6
A Century of Singing Along to Stephen Foster

Esther M. Morgan-Ellis

When elite white reformers first began to organize and promote community singing in the United States and Canada in the early years of the twentieth century, they placed the blackface minstrel songs of Stephen Foster at the center of their repertoire. With the exception of patriotic staples such as "The Star-Spangled Banner," no songs were programmed or printed more frequently. Foster's minstrel songs were already familiar to the white communities whom collective singing was to benefit, and many participants embraced them as national heritage, ignoring objections from Black intellectuals that the sentiments expressed by Foster could not represent contemporary African American citizens.[1] Just as Foster's ubiquity predated the movement to encourage mass singing, his songs remained in the sing-along repertoire long after the movement's demise and are still found in songbooks and other participatory media. Today, Americans are most likely to encounter "Oh! Susanna" (1848) or "De Camptown Races" (1850), both examples of comic minstrel songs.[2] Foster's sentimental minstrel songs, which were nationally popular at the height of the community singing movement, still have regional staying power.[3] "Old Folks at Home" (1851), with its misspelled reference to Florida's Suwanee River, was adopted as the state song of Florida in 1935, while "My Old Kentucky Home" (1853) was similarly adopted by Kentucky in 1928 and has been sung annually by visitors to the Kentucky Derby since 1921.[4] All of these songs, however, have been divorced from

[1] "Community Singing," *Baltimore Afro-American*, June 19, 1915.

[2] Foster scholar William Austin categorized these as "comic, Ethiopian songs." His terminology references the common use of "Ethiopian" to designate minstrel songs in Foster's own time. William W. Austin, *"Susanna," "Jeanie," and "The Old Folks at Home": The Songs of Stephen C. Foster from His Time to Ours*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 7.

[3] The category of "pathetic plantation songs" is discussed in part three of Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 223–358.

[4] James Nicholson, *The Kentucky Derby: How the Run for the Roses Became America's Premiere Sporting Event* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 63. "Kentucky Home" is also sung by visitors to the My Old Kentucky Home State Park in Bardstown, Kentucky. The official adoption of these songs by states and institutions reflected the Jim Crow politics of the era. Regarding "Kentucky Home," Emily Bingham writes, "the song's plantation setting and nostalgic mood provided a ready soundtrack to the culture of 'reunification' between Southern and Northern whites, an absolution

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their blackface origins: dialect has been stripped away, references to African Americans have been replaced, and new contexts for understanding the songs' meanings have been presented to singers.[5] This chapter traces that transformation, demonstrating the processes by which Foster's minstrel legacy has persisted in American participatory singing practices into the present day.

My study draws from an analysis of seventy songbooks published between 1913 and 2003, supplemented by contemporary sing-along media, including short films, radio broadcasts, long-playing records (LPs), and television programs. While early songbooks and other media used a combination of blackface dialect, racist terminology, and prose descriptions to identify Foster's narrators as African American, it became common in the 1960s to eliminate these characteristics, thereby recasting the songs as race-neutral. By the end of the twentieth century, accompanying imagery invariably portrayed Foster's characters as white, thereby reassigning the racial identity of his protagonists for a new generation of singers.

The story of Foster's minstrel songs in the sing-along repertoire can effectively be told using three selections: "Oh! Susanna," "Old Folks at Home," and "My Old Kentucky Home." The songs are the most popular songs of their type, and they display the full range of characteristics typical of Foster's minstrel songs.[6] "Susanna" is a comic song, while "Old Folks" and "Kentucky Home" are sentimental. "Susanna" and "Old Folks" were initially published in dialect ("Kentucky Home" was not).[7] And all three songs contain derogatory epithets relating to African Americans.[8] These elements will be central to my story.

for racial exploitation past and present." Emily Bingham, "'Let's Buy It!': Tourism and the My Old Kentucky Home Campaign in Jim Crow Kentucky," *Ohio Valley History* 19, no. 3 (2019): 27.

[5] Across the songs discussed in this chapter, the most disturbing and violent expression of racism appears in the second verse of "Oh! Susanna," which describes a steamboat accident in which "De lectric fluid magnified, / And killed five hundred [slur redacted]." This verse is little-known today, and was omitted from all but one of the sources I consulted. A sanitized version of the verse was included in both the 1983 and 1996 editions of *The Family Car Song Book*, presumably because the editors consulted Foster's original sheet music instead of relying on earlier songbooks, which do not seem to have influenced the text or tune in their arrangement.

[6] Between 1890 and 1925, "Kentucky Home" and "Old Folks" were the most frequently recorded of Foster's songs, with eighty-five and sixty recordings respectively. "Susanna" and "Camptown" were largely absent from the repertoire, with only four recordings each. See George R. Creegan, "A Discography of the Acoustic Recordings of Stephen Foster's Music" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1987), cited in Mariana Whitmer, "Josiah Kirby Lilly and the Foster Hall Collection," *American Music* 30, no. 3 (2012): 333–34.

[7] Foster employed dialect in early drafts of "Kentucky Home." It seems that he abandoned it at the behest of his publishers, who encouraged him to move away from minstrelsy. Christopher Lynch, "Stephen Foster and the Slavery Question," *American Music* ~~39~~ 42, no. ~~4~~ 1 (~~2021~~ 2024): ~~n.p.~~ 1–.

[8] In "Susanna," the derogatory term "darkie" is found only in the fourth verse, which was omitted from most sources. The term is much more prominent in the other two songs, and editors therefore had either to include it or to find an alternative.

Because this historical narrative is driven by songbook analysis, it is framed by the ideologies and activities of songbook creators. In the early twentieth century, most of these creators were reform-minded individuals who actively sought to build and promote a community singing movement, while in later decades they were increasingly likely to be music industry professionals who sought to profit from the movement's success.[9] Using these songbooks, I have identified three historical periods in the communal singing of Foster songs: 1913–30, 1930–60, and 1960–present. The first was inaugurated by the publication of *18 Songs for Community Singing*, a landmark volume assembled by a committee of the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC)—headed by music educator Peter Dykema—that signaled the investment of music educators in shaping and promoting the community singing movement.[10] The year 1930 makes an effective end for this first period both because it marked the publication of the final MSNC songbook and because the 1930s saw a shift in repertoire: While Foster's sentimental minstrel songs did not disappear, his comic songs became increasingly popular. This second historical period (1930–60) was dominated by commercial songbooks that eschewed the uplift ideology of community singing activists in favor of entertainment value, while a third period (1960–present) saw the gradual disappearance of sentimental minstrel songs, the elimination of racial identifiers, and the replacement of Foster's minstrel characters with "hillbilly" stereotypes. Every piece of media that I examined for this study was intended to facilitate the practice of community singing, in which groups of people—sometimes known to one another, sometimes not—actively express and construct their shared identity by singing together.

People were singing Foster's songs together long before 1913. "Susanna," for example, quickly entered the oral tradition and was being sung by gold miners in California within a year of its composition.[11] Each of these songs also bore a wealth of cultural associations, accumulated over decades and subject to constant revision. Some of those who sang "Old Folks" and "Kentucky Home" in 1913, for example, might have remembered the nineteenth-century "Uncle Tom" shows that helped to make these songs famous.[12] Others might have heard "Old

[9] For a detailed analysis, see Esther M. Morgan-Ellis, *Everybody Sing! Community Singing in the American Picture Palace* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 59–67.

[10] The MSNC was founded in 1907 by a group of midwestern music educators who belonged to the music section of the National Education Association. The organization became involved in the community singing movement under the leadership of Henrietta Baker Low, who served as president from 1912 to 1913. Morgan-Ellis, *Everybody Sing!*, 63–65. Low later led grassroots community singing efforts in Baltimore, where she directed singing classes at the Peabody Institute Preparatory Division. Esther M. Morgan-Ellis, "'Making the Many-Minded One': Community Singing at the Peabody Prep in 1915," *Musical Quarterly* 102, no. 4 (2019): 361.

[11] Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 28.

[12] "Kentucky Home" was written with Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel in mind, while "Uncle Tom" shows also frequently included "Massa's in de Cold Ground" and "Old Black Joe." Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 235.

Folks" performed by the Fisk Jubilee Singers in the 1870s, and therefore associated it with the emerging repertoire of Negro Spirituals.[13] Yet others might have been influenced by a developing discourse that sought to classify Foster's sentimental minstrel songs as genuine folksongs—an argument sometimes made on the basis that he supposedly drew from folk sources, and sometimes on the basis that the American people had granted his songs folk status by embracing them as representative of national identity.[14] In any case, the racial politics surrounding these songs were highly complex.[15] They seemed to fully embody both Black and white identities.

Period 1 (1913–30): Sentimental Minstrel Song as National Song

18 Songs for Community Singing, which was intended to make "an immediate and effective start toward national community singing," served as the basis for a series of MSNC-developed publications and shaped the contents of contemporary songbooks created for a variety of purposes.[16] Although the "explanatory note" that introduces *18 Songs* takes the value of community singing for granted, later volumes would explicitly address the aims of the movement. The earliest such statement appears on the title page of *55 Songs and Choruses for Community Singing* (1917), published on behalf of the MSNC to further their efforts during the war. According to the editors, the purpose of the volume was to encourage "deeper and truer brotherhood and spiritual awakening through mass singing in America—an effort to liberate the spirit of the people through self-expression in song, and add to growth in unity of thought and feeling, which is the foundation of individual and national strength."[17] This sentiment—that singing songs together would promote unity and forge national identity—remained prevalent

[13] Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 284.

[14] Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 290, 300.

[15] In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some Black activists, including W. E. B. Du Bois and Frederick Douglass, lauded Foster's sentimental minstrel songs for their perceived potential to advance the cause of abolition (Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*, 20th anniv. ed. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013], 17; Lynch, "Stephen Foster and the Slavery Question," ~~n.p.~~ 21). However, by the early decades of the twentieth century, civil rights activists and organizations had rejected this argument. Bingham, "'Let's Buy It!,'" 44.

[16] Peter W. Dykema, Elizabeth Casterton, Henrietta Baker, Hollis E. Dann, Charles H. Farnsworth, C. A. Fullerton, and T. P. Giddings, explanatory note in *18 Songs for Community Singing*, ed. Dykema et al. (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1913).

[17] Dykema, Peter W., Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds., *55 Songs and Choruses for Community Singing* (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1917), 1.

for years to come, and is echoed in many of the songbook prefaces excerpted below.[18]

Foster was the only composer represented in *18 Songs* by multiple selections. His "Old Folks" and "Kentucky Home" joined Dan Emmett's "Dixie"—presented in dialect, like "Old Folks"—to constitute a pillar of minstrelsy in this foundational volume. The fact that these were nestled among patriotic favorites, European folk songs, and American and English parlor songs indicates that the MSNC committee judged them to be of high musical and patriotic value. *55 Songs and Choruses* retained these selections, adding "Massa's in de Cold Ground" (1852) and "Old Black Joe" (1860). The next revision, *Twice 55 Community Songs* (1919), added "Nelly was a Lady" (1849), confirming Foster's role as the author of sentimental songs expressing the suffering or nostalgia of imagined Black personae.[19] Both "Old Folks" and "Kentucky Home" were present in every volume of the period that I examined, with only rare exceptions (see appendix). It is no coincidence that blackface minstrel songs, especially those of Stephen Foster, were used to anchor a "unifying" national repertoire. Matthew Morrison has written extensively about the foundations of American culture in blackface minstrelsy, which was used to define white identity in the early twentieth century.[20] When majority-white crowds sang these songs in public spaces, they claimed racial superiority and reinscribed hierarchical racial divisions.

Foster was credited as the composer of his songs in every volume that included notation and many of those that did not. There was no question of passing them off as products of the oral tradition. However, songbook editors actively lobbied for the acceptance of Foster's sentimental minstrel songs as "folk songs."[21] In her *Folk Songs of Many Peoples* (1922), Florence Botsford distinguished between "folk song" and "composed songs," but the fact that she included Foster in her volume indicates that she accepted his songs as "folk" products in some sense; her lengthy introduction, which is clearly addressed to composers of American art music, suggests that Foster's sentimental minstrel songs merit inclusion due

[18] Dykema elaborated on these goals in numerous publications. For a representative example, see Peter W. Dykema, "The Spread of the Community Music Idea," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 67 (1916): 218–23.

[19] Peter W. Dykema, Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds., *Twice 55 Community Songs: The Brown Book* (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1919).

[20] For one discussion of Foster songs, see Matthew Morrison, "Blacksound," in *The Oxford Handbook of Western Music and Philosophy*, ed. Tomás McAuley, Nanette Nielsen, Jerrold Levinson, and Ariana Phillips-Hutton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 569–70.

[21] Debate raged in the early decades of the twentieth century over whether Foster's songs should be accorded "folk" status. FollowingAntonín Dvořák, Louis Elson called Foster "the folk-song genius of America" (Louis C. Elson, *The History of American Music* [New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904], 134), while critic W. J. Henderson rejected this claim in his preface to Harry Burleigh's collection of minstrel songs (Harry T. Burleigh, ed., *Negro Minstrel Melodies* [New York: G. Schirmer, 1909], iii).

to their embodiment of genuine American folk character.[22] In *55 Songs*, Foster was described as "an American of Irish descent [whose] songs have gained for him the title of the great American folk-song writer,"[23] while the 1923 revision of *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*—a volume first published in 1915 and also widely used by music educators[24]—introduced him as "a truly American writer of what may be called the folk-songs of America."[25]

The role of Foster's songs in the sing-along repertoire is further illuminated by their categorization within songbooks. In his eponymous 1920 songbook, David Bispham anticipated Botsford's blurring of categories when he placed Foster under the combined heading of "Popular and Folk Songs."[26] Other editors created more specific categories, which sometimes indicated competing understandings of what Foster's sentimental minstrel songs might mean to the singer. In *The Canadian Soldiers' Song Book*, for example, Foster's songs were "Southern Melodies," suggesting that they represented a specific geographic location and the people who lived there.[27] In both *Songs of America* and the 1920 *Boy Scout Song Book*, however, they were "Home Songs," suggesting that Foster's sentimental minstrel songs embodied a universal sentiment that could not be tied to a single region or people.[28]

Outside the pages of songbooks, Foster's songs played a central role in participatory media of the 1920s—specifically, the sing-along films produced for use in picture theaters. "My Old Kentucky Home" was included in the film "Heart Throbs" (1924), while "Old Folks at Home" found a place in "Melodious Moments" (1924), the final installment in Educational Pictures' twelve-part series, *Sing Them Again* (1923–24).[29] Almost all of these silent films have been lost, but were known to have featured live-action portrayals of the scenes described in song.[30]

[22] Florence Hudson Botsford, foreword to *Folk Songs of Many Peoples*, vol. 2, ed. Florence Hudson Botsford (New York: Womans Press, 1922), 1.

[23] Dykema et al., *55 Songs and Choruses for Community Singing*, 10; Foster was, in fact, of Scots-Irish descent, which accorded him significantly higher social status in his lifetime (Lynch, "Stephen Foster and the Slavery Question," n.p.).

[24] Lucile M. Slade, "The Biggest Sleeper of Them All," *Music Educators Journal* 53, no. 7 (1967): 49.

[25] John W. Beattie, William Breach, Mabelle Glenn, Walter J. Goodell, Edgar B. Gordon, Norman H. Hall, Ernest G. Hesser, and E. Jane Wisenall, eds., *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1923), 25.

[26] David Bispham, ed., *The David Bispham Song Book* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1920).

[27] *The Canadian Soldiers' Song Book* (Young Men's Christian Association, 1916).

[28] Arthur J. Mealand, ed., *Songs of America* (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing, [n.d.]); William D. Murray, Frank Presbrey, and Henry Van Dyke, eds., *Boy Scout Song Book* (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1920).

[29] Educational Pictures was an American film production and distribution company active between 1916 and 1940. Each film in their *Sing Them Again* series included three familiar songs united by a theme.

[30] Malcolm Cook, "Sing Them Again: Audience Singing in Silent Film," in *Music and Sound in Silent Film: From the Nickelodeon to "The Artist,"* ed. Ruth Barton and Simon Trezise (New York: Routledge, 2018): 67–71.

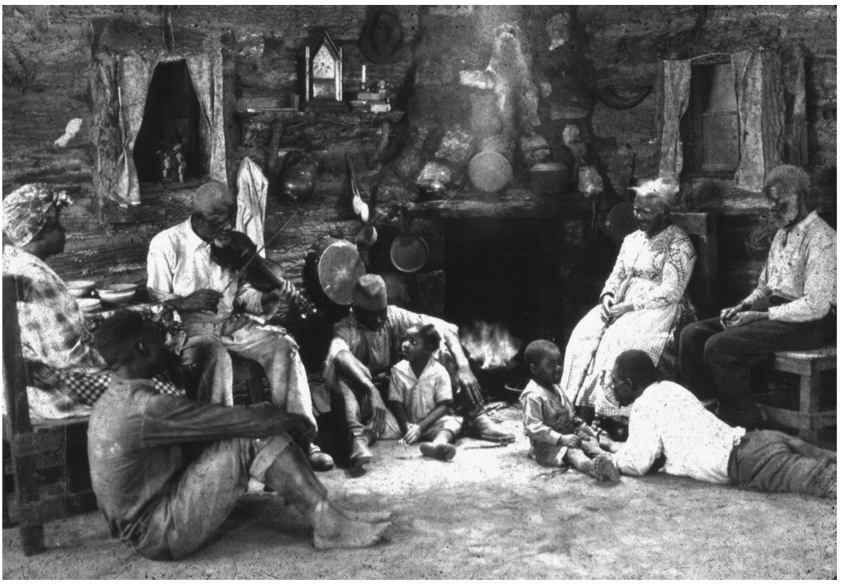


Figure 6.1. This still shot is taken from the 1923 film *Home Again*, the sole extant entry in Educational's twelve-part series, Sing Them Again. It was used to illustrate Foster's "Old Black Joe."

We can get an idea of what "Kentucky Home" and "Old Folks" might have looked like onscreen by examining a scene from "Old Black Joe," the song that opened the film "Home Again" (1923)—the only example from the series to survive, albeit in very poor condition.[31] In this scene, which preceded the collective singing of the song, theatergoers were invited to gaze upon a large, multigenerational African American family crowded into a rough-hewn cabin to listen to "Joe" play a tune on the fiddle (Figure 6.1).

"Oh! Susanna" was never included in one of the Educational pictures, presumably because it did not express the heartfelt sentiment characteristic of the series. However, "Susanna" *was* embraced by Fleischer Studios, which specialized in humorous cartoons, and animator Max Fleischer included no fewer than four Foster songs in his series of silent-era sing-along films, *Song Car-Tunes* (1924–27). The Fleischer films were decidedly irreverent, even when treating the most

[31] According to the Betzwood Film Archive, the surviving film is the 1924 release "Echoes of Youth" ("Song Film," Betzwood Film Archive, https://mc3betzwood.wordpress.com/betzwood-films/song-film/). However, this is contradicted by the trade press, which clearly indicates that "Home Again" contained "Old Black Joe," "Little Annie Laurie," and "Home Sweet Home" ("Short Subjects," *Film Daily*, December 9, 1923). The film, with its title sequence and opening scene missing, can be viewed online (MC3Libraries, "OLD BLACK JOE," YouTubevideo, 9:53, https://youtu.be/CDI1Rz1CI9U).

Figure 6.2. During the final sing-along chorus in Fleischer's "My Old Kentucky Home" (1926), a blackface caricature of a woman in braids collects laundry while leaping from word to word in time with the singing.

hallowed chestnuts of the community singing repertoire.[32] "Old Folks at Home" (1925) was among the first films in the series, to be followed by "Oh, Suzanna" [*sic*] (1925), "My Old Kentucky Home" (1926), and "Old Black Joe" (1926). Although all four films would most often have been exhibited with live instrumental accompaniment, provided either by an organist or orchestra, the last two were released with synchronized soundtracks using the Phonofilm sound-on-film system.[33] Only "My Old Kentucky Home" seems to have survived. The Fleischer treatment of "Kentucky Home" is notable because it forgoes sentiment for comedy. However, the animators offered no criticism of the song's racist origin or contents; indeed, they embraced its roots in minstrelsy and illustrated the lyrics with crude blackface caricatures. All of the Fleischer films feature an animated character leaping from word to word during the final sing-along chorus. In this case, a blackface caricature of a woman in braids weeps uncontrollably and flails her arms in an expression of emotional excess while attending to laundry (Figure 6.2). In the closing sequence, she dangles a watermelon segment in front of another blackface character in order to convince him to pull her off screen in a cart.[34]

As the preceding examples indicate, there is no question that these songs bore African American identifiers for the singing masses. In songbooks, both "Old

[32] For an analysis of their comedic treatment of Charles K. Harris's sentimental waltz song "After the Ball" (1891), see Esther M. Morgan-Ellis, "Nostalgia, Sentiment, and Cynicism in Images of 'After the Ball,'" *Magic Lantern Gazette* 23, no. 2 (2011): 6–7.

[33] Nicholas Sammond, "A Space Apart: Animation and the Spatial Politics of Conversion," *Film History* 23, no. 3 (2011): 272.

[34] Regarding "Kentucky Home" and other Fleischer sing-alongs that trade in racist stereotyping, Nicholas Sammond writes that "performances of race and ethnicity in these cartoons were interwoven with the sentimentality and the fun of the sing-along, offering ostensibly white audiences an affectively positive experience of collective and distributed racism." Nicholas Sammond, *Birth of an Industry: Blackface Minstrelsy and the Rise of American Animation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 152.

Folks" and "Susanna" (when it was included) were usually printed in blackface dialect, while all three songs typically included derogatory references to African Americans. Their subject matter was frequently expounded on in accompanying editorial blurbs, which tended to emphasize the songs' emotional authenticity. "No author or composer of negro songs has touched the sympathetic chord of the home-love of the colored race so surely as Foster did in this song," reads the text accompanying "Kentucky Home" in *55 Songs*. "It embodies some of the best characteristics of American negro music and is in truth fitted to rank with the best legendary folk-songs of any land."[35] Bispham introduces "Kentucky Home" with remarkably similar language: "Stephen C. Foster, of Pittsburgh, Pa., touched with most of his songs, which were written before the Civil War, a sympathetic note in the hearts of all Americans, white people as well as the colored folks whose inner sentiment he, though of Irish decent, seemed to catch so perfectly."[36] The 1923 revision of the *Golden Book* also goes to great lengths to legitimize Foster's songs as authentic African American expression, making the false claim that "He often attended negro camp meetings and there studied the music of the colored people."[37] Foster, according to these editors, was even better at expressing the thoughts and feelings of Black Americans than they were themselves.

In early sing-along media, Foster was represented almost exclusively as a composer of sentimental plantation songs, although he also produced comic songs and was in fact most prolific as a composer of genteel parlor songs. Why are his sentimental minstrel songs so overrepresented in the repertoire? The absence of his comic songs can be explained by the fact that they contributed nothing to the movement's uplift agenda, while close examination of the MSNC songbooks suggests that parlor songs were considered more appropriate for formal choirs than for informal singing events. The 1926 collection *Twice 55 Community Songs for Male Voices: The Blue Book*—a volume aimed at "men's singing societies"—omitted all of the sentimental minstrel songs except "Nelly was a Lady," but added the parlor song "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair." Both are presented in sophisticated four-part arrangements clearly intended for performance.[38] This was the first appearance of "Jeanie"—the Foster parlor song found most frequently in the sing-along repertoire—in an MSNC songbook; it later appeared in *Twice 55 Plus*.[39] Another parlor song, "Hard Times Come Again No

[35] Dykema et al., *55 Songs and Choruses for Community Singing*, 12.

[36] Bispham, *The David Bispham Song Book*, 210.

[37] Beattie et al., *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*, 25. This false claim was first made by a friend of Foster's shortly after the composer's death. George W. Birdseye, "A Reminiscence of the Late Stephen C. Foster," *New York Musical Gazette*, January 1, 1867.

[38] Peter W. Dykema, preface to *Twice 55 Community Songs for Male Voices: The Blue Book*, ed. Peter W. Dykema (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1926).

[39] Peter W. Dykema, Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds., *Twice 55 Plus Community Songs: The New Brown Book* (Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1930).

More" (1854), appeared in the 1923 *Golden Book*, *Twice 55 Community Songs for Male Voices*, and *Twice 55 Plus*.[40] It is clear, however, that Foster's parlor songs were considered less suitable for community singing than were his sentimental minstrel songs.

A comic song first entered the MSNC repertoire in 1930 with *Twice 55 Plus*, which included "Oh! Susanna."[41] This is not the very first appearance of "Susanna," which also made it into Homer Rodeheaver's *Sociability Songs* (1928) and *The Blue Book of Favorite Songs* (a 1928 entry into the *Golden Book* series that combined several extant volumes).[42] It seems likely that the increased popularity of the community singing movement in the 1920s contributed to relaxed standards, although the fact that this selection was only embraced by the MSNC once the size of its collection had grown to 185 songs indicates that Dykema and colleagues still considered it peripheral. It is notable that "Oh! Susanna" was placed in the middle of the volume, while the sentimental minstrel songs were grouped together near the beginning. An editorial introduction draws attention to the song's frivolous character ("This is one of Foster's most lighthearted songs"), while the arrangement—unusual for the volume—invites the upper voices to supply "plink" and "plunk" sounds on the offbeats in imitation of a banjo.[43] Even more remarkable, however, is the fact that "Oh! Susanna" is printed out of dialect in *Twice 55 Plus*. Indeed, there is nothing to indicate the identity of the narrator. It seems likely that stripping this comic song of its blackface connotations made it more palatable to the editors. This change was certainly not part of a wholesale effort to remove the legacy of minstrelsy, however: the sentimental minstrel songs retained their dialect and racist language.

The use of blackface dialect requires special attention. At the most fundamental level, we can identify whether or not it is present. Of the thirty-four songbooks published between 1913 and 1930 that I examined, twenty-nine included "Old Folks at Home" and three included "Oh! Susanna." Of these, dialect was omitted in four cases of "Old Folks at Home" and one case (already described) of "Oh! Susanna." But what might have motivated these revisions? The answer, I would suggest, varies depending on the context. The *Liberty Song Book* published in 1918 by the War Camp Community Service, for example, was intended for use

[40] Curiously, the phrase "hard times" in "Kentucky Home" was often either capitalized or placed in quotation marks. This is also a characteristic of the original publication, although Foster's intent is not clear.

[41] "Camptown Races" is entirely absent from the songbooks examined belonging to this period with one exception: A dialect version appears in *Camp-Fire Choruses*, a volume intended "for chorus recreation in camp, (in war and in peace), at banquets, at lodge, in class rooms, on the march, in canoe,—wherever good fellowship breaks forth in song." James Edmund Jones, ed., *Camp-Fire Choruses* (Toronto: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press, 1916), 5.

[42] *Rodeheaver's Sociability Songs* (Chicago: Rodeheaver, 1928); John W. Beattie and Arthur Goodell, eds., *The Blue Book of Favorite Songs* (Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1928).

[43] Dykema et al., *Twice 55 Plus Community Songs*, 97.

by servicemen.[44] "Old Folks at Home" was included alongside other minstrel selections in the "Home Songs" section of the booklet, so perhaps dialect was dropped in order to emphasize the songs' nostalgic content (although this hypothesis is complicated by the omission of dialect in the 1916 YMCA-issued *Canadian Soldiers' Songbook*, which categorizes "Old Folks" under "Southern Melodies" rather than "Home Songs").[45] But did soldiers sing the song in dialect or not? The fact that "Old Folks at Home" was printed in dialect in every other World War I–era military publication that I examined suggests that they may well have. Another volume to abandon dialect for "Old Folks at Home" was the 1923 *School and Community Song Book*, a decidedly highbrow volume edited by a pair of faculty members at the Toronto Conservatory of Music. Perhaps the omission of dialect from certain songs contributed to, in the editors' words, "the dignity of their treatment."[46] Finally, the 1920 *Boy Scout Song Book* likewise printed "Old Folks" out of dialect. Perhaps dialect was deemed inimical to the volume's stated mission of "express[ing] the essential spirit of Scouting."[47] The one thing we can be certain of, however, is that it was never removed for the purpose of obscuring the song's racist connotations; derogatory epithets remained intact in all cases.

Closer examination of various versions of the dialect songs reveals the fluidity of dialect as a practice. We can see this phenomenon at play in the opening phrase of "Old Folks," which in *18 Songs* reads "Way down upon de Swanee Ribber." In this common implementation, "th" sounds are replaced with "d," and "v" sounds are replaced with "b."[48] *The Golden Book* maintains the modified "th" sounds throughout, but does not turn "d" sounds into "v" sounds, with the result that the opening phrase refers to "de Swanee River" (likewise, the "Eb'ry where" of the chorus in *18 Songs* becomes "Ev'rywhere"). Several war-era volumes, including both the 1917 *Service Song Book* and the 1918 *Army Song Book*, maintain the "th" sound in the opening reference to "the Swanee Ribber," but revert to "d" for the remainder of the song (e.g., "Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber, Dere's wha de old folks stay").[49] The 1916 *One Hundred and One Best Songs*—a promotional volume published on behalf of Chicago-based piano manufacturer The Cable Company—completely eliminates dialect from the opening phrase, but

[44] *Liberty Song Book* (New York: War Camp Community Service, 1918).

[45] *The Canadian Soldiers' Song Book.*

[46] A. S. Vogt and Healey Willan, eds., *School and Community Song Book* (Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1922), iv.

[47] William D. Murray, Frank Presbrey, and Henry Van Dyke, introduction to *Boy Scout Song Book.*

[48] This approach to dialect is consistent with the 1851 publications overseen by Foster himself. I also examined an 1896 "concert edition" published by H. Franklin Jones of Brooklyn in which the dialect is further exaggerated, as in "Dere's whar my heart am turning ebber." I did not find this version of the text in any of the songbooks.

[49] *The Service Song Book (Abridged)* (New York: Association Press, 1917); *Army Song Book* (Washington, DC: War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities, 1918).

reintroduces the "d" sounds for the remainder of the song (e.g., "Dere's wha my heart is turning ever, Dere's wha de old folks stay").[50] It was not uncommon for the opening phrase to be printed in standard English even while the remainder of the song was presented in dialect—a peculiarity almost certainly attributable to the fact that "The Swanee River" was a popular alternative title for the song. Other irregularities, however, attest to the fact that blackface dialect signified Black identity without referring to a specific reality; because it was invented, there was no single correct implementation.

The presence of dialect on the printed page informed singers that they were giving voice to imagined African American identities. However, it fails to tell us what those singers sounded like. The pervasive inconsistencies in the incorporation and implementation of dialect raise questions about whether or not singers were faithful to the text printed on the page. Would an individual participant have been likely to pronounce the words to "Old Folks" differently based on the songbook they were using? Such seems unlikely. I am more inclined to believe that each individual singer would render the text in more or less the same way every time, and that their decision to use dialect and, if so, to what degree would be primarily influenced by their past experiences with the song and by the singers around them, not the volume in their hands.

Period 2 (1930–60): The Rise of Comic Songs

During the second period, Foster's minstrel songs continued to be presented as representative of African American identity. The repertoire, however, underwent a decisive transformation, first seeing the sudden, widespread inclusion of the comic songs "Oh! Susanna" and "De Camptown Races" and then the gradual elimination of Foster's sentimental minstrel songs. Of the twenty-five songbooks I examined belonging to this period, eighteen contained "Susanna," seventeen contained "Old Folks," and seventeen contained "Kentucky Home"—a dramatic reversal from the first period. This reflects a shift in the promotion of community singing activity, as commercial publishers began to produce books that increasingly targeted domestic audiences. Kenneth S. Clark's *The "Everybody Sing" Book* (1930), for example, was designed to facilitate "singing by family and neighbors around the household piano, organ, ukulele or 'what have you,'" and incorporates an entire section uniquely dedicated to barbershop-style arrangements that can be performed either by men's or mixed choruses.[51]

[50] *The One Hundred and One Best Songs*, rev. 20th ed. (Chicago: Cable, 1916).

[51] Kenneth S. Clark, foreword to *The Everybody Sing Book*, ed. Kenneth S. Clark (New York: Paull-Pioneer Music, 1932).

Curiously, "De Camptown Races" appears in the barbershop section, while "Old Folks," "Kentucky," and "Susanna" appear in a block with two other Foster songs in the mixed-voices section at the front of the book. Even more curiously, "Old Folks," "Massa," and "Camptown" are all printed in blackface dialect, while "Susanna" is not. The *Let's Sing Community Song Book* (1933) is described in the foreword as "a song book which truly belongs on the piano in every home," but the volume is designed to also facilitate performance by the complete line-up of domestic instruments.[52] In addition to an accompaniment that can be performed on piano or organ, each arrangement includes a melody line for violin or mandolin, a transposition for E-flat saxophone, guitar tablature, ukulele tablature, chord names for tenor banjo, and numbers for harmonica players. Clearly, this volume sought to target a broad commercial audience. The three Foster songs under close consideration are scattered throughout the volume, with both "Old Folks" and "Susanna" appearing in blackface dialect.

The producers of 1930s-era sing-along films showed little interest in Foster songs; Fleischer Studios quickly pivoted to performer-driven programming with their sound-era *Screen Song* series, while no Foster songs were mentioned in connection with any of the Master Art *Organlogue* films or featured in those to have survived.[53] However, one song—"Oh! Susanna"—was featured several times on the sing-along radio program *Gillette Original Community Sing* (1936–37), which represented the most successful attempt to transpose this popular form of entertainment to the airwaves.[54] *Community Sing* is remembered in part for its noteworthy cast: the program was hosted by a young Milton Berle, while at the same time providing the duo of Billy Jones and Ernest Hare with a late foray as "the Gillette Gentlemen." Although no recordings survive, the fact that songleader Wendell Hall was himself a prolific recording artist allows us to imagine what the sing-along portions of the show might have been like. Hall was best known for his renditions of blackface dialect songs; his greatest hit was "It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo'," which he copyrighted in 1923 and recorded numerous times.

The thousand-strong studio audience joined Hall in singing "Oh! Susanna" on August 16 and November 1, 1936. The first instance took place during the program's nine-week tryout period, during which it was broadcast over the regional Yankee network from the Boston Repertory Theater; the second occurred

[52] *Let's Sing Community Song Book* (New York: Amsco Music Sales, 1933), 1.

[53] As Joanna Smolko has demonstrated, Foster songs were common in animated shorts of this period, in which they were paired with references to enslaved African Americans, minstrelsy, and the South. She traces these uses of Foster's music to the practices of silent-era theater organists. Joanna Smolko, "Southern-Fried Foster: Representing Race and Place through Music in Looney Tunes Cartoons," *American Music* 30, no. 3 (2012): 344–72.

[54] Esther M. Morgan-Ellis, "Mediated Community and Participatory Blackface in *Gillette Original Community Sing* (CBS, 1936–1937)," *Music and Letters*, ~~forthcoming~~.

during a national broadcast from the program's permanent home in New York's Manhattan Theater. In each case, the scripts give us a good idea of what the broadcast sounded like, and also hint at what the songs meant to the audience. Although in August "Susanna" served as a stand-alone sing-along number, in November it introduced a sketch set at a rally for the "Square Deal Party" (in reality, a vehicle for the fast-paced comedy of Milton Berle and Tommy Mack in character as Judge Hugo Straight). Before the sketch, Hall called out to the listeners, "Democrats and Republicans alike . . . All of you, for the men of the hour . . . let's sing 'Oh Susanna' and 'Happy Days Are Here Again.'"[55] In this instance, with a presidential election only two days away, Foster's song was apparently deployed as symbolic of the Republican Party—but perhaps also the Southern conservative Democrats who opposed the current Roosevelt administration. White listeners were invited to resolve their political differences by uniting in blackface participation.

The *Gillette* program also sheds light on the implementation of dialect in a community-singing context. On August 16, Hall introduced "Oh! Susanna" as "a good old song by Stephen C. Foster—who wrote more fine southern tunes than any other man that ever lived."[56] He then explained that he would sing the verses, while the studio audience and home participants were expected to join in on the chorus. The first two lines of the script read, "I came to Alabama, wid my banjo on my knee, / I'm g'wan to Lousiana [*sic*], my true love for to see." However, we can get a much better idea of how Hall might have pronounced the words by listening to his 1924 Victor recording with the Shannon Quartet, in which he combines selective blackface dialect with the rolled Rs and vocal ornaments of a seasoned vaudeville performer.[57] The nonprescriptive nature of transcribed blackface dialect—at least in scripts,[58] but I would argue in songbooks as well—is driven home by the November 1 appearance of "Oh! Susanna," in which case the first two lines read, "I came from Alabama, wid my banjo on my knee, / I'm gwine to Louisana [*sic*] my true lub for to see." (For the record, I judge this version, in which there are four minor differences from the first, to be closer to Hall's execution.) The two songbooks published in conjunction with the program—one in December 1936, and the other in April 1937—contain yet *another* version of the text, this time reading, "I came from Alabama Wid my banjo on my knee,

[55] Script, George Bennett Larson papers, University of Utah, Box 15, Folder 5.

[56] Script, Milton Berle papers, Library of Congress, Box 31, Folder 3.

[57] *Discography of American Historical Recordings*, s.v. "Victor matrix B-29417. Oh! Susanna / Wendell W. Hall; Shannon Quartet," https://adp.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/800003490/B-29417-Oh_Susanna.

[58] According to the 1931 handbook *How to Write for Radio*, "In preparing most blackface dialogue for radio, it is best not to indicate all the dialect." Katharine Seymour and John Tilden Waite Martin, *How to Write for Radio* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1931), 88.

/ I'm goin' to Louisiana, My true lub for to see."[59] In one respect, this is not relevant to participation in *Community Sing*, for "Oh! Susanna" was only sung on the air before the first songbook became available. However, the songbooks, taken in conjunction with the scripts, further testify to the ephemerality of blackface dialect.

In 1941, Paramount forced out founders Max and Dave Fleischer to take control of Fleischer Studios, which they renamed Famous Studios. Between 1947 and 1951, Famous Studios released a new series of sing-along *Screen Songs*. These short films featured familiar public-domain songs, including, in 1948, "Camptown Races." The cartoon is cast as a minstrel show, with animal performers appearing in blackface before a "white" audience (that is to say, animals *not* in blackface). The minstrel troupe opens with "Dixie," and later a quartet sings James Bland's "Oh Dem Golden Slippers" (1879) in dialect. However, when "Camptown Races" is subsequently presented in sing-along format, complete with on-screen lyrics, bouncing ball, and a mixed chorus singing in alternation with female and male soloists, there is no trace of blackface dialect. It would seem that the creative team thought audiences would be more enthusiastic about joining in with the dialect eliminated, although presumably not out of concern for racist caricature, with which the cartoon is saturated. In 1948, a blackface minstrel show was still perceived as the natural setting for "Camptown Races," for viewers still associated Foster's song with the minstrel stage.

The companion volumes *Fireside Book of Folk Songs* (1947) and *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs* (1952), both of which were compiled and edited by New York–based music educator Margaret Bradford Boni and published by Simon and Schuster, further exhibit the gradual "whitewashing" of Foster's characters. These books are of a different type than those considered so far, which have primarily been cheap, utilitarian paperbacks. The *Fireside* books, in contrast, are lavish hardbound volumes, complete with color illustrations. They are built to last, and obviously suited to life on a piano; indeed, the second volume contains explicit instructions for positioning the book on the piano's music rack. The *Fireside* prefaces, however, make it clear that these volumes still exist to facilitate communal singing, although now in the context of "domestic performance."[60] *Folk Songs* contains "Old Folks" and "Susanna," both categorized as

[59] *Official Song Book of Gillette Original Community Sing, Volume 1* (Boston: Gillette Safety Razor, 1936); *Gillette's Original "Community Sing" over CBS Every Sunday Evening: Second Official Song Book* (Boston: Gillette Safety Razor, 1937).

[60] Margaret Bradford Boni, preface to *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, ed. Margaret Bradford Boni (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1947), 5. After linking folk songs to populations categorized by labor, Boni argues in her first preface that participatory singing is integral to the repertoire itself: "It is characteristic of the songs of the people that they call for group performance. Many of them [...] were so rendered from their inception; but even those conceived as solos have by their familiarity invited companionable unison whenever two or three or more people are gathered together." Boni, *Fireside Book of Folk Song*, 5. See also: Carl Van Doren, foreword to *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*, ed. Margaret Bradford Boni (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), 5–6.

Figure 6.3. In Alice and Martin Provensen's illustration for *Fireside Book of Folk Songs* (1947), clothing and iconography link "Susanna" with a white Western identity.

"Ballads and Old Favorites." The blurb accompanying "Susanna" clearly links the song with the minstrel tradition, but also emphasizes its popularity among California gold miners, describing it as "the 'theme song' of the California gold rush."[61] The accompanying illustration portrays white people in Western garb, not Southern Blacks, and the blackface dialect is omitted (Figure 6.3).[62] This depiction contrasts with an illustration that was published just two years earlier in *The Golden Song Book* (1945), another Simon and Schuster volume in which illustrator Gertrude Elliott clearly identifies the song's protagonists as nonwhite; in particular, the man's ragged clothes, gaping mouth, and white teeth betray him as a minstrel stereotype (Figure 6.4).[63]

The *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, however, did not depart wholesale from tradition. "Old Folks at Home" includes blackface dialect and is illustrated with a

[61] Boni, *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, 40.

[62] This was not by any means the first time such a connection was made. In motion pictures, both "Susanna" and "Camptown Races" had been associated with white cowboys and gold prospectors since the 1940s. Kathryn Miller Haines, "Stephen Foster's Music in Motion Pictures and Television," *American Music* 30, no. 3 (2012): 377.

[63] Katharine Tyler Wessells, ed., *The Golden Song Book* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945).

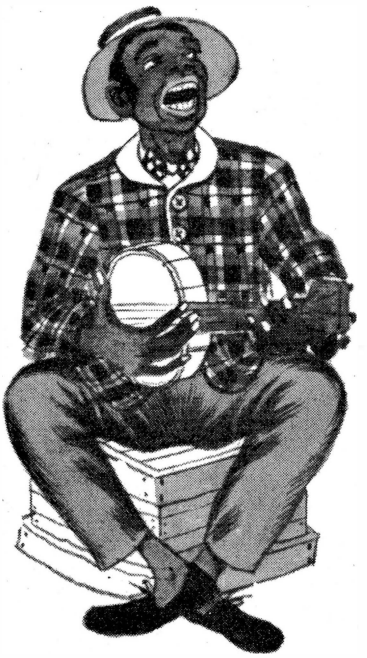


Figure 6.4. Among all the volumes examined for this study, *The Golden Song Book* (1945) was the earliest to include illustrations. At this point, "Oh! Susanna" was still firmly linked with black identity and the minstrel tradition.

rather dapper-looking Black couple next to a cottage (Figure 6.5); "Camptown Races," also present, includes dialect and is accompanied by an illustration of African American jockeys. Although it is not clear why "Kentucky Home" was omitted from *Folk Songs*, that omission was remedied in the follow-up volume, *American Songs*, where it appears under the header "Conflict and Expansion: From 1850," the second of four categories that constitute a historical narrative. With a critical reflexivity surprising for the era, the song blurb recognizes that " 'My Old Kentucky Home' romanticizes the life of the Southern Negro."[64] The accompanying illustration, however, which features stereotyped garb, hairstyles, and banjo picking, serves only to amplify this tendency toward romanticization (Figure 6.6).[65] The scene closely resembles those used

[64] Boni, *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*, 134.

[65] This reflects a broader ambivalence in Boni's treatment of the Civil War, which she describes in the section introduction as being "fought over many well-recognized issues behind which were various less obvious economic factors"—an endorsement of Southern revisionism (Boni, *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*, 124). Later in the essay, she condemns the "merciless revenge [. . .] visited upon the South" during Reconstruction (Boni, *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*,

Figure 6.5. The rustic cabin and old-fashioned clothing in this illustration, which accompanied "Old Folks" in *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, provoke nostalgia but avoid minstrel stereotypes. Although the two-tone print seems to leave the couple's ethnicity in question, comparison with other illustrations in the volume makes it clear that they are not white.

to represent "hillbillies" since the mid-nineteenth century, of which Edward Washbourne's painting *The Arkansas Traveller* (c. 1856) is perhaps the most famous example (Figure 6.7).[66] The fact that the same signifiers of rural poverty were frequently applied to both Black and white Americans facilitated the recoding of Foster's songs from Black to white identities.

Period 3 (1960–present): Erasing Blackness from the Foster Legacy

The arc of the community singing movement had touched the earth with the end of World War II, and by the second half of the century, public mass singing

125). Boni's perspective might have been influenced by her upbringing in Tallahassee, Florida, or it could be indicative of her desire to appease potential book-buyers on both sides of the geopolitical divide.

[66] See Anthony Harkins's discussion of the Washbourne painting in Anthony Harkins, *Hillbilly: A Cultural History of an American Icon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 27.

Figure 6.6. Aurelius Battaglia's illustration for "Kentucky Home" in *The Fireside Book of American Songs* draws on a long tradition of depicting poor rural African Americans.

had ceased to play a significant role in the daily lives of Americans. Nostalgia for the heyday of community singing, however, continued to manifest itself in sing-along media—most significantly in Mitch Miller's series of sing-along LPs and television broadcasts, which began with the chart-topping album *Sing Along with Mitch* (1958) and exerted significant influence into the mid-1960s. Miller's project was explicitly backward-looking. Publicity for the 1960 television pilot that led to the syndication of *Sing Along with Mitch* (NBC, 1961–64) announced that Miller's program "will encourage viewers to sing along with the 30 tunes programmed—much as movie patrons did to the beat of a bouncing ball some

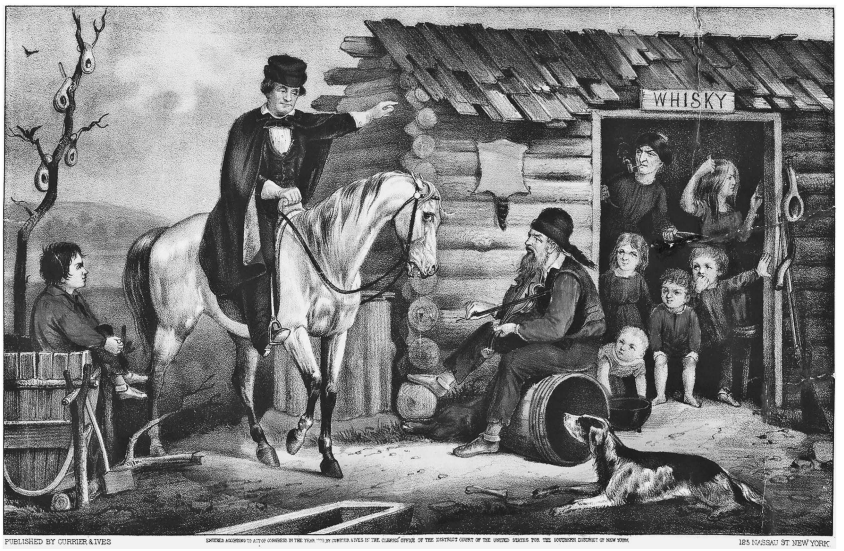


Figure 6.7. The parallels between Battaglia's "Kentucky Home" and Washbourne's *The Arkansas Traveller* are evident in this 1870 lithograph by Currier and Ives.

years ago."[67] Miller himself declared that "Nostalgia is everything in our show. All we do is open a door for people, but they have to enter that door by themselves. They hear the old songs in terms of their own experience or imagination."[68] For Miller's adult audience, that experience included the mass-singing events that had been common only twenty-five years earlier.

Miller focused his programming on older songs that were familiar to viewers, but he abandoned many of the songs that had appeared most frequently in songbooks while introducing others that, although decades old, do not appear previously to have been employed for collective singing. Although Foster songs played a surprisingly small role in Miller's project, "Susanna" appeared in a medley with "Camptown Races" on the 1959 album *Folk Song Sing Along with Mitch* in an arrangement by Lennie Carroll, who was responsible for many of Miller's renditions.

[67] Norman Shavin, "Mitch Miller's as Real as His 20-Year Beard," *Atlanta Journal*, May 24, 1960, 24, in Mitch Miller papers, JPB 14–31, Music Division, The New York Public Library, box 2, folder 6.

[68] Virginia Kelly, "'Sing Along' Success Story: Mitch Miller," *LOOK*, December 5, 1961. In Mitch Miller papers, box 26, folder 5.

Miller does not entirely divorce Foster's comic songs from their minstrel context—a tradition that he explicitly celebrated and reenacted (although without literal blackface) in his television program.[69] As in Miller's on-screen minstrel-themed sing-alongs, a plectrum banjo is foregrounded in the medley's accompaniment, providing listeners with an immediate aural signifier of Black identity. However, with the single exception of the word "gwine" in the refrain to "Camptown Races," Miller's all-male chorus abandons Foster's blackface dialect. Similarly, their rendition of "Susanna"—which uses "goin'" in place of "gwine"—omits the verses that refer to race.[70] In other words, Miller achieves a *near*-complete divorce between Foster's songs and the imagined Black identity they had embodied for more than a century; only the banjo hints at the minstrel stage, and even that was being recast in the public imagination as the instrument not of enslaved Blacks but rather white "hillbillies"—a transformation to which I will return later.

The racial reassignment of "Oh! Susanna" from Black to white identities is most evident in songbooks that include illustrations. Once the community singing movement became a thing of the past, the production of cheap paperback songbooks targeting the general public essentially came to an end. High-quality volumes intended for display on the living room piano, however, continued to find a market, and although these differ in form and function from most of the materials examined thus far, they will help us to follow Foster's songs into the twenty-first century. We have already seen "Susanna" associated with white frontierspeople in the 1947 *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, even as Foster's other songs retained their connections with Black identities. Beginning in the 1960s, however, Black identities were almost universally erased. In their place, singers were presented with a wide array of alternatives. *American Favorite Ballads: Tunes and Songs as Sung by Pete Seeger* (1961) was edited by Irwin Silber and Ethel Raim, but the illustrations—described opposite the frontispiece as "appropriate reproductions of period prints" (they are drawn from famous artworks)—were selected by Moses Asch, the founder of Folkways Records in New York City.[71] Although he accompanies some songs with illustrations that

[69] Esther M. Morgan-Ellis, "Leslie Uggams, *Sing Along with Mitch* (1961–1964), and the Reverberations of Minstrelsy," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 16, no. 1 (2022): 55–57.

[70] A copycat group called The Sing-A-Long Gang chased Miller's success, releasing seven LPs beginning in 1959. A near-identical medley of "Camptown Races" and "Oh! Susanna" appears on *Camp Fire Sing-A-Long* (Crown Records, 1961). The main differences are a reversal in song order and the fact that The Sing-A-Long Gang includes female members, while Miller openly ridiculed the idea of adding women to his Gang "because a woman's voice is not good on record." P. M. Clepper, "Mitch Hopes to Get Show Back on Air," *St. Paul Sunday Pioneer Press*, December 12, 1965, in Mitch Miller papers, box 5, folder 13.

[71] Irwin Silber and Ethel Raim, eds., *American Favorite Ballads: Tunes and Songs as Sung by Pete Seeger* (New York: Oak Publications, 1961). In his foreword to the collection, Moses Asch suggests that the postwar surge in interest in folk music among young people represents the most promising chapter in an "ever-continuing search of Americans for an identity of belonging" (7).

(a) Moses Asch's illustration for "Oh, Susanna!"

(b) Moses Asch's illustration for "Camptown Races"

Figure 6.8. These illustrations from *American Favorite Ballads* (1961) disguise the minstrel legacy of Foster's songs.

include African Americans, Asch pairs "Susanna" with a sixteenth-century Venetian woodcut portraying court musicians serenading a lady as Cupid aims an arrow at her heart (Figure 6.8[a]). The song is described as "Probably Stephen Foster's most famous song, a ditty children will always love."[72] "Camptown Races," also present in the volume, is accompanied by a nineteenth-century portrayal of white men racing sleighs in an idyllic wintertime scene (Figure 6.8[b]); the accompanying text reads "By Stephen Foster. His best songs grew out of the folk tradition and got taken back into it."[73] As such, any idea that these songs

[72] Silber and Raim, *American Favorite Ballads*, 46.
[73] Silber and Raim, *American Favorite Ballads*, 40.

ever embodied a Black identity is neatly excised, while they are simultaneously reclaimed as unmarked folk products.

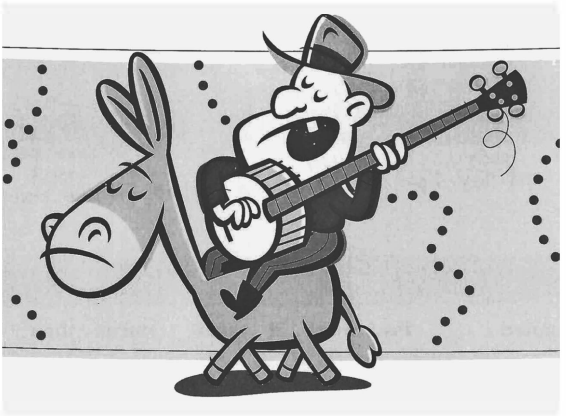
While Seeger was well aware of the damaging legacies of slavery and Jim Crow, he remained a dedicated apologist for Stephen Foster. He frequently praised Foster as one of the greatest melodists, even if sometimes his "lyrics deserve to be forgotten."[74] In the blurb accompanying "Old Folks at Home," which seems to have been written by Seeger (Austin certainly thought so), we are informed that "shorn of their minstrel show dialect and considered simply as melodies, it is no wonder [Foster's sentimental songs] spread around the world."[75] Seeger found Foster's songs useful in his mission to encourage participatory music-making, and he employed them to transform the audience into what Austin calls "a kind of secular congregation, sharing hopes of effective action for social justice, freedom, peace, and ecological harmony."[76] As Austin has elucidated at length, Seeger freely arranged Foster songs, adjusting pitches, forms, textual content, and titles to suit his preferences.[77] He removed all traces of dialect from his printed versions, and, in "Old Folks at Home" ("Swanee River" for Seeger), replaced the derogatory reference to African Americans in the refrain with "Old brother." Although he abandons "gwine" for "goin'" in the printed version of "Camptown Races," he clearly sings "gwine" on the 1959 Folkways recording *American Favorite Ballads, Vol. 3* (FA 2322). Perhaps he found it impossible to effectively execute a two-syllable word—or perhaps the song's performance practice was simply too powerful to resist.

Foster songs would periodically be paired with pre-existing artwork over the next few decades. In *The Norman Rockwell Family Songbook* (1984) they were illustrated with Rockwell's artwork: a young white woman doing embroidery (*Needlepoint*, 1924) for "Susanna" and an elderly white couple playing checkers (*April Fool, 1943*, 1943) for "Old Folks."[78] These images are not accompanied by any commentary, and were clearly selected according to a superficial connection with the song text. In *Go In and Out the Window* (1987), however, a pre-existing work of art is actively used to recontextualize "Oh! Susanna" as a symbol of white cultural history. The volume (which sat on the piano throughout my childhood, and which I played and sang from often) pairs familiar songs with works from the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City; many of the selections, including "Susanna," were later reprinted in *A Treasury of Children's*

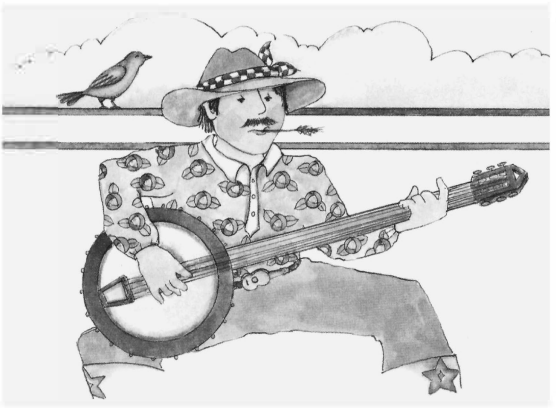
[74] Pete Seeger, *The Incompleat Folksinger*, ed. Jo Metcalf Schwartz (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 302.
[75] Silber and Raim, *American Favorite Ballads*, 83.
[76] Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 349.
[77] Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 349–51.
[78] *The Norman Rockwell Family Songbook* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1984).

Figure 6.9. Eakins's *A Cowboy Singing*, paired with "Susanna" in *Go In and Out the Window* (1987), emphasizes the song's connection to California goldminers while erasing its minstrel roots.

Songs (2003). In both volumes, "Susanna" is illustrated with a detail from Thomas Eakins's *A Cowboy Singing* (c. 1892), in which a white man in Western garb reclines in a chair, picking a banjo with a natural-skin head and singing an unknowable tune (Figure 6.9). The iconography is already familiar from earlier songbooks (Figure 6.10), but this time an accompanying text by Claude Marks explicitly associates the singing frontiersman with the song: "Written by Stephen Foster, ['Oh! Susanna'] quickly became the anthem of the Gold Rush. The song has the jolly feeling of someone setting out on the open road singing and



(a) Michael Galen's illustration for "Oh, Susanna!"



(b) Judy Pelikan's illustration for "Oh, Susanna!"

Figure 6.10. These cowboy illustrations appeared alongside "Susanna" in *The Family Car Songbook* (1998) and *Grandmother Remembers Songbook* (1992), respectively.

strumming on a banjo or guitar."[79] There are no falsehoods in this description. "Oh! Susanna" *did* become the anthem of the California Gold Rush, and with almost unbelievable rapidity—it was being sung throughout the state by 1849.[80] However, this is not the whole story. The text and image invite the reader—despite residual references to Alabama and Louisiana—to transplant "Susanna"

[79] Claude Marks, "Oh! Susanna," in *Go In and Out the Window*, ed. Dan Fox (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1987), 98.
[80] Austin, *The Songs of Stephen C. Foster*, 28–30.

to the West Coast and imagine it as a song for and about white frontierspeople. It is still a product of the mid-nineteenth century, but now embodies the carefree abandon of hopeful gold miners, not a blackface minstrel character.

Although he never could have foreseen it, Foster's centering of the banjo image facilitated the reinterpretation of "Oh! Susanna" as a song associated with white "hillbillies." For Foster, and most nineteenth-century Americans, the banjo was without question a symbol of African American culture and identity. The banjo was developed by enslaved Africans in the Caribbean islands, and for nearly 150 years it was played only by Blacks.[81] The first white musician to take up the banjo may well have been Joel Walker "Joe" Sweeney (1810–60), one of the architects of minstrelsy, and it was through that institution that the banjo was introduced into mainstream American culture.[82] The means by which white mountaineers, primarily in the Appalachians, came to adopt the banjo are still contested. While it was once believed that they were influenced by touring minstrels, recent scholarship has argued that most rural whites learned directly from their Black neighbors, whether enslaved or free.[83] By the early twentieth century, African Americans had begun to abandon the banjo in favor of the guitar, while rural Southern musicians found new opportunities to profit from their banjo-driven music with the invention of "hillbilly records" in 1923.[84] By mid-century, memories of banjo-playing minstrels were fading away, while the banjo-playing white "hillbilly" could be heard on record and radio, watched on television, and consumed through print media. The collective reimagination of the "Susanna" protagonist as a white "hillbilly" was practically inevitable.

Conclusion

This chapter's narrative comes full circle with one of the most recent songbooks to include a Foster song: *Get America Singing . . . Again!*, published in 1996 on behalf of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC, formerly MSNC). Although now more than a quarter-century old, *Get America Singing* is still in

[81] Shlomo Pestcoe and Greg C. Adams, "Banjo Roots Research: Changing Perspectives on the Banjo's African American Origins and West African Heritage," in *Banjo Roots and Branches*, ed. Robert B. Winans (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 7–8.

[82] Pestcoe and Adams, "Banjo Roots Research," 12.

[83] Cecilia Conway, "Mountain Echoes of the African Banjo," *Appalachian Journal* 20, no. 2 (1993): 146–60; George R. Gibson, "Black Banjo, Fiddle, and Dance in Kentucky and the Amalgamation of African American and Anglo-American Folk Music," in Winans, *Banjo Roots and Branches*, 223–55.

[84] Tony Thomas, "Why African Americans Put the Banjo Down," in *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*, ed. Diane Pecknold (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 143–70.

print and in active use around the country.[85] It represents the culmination of a campaign of the same name, spearheaded by the MENC but with the participation of four other major national organizations dedicated to group singing.[86] According to the volume's introduction, authored by then-MENC president Will Schmid, the campaign had two objectives: "to establish a common song repertoire that 'Americans, of all ages, know and can sing' . . . [and] to promote community singing."[87] To a historian of the community singing movement, these words are familiar, for these are the same objectives that motivated music educators and other community singing activists in the 1910s; indeed, the entire introduction, with minor edits, could have been written eighty-five years earlier. Schmid and his collaborators were well aware of their history: Schmid mentions the early MSNC songbooks and even includes a photograph of four white children participating in a 1925 Music Week event.[88]

The contents of the book are less familiar. Although the volume includes the two patriotic songs that had opened *18 Songs*, the overlap ends there. The editors clearly made an effort to both update and diversify their offerings: *Get America Singing* includes several songs from the folk revival, some musical theater numbers, and songs with non-English texts (in Spanish, Japanese, and Hebrew). Christian sentiment still prevails, but Jewish tradition is given a seat at the table. A large number of Negro Spirituals are present, as is "Lift Every Voice and Sing" (1900), which has been recognized as the Black National Anthem for over a century.[89] However, the minstrel tradition is also well represented. "I've Been Working on the Railroad," although since sanitized and divorced from its blackface origins (it is listed as a "Traditional American Folk Song" in the volume), was first published as a dialect song in the college songbook *Carmina Princetonia* (1894), while "Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah" was written for the 1945 Disney film *Song of the South* (since removed from official circulation) and draws from the early minstrel staple "Zip Coon" (1830s).[90] Although Foster's sentimental minstrel songs are gone, "Susanna" remains—stripped of all racial

[85] Trudi Wright, "'Scare Away the Dark': How Community Singing Changed My College Teaching," in *The Oxford Handbook of Community Singing*, ed. Esther M. Morgan-Ellis and Kay Norton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024), 316–17.

[86] These were the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, Sweet Adelines International, American Choral Directors Association, and Chorus America.

[87] Will Schmid, Introduction to *Get America Singing…Again!* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1996), 6.

[88] Citywide and national Music Weeks were typical of the 1920s. Sponsored by industry professionals, they played an important role in encouraging participatory music-making of all types. Morgan-Ellis, *Everybody Sing!*, 73–74.

[89] Imani Perry, *May We Forever Stand* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 15–16.

[90] Gregory Camp, "The Disney Chorus: Singing Along to the Studio's Forging of American Musical Identity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Community Singing*, ed. Esther M. Morgan-Ellis and Kay Norton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024), 548.

markers, and presented without comment or illustration. (It is perhaps no coincidence that Seeger himself served as Honorary National Chair for the campaign and wrote the songbook's foreword.)

An increasing number of music educators are calling for the removal of Foster and other minstrel songs from pedagogical materials, and reform seems imminent in mainstream educational spheres.[91] However, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the act of collectively voicing Foster songs has become entangled with the identity of political and cultural institutions, and their removal from music curricula will have a limited impact. This chapter has traced the ways in which American society has negotiated Foster's legacy over the past century. At first, his minstrel songs were embraced *as* minstrel songs in support of the white supremacist project to define hierarchical racial categories. Later, in response to the civil rights movement, Foster's songs were "whitewashed," their origins in minstrelsy conveniently disguised and forgotten. However, the songs never disappeared. Their persistence signifies the difficulty of setting right a nation built on enslavement and Jim Crow segregation.

Appendix: Chronological Bibliography of Songbooks with Content Indicators

The notation of Foster's melodies relied on common practice as opposed to authorial fidelity. As a result, there is great variety among sources. Although we cannot assume that singers faithfully executed the printed pitches and rhythms, the variations tell us something about transmission patterns and editorial objectives. In order to provide an overview of the variations, I have transcribed the first melodic phrase of each song as it appeared in each notated source. The text represents a modernized version (no dialect or derogatory terms) of the original, as it appeared in one or more post-1960 songbooks.

The melody of "Old Folks" was mostly often cast in D major, although the song also appeared in E♭ major and C major. Version A in Figure 6.11 was first printed in *18 Songs*. The editors of that volume took great care in selecting and creating their arrangements. The second of the committee's four official charges was "to adopt a standard version so that successful singing of these songs by people from even widely separated sections of the country might be possible."[92] Dykema and his colleagues were on a mission to standardize and homogenize—to distill from oral tradition the most singable version of each selection. The longest paragraph in the preface is dedicated to explaining the process by which the committee made their determinations. After consulting "many versions of the songs, differing both in words and music," they chose to print versions that represented "an approximation of what may be expected from the undirected, and hence, rather

[91] See, for example: Jennifer Forness, "Reconsidering the Role of Stephen Foster in the Music Classroom," *Music Educators Journal* 103, no. 2 (2016): 58–63; Joseph Byrd, "Whitewashing Blackface Minstrelsy in American College Textbooks," *Popular Music and Society* 32, no. 1 (2009): 77–86.

[92] Dykema et al., explanatory note in *18 Songs*.

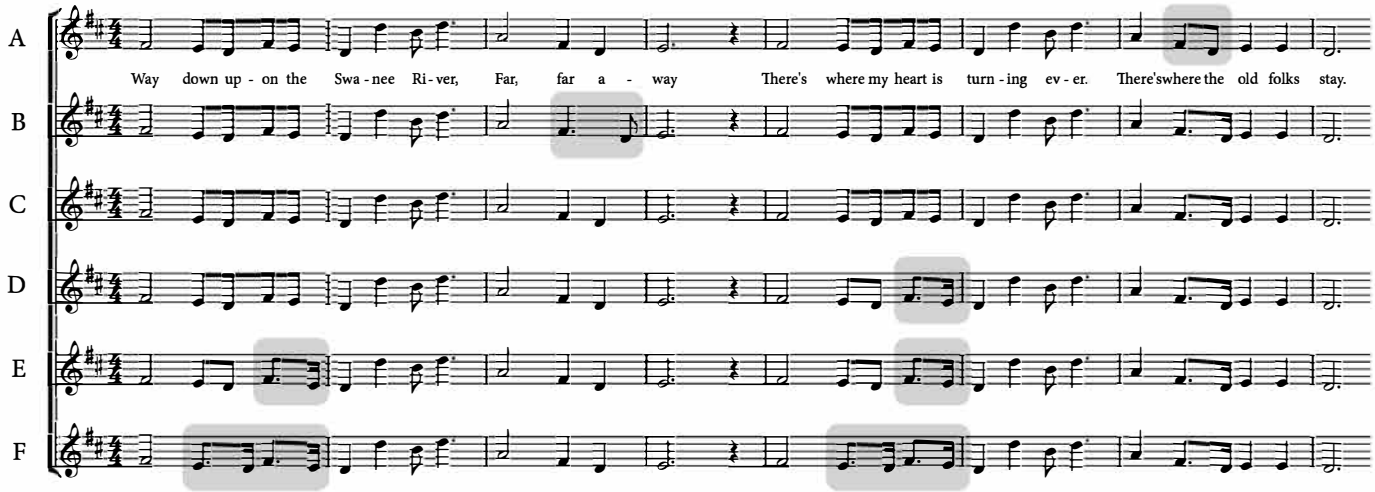


Figure 6.11. This transcription indexes all melodic variations on the first eight measures of "Old Folks at Home" that appear in the volumes examined. The label for each line corresponds with relevant entries in the chronological list of songbooks below. Points of melodic or rhythmic inconsistency are shaded.

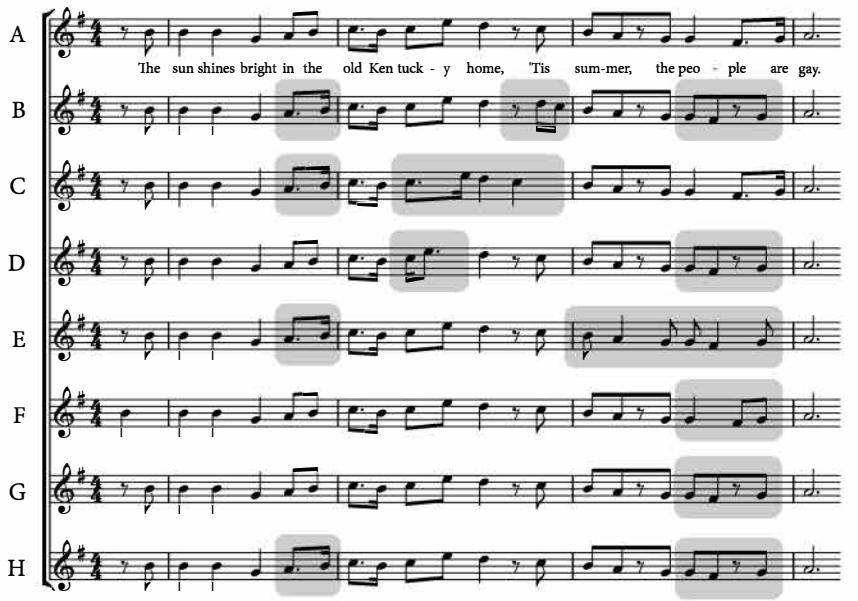


Figure 6.12. This transcription indexes all melodic variations on the first four measures of "My Old Kentucky Home" that appear in the volumes examined. The label for each line corresponds with relevant entries in the chronological list of songbooks below. Points of melodic or rhythmic inconsistency are shaded.

natural and spontaneous singing of an untrained but musical group."[93] If we are to take the committee at their word, therefore, the versions printed in *18 Songs* represent not the composer's intent but the performer's practice.

Version B, which was used in the 1915 *Golden Book*, also happens to be the version that appeared in the 1851 publications by Firth, Pond & Co. and Oliver Ditson & Co., and might therefore be regarded as the original version (although performance practice would have introduced variations even then). It is very slightly more complex, featuring dotted rhythms in measures 3 and 7. With the 1923 revision of the *Golden Book*, however, lead editor John Beattie chose to adopt the simplified *18 Songs* version of the melody; he offers no explanation as to why, but was likely influenced by the MSNC songbooks. Beattie's key and harmonization, however, are drawn from the 1915 edition, not *18 Songs*. In contrast to *18 Songs*, both editions of the *Golden Book* harmonize the entire song, not just the chorus. *Twice 55* also adopted this approach, at the same time transposing "Old Folks" from E♭ major into the *Golden Book* key of D major.

"My Old Kentucky Home" appeared most commonly in G major but also in F and E♭ major. Again, version A appeared in *18 Songs* (Figure 6.12), although this time it was Dykema and his committee who rendered the melody as originally published by Firth, Pond & Co. in 1953. Perhaps for this reason, version A was by far the most common, appearing in most volumes to include notation. Version B—which adds a dotted rhythm

[93] Dykema et al., explanatory note in *18 Songs*.

in measure 1, ~~an appoggiatura~~ in measure 2, and a new interpretation of the cadential rhythm—appeared in the 1915 *Golden Book* and subsequent volumes that used its plates, such as *Songs of Kiwanis* (1923). It also appeared in *The Community Chorus Book* and *The University of Texas Song Book*, both of 1918—an indication, perhaps, of the *Golden Book*'s widespread influence. As with "Old Folks," later editions of *Golden Book* adopted the MSNC version of "Kentucky Home." All of the other versions of "Kentucky Home" appeared in only one or two songbooks, as indicated below.

"Oh! Susanna" was most often notated in G major, but also appeared in D, F, and C. Version A, which represents the melody published by Firth, Pond, and Co. in 1849, was once again the most common, appearing in volumes of every era (see Figure 6.13). Version C adds a Scotch snap in the penultimate measure—a variation adopted in *Let's Sing* (1933) and the *Army Song Book* (1941). Also common was version E, which adds a dotted rhythm in the first half of a phrase to parallel the dotted rhythm in the second half; this version appears in *Fireside Book of Folk Songs* (1947), *The Norman Rockwell Family Songbook* (1984), and *Get America Singing . . . Again!*, published by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC, formerly MSNC) in 1996. All of the other versions appear in a single volume.

Key: OFH = "Old Folks at Home"; MOKH = "My Old Kentucky Home"; OS = "Oh! Susanna"; bd = includes blackface dialect; appended letters (A, B, C, etc.) refer to notation in the corresponding appendix Figures.

Undated songbooks are placed approximately.

1910s

Dykema, Peter W., Elizabeth Casterton, Henrietta Baker, Hollis E. Dann, Charles H. Farnsworth, C. A. Fullerton, and T. P. Giddings, eds. *18 Songs for Community Singing*. Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1913. OFH-A(bd); MOKH-A

Jolly Song Book of the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada. Toronto: 1913. MOKH

Old Time Songs. Galesburg, IL: Galesburg Piano, [nd]. OFH-B(bd)

Aitch, N. H., ed. *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*. 10th ed. Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1915. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-B

The Canadian Soldiers' Song Book. Young Men's Christian Association, 1916. OFH; MOKH

Jones, James Edmund, ed. *Camp-Fire Choruses*. Toronto: Humphrey Milford/Oxford University Press, 1916. OFH(bd); MOKH

The One Hundred and One Best Songs. rev. 20th ed. Chicago: The Cable Company, 1916. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

Barbour, Clarence A., ed. *The Service Song Book*. New York: Association Press, 1917. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-C

Dykema, Peter W., Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds. *55 Songs and Choruses for Community Singing*. Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1917. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

The Service Song Book (Abridged). New York: Association Press, 1917. OFH(bd); MOKH

Songs of the Soldiers and Sailors. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1917. MOKH

Army Song Book. Washington, DC: War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities, 1918. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

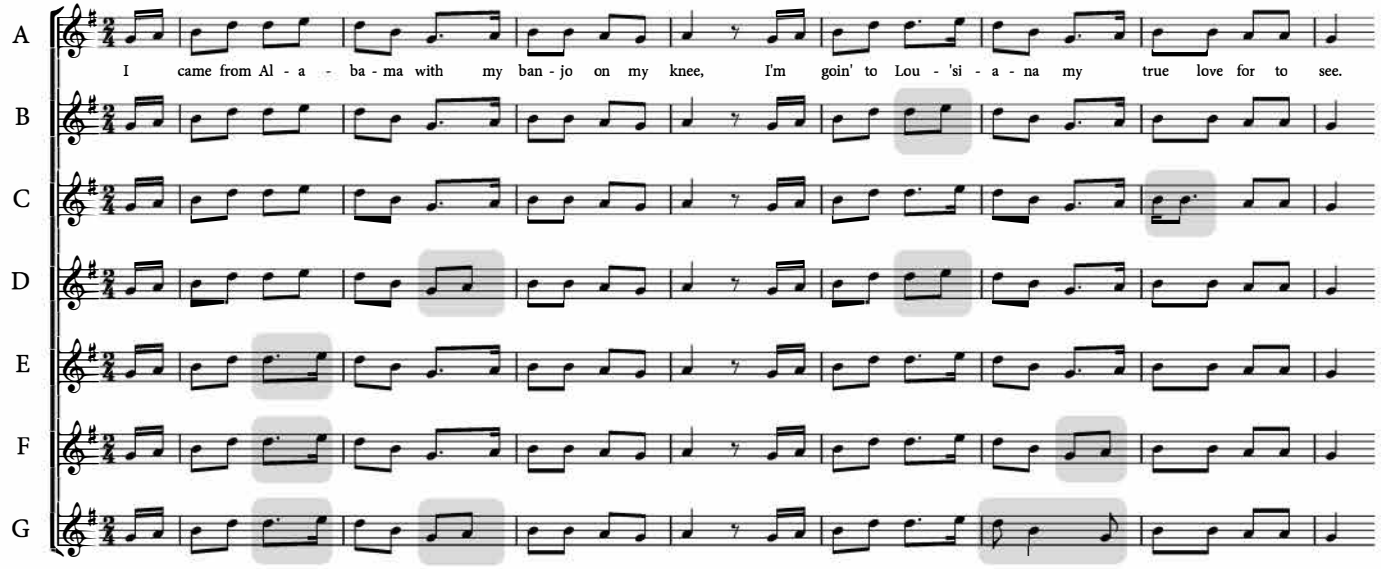


Figure 6.13: This transcription indexes all melodic variations on the first eight measures of "Oh! Susanna" that appear in the volumes examined. The label for each line corresponds with relevant entries in the chronological list of songbooks below. Points of melodic or rhythmic inconsistency are shaded.

Downes, Carrol, and Logan Marshall, eds. *The Community Chorus Book Containing Songs for All.* Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1918. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-B

Ellis, Alexander Caswell, ed. *The University of Texas Community Song Book.* Austin: Hinds, Hayden & Eldredge, 1918. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-B

Liberty Song Book. New York: War Camp Community Service, 1918. OFH; MOKH

Special Community Sing at Mahoning County Fair. Canfield, OH: War Camp Community Service, 1918. MOKH

Dykema, Peter W., ed. *Camp Song Sheet No. 2.* Washington, DC: The Evening & Sunday Star, [nd]. MOKH

Knowles, Hugh A., ed. *Song Sheet.* Norfolk War Camp Community Service, [nd]. OFH(bd); MOKH

Dykema, Peter W., Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds. *Twice 55 Community Songs: The Brown Book.* Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1919. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

Jones, Irving W., ed. *Popular Songs for Community Meetings.* Austin: University of Texas, 1919. OFH(bd); MOKH

Relief Society Song Book. Salt Lake City: General Board of Relief Society, 1919. OFH(bd); MOKH

1920s

Bispham, David, ed. *The David Bispham Song Book.* Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1920. OFH-D(bd); MOKH-D

Murray, William D., Frank Presbrey, and Henry Van Dyke, eds. *Boy Scout Song Book.* Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1920. OFH(bd); MOKH

Gage, Charles A., ed. *Songs of Kiwanis.* Chicago: The Kiwanis Club International, 1921. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-B

Botsford, Florence Hudson, ed. *Folk Songs of Many Peoples.* Vol. 2. New York: Womans Press, 1922. OFH-B(bd)

Vogt, A. S. and Healey Willan, eds. *School and Community Song Book.* Toronto: W. J. Gage, 1922. OFH-B; MOKH-E

Beattie, John W., William Breach, Mabelle Glenn, Walter J. Goodell, Edgar B. Gordon, Norman H. Hall, Ernest G. Hesser, and E. Jane Wisenall, eds. *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs.* Rev. and enl. ed. Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1923. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

"Peoria" Song Book. 3rd rev. ed. Peoria, IL: Edward J. Jacob, 1923. OFH(bd); MOKH

Beattie, John W., William Breach, Mabelle Glenn, Walter J. Goodell, Edgar B. Gordon, Norman H. Hall, Ernest G. Hesser, and E. Jane Wisenall, eds. *The Gray Book of Favorite Songs.* 3rd rev. ed. Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1924. OFH(bd); MOKH; OS-A(bd)

Dykema, Peter W., Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds. *Twice 55 Community Songs.* Canadian ed. Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1924.

Community Song Book. New York: The Rochester Chamber of Commerce, 1927. OFH(bd)

Beattie, John W., and Arthur Goodell, eds. *The Blue Book of Favorite Songs.* Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1928. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A; OS-A(bd)

Rodeheaver's Sociability Songs. Chicago: Rodeheaver, 1928. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-B; OS-A(bd)

Mealand, Arthur J., ed. *Songs of America*. Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing, [nd]. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-B

1930s

Dykema, Peter W., Will Earhart, Osbourne McConathy, and Hollis Dann, eds. *Twice 55 Plus Community Songs: The New Brown Book*. Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1930. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A; OS-B(bd)

The One Hundred and One Best Songs. 37th ed. Chicago: The Cable Company, 1931. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

Surette, Thomas W., and Archibald T. Davison, eds. *The Home and Community Song Book*. Boston: E. C. Schirmer Music, 1931. OFH-C; MOKH-E

Clark, Kenneth S., ed. *The "Everybody Sing" Book*. Rev. ed. New York: Paull-Pioneer Music, 1932. OFH-A(bd); MOKH-A; OS-A

Let's Sing Community Song Book. New York: Amsco Music Sales, 1933. OFH-B(bd); MOKH-F; OS-C(bd)

Frey, Hugo, ed. *America Sings Community Song Book*. New York: Robbins Music, 1935. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-G; OS-A(bd)

Official Song Book of Gillette Original Community Sing, Volume 1. Boston: Gillette Safety Razor, 1936. MOKH; OS(bd)

Treasure Chest Community Songster. New York: Treasure Chest, 1936. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-G; OS-D(bd)

Alka-Seltzer Song Book. Elkhart, IN: Miles Laboratories, 1937. OS(bd)

Botsford, Florence Hudson, ed. *The Universal Folk Songster for Home, School, and Community*. New York: G. Schirmer, 1937. OFH(bd); MOKH

Gillette's Original "Community Sing" over CBS Every Sunday Evening: Second Official Song Book. Boston: Gillette Safety Razor, 1937. OS(bd)

MacMillan, Ernest, ed. *A Canadian Song Book*. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1938. OFH-E

1940s

Army Song Book. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1941. OS-C(bd)

Zanzig, Augustus D., ed. *Singing America: Song and Chorus Book*. Boston: C. C. Birchard, 1940. OFH-A(bd); MOKH-A

Frey, Hugo, ed. *Bill Hardey's Songs of the Gay Nineties and Other Old Favorites*. New York: Robbins Music, 1942. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-G; OS-A(bd)

Frey, Hugo, ed. *Victory Song Book for Soldiers, Sailors and Marines*. New York: Robbins Music, 1942. OS-A(bd)

Maddy, Joseph E., and W. Otto Miessner. *All-American Song Book*. New York: Robbins Music, 1942. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-G; OS-A(bd)

Wessells, Katharine Tyler, ed. *The Golden Song Book*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1945. OS-A(bd)

Beattie, John W., William Breach, Mabelle Glenn, Walter J. Goodell, Edgar B. Gordon, Norman H. Hall, Ernest G. Hesser, and E. Jane Wisenall, eds. *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*. 21st ed. Chicago: Hall & McCreary, 1946. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

Boni, Margaret Bradford, ed. *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1947. OFH-A; OS-E

Pioneer Community Song Sheet. East Stroudsburg, PA: Shawnee Press, [nd]. OFH; MOKH; OS(bd)

1950s

Boni, Margaret Bradford, ed. *The Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952. MOKH-H

Best, Dick, and Beth Best, eds. *The New Song Fest*. New York: Crown, 1955. OS(bd)

Community Favorites. Esso, [nd]. OFH(bd); MOKH; OS(bd)

Community Sing Session: 101 Songs You Love to Sing. New York: Remick Music, [nd]. OFH; MOKH; OS(bd)

1960s–2000s

MacMillan, Ernest, ed. *A Canadian Song Book*. Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1961. OFH-E

Seeger, Pete, ed. *American Favorite Ballads*. New York: Oak Publications, 1961. OFH-F; OS-F

The Family Car Songbook. Philadelphia: Running Press, 1983. OFH; OS

The Norman Rockwell Family Songbook. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1984. OFH-A; MOKH-A; OS-E

Beattie, John W., William Breach, Mabelle Glenn, Walter J. Goodell, Edgar B. Gordon, Norman H. Hall, Ernest G. Hesser, and E. Jane Wisenall, eds. *The Golden Book of Favorite Songs*. 21st ed. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 1985. First published 1946 by Hall & McCreary. OFH-C(bd); MOKH-A

Fox, Dan, ed. *Go In and Out the Window: An Illustrated Songbook for Young People*. New York: Henry Holt, 1987. OS-A

Levy, Judith, ed. *Grandmother Remembers Songbook: A Written Heirloom for My Grandchild*. New York: Workman, 1992. OS-A

Get America Singing...Again! Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1996. OS-E

The Family Car Songbook: Hundreds of Miles of Fun! Philadelphia: Running Press, 1998. OFH-F; OS-G

Fox, Dan, ed. *A Treasury of Children's Songs*. New York: Henry Holt, 2003. OS-A