and have certainly made my life much fuller: Virginia Martin Howard; James and Elsie Pollock; Paul and Mona Faye Black; Sean, Mona, and Adrian Jones; Peter and Gaile Zack; Bruce DesChamps; Sandy Errante; John Stike; Mattie Gillispie; Naomi Farr; Hilda Lewis; Yvonne Thomason; Marie Sammons; Dagny Barbara; Miriam Warshauer; Margerite Chance; and Victoria McLamb. The doctors, nurses, and staff at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida, as well as medical professionals in Wilmington, North Carolina, certainly contributed to making the completion of this project a reality.

My family deserves special thanks for their patience, indulgence, understanding, and humor throughout this project, especially Roger and Nancy Martin; Jeff Martin; Karen, Ricky, and Nicholas LeCroy; and my 94-year-“young” aunt, Ruth Pelland.

I also wish to thank the members of the Greenwood Publishing staff, including Don Hixon, Alicia Merritt, Elizabeth Potenza, Marcia Goldstein, and Nina Duprey. What a pleasure it has been to work with them.

List of Abbreviations

An instrumental shorthand indicates woodwind and brass parts in the following manner: 3.2.2.2/4.2.3.1. The first group of numerals indicates the number of flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons respectively. After the slash, the second group of numerals indicates the number of horns, trumpets, trombones, and tubas. Instruments other than those in the woodwind and brass sections are listed separately. Abbreviations are often used.

bsn: bassoon
c: contra
cb: contrabass
cl: clarinet
dr: drums
fl: flute
glocken: glockenspiel
gtr: guitar
hn: horn
hp: harp
hpd: harpsichord
ob: oboe

org: organ
perc: percussion
pf: piano
pic: piccolo
sax: saxophone
str: strings
tbn: trombone
timp: timpani
tpt: trumpet
vcl: violoncello
vla: viola
vln: violin

AM: Autograph manuscript
Arr., arr.: Arranged, arrangement
m., mm.: measure(s)
mvmt.: movement
Ms., MSS: Manuscript(s)

n.d.: no date
n.s.: no source
n.y.: no year
p., pp.: page(s)

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Biography

Plain clarity is better than ornate obscurity.
—Mark Twain

Nationalism in music was one of the great issues of the nineteenth century. In country after country in Europe, critics trained in aesthetics debated whether classical music should reflect the character of a national or ethnic group. Until the very end of the century, such matters were of little concern to American composers, who were convinced that the Germanic style was the only basis for successful composition. Ironically, it was a foreigner, Antonín Dvořák, who raised their consciousness by using American idioms in his compositions. Arriving in New York on September 27, 1892, Dvořák immediately issued a challenge to the composers of the New World to create a national school of composition. Henry F. Gilbert was among the first to respond.¹

In many respects, Henry Franklin Belknap Gilbert, often called the "Mark Twain of American Music,"² is the most quintessentially American of our nationalistic composers in spirit, personality, and in his compositions.³ Certainly he was one of American music's plain, rock-salty nonconformists—a maverick who became a true prophet of American music as a composer, writer, editor, and lecturer.⁴

¹ Antonín Dvořák, "Music in America," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (February 1895): 429-434.

² E. C. Ranck and H. K. Moderwell, "Henry Gilbert: Unusual Composer," *Boston Transcript*, April 25, 1914, Part II, 6:1-4.

³ R. D. Darrell, Liner notes for New World Records 228, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Calvin Simmons, conductor.

⁴ Olin Downes, "Henry Gilbert: Nonconformist," *A Birthday Offering to Carl Engel*, ed. G. Reese (New York: G. Schirmer, 1943), 88-94.

Gilbert dedicated himself to stimulating an interest in folk songs as expressive of the spirit of America. He believed that:

Insofar as the music of the individual composer is truly great, it will be found to have drawn its deepest inspirations from that spirit of the Folk which gave birth to the folk songs, and to bear a deep and fundamental relationship to the latter. . . . For it is the function of Genius to contribute to the growth of that folk-spirit from which it sprang, that the Folk may ever rise to broader horizons of power and beauty.⁵

American folk songs, and in particular African-American folk music, proved to be a great source of inspiration for Gilbert. He studied the rhythms and incorporated them into melodies of his own: he welded scraps of these tunes into workable themes, and used entire melodies,⁶ "because that music seemed closely related to the spirit of all America."⁷ Apparently this interest in folk music was cultivated at a very early age.

Henry was born at the residence of his grandparents, Henry Yend and Mary Bailey Gilson,⁸ 15 Monroe Street, Somerville, Massachusetts, on September 26, 1868.⁹ Descended from an old, New England family, his ancestor, Humphrey Gilbert, had settled in Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1640; on his maternal side, the first member, William G. Gilson, arrived from England and settled in Scituate, Massachusetts, in 1631. Other significant ancestors included Lieutenant Ezekiel Belknap, a hero in the Revolutionary War,¹⁰ and Benjamin Franklin, the great American patriot.¹¹ James L. Gilbert, Henry's uncle, was a composer, and John Gilbert, the actor, was a cousin.¹²

⁵ Henry F. Gilbert, "Preface," *One Hundred Folk Songs from Many Countries* (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1910).

⁶ H. G. Sear, "Henry Franklin Belknap Gilbert," *Music Review* V (November 1944): 251.

⁷ Elliott Carter, "American Figure, with Landscape," *Modern Music* 20 (May-June 1943): 219-225.

⁸ Isolde Gilbert Horton, his daughter, said that he was born in the house at this address, but that it belonged to his Aunt Mary Ellen Gilson, Henry Y.'s daughter. Interview with Isolde Gilbert Horton, December 31, 1987. Major Figures in American Music, Oral History, American Music, Yale University, Interviewer: Caitriona Bolster.

⁹ Katherine E. Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert, His Life and Works." (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1968), 3-4.

¹⁰ Isaac Goldberg, "An American Composer," *American Mercury* 15 (November 1928): 331-335.

¹¹ Horton, Interview.

¹² Goldberg, "An American Composer," 331-334.

Henry Y. Gilson, Henry F. Gilbert's grandfather, became very prosperous as a music publisher and eventually founded the Stanhope Press. Although Henry Gilbert lived a life of modest means in comparison to his grandfather, he does seem to have shared a number of interests with him: a love of nature, music, and botany, and both were apparently total individualists.¹³

Gilbert's father, Benjamin Franklin Gilbert, a banker by profession, was also a composer, organist, singer, and artist. A champion of Richard Wagner, he was one of the first Americans to recognize his significance.¹⁴ His mother, Therese Angeline Gilson, a renowned soprano, frequently appeared as a professional soprano soloist in New England concerts. She was selected as one of "The Bouquet of Artists" for the World's Peace Jubilee, International Musical Festival, held in Boston, June 17-28, 1872.¹⁵ She was also equally gifted as an artist. After an exhibition of her paintings, a critic for a New Hampshire newspaper wrote:

She had 75 handsome samples of watercolor painting and 33 of China decorations all executed by her own hands. They were handsome and some of them very costly. Mrs. Gilbert is a painter of rare ability and has studied with the best and most famous painters in the country. She studied under Leavitt, the flower artist, and Berckott, the China decorator, two of the most famous artists in the United States.¹⁶

Other Somerville, Massachusetts, reporters praised both Henry and his mother in the local paper. After complimenting Mrs. Gilbert on the outstanding quality of her paintings, "especially her floral and fruit pieces," the reviewer writes that "another attractive feature of the exhibition is the display of rare specimens of butterflies from all over the world. . . . This is the work of Henry F. Gilbert, and the unique and beautiful collection was the subject of much favorable comment at the recent world's food fair, where it was on exhibition."¹⁷

¹³ Beatrice Gilson Slocombe, "The Gilson Family." Unpublished, Cambridge, Mass. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 71/7).

¹⁴ "Obituary of Benjamin Franklin Gilbert," *Boston Herald*, February 7, 1894, 7.

¹⁵ E. Tourjée, Letter to Mrs. B. F. Gilbert, n.d. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 37/169-70).

¹⁶ "Fine Exhibition," Derry, New Hampshire. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Scrapbook I:92).

¹⁷ "Notable Exhibition of Oil Paintings," Somerville, Mass., n.d. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 37/169-70).

When Gilbert was ten years old, he was taken to hear Ole Bull, the famous Norwegian violinist, in concert. Gilbert was so touched by his playing, as well as the compositions that he played, many of them folk songs, that he determined to become a violinist. Since the family could not afford to buy a violin, his father¹⁸ constructed one for Gilbert out of a cigar box and boards: Gilbert then proceeded to teach himself to play. As he grew more adept at playing the violin, he and other friends, primarily the future conductor/composer/violinist Henry Hadley, arranged musical evenings either at Gilbert's house¹⁹ in Cambridge, or Hadley's house in Somerville.²⁰ Gilbert was a member of a string quartet, composed of Henry Hadley, first violin; Gilbert, second violin; Henry Hadley, Sr., viola; and Frank Porter or Arthur Hadley, cello.²¹

Gilbert decided when he was just a teenager that he wanted to be a composer. By the time he was sixteen, he was playing professionally in theatre and dance orchestras in order to finance his career.²² Among his "dance fiddler" experiences, he played once a month for a dancing party in an asylum in Eastern Massachusetts. During one performance, he confused a doctor for a patient.²³

Summer jobs included playing for hotels in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Florida for the entire season. In a letter to his father from Onset Bay, Massachusetts, July 17, 1888, he lists his playing schedule, and mentions his acquaintance with Mrs. Emma Stowe, a friend of many musicians, who would profoundly affect his future as a composer:

We play 3 times a day; about 3/4 of an hour before dinner; about 3/4 hour before supper; and about 1 hour in the evening.

I go over to Mrs. Stowe's cottage about twice a week and we have fine times playing together. I was over there the other day and she played the music to the last scene in "Tristan und Isolde," the love music in "Die Walküre" and a long selection from "Die Meistersinger" all from memory. Then we played the Prize Song ("Die Meistersinger") together. . . . She has been to Bayreuth

¹⁸ Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert," 5-6. Some sources list either his grandfather or his uncle as the violinmaker.

¹⁹ Please see Appendix III for a list of Gilbert's arrangements that were played during these musical evenings.

²⁰ Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert," 5-6.

²¹ Herbert R. Boardman, *Henry Hadley* (Atlanta: Emory University, Banner Press, 1932), 26.

²² Daniel Harper MacKay, "The Music of Henry F. Gilbert." Unpublished Honors Thesis, Department of Music, Harvard University, April 6, 1942, 5.

²³ Henry F. Gilbert, "A Chapter of Reminiscence," presentation for Men's Club, Redding Ridge, Conn.; printed, *New Music Review* XX (January 1921): Part I, 54-57; (February 1921): Part II, 91-94.

and seen the Wagner performance there and she was acquainted with Liszt. So you see what a valuable acquaintance she is to me.²⁴

In a later letter to his parents from Onset Bay, he speaks of his frustration in having to hear and play "miserable dance music," and of Mrs. Stowe's continuing influence:

I am having a pretty good time but I should like to get back to the city and hear some good music. If it was not for Mrs. Stowe I should be musically starved. . . . Mrs. Stowe says I ought to live in New York. She says she would do all she could to get me acquainted with Walter Damrosch and all the big folk. She seems to be acquainted with everybody from Wagner down. . . . She has the contempt for America and Americans that I have and agrees with me in what I say about them.²⁵

Gilbert, largely self-taught, did study harmony with George Henry Howard and piano with George Eldrige Whiting at the New England Conservatory of Music in 1886-87. In addition, he studied violin privately with Emil Mollenhauer, a well-known musician, but discontinued his studies when his interests shifted to composition.²⁶ He credited Mrs. Stowe with introducing him to the famous American composer, Edward MacDowell, a family friend of hers. Gilbert consequently became MacDowell's first composition and orchestration student in 1889 after MacDowell came back to America from his European successes. Gilbert paints a vivid portrait of the composer:

A true tone poet whose muse was both rugged and delicate: a brilliant mind, richly stored with tender and poetic images: and a charming, kindly and genial man, bubbling over with humor and life. *Ave atque vale.*²⁷

Gilbert and MacDowell admired many of the same composers and writers, including Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Edvard Grieg, William Butler Yeats, and Maurice Maeterlinck, and both were enthusiastic about folk music. In fact, Gilbert selected the themes for MacDowell's *Indian Suite*, op. 48, from Theodore Baker's thesis, *On the Music of the North American Indians*.²⁸

²⁴ Henry F. Gilbert, Letter to Benjamin Gilbert, from Onset Bay, Mass., July 17, 1888. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 28).

²⁵ Henry F. Gilbert, Letter to Benjamin and Therese Gilbert, from Hotel Onset, Onset Bay, Mass., n.d. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 28).

²⁶ Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert," 8.

²⁷ Henry F. Gilbert, "Personal Recollections of Edward MacDowell," *New Music Review* XI (November 1912): 494-498.

²⁸ Theodore Baker, *Über die Musik der Nordamerikanischen Wilden* (Leipzig: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1882).

Gilbert's lessons with MacDowell were apparently very beneficial for, on May 13, 1891, he completed his first composition, "A Lovely Fir Tree." The work, written for piano, is untitled but has Heine's poem as an inscription.²⁹ He began a number of other compositions, but was forced to discontinue lessons with MacDowell in 1892 for financial reasons.³⁰ He did, however, later spend eight summers, between 1912 and 1926, at the MacDowell Colony for American composers in Peterborough, New Hampshire.

Earning his living in theatre and dance orchestras had proven so musically destructive to Gilbert that he determined this an unsatisfactory means of support.³¹ For the next ten years, he became "a real-estate agent; a foreman in a factory; a worker in music lithographing establishments; a collector of butterflies, with an Arab for a companion, in Florida; and a raiser of silk-worms."³²

The year 1893 found Gilbert at the World's Fair, employed as a bread-and-pie cutter in a restaurant.³³ He filled his notebooks by taking down the hundreds of folk songs of the people who pitched their tents on the Midway Plaisance.³⁴ According to a letter to his father:

I have spent most of my time this last week studying the music exhibits here. The Bohemians have been very kind as they have placed a beautiful grand piano and hundreds of dollars worth of music at my disposal. The Russians have also opened their case of music for me several times. I was talking with a Russian gentleman the other day about the Russian music, especially the compositions of Rimsky-Korsakov. We exchanged cards. His read "Prince de Senetrin."³⁵

Gilbert was so enthralled by this prince's stories of Rimsky-Korsakov, Modest Moussorgsky, and the new type of music they were writing, that he and Professor Josiah D. Whitney of Harvard University organized a series of concerts to familiarize their friends and themselves with Slavic nationalist music.³⁶ Gilbert subsequently became recognized as one of the first American

²⁹ See: W201.

³⁰ Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert," 11.

³¹ MacKay, "The Music of Henry F. Gilbert," 5.

³² Olin Downes, "An American Composer," *Musical Quarterly* 4 (January 1918): 23-36.

³³ Olin Downes, "Composer and Bread-and-Pie Cutter," *New York Times*, January 5, 1919, 4:4.

³⁴ Please see Appendix II for a list of some of the folk songs in his sketchbooks.

³⁵ Henry F. Gilbert, Letter to Benjamin and Therese Gilbert, from World's Fair, Chicago, September, 1893. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 28).

³⁶ Elliott Carter, "American Figure, with Landscape," *Modern Music* 20 (May-June 1943): 222.

composers to turn away from German Romanticism to that of the Russian and French composers.³⁷

In 1894 Gilbert's *A Group of Songs*, op. 1, was published by M. B. Stevens Co. of Boston. Gilbert notated on the folder that this was his "First published work 1894."³⁸ The eight songs are: No. 1. *Absence*; No. 2. *Fair Helen*; No. 3. *Happy Little Flower of May*, text by Miss H. J. Wescott; No. 4. *Bonnie Lesley*, text by Robert Burns; No. 5. *In the Night*, text by Jean Ingelow; No. 6. *Reverie*, text by Owen Meredith; No. 7. *Folk Song*, text from Wagner's *Das Knaben Wunderhorn*; and No. 8. *O Saw Ye the Lass*, text by Richard Ryan.³⁹

In 1895, Gilbert inherited a small sum of money, and with a commission to purchase modern scores in Paris and London, went to Europe, working his way across the Atlantic on a cattle boat.⁴⁰ After spending more time endeavoring to read French literature in the original than in the opera houses and music shops, he suffered a severe attack of typhoid fever, which made him helpless for months.⁴¹ His mother subsequently went to London and Paris to care for him, and to help him return to the United States.⁴²

Continuing to compose when time permitted, Gilbert published his first orchestral works in 1897, *Two Episodes*, op. 2, setting the type himself. The two pieces are: 1. *Legend*; 2. *Negro Episode*. Scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons/4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 tuba, timpani, harp, and strings, *Legend* uses two solo celli but omits tuba; *Negro Episode* omits timpani. *Legend*, performed on January 13, 1896, in Jordan Hall, Boston, by the Boston Ladies' Symphony Orchestra, Arthur W. Thayer, conductor, marks the first performance ever of an orchestral work by Gilbert.⁴³ The December 3, 1896, performance of the *Episodes*, called *Two Negro Idyls for Orchestra*, in Chickering Hall, New York, by the Manuscript Society of New York, Silas G. Pratt, conductor, represents the premiere of both works.

In the score of the second *Episode*, Gilbert adds that he uses two of the Negro rhythms taken from *Slave Songs of the United States*, the collection compiled by Allen, Ware, and Garrison; and that a third rhythm is from the spiritual "Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord!"⁴⁴ The *Two Episodes* were

³⁷ Elliott Antokoletz, *Twentieth-Century Music* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992), 181.

³⁸ See: W6.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Olin Downes, "An American Composer Passes," *New York Times*, May 27, 1928, VIII, 6.

⁴¹ Downes, "An American Composer," 26.

⁴² Mrs. Therese Gilbert, Letter to Mrs. H. A. Gooding, from London, June 30, 1895. Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University. Letter to Mrs. J. H. Leighton, from Paris, August 11, 1895. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission.

⁴³ See: W6.

⁴⁴ Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert," 231.

praised by Jules Massenet⁴⁵ in 1898 and “heralded in France as the ‘first autochthonous American writing.’”⁴⁶

The reviewer of *The Post Express* (Rochester, New York), November 28, 1905, proclaimed Gilbert’s “Americanism” in this early work:

The *Negro Episode* is based on Negro folk songs and an interesting note in the programme tells us that Mr. Gilbert is strongly national in his leanings. He wants to help in the founding of a characteristic American style. To this end he would shun adulation of Europe. If Mr. Gilbert writes music as full of charm as these sketches, people will accept them gladly, nay eagerly, irrespective of question of schools.⁴⁷

Other compositions that Gilbert typeset and published in 1897 included *Scotch Song*, *The Curl*, *O Were My Love Yon Lilac Fair*, and *Perdita*.⁴⁸

Gilbert also began to establish his advocacy of American music when his “Folk Melody” article was published in *Music*.

Folk-melody is . . . the product of many minds, rather than being the apparent product of one only. . . . There are more folk-melodies to be found in major than in minor. . . . The fountain-head of nationality in music is to be found in the folk-melodies. The folk-melodies are very near to the people; they spring from the heart of the nation; and thus contain the musical essence of nationality.⁴⁹

Among the composers who laid the foundation of their musical activity in the folk-melodies of their country, Gilbert lists Anton Borodin, Edvard Grieg, Peter Tchaikovsky, Antonín Dvořák, and Johan Severin Svendsen.⁵⁰

A second visit to Europe literally changed Gilbert’s life. He arrived in Paris on May 13, 1901, delighted that he had been able to pay for his passage this time, since “there were 503 cattle and 20 horses aboard.”⁵¹ During his two-week stay, Gilbert heard Charpentier’s *Louise*, an opera incorporating famous

⁴⁵ Jules Massenet, Letter to Gilbert, 1898. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Scrapbook III).

⁴⁶ H. G. Sear, “Henry Franklin Belknap Gilbert,” *Music Review* V (November 1944): 250-259.

⁴⁷ “In the Theaters. The Lyceum. Rochester Symphony Orchestra,” *The Post Express* (Rochester, New York), November 28, 1905.

⁴⁸ Please see W175, W71, W116, and W124 respectively.

⁴⁹ Henry F. Gilbert, “Folk-Melody,” *Music* XI, January 1897, 268-271.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Letter to Therese Gilson Gilbert, from Liverpool, England, May 14, 1901. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 28).

Parisian folk songs. He was so moved by the opera, receiving "462 new sensations in the first act alone,"⁵² that:

There in the top gallery of the Opera Comique in Paris I vowed to devote the rest of my life to musical composition come what might. To return to America—to live as inexpensively as possible and to devote myself to my art with all my strength. . . . I curtailed my stay at the pension and engaged passage on the first ship leaving for New York the next day.⁵³

After his return to the United States, Gilbert, penniless, found a barn where he could live and work in 1901, vowing to compose "American, and un-European music: music which shall smack of our home-soil, even though it may be crude."⁵⁴ "After a while the cow departed (I think she was sold), and the horse went crazy and had to be shot," possibly because of the "crazy sounds I made on the old piano. Sometimes I was visited by the tramps—I slept in the hayloft."⁵⁵ There he composed two of his most noted songs, *Salammbô's Invocation to Tånith* and *The Pirate Song*, made famous by the Metropolitan Opera baritone, David Bispham.

For soprano solo, Gilbert adapted the text for *Salammbô's Invocation to Tånith* from Gustave Flaubert's *Salammbô*. The work, published by the Wa-Wan Press in 1902, was highly acclaimed by the composer Arthur Farwell:

Salammbô's Invocation to Tånith presents evidence of so distinctive a personality, that while in justice to the unusual nature of its effects, judgment upon the work as a whole must necessarily be deferred by all to its more perfect assimilation, we have no hesitation in proclaiming that it reveals a melodic and harmonic imagination, and a poetic sensitiveness, of an unusually high order. . . . We feel that with the optimistic American temperament, with fearlessness of self-expression, and with the rigid self-criticism to which Mr. Gilbert subjects himself, we may expect from him many distinctive and highly poetic works which will point out the way to new and unexpected modes of expression.⁵⁶

⁵² Olin Downes, "Comment Upon Musical Matters. A Bohemian, His Music," *Boston Post*, October 10, 1909, 33.

⁵³ Henry F. Gilbert, "A Chapter of Reminiscence."

⁵⁴ Herbert R. Boardman, "Somerville's Composers and Musicians." Unpublished paper read at the Somerville Historical Society, Somerville, Mass., January 13, 1941, 34.

⁵⁵ Gilbert, "A Chapter of Reminiscence."

⁵⁶ Arthur Farwell, "Introduction," *Salammbô's Invocation to Tånith* (Newton Center, Mass.: Wa-Wan Press, 1902).

The Wa-Wan Press also published the *Pirate Song* in 1902. The text was adapted from Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, with additional stanzas by Alice C. Hyde.⁵⁷ David Bispham addressed the composition's immediate success:

You may say from me that since Damrosch's *Danny Deever* no song by an American composer has so profoundly moved my audiences, whether at home or abroad as your *Pirate Song*. A well-known German composer after hearing it, exclaimed with enthusiasm as he examined your music, "Bei Gott! this man haf stroked the genius." With best wishes, I am very sincerely yours, David Bispham.⁵⁸

Bispham later selected the *Pirate Song* to be included in a concert of American Indian and Negro Songs performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and 500 guests.⁵⁹

In a letter to his mother, Gilbert stated that he left the barn on October 5, 1901, and that he had "had one of the very happiest times in my life at the barn. Absolute freedom. I minded no dinner bell and no one told me when to go to work nor when to leave off."⁶⁰

During the summer of the same year, Arthur Farwell became aware of the "great amount of original, imaginative, characteristic work by American composers, in manuscript, and wholly unknown. My astonishment was increased when I learned that the publishers would have none of this music."⁶¹ This discovery (as well as the challenge of Dvořák in 1895)⁶² provided the impetus for the establishment of the Wa-Wan Press.⁶³ "At this time of need, the movement was to find a strong ally in the person of Henry Gilbert. I first met this man of militant musical originality in the early months of 1902."⁶⁴

Gilbert's enthusiasm, his compositions, and his knowledge of music-printing encouraged Farwell to proceed with the Wa-Wan Press. According to

⁵⁷ See: W126.

⁵⁸ David Bispham, Letter to Gilbert, August 13, 1906. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 30/39).

⁵⁹ See: W126d.

⁶⁰ Henry F. Gilbert, Letter to Therese Gilson Gilbert, n.d. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 28).

⁶¹ Arthur Farwell, "Wanderjahre of a Revolutionist," Part I, *Musical America* 9, April 3, 1909, 19:1-4.

⁶² Dvořák, Antonín. "Music in America," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (February 1895): 429-434.

⁶³ The name "Wa-Wan" means "to sing to someone," and comes from the Omaha Indian peace ceremony. Longyear, "Henry F. Gilbert," 17.

⁶⁴ Farwell, "Wanderjahre of a Revolutionist."

Farwell, "Henry was in many ways a help and inspiration to me. . . . And then during my Western tours, he was very helpful, with my father, in carrying on the [Wa-Wan Press] movement."⁶⁵

Within two years, the Wa-Wan Press, hailed by American composers as "probably the most determined, courageous, and enlightened endeavor to assist the cause of American music that has yet been made," had published many compositions by American composers, including Arthur Farwell, Gilbert, and Harvey Worthington Loomis.⁶⁶ Among the Gilbert compositions published by the Wa-Wan Press are: in 1902, *Mazurka, Scherzo, Pirate Song*, and *Salammbo's Invocation to Tånith*; in 1903, *The Lament of Deirdré, Zephyrus*, and *Two Verlaine Moods*; and in 1904-1909, *The Island of the Fay, Celtic Studies, Tell Me Where Is Fancy Bred?, Negro Episode, Orlamonde, Fish Wharf Rhapsody*, and *The Owl*.

For a decade, Gilbert was a driving force behind the success of the press, especially after his marriage to Helen Kalischer of Romania. Gilbert's mother declared her an exceptional lady:

Yes! [Helen's] ways are different from ours most decidedly. There are grades in Jewish society as there are in our society and she belongs in the upper grade with her rich relatives in NY. Her sister is a successful dentist on 5th Ave., and her husband is . . . a practicing physician.

Helen stood high in school, being the finest German scholar in the class. She can hold her own in any controversy with Harvard professors who come to the house and she is modest in regard to her capabilities.⁶⁷

Helen and Henry became the parents of two talented daughters, Isolde Therese and Elizabeth Yolande.

In 1903, Gilbert composed *Americanesque*, published in 1913 as *Humoresque on Negro Minstrel Tunes*, opus 5. Gilbert describes the work as follows:

The *Humoresque on Negro Minstrel Tunes* is based on three melodies, all of which are published in the Ditson Collection: *Old Zip Coon*—otherwise known as *Turkey in the Straw, Rosa Lee* and *Dearest Mae*. The latter, which forms the "Andante" portion of the work, is also known to college students as *The Last Cigar*. The composer has taken these three themes and worked them up into an orchestral work of much power and beauty. Towards the close, the three themes appear simultaneously: *Dearest Mae* in the

⁶⁵ Arthur Farwell, Letter to Mrs. Helen Gilbert, Lansing, Michigan, June 3, 1928. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 36/135).

⁶⁶ Lawrence Gilman, "Some American Music," *Harper's Weekly*, March 7, 1903.

⁶⁷ Therese Gilbert, Letter, n.d., addressed to "Dear B__". The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 38/163-8).

Trumpets, *Rosa Lee* in the Horns, *Zip Coon* in the Violins and woodwinds, while the Trombones form a harmonic background.⁶⁸

The composer, in a note printed with the score, adds: "It is from this soil of popular song, redolent of 'minstrel' memories, that my *Humoresque* has grown, and in it I have tried to reflect the spirit of comedy, pathos, and rollicking mirth which found expression in the Minstrel Show of the olden days."⁶⁹

As early as 1905, Gilbert began toiling on an opera based on the *Uncle Remus* tales of Joel Chandler Harris (1848-1908). Although Gilbert ultimately failed to get the musical rights for the opera, he recast the prelude to the opera into the *Comedy Overture on Negro Themes*, completed in 1909. It was premiered at a Central Park Concert in New York in August 1910, attended by 4000 people,⁷⁰ and then performed by the Boston Symphony in 1911. Gilbert writes in his program notes for the Boston Symphony performance:

My scheme in the opera was to base the music on motives from traditional Negro songs and dances even as the *Uncle Remus* stories are based upon traditional Negro folklore. . . . The overture has five well-defined sections. The first movement is light and humorous, the theme being made from two four-measure phrases taken from Charles L. Edwards' book: *Bahama Songs and Stories*. The next slower section features a Mississippi steamboat song, "I'se gwine to Alabammy, Oh!" found in *Slave Songs of the United States* and the only complete tune used in the work. Next comes a fugue. The theme of this fugue consists of the first four measures of the Negro spiritual "Old Ship of Zion" as noted by Jeanette Robinson Murphy in *Southern Thoughts for Northern Thinkers*. Later this theme is played in augmentation by the brass and interwoven with "I'se gwine to Alabammy, Oh." The work closes on increased merriment with more allusions to ragtime.⁷¹

Some people considered the piece undignified, especially with its persistent ragtime rhythms; most responded, however, "to the youthful vigor, the racy humor and the romantic nature of this new music," states Olin Downes.⁷² Philip Hale, in the *Boston Herald* of April 14, 1911, writes:

The overture stirred the blood of the audience. All rejoiced in hearing a new voice with something to say and an original way

⁶⁸ Henry Gilbert, *Humoresque*, "Program Notes," *National Federation of Musical Clubs*, July 9, 1919.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ "Hub Composer's Latest Work Gains Success in New York," *New York Post*, August 21, 1910.

⁷¹ *Comedy Overture*, "Program Notes," *Boston Symphony Orchestra Programs*. ed. Philip Hale. Boston: 1910-11, April 13, 1911, 1660-1661.

⁷² Downes, "An American Composer," 24.

of saying it. The fugue did not dampen the interest of the hearers, for the old form was used with dramatic spirit. No wonder that the audience, surprised and delighted, was for once in no hurry to leave the hall. . . . The overture is distinctively, but not bumpiously, not apologetically, American.⁷³

The *Comedy Overture* became a hit with American orchestras, but also the first American composition hailed in Italy, France, England, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, and Russia as a masterpiece.⁷⁴ The Russian composer Alexander Glazunov found the work "simple, original and powerful, well orchestrated and melodious,"⁷⁵ and the great Russian critic Ivan Narodny proclaimed:

The man who is the first of living American composers to be recognized in Russia is Henry F. Gilbert, whose *Comedy Overture*, one of his earlier works, was performed by the Russian Imperial Symphony Orchestra, July 22, at Feodosia, in Crimea, and on August 1 in Odessa.

The opinion of the Russian critics is that Gilbert's music is both unique and great, and that his works should become known all over the country. . . . His music is spontaneous, natural and beautiful. One can feel the powerful individuality of the American composer in his direct and classic message. Though the work is based on Negro music—some kind of folk-melody—yet it does not belong to the class of popular compositions. We Russians understand perfectly the melodic language of this composer, though we differ so much racially. There is no doubt that Gilbert will soon lead the Frenchmen and Germans in our concert repertoires. Let us have more of him!⁷⁶

Later, Narodny quotes Reinhold Glière:

I consider Gilbert a towering American musical genius, a great individuality, a musician with a message. His music has the vigor of a sincere pioneer, surpassing his predecessors and contemporaries in its direct ethnographic epic appeal—something distinctly American.⁷⁷

⁷³ Philip Hale, "Symphony in Gilbert Piece," *Boston Herald*, April 14, 1911, 7:4.

⁷⁴ "People's Orchestra," *Boston Post*, February 28, 1921, 14:3.

⁷⁵ *Musical America*, October 3, 1914, 17.

⁷⁶ Ivan Narodny, "An American Composer's Success in Russia—Henry F. Gilbert, First of Living Musicians in This Country to Gain Recognition in Czar's Dominions—His 'Comedy Overture' Hailed as a Work of Genius by Glière and Other Eminent Authorities," *Musical America*, October 17, 1914, 61.

⁷⁷ Ivan Narodny, "A Troubadour of the New Age: Gilbert's Rich Bequest to American Posterity," *Musical America*, June 16, 1928.

Narodny, deeming Gilbert "an epic figure," also quotes Jean Sibelius: "In what I have heard of Gilbert's compositions, he is to me the most racial and original of America's composers."⁷⁸ And, in 1918, Olin Downes declared that the performance of Gilbert's "*Comedy Overture* appears to me as a more significant event than the performance of any other American composition which it has been my fortune to know."⁷⁹

Around 1906, Gilbert started writing some keyboard dances in ragtime rhythm. Among the dances are the three *American Dances* of 1906, the five *Negro Dances* of 1914, and the six in *A Rag Bag* of 1927.

The *American Dances*, based on excerpts from *Uncle Remus*, were revised in 1911 for orchestra. The three dances are: 1. *Uncle Remus*; 2. *Delphine*; 3. *Brer Rabbit*. Gilbert wrote of his intentions in his program notes:

In writing these dances, I have had in mind Moszkowski's *Spanish Dances* and Grieg's *Norwegian Dances*. I have tried to present the popular American spirit in artistic form. I have made free use of ragtime rhythms and all sorts of twists in use in popular music, but have tried to enhance their piquancy by means of harmony and orchestration.⁸⁰

The *Negro Dances* are, in some true sense, folk-dances, and "are full of the light-heartedness, and the occasional pathos—the sunshine and storm of the Negro character. . . . They are written by a master of harmonic device, who employs his mastery in the set only when the matter demands it, thus keeping the dances like pictures well within the frame."⁸¹

The six piano miniatures in *A Rag Bag* show both the influence of the new dance craze, ragtime, and the cakewalk. According to Olin Downes, "It was Henry Franklin Gilbert who, long before it was fashionable for the American composer to employ Negro rhythms of 'ragtime' and 'jazz' and Negro spirituals, experimented with these idioms."⁸²

Gilbert possibly achieved his greatest success with *The Dance in Place Congo*. Begun in 1906, New York's Metropolitan Opera finally premiered it as a pantomime-ballet on March 23, 1918.⁸³ Gilbert, in his program notes, writes:

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Downes, "An American Composer," 23-36.

⁸⁰ *American Dances*. "Program Notes," *Boston Symphony Orchestra Programs* 1910-11, ed. Philip Hale, April 13, 1911, 1662-1664.

⁸¹ *Pacific Coast Musical Review*, The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Scrapbook IV:40).

⁸² Olin Downes, "New Edition of Grove's Dictionary," *New York Times*, April 29, 1928, 9, 6:1.

⁸³ Gilbert had multiple problems in achieving a performance. After submitting *The Dance in Place Congo* to the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the conductor kept the score for five months "without deigning to examine it. . . . He was prejudiced against it on account of its title and its definitely American source." Gilbert withdrew the score and attempted to have it performed as a ballet, but

It has been for a long time an ideal of mine to write some music which should be in its inspiration truly native to America. The efforts of my compatriots, though frequently very fine technically . . . leaned far too heavily upon the tradition of Europe, and seemed to me to ignore too completely the very genuine touches of inspiration which exist in *our* history, *our* temperament, and *our* national life.⁸⁴

Gilbert was attracted to New Orleans after reading George W. Cable's books, and especially his article, "The Dance in Place Congo," in *Century Magazine*, February 1886.⁸⁵

Here was inspiration indeed. What a strong and romantic picture was presented to my imagination by the magical pen of the artist. . . . Here was an American subject; presented in vivid style by an American author; full of dramatic and colorful suggestion. . . . The first episode of the piece has nothing specifically to do with the "dance" in Place Congo. . . . Beginning with certain dark and quasi-barbaric rhythms, it gradually grows in intensity until it attains to what may be called the tragic and poignant cry of rage and revolt of an entire race against the restraining bonds of slavery. . . . The dark mood of this introduction . . . serves as a frame or tragic background for the wild and unrestrained dance-picture which is to follow. There is uncouth prelude upon the rhythm of the coming dance ever growing stronger and more determinate until the theme of the

problems occurred at the Metropolitan Opera because of all the European personnel. "A Chapter of Reminiscence," presentation for Men's Club, Redding Ridge, Conn.; printed, *New Music Review* XX, January 1921, Part I, 54-57; February 1921, Part II, 91-94.

The Met finally agreed to pay Gilbert \$50, and guaranteed that he would be paid for five performances. Gilbert continues to speak of disappointment over the stage presentation: "The ballet master was a Bohemian [who] had no knowledge nor sympathetic understanding of what I was trying to realize. He was a circus man, and in the summer traveled with the Ringling Circus—Taking charge of their spectacular ballets. He wished to have the scene one of startling reality and even had an idea of getting mechanical rattle snakes to run across the stage and help enliven matters. He did have some large wooden flamingoes constructed which flew in quite a natural manner about the treetops before the action. But I said to him 'What do we want those birds for. They don't have flamingoes in Louisiana.' He agreed and at the next rehearsal gave the order to 'Cut out the birds.' But the stage manager . . . refused, saying, 'Do you think we're going to rehearse the birds for two weeks and then not fly them?'" *The Dance in Place Congo*. Handwritten notes laid in with program, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, conductor, February 20, 1920.

⁸⁴ *The Dance in Place Congo*, "Program Notes," *Boston Symphony Orchestra Programs*. ed. P. Hale. Boston: 1919-1920, February 20, 1920, 1087-96.

⁸⁵ George W. Cable, "The Dance in Place Congo," *The Century Magazine* XXXI (February 1886): 517-532.

Bamboula is ripped out in all its triumphant vulgarity by the full orchestra. After the Bamboula, they are interrupted by the deep voiced tone of the nine-o'clock bell calling the slaves to quarters. After a final pause the orchestra breaks forth with the tragic cry of the introduction: the cry of racial revolt against slavery.⁸⁶

The reviewer for the New York *Evening Telegram* described the work as "a veritable riot of color, rhythm and melody. His orchestration is particularly rich, and this dance pantomime, showing the slaves of the old times in New Orleans indulging in their extravagant dances in the Place Congo after the day's work, strikes a new note in the musical and dramatic productions of this country."⁸⁷ In 1927, a year before Gilbert's death, he and Aaron Copland were chosen to represent the United States at the Fifth International Festival of New Music in Frankfurt; Gilbert's *Dance in Place Congo* was played on the same program with Bartók's First Piano Concerto, performed by Bela Bartók, pianist, and Wilhelm Furtwängler, conductor. When Arturo Toscanini played and recorded the *Dance* in 1943, Olin Downes described Toscanini's appreciation of Gilbert's genius, comparing "the works of the present generation with it in a way reflecting infinite credit upon Gilbert and much disparagement upon his successors."⁸⁸

Gilbert also became one of the first experts on Amerindian music in 1911 when Edward S. Curtis hired him:

A number of years ago, I was a member of the editorial staff of Mr. Edward S. Curtis' *deluxe* publication *The North American Indian*. . . . My particular job consisted in the transcription of Indian melodies and tribal songs from phonographic cylinders—putting them down in our ordinary musical notation, so that they might be published in Mr. Curtis' book. The field staff connected with this work would induce certain Indians in the far West to sing their love songs, ceremonial songs, dance songs, etc., into a phonograph. . . . While engaged in this work, I became much interested in the musical material.⁸⁹

The North American Indian; being a series of volumes picturing and describing the Indians of the United States, the Dominion of Canada and Alaska, (1907-1930), a superb, comprehensive survey of all the important Indian tribes, contains much information about Amerindian music. Volumes 3 through 12, as well as

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ "American Color at the Opera," *Evening Telegram*, March 24, 1918.

⁸⁸ Olin Downes, Letter to Helen Gilbert, January 15, 1943. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 36/133).

⁸⁹ *Indian Sketches*, "Program Notes," *Boston Symphony Orchestra Programs*. ed. Philip Hale. Boston: 1920-21, March 4, 1921, 1072-77.

Volume 19, contain music transcriptions by Gilbert. There are also two articles about Indian music: one in Volume 3 by Curtis, one in Volume 6 by Gilbert.⁹⁰

Gilbert was also requested to prepare music for the series of lectures presented by Curtis throughout the United States: "26 numbers, two being the prelude and interlude," the others for "motion pictures and dissolving views." Curtis paid Gilbert \$300 for orchestration expenses; \$35 per week to compose; \$25 per week for up to 13 weeks to conduct the orchestra; and \$25 per week for hotel expenses. Curtis paid for transportation expenses.⁹¹

In 1921 Gilbert published *Indian Sketches*, an orchestral suite in six movements, based on the music that he had prepared for Curtis. Gilbert describes the *Suite* in program notes:

The Suite is in six movements:—I. Prelude: A barbaric mood which rises to a climax and in turn fades away to the desert silence. II. Invocation: The nature of the Indian is full of primitive religious feeling. This movement is subjective in character and may be considered as a prayer, or supplication of the Great Spirit. III. Song of the Wolf: A short development of one of the sombre and poignant cries of the Kutenai. IV. Camp Dance: Intended to express the lighter side of Indian camp life. More in the nature of a Scherzo. V. Nocturne: This is a larghetto of somewhat romantic feeling, such as one might have if he were alone at night paddling a solitary canoe on one of our Western rivers. . . . VI. Snake Dance: This is a frankly barbaric study, and was suggested by the prayer-dance of the Hopi of Arizona. This ceremony which is performed by several men in public constitutes a prayer for rain. Live rattlesnakes are held and carried between the teeth by the participants.⁹²

Although Gilbert did not choose to quote indigenous American melodies during his last period, his music became even more American. A voracious reader, Gilbert had long admired Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, and Walt Whitman. According to Gilbert:

I've always wanted to write something on that beautiful passage from Whitman . . . That piece is filled with melody, in fact, it is one long melody from beginning to end. Melody is, I believe, about nine-tenths of music, anyway. . . . I have heard so many of the devilishly clever, uncannily ingenious, but dry and soulless musical concoctions which are all the style nowadays, that I desired to give myself the satisfaction of making an individual

⁹⁰ Edwin S. Curtis, *The North American Indian; being a series of volumes picturing and describing the Indians of the United States, the Dominion of Canada and Alaska*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Vols. 1-5); Norwood, Mass.: Plimpton Press, 1907-1930.

⁹¹ Edwin S. Curtis. Letter to Gilbert, July 26, 1911. The Henry Gilbert Papers, MSS 35, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, used by permission: (Box 38/171).

⁹² *Indian Sketches*, "Program Notes."