Gertrude Sans Souci (1873-1913) and her milieu

Building a Musical Career

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Preface

Not often do we get the opportunity to examine the musical career of a woman pianist-organist-song composer through a wealth of documents—photographs, handwritten letters, account sheets, reports of the family, reviews, programs, lists of possible contacts, prices of lessons, contributions to local and national newspapers/journals, and records of local music societies. As a result, more information is provided in this essay and in the notes than would normally be the case. It is hoped that such detail may not only show the richness of a life, but inspire researchers to examine the careers of own talented women musicians.

Music was moving westward. Harlow Gale of Minneapolis, Yankee transplant, wrote, "For 'On to the West with all that is best' peals up from the earth to the sky." In the story of Sans Souci's life, we have one building block in documenting the westward movement of the musical art from the east coast to communities that were not lazy backwaters but energetic centers.

The story relates the gradual ascent of a woman musician from the stereotype of a "pretty miss" to an accepted independent artist. It gives credit to the women's organizations and women impresarios that helped her to rise until her career was tragically cut short by an illness that might have been treated today.

The title, "Building a Musical Career," refers not only to the preparation of the artist, acquisition of a repertoire, and successful concerts, but to the essential need for the artist to become an entrepreneur, to take charge of commercial details such as forming one's own publishing company, making contacts with journals and newspapers, finding congenial and gifted collaborators and even coming to grips with new media: vaudeville and the movies.

Particular attention is given to the pipe organ as it existed during Sans Souci's lifetime. Perplexed readers—who no longer even know the name of Guilmant—have convinced me that this facet of musical life with its combination of sound, religion, and commerce deserves attention to its composers, repertory, and even the surroundings and décor that formed an essential part of the "organ world."

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Sans Souci as pictured in her publicity brochure
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

I. Gertie Sansouci

John Sansouci[11] traveled far from his original French Canadian forbears—the family Vel known as the Sansouci—in search of new opportunities. He settled in Putnam, Connecticut, a prominent manufacturing town at the falls of the Quinebaug River. There, in 1852, a firm for shoemaking had been established, an industry that expanded quickly into one of major employers of the area. John, a master shoemaker and artisan, found employment there. He and his wife, Maggie Burns welcomed two daughters, Gertrude and Monica born in Putnam. In 1877, a few years after their birth, John made another move toward a lucrative and promising area.

St. Paul, Minnesota, beckoned. It had a good commercial location on the Upper Mississippi, a railroad center that promised to be the Gateway to the Great Northwest, and a populace growing at a fast pace. It was a center of the Roman Catholic Faith stemming from its French, Irish, and German immigrants. There the family found a congenial home, one of enterprise and one that could offer fine education to John and Maggie's daughters. John, worked in C. Gotzian & Co., manufacturers and wholesale dealers of boots and

[11] John (6 May 1849- 15 November 1927). Originally Jean-Baptiste according to Marguerite Mumm. He was the son of Jean-Baptiste Vel dit Sansoucy, born 2 January 1822, Saint Ours, Richelieu, Quebec, to Pierre Vel dit Sansoucy and Reine (sometimes noted as Marie-Archange) Meunier dit Lapierre born 13 January 1828, Saint-Antoine sur Richelieu, Vercheres, Quebec, Jean Baptiste and Reine Meunier were married 1 August 1848, Saint-Antoine sur Richelieu, Vercheres, Quebec. Evidently John, Gertrude's father, was their first born.

shoes, as a cutter, in reality a special worker because of his artistic training and drawing ability, qualities evidently of the Sansouci, the "Carefree" family.

Maggie Burns had been born in Ireland. Usually the Irish and the French in America founds themselves at odds. The Sansouci couple, however, achieved a happy combination: John's somewhat introspective exterior but inner "carefree" nature and Maggie's extroverted personality were bound together by their Roman Catholic faith and, more especially, by their desire to build a stimulating but protected life for their daughters.[12]

The family prospered in a time that might well be called the Age of Enterprise. The city now eclipsed the rural. The western cities of Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Chicago were becoming centers of industry and of culture. "As the cradle of progress the city, in some manner or other, seemed to favor persons born within its walls over those born on the farm."[13]

> To dwell in the midst of great affairs is stimulating and broadening; it is the source of a discontent which if not divine, is a t least energizing. In a populous urban community like could find like; the person of ability, starved in his rural isolation might by going there find sympathy, encouragement, and that criticism which often refines talent into genius.[14]

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[12] This appraisal of personalities by Marguerite Mumm, the daughter of Monica Sans Souci and niece of Gertrude Sans Souci.
[13] Arthur Meier Schlesinger, *The Rise of the City, 1878-1898,* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), 80.
[14] Schlesinger, *Rise of the City,* 80.

Gertrude Sans Souci—her adult name—organist, pianist and song composer of St. Paul, Minnesota, was born on the 23rd of October 1872 in Putnam, Connecticut.[15] When she was five years old, the family moved to Saint Paul, Minnesota, We have no evidence of any precocious show of musical talent during Gertrude's years of infancy, nothing akin to the extraordinary abilities of Amy Beach who could hum 40 songs in perfect pitch at the age of one[16] nor to Carrie Jacobs-Bond who could play accurately one of Blind Tom's original compositions upon only one hearing.[17] Still her career indicates a true talent, a musicality that would not be denied.

Beyond her schoolwork at St. Mary's Academy in downtown St. Paul, Gertrude studied music at St. Joseph's Academy, a school founded in 1851 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, an order noted for outstanding education in the arts. In Minnesota, the sisters have been active in music teaching for over a century and a half and continue their inspiring work to this day. "Their bilingual curriculum consisted of history, Latin, vocal and instrumental music, needle and art work, mathematics, rhetoric, sciences,

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[15] Date from *The Whittier Birthday Book* started by Monica Sans Souci in Berlin in 1891 and from the birth certificate. Many sources give 1873 probably because the birth was not officially recorded until 6 January 1873. Gertrude's birth is posted in the records of the Church of St. Mary, Putnam. Her full name is given as Gertrude Esther Sansouci, the first child of the couple: John Sansouci, Leather Cutter of Putnam, age 25 (born in Canada) and Maggie Burns, age 23 (born in Ireland).

[16] Adrienne Fried Block, *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4.

[17] Jacobs-Bond, *The Roads of Melody,* (New York: D. Appleton, 1927), 10-11.

English and French."[18] The church of Saint Louis, Roi de France served French speakers in the city. In addition to French, German was a common language used by Roman Catholic leaders and by musicians, a language that found written expression in German newspapers and in the Catholic publication for immigrants, *Der Wanderer,* published in St. Paul for many decades starting in 1867. Gertrude later found her acquaintance with languages of inestimable worth.

During the 1880s when Sans Souci was a music student, the St. Joseph's Academy offered piano, harp, voice and choral music. Demand for music instruction was so high in this women's school that four prominent lay teachers had to be hired.[19] Gertrude and her sister Monica went by horse car out into what was then the country to reach the academy where they would have a picnic lunch under the trees before starting back. Her introduction to music came through the piano, a favorite instrument for young women who found it not only a treasured artistic medium but an entrée into social life and even a help in the quest for a life partner.

Gertrude joined the swelling ranks of "women in music." In the 1870s and 1880s, women far outnumbered men in the cultivation of music.

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[18] Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson, CSJ, "St. Agatha's Conservatory and the Pursuit of Excellence," *Ramsey County History,* 24/1, 4.

[19] Sampson, "St. Agatha's Conservatory." This lengthy illustrated article which fills almost the whole issue of that issue of *Ramsey County History* contains much information about the early musical teaching of the Sisters of St. Joseph. A bit more detailed information remains within the archives of the province.

Minnesota Census Figures

Census Total Employed	Total Music	Male Music	Female Music
1850 Census Population 6,077			
1860 Census Population 172,023			
teachers of music	630	5	625
musicians	723	4	729
1870 Census Population 439,706			
teachers of music	500	9	491
musicians	525	6	519
1880 Census Population 780,773			
musicians. & music teachers	507	30	477
1890 Census Population 1,310,283			
musicians. & music teachers	217	62	155

*After 1870, the census fails to distinguish between teachers and musicians

Other information confirms this data. At Northfield, Minnesota, in the period from 1882 through 1912, Carleton College had 45 music graduates but only one of them was male.[20] All women's schools such as Stanley Hall and the various religious academies—many on their way to becoming colleges—

[20] Leal A. Headley and Merrill E Jarchow, *Carleton, the First Century* (Northfield: Carleton College, 1966), 323.

maintained prominent music departments. Apparently only one men's institution, St. John's University, featured a music department, this a hallmark of its Austrian heritage. A number of colleges offered "voice culture" and Macalester College in St. Paul began a full-fledged music department in 1895.

During Getrude's youth in the 1870s and 1880s, piano playing was known as a feminine accomplishment, akin to sewing, embroidery, and such arts suitable for the home. Sometimes musical and domestic arts were lumped together. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet included "needle and art work" in the curriculum just as St. Agatha's Conservatory later included the decoration of porcelain in its offerings. *The Musical Courier*, to which Gertrude was to be a contributor, actually began in 1880 as *The Musical and Sewing Machine Gazette. The Ladies Home Journal,* which later requested Sans Souci's biography, had in the 1880s a column called "Musical Studies," and as the magazine developed hired a musical editor.

Huneker, the critic and journalist, in speaking of the many young lady pianists, referred to this "nineteenth-century stereotype" as the "piano girl" for whom music was an "accomplishment" suitable for the marriage market and for the household.[21] Schools and newly-forming conservatories were well

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[21] Judith Tick, "Passed Away Is the Piano Girl: Changes in American Musical Life, 1870-1900," in *Women Making Music, The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950,* ed. Jane Bowers and Judith Tick, (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), p. 325, quotes Huneker as she considers what she so correctly calls the "stereotype." See also Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos, A Social*

aware of the economic windfall in catering to this view. In St. Paul, Macalester College based its decision on the admission of women partly on the fact that fathers were willing to pay to have their daughters educated in music. Dr. Ringland's report to the Board of Trustees, 10 June 1893, stated: "A Ladies' Seminary has not the same dependence upon endowment as a college for young men. The music, painting, drawing, profits on board, etc., with the paternal pride in daughters and a corresponding willingness to pay more for their education gives a Ladies' Seminary a decided advantage over a school for boys." Dr. Ringland believed that his "ladies" department "will not only pay its own way, but under proper management will pay a surplus. The expenses for a girl can be made several times the expenses of a boy, when once the institution has gained its place in public recognition."[22]

Gertrude's first studies occurred at the height of this stereotype. The idea of the "piano girl" who made music to impress suitors and to enhance the home faded decisively but slowly in Minnesota. One of its last manifestations came in an advertisement in the *Fifth Annual Report* of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association (MMTA) in 1906. The Everett Piano Company placed a drawing of Cupid at the top of its page. His bow was drawn with a bead on the image of a piano enclosed in a heart. The advertisement read:

History (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), Chapters 18 and 19 on the earlier growth of "accomplishments" and the movement against them.

[22] Henry Daniel Funk, *A History of Macalester College* (St. Paul: Macalester College Board of Trustees, 1910), 208.

This ran quite contrary to the ideals of MMTA, and in the next *Report*, the company eliminated this outmoded concept and replaced it with a dignified announcement.

Judith Tick has shown that on the East Coast, women made great strides in performance, pedagogy and in composition during the decades of 1870 to 1900.[23] In Minnesota, a similar movement began around 1870 but gained its greatest momentum in the 1880s when the state, rich in natural resources—timber, iron ore, wheat lands—and with favorable transportation sites was flooded with entrepreneurs eager to make the state as flourishing as the eastern region. They brought with them wives, many of whom had extraordinary musical talent and education.

Gertrude joined this host of women who were sincere devotees of the art, people who did not simply aspire to shine, but who studied music seriously as one of the principal avenues of expression open to the sex. Women, already in great numerical superiority in the cultivation of music, began in the 1880s to organize into clubs for study of the art and for performance, at first only within their own social circles not in the broader public sphere which was

[23] Tick, "Piano Girl," 326-327 discusses various kinds of evidence that show the change away from this appellation.

considered not quite right for "proper women." In St. Paul, a number of women, particularly those living along fashionable Summit Avenue, opened their homes to women's musical matinées. It was at one of these that a group of some forty women met in 1882 and organized a "Musical Society" soon to be called the "Ladies Musicale" and in 1888 to receive its permanent name, "The Schubert Club," still a prime force for music in the Twin Cities.[24] Minneapolis followed suit in 1888 with a Ladies Club, later called The Zoch Club, followed by several minor clubs: The Ladies Liszt Circle and The Mozart Club. Only in 1892 did the Lorelei Club, soon to be called The Ladies Thursday Musicale, become organized and begin its career of community leadership that extends to the present.[25] In Duluth, the third largest city of the state, yet another group, The Cecilians,[26] gathered in 1888 and began its long-running serious

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[24] See James Taylor Dunn, *Saint Paul's Schubert Club, A Century of Music, 1882-1982,* (St. Paul: The Schubert Club, 1983). The archives are held by the club and by the Minnesota Historical Society. A disastrous fire in the public library destroyed many early records.

[25] See Lois Cooper, *Thursday Musical, The First Century, 1892-1992,* (Minneapolis: The Thursday Musical, 1992) and Barbara Lamb, "Thursday Musical in Musical Life of Minneapolis," University of Minnesota Dissertation, 1983. The archives of the club are held by the Special Collections Department of the Minneapolis Public Library.

[26] No history of this still flourishing club has yet been written. The study group was the brainchild of Stella Stocker (1858-1925), composer, Indianist, and lecturer. In its beginning years it sponsored a chorus and concerts by visiting artists. The club's archives, wonderfully complete, are found in the Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, University of Minnesota-Duluth. The Cecilian's public concerts and educational projects were eventually taken over by the Matinée Musicale founded in 1900 by a group of Duluth women; see Mary R. Boe, *A City Filled With Music,* (Duluth: Matinée Musicale, 1999). Its archives are also in the Northeast Minnesota Historical Center.

study of music.[27] Smaller cities in the state followed suit with music clubs of their own. The Minnesota Federation of Women's Clubs urged all clubs to support art and "the companion art of music, harmony of sound, upon which God built the universe and set the spheres in motion." Miss Hope, the leader of the Ladies Orchestra of St. Paul, reported that "1000 of the 7000 members of The Federation belong to the music clubs."[28]

Pedagogues were aware of the opportunities that were opening in the Twin Cities of Minnesota. In the 1880s, several eminent pianists moved to the area: Gustavus Johnson, trained by the finest teachers of the Stockholm Conservatory;[29] Emil Zoch, honor's graduate of the Leipzig Conservatory;[30]

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[27] All three of the above-mentioned clubs reported on their programs and gave performances at the National Convention of Women's Amateur Musical Clubs at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 21-24 June 1893. See *National Convention of Women's Amateur Musical Clubs,* (Chicago: Stromberg, Allen, 1893) republished as *The Record of the Founding Meeting of the National Federation of Music Clubs* by The Federation in 1973, 19-21. 49-51, 96-98, and the partial review in *The Musical Courier* for 1 July 1893, 20-23.

[28] "Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Federation of Women's Clubs," *The Club Woman,* ix/3 (December, 1901), 92, 94.

[29] Gustavus Johnson (1856-c.1932), settled in Minneapolis in 1880 where he established the Johnson School of Music, Oratory and Dramatic Art, published a fine teaching manual, *Touch Formation and Elementary Technic for Piano-Forte* (1898) whch he used as a stepping stone to William Mason's *touch and Technique.* Johnson was one of the foremost composers of the First School of Minnesota Composers—songs, chamber music, and piano pieces. He accompanied well-known singers, and played over 300 compositions in concerts. See R. T. Laudon's biographical essay, "Gustavus Johnson, Pianist-Composer of Minneapolis," on deposit in the research library of the Minnesota Historical Society.

[30] Hermann Emil Zoch (1851-1928), Student #2036 of the Leipzig Conservatory, First Prize in 1875, in Minneapolis 1884-1910, gave 73 recitals of the masterpieces of piano literature in his 26 years in the city.

and Carl Lachmund, a pupil of Liszt in the last three years of that master's life.[31]

[31] Carl Lachmund (1857-1928) of Missouri, pianist and violinist, chose the Twin Cities as his residence in 1885 after he returned from study with Franz Liszt (1882- 1884). He kept a diary of his lessons and experiences, published as *Living with Liszt,* Franz Liszt Studies Series 4, edited, annotated, and introduced by Alan Walker, (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995), now considered one of the most important sources for understanding the way in which Liszt taught. While in the Twin Cities, he established a youth orchestra, played first violin in a string quartet, and accompanied performers on tour. After the death of his wife, a gifted harpist, he left for New York in 1890 where he founded his own conservatory and formed a Women's String Orchestra. Photos of Carl and Caroline Lachmund with Liszt are found in Ernst Burger, *Franz Liszt, A Chronicle of His Life in Pictures and Documents,* trans. Stewart Spencer, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 295, 300.

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Blue Book announcements of Johnson, Zoch, and Lachmund

Note that both Zoch and Lachmund chose an elegant script in the 1889-90 edition for their names in this directory for the elegant classes. Lachmund listed his foreign credentials, a sure fire attraction. Johnson opened his own conservatory in 1898-99, the dream of every musician/entrepreneur, this ad: 1909-1910..

In the same decade were founded: (1) St. Agatha's Conservatory in St. Paul (1884), an outgrowth of the earlier efforts of the Sisters of St. Joseph, and (2) The Northwestern Conservatory of Music in Minneapolis (1885), started by Charles H. Morse who searched the nation to find the best place to locate a conservatory on the model of the New England Conservatory. Music study on a national or even international level now became possible.

Gertrude's principal piano teacher beyond her earliest study, Prof. Charles Groves Titcomb,[32] organist of The People's Church of St. Paul, was not of the caliber of the above-mentioned "stars" but he brought high standards of Boston education to St. Paul. He had already been the principal teacher in Janesville, Wisconsin, of a songwriter destined for fame: Carrie Jacobs-Bond. He did seem quite antiquated—actually in his forties—to young Gertrude who, when she returned from lessons, made fun of his beard and stern manner. He was insistent upon exercises and correct fingering and at times

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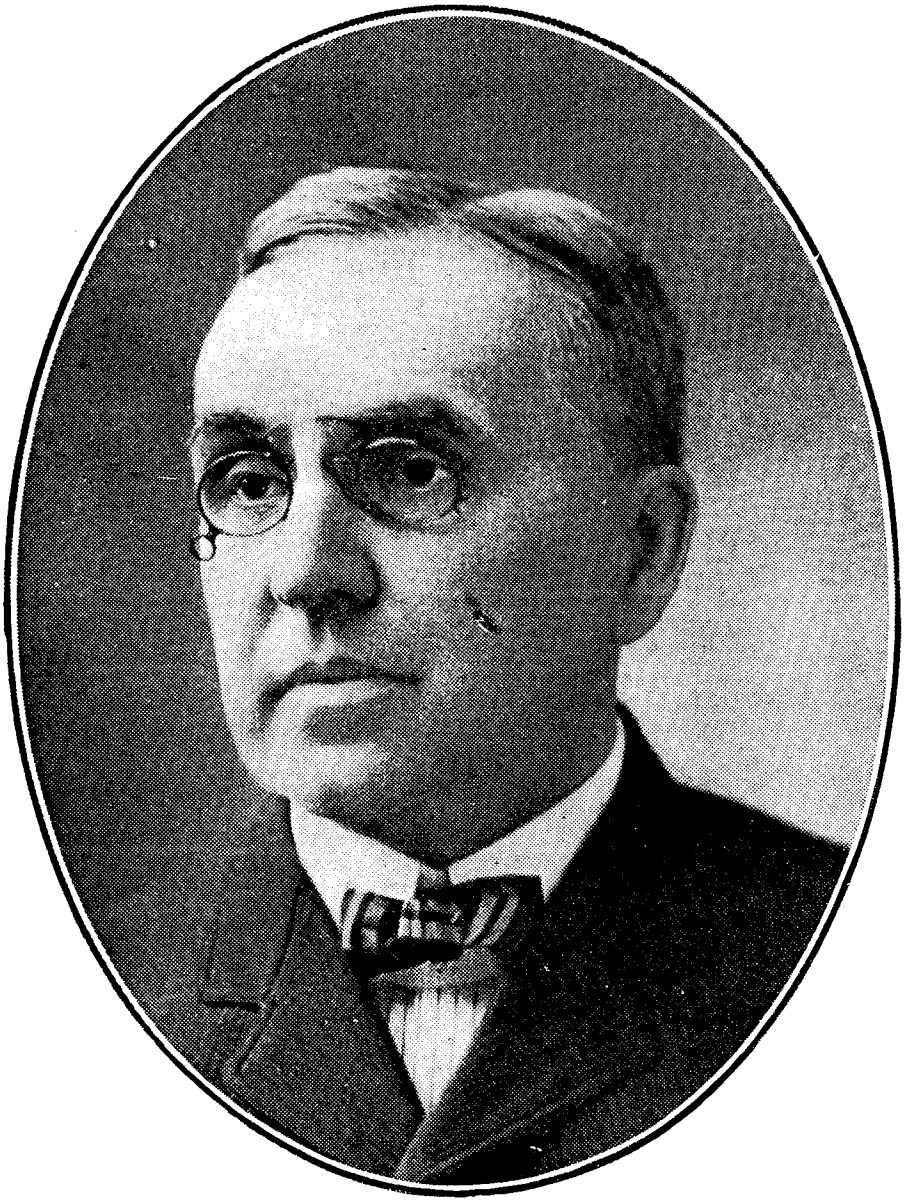
[32] Charles Groves Titcomb was born in Nassau, New Hampshire, 20 March 1844, to Mr. and Mrs. John Pierson Titcomb. He received his musical training in Boston. He served in the 47th Massachusetts Volunteers during the Civil War. He settled in Harvard, Illinois, and around 1866 moved to Janesville, Wisconsin where he set up a "music parlor" as a teaching studio. He became organist of the Baptist Church and then of All Souls Church. He taught 50 to 60 pupils a year, among them Carrie Jacobs-Bond, his most famous student. In 1882 he moved to St. Paul where he taught until 1910 when he moved to Los Angeles and lived near Carrie Jacobs-Bond in Hollywood. The information on his time in Janesville comes from the City Directories, material supplied kindly by Laura Gottlieb and Jean Motsinger, reference librarians of Hedberg Public Library. A short biography of Titcomb can be found in *The History of the Great Northwest and its Men of Progress* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Journal, 1901), 576.

overly discouraging to the talented student.[33] As a member of an older generation, he used repertory that was soon to become outmoded along with other items that would stand the test of time.

[33] Carrie Jacobs-Bond gives her impressions of Titcomb and a teacher in *The Roads of Melody,* (New York: D. Appleton, 1927). She speaks of working hard "but the teachers I had were the sort one would find in a town like Janesville fifty years ago—just the everyday, perfectly competent and understanding, but none the less routine, music teachers. (p. 8) She speaks of not being taught harmony or composition. She also notes that Titcomb sometimes decided she had not been practicing correctly and would make her do it over again. "I wouldn't say I enjoyed the five-finger exercises, but I learned that it was very necessary to know the proper fingering and I mastered it when very young." (pp. 11-12).



Portrait of Charles Groves Titcomb
Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society

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Titcomb's full page advertisement
Dual City Blue Book, 1909-10

Titcomb trained two other excellent woman pianists, Ella Richards and Emma Hess Detzer. His "Piano Club" of advanced pupils gave informal musicales in addition to more formal concerts. These often featured four-hand duets and 8-hand ensembles. Some method books, such as Low's *Practical Course of Study of 4-hand Playing,* were geared to this practice. On a Titcomb program, Ella Richard's farewell concert before leaving for Vienna and study with Leschetizky,[34] Sans Souci performed in an eight-hand *Grande Marche de Concert* by Wollenhaupt.

Gertrude's mother—from Ireland—was the driving force behind her daughter's accomplishments and "pounded her on the back" to get results.[35] Her father, John, despite his Carefree name, an introvert devoted to a study of history and an artist who occupied a special niche in his trade, supported Gertrude's study even to the point of sacrificing three years of family life in order to allow her to study abroad. We do not know enough about Mrs. Sans Souci to be able to say that she was part of the "musician-artist" class that made music and the arts part of their own lives and of their children's everyday experience and were frequently the first generation of a dynasty of

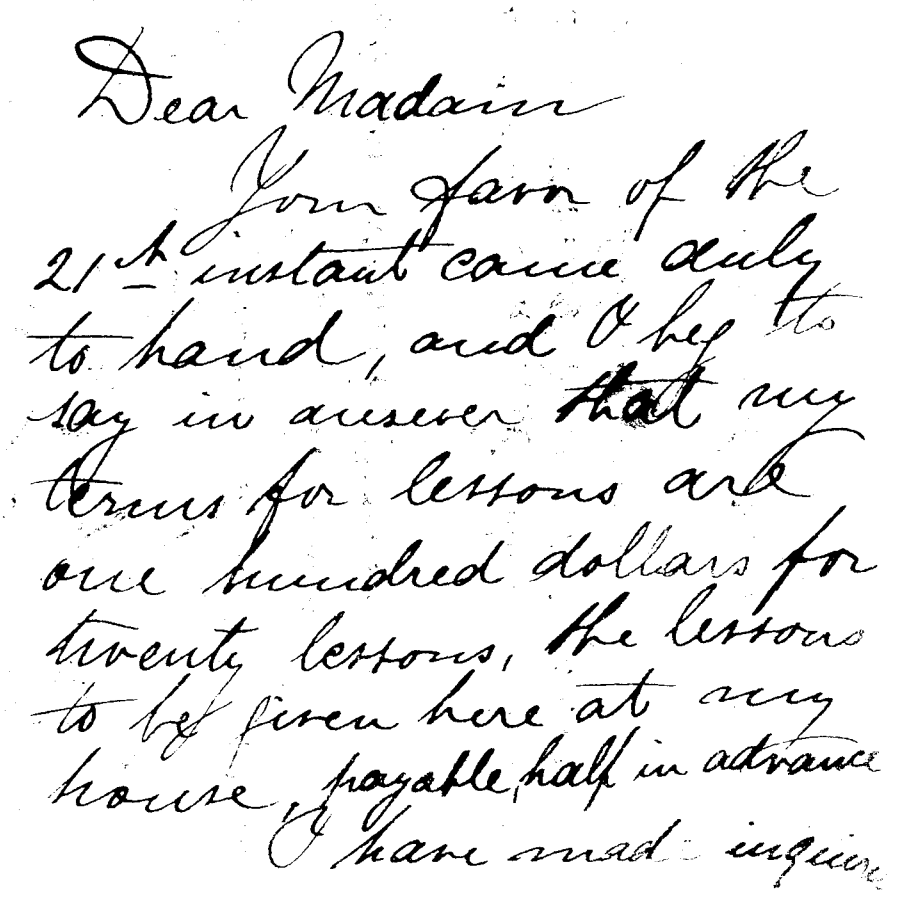
[34] Richards was loaned $425 by the Schubert Club to go to Vienna and study with Leschetizky. She became a well-known local soloist and later correspondent of the *Music News* of Chicago.

[35] Informaation from Marguerite Mumm, Gertrude's niece.

musicians.[36] The husband and wife, however, wanted to combine the safety of a family life even as their daughters entered the artistic world.

When Gertrude was only fifteen years of age, her mother wrote to Teresa Carreño, at that moment the best-known woman pianist in the world, about the possibility of lessons. Madam Carreño answered from her residence at 47 West 22nd Street in New York City.

[36] See Nancy B. Reich, "Women as Musicians: A Question of Class," Ruth A. Solie, ed., *Musicology and Difference,* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 125-146. Certainly there were several such dynasties of musicians in the Twin Cities whose first generations, such as Wilma Anderson or Hermann Straka, were active in Sans Souci's day. Later generations are still active.


Dear Madam
Your favor of the
21st instant came duly
to hand, and I beg to
say in answer that my
terms for lessons are
one hundred dollars for
twenty lessons, the lessons
to be given here at my
house, payable half in advance
I have made inquire

Beginning of the Carreño letter
Courtesty of Leslsie White, Sans Souci's grandson

Carreño kindly offered arrangements for lodging with Mrs. Richter, her own landlady. A room on the parlor floor would be $22 per week for room and board or $16 per week for a large front room on the upper floor. She also

assured Mrs. Sans Souci that "in this house you would have the advantage also that your daughter could practice as much as she desired without any inconvenience or objection from any one."[37] We have no indication why this arrangement remained unfulfilled on either part. Carreño at that time was already considering a career in Germany, something that she undertook with great acclaim in the fall of 1889.

Gertrude made excellent progress in St. Paul if we may judge by the exercises for her graduation from St. Mary's School. She played a Chopin Ballade "enthusiastically received" and accompanied others in the class. Already she was glorying in the limelight.

> Amid the applause of parents and friends present, a musical charade was also given. The charade and a fan drill directed by Miss Gertie Sans Souci were the features of the exercises. In the charade the different birds sing to the fairies. The costumes worn in the fan drill were pink, blue and old gold.[38]

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[37] Carreño to Mrs. John Sansoucie, 27 February 1888, now in the possession of Leslie White, Sans Souci's grandson. The assurance of practice without disturbing others was an important consideration. When Kate Mork of Minneapolis went to Leipzig to study with Robert Teichmüller, she recounted that she found a landlady who said she loved music and would be pleased to have a musician in the house. As it turned out, the landlady placed a chair in the hall to listen and what she heard, to her dismay, were scales and arpeggios.

[38] Sans Souci Scrapbook, the entry is undated but coincides with a newspaper account. Where not otherwise indicated, quotations are drawn from this Scrapbook.

II. Berlin

In the latter part of the century, the accepted means of professional musical training for Americans lay principally in foreign study.[39] Many students chose Germany. Its conservatories—established mainly in the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s—had now reached a state of renown; its repertory dominated concert life. Among the early students from America was Amy Fay, author of *Music Study in Germany,* a description of her experiences in the 1870s. This book published in 1881 (and twenty editions thereafter) became a source of inspiration for the talented "females" of the USA.

At age eighteen (1890), Gertrude and her sister, Monica, accompanied by their mother, chose Berlin where Monica studied violin with Thadeus von Hanizki and Gertrude studied organ with Pyllemann of the Twelve Apostles Church, and piano, first with Oscar Raif[40] and then with Moritz Moszkowski.[41] In addition to Sans Souci's work with Moszkowski, Gertrude became a friend of Moritz Rosenthal[42] who coached her in many pieces of her

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[39] At Macalester College in St. Paul, as late as 1925 they listed their faculty with special marks to distinguish those that had had "foreign and American training" as opposed to those that had only local education.

[40] Oscar Raif (1847-1899), Royal Professor of the Berlin Hochschule and also known as a composer.

[41] Moritz Moszkowski (1854-1925), the noted German pianist, teacher and composer (of Polish descent), taught at this time at the Kullak Academy. Theodor Kullak (1818-1882) had originally formed a conservatory in conjunction with Stern and Marx but in 1855 withdrew and founded the Neue Akademie der Tonkunst that became famous as Kullak's Academy.

[42] Rosenthal (1862-1946), one of the greatest virtuosos of the piano and a pupil of Liszt.

repertoire. Such attention by one of the greatest artists of that time, the man called the "Little Giant of the Piano," gives us an indication that Sans Souci was performing well in a selective repertoire but "coaching" is the operative word—it would not lead to individual thought and confidence.

Gertrude's mother established a household at 23 Winlerfeldstraße so that her daughters would not have to live in a pension as most music students did. She made that a true home—even with a cat—and a social center for a merry group of young people. Evidently the Sans Soucis received no financial help from the Schubert Club (which was beginning a loan program) nor from the James Hill family.[43]

Mother and daughters managed to live and pay for lessons on $100 a month which the father sent from St. Paul, enough money to sustain them although the daughters could remember having to economize near the end of the month. Still they were able to hear, during their three-year residency, the "best of concerts" which cost only 3 Pfennig apiece. In contrast, Royal Professor Raif, who was noted for overcharging foreign students, charged 20 marks a lesson.[44]

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[43] James J. Hill, the railroad magnate, gave many awards to deserving students, especially those in Catholic institutions favored by his wife. Research in the Hill Library has failed to find any grant to Sans Souci.

[44] Information from Miss Marguerite Mumm who was very close to her mother, Monica, and who heard much discussion of the family's musical life in their home on Crocus Hill just above Oakland Avenue. According to a bill in San Souci's Scrapbook, Raif exacted the price quoted. It appears that San Souci took a one-hour lesson every two weeks.

Gertrude's choice of Moszkowski (now widely regarded as a "salon" composer) as teacher for her last year of study indicates the trend of her taste. He admitted that he considered his own compositions "one generation too late—already outmoded when they appeared."[45] But Sans Souci's choice may also reflect the taste of the community as well. It was just after 1900 that the solid long-lasting organizations of the Twin Cities—the Schubert Club, the Thursday Musicale, the Minneapolis Symphony, the Minnesota Music Teachers Association, and the college and university music departments began to exert a powerful influence which moved the community gradually away from entertainment music and toward more "cultured" styles. The virtuoso Moszkowski, one of the most illustrious and well-organized teachers of the day, taught his students to overcome all technical difficulties but also to find the spirit of each composition. At the end of her study, he gave Sans Souci a recommendation stressing her performance possibilities.

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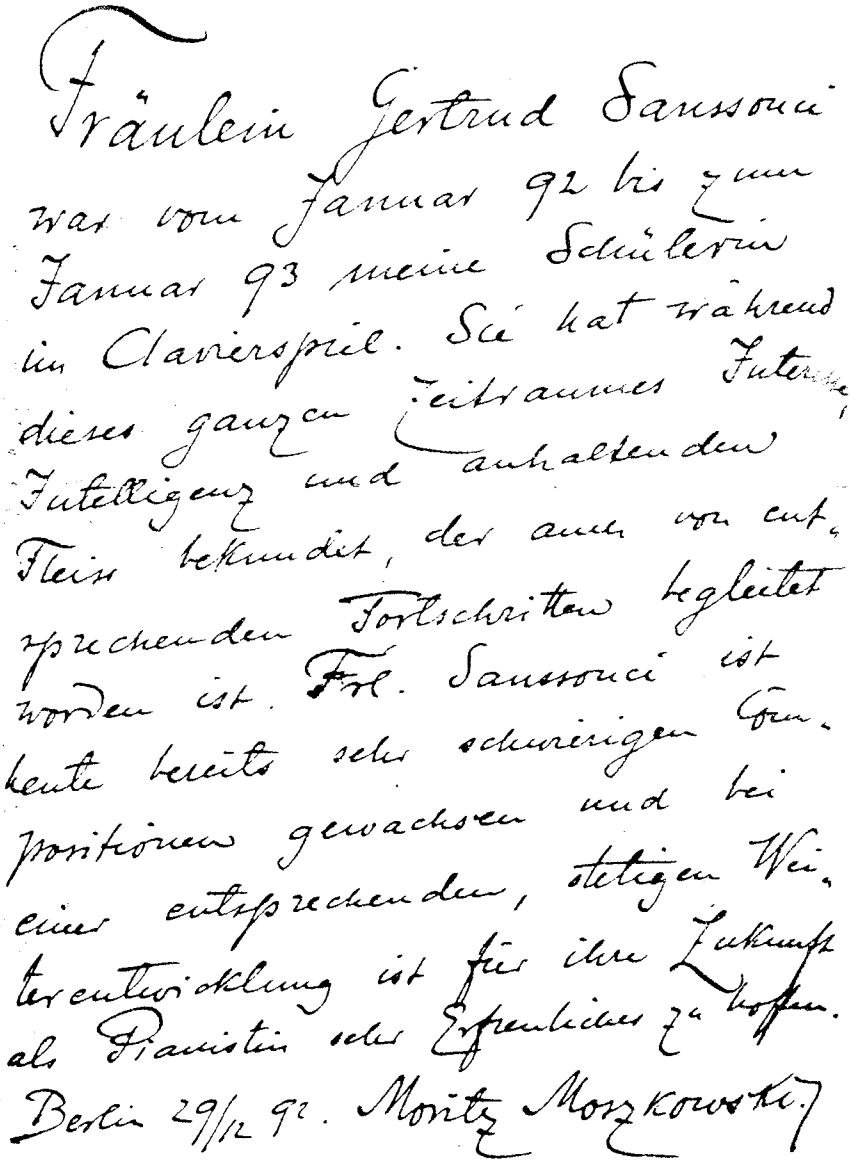
[45] Gail Delente, "Solo Piano Music of Moritz Moszkowski," *The American Music Teacher,* Nov/Dec 1982, 19.

Miss Gertrude Sanssouci was my student in piano playing from January of 1892 until January of 1893. She demonstrated interest, intelligence and controlled diligence accompanied by matching progress during the entire period. Miss Sanssouci is today ready and capable of very difficult compositions and, through an expected steady further development, will hopefully be a pianist who will delight.

Berlin, 29 December 1892. Moritz Moszkowski.



Fräulein Gertrud Sanssouci
war vom Januar 92 bis zum
Januar 93 meine Schülerin
im Clavierspiel. Sie hat während
dieses ganzen Zeitraumes Inter-
Intelligenz und anhaltenden
Fleiss bekundet, der auch von ent-
sprechenden Fortschritten begleitet
worden ist. Frl. Sanssouci ist
heute bereits sehr schwierigen Com-
positionen gewachsen und bei
einer entsprechenden, stetigen Wei-
terentwicklung ist für ihre Zukunft
als Pianistin sehr Erfreuliches zu hoffen.
Berlin 29/12 92. Moritz Moszkowski.

Moszkowski's Letter of Recommendation
Courtesy Marguerite Mumm, Sans Souci's Niece

One might contrast her recommendation with that of another Gertrude.[46]

[46] Gertrude Ann Dobyns (1877-1973) pianist, composer and teacher was born in Shelbyville and raised in Shelbina, Missouri. She studied with private teachers in the USA and then spent four years in Germany. She was a student at the Stern Convervatory (Berlin): piano with Ernst Jedliczka (pupil of Tschaikowsky and Rubenstein), musical theory with Ludwig Bussler and at the Dresdent Convervatory: piano with Bertrand Roth (pupil of Liszt), musical theory with W. Albert Rischbieter.

She came in 1901 to Minneapolis where she taught at Stanley Hall and at the Northwestern Conservatory. Her concerts in Germany and the USA earned her rave reviews. She gave special lectures on the Minneapolis symphony repertory before concerts and had her students study the masterworks of orchestral literature. She even took one of her classes to Germany to study.

In the time of World War I, she went to France as a volunteer member of the first foreign service entertainment group sent abroad. Following the war, she returned to Shelbina where she built a music studio and guided generations of students in art and music while she became a community leader in civic affairs. Her songs were performed at the 1910 convention of MMTA.

Miss Gertrude Dobyns

aus Shelbina, Missouri, U. St.

hat vom Oktober 1898 bis Mai 1901 unter der speciellen Leitung der Unterzeichneten Klavier gespielt und sich in dieser Zeit vermöge ihrer reichen Begabung und ihres temperamentvollen Empfindens zu einer concertfertigen Pianistin von grosser Feinsinnigkeit entwickelt. Auch bürgt die gewissenhafte Art ihres Musikstudiums für Miss Dobyns' Tüchtigkeit als Lehrerin.

Die junge Künstlerin in beiden Beziehungen aufs Wärmste zu empfehlen, ist der Zweck dieses Zeugnisses.

Dresden am 8. Mai 1901.

Bertrand Roth.

Klavier-Virtuose.

Recommendation courtesy the Dobyns family

Miss Gertrude Dobyns, of Shelbina, Missouri, U.S., has, from October 1898 until May 1901 under the special guidance of the undersigned, played piano, and has, in this time period, through her rich talent and emotional temperament, developed into a concert-ready pianist of sensitive taste. This also vouches that the conscientiousness of her music studies fits Miss Dobyns for activity as a teacher. To recommend most warmly the young artist in both capabilities is the aim of this witness. Dresden, 8th of May, 1901.

Bertrand Roth, Piano virtuoso.

This recommendation is not quoted to show Sans Souci in an inferior position but to show the difference between a student who spent four years in intensive work not only in performance but *also in the study of music theory.* At this time, many parents and advisors were dazzled by a "big name" and unaware of the necessity of a deeper music education.[47] If the diary that the Sans Souci sisters kept of their three years in Berlin had not been destroyed, we might know more of the scope of their study.[48] The best private teachers

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[47] Study at a conservatory usually gave access to a richer study of music including its theoretical aspects, however, even at Leipzig, the women were placed in women's classes (performance teaching was not individual) and the women might not elect to study theory as thoroughly as the men. Sometimes this meant that a woman violinist might be given a Grieg Sonata whereas her male counterpart might be required to study a Beethoven work—a type of situation that happened with Verna Golden of Minneapolis as compared with F. Melius Christiansen of Minneapolis in their classes with Hans Sitt.

[48] Students frequently kept diaries or memory books. Monica Sans Souci started a Birthday Book in Berlin. Ruth Anderson and Wilma Anderson [Gilman] of Minneapolis asked their friends in Brussels to inscribe a book of remembrance during their study in Belgium and particularly when they were on the point of returning home. The volume bears the title *Poésie* and includes poems, comments about the worth of music, and well wishes in English, French and German and is enhanced by a number of drawings. These sisters were the first musical generation in what now extends to the third generation.

often recommended study with a composer or theorist.[49] Much musical background could also have been gained by attendance at concerts especially if they acquired and studied musical scores. Moszkowski did teach at Kullak's Academy which undoubtedly offered instruction in theory of music.

Despite the lack of definitive proof, Gertrude must have studied harmony and music theory in Germany. The flowing harmony of her songs and the ease of harmonic progression indicates it. One sees in her manuscripts an ease of musical calligraphy that indicates someone who is long past amateur status.

[49] Around 1905, Donald N. Ferguson (for whom School of Music at the University of Minnesota is named), studying piano with Michael Hambourg in London, took advantage of his teacher's hiring of Josef Holbrooke to hold a class in counterpoint for his piano students. Ferguson became fascinated to the point where he could write in the style of Bach Inventions as readily as he could write English. Out of this came Ferguson's organization of an early Bach Society.

In Germany of that day, student recitals in the American usage were unknown; only star pupils appeared in recital and then only with "orchestral assistance" and to a large audience that would be interested in the "new discovery of the master."[50] Toward the end of her Berlin stay, Gertrude Sans Souci had more opportunity than most young students though not with orchestral accompaniment. Her organ teacher, Pyllemann, introduced two of his American students at one of his concerts. Miss Wheeler presented the familiar Toccata and Fugue in D Minor of Bach and received moderate praise in the press. Sans Souci received a more extended and enthusiastic review for her performance of a Fantasie of Ludwig Thiele, a composition which she used for many years as her *pièce de résistance.* Wilhelm Tappert, the noted writer on musical subjects, reported:

> Frl. Sans-Souci, the young American organist who is appearing so successfully in Berlin, appeared again last evening. Frl. Sans-Souci chose a difficult task, the beautiful Chromatic Fantasie in A Flat, by Thiele, a masterpiece of the most genial virtuoso and composer of modern times, who apparently possessed all qualifications to become as organist, the Sebastian Bach of today. Frl. Sans-Souci played her numbers with an energetic and enthusiastic attack. Her technique,

[50] Gertrude's reminiscences, *Minneapolis Tribune,* 15 September 1900.

both of the keys and pedal, is wonderful. The musical treat will not be easily forgotten.[51]

She also had a few opportunities as accompanist and pianist. In the Bauersaale, she played accompaniments for G. Saackel, a young violin virtuoso. The reviewer mentioned especially the A Minor Mazurka of Wieniawski and an *Air varié* of Beriot. "The demanding accompaniments played by Miss Sans Souci supported the performance in a most favorable way." Her solo pieces at this concert earned her the epithet of piano virtuosa of "great technical agility that showed witness of much industry and careful practice. The Waltz of Chopin was in this regard masterfully performed although a little less of the pedal could be recommended to the young artist."[52]

Though encouraged by Moszkowski to stay and perfect her talent still further, the family had evidently planned on three year's study abroad and funds would not allow a further extension. The next step would have been to perfect a concerto and join the ranks of the piano virtuoso world.[53]

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[51] From *Das kleine Journal* as quoted in Sans Souci's press testimonials (Sans Souci Papers, Minnesota Historical Society) and in the clippings in the Sans Souci Scrapbook. Wilhelm Tappert (1830-1907) was an author and composer, ardent admirer of Wagner, and collector of an extremely valuable library later acquired by the Royal Library. Louis Thiele (1816-1848) had been organist of the Parochialkirche in Berlin. In addition to this concert, other clippings describe successful piano concerts at the Architekten Haus and at the Saale des Herrn Bauer with the violinist Saackel.

[52] Information from the publicity materials of Sans Souci.

[53] On the same page as Sans Souci's review was a notice of Emma Koch playing two concertos at the Singakdemie with the orchestra of the

III. Building a Career

The Sans Soucis, mother and daughters, returned to Saint Paul in 1893. Monica, the violinist, a much more private person than her sister, soon gave up music for domesticity. Gertrude, however, embarked on a career that she would have to shape both artistically and financially. She had to become something of an entrepreneur as well as a professional musician.

Her French name Carefree—Sans (without), Souci (care)—already promised a sparkling personality. The actual family name was Vel but in the eighteenth century back in Canada, free spirits acquired the nickname Carefree, an appellation soon adopted by the family. Gertrude inherited not only the name but the spirit of the family—perhaps spiced also with a bit of fire from her Irish mother Margaret Byrne.[54] During her professional career, her distinctive family name became a great asset. At a Chautauqua Assembly at Lake Madison, South Dakota, in July of 1894, the "eloquent orator of the balmy south," John Temple Graves, and the humorist, Fred Emerson Brooks, signed her calling cards with lines in tribute:

I thank thee, Gertrude, when I bid adieu,
That with you I have been "Sans Souci" too.

Had I a name as sweet as this
I'd never change it pretty Miss.

Philharmonic under Moszkowski's direction. Sans Souci could not have reached a similar point in her scant three years of professional training.

[54] Margaret Byrne (15 October 1849-buried 22 November 1916).

During her years in Berlin, Gertrude discovered the Potsdam Palace of Frederick the Great who had christened it Sans, Souci, the two words separated by a comma, Free of, Care. The palace had two wings, one devoted to governmental affairs and appropriately called Souci, Care; the other devoted to entertainment and his favorite art of music which fell under the aegis of Sans, Free.[55] Gertrude's family had spelled its name Sansouci or Sansoucie, pronounced San-sou'-see. Upon her return to the United States they changed it definitively to the Potsdam Palace spelling.[56] In a practical tribute to this gift of a special *nom-de-plume,* she designed an oak cabinet for her music with a large "S" carved on right and left doors. Seldom has anyone made more of a spirited name!

At this time, it was important for an American artist to have a name that suggested foreign or exotic origin. Some of the most successful American woman pianists, Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler and Julie Rivé-King, were blessed with names that satisfied the public. One was not! Lucy Hickenlooper of Texas, was told by her agent, Henry Wolfson, that her name might fit her "for the Colonial Dames or the Daughters of the American Revolution" but would be unfit "for an artistic career."[57] He was convinced that if she "played like

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[55] On the palace and its place in Frederick's daily activities see Nancy Mitford, *Frederick the Great,* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Book, 1973), 151-170.

[56] The spelling of Sans Souci as opposed to Sansouci first appeared in the 1895 St. Paul Directory after Gertrude's return from Berlin.

[57] Olga Samaroff Stokowski, *An American Musician's Story,* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1939), p. 30. For further on Samaroff, see Donna Staley Kline,

Liszt and Rubenstein rolled into one" he could do nothing for her "in this country without European prestige."[58] Consequently Lucy Hickenlooper became Olga Samaroff, a professional name she retained for life. Sans Souci did not have to face this hurdle

Now Gertrude had, in addition to her name, European training and some German reviews—valuable assets in building an American reputation. For two years thereafter her press notices mentioned that she intended to go back to Germany for further study. She evidently realized the extra effort it would take to come up to the level of a leading pianist.

After her study in Germany, Sans Souci hoped to make a career of concert playing following the example of touring artists. The first step was to introduce oneself to prospective audiences through a brochure. Her brochure for the season of 1894-95 showed her seated on a wicker chair, clothed in a full gown with puff sleeves, the gown gathered just below the bosom with a large bow. She looked expectantly out toward the Empyrean where the arts dwelled. In her hand was a scroll of music. She is identified not just as a pianist but a "concert pianiste," the French form of "pianist" conveying not only the feminine gender but a bit of class—this in a day of "quartettes, musicales, and matinées." The whole picture was to suggest that art could carry one beyond

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Olga Samaroff Stokowski, An American Virtuoso on the World Stage, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996).

[58] Samaroff Stokowski, *Musician's Story,* 36.

the everyday world. "Were it not for music, we might in these days say, The Beautiful is dead."

Publicity Brochure, Sans Souci's Scrapbook
Courtesy Leslie White, Sans Souci's Grandson

She found it necessary to become an entrepreneur and set up a Western Musical Exchange in St. Paul with Miss Cecelia Mumm as her traveling representative and with Charles R. Baker of Metropolitan Music in Minneapolis as her manager.[59] Sans Souci herself made lists of influential people that she could contact in various places.

Unfortunately she arrived back in St. Paul just at the time that the country was gripped by a severe depression, a downturn so severe that it spoiled The Twin Cities' hopes of attaining the status of the great eastern establishments. Flour milling still remained a world-class industry and the railroads claimed the Twin Cities as the "Gateway to the Great Northwest;" however, the state lost financial control of its iron ore investments to Rockefeller, the great forests were becoming depleted and logging was moving on to the West. Extreme grandiose dreams disappeared and Minnesota was left with important cities and industries but not the prime centers that the entrepreneurs thought would rival New York, Philadelphia or Chicago.

Shortly after her return to Minnesota, Sans Souci was appointed organist of St. Luke's Catholic Church, one of the great churches along Summit Avenue that were graced by the elite of the city. The parish, in a developmental stage, already had grand plans and some accomplishments. The members still

[59] Director Clarance Marshall of the Northwestern Conservatory also kept an informal concert bureau and helped his teachers to obtain engagements. See R. T. Laudon's biographical essay, "Clarance Alden Marshall: the Northwestern Conservatory of Music and the Minnesota Music Teachers Association" on deposit in the research library of the Minnesota Historical Society and on net.

occupied a chapel but were looking forward to the days of a monumental church building. They were installing electric lights, hiring good soloists for their "choir," and had formed a Literary and Social Club to inculcate a "taste for study of a literary and musical nature."[60] In a short time, this church became the most prominent in the city next to the cathedral itself.

During the summer of 1893, Sans Souci briefly took over the duties at the cathedral while the regular organist, Katherine Collins, was appearing at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Collins, a formidably able musician, some years later became Schumann-Heink's accompanist and traveled the world with that famous singer for twenty years. That Sans Souci should be chosen to substitute for her is a mark of the esteem accredited to the recent debutante from Berlin.

Sans Souci's position at St. Luke's remained the backbone of her musical career in the years from 1893 through 1897. She supplemented this work with private piano lessons and continued to entertain hopes of a concert career but opportunities were scattered. Her most steady help came as accompanist and assisting artist to Nettie Snyder, soprano of St. Paul. Most of the performances they gave in the early years were for private matinées that were reported on the society pages.

Mrs. Snyder's husband was the proprietor of The Frederick Hotel, the stopping place for many prominent visitors to the city. Nettie Snyder

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[60] Patricia Condon Johnston, *Church of St. Luke, A Centennial Memoir, 1888-1988*, (St. Paul: Church of St. Luke, 1988), 14.

maintained in the hotel a studio that became "a center of social life for St. Paul devotees of music."[61] An impresario, Snyder brought the Metropolitan Opera to the city in 1910 and the Chicago Grand Opera in 1911, with further presentations of opera until 1920 when she left St. Paul. Snyder formed part of the group that organized the St. Paul Symphony Orchestra in 1907 and even managed the orchestra for two years.

In 1898 Sans Souci was appointed organist of the Cathedral of St. Paul, another forward step in her career. She served until 1902. She had a repertory of nearly 100 masses; however, this does not indicate an important choral program at the cathedral that still relied upon a quartet of soloists except for high church festivals when a choir and full orchestra were present.

Though the organ world beckoned, opportunities—compared to pianistic possibilities—were limited except for certain world figures. Exceptional careers of Clarence Eddy or other "stars" of the day acted as a beacon to aspirants. Though we have no record of Sans Souci trying to emulate any one particular artist, we know that she appeared as an assisting artist on Eddy's program in Mankato, Minnesota, 10 March 1899. She played accompaniments for Mrs. Snyder who sang among other things the Ave Maria from Verdi's *Otello*. Most of Eddy's program at Mankato was drawn from "organ composers"—Wolstenholme, Bossi, and Guilmant—but he did include the Great Fugue in G Minor of Bach, more of a show-off composition than many works of Bach.

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[61] Snyder Obituary, *The St. Paul Pioneer Press,* 21 October 1929.

Though Sans Souci did not to my knowledge ever play any Bach compositions in public yet she could identify with and perform effectively the other material on the Eddy recital. It seemed that her prospects were excellent but in practice she had to look beyond the concert circuit.

In 1900, she joined the teaching ranks of the Northwestern Conservatory of Music, Clarance Alden Marshall's noted music school in Minneapolis, an institution that at that time served as the music facility of the University of Minnesota. Sans Souci spent two afternoons a week at the school where she guided a number of students until 1904. She served on the piano faculty along with Emil Oberhoffer, the founder of the Minneapolis Symphony, a student of Philipp in Paris and a fine pianist, She was also on the organ faculty with Oberhoffer and Clarance Marshall, the director of the school. Mr. Oberhoffer received $40.00 for twenty private piano lessons. Sans Souci received $30.00, a mark of the esteem in which she was held since the other women teachers received fees of $20.00 down to $10.00. Oberhoffer received $50.00 for a similar number of organ lessons whereas Sans Souci and Director Marshall received $30.00.[62]

[62] These details from the 1901 Catalogue of the Conservatory. A number of these catalogues for various years are contained in the collections of the Minneapolis Public Library, the Hennepin County Library and the Minnesota Historical Society.

Sans Souci's students gave substantial programs, often slanted toward display and sentiment as was the case in that day, but as the following will show, with compositions by major composers.[63]

PIANO-FORTE RECITAL
(Completion of Teachers Course)

MISS EDNA G. WAKEMAN
Pupil of MISS SANS SOUCI
AT NORTHWESTERN CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
LADIES THURSDAY MUSICALE STUDIO (METROPOLITAN BLDG.)

Saturday, October 24, 1903, 4 O'Clock
ASSISTED BY MR. FRED WARNER, BASS

Grieg	Sonata Op. 7
	Allegro moderato—Andante molto
De Koven	Armourer's Song (Robin Hood)
Sans Souci	Thoughts
	Mr. Warner
Chopin	Etude Op 25, No. 1
	Etude, Op. 10, No. 7
MacDowell	Sketches
	Waterlily—From an Indian Lodge
Chopin	Polonaise, Op. 26, No. 1
Lohr	Out on the Deep
	Mr. Warner
Liszt	Concert Etude in D flat

[63] Edna Wakeman became organist of Wesley Methodist Church in 1909, *History of Wesley Church, the First 125 Years* (Minneapolis: 1977), 99. The position had been held earlier by Sans Souci.

At last, the cities were realizing what a musician they had. Gertrude was offered a position as organist of the Wesley Methodist Church in Minneapolis through the offices of Maud Ulmer Jones,[64] possessor of a "clear, bell-like soprano" which cast a spell over auditors. Jones "loved applause" but was not tempted to achieve it by showoff means. She was devoted to serious music and to the Thursday Musical Club of Minneapolis. In her early days, she had been a leading lady with the Bostonians, a light opera company of high repute[65] but later turned away from the theater.

Constant travel and the hardships of life with a comic opera troupe proved too trying for Mrs. Jones, who had refused all offers to go on the opera stage again. Preferring church and concert work, she took the position of leading soprano in the Wesley Methodist church at Minneapolis. There she is literally "the whole thing," being the sole member of the choir. Several thousand people flocked to hear her every Sunday.[66]

The position at Wesley Methodist Church was reputed to be the highest paying one for musicians within the cities. Sans Souci now had two sopranos

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[64] Maud Ulmer was born on the East Side of Minneapolis in 1870 and died in the city 3 December 1907, age 37. See the notices in *The Minneapolis Journal* for 4 and 6 December.1907 Her funeral services at the Church of the Redeemer attracted a large crowd. The Masonic Quartet sang and acted as pall bearers. Emil Oberhoffer played the funeral march from Peer Gynt.

[65] The company that drew upon the troupe of the previous Boston Ideal Opera Company was noted for "a fine standard for artistic finish."

[66] Sans Souci Scrapbook undated. This article exaggerates. The "choir" in churches at this time was a quartet of soloists. That is the kind of group that sang at Ulmer Jones's funeral.

for her concerts, and, with their fine voices and her growing reputation, the pairs embarked frequently on concert tours to women's music clubs both in and out of state.

For the Schumann Club in Fergus Falls,[67] Minnesota, for instance, Sans Souci and Maud Ulmer Jones presented the Annual Spring Recital at the Lyceum Theatre, 22 May 1903.

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[67] Seven women founded the Schumann Club in March of 1897. By 1924 it had 160 members. It sponsored local talent and other artists in concert with the object of creating a desire for "better music." See Mary Dillon Foster, *Who's Who Among Minnesota Women,* (Published by the author, 1924), 106. Minnesota had numerous ladies music clubs: the two Twin Cities Clubs: the Schubert Club of St. Paul and the Thursday Musical of Minneapolis and the Duluth Clubs: the Cecilians and the Matinée Musicale. All of these are still active. Beyond the hub cities were such groups as the Mozart Club of St. James, the Brainerd Musical Club, and the Musical Arts Club of Little Falls. Many of the literary clubs also sponsored music programs. See Jennifer E. Cieslak, "Women and Music in Nineteenth-Century America and the Rise of the Women's Music Club Movement," Princeton University B.A. Thesis, 1944, which concentrates upon the Schubert Club of St.Paul (on deposit in the Schubert Club Library).

1.	Fire Scene	Wagner-Liszt
2.	Jewel Aria, from Faust	Gounod
3.	(a) Nocturne	Liszt
	(b) Maiden's Wish	Chopin
4.	(a) Nymphs and Shepherds	Purcell
	(b) Eventide	Agatha Grøndahl
	(c) Meine Liebe ist grün	Brahms
5.	Valse, Op. 34	Moszkowski
6.	(a) Gray Rocks and Grayer Seas	Kate Vannah
	(b) My Bairnie	Kate Vannah
	(c) Wishes	Gertrude Sans Souci
	(d) Serenade	Strauss
7.	Polonaise, E Major	Liszt
8.	(a) Afar in the Wood	Kjerulf
	(b) Summer	Chaminade

This particular program is slightly more serious than some; perhaps so planned to accord with the club's purpose of studying "the best music." The unusual presence of songs by four women[68] may have been in tribute to the

[68] Agathe Backer Grøndahl (1847-1907), Norwegian composer and pianist, is particularly noted for her songs which, despite her Norwegian background, seem to be modeled on Romantic composers rather than on folksong material [see *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers,* 198-199]. Letitia Katherine "Kate" Vannah (1855-1933), a Maine composer and writer of verse was educated in Maine and at St. Joseph's Academy, Emmetsberg, Maryland. She is practically unknown today. Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944) composer and pianist, was probably the best-known woman composer of her day. She composed in all genres, large and small including about 125 songs. Her compositions were well received particularly by the numerous Chaminade

Fergus Falls Woman's Club, a study and community service club, founded simultaneously with the Schumann Club by many of the same organizers. For the concerts, Snyder or Jones often included songs by Sans Souci who had begun publishing in 1901 and had achieved a national hit in 1902 with "When Song is Sweet."

Sans Souci found that her positions as Twin Cities correspondent of *The Musical Courier* and local reviewer for the *St. Paul Globe* (James J. Hill's paper) gave her access to a wider public. As a result of these campaigns, she played often within the state and somewhat less frequently in the East and West.

At this time, concerts were given by a principal soloist but almost always with an assisting artist. Sans Souci alternated in these roles, sometimes principal, sometimes assistant. While there were advantages to this arrangement, then as now, a pianist who was an accompanist did not receive as much recognition as when performing as a soloist.

Many of her appearances were with singers—especially with one or the other of two sopranos: Maude Ulmer Jones, or Mrs. Fred H. (Nettie) Snyder. The second singer, Mrs. Snyder of St. Paul, possessing the voice of a "dramatic soprano of wide compass and exceeding sympathetic quality," toured often with Sans Souci. In fact, Snyder acted as an impresario and arranged many of

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Clubs of the United States [see *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers,* (New York: Norton, 1995), 112-115.

their appearances.[69] She had studied in Italy and eventually returned to Florence where she reputedly set up a studio in what had been Galileo's home. She was the wife of the proprietor of the Frederick Hotel, an establishment where the celebrities stayed, and where she met many of the important figures of the day.

A typical recital alternated voice and piano selections.[70] Almost always Sans Souci's programs took place in women's circles: clubs, private matinées, in churches where an organ was available, and in special festivals designed for good causes—events recorded in society pages of the newspapers rather than in music columns. Sans Souci captivated "the ladies who heard her play and her musical as well as social accomplishments made her an immediate favorite with the company." So read one of the press notices. In this milieu, it was important to choose the right gown, coiffure, and floral bouquet—

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[69] Snyder was manager of the St. Paul Philharmonic Orchestra for a number of seasons. Several other women in Minnesota made careers as impresarios. Mrs. George S. Richards of Duluth ran an All-Star Musical Course in Duluth, 1916-1931. The most famous impresario was Mrs. Carlyle Scott, the wife of one of the early founders of the Music Department of the University of Minnesota. She began the Artist Course of recitals by world-class artists at the university in 1919 and ran it until 1944. She served as manager of the Minneapolis Symphony from 1930 to 1938. She was responsible for the appointment of Eugene Ormandy and Dmitri Mitropoulos as conductors of the symphony. See K. Holmquist essay on Verna Scott in the University of Minnesota Archives and R. T. Laudon's essay "Carlyle McRoberts Scott and Verna Golden Scott: Builders of Minnesota Music" on deposit in the university archives and the research library of the Minnesota Historical Society and on net. These women and others had gathered financial and managerial experience in their club work that made it easy for them to assume the greater responsibility of running concert series.

[70] Sans Souci's scrapbook contains many press clippings and only a few programs. Almost all are undated.

attributes still to be found today in "classical concerts." Her career unfolded essentially in a 'women's world" as it was understood in that day. Even in her most important engagements, those in Buffalo or in St. Louis, her position depended greatly on her status as a woman and her support by women's organizations in this special "world."

Sans Souci did not play music earlier than Chopin's except for two movements—an Andante with Variations in a easy-going march style and a mischievous Scherzo—of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 14, No. 2, one of the master's lighter works.[71] Notably absent were works of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven The audiences of the day remained unaware of the more extended and challenging styles of music. They preferred "solos" to "sonatas."

At this moment, musical taste and concert repertories were changing. The newly-formed Minneapolis Symphony of 1903 focused the audience's attention on many extended works of great depth of artistic expression. Emil Oberhoffer, the director, recognized the need to gradually educate his audience and bring them up to a new level. He instituted Sunday Afternoon Popular Concerts designed to please but also to gradually wean listeners away from the "caramel-stuffed" repertory as the historian of the symphony called

[71] Which she performed on her debut recital in St. Paul given 2 June 1893 at Ford's Music Hall.

them.[72] For these Sunday concerts, Oberhoffer regularly hired local artists such as Maude Ulmer Jones. Had Sans Souci had a concerto in her repertory, she would have had an opportunity to present herself to a larger and more varied audience than the woman's club circuit. She was playing solo music with great technical and interpretative demands. It remains a mystery why she did not essay the concerto.

With her success as a recitalist, teacher, and composer, we might expect that Sans Souci would consolidate her career. Despite Moszkowski's suggestion that she return to Berlin after she had assimilated what she had learned, she never did so. She seemed to slip easily from church to church, Episcopalians in New York, Catholics in St. Paul, and Methodists in Minneapolis. Almost every account of her includes the word "dashing" or some similar adjective—perhaps as a reaction to her name "Carefree," a quality that many writers attributed to her French ancestry.

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[72] John K. Sherman, *Music and Maestros,* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1952), 70.

IV. The Concert Organist

At the time of her early piano studies in St. Paul, Gertrude developed a passion for the pipe organ. It was not too unusual for a woman to become a church organist but to aspire beyond that was rare. She got permission through the good offices of Father Caillet[73] of St. Mary's to practice on the organ at the cathedral. Titcomb as organist of one of the most prominent churches of the city could guide her but evidently he stressed piano technique and she did not play an organ recital during these early years in St. Paul. Still her devotion to the instrument continued in Berlin where she studied both piano and organ.

Gertrude Sans Souci arrived on the musical scene in the 1890s at an auspicious moment when the public had become enamored with the pipe organ. That instrument reigned in church where, according to enthusiasts, it could "give in the grandest, noblest and most joyous strains all its praise and thanksgiving unto the great and good God."[74] Its voice seemed like that of "the

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[73] Louis E. Caillet (Lyons, France, 1832-St. Paul, MN, 1897), widely loved for his kindness and even-mindedness. He came to the United States in 1853. The Church of St. Mary's was built in 1867 at which time he became its pastor. Besides schools, he founded St. Mary's home and was the force behind the institution of the Convent of the Visitation for young ladies (another school with an active music program). He was made Monsignor and became Rector of the Hill Seminary, the St. Paul institution funded by James J. Hill.

74 Eugene Thayer, Complete Organ School (Boston: Eugene Thayer, 1880), pp.. 4-5, quoted from Margaret Sihler Anderson, *"The Organ without a Master" A Survey of Nineteenth Century Organ instruction Books in the United States,* 2 vols, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Doctoral Dissertation, 1977) 1:195. (Whitney). Eugene Thayer (1838-1889), organist of several large churches in Boston and New York, was one of the earliest to

great deep."[75] It was an essential in the homes of the rich and powerful[76] and its cousin, the reed or "parlor organ," almost a household necessity in the homes of the lowly and humblest where it could "cheer the lonely hours and give variety to the monotony of everyday life."[77]

American business had discovered in the instrument something challenging to the inventor and lucrative to the entrepreneur.[78] The organ united what was called the "divine art" of music with the spirit of scientific progress. This thrilling achievement of the present and the hope of the future, became a centerpiece in specially designed Temples of Music at industrial expositions and world's fairs. Enough instruments existed that, for the first time, concert

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establish a private teaching studio and to tour as organ soloist. He campaigned in several journals for better standards for church music.

[75] Irene P. McKeehan, "An Organ Peal," *The Minnesota Magazine,* 8 (April 1902), title page. This issue is devoted to music.

[76] Just as James J. Hill, in search of culture, established an art gallery in his mansion on Summit Avenue, so he installed in 1891 within the gallery, a Hutchings two-manual pipe organ, a local recognition of musical refinement and civilization recognized in the wider world.

[77] The reed organ, in use as early as 1810, experienced its greatest popularity in the United States from 1840-1900 after which it declined. According to Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume, *Harmonium, The History of the Reed Organ and its Makers* (London: David & Charles, 1986), 68, there were, in the 1880s, 250 companies manufacturing reed organs in the U.S. The author remembers as late as the 1930s playing reed organs in both parlor and church. The quotation in the text is from W. W. Whitney, *New and Enlarged Edition of the Improved Easy Method for the Parlor Organ* (Toledo: W. W. Whitney, 1886) preface, as quoted from Anderson, *"The Organ without a Master,"* 1:7-8.

[78] Waldo Selden Pratt, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians American Supplement* (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser, 1920), 317 claims over 100 establishments employing 2500-3000 workers and producing over 2000 instruments a year.

careers were possible for organists.[79] Several recitalists in the last decades of the nineteenth century had astonished the world with their virtuoso skill, vast repertories, and powers of interpretation. Two men especially had well-deserved reputations, Alexandre Guilmant of Paris and Clarence Eddy of Chicago.[80] The grandeur and sweep of the organ and the tonal splendor that

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[79] In Minnesota, civic leaders, the business community and the larger public celebrated in 1886 "the Minneapolis Miracle" by a great Industrial and Art Exposition, widely advertised and intended for yearly presentation. The illustrated handbook—with pictures of exchanges, banks, academy of science, various business blocks, churches and schools—compared northwest possibilities with those of New York and Chicago. In the Exposition Building, a Barckhoff "cathedral organ" confirmed the city's place in the sun as Hal Woodruff, noted organist of Cincinnati, played a six-week engagement. He, too, soon caught the expansionist spirit and decided to remain in this "coming" area where music and industry were wedded. Henry Seymour Woodruff (18 February 1861, Courtland, NY-19 May 1943, Minneapolis) had studied 7 years at Cincinnati with Herman Auer, Henry Andre and Louis Ehrgott, and voice with Bush Foley. He followed this with voice study with Delle Sedie in Paris. In Minneapolis, his conducting of the Apollo Club and his work with several large churches gave him a position of leadership in the musical community. See "The Woodruff Years 1902-1928" in the history of the Apollo Club, *Sweeter Than The Honeywell: 100 Years of Music and Friendship,* by Johannes Riedel and Jane Rasmussen Riedel (Minneapolis: The Apollo Club, 1995).

[80] Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911), organist of Ste. Trinité, Prof. of Organ at the Paris Conservatoire, founder of the Schola Cantorum. He was noted for his organ compositions, his teaching and his editorship of the monumental edition *Archives des Maîtres de l'Orgue.* Probably the greatest recitalist among American organists was Clarence Eddy (1851-1937), a musical genius who became a church organist at the age of twelve and by age twenty, after study with August Haupt in Berlin, began an international career. He performed in 1879, from his enormous repertory, one hundred recitals without repeating a single composition. His capacity for work seemed boundless. As daily practice he recommended playing the Six Trio Sonatas of Bach, some of the most demanding works ever written, a task which took him one and one half hours—this at a time when Bach works did not figure prominently in the organ repertory. He appeared at the Vienna Exposition of 1873, at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876, played to an audience of 6,000

rivaled that of the symphony orchestra attracted many. Among those aspiring to personal advancement and a career was Gertrude Sans Souci, the dashing young lady who astonished the musicians of the United States in the early years of the twentieth century.

She was invited in 1901 to play two organ concerts at the Buffalo fair, the Pan-American Exposition, an engagement that marked her entrance into the larger musical world. Organists of considerable attainment found their principal work at one of the larger churches. From time to time, a few special artists were invited to show their talent at dedications of new instruments or, more rarely, at one of the temples of music that formed the centerpiece of an exposition. Such a temple, dominated by a large pipe organ, gave an aural and visual image of the "divine art" itself but also an expression of the "harmony of industry and art" that reigned in the great expositions. It was a special honor to appear as one of the best who could display such a harmonious gestalt, the blend of the practical and the spiritual symbolized by the instrument and the art.

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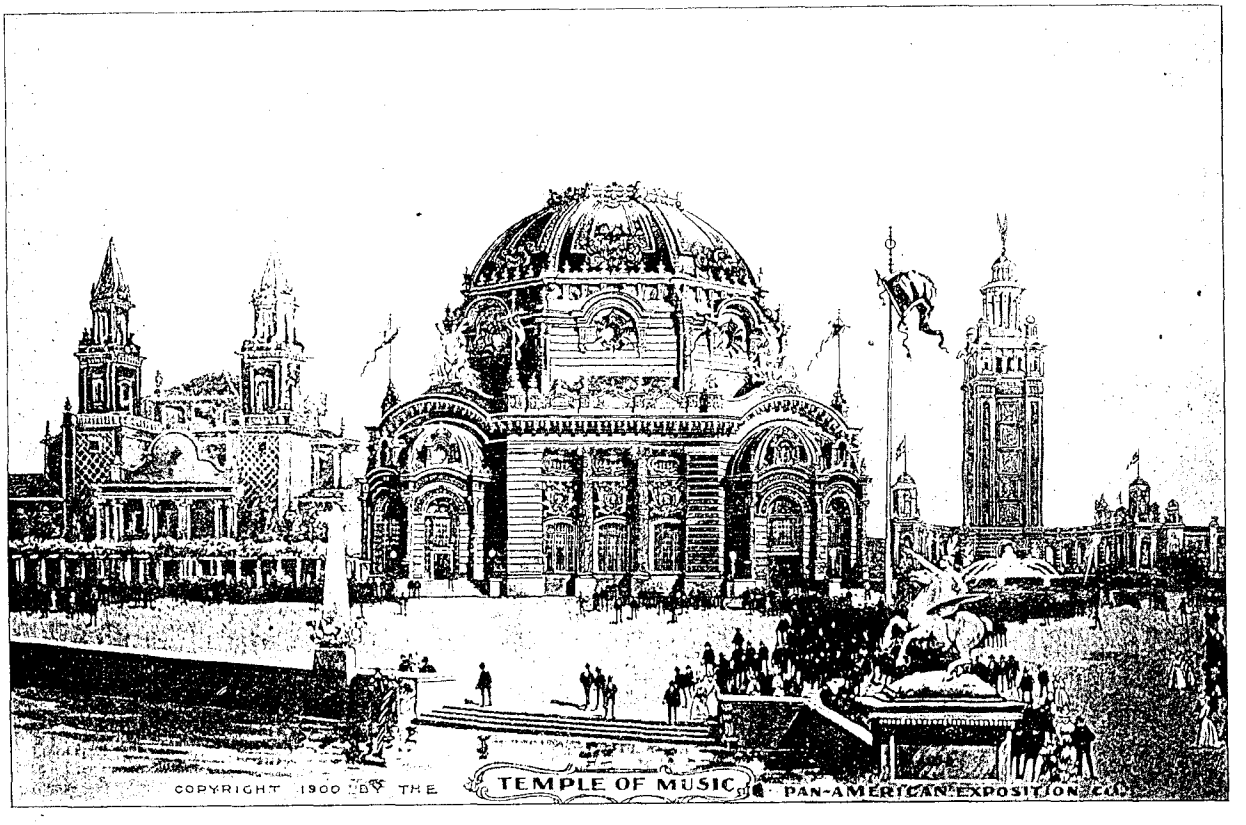
at the Paris Exposition of 1889 and to an audience of 10,000 at the Crystal Palace in London. At the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, he gave 25 recitals at Festival Hall. After the Buffalo Exposition in 1901, he gave a long series at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904 and continued on to the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 and the San Francisco one of 1915. He continued to be optimistic about horizons for the organ. In *The Diapason,* September 1911, p. 4, he reported "greater interest than ever in the organ and a keen appreciation for the best class of organ music." From April of 1932 through March of 1933, Eddy wrote a series of reminiscences of his career for that journal.

Sans Souci found a picturesque scene when she arrived to fulfill her recital engagement. Just off the Esplanade and fronting the gushing jets of the Court of the Fountains lay the Temple of Music,[81] center piece of the Pan-American Exposition.



[81] *Musical Courier,* 24 April, 1901. Mr. Shuey, pioneer musician of Minneapolis, proposed a Temple of Music for Minneapolis, see the *Minneapolis Tribune,* 20 January 1902. On Shuey, see Laudon's essay "Gales of Music" on deposit in the research library of the Minnesota Historical Society and on net. At one point the Woman's Clubs considered a Temple of Music for the State Fair. The idea that the arts should be served in a "temple" conducive to artistic contemplation had long been established. The famous Dresden Gallery was entered only through a "Holy of Holies" where the Sistine Madonna and other works put one in the proper frame of mind. The Leipzig Gewandhaus had decorations to effect the same purpose for music. The Academy of Music in Minneapolis (1872-1874) had an interior "all gussied up with statuary, a big portrait of Beethoven, and frescoes" [Larry Millett, *Lost Twin Cities,* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1992), 87.

The exterior of the temple was striking:

> As in the other buildings around the Court of Fountains, a strong green note will be carried out, which will be noticeable especially in the trimmings of the windows and in the panels of green bronze. The colonnades of the four façades will be inlaid with red, which will serve to bring out the outline of the beautiful sculptural forms. The sculpture of the frieze on the building will be also richly inlaid with green and gold. The red tones of the building will grow lighter as they reach the dome, which will be notable for its panels in blue and other tints harmonizing with the main color.[82]

The interior was "similar in character" and was lighted by electric lamps "which will bring out most effectively the brilliant coloring and will present one of the most artistic scenes to be enjoyed in connection with this whole Exposition, which will abound in things artistic and pleasing to the eye."[83] A beautiful place for a beautiful art! A raising of the soul to a higher level!

Here a four-manual organ of nearly 3000 pipes had been erected and daily recitals were given.[84] On 5 September 1901, President William McKinley

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[82] Edward Hall Brush, "Decorations of Pan-American Music Temple," *The Musical Courier,* xlii, No. 17 (24 April 1901), 12.

[83] Brush, "Decorations," 12.

[84] The specifications for the organ are given in *The Musical Courier,* xlii, No.17 (24 April 1901), 31.

gave an address to crowds in the Esplanade. Now he was expected at the Temple of Music.

> While he was still far away at the Niagara the building had been filled and eager thousands had jammed the open spaces at either side of it, waiting an opportunity to enter. On the eastern side of the building is a dais elevated about a foot from the floor, on which stands the great organ, the central figure of the temple. During the wait for the president's appearance an organ recital was given and applause for the musician had scarcely died away when a ringing cheer from those massed outside the building announced the arrival of the president.[85]

> The exposition organist, William J. Gomph,[86] started the Sonatina in F by Bach "low at first and swelling gradually to more majestic proportions until the whole auditorium was filled with the melodious tones of the big pipe organ."[87] Within a few minutes the fatal shots that wounded McKinley rang out, the organ stopped and the president was rushed to the exposition hospital. He lingered on for six days but succumbed, after inadequate medical help, on the 13th of September.

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[85] *The Chicago Chronicle,* 7 September 1901.

[86] Organist of Lafayette Church in Buffalo who was remarkable for "filling in" on short notice for those organists who were detained or could not meet their engagement.

[87] *The Constitution-Democrat* (Keokuk, Iowa), 7 September 1901 among other sources.

At the height of this tragedy, 12 and 13 September 1901, Gertrude Sans Souci mounted the dais to play two organ recitals at the great exposition.[88] The date of Thursday, 12 September, had been chosen as part of a celebration of women. The week had started with two days of meetings of the National American Woman Suffrage Conference and had continued with the executive sessions of the National Council of Women. Susan B. Anthony and Miss Alice Parker added their luster to the meetings. A special afternoon public session was scheduled for the Temple of Music. The attendance that day was notable, 69,041 whereas the number of visitors had been hovering around 60,000 due to the precarious state of McKinley's health.[89]

Sans Souci as an outstanding example of talent and success was an apt choice for this notable occasion. She had chosen her programs with care for variety: a number of rhythmic pieces, march, gavotte, passepied, burlesca; a demanding work in the the severe style, Thuille's Chromatic Fantasie; some operatic numbers for brilliance; a favorite melody or two, Nevin's "Narcissus" and Grieg's "Morning,;" and a quiet, meditative number.

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[88]The *Minneapolis Journal,* 28 September 1901 reports the recitals as 15 and 16 September. Many events were changed because of the condition of the dying president but the *Buffalo Evening News* reports that the Exposition was to be closed on the 14th and 15th out of respect (issue of 14 September 1901) and their earlier issues confirm the dates of 12 and 13 September as do the press accounts that Sans Souci used in her publicity. The *St. Paul Globe* for 1 September 1901 reports the actual programs in an elaborate article with a picture of Miss Sans Souci. Later on 22 September, the *Globe* reported her success.

[89] *Buffalo Evening News,* 12 and 13, September 1901.

September 12, 1901

Marche nuptiale from the opera "Feramore"	
Gavotte in B Flat arranged by Bartlett	Haendel
Chromatic Fantasie, A Minor	Thiele
Serenata	Moszkowski
Pilgrims' Chorus	Wagner
Narcissus	Nevin
Overture "Zampa"	Hérold

September 13, 1901

March "Queen of Sheba"	Gounod
Passepied	
Lost Chord	
Pilgrims Song of Hope	
Burlesca e Melodia	
Au Matin From the Peer Gynt Suite	Grieg
Recessional "Old English"	LePaige

Here we might pause a moment to notice her choice of Arthur Sullivan's setting of "The Lost Chord," to the poem of Adelaide Proctor. It had become Sullivan's best-known solo song. The words were widely committed to memory; they could easily echo in the mind of the listener.[90] Probably no other contemporary literature expressed the combined sonic and spiritual appeal of the organ, the quality that made it "enter into the soul." The poem deserves to be quoted here.

Seated one day at the organ,
I was weary and ill at ease,
And my fingers wandered idly
Over the noisy keys.

I knew not what I was playing,
Or if I was dreaming then,
But I struck one chord of music
Like the sound of a great Amen.

It flooded the crimson twilight
Like the close of an angel's psalm,
And it lay on my fevered spirit
With a touch of infinite calm.

It quieted pain and sorrow
Like love overcoming strife,
It seemed the harmonious echo
From our discordant life.

It linked all perplexed meanings
Into one perfect peace,
And trembled away into silence
As if it were loath to cease.

[90] It continued to be printed in community song books up through the 1930s.

I have sought but I seek it vainly,
That one lost chord divine,
Which came from the soul of the organ
And entered into mine.

It may be that death's bright angel
Will speak in that chord again.
It may be that only in heaven
I shall hear that grand Amen.

"The Lost Chord" could be found in song books of the age such as Theodore Presser's publication, *Favorite Songs of the People, School, Home and Community Songs and Choruses, Old and New for All Occasions.* That "grand Amen" had special meaning for the people of the belle epoch, the turn of the century. Not many chances existed to hear large-scale orchestral works. The organ filled this missing niche with grandeur and volume. It could permeate an auditorium with a uplifting amount of sound. Even the "Amen" of Sullivan's song did not exist in isolation. It occurred in the final line *fff* and "con gran forza" with the organ expanding the Amen into an extended passage. Even in simple church services, the organist at the conclusion of a hymn would release the final chord but prolong a single keynote, give the congregation enough time for a deep breath, and then combine with the voices into a concluding and satisfying "so be it."

Connections with the "divine art" were made even more specific when Sans Souci posed for her publicity photos as St. Cecilia at the organ. Radiant with youth, clad in a flowing gown, and with a floral halo, she resembles the many representations of the patron saint of music. We may imagine that her gown would be lavender, her favorite color—she even wrote in purple ink. The small organ, perhaps the organ at the Northwestern Conservatory, is also in keeping with the theme of St. Cecilia playing a small medieval organ. One hand is gracefully extended to the keyboard. An inspiring picture indeed! We can only wonder how she played the pedals in that attire!

Sans Souci posed as St. Cecilia
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Gertrude's appearance had been eagerly anticipated and the reviews confirmed the general impression of her brilliance.

> It was with deep interest that we watched for Miss Gertrude Sans Souci's two organ recitals at the Temple of Music. Her reputation had preceded her from St. Paul, where she is organist of St. Paul's Catholic Cathedral and a member of the faculty of the [North] western Conservatory of Music, Minneapolis. She was educated in Berlin by Moritz Moszkowski, Oscar Raif and Pylleman.
>
> Right from the start of her concert the vast audience applauded heartily, and afterward many remained begging a repetition of some of her numbers. Musicians present praised the musical feeling, intelligence, power, delicacy and flawless technic of the young artist, who was chosen from among many older organists of St. Paul to give her concert at the Pan-American Exposition. Miss Sans Souci's program was among the most attractive and popular given at the Temple; brilliancy and dash characterized her work and inspired her audience to tumultuous applause. Assistants for her concerts were E. S. Timmons, flutist, and Bart Brown, cornetist, of the Chicago Marine Band. Mr. Timmons played Chopin's Nocturne, and gave an encore.

With her reputation growing, it was only natural that she should be invited to St. Louis for the next great international exposition where the star organists were to be Clarence Eddy and Alexandre Guilmant.

On 30 April 1903, the centennial of the signing of the Louisiana Purchase, the St. Louis Fair was dedicated with a chorus of 2,800 singers and a band of 100 performers. The following year a chorus of 500 voices and Sousa's band added luster to the official opening of the grounds. John Knowles Paine's *Hymn to the West* set the tone: "Eternal Light, Fill in Thy might these domes that in Thy purpose grew and lift a nation's heart anew." Exposition President Francis proclaimed: "Open ye gates! Swing wide ye portals! Enter therein, ye sons of men and behold the achievements of your race. Learn the Lesson here taught and gather from it inspiration for still greater achievements."[91]

In Festival Hall, a part of the Department of Liberal Arts, "an exquisite Altar of Art, at the foot of which worshiped pilgrims from all the nations of the earth,"[92] the largest organ in the world stood ready for use from 9 June 1904 on to the end of the exposition.

> Wonderful to state, this Brobdingnagian soul and executant of melody is capable of producing 17,179,869,183 distinct tonal effects, a continuous performance that would last 32,600 years if a different one of these combinations were drawn every minute in those centuries of time.

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[91] Mark Bennitt and Frances Parker Stockbridge, *History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (St. Louis: Universal Exposition Publishing Company, 1905), 133.

[92] David R. Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904* (St. Louis: Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, 1913), 192.

> The wonderful impressiveness of its proportions and its overpowering volume of sound are the least of its remarkable achievements in the realm of instrumental music. That its thousands of pipes sound the profoundest depths of the grand passions as easily as the wind stirs the leaves to fairy cadences, is an infinitesimal part of its accomplishments.
>
> Large as a brick block, 62 feet long, 40 feet high, and 33 feet wide, and possessing 140 stops, 239 movements, and 10,059 pipes, it overshadows all other great instruments of Christendom. It cost approximately $100,000. Only master musicians may command its marvelous volubility.[93]

Sans Souci was one of the masters[94] chosen to show off the organ in the month following the 40 performances by Alexandre Guilmant,[95] the most noted organist in the world at that time. Prior to his arrival, the fair charged 10¢ admission to the organ concerts but the fee was raised to 25¢ for his

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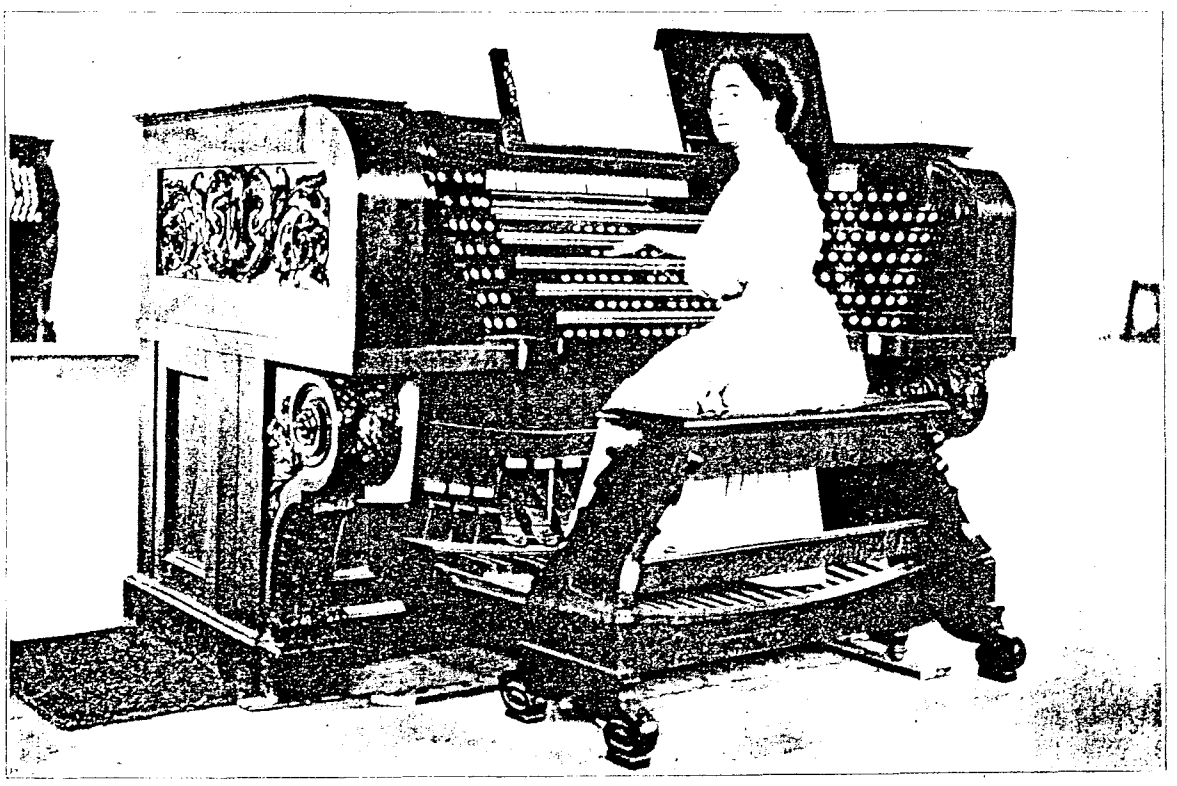
[93] J. W. Buel, Ed., *Louisiana and the Fair,* 10 vols, (World's Progress Publishing Company: 1905), 9:3461. Note that this chapter is headed "Music and Religion at the Fair" and that music is described as "one of the sublime arts." Names of buildings such as Buffalo's Temple of Music and St. Louis's Festival Hall testify to the assumption that music was as divine as religion (in France, at times the phrase "classical and religious music" was used). The organ is described in detail in this chapter of Buel's work.

[94] Only one other woman was chosen, Miss Mary Chappell Fisher of Rochester, N.Y. who played early in the summer. Sans Souci's invitation is reported in the *Minneapolis Journal,* 17 September 1904.

[95] Reports on Guilmant's St. Louis concerts are found in *The Musical Courier,* 23 and 30 November 1904. He did not repeat a single composition and played no transcriptions in these forty concerts.

engagements, the same fee as that for the weekly symphony concerts. This higher rate prevailed thereafter.

WORLD'S FAIR ORGAN



FESTIVAL HALL
ST. LOUIS EXPOSITION
1904

Sans Souci at the St. Louis Organ
Courtesy of Leslie White, Sans Souci's Grandson

Sans Souci paid homage to the French school of organ playing and composition by programming substantial works by Guilmant and Boëllmann.[96] She acknowledged the American School by the works of Russell King Miller.[97] The remainder of her program consisted of transcriptions—though not always so identified. Mrs. Maud Ulmer Jones, soprano soloist of Wesley Methodist Church, Minneapolis, assisted by singing an aria from Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* for Sans Souci's first concert and "Hear Ye Israel" from his *Elijah* for the second.

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[96] Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897), had been a student at the École Niedermeyer, and later was organist of St. Vincent-de-Paul. His *Suite gothique*, a brilliant but undemanding composition, remains in the repertory of most organists and his *Variations symphonique* for cello and orchestra are also well known.

[97] Miller (born 1871) of Philadelphia became organist of Temple Keneseth Israel of that city as well as music-director of the Pennsylvania School for the Blind. He had appeared at both world fairs where Sans Souci played and one of his compositions won an A.G.O. (American Guild of Organists) prize.

November 2, 1904

1.	Sonata (No. 5) (Allegro appassionata, Adagio, Scherzo)	Guilmant
2.	Gothic Suite (Chorale, Minuet, Prayer, Toccata) Böell	Boëllman
3.	Spring Song	Mendelssohn
4.	a. Bridal Music (Lohengrin) b. Pilgrims' Chorus (Tannhäuser) c. Liebes Tod (Tristan and Isolde)	Wagner
5.	Nocturne	Russell King Miller
6.	Scherzo Symphonique	Russell King Miller
7.	The Lost Chord	Sullivan
8.	Pomp and Circumstance (Processional) (Transcription by E. Lemare)	Elgar

November 3, 1904

1.	Chromatic Fantasie	Thiele
2.	Concert Rondo	Hollins
3.	a. Nocturne b. Pilgrim's Chorus	Chopin Wagner
4.	a. Serenade b. Pilgrims' Song c. Gavotte	Moszkowski Batiste Handel
5.	a. Morning b. Burlesca	Grieg Baldwin
6.	Overture, Queen of Sheba (Transcription by Frederick Archer)	Gounod

Some compositions, by Chopin, Wagner, Gounod, and Grieg were not originally for organ but were audience favorites of the belle epoch, that magical moment that blended the arts with commerce.[98] At this time a cult of "Wagnerism" was still in full swing and Gertrude performed several of Wagner's most noted selections.[99]

A number of Twin City's residents planned their visits to the fair so that they could hear *both* Guilmant and Sans Souci. Later the Minnesota papers spoke of her "brilliant handling of the mammoth organ at St. Louis."[100] The organ must have looked daunting to the public.

> A movable console or key-desk, the only one in the United States, serves the organist in playing the great organ. His fingers must command 5 manuals or keyboards, making a flight of 5 stairs. This console, which is movable, is connected to the organ by an electric cable 150 feet long. When seated before the instrument, the musician must dominate the 5 manual stairs, the 140 draw stop-knobs, 5 tremolant draws, and 36 couple draws, the 46 push buttons belonging to the adjustable

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[98] The type of program Sans Souci offered was quite in the style of the day. One sees it not only in the programs themselves but also in the numerous collections of organ music. Typical is the 3 volume series by Clarence Eddy, *The Church and Concert Organist: A Collection of Pieces,* issued in the 1880s by Edward Schuberth & Company.

[99] See David C. Large and William Weber, *Wagnerism in European Culture and Politics,* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1984) which includes a section "At Wagner's Shrine: British and American Wagnerians" by Anne Dzamba Sessa.

[100] *Minneapolis Journal,* 3 December 1904.

> combination system and all the feet levers controlling the expressive powers of the whole organ.
>
> Should one wonder most at the musical results or the mechanical marvels? For those who were worshipping at the shrine of progress, it was incredible to see an organist control this monster and it was equally startling to realize that a second console had a roll mechanism on which full orchestral compositions could be transcribed without changing a note of the original piece, a feat which if it could be performed by a human would require someone with 10 fingers on each hand.[101]

The firm that built the organ, the Los Angeles Art Organ Company, found it impossible to keep the work under the contract price of $67,000 and, having spent $105,000, eventually went out of business. The gigantic organ was purchased after a time by John Wannamaker who placed it in his store in Philadelphia, one of numerous musical attractions designed to boost sales. The acoustical ambience of his store forced him to enlarge the instrument still further from 10,000 pipes to over 30,000.[102]

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[101] Buel, op. cit., 9: 3463.

[102] Orpha Ochse, *The History of the Organ in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 356-360. For the role of music in such stores, see Linda L. Tyler, " 'Commerce and Poetry Hand in Hand': Music in American Department Stores, 1880-1930," *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 45 (1992), 75-120 and especially p. 87 on the organ.

V. The Song Composer

In the year of the Buffalo exposition, Sans Souci began publishing songs. This lone woman composer of the Twin Cities joined a group of some twenty to twenty-five that I am calling the First School of Minnesota Composers. In the season of 1889-1890—just as she was preparing to go to Berlin—two local musicians, Willard Patton and Gustavus Johnson, brought several important works to the public. In October, Willard Patton[103] presented his comic opera, *La Fianza,* at the Minneapolis Grand Opera House. On Valentine's Day,

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[103] Willard Patton (1853-1924) of Maine, tenor, before arriving in Minnesota refused an offer to teach at the New England Conservatory, a proposal extended by an initiator of MTNA (Music Teachers National Association), Eben Tourjée, the conservatory's founder. Patton (sometimes spelled Patten) was a composer and director as well as a teacher of voice culture. He was particularly active in civic music, directed many organizations including the Filharmonix and the Philharmonic Club (1898-1901) More than any other person, he was the father of MMTA, Minnesota Music Teachers Association (which he tried to organize in 1887) as well as the dean of Minnesota composers. The Filharmonix was a group of young men interested in music and organized for their own social enjoyment in 1890. In 1891 a male chorus and mandolin club were added and invitation programs were given. Patton was the first of several directors of this chorus. In 1897 it became a choral society of mixed voices called The Philharmonic Club. Patton conducted its three concerts each year from 1898 through 1901 when he resigned to devote time to composition. Emil Oberhoffer took over the conductorship. The club soon found they needed an orchestra. Out of this need the Minneapolis Symphony was formed in 1903 (this information from the Old Log Book of the Evergreen Club which can be consulted on microfilm at the Minnesota Historical Society Research Library). When Patton became gravely ill in 1924, the community musical leaders arranged a testimonial concert that raised some $1,500. See R. T. Laudon's biographical essay, "Willard Patton: Friend of Music and Musicians," on deposit in the research library of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Gustavus Johnson[104] gave a "one-man" concert of his compositions including piano pieces, songs, violin solos and even a Grand Trio. At the end of the season, 27 April 1890, the Danz Orchestra gave a concert embracing still more composers, "Music by Home Composers," at Harmonia Hall.

Such stirrings of American creativity were sweeping the nation. New York founded a Manuscript Club in 1889. Minnesota followed quickly with its own in 1893, three years before Chicago organized one. These were conceived as matters of local and American pride. Beyond the realm of music, the decade of the 1890s witnessed the birth of many expressions of Americanism: the Pledge of Allegiance, Flag Day, the Star Spangled Banner as national anthem, and the patriotic associations of the Colonial Dames of America, the

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[104] Gustavus Johnson (1856-c. 1932), born in Hull, England to a merchant father and a pianist mother, Johnson was educated in Stockholm where the family removed when he was 3. He studied privately with prominent musicians including some of the Royal Conservatory such as Mankell and Nordquist. His sister, Mary Henrietta, attended the Royal Conservatory, married a Baptist preacher, K. A. Östergren who had emigrated to the U.S. Later Mary Henrietta was a distinguished musician and teacher in Duluth. Gustavus Johnson came to the U.S. in 1875 and settled in Minneapolis in 1876 (where he remained except for some 3 years in Wisconsin). He was the leading piano teacher of Minneapolis for many years. In 1898, he published his method, *Touch Formation,* which contained fundamentals presented with an original approach to the all-important matter of "piano touch." In the same year, he founded the Johnson School of Piano that soon expanded to The Johnson School of Music, Oratory and Dramatic Art. In 1907 this became the Minneapolis College of Music, Oratory and Dramatic Art. Johnson was much in demand as a soloist and an accompanist. During his time in Minnesota, he played in concert over 300 compositions, great master's and his own. He was a president of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association in 1905-06 and was given an honorary membership shortly after MMTA reached the quarter-century mark. He introduced Olive Fremstad, the great soprano, to the public for the first time (Minnesotan Fremstad was the model for Willa Cather's *Song of the Lark).*

Daughters of the American Revolution, the U.S. Daughters of 1812, and the Society of Mayflower Descendants.[105] Music too could be an expression of American pride.

Sans Souci returned home in 1893 in the midst of these rousing calls of patriotic fervor and at the formative stages of the First School of Minnesota Composers. Following the first concert of the Minnesota Manuscript Club in November of 1893 came a flood of concerts including a large-scale nationally-acclaimed oratorio by Patton and a piano concerto by Johnson. When the Minnesota Music Teachers Association was formed in 1901, it became the sponsor of a lengthy series of concerts by local composers.

Sans Souci's first three songs, *Wishes, My Heart is Singing,* and *When Song is Sweet* met with considerable approval. *Wishes* was published by Oliver Ditson in Boston, a mark of distinction for a novice song-writer. The other two were published by Metropolitan Music in Minneapolis.

Song composers often made their initial reputations on a composition or two such as:

Charles K. Harris	"After the Ball" (1892)
Carrie Jacobs-Bond	"I Love You Truly" (1901)
	"The Perfect Day" (1910)

[105] See Scot M. Guenter, *The American Flag, 1777-1924,* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1990), Chapter 5 and especially pp. 106-109. Stuart McConnell is carrying this topic further.

Sans Souci entered this sheet music market. Her "When Song is Sweet" appeared in many keys for various voice-ranges and in arrangements for 2 and 3-part women's voices, 4-part male voices, and 4-part mixed voices. It was taken up by Chauncey Olcott, the noted "Irish" tenor, and interpolated into his plays.

At the same time that Sans Souci began to publish compositions in 1901 and 1902, she entered into the literary fields supporting American music. The National Federation of Music Clubs (founded in 1898), a women's organization, was trying to "stimulate American composition" and was devoting study guides to that subject.[106] Other voices such as the *Musical Courier* and *Musical America* supported the cause.[107] Sans Souci joined in this effort as music critic for *The Saint Paul Globe,* James J. Hill's paper, and as the Twin City reporter for *The Musical Courier.*

By far the greatest number of American compositions at this time were songs, compositions of modest length supported by the natural form and emotion of the poetry and which could be readily sold as "sheet music" to a public eager and equipped to perform them.[108] Sans Souci chose texts of the tender sentiments with readily understood imagery as did many women

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[106] Many guides were prepared by Mrs. F. S. Wardwell of Stamford, Connecticut. Her guide for American Music featured "programs selected and arranged, with few exceptions, by the composers."

[107] In the season of 1909-1910, *Musical America* published a series of articles prepared by Stella Reid Crothers on individual women composers. Many of these were song composers.

[108] Leading department stores had book departments and music departments.

songwriters. Quite a few of her songs speak of roses, flowers which for centuries had been symbols of love and which in turn-of-the-century America were proffered as a mark of special attention by numerous swains. It was even considered essential that a husband should bring his wife a bouquet of flowers on their wedding night.

Love is a rose,
The bud unfolds
In sunshine and in dew,
Its incense clings to you.
Love is a rose
It buds and blows,
In the heart of the rose.

Love is a rose,
Its petals wither,
Its incense dies
And fades away
Love is a rose,
It blooms and blows
All in a day.[109]

So we find also *A Rose, a Kiss and You; Gather the Roses;* and *Mammy's Rosebud.* Gertrude was not alone in her choice of topic.

Ethelbert Nevin	"The Rosary" (1898)
	"Mighty Lak' a Rose" (1901) Irish song
Chauncey Olcott	"My Wild Irish Rose" (1899)

The image of the rose on Sans Souci's title sheet has even today a certain unforgettable allure. In 1901, the same year as Gertrude's first publication, Carrie Jocobs-Bond published her first edition, *Seven Songs as Unpretentious as the Wild Rose.* Nor should we forget that Edward MacDowell's most noted piano piece is *To a Wild Rose* (1896), another echo of the Genteel Tradition.

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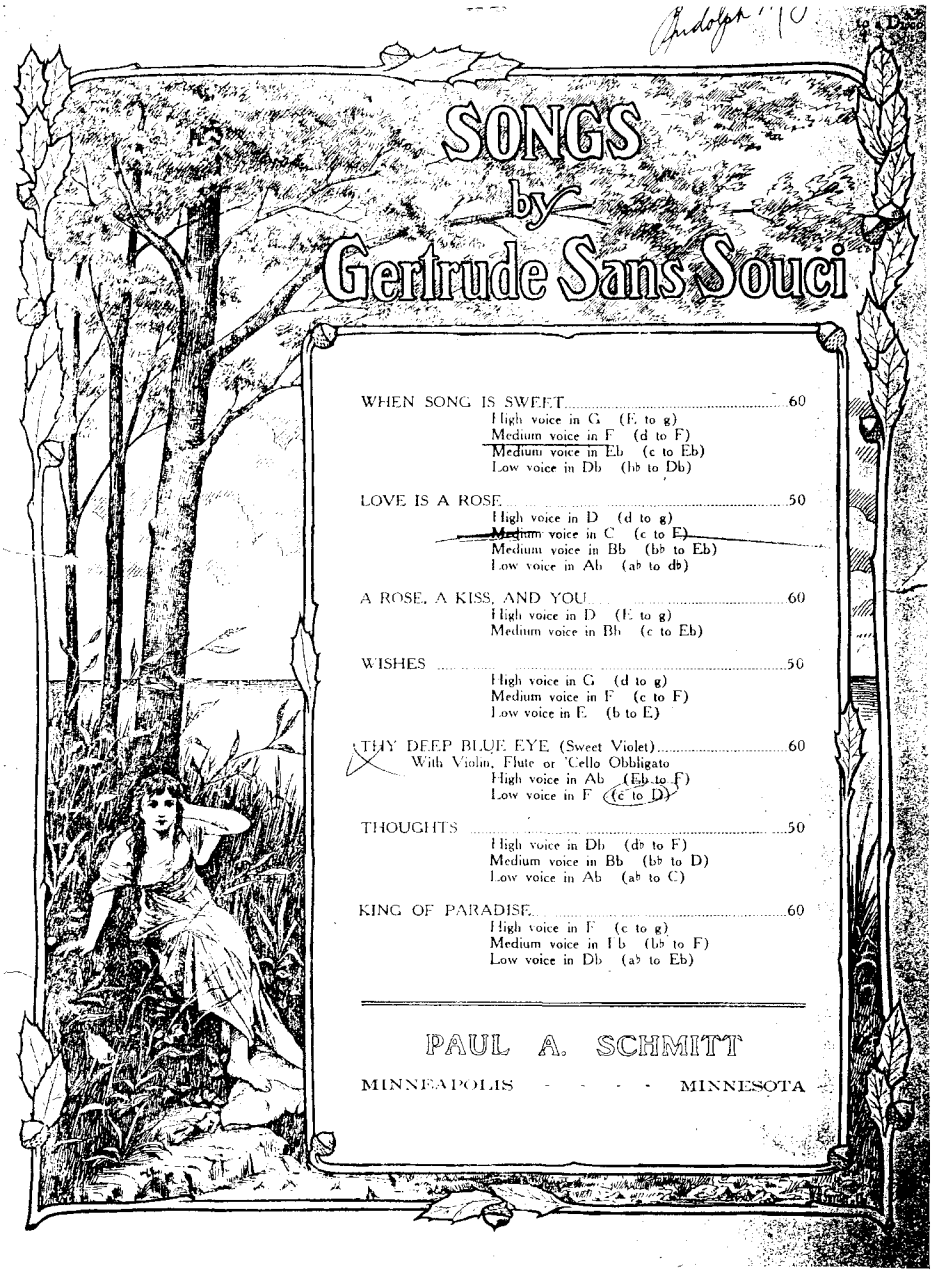
[109] Poem by Edith McCarthy, used by Sans Souci by permission of *The Smart Set.*

Other Sans Souci images recall flowers, the seasons and times of the day. Still others are "characteristic songs," designed to evoke well-known genres: the serenade, the waltz song, or the sacred song.[110]

A title page for one of her songs renders in a visual manner the sentiments so cultivated by the women of that day. A young lady rests beside a stream, the stream of life perhaps, in a forest with a lake in the background. She has one hand to her ear as if listening to the music of the woods; her face is

[110] At this time, publishers often grouped songs by such categories in their catalogues.

uplifted as if expecting a radiant future. Tasteful and appealing with rather delicate print, it must have captivated many youthful singers



Title Page of Song Publication
Courtesy of Leslie White, Sans Souci's Grandson

The poets for Sans Souci's settings are practically unknown today.[111] Several wrote occasional pieces for magazines. One whose poetry she used frequently, Frederic G. Bowles of England, compiled anthologies of small poems especially suitable for music. These were published by him personally in small-size, paper-bound volumes (4 x 5 3/4"), each collection with an intriguing title such as: *A Little Rosary of Song, Famous English Songs, The White Clouds, Lyrics for Musical Setting, Northern Lyrics*, etc. He circulated these in musical circles and kept in personal contact with the musicians who were using them. Sometimes in Bowles's listing of a particular poem he was able to add to the allure by a phrase such as "Sung by Madame Melba" or some other star.[112] In the material owned by Sans Souci, Bowles wrote above his poem, *The Broken Chain*, "I am sure you could make a lovely setting of this. Shall I keep it for you?" On the cover pages of his anthologies he noted settings of his poems by composers such as Louis Victor Saar, Reginald de

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[111] Probably the best known was John Vance Cheney, the son of musicians and himself a church organist, who "wrote with dignity and taste" but who "distrusted Browning and Whitman, and abhorred free verse" according to Garland Greever in the *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930).

[112] Frederic G. Bowles was born in 1871, the son of William Burwood Bowles, draper, and Mary Ann Bowles (there were two other sons in the family). Frederic was in 1891 a mercantile clerk in the firm according to records kindly supplied by the Durham Record Office. The family was established at Fountain House, 36 Lynn Street, West Hartlepool, the address given for musicians to contact him. How Frederic came to enter upon a literary career and how he contacted musicians is at this point unknown. His anthologies were primarily of his own work but also included translations from other literature (as for instance, the Cossack Lullaby from Russian folk song). This curious side issue might be explored some day.

Koven, and Pietro Yon, well-known American composers of lighter music—which places Sans Souci in good company.

Sans Souci's musical settings of poems fall into a category favored at the time, something that can best be described as the "recital song,"[113] not as vapid as the "teaching piece" but yet not as elevated nor as daring as the "art song." Since American teachers cultivated the student recital far more than their European counterparts,[114] a recital song—with an impressive climax near the conclusion, an extended range for the voice, to a poem that appealed to the many feminine students of voice and their adoring parents—became the norm.

Such works did not demand of the composer the sustained and lengthy toil necessary for chamber and orchestral works. They did require a talent for

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[113] This is not to deny that many of them were also used as "parlour songs" found on piano reading desks or in the storage cabinets of piano benches. Gillett "Entrepreneurial Women," 205, suggests that songs similar to the Sans Souci manner occupied a "position at the intersection of learned and general musical taste." The teaching piece was a common composition for pianists and sometimes for singers. Teaching pieces bridged the gap between beginning steps and the easier pieces of the art song repertory. Willard Patton's collection, *Studio Fancies, Six Little Songs,* (Minneapolis: The Lloyd Publishing Company, n.d.) is a good example.

[114] Patricia Hampl, St. Paul writer, has written an introduction "The Recital: A Reflection" to James Taylor Dunn's *Saint Paul's Schubert Club, A Century of Music 1882-1982.* She establishes the hopes and fears of a student and how the amateur's dreams of mastery are realized in the artist recital. A wonderful amusing account of a recital was written by James Herriot in Chapter 30 of *The Lord God Made Them All.* While the *Oxford Dictionary* recognizes 1811 as the earliest use of the word *recital* in reference to music, its use for a solo concert dates from the years immediately following 1839 when Franz Liszt dared to give what he first termed "musical soliloquies." See Arthur Loesser, *Men,Women and Pianos* (New York Simon and Schuster, 1954), 368-371.

lyric melody, a quality that might well be expressed in the title of one of her songs, "My Heart is Singing." Sans Souci had little if any experience in performing complex instrumental music and limited her creative work almost exclusively to song, a type that she knew well from her years of accompanying singers. She preferred to meet the public at its level of taste. She never tried to be a pathfinder and confessed, "I do not attempt ambitious things but confine myself to writing for the singing public which likes melody rather than theoretical problems in composition."[115]

Like so many of that day, men and women alike, she was raised on a musical diet of brilliance and virtuosity and in an atmosphere that remained conservative in taste—most especially in church music in which she was so active. Solo singers and so-called choirs that were truly quartets of soloists were still often the norm in Protestant churches. Florid masses of operatic quality[116] were frequently found in Catholic churches prior to the reforms of Pius X in his Motu Proprio (1903-1904). Church music remained in a wavering balance between restraint and flamboyance.[117]

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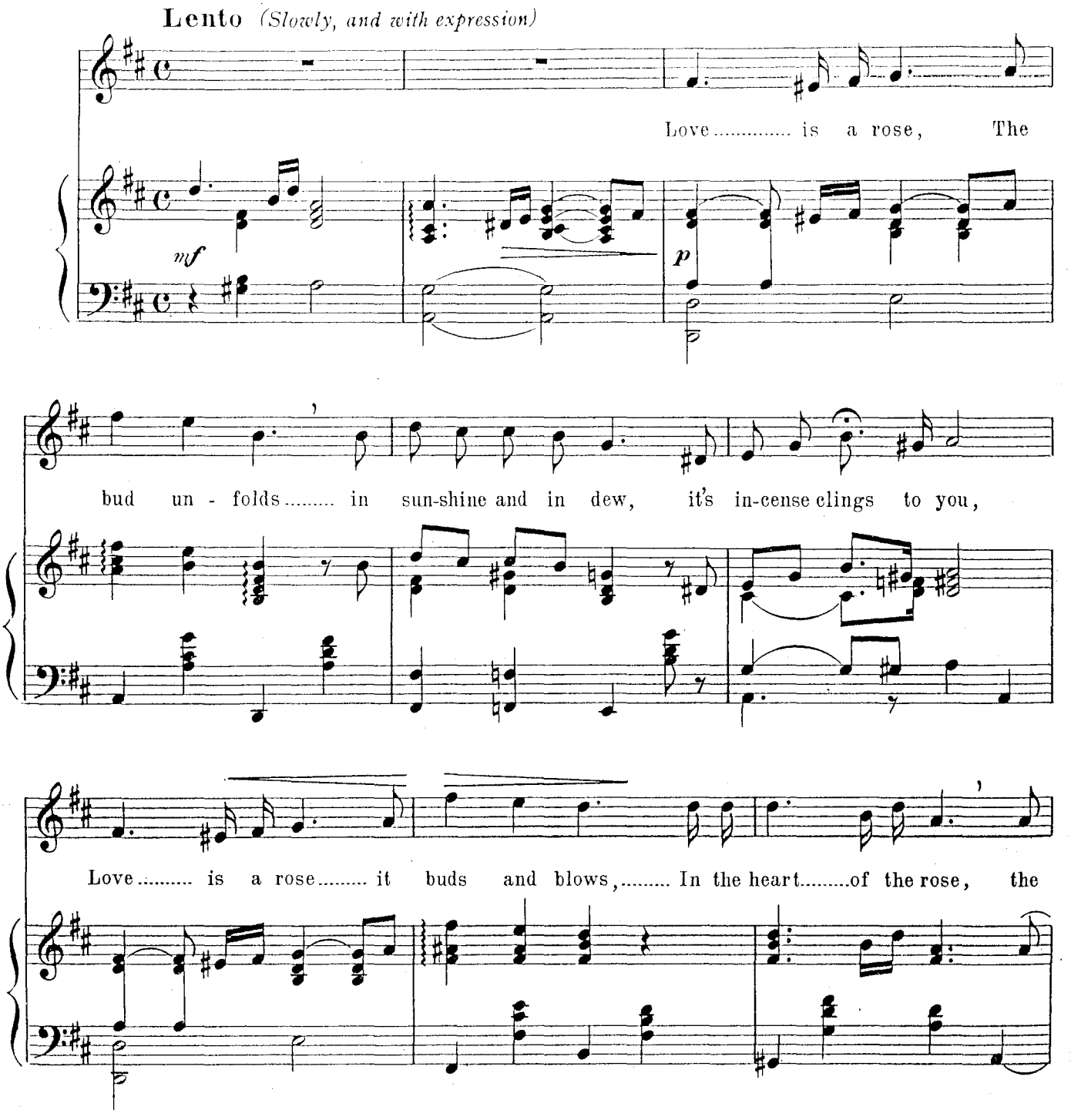
[115] Comment published in an undated newspaper interview during a Pacific Tour and preserved in Sans Souci's Scrapbook.

[116] Elsie Shawe at St. Mary's Church in St. Paul was giving masses by Hummel and Biedermann. At St. Luke's Church, Weber's Celebrated Mass in E Flat is found in the archives and there is a newspaper clipping from 22 March 1886 in the Bruenner Scrapbook (Minnesota Historical Society *ML 200.8.S14) concerning a performance of another Weber mass at St. Luke's.

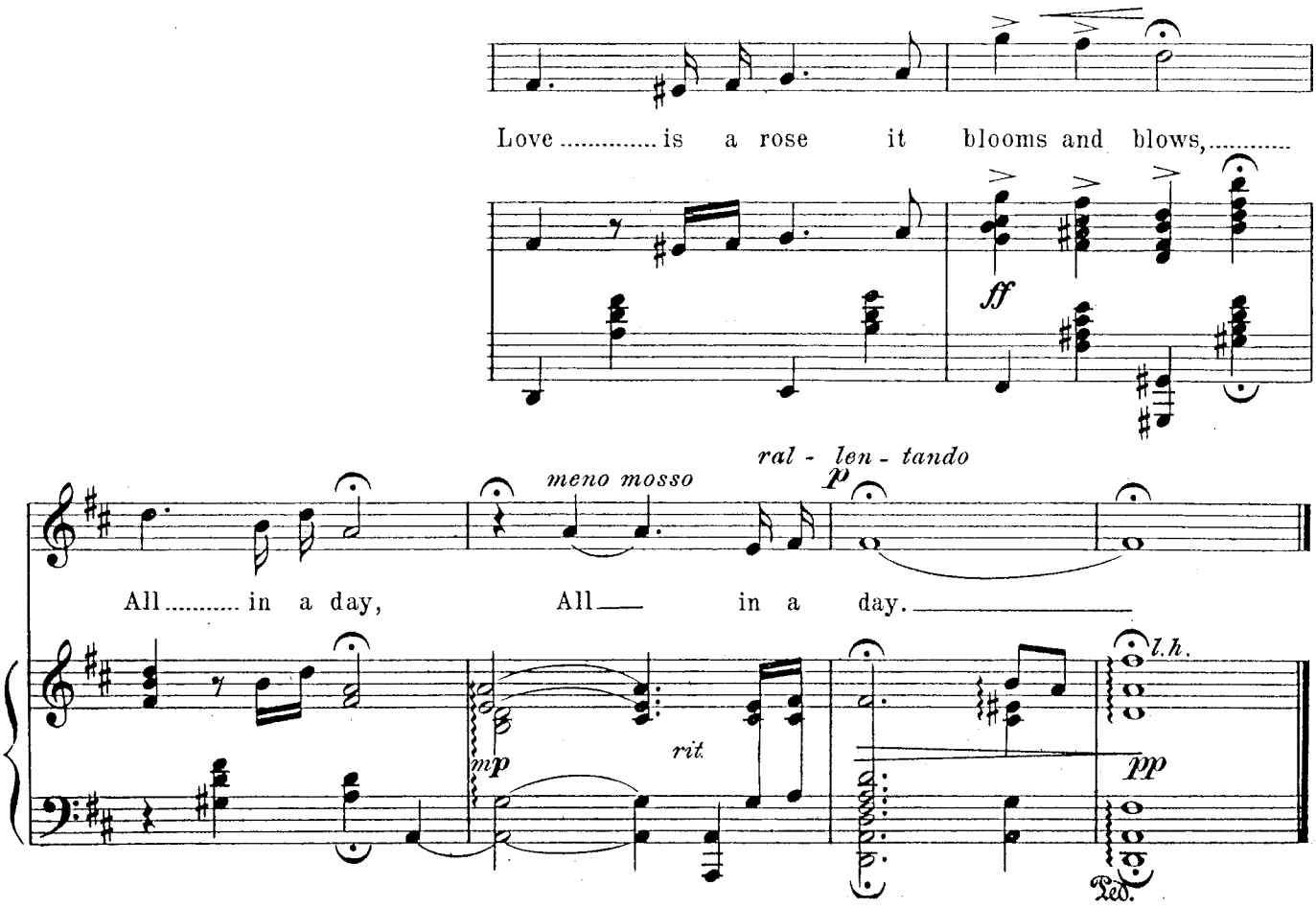
[117] Two decades later, R. Buchanan Morton of the House of Hope Church, St. Paul, discussed this problem in the *Saint Paul Musicians Directory* for 1926. In his conservative view, he concluded that the "personal element, so strong and so important in the concert room, has no place in the church."

This same counterpoise between conservative and brilliant aspects is apparent in Sans Souci's music. The accompaniment makes use of conventional patterns of chords and arpeggios but sometimes contains bits of counter-melody and tenor melody against the voice. Above all, the works display a sense of harmony that is effective and proceeds with ease though never reaching chromatic extremes. Every song establishes a characteristic rhythmic and melodic pattern suitable to the text and which then is used as the basis for the composition. The words are skillfully set in the rhythm of the verses. The climax of the poem calls forth a similar climax in the music.

The opening of "Love is a Rose" shows the shaping of an opening motive and the persistence of a rhythmic figure..


Lento (Slowly, and with expression)
Love ..... is a rose, The
mf
p
bud un - folds ..... in sun-shine and in dew, it's in-cense clings to you,
Love ..... is a rose ..... it buds and blows, ... In the heart ..... of the rose, the

Near the conclusion of a song, there is often an intensification before a quiet ending.



The best of her production has a musical and emotional directness that rises above the sentimentality frequent at this time. Her most famous composition, "When Song is Sweet" is a little masterpiece of three pages,[118] a truly folk-like art song in which the flow of melody, the climaxes, the harmony, all act in concert. The "genuine" quality of this song was recognized by the public that demanded many versions—arrangements for 2 and 3-part women's choruses, 4-part male chorus, and 4-part mixed chorus in addition to the solo version. It is no wonder that it was taken up by Chauncey Olcott, the noted "Irish" tenor.

Sans Souci's songs were popular. *When Song is Sweet* sold over 100,000 copies within a decade and *Love is a Rose* over 50,000 in the same period. An account sheet from Paul A. Schmitt,[119] her principal publisher, indicates that she earned $135 over a three-month period, a sum roughly equivalent to $1,380 in terms of 1988 purchasing power.[120] The bulk of these earnings were from over 1,000 copies of *When Song is Sweet.* We may estimate that that particular song during her lifetime brought Sans Souci $10,220, about $102,200 in terms of 1988 purchasing power. [121]

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[118] Sans Souci dedicated it to one of her favorite sopranos, Mrs. Maud Ulmer Jones. The score is held by many libraries. It is the only one of Sans Souci's songs that has been recorded.

[119] Sans Souci Papers, Minnesota Historical Society.

[120] Calculated from Table 113 (Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers), of the *Handbook of Labor Statistics* (Bulletin 2340 of the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, August 1989), 475.

[121] After Gertrude Sans Souci's death, the rights and proceeds from her compositions passed to her husband, William Charles Toomey. When he died

VI. Tragedy

The years following her St. Louis recitals in 1904 brought even more radical shifts of direction. She had practically exhausted her work as an entrepreneur[122] building a career of artistry and profit. The *Minneapolis Journal* reported with shock on 3 December 1904 that the Wesley organist was now joining the ranks of the Vaudevillians and would be appearing at the Orpheum Theater in a picturesque church scene[123] accompanied by the theater orchestra, the "largest and best in Twin City theaters."

> The scene was admirably arranged. The organ was placed on one side of the stage obliquely facing the audience, and when the curtain rose Miss Sans-Souci was discovered seated at the organ. She was most attractive in a lavender empire-gown trimmed with silver ornaments, and wearing a silver bandeau around her hair.
>
> Miss Sans-Souci opened with Sullivan's "Lost Chord," played with orchestral accompaniment. It was very effective, but marred somewhat by the failure of the leader of the orchestra to follow her

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at Samaritan Hospital, Brooklyn, NY, 19 January 1942, his son by a third marriage, William Charles Toomey, Jr., renounced his own claims to these compositions and turned them over to Ruth White, the daughter of Gertrude Sans Souci, through court papers of the County of Kings, State of New York, 9 February 1946.

[122] Similar problems are reported by Paula Gillett, "Entrepreneurial Women Musicians in Britain: From the 1790s to the Early 1900s" in *The Musician as Entrepreneur, 1700-1914,* ed. William Weber, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2004), 198-220.

[123] *Minneapolis Journal,* 3 December 1904.

> time accurately. As a first encore Miss Sans-Souci played Baldwin's "Burlesca," which did not prove so effective. The player's last offering was Moszkowski's "Serenade," which was beautifully rendered, the orchestra accompanying her with fine effect.

Sans Souci explained her turn to vaudeville by the "high character of its performers and excellent quality of its clientele." Not only did the organ provide theater music but in the larger houses an orchestra, giving substantial concert programs, was often a star attraction. The Minneapolis Orpheum had opened that year on Seventh and Hennepin and was to become the home in turn of vaudeville, radio stars and silent films. The first director of the orchestra, Theodore Martin, raised in Cincinnati by a German family and a graduate of the Royal Conservatory in Berlin, the same educational milieu that Sans Souci knew, must have been the leading force in persuading her to enter this new world.[124] Even a later director of its orchestra, Albert Rudd, chose striking programs if we may judge by one of the few remaining handbills (1915) that list the Caucasian Sketches (Ippolitov-Ivanov) and the Slavonic Dance Number 10 (Dvorak).[125]

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[124] See the short notice and picture of Martin in the issue of 22 January 1905 of the *Minneapolis Times,* the newspaper that covered musical events quite thoroughly in the work of their critic, Harlow Stearns Gale [see R. T. Laudon, "Gales of Music," an essay deposited in the Minnesota Historical Society Library].

[125] For the week of 10 October 1915, located in the Performing Arts Archive of the University of Minnesota

After a turn as a vaudevillian, Sans Souci moved to New York City (1906) where her life took another swift turn. She married William C. Toomey 7 August 1907.[126] Mr. Toomey had been employed by the Great Northern Railroad, James J. Hill's enterprise, in the late 1890s, but left it briefly, and then was employed by Hill in "outside affairs" (a sort of private secretary) only to leave permanently 25 July 1904 after which he pursued other entrepreneurial interests. His divorce from his first wife had intervened in his relationship with Hill and especially with Mrs. Hill, a devout Catholic. Years later Toomey wrote Hill expressing regret for "annoyance caused you and your family."[127] The marriage of Toomey and Sans Souci thoroughly shocked Gertrude's family and since Toomey's first wife, Margaret Busby, was still living, a great deal of gossip arose in the city when the news reached St. Paul. People assumed that since Gertrude was Catholic, the wedding would have been consecrated in her church until the Archdiocese issued a denial.[128] Following their marriage the couple celebrated with a dinner at the Hotel Martinique in New York City and then left for Seattle. They returned to the New York area that became their headquarters for the all too short five and a half years remaining to Gertrude.

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[126] *Minneapolis Journal,* 10 August 1907.

[127] James J. Hill Papers on William Toomey, James J. Hill Library.

[128] *St. Paul Dispatch,* 26 August 1907.

Gertrude set up a publishing enterprise in New York under the firm name of G. S. Toomey, New York,[129] seeking to continue marketing of her compositions that were by this time a substantial part of the household income. Toomey, a man of business who sought new paths, began to take up the intriguing possibilities of the movies, a dawning industry.

At this time, it was not considered quite proper for a wife to pursue a career. Many women simply retired from the stage except for some occasional appearances for good causes. Sans Souci, however, continued her musical career. She worked as a performer under the management of F. A. Stavrum, Steinway Hall, Chicago,[130] and published further songs. Nor were family ties neglected. Frequently she came back to St. Paul to spend the summer with her parents and her sister, Monica, now Mrs. B. J. Mumm.

In 1910, Sans Souci bore a daughter, Ruth Toomey, to whom she was devoted and for whom she gladly sacrificed some of her professional time. Her concern is particularly shown by an episode that happened as she returned to New York from St. Paul in 1912 and left the train at a stop in order to get coffee for an elderly person. The train pulled away before she could get back and her baby was left alone on the seat of the train. She was able to telegraph ahead so that her husband met the train and found the baby safe but Sans Souci suffered "nervous prostration" for several weeks.[131]

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[129] The distributor continued to be Paul A. Schmitt of Minneapolis. Carrie Jacobs-Bond had founded a publishing company that marketed her songs and made her fortune and fame.

[130] *Musical America,* 9 October 1909.

[131] *St. Paul Pioneer Press,* 20 January 1913.

Sans Souci seemed to enjoy good health and should have been able to manage both family and music although she was left very little time to enhance her repertory as a soloist. It appears that she encountered few financial problems and got a great deal of support in her musical training and professional work. Her career continued its progress. She became a model to other women. She was asked to write her biography for the *Ladies Home Journal* and had been put up for an honorary degree.

Sans Souci was not equipped to deal with the changes that were coming in music. She had essentially no study of Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven nor "moderns" of her own day. She had not essayed the concerto repertoire. Her own dashing nature and financial necessity—already she had switched rapidly from temples of art, to conservatory, to various churches, to correspondent, to vaudeville, to marriage—could hamper her career. Above all, she had been "coached" in performance rather than trained in independence.[132]

Her natural talent might have carried her beyond these obstacles. She was planning to return to St. Paul, truly her home, to open a movie theater on Selby Avenue, yet another dashing adventure, although this was in support

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[132] Even Olga Samaroff found herself unprepared to proceed on her own after student days and only found her way after observing actors rehearsing. As a result, Samaroff made a special point of later nourishing independence in her students. Sans Souci kept repeating the same repertory. Even when she played an organ concert at Steinway Hall in New York on 1 April 1907, she played once again the Thiele *Chromatic Fantasia* and the Wagner transcriptions.

of her husband's cinema business. At that point tragedy struck. Suddenly and quite unexpectedly, on the nineteenth of January 1913, she died, cutting short her career.[133] The newspapers reported that she had contracted ptomaine poisoning that led to blood poisoning. Physicians of that day were unable to save her.

The national magazines, *Musical America* and *The Musical Courier,* reported the shock felt by singers "who have interpreted the charming songs of Gertrude Sans Souci." They called her "one of the more popular of the women composers of America" and gave tribute to her talent.

> Her skill as a pianist was recognized as a girl and she later developed into an excellent artist, but she won fame as a composer and especially for her songs, which many singers were eager to add to their lists.

Both magazines spoke of the sorrow for her 2-year old daughter, a lively, blond, curly-headed child who was much too young to understand her mother's death. Gertrude's sister, Monica, could hardly believe the news and hastened off to the funeral and tried to comfort the infant.

The soprano, Nettie Snyder, arranged for a memorial concert in Sans Souci's name,[134] and the Schubert Club of St. Paul included one of her songs

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[133] State of New Jersey, Bureau of Vital Statistics, 1913 Death Certificate 5622 for the county of Hudson and the township of Weehauken. The cause of death is listed as Purpura Hemorrhagia.

[134] *St. Paul Pioneer Press,* 13 July 1913.

in a program of works of St. Paul Composers given the following year.[135] The poet, Frederic Bowles, sent to her mother a collection of his poems including the following stanza:

> Tell me once more, O Father mine immortal,
> Whisper the secret to my raptured ear...
> *Sunshine for shadow in this world of ours!*
> *Rainbows to brighten sorrow's falling showers!*
> *Light after darkness, and for skies o'ercast,*
> *Light everlasting! pain and doubting past.*

Opposite the poem he wrote, "Mrs. John Sans Souci in loving and everlasting memory of her gifted girl Gertrude Sans Souci—and there shall yet be "Sunshine for Shadow—"

Sans Souci was buried in the Cemetery of the Holy Name in Jersey City, New Jersey after services in the Church of Saint Augustine. At the time of her death in 1913 she, one of the worthy lighter composers of her era, had become an exemplar of the style and outlook of the cultured generation. What new directions might have come from this "pretty miss" who had exceeded the stereotype implied by that phrase and had built a brilliant career? She might have extended her extremely short list of compositions. She had already shown the kind of initiative that could have led her into new commercial ventures—perhaps within the movie business that attracted her husband. Her ability to create a professional career shows her practical

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[135] *St. Paul Pioneer Press,* 27 December 1914.

embrace of artistry and promotion, something of the same combination of music and enterprise that marked her favorite instrument, the pipe organ.

List of Works

MnM= Minneapolis Public Library

MnMo = Minneapolis Public Library (old music)

MnHi=Minnesota Historical Society

Lbl = London, British Library

MnMS=Mankato State Univ.

NN=New York Public Library

DLC = Library of Congress

C = Copyright Office

Pr = Print

Ms = Manuscript

Songs

Ms. or Print	Title	Dedication & Date Publisher	For	Location
Ms	Amorita		Voice & Piano	MnHi
Pr	Awake Little Flower Words by Frederic G. Bowles	Ricordi, London, 1911	Voice & Piano	Lbl, NN
Ms				MnHi
Pr	Bonny May (Scotch Song)	G. S. Toomey, New York distributed P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1908	Voice & Piano	DLC, MnMo
Pr	Eileen Words by Frederic G. Bowles	Ricordi, London, 1912	Voice & Piano	Lbl
Ms				MnHi
Pr	Gather the Roses Poem by Marietta Stein	Luckhardt & Belder, New York, 1905 Stationer's Hall, London	Voice & Piano	
Ms				MnHi
Pr	In Dreams I Linger with Thee Anon. (?) Words by permission of Lee and	Metropolitan Music, Minneapolis, 1901 J. E. Frank	Voice & Piano	MnM
Ms	Shepherd, Boston			MnHi
Ms	Heart of the World Poem by Frederic G. Bowles		Voice & Piano	MnHi

Pr	June-Time. Waltz Song Poem by Phillip Bourke Marston	G. S. Toomey, New York Supplier P. A Schmitt Minneapolis, 1908	Voice & Piano	MnM, DLC
Pr	King of Paradise Sacred Song	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1910	Voice & Piano Also arranged a Anthem, SATB	Lbl MnM C
Pr Ms	Love is a Rose Poem by Edith McCarthy	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1905 To Mr. Edward P. Johnson	Voice & Piano	MnM, DLC, MnMo MnHi
Pr	Mammy's Rosebud Words by C. L. Kain	O. Ditson, Boston, 1910	Voice & Piano	Lbl
Ms	Morning		Voice & Piano	MnHi
Pr Ms	My Dreams Poem by John Vance Cheney	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis	Voice & Piano	DLC MnHi
Pr Ms	My Heart is Singing Words, anon. by permission of Lee and Shephard, Boston Also under title Singing of You	O. Ditson, Boston, 1901	Voice & Piano	Lbl, NN, DLC MnHi
Pr	A Rose, A Kiss and You Text by A. L. Hughes attributed to Agnes Lockart in n	G. S. Toomey, NY, distribute P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1909	Voice & Piano	Lbl, NN, MnMo
Pr	Senorita Bonita, Serenade. Words by A. L. Hughes	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1909	Voice & Piano	Lbl, NN
	Serenade		Voice & Piano	
Ms	Spring Greeting		Voice & Piano	MnHi
Pr	Take Me Words by C. D. Wilbur Also attributed to Agnes Lockart Rose probably incorrectly	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1909	Voice & Piano	Lbl, NN
Pr	Thoughts	J. E. Frank, Minneapolis, 1903 P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1910	Voice & Piano	DLC, MnMo NN rev ed. 1910
Pr	Thy Deep Blue Eye (Sweet Viole Words by Monica Sans Souci	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis, 1910	Voice & Piano Violin, Flute, or Cello obbligato	Lbl, NN MnM
Pr	Twilight Shadows Poem by K. Y. Glen	W. Maxwell, New York, 190 To Mr. Frank Croxton	Voice & Piano	Lbl, DLC MnM
Pr Ms Pr Pr	When Song is Sweet When Songs are Sweet When Song is Sweet	J. E. Frank, Minneapolis Dedicated to Mrs. Maude Ulmer Jones Minneapolis, Metropolitan Music, 1902	Voice & Piano Versions for TTBB and SSA in octavo ed.	MnHi, NN, DLC MnHi, MnMo, in n collections DLC MnMo

Pr	Where Blossoms Grow (Spring Song) Words by J. V. Cheney	O. Ditson, Boston. 1906	Voice & Piano	Lbl, MnHi, MnMS NN
Pr Ms	Wishes	Metropolitan Music, Minneapolis, 1901 J. E. Frank, P. A. Schmitt	Voice & Piano	NN, DLC MnHi

Piano Music

Pr	Gavotte Gracieuse	P. A. Schmitt, Minneapolis. 1911	Piano solo	C

Within the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society are three compositions filed in the Sans Souci collection. They must have been in the music collection of the unknown donor:

Cupid went a-courtin' Poem by Fred Brooks, Music by Blanche Sage Holcomb

Three Lullabys [sic] which appear to be a student work by someone unknown

The Sorrows of Death, an brief attempt at oratorio style, again in a student hand

None of these are in Sans Souci's hand nor seem to have any connection with her.