Vocal Music in a City High School and its Contribution to Community Life

Charles Troxell

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VOCAL MUSIC IN A CITY HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY LIFE

by

Charles Troxell
VOCAL MUSIC IN A CITY HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY LIFE

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Education
The College of William and Mary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Charles Troxell
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study (1) to show that the work in the voice classes at John Marshall High School contributes materially to the music activities of Richmond, Virginia.

It is proposed (2) to find the extent to which students and former members of the voice classes are participating in choral groups. It will be attempted (3) to determine whether or not the students are influenced and prepared by the work of the voice classes to carry on their singing after graduation.

In answering the problem regarding the contribution made by the voice classes to Richmond music (1), the objectives of education are presented, and the contribution of music to them discussed. Music study in the secondary schools is justified by educators, and their confirmation of the benefits to students and to the community is given, on the basis that the music of communities is improved by the voice classes of the secondary schools. The contribution of the voice classes of secondary schools to choral singing in communities is explored through case studies of three churches, located in different cities.
To find the extent students and former members of the voice classes participate in choral groups (2), a list of school and community engagements for which the voice classes have sung is presented. A study was made of the students enrolled in the voice classes for one semester through the use of a questionnaire which dealt with participation in the music activities of the churches these students attended. The results are given of an interview with an officer of two choral organizations existing when the data were collected. A statement has been made regarding solo positions held by alumni of the voice classes from a list kept at school, and from personal knowledge of the investigator.

To discover whether or not the students are influenced by the work of the voice classes to carry on their singing after graduation (3), case studies of alumni were made and studied. A detailed description of the course for the voice classes is presented to show that there is a definite relationship between what is learned in the classes and what is carried on after graduation. Some brief case studies were made and the results are shown to determine whether or not students are influenced to sing away from school.
CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTION OF MUSIC IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

I. The Objectives of Education

Education is necessary in a democracy, so as to have an enlightened citizenry, and to maintain and develop a nation. In America, according to the Educational Policies Commission, the aim of education has become the fullest development of the individual within the framework of our present industrialized democratic society. The results may be observed in individualized behavior or conduct.¹

The objectives of education have been classified by educational leaders and professional groups. Herbert Spencer, writing in 1860, set forth five classes of human conduct as a basis for educational objectives:

(1) Self-preservation, (2) securing the necessities of life, (3) the rearing and discipline of offspring, (4) the maintenance of proper social and political relations, and (5) the activities which make up the leisure part of life.²


A second classification is found in the 1918 Report of the Commission on Reorganization of Secondary Education of the National Education Association, founded on seven cardinal principles:

(1) Health, (2) command of the fundamental processes, (3) worthy home membership, (4) vocation, (5) citizenship, (6) worthy use of leisure, and (7) ethical character.

A third classification, by Chapman and Counts, made in 1924, gave six great interests about which human life revolves:

Men must always (a) care for their bodies, (b) rear their children, (c) secure the economic necessities, (d) organize for civic action, (e) engage in recreation, and (f) satisfy their religious cravings.

A fourth classification is that of Bobbitt, who presented a tenfold list of activities:

(1) Language, (2) health, (3) citizenship, (4) general social activities, (5) spare-time activities, (6) mental fitness, (7) religion, (8) parental, (9) unspecialized or non-vocational practical activities, and (10) vocational activities.

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The Educational Policies Commission has proposed more recently a classification having four categories:

1. The Objectives of Self-Realization
2. The Objectives of Human Relationship
3. The Objectives of Economic Efficiency
4. The Objectives of Civic Responsibility

Later, in 1939, Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky expressed a different viewpoint. They replaced the bases for the objectives of education previously mentioned in this chapter by concentrating on the needs of the individual; and in the case of the secondary school, upon the needs of the adolescent. They said:

The primary thesis of this book is that the supreme mission of secondary education at this time is to help young people realize upon the significant possibilities implicit in their changing status.

The school must have the responsibility of helping the student find himself in his personal, social, and economic relationships, and develop a philosophy of values which will give meaning and purpose to life. In past times the purpose of

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education was to train students for future occupations and for college; economic changes, however, give the school greater responsibilities for a large number of young people. Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky criticize the school for ignoring the relationship of the senses and feelings to intellectual functioning, and they urge more attention to the emotional and social life of the student. They group the needs of the adolescent into four areas:

1. Immediate Social Relationships
2. Wider Social Relationships
3. Economic Relationships
4. Personal Living

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8 Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky, op. cit., p. 44.
II. Music Contributes To The Attainment Of
The Objectives of Education

Music, especially singing, contributes to most
of the objectives of education, as they have been set
forth by the work of the Educational Policies Commis­sion. To measure and compare some functions of music,
the four objectives listed by this Commission shall
be used; and the groupings, or areas, as set forth
by Spencer, the 1918 Report of the Commission on
Reorganization of Secondary Education, Chapman and
Counts, and Bobbitt, will be distributed for conven­ience of analysis as seems most appropriate, as
follows:

1. The Objectives of Self-Realization

Health (listed by all four of the author­
ities)
Leisure (listed by all four)
Ethical character or religion (listed by
all four)

2. The Objectives of Human Relationship

Home (mentioned by all four)
Social life (mentioned by two)

3. The Objectives of Economic Efficiency

Vocation (mentioned by all four)

4. The Objectives of Civic Responsibility

Citizenship and democracy (mentioned by
all four)
The Commission has stated that their grouping has been based on the material presented, and that there could be further subdivision, though each is related to the other.\(^9\)

Music may be a contributing factor to health. According to Henry Coward, eminent British vocal expert and choral conductor, singing is particularly beneficial to health. He writes that singing improves the general system of breathing, oxygenizes the blood, improves the circulation and strengthens the heart, aids the peristaltic action of the stomach, thus improving digestion, raises the spirit, often banishes headaches, improves the carriage and figure, and beautifies the complexion.\(^10\) Slavson states that correct singing involves some basic processes in vital organs that are strengthened and stimulated through it. That singing is vibrated and rhythmic expiration; viewed from this angle, its fundamental nature is readily perceived.\(^11\) Dykema and Gehrken write that

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\(^10\) Henry Coward, *Choral Technique and Interpretation* (London: Novello and Co., Ltd.), p. 64.

breathing is the source and regulator of all vital processes that are essentially rhythmic; the heart action, blood flow, perception of light and sound, the digestive tract, and the total rhythmic bodily processes.\textsuperscript{12} The emphasis on breathing in singing thus becomes vitally important. Many competent authorities are convinced that music actually has healing powers, and that it causes perceptible changes in functions of the nervous and circulatory systems by vibration, thus having power to dispel fatigue.\textsuperscript{13}

In the area of leisure music has an unique place. Our art has become divorced from life and from the service of men.\textsuperscript{14} Music can be put to more varied uses, as an accomplishment, than any other subject.\textsuperscript{15} A direct carry-over from the voice classes

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{12} Peter W. Dykema and Karl W. Gehrken, \textit{The Teaching and Administration of High School Music} (Boston: G. C. Birkhead and Company, 1941), p. 104.
    \item \textsuperscript{13} Agnes Saville, M. D., \textit{Music, Health, and Character} (London: John Lane The Bodley Head Limited, 1923), p. 1.
    \item \textsuperscript{14} James L. Mursell, \textit{Human Values in Music Education} (New York: Silver Burdett Company, 1934), p. 31.
    \item \textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 161.
\end{itemize}
to the community is recognized by many authorities, and classes have thus transformed the singing of glee clubs, choirs, and small ensembles, not only in school, but also in the community as well.\textsuperscript{15} Pupils who have learned to sing during high school days have developed the desire to take their places in church choirs and other adult organizations, and they will sing in their homes and at social gatherings. Their training may offset some of the bad singing heard on the radio, so that better programs may be eventually demanded. The music students will not only want to sing or play, but also will be stimulated to be keener listeners to musical events. In the matter of carry-over, there is an opportunity to neutralize the materialism we have developed.\textsuperscript{17} Music can alleviate the effects of routine employment, and the fact that many industrial workers spend large sums of money for mechanical music shows the need they feel.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} Dykema and Gehrken, op. cit., p. 104.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. xxiii.
\textsuperscript{17} Mursell, op. cit., p. 75.
Music has always been so closely attached to religion, the next area of consideration, that it can be thought part of it. The singing of sacred texts, set to music by the masters, provides for the students a religious experience that can be a decided moral force. The desire to sing with a group may bring many students under religious influence. The school can give a religious emphasis through music without giving offense to those who oppose any religious training within its walls. "Music is one of the most essential and convincing expressions of that faith in truth and goodness, in beauty which alone makes life worth while."

Music is a moral force, though no music in itself has direct moral power. The power lies in our response to it and what we do with it. It furnishes opportunities for students to experience achievement. It has moral influence due to its maintenance of proper and honest standards, because it naturally arranges itself in the form of significant undertakings. It can be an aid to self control through its study.

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In the home, music is a power to bring cheer and build morale. The mother's lullabies bring to the child a sense of security and confidence. The family, singing as a group, or listening together, are unconsciously welding together forces which make the home the greatest unit of our culture. Above all, music should be made humanly significant; and this can be done by teaching songs the children will like to sing outside school, thus affecting the home.\textsuperscript{21}

Music should be taught in school because growing skill in music is an experience which increases human happiness. No subject has more to do with making a happy school than music, and it can do the same for the home.\textsuperscript{22}

The importance of music in the area of social life will be treated at greater length in the section dealing with the community -- a more comprehensive classification.

\textsuperscript{21} Mursell, \textit{Human Values in Music Education}, op. cit., p. 21.

\textsuperscript{22} Dykema and Gehrken, op. cit., pp. xix-xxi.
In the area of vocation, it is not probable that a large proportion of students will make a profession of music, but it is possible for students to receive fees for singing, or for playing. Music, therefore, may be thought of as being a part of the vocational field. For example, plans for a vocational school to be built in Richmond provide for elaborate equipment and quarters for music study, vocal and instrumental.

Music in the area of citizenship and democracy will be discussed at length in the section on the community. The major function of music is to aid in developing personalities, help make social adjustments, strengthen faith in democratic ideals, and build culture.23

It is assumed that the classification given by the Educational Policies Commission, Objectives of Self-Realization, and that of Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky, Personal Living have the same general aims regarding the individual’s development, and particularly, his emotional life and personality. Music is very potent in this realm. Mursell states that a musical person is one having enthusiasm for music,

one who seeks wider experiences in music and is capable of serious study, and who makes music a part of his everyday life. Music, he also writes, exists to serve humanity and to glorify human life. It enables one to be aware of new things in the world, and new possibilities in one's self. Music is a natural emotional release through self expression. It expresses sentiment in tone. Many of our students will pass through life in hum-drum and dreary occupations, and only the things of the spirit will give them release; music can change life for them, for it provides nurture for the spirit of man. Music can be an agency for mental and personal growth, by overcoming repressions and through self expression.


28 Dykema and Gehrken, op. cit., p. xxiv.

This is a disciplined self-expression, and since too few of the subjects in the high school curriculum as they are generally taught offer self-expression, music is one of the main avenues to this end. School work which is directed primarily to the intellect, and leaves out feeling frequently influences students to find in other means, as the detective story, gangster play, sex novel, and cheap moving pictures, emotional satisfactions. The school must provide worthy emotional opportunities, and singing can be a means of real emotional experience, expression, and release. Songs should be chosen with a view to their emotional value and sincerity, and the music for listening must have these same qualities.  

Not much attention has been devoted to a scientific analysis of the influence of music on man's feelings and behavior. Plato and Aristotle thought music affected character and had power to produce relaxation and enjoyment. R. C. A. Victor has made a research along this line, and they found that most people think music is helpful.


In personality development, singing will improve the speaking voice, in quality, volume, and enunciation. This is particularly true if a good singing method is taught.32

All teaching must aim to promote both appreciation and technical power.33 Dr. John Erskine thinks that performance is more important than listening.34 McCauley thinks that the aim in music instruction is the development of love of music, both in listening and participation.35 Mursell has said:

To be valuable in education, an experience must have these characteristics: it must be active rather than passive, it should be many-sided, and culturally significant -- music fills these conditions with remarkable perfection.36

32 Dykema and Gehrkena, op. cit., p. 104.
33 Ibid., p. 19.
34 Mursell, Human Values in Music Education, op. cit., p. 44.
35 McCauley, op. cit., p. 28.
III. Music Contributes To Community Life

The objectives of education, as they apply to community life, cannot be separated from their applications to an individual, since the individuals make up a community. An individual, undoubtedly, makes contributions to his community, and the community makes its impression on its individuals. The Educational Policies Commission's fourth classification, The Objectives of Civic Responsibility, and the classifications of Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky concerning Social Relationships are assumed to have some common factors, and will be considered as having for their field of observation the community. Music contributes to these objectives as it serves the community.

Music develops a strong social value -- a desire to share with others the results of music study.37 Many persons will be fated to lives of routine toil; some communities provide ways to meet this unsatisfactory condition.38 Flint, Michigan, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Lindsborg, Kansas, are three places

37 Dykema and Gehrken, op. cit., p. 23.
where music holds great importance. In Lindsborg, for example, all town activities and holidays are planned to make their music festival successful. In the three performances of *The Messiah*, which are given in Holy Week, at least a fourth of the two thousand population participates in the chorus or the orchestra; and three generations of the same family are represented frequently at a performance. Baltimore, Maryland, has had a municipal director of music for many years, and has maintained a symphony orchestra and concert band for community concerts. Birmingham, Alabama, has maintained a large music appropriation. Denver, Colorado, Portland, Maine, and San Francisco, California, have held municipal concerts for many years. St. Louis, Missouri, has held outdoor opera for its citizens. Salt Lake City, Utah, and Dallas, Texas, have municipal pipe organs. New York City has held symphony concerts in the Lewisohn Stadium many summers. Kansas City, Missouri, Washington, D. C., and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, have maintained municipal auditoriums. Boston, Massachusetts, Westchester County, New York, and many other communities have held annual festivals for several years. The National Federation of Music Clubs has sponsored national contests for individuals and groups.
In the last third of the nineteenth century, community music, founded on the old singing school for young and old, waned; then professionalism created a class consciousness. Individuals, dreaming of a career, drew away from amateur enterprises. The solo quartet displaced the choir. There was a need for improved congregational singing, under the leadership of chorus choirs, and that condition has since been remedied. The Westminster Choir School, of Princeton, New Jersey, under the direction of Dr. John Finley Williamson, has done pioneering work in preparing choir leaders to direct and train groups recruited within a church membership. In his famous Motu Proprio, Pope Pius X recommended the establishment of the necessary training schools.


called Schola Cantorum, to restore congregational singing to combat the concert music used in the Catholic Church. This points toward a more general participation in worship.

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41 Mursell, Human Values in Music Education, op. cit., p. 81.
IV. The Justification Of The Secondary School Music Program

The secondary school music program is justified by its contribution to the realization of the objectives of education through its contribution to individual development and community life. The Educational Policies Commission had for its last classification, The Objectives of Civic Responsibility; Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky had for their second, Wider Social Relationships. It will be assumed that these objectives have the community for their common field of activity and observation; and if music contributes effectively to the community it should satisfy the requirements of the stated objectives.

In Section II, ideas have been presented which reveal that music contributes many values to an individual. Singing contributes to his health, provides wholesome activities for his leisure time, gives him a means of self expression for his religious feelings, and a release of his emotions. Music helps to make a happy home, engenders social contacts and relationships, aids in strengthening democratic principles, and is a means of financial earnings. Above all, it
One of the main purposes of education, in effecting the promises of American democracy, is to guard, cherish, advance, and make available in the life of coming generations the funded and growing wisdom, knowledge, and aspirations of the race. The practical, social, and fine arts are all essential parts of education. According to the Educational Policies Commission:

Fine arts, which are often regarded as "ornamental" by the thoughtless; in truth they are not mere refinements of life......they serve to distinguish civilization from barbarism.42

Music has been criticized by some educators and lay people as one of the fads and frills which has gotten into our curriculum in the past few decades. High school music can be justified in many ways, but its major justification can be found in its own excellence in high standards of accomplishment, and for its splendid contribution to community life.

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Pitts writes that the high schools have produced the most brilliant and expert performance by the largest number of students of any nation at any time in history.  

A brief discussion of the history of the development of music as an element of the curriculum of the public school will suggest, perhaps, that the contribution which music can make to personal and social development was recognized at an early period and that its inclusion in the school program was in response to a recognized need.

In 1838, public school music was first introduced in New England. This started as an attempt to improve the singing in church service. It will be remembered that the Puritans gave scant support to music. The old singing schools began in 1720, but it was 1837 before music was taught in the grammar schools. The first teachers were products of the old singing schools. Between 1838 and the Civil War, not more than fifty cities had public school music. Cincinnati was the first city to institute music (1857) in the primary grades. In a real sense, however, public school music came after the Civil War.

43 Pitts, op. cit., p. 24.
By 1886, the United States Commissioner of Education reported that two hundred and fifty school systems were regularly teaching music.

Marked advances in American music were encouraged by: (1) concerts and success by American concert artists, (2) activities of choral clubs, (3) formation of orchestras and bands (Theodore Thomas was most active in presenting symphonic concerts throughout the country -- he popularized good music), (4) and activities of the New England Conservatory and the Cincinnati Conservatory. During this period teaching became an art, music books were compiled and published, tonic and sol-fa was introduced in New England, rote songs were taught, and in 1885, music was an activity which was taught by most grade school teachers. It is also significant that Thaddeus F. Giddings endorsed the system of reading music by actual reading from books rather than from a blackboard. This system will be referred to later as teaching to read music by the use of copious material.

The matter of developing discrimination and proper standards in pupils is important in our

culture. This calls to mind a question which music teachers must answer, namely, "Will the popular appeal for swing music and hillbilly bands increase or decrease?" Young men and women should be given the opportunity to work with music of high quality to the point where they can experience the satisfaction which derives from its performance. Dykema and Gehrken give directions: select music of high quality, direct it with vitality and artistry, and keep the pupils working hard. 45 Another question invariably arises, "Should we teach for enjoyment or for gain of technical power?" Dykema and Gehrken answer that we should do both, for in so doing there are definite gains. Some of the noblest music in the world has been written in vocal form, and music with good texts adds culturally to the performer. 46

High school pupils contribute heavily to the community. The girls' glee club, the a cappella choir, and the boys' glee club frequently sing better than the usual adult parallel organizations. High school groups, vocal and instrumental, all over the nation, perform for such events as: Parent Teachers'...

45 Dykema and Gehrken, op. cit., p. 457.
46 Ibid., pp. 19-72.
Association meetings, civic clubs, memorial ceremonies, teachers' meetings, Red Cross meetings, community fund meetings, corner-stone layings, in hospitals and camps for service men, in school and municipal concerts, competitive festivals, and radio broadcasts.

During the past two decades there has been an effort to attract young people into church choirs, mainly by the institution of the minister of music. Often, this leader gives private lessons in exchange for services given in the choir, and in many cases a school musician holds also the minister of music position; this insures something like common standards. 47

47 Dykema and Gehrkena, op. cit., pp. 343-353
Dr. Thomas H. Briggs, a recognized authority on secondary education, writes as follows concerning music activities performed outside the school.

All my own thinking about education is guided by two very simply stated principles. The first one is that the primary duty of the school is to teach people to do better the desirable things that they are likely to do anyway. Another duty is to reveal higher activities and to make them both desired and maximally possible. What are the musical activities in which people actually engage outside of school? In limited numbers they sing and play on various instruments; in larger numbers and more frequently they listen to others play and sing; and they think and talk about music. What do they play and sing? To what do they listen? Of what do they talk? and how do they carry on these various activities? Answers to such questions give raw curriculum material. After evaluation it is to be arranged for teaching; and then the first challenge is to teach pupils to do better than they otherwise would do these things that seem to you most desirable.

In addition to this, the second principle demands that the school should reveal to pupils higher activities -- higher types of music, better ways of singing or playing, better ways of listening and responding, and better ways of thinking and talking about what they have heard. This in some measure the school has always done, frequently, however, attempting the revelation on a level higher than the pupils are ready to appreciate and to approve. Unless they are made to desire these higher activities and to seek mastery over them, the teaching is likely to be ineffective and futile. It is what pupils are inspired to seek after compulsion ceases that counts.\footnote{Thomas H. Briggs, "Music in Secondary Education," \textit{MENC Yearbook}, 1936, pp. 42-45, cited by Peter W. Dykema and Karl W. Gehrken, \textit{The Teaching and Administration of High School Music} (Boston: C. C. Birchard and Company, 1941), p. 354.}
Mursell justifies music as a school subject because it falls in with the project type of organization. This is of considerable importance, for it involves a joint undertaking to which each pupil makes his own personal contribution.49

Music can offer, under present school conditions, an almost perfect example of how standards ought to be set to achieve educational and ethical outcomes, for the reason that it naturally arranges itself in the form of significant undertakings.

Dr. John Erskine is reported to have said that when he had to reconstruct his piano playing sufficiently to perform in public one of Mozart's concertos, it represented one of the most formidable moral tasks of his whole life. Music can be delightful, but it is not easy; furthermore, it becomes more exacting as we work with it. It should not be divested of the element of hard work, for it means a constant revision of standards, to self and to others. We learn in it to see the identity of musical, human, and moral values.50


50 Ibid., pp. 158-160.
There is a principle in education, that the cooperative activity of a group of like-minded learners can exercise a very stimulating influence on each individual. This is the idea underlying class instruction, as opposed to private teaching. Thus, a social context for learning is provided. The acquisition of an ability is private and individual, but its expressive use is social. Class work should be planned to furnish the social patterns for expressive activities, since the class can arouse momentum and enthusiasm. It is well adapted to import into musical learning the essential sense of reality, for it can foster a sense of cooperative responsibility.51

John Dewey characterized the school as a simplified, purified, and balanced environment. This does not mean a place of preparation for life only, for there should be no break with the future. Many educators treat the music program with less respect than arithmetic or foreign language study, because they think of it as an extra-curricular activity. Students may become members of a chorus, band, or orchestra; but the critics ask if this is

really serious business, and is it the kind of thing schools are for; no lesson is being learned, and no assignments are being given. It cannot be argued, as an arithmetic teacher can, that the minds of the students are storing up knowledge to be used at a later day. Because music seems a less serious process, it is often relegated to a lower plane along with minor athletics or the social life of the school.52

If we consider the school as an environment for living, however, our attitude toward singing and listening to the best music will be different. If the environment is to be simplified, purified, and a balanced way of life, music becomes still more important; because it provides emotional experiences that no other activity can equal. It provides a means for personal and mental growth and release, moral situations, and cultural background. Progressive educators find in the music program an agency that helps advance their ideas, because the music program harmonizes with the nature and functions of the ideal school.

52 Mursell, Human Values in Music Education, op. cit., p. 231.
(a) Music presents a picture of an ideal school activity. (b) The music program, properly handled, embodies and represents the principle on which the whole internal organization of the school should be governed. (c) The music program affords essential contacts between the school on the one hand and general society on the other, between school life and life in general -- a relationship which is recognized as one of the great needs of modern education.53

One of the greatest dangers to the school today is that it may be divorced from life. This condition exists in other institutions also -- professions, business, and the church. This unnatural condition, prevalent in many schools, can be resisted by setting up the right sort of internal organization, and by maintaining effective external relationships. The first means may be accomplished by reforming curriculum and procedures. If music instruction is planned in terms of needs of both individuals and society, it should have generous treatment within the schedule, not used as an appendix; and it should be considered equal to any other school experience so far as credits and recognition are concerned. There are many good examples illustrating what is meant by external relationships, such as the Alumni Chorus of the Ithaca, New York, High School; an

organization in Flint, Michigan; Omaha, Nebraska, High School; and the Madrigal Singers from the State College at Emporia, Kansas. The school music program should operate to motivate musical activity outside the school so as to provide contacts with life which are most natural. The program should include contacts with the home, and should thus effect a change in the cultural status and richness of life there. The school should assume leadership in community culture, and if the music in the school is well planned, it will tend to carry over into the community life naturally and simply.

Mursell imagines a skeptical critic, who regards the music program as a waste of the taxpayers' money and pupils' time. This critic puts music on the basis of stamp collecting, needlework, and the study of Sanscrit. His criticism may be answered, that music, from the standpoint of historical and sociological fact, is an important part of our common culture, that men of the highest genius have devoted serious efforts to it, that it is a part of our western civilization (a civilization based on Christianity), that every child has a right to be brought in contact with it, that much pleasure may be derived from it, that those persons having no aesthetic interests are limited and
Immature, and that music can provide a means for mental and personal development. Leisure time imposes a responsibility on education, and some part of the pupils' activity must be given over to this end.

Mursell admits that written and oral speech, reading, and elementary arithmetic are most essential, in fact, more important than music; every person must possess this group of knowledge. Three things have affected the status of these fundamental subjects: first, they are now taught so efficiently it takes less time to learn them; second, many parts, once taught, are now deleted -- formal grammar and advanced arithmetic; and third, children stay in school longer (more years) than formerly. Since more time is now available, there should be time for music and related activities.54

To summarize, educators and musicians have endorsed teaching music in school because (1) music contributes worthy qualities to students, and (2) the students carry these benefits to the community. Regarding the contributions of music to the students, indirectly affecting the community, it has been stated that fine arts are necessary to education, and music

belongs in this classification. High schools have produced excellent performances by large participating groups. The awareness of beauty justifies music study, and developing standards is important to our culture, and, further, teaching appreciation of good music will offset bad music. Briggs, in his philosophy, urges schools to reveal higher activities. Music is important because it fits in with the project type of organization, for it sets up significant undertakings.

Music is a moral force because it gives the pupil the experience of successful achievement. Class work in music provides a field for discussion of music which has been performed or heard. There is ample time for music in the schools, since the more vital subjects, English and arithmetic, are now taught more efficiently, and students have now more years to attend school. Music provides emotional release, and it is part of our common culture.

Regarding the benefits which the students carry to the community, it was presented that public school music courses began as a plan to improve church singing; and quick achievement came because of adolescent enthusiasm. There is social value in the study of music. Leisure time has become a responsibility to the community, and music can be a great aid in this
connection. Perhaps the most important fact is that music study is closely related to life, for it applies to the school life and to the community life at the same time; and this makes music a valuable and meaningful subject, for it tends to offset the criticism that the school is divorced from life.
CHAPTER III

THE VOICE CLASSES AT JOHN MARSHALL
HIGH SCHOOL

I. The Beginning Of The Voice Classes
At John Marshall High School

Voice classes were started in both the senior high schools in Richmond the fall semester, September 1934, by Mr. Walter C. Mercer, then supervisor of music for the city of Richmond. He engaged the investigator to set up the course of study and teach the classes. These began with two classes at Thomas Jefferson High School, including eighty students; and one class at John Marshall High School, with sixty-five students enrolled. Full scholastic credit was allowed, the same as that given for English, History, or any other academic subject. Mr. Mercer had some difficulty arranging for this full credit, for the School Board thought the vocal work should not have the same standing as other subjects, since there would be little or no home work, and no regular assignments. Mr. Mercer, however, was able to convince them that there was no real discrepancy, since the students would often be asked to do extra service singing in concerts which would be scheduled outside
school hours, and approval was finally granted.

The demand for the voice class instruction grew rapidly, and the next semester, February 1935, there were five classes, three at Thomas Jefferson High School, and two at John Marshall High School. Enrollment grew so fast, in the next year, that in the September 1936 semester, a full-time teacher was needed for classes at Thomas Jefferson High School, and the investigator was engaged with a full schedule of classes, at John Marshall High School.

II. The Plan Of Study

This plan is practically the same as the original which was made before class work was begun. It was planned to prepare students to sing successfully in school and community organizations. It has seemed to work out very satisfactorily, and few changes have been made.
The course is based of the following factors:

- Technique
- Repertoire
- Reading
- Part-singing
- Appreciation

Each of these will be discussed at length, since method is important in music, as it is in any work which combines art and science.
Technique

This is the vocal method, a copy of which was given each student at the beginning in the voice classes, in 1934.

A SHORT TEXT FOR VOICE CULTURE

by

Charles Troxell

This brief work makes no claim of originality, but I believe it will be practical and useful. Nonessentials have been omitted; and it contains the material which has been successfully used in training voice classes in high schools and colleges, glee clubs and choirs.

Vocal technique (or method) may be divided for convenience into three principles: Support, Resonance, and Registers.

SUPPORT

(Breath control, breathing, etc.)

The tone should be sustained and supported by a conscious, steady pulling in of the abdominal tract, as the breath supply is needed. While singing, the chest should remain in a comfortably high position, and should not be relaxed until the end of the phrase.
Exercise A

This exercise should be used only for beginners. It teaches the proper action of the supporting muscles.

Very slow.

```
\[ \text{may} \text{ may} \text{ may} \text{ may} \text{ may} \text{ may} \text{ may} \]
```

Do not take a preparatory breath. (a) Kick in the abdominal tract with a convulsive, muscular movement. (b) Relax between tones (at $\checkmark$).

Exercise B

Slow

```
\[ \text{(1) may} \text{ my ny my ny my ny my} \]
```

This exercise gives the actual application of breathing for all singing.
With hands on the lower ribs, expand out and up with a muscular movement. Maintain this position while singing, and completely relax when through.

EXPAND TO BREATHE -- DO NOT BREATHE TO EXPAND.

While singing, the ribs stay out and up; and the chest does not fall until the end of the phrase.

Complete relaxation of the ribs and chest muscles at the end of each phrase is very important. The muscular movement of the ribs in both expansion and relaxation must be prompt and spontaneous. Strive for elasticity of movement rather than strength.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

RESONANCE

(Placement, Nasal Reinforcement, etc.)

This is probably the most important principle of all. Zay describes resonance, as follows:

Resonance is the forward humming ring, or ringing hum, which gives intensity and carrying power, solidity and character, whether the voice is loud or soft....It is the ring in the voice.¹

Exercise C

Slow

\begin{align*}
(1) & \text{ming ming ming ming ming} \\
(2) & \text{nyea nyes nyes nyes nyes} \\
(3) & \text{mee may mah mo moo}
\end{align*}

Apply the breath support as in Exercise B.

Produce a strong, clear, ringing tone. Strive to fill the resonating cavities which are back of the eyes and the nose --

Exercise D

Fast

\begin{align*}
\text{mee mee mee mee may may may may may mah mah mah mah mah}
\end{align*}
Now apply these two principles (Support and Resonance) immediately in some simple song. Reduce the thought preceding each phrase to this: "I must spread my ribs comfortably, and keep them out while singing, and then relax completely at the end of the phrase." Do not think this: "I must fill my lungs with breath." Make your voice ring -- fill the resonating cavities.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Exercise D2

For resonance and clear diction

Slow

\[ \text{bah bay bah bee bah bo bah bee bah buh bah boo bah bah bah} \]

\[ \text{bah bay bah bee bah bo bah bee bah buh bah boo bah bah} \]

Phrase at the breath mark (\( \checkmark \)). Emphasize the consonants. Then sing again, using for the consonant S, D, T, M, N, or Z. Retain the same vowel sounds. For example -- sah say, sah see, etc.
REGISTERS

A vocal register has been defined as a series of tones produced by the same mechanism. There is a necessary and natural change in the thought of direction of tone in the upper voice of all singers; as well as in the low tones of contraltos, baritones, and basses.

The middle register is approximately as follows:

for sopranos and tenors

for contraltos, baritones, and basses

The head register (upper register) begins on the given note and includes all higher notes:

for sopranos and tenors

for contraltos, baritones, and basses

The thought directs the tones of the middle register, as in X; but we direct the thought for the high tones, as in Y; thus aiding nature by our power of will.
Exercise E

sopranos and tenors
contraltos, baritones,
and basses

On the "ooh" protrude the lips, and get a pure oo sound, as in the word soon. Yawn, and give the high note an extra supporting pressure by the breathing muscles. Think toward the crown of the head, dropping the jaw, getting a yawning form, darkening bright vowels, and thinking into the interior cavities. Any one of these directions will produce the right tone.

The diagram is false, obviously, but it is an aid to induce the right effect. What really happens, in singing a correct high tone, is that the uvula is raised, as is the soft palate, and the tone is resonated in the naso-pharynx region, as well as in the other resonating cavities used in the middle register.

A simple rule is produce the middle, or medium register, the same way you would speak loudly. In the upper voice, however, think a yawning form, and darken the vowel sounds.
Exercise E2

Use the same instructions as in Exercise E.

sopranos and tenors

contraltos, baritones, and basses

On "whom" yawn and think in.
Chest Tones

Sopranos and tenors should not use chest tones. Baritones and basses use these tones so naturally that it is hardly necessary to instruct them along these lines. They will feel a sympathetic vibration on G (below middle C) and all lower tones, as if the tone is resonating principally in the chest.

Contraltos should sing chest tones on middle C, or C sharp (the half tone above), but under no circumstances should they carry this register higher in the scale. They should feel a sympathetic chest vibration when the correct tone is sung, and they will be aware that the quality on these chest tones resembles the quality of a man's voice.

Exercise F

Sing chest tones on the C and all tones below C. The chest tones are dotted underneath.
Nothing is more important to vocal classes than the method, or technique, of singing. Good music, badly sung, can never be effective. To spoil young fresh voices with bad technique would be an injustice to the school, the students, and the community; talented individuals could never realize musical ambitions, and the voice classes would be an expensive waste of time and money.

When teaching voice in high school, it is almost impossible to go into detail in the matter of technique, for the students are impatient to sing. Year after year, therefore, time taken for the discussion and study of technique has been shortened, and attention to it has been simplified to the barest necessities. These fundamentals are: (1) how to support a tone with the breath, (2) how to resonate a tone, and (3) how to sing medium, high, and low tones. From a singer's viewpoint, this is a complete technique; and the daily work, an hour of singing, gives ample opportunity for the class to practice correct singing. There are three examination periods every semester, when each student sings alone for evaluation; and the teacher is given opportunity to make necessary criticisms and corrections.
Repertoire

The repertoire listed in the course of study refers to the numbers which are taught to the voice classes to be sung as solos. Individuals are required to sing one of these numbers before the class and for examination. The songs are taught in appropriate keys, by transposition, so that the high voices and the low voices can learn them in a key which is comfortable to each student. To vary the program, the class is required to sing the song, one member at a time singing two or three short phrases as the song proceeds to its close; and when finished, it is started again from the beginning, and is continued until all members have performed. This builds confidence in a student, and offsets self consciousness and nervousness. At other times, the class is turned into a vocal clinic, and each member must sing from the platform, when he is criticized for posture, performance, and any outstanding qualities; good or bad.

When the classes began, in 1934, available material (music books) was very limited, so the students copied songs from the blackboard, and they also learned to transpose the keys.
Such songs were used as:

- The Rosary
- Lascia Chio Piango (In Italian)
- Pale Moon
- When Song Is Sweet
- Duna
- Serenade
- The Zephyr
- Shortnin' Bread
- Dedication (In German)
- Mah Lindy Lou
- Rolling Down To Rio
- Could My Song With Wings

Nevin
Handel
Logan
Sans-Souci
McGill
Schubert
LaForge
Wolfe
Franz
Strickland
German
Hahn

When the school secured books which contained suitable solo material there was no more need for copying and manuscript making.

Some of the solos used from the Hollis Dann Book, Book Four are:

- The Silver Ring
- Songs My Mother Taught Me
- O Thou Sublime, Sweet Evening Star (Tannhaeuser)
- Ave Maria (English and Latin)
- Serenade (Duet arrangement)
- Thou'rt Like Unto A Flower
- O Holy Night
- Incline Thine Ear To Me
- Danny Deever

Chaminade
Dvorak
Wagner
Bach-Gounod
Schubert
Rubinstein
Adam
Himmel
Damrosch

Some of the solos used from *Music of Many Lands* and *Peoples* are:

- *Lullaby* (Jocelyn)
- *When I Was Seventeen* (Swedish Folk Song)
- *Oriental Romance*
- *Neapolitan Boat Song*
- *Serenade To Nita*
- *O Rest In The Lord* (Elijah)
- *He Shall Feed His Flock and Come Unto Him* (The Messiah)
- *Fly Now, O Song I'm Singing*
- *I Love Thee*
- *Sleep, Little One, Sleep* (Duet)

Numbers from a concert version of Gounod's *Faust*, and simple folk songs from other books are used constantly. Songs from musical comedies, semi-popular, and sometimes popular songs are taught by rote, so as not to infringe the copyright law, which forbids copying music. The students usually know popular songs from listening to the radio, therefore little time is necessary to teach them. Proper diction and interpretation are given considerable emphasis while teaching the solos.

---

Reading

This is done mainly by the use of copious material. There is some drill on the intervals which make up the major and minor triads. The values and names of notes, in both treble and bass clefs are taught, as well as any other theoretical matters or terminology as the need arises. The main emphasis in this area is to have the student develop the skill of using eye and ear at the same time. There are drills on difficult passages when necessary; and students are required to identify these chords: major, minor, diminished, and augmented. The students learn to read music by actually doing it; by frequently changing the material, they soon learn that they cannot rely on memory alone. Each part (the sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses) is often required to read another part. Most of the members of these classes seem to have little difficulty holding singing positions where reading is a requirement.
Part-singing

In this department the school is fortunate in having books which are excellent for voice classes. There is, in addition, a good library of octavo music, sacred and secular; much of this was required music for the competitive festivals. The classes are required to learn some important anthems which are in the library of Grace Baptist Church, where the teacher is choir director, and has access to this material; this enables the selected groups to become familiar with the standard choir repertoire generally used in the community. The classes are required to sing Latin texts when they are presented.
Listed below are some of the numbers that are used most frequently, taken from the two books already mentioned, and presented as examples of the materials on which the voice classes work.

Some of the numbers used from the Hollis Dann Book are:

Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming  Foster
God So Loved The World (The Crucifixion)  Stainer
I Ain’t Gwine Study War No More (Spiritual)  Sullivan
I Hear The Soft Note (Patience)  Bantock
Requiem  Stainer
God Is A Spirit (The Woman Of Samaria)  Bennett
The Nightingale  Tschaikowsky
O Hush Thee, My Babie  Sullivan
Ave Verum  Mozart
Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming  Praetorius
Now Let Every Tongue Adore Thee  Bach
Calm As The Night  Boehm
Evening And Morning  Oakeley
Good Night, Good Night, Beloved  Pinsuti
Yea, Though I Walk  Sullivan
Ye Watchers And Ye Holy Ones  Goodhart
A Joyful Christmas Song  Gevaert
Chants: The Lord’s Prayer, Trayte’s Chant, Gloria Patri, and Stainer’s Sevenfold Amen
Incline Thine Ear To Me  Himmel
Cast Thy Burden (Elijah)  Mendelssohn
Come Again! Sweet Love  Dowland
In These Delightful, Pleasant Groves  Purcell
The Three Kings  Gevaert
A Legend  Tschaikowsky
Adoramus Te  Palestrina
Break Forth, O Beauteous, Heavenly Light  Bach
Some of the numbers used from the book, *Music of Many Lands and Peoples* are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Composer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finlandia</td>
<td>Sibelius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo, I Shall Never Want</td>
<td>Bortniansky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bell Buoy</td>
<td>Curtis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaudeamus Igitur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here Comes The Flag</td>
<td>Cain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are in use several books published by Hall and McCreary, that have more advanced numbers than those which have been presented, a concert arrangement of Gounod's *Faust*, a Bach collection, a collection of descants to familiar hymns, Handel's *Messiah*, two hymnals, and several Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

Talented students are put in quartets and other small combinations during class periods, to give them an opportunity to sing one of the essential parts in regularly harmonized numbers.
Appreciation

The room assigned for the voice classes is equipped with a public address system that plays records, and every Friday is given over to listening to choral or symphonic records. The school owns only ten albums of records, but the teacher lends records from his own library to the classes, so there are sufficient examples available to cover the requirements of the courses, as they are listed in the texts used. A course in music appreciation is given one year, and one in the history of music the next.

The following books have been used:

Music in History, McKinney and Anderson, for history of music
Discovering Music, McKinney and Anderson, for appreciation
Listening to Music Creatively, Stringham, for appreciation
Great Symphonies, Spaeth, for themes to write on the blackboard

7 Sigmund Spaeth, Great Symphonies (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1936).
A short lecture precedes the listening period, and the students take brief notes, which must be evaluated by the teacher at the end of the semester's work. This deviation from singing is planned for three reasons, namely: to add variety to the course, to keep the singing from becoming monotonous, and to develop a sense of musicianship and love for good music through hearing it. Despite the fact that there is excellent choral music available, it is interesting to note that composers chose to write principally through the medium of the orchestra. Unless attention is paid purposely to symphonic music, vocalists are frequently ignorant of the world's best music. Many students of the voice classes, it is gratifying to note, seem to develop interest in symphonic music; for this is indicated by comments made and letters written by alumni of the class, to the investigator.
Other Classes
(For which no credit is allowed)

In addition to the regularly scheduled classes, there have been four special groups for advanced students; no scholastic credit is given to these classes. These classes are as follows: The Choir, the Opera Class, the Girls Chorus, and the Boys Chorus. All groups rehearsed during recess periods, excepting the Opera Class.

The Opera Class took over all activities previously undertaken by the Choir, in 1946, and this group was organized for two reasons: first, it was the year the school was scheduled to produce an opera, and there was not sufficient rehearsal time during recesses or after school; second, there is always a shortage of boys, and the cadets helped fill the vacancies, though they could not rehearse during recess or after school. For these reasons this special class was organized and scheduled in a regular class period. The Opera Class numbered sixty-three, and since the state contest regulations have allowed sixty-six in the mixed group, since 1946, the Opera Class will probably be a permanent organization.
The Opera Class has made an opportunity for a larger number of students to participate in advanced work, because of its larger membership; for the Choir, which it replaced, had only thirty-six members.

The Girls Chorus, as an organization, has been continuous. The membership was formerly limited to thirty-six, governed by the state contest regulations; but a change was made in the regulations, in 1946, and the Girls Chorus was enlarged to fifty members.

The Boys Chorus has not been continuous, for there have been many years when there were not enough boys available to form a properly balanced male group.

Each of these classes is organized, and has officers, consisting of a president and as many vice presidents as are necessary to represent each section. The Opera Class, for example, has a president, and four vice presidents, representing the sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses; the other classes follow the same pattern. The officers help to check on the attendance, collect funds, and form an executive committee which helps the teacher to decide on matters of policy and selection of numbers for programs.

The work of the special classes is difficult and intensive, and members are chosen on a basis of seniority and ability. Much of the work has always
been a cappella, done not only for its effectiveness in performance, but also for the good singing and musicianship that may be developed by its use.

The special classes represent the school in concerts, contests, school and community functions, and make phonograph records to help other classes. A list is presented, to give some idea of the services rendered by these classes since they were organized, as follows:

In School

- programs for school groups and organizations;
- at Commencement, June and February;
- assembly programs;
- concerts for the public, in the auditorium;
- Thanksgiving programs;
- Christmas programs;
- singing in the halls of the school before Christmas;
- foreign language programs;
- class day programs;
- Quill and Scroll Society programs;
- Christian Youth Club programs;
- Spanish programs;
In the Community

annual spring concerts, at the Mosque;
annual ensemble concerts (by small groups of mixed, voices, girls voices, and male voices);
The Messiah concerts, at the Mosque, given for four years, with both senior high school choruses combined, and soloists chosen from both schools;
concerts at other schools in Richmond, Maury, Lee, Albert Hill, Bainbridge, Chandler, East End, and Binford, to encourage interest in the voice classes;
All State Chorus, 1936, concert;
annual State Competitive Festival, 1937-1940 inclusive, for soloists, ensembles, and choruses;
National Festival, regional, 1941, for ensembles and choruses, and sight-reading competition added;
annual State Competitive Festival, 1942;
annual State Competitive Festival, regional and state, 1946, for mixed chorus;
annual State Competitive Festival, regional only, 1947, for soloists, mixed voice ensemble, girls chorus, and boys chorus;
concerts at Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, Virginia, by Choir and Girls Chorus, six occasions;
Masonic Corner Stone Laying, three occasions;
New Medical Center, State Library, and Y. M. C. A.;
Musicians Club concerts, twice;
Parent Teachers Association programs;
Red Cross meetings;
Richmond Teachers Association meetings;
Student Cooperative Association meetings;
Women's Auxiliary League of the Methodist Orphanage;
Teachers League, V. E. A. meetings;
Teachers League, Tri State meeting;
Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, and Sphinx Club meetings;
Community Fund banquets;
Housewives League meetings;
Christian Endeavor state meeting;
Girls Reserve, Y. W. C. A. meeting;
church services;
broadcasts over Richmond stations, WLEE, WMBG, WRNL, WRTD, and WRVA.
War Activities

American Legion meeting;  
concert, a defense entertainment program, at the  
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts;  
State Nurses Red Cross meeting;  
Patriotic Meeting, at Capitol steps;  
"I Am An American" meeting;  
Junior Red Cross meetings;  
concerts at Camp Lee, McGuire's Hospital, and  
the Air Base.
To indicate the type of music performed by the special groups, there is here presented the program of a concert held at the John Marshall Auditorium, Friday, December 6th, 1946:

Hail, Smiling Morn  Spofforth (a cappella)  The Opera Class
The Silver Swan  Gibbons (a cappella)  
Hallelujah, Amen (Judas Maccabaeus)  Handel

Alleluia  Mozart--Riegger
May Night  Palmgren--Watters
Hymn To The Sun  Rimsky-Korsakoff--Harris

The Girls Chorus

La Ci Darem (Don Giovanni)  Mozart

Music Of Life  Cain
Pretense  Clokey
Onward, Christian Soldiers  Sullivan--Nilsen

The Opera Class

When Children Pray  Fenner
A Spirit Flower  Campbell-Tipton--Treharne
Somebody's Knockin' (Spiritual)  Dett

The Girls Chorus

The Drum  Gibson
Kentucky Babe  Gelbel
The Battle Of Jericho (Spiritual)  Bartholomew

Male Chorus

When Day Is Done  Katcher--Lawrence
Without A Song  Youmans--Stickles
Begin The Beguine  Porter--Howorth

The Opera Class
Groups Organized As An Outgrowth Of School Music Activities

There are three groups which organized as an outgrowth of school music activities, but which were not organized under school regulations or schedule, and these are as follows: the G. I. Josefiends and Stage Door Commandos, the Alumni Choir, and the Cadet Glee Club.

During the war, a group of alumni and students, girls and boys, organized their own singing club, and called it the G. I. Josefiends and Stage Door Commandos, with the purpose of assisting the Red Cross. They gave concerts every week at one of the camps or hospitals, sang over the radio, and made appearances at community affairs whenever they were called on, using standard music and popular music, for solos and ensembles; and they continued their activities until 1947.

The Alumni Choir, having about seventy members, was organized in 1940, and it rehearsed a program of advanced music. This group sang but one public concert, at a Teachers League meeting, and lasted only one season; because another choral group enlisted many of
the members, and the conflicts became so frequent it seemed best to dissolve it in favor of the rival organization.

The Cadet Glee Club was organized in 1941, with fifty members. It gave one concert at school, and sang at the cadet annual dance. It was discontinued after the one season, as there was no available time to schedule rehearsals.
CHAPTER IV

DATA COLLECTED

Preparation Of The Questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared (1) to determine how many John Marshall students from the voice classes are now singing in church choirs, and (2) how many alumni from the voice classes are continuing their singing.

The questionnaire was mimeographed on cards, and these were given to selected students, who represented the churches attended by members of the voice classes. The investigator gave the reason for getting this information, and explained that the term on the questionnaire, "J. M. singers" meant both present and former members of the voice classes. The students then consulted the choir director, the pastor, or some member of the choir of his church; in many cases the student was a member of the choir and in position to get the correct information readily. The questionnaires were filled out, signed by a choir director, pastor, or the student, and returned. Sixty-six cards were issued and returned.
The questionnaire was as follows:

Church.................................................................
How many singers are enrolled in the Choir?...........
How many are from the voice classes at J. M.?......
How many are former members of these classes?.....
How many of the J. M. singers are soloists?.......  
How many of the J. M. singers are paid?.............
How many other singers from J. M. (present or alumni) sing solos or lead singing in Sunday School or other organizations (as B. T. U., C. E., Epworth League, etc.)?...

This information is accurate so far as I can find.

Date....... (Signed) .................................

Results Of The Questionnaire

The figures from the Results of the Questionnaire (page 70) show that the churches attended by members of the voice classes totaled sixty of the one hundred and sixty-six white churches of Richmond, or 37 per cent.

In reference to the objective of the questionnaire (1) to find how many students from the voice classes are now singing in church choirs, it is found that over half, or 58 per cent, are members of choirs; and they represent more than 9 per cent of the total number of the combined choirs of the churches questioned.

In reference to the objective of the questionnaire (2) to find how many alumni from the voice classes are now singing in church choirs, it is found
that they represent more than 17 per cent of the total number of the combined choirs of the churches questioned. The proportion of John Marshall singers, present students and alumni, in the combined choirs is 27 per cent. These proportions are not impressive, but it may be considered that the figures are low because of the comparative newness of the voice work. The number of those leading singing, one hundred and thirty-nine, is surprising, and an indication of useful activity.

A detailed study of the Questionnaire Results (Appendix) shows some interesting facts regarding the musical conditions in the community, namely: most churches, evidently, have adopted the chorus choir, since only one church reported a quartet. There are twelve hundred and forty-six singers in the sixty churches listed, and this apportions each church an average of twenty singers, which should be enough to insure a good musical program. Six churches have each 50 per cent, or more, of their choir personnel from the John Marshall voice classes, present and alumni, and two of these churches are made up entirely from the John Marshall singers.
Results Not Covered By The Questionnaire

There are some tangible results of the work of the voice classes which are not covered by the questionnaire. A church recently gave up its chorus choir and engaged a quartet, and three members were alumni of John Marshall voice classes, but the church is not included in those presented in the questionnaire. For many years John Marshall alumni have formed the nucleus of the male octette which sings every summer at the First Baptist Church, but this church is not included in those in the questionnaire.

A record book at school shows that, during a period of time from 1934 to 1942, there were forty-five students, or alumni, from the voice classes holding paid church choir positions in Richmond; the questionnaire would not indicate this, because it does not cover these past experiences. The questionnaire cannot show that there are at least ten alumni directing church choirs in Richmond.

Every year the investigator receives an average of fifteen inquiries, written or telephoned, for singers from the voices classes; these come from choir directors, pastors, and civic leaders. This seems to be an indication of approval from the community.
Results Of The Questionnaire

Given In Total Numbers

The number of churches attended by students in the voice classes 60

The number of students from the voice classes attending these churches 188

The number of singers enrolled in the choirs of these churches 1246

The number of singers in these choirs now in the voice classes 118

The number of singers in these choirs who were once in the voice classes 219

The number of singers in these choirs from the voice classes, present and alumni 337

The percentage of singers in these choirs from the voice classes, present and alumni 27

The number of singers in these choirs that are soloists from the voice classes, present and alumni 87

The number of singers in these choirs that are paid, from the voice classes, present and alumni 22

The number of singers that lead singing in Sunday School, or other organizations in the church, from the voice classes, present and alumni 139
Choral Organizations

These organizations represent a part of the secular musical activities of Richmond. There are two community choral groups at present, (1) the Richmond Opera Group, and (2) the Ars Musica Guild. Both organizations have alumni from the voice classes of John Marshall High School in their membership.

An examination of the program of the last production of the Opera Group, Victor Herbert's The Red Mill, given in November, 1946, gave the following facts:

**Principals, 31, including 15 men and 16 women;**
- John Marshall voice class alumni, 3, including 1 man and 2 women.

**Chorus, 40, including 19 men and 21 women;**
- John Marshall voice class alumni, 10, including 5 men and 5 women.

There were 71 members in the production; John Marshall voice class alumni had 13, or 18 per cent.

An interview with an officer of the Ars Musica Guild gave the information that the membership includes:

- 15 sopranos, 13 altos, 8 tenors, and 14 basses;
- John Marshall voice class alumni had 2 sopranos, 4 altos, 3 tenors, and 6 basses.
- The membership totals 50; John Marshall voice class alumni number 15, or 30 per cent.
Case Studies Of John Marshall

Voice Class Alumni

Four case studies are presented to show that the work of the voice classes aroused and encouraged an interest in music, that talent was discovered and developed in the classes, and that students were prepared and influenced to continue their singing after graduation. The studies include cases of a church chorus singer, a church soloist, a church soloist who directs a choir, and a choir director who is an organist.

Case I

Hilda attended a junior high school where she played the guitar in the school string band, although she could not read music. She received some encouragement from the teacher who played accompaniments for the group. She entered John Marshall High School in February, 1938. No one else in her class took vocal, so her mother laughed at her when Hilda told her she had enrolled in the voice class. Her parents both sing, but they have had no formal training. Hilda had no idea whether she was a soprano or contralto, but finally decided she sang low, and tried
out with the contraltos. This was her proper classification, and she learned to sing alto parts. One day, during her first semester, she sang the alto part in a duet with a soprano, and did it very well, and she was encouraged. She made good grades in school, and was exemplary in her attitude and cooperation. She was selected for both the Choir and the Girls Chorus, in the fall of 1939, three semesters after she had entered high school. While in these organizations she made two trips with the Choir to Mary Washington College, in Fredericksburg; she sang in two contests with the Choir, Girls Chorus, Mixed Ensemble, and the Girls Ensemble, and one of them was the National Regional Contest. She was in the chorus of *Pinafore* at school. She came to the choir of a Baptist church, on a general invitation given by the teacher, in 1940, and she has been an active and faithful member since that time. She has repeatedly sung in octettes, special groups in Christmas services, regularly with a girls quartet, in the young people’s mixed quartet, and once tenor in a quartet. Remarkably, she learned to play hymns and simple songs merely from the theory taught in school, and from observation of the piano keyboard chart displayed in the classroom. She later studied piano with the church organist for a year, and
when he went away to another position, she continued with another teacher. She stopped, after two months, when this teacher failed to interest her, and then found a satisfactory teacher with whom she has been studying three years. She plays good standard concert music, and twice she has played the piano accompaniment part of a Bach number, with the organ, at church services. She was entirely unacquainted with good music up to the time she entered the voice class. Hilda has stated that she is glad she took up vocal, because the things she is doing now which she likes the best have been made possible by her work in the voice class. She says it was a lucky hunch when she decided to take voice. Her church life means a great deal to her.
Case II

Virginia's parents are both slightly musical, she says, for they can both sing. She attended a junior high school where she was a member of a large chorus. There was only group singing, for the class was too large for individual attention. There was a woeful lack of material (books and music), and too much copying from the blackboard, too much theory to be learned, and too much drill on syllables (do-re-mi). She had very little interest in the class, and she was actually discouraged.

She came to John Marshall High School, September 1937, and at that time she did not know that she had a solo voice. In February 1938, her second semester in the school, she was selected for the Girls Chorus; and in September 1938, the next semester, she made the Choir. She sang a solo twice in the State Contest, winning second rating one year, and third rating the next. She sang in all the competing groups, and she was a member of the mixed ensemble group that won the rating A plus, the highest given for many years. She sang solos in assemblies at school; a solo at a V. E. A. meeting; she was on several Monocle Review programs, broadcast from WRVA;
she sang many times for the Christian Youth Club; and she was in the chorus of *Pinafore*.

She was in the junior choir of her church when she was twelve, and she was selected for the senior choir when she was fifteen, though the age limit was set at eighteen. Shortly after this she was made soprano soloist, a salaried position. The church is one of the largest Methodist churches in Richmond, and they have a paid quartet and a chorus choir of forty-five members. She sang, as special soloist, with a male chorus that gave concerts in the City, including several appearances at Ewart's Cafeteria. She has recently joined the Richmond Opera Group. For four years she was a member of the USO Girls Glee Club, an organization of thirty girls (twelve of which were former members of the John Marshall voice classes), which sang every week at the USO, and gave concerts at McGuire's Hospital, Richmond Air Base, and Camp Peary. She was chairman of the group for two years before it disbanded, in September 1946. When she found she could sing solos, a year after entering high school, she started taking private lessons, and has continued her study until the present. She sang her own program, recently, for six weeks over Station WLEE, and was invited to continue the program.
Virginia says she has always loved music but did not hope ever to be a soloist. All she has done, she states, is a result of her experience in the voice class, and this made her high school life and work interesting. She learned to love school because of the voice class.
Russell says that his parents are not musical. He was in a voice class in junior high school, but found it boring because there were not enough boys in the class. There was too much singing on syllables, too much theory, too much copying from the blackboard, not enough singing, not enough music or books from which to sing, and too much repetition. He liked the appreciation, or listening, part of the program. He entered John Marshall High School in 1933, and was in the first voice class organized there, in 1934. His voice had changed, and he had an idea how to sing a bass part, a skill he had developed from singing with other boys attempting barber-shop harmony. He thinks that this informal singing was a good moral influence on the boys. He was not a good student, where books are concerned, so he was in the voice classes for four years, whereas the normal time should have been three years. He wanted only to sing and play football, and he was excellent in both of these activities. He was in the first John Marshall Choir, and was elected president. He helped organize the Boys Chorus which sang in state competition. He organized and sang in a male quartet which went to the junior high schools
which feed into John Marshall High School, to sing programs purported to interest boys in singing; this quartet sang at many school functions, and sang for eight weeks over Station WRTD. He and another boy were responsible for organization and the beginning of the custom of singing carols in the halls at school just before the Christmas holidays, and this is still continued. He sang the bass solo in The Messiah the second year of its performance by the high schools groups. He sang the bass solo and received the highest rating in the State Contest.

He took the part of Sergeant of Police in The Pirates of Penzance, and had a solo in a production of She Stoops to Conquer. He started singing in a chorus choir in 1933, but shortly after this he got the solo position in the choir of the historical St. John's Episcopal Church, where he sang for five years. Up to this period in his experience he had received no private instruction. In 1940 he went into military service, and he was in a chorus choir at Camp Story, Virginia, 1941-1942; this was a chaplain's choir, with mixed voices. Overseas, during 1944-1945, he sang in the division male chorus, and a solo in a show. Since 1935 he has been a member of the Ars Musica Guild. He was a member of the Orpheus Club,
an a cappella group. He was a second bass in the original First Baptist Male Octette, and he continued this summer engagement for seven years. He has been in three productions of the Richmond Opera Group, and had a small principal part in one. He now holds the solo bass position in a Christian church where services are held only Sunday mornings, so he directs the chorus choir of his own church Sunday nights; and he is studying choral conducting.

Referring to the voice classes, Russell says that many take voice because they think it will be an easy subject; but in his case, it changed his whole system of living, for he was self-conscious; now his ability to sing has helped him socially. He says, "Music broadens one's outlook, and now I appreciate more things in life -- music has made this possible." He has made many friends through his singing, and has received considerable financial returns at the same time.
Case IV

Charles's mother is a church organist, so he has always had a musical environment; but when he entered John Marshall High School, nevertheless, he played only popular music, and that not very well, despite the fact that he had studied piano. He frequently admitted that he could not read music, and he was a poor accompanist. On several occasions, he was called on to play accompaniments for the class, at which times he demonstrated his lack of ability. He persisted in his efforts, however, and soon showed real improvement, and because he sang, he had an innate ability to accompany. He started playing with a dance band, and this made it necessary for him to read music. His progress became rapid from this time on, and he was earning money as well. He became baritone soloist at the church where his mother was organist, and his frequent requests for help and coaching in class indicated that he was interested in his singing. The teacher was director of two college glee clubs, and gave Charles the job of accompanying. He practiced diligently, and began to show a real flare for this sort of accompanying, seeming to know intuitively where to bolster up weak
spots in the harmony, and where to support. He was prompt and reliable about all appointments, and businesslike in all dealings. He sang the bass solo part satisfactorily in a performance of The Messiah, though his voice was a light baritone. He took the part of the Major General in The Pirates of Penzance, and this suited him well. He got a position as soloist and choir director in a small church, where, by good planning and efficient rehearsing he developed a good program. He then studied organ with a competent teacher. He finished high school, and because of his ability as accompanist got a scholarship at one of the colleges where he had been playing for the glee club; thus his playing made it possible for him to get a college education. He got the position of organist and choir director at a prominent Richmond church, where the organ, formerly used in a theatre, was a freak so far as a church service is concerned; but he showed his resourcefulness in his handling of this weird instrument, and even gave recitals on it. He gave up dance work and developed a private class in piano and organ while he was still in college. He could now read music well, and he developed a creative urge, writing an organ number which was accepted and published. He was graduated from
college, got married, and bought a car; his professional work had made all this possible. He then got the position of organist in a large church, and at the same time took a position in a nearby county school, where he taught voice classes and music appreciation. After two years, he got a position in Roanoke, Virginia, where he taught voice classes in high school, and directed the choir in a Methodist church. Contrary to general experience, his voice developed into a tenor, and he was soloist as well as choir director. In less than a year he was called into military service, and he became a radio operator. Later, he was made chaplain's assistant, and organized a choir of service men in England. In Austria, he organized a symphony orchestra, which gave "pop" concerts, and furnished accompaniments for several variety shows and musical comedies; these he produced with the help of local civilian talent, people who were professional theatrical singers. When he was discharged from service, he became the organist and choir director of a Methodist church in Norfolk, Virginia.

Charles thinks the voice classes at John Marshall High School changed the course of his life. His interest had been only for popular music before the activities of the voice classes aroused his
attention to choral music and accompanying. The work he did in *The Messiah* made a profound impression on him, and he has presented this work at every opportunity.
Six short case studies are presented to show that the work of the voice classes aroused and encouraged an interest in music; and that students carry over what they have learned in the classes, singing and appreciation, to the community. The answers represent typical activities of the less talented members of the voice classes, or about two thirds of the enrollment. The six students will be designated as A, B, C, D, E, and F.

**QUESTION:** Do you sing in the movies?

**ANSWERS:** All answered yes.

**QUESTION:** Do you sing in church?

**ANSWERS:** All answered yes.

**QUESTION:** Regularly or occasionally?

**ANSWERS:** Four answered regularly: two, occasionally.

**QUESTION:** Is there any connection between your singing activity and the school vocal classes?

**ANSWERS:**

A. Yes. I frequently sing songs and hymns at home after singing them at school.

B. Without the school vocal classes young people's voices cannot be developed so that they can sing out of school.
C. Yes. I have learned to read notes, and when I am singing a song which I do not know I can read the notes.

D. Yes. It helps me to read notes. The records help me to recognize music on the radio.

E. Yes.

F. Yes. It helps considerably in choral work at church and other places.

QUESTION: Where and when do you sing?

ANSWERS: A. I sing when I'm happy regardless of where I am.

B. Church, school, home, parties, and any small social groups of young people.

C. Wherever there is music and it is all right to sing. I sing where there is music I can sing by.

D. School, church, home; in groups when I go out. In fact, I sing much of my time.

E. When I am home dressing or just sitting around.

F. I sing at church, school, and home, especially when I feel good.
QUESTION: What has the class contributed to your interest in music?

ANSWERS:  

A. It has made me appreciate classical music.

B. The vocal class has contributed to my interest in music, in that it has widened and increased my knowledge of classical and semi-classical music. It has also made me appreciate the classical music as well as popular music. In vocal class, we sing songs of many lands, as well as those of our own native land. In my opinion, the vocal classes are of great help to students interested in music.

C. For a long while I did not like classical music, but now that I know the meaning and the worth and what value music has I have learned to listen to it, and it makes me mad when some one talks while it is playing.

D. A great deal. It has made me appreciate good music. It has helped me read notes.

E. A great deal, because I would have never been in the church choir if I hadn't taken vocal. I would never have been able to read notes if I hadn't taken vocal. I am now interested in different types of music.

F. It has helped me in a lot of things. It has helped me cultivate a liking for all types of music, and it teaches a lot of things one ordinarily wouldn't learn. This class has helped me in many ways, and the training I received has been invaluable. I'm sure that all along in my musical career things I learned in this class will be popping up.
Case Studies Of Three Church Choirs

These case studies are presented to show that until the school had regular voice classes, very few young people sang in church choirs; that the high school singers have given an impetus to church music; that the congregations like the youthful vocal quality of the high school singers; that the ministers and leaders of the churches like to have the young singers in the choirs because of the religious influence on these young singers, and on the other young people of the church, through the power of example; that many of the young choristers become regular members of a church because of their interest in the choir; and that there is one disadvantage, discrimination against the young singers, which is based on jealousy directed toward them by the adult singers, because of the disparity in age. Two of these churches had only a few high school trained members, but the third included in its membership two thirds who were alumni of voice classes.
Case I

The investigator was made director of this choir in 1922. The church had a large music budget, a choir of thirty members, and a paid quartet. The choir had been organized for several years. The sopranos were good, and there were two leaders in this department, the altos were weak, and the men were good, though few. The quality of the ensemble was fairly good, but it lacked vitality. The reading ability of the group was poor, therefore long rehearsals were necessary. In that same year the local high school started voice classes, but the teacher was not effective, and during the two years he was there little progress was made. The next year (1923) the school secured a new teacher, who was a singer and professional musician, though he had little formal education. He was successful, and at the end of the year his mixed chorus sang some unaccompanied numbers which displayed quality, blend, and nuances that only frequent rehearsing could accomplish; these young singers had set up an enviable standard. Contrasted with the performance of this high school group, all other youthful singing in the city, such as groups in Sunday School and those in private music classes, was feeble and ineffective.
The church started a boys’ choir, which sang special numbers for a time, and after two years, was able to sing anthems with the adult choir. The boys learned to read music rather well, and added soprano and alto volume to the ensemble. It was not until 1928 that three high school students came into the choir. The students did not have strong voices, they supplanted no one, and they were not unwelcome. By this time a few of the ex-choir boys started singing tenor or bass in the choir, as their voices had changed. The group, in the matter of age, was mixed; and the choir numbered about fifty singers, women, boys, and men. The work was good, but there was not a pleasing blend, especially in the soprano department, and the soft effects were not satisfactory. Very few young people, besides the ex-choir boys, came into the choir from the membership, or from the young people’s departments.
Case II

The investigator moved, in 1929, to a new position in a neighboring city. The choir there, having about twenty-five members, was newly organized, and there were no teen-agers. The high school had a well developed choral group, and the teacher of that group was the director of a large children's choir, enlisted from the whole community. In a year the church choir included five students from the high school, who materially helped the quality of the ensemble. There was no resentment toward the high school students when they came into the choir, though there were no vestments to help disguise the difference in ages. The quality of this choir was superior to the one described in the preceding study.
Case III

After eighteen months the investigator came to Richmond, in 1930, and organized a chorus choir. There were no high school students in the choir, for the voice work in the high schools did not begin until 1934. The singing in the Sunday School and other organizations was weak. In 1935, the church engaged as soloist a sixteen-year-old soprano, who had shown superior talent in the voice classes at Thomas Jefferson High School. A bass who sang in the choir when he was sixteen is now soloist. The church has had two junior choirs, at different periods, and each time the junior choir was dissolved to take new members into the senior choir. The new members generally took the places of adults who found choir work too much of an obligation. Many singers were enlisted from the voice classes of John Marshall High School. The church has become a training field for many Richmond singers; some have secured paying positions in other churches. Some have joined the church because of their interest in the choir, and this was encouraging to the minister and the church leaders, for the singers bring their friends and relatives to church. The singers become good workers in every department of the church, are good examples,
and assist whenever they can.

A difficulty arose, caused by jealousy and prejudice. Some of the adults resented the young people coming into the choir, and some of them left because they did not want to sing with young folks. The choir actually improved because of the withdrawals. Some of the adults, having had no training, produced dark, lugubrious tones, which gave a drab quality to the ensemble; but the improved quality, founded on lyric, youthful production, gave a spiritual lift to the music, and the rehearsals and services gained new enthusiasm. The choir still has some older members, but there is no longer any friction. The introduction of young singers, particularly soloists, was difficult. Only the support of the music committee and sympathy of the congregation made it possible; but the young singers developed satisfactorily, the skeptics were won over, and the members of the church take pride in the singers they have seen grow up.

The high school singers represent twenty of the thirty members making up the choir, and include the soprano, contralto, and bass soloists, and the organist. The program is rather demanding and includes four quarterly musical services each year, besides the music for regular services, and occasional broadcasts, yet the
general rehearsal, held once a week, lasts no longer than an hour. The members read music well, and it is unnecessary to hold long drills just to learn the music. This choir is superior to the two choirs reported in the preceding case studies.
The work in school is effective because it is shown by the action and behavior of students in school and the community. It has been shown that music contributes to the objectives of education. The voice classes at John Marshall High School are justified because the work done has contributed to the desirable growth of the individual, and through him to the community. Evidence has been presented that a close relationship exists between school work in music and real life conditions.

The voice classes have contributed to church choirs, choral organizations, and to civic affairs. The extent of this contribution has been shown, in some measure, as follows: a list of school and community engagements for which the voice classes have sung; by the results of the questionnaire; from the examination of the roster of the two choral organizations; from the statement regarding the solo positions held in Richmond by voice class alumni; and from the constant requests made to the investigator from choir directors, pastors, and other civic leaders for student singers from the voice classes to serve in their organizations.
The classes have discovered and developed talent, and have aroused an interest and love for music in students. The classes have prepared students to carry over into life appreciation and musical skills, after finishing school, thus enriching the community.

In addition to the benefits to the personality of students, the training of the voice classes has made financial compensation possible, for some of the students receive fees for singing. In some cases students have made a vocation of singing, accompanying, or choral conducting. The foregoing facts have been revealed by the following means: four case studies of alumni of the voice classes; a detailed description of the course of study used for the classes, in which preparation for advanced singing was emphasized; six short case studies referring to the singing of students away from school, and the influence exerted on them by the work of the voice classes; and by all references to the musical activities of the alumni of the voice classes.
On the basis of conditions and needs revealed by this study, the following recommendations are made:

(1) The work of the voice classes should be planned more and more in relation to the students' future contributions to the community. This may be done (a) by the selection of appropriate music for them to learn, on a basis of the type of music that is in use by church choirs and choral organizations in Richmond; and (b) by making as many opportunities as possible for the vocal groups to take part in community undertakings while still in school.

(2) There should be organized, probably under the adult education program, an alumni chorus, which should give concert programs and produce operas.

(3) Plans should be made and executed, by the director of music for the Richmond Public Schools, to enlist and interest large numbers of boys in music classes in the elementary schools, because the high school work is suffering from an acute male shortage.

(4) The school should have some systematic relationship with the community, like a placement service, including records of singers and choir directors. This service should be provided for both students and alumni of the voice classes. The Richmond Chamber of Commerce, through its educational committee, recently urged the forming of a city placement office "in and for" the Richmond Public School system. The voice departments of both Richmond senior high schools should be represented in this, for it offers an opportunity for students, and a source of development for Richmond music.

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1 Richmond Times-Dispatch, May 22, 1947.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS


B. PERIODICAL ARTICLES


C. NEWSPAPERS

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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## QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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<th>Number of students from school attending this church</th>
<th>Number of singers enrolled in the choir</th>
<th>Number from the present voice classes at J. M.</th>
<th>Number that were once members of voice classes</th>
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<th>Number of J. M. singers that are soloists</th>
<th>Number of J. M. singers that are paid</th>
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### PRESBYTERIAN

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<th>Percentage of singers in choir from J. M.</th>
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## QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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60 churches
VITA

The writer was born 1889, in Cumberland, Maryland. He sang in a boys' choir, studied in New York City with A. Y. Cornell, sang in concert, oratorio, and church, as tenor soloist, for ten years, in the United States and Canada; then became singing teacher and choral conductor, working for the past twenty-five years in southern states. His formal education continued while teaching in summer sessions at the College of William and Mary, and at the University of North Carolina. He received his B. A. from William and Mary in 1938. The writer is now choir director of Grace Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, and vocal music instructor at John Marshall High School.