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The Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano, “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting” by Charles Ives: Contextual, Structural, and Stylistic Considerations

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ABSTRACT

The Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano, “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting”

by Charles Ives: Contextual, Structural, and Stylistic Considerations

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Though complex, the Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano is one of Ives’ most accessible works. For this reason, it serves as a particularly useful starting point, not only for one interested in the four violin sonatas of Charles Ives, but also as an initiation to the subtleties of his style in general. The purpose of this paper is to provide contextual information necessary to affect a sympathetic performance of the sonata. Following the presentation of pertinent biographical information, a discussion of three important influences on the development of Ives’ music and thought will follow: the development of American gospel hymnody; political currents during the period in which the sonata was written; and attitudes towards the use of vernacular music as compositional material in the late nineteenth century. The subsequent analysis of the Fourth Violin Sonata will demonstrate in each movement Ives’ uses of borrowed material in the formal procedure called cumulative setting by J. Peter Burkholder. Finally, suggested stylistic techniques and considerations for performers of the work will be provided.
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I. Introduction

Roughly a hundred years after the beginning of his mature compositional period, Charles Ives remains an enigma to many. He is often remembered as a sort of misfit genius who sold insurance, championed sweeping if not radical political reform, and composed bizarre music that incorporates hymns, popular tunes, and patriotic songs as source material. For Ives, music was an expression of life. Although for many years he was viewed as an eccentric, his musical experiments and innovations are in most cases the result of his earnest attempt to represent ideas, events, or emotions.

Thanks to recent strides in scholarship and the increasing availability of high-quality recordings of his music, Charles Ives has been revealed over the last few decades to be the first great composer to emerge from the United States. Recent research has also shown that the socio-political facets of Ives are integrated with his music to a greater degree than possibly any other composer of the twentieth century. In their groundbreaking 1955 biography of Ives, Henry Cowell and his wife and co-author, Sydney Cowell, named Ives:

one of the four great creative figures in music of the first half of the twentieth century. The others are Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Bartók. No composer has escaped the influences of the first two—influences that seem now fairly fully assimilated. Bartók and Ives, on the other hand, stand for something new whose power is only beginning to be felt, and which undoubtedly has many years to run. Both men went back deliberately into unsophisticated music to explore and then carry forward aspects of musical behavior that had gone unnoticed or had been abandoned by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century composers who established the symphonic music of the Western world. Bartók’s source was the folk music of Central Europe and the Near East. Ives’s music had its roots in the church, stage, parlor, and dance music of a small American town—the popular music of his time, in short.¹

The American musical climate proved inhospitable for Ives' seemingly anarchic style during the majority of his mature compositional period. At an early 1914 reading of the First Sonata, Ives (at the piano) endured harsh criticism during a reading session with German violinist Franz Milcke, who had been concertmaster under Anton Seidl of the New York Philharmonic. Milcke said of the work, "...This is awful! It is not music, it makes no sense...When you get awfully indigestible food in your stomach that distresses you, you can get rid of it, but I cannot get those horrible sounds out of my ears by a dose of oil."² Rejection by Milcke and others must have added to Ives' anxiety, since if the violin sonatas were too dissonant, then the fate of his less accessible music seemed without hope.

The violin sonatas are, nevertheless, noticeably less dissonant than much of the music from his mature period, and they seem to have been intentionally geared towards inclusion in the mainstream repertoire.³ Writing in the 1930s, years after his compositional career had ceased, Ives demonstrated his increasing intolerance for such "soft" music by denigrating the violin sonatas: he calls the First Sonata a "kind of retrogression," the Third a "weak sister," and the Fourth a "slump back."⁴ Perhaps the slowly growing appreciation for his work, late as it was in coming, brought a new confidence and ardor for his earliest convictions about music, which had been cultivated by his father and disparaged by many of his contemporaries. At the same time he may have felt, as his father had before him, that he had compromised certain principles in order not to "starve on his dissonances." In spite of his own criticisms, the violin sonatas

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⁴ Ives, Memos, 68-71.
are, in fact, ingenious, beautiful, and sophisticated works that feature innovative compositional procedures and sophisticated representations of the camp meetings and country fiddling of Ives' youth.

Charles Ives finished the *Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano*, entitled “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting,” around the same time as his encounter with Milckee in 1914. It was written for his nephew and was in Charles Ives’ words an “...attempt to write a sonata which Moss White [Ives] (then about twelve years old) could play. The first movement kept to this idea fairly well, but the second got away from it, and the third got about in between.” Ives offered further explanation in the program note included in the published score:

> This sonata is the fourth for violin and piano. It is called “CHILDREN’S DAY AT THE CAMP MEETING.” It is shorter than the other violin sonatas, and a few of its parts and suggested themes were used in organ and other earlier pieces. The subject matter is a kind of reflection, remembrance, expression, etc. of the children’s services at the out-door Summer camp meetings held around Danbury and in many of the farm towns in Connecticut, in the 70’s, 80’s, and 90’s. There was usually only one Children’s Day in these Summer meetings, and the children made the most of it—often the best of it. They would at times get stirred up, excited and even boisterous, but underneath there was usually something serious, though Deacon Grey would occasionally have to “Sing a Caution.”

Nearly thirty years after its composition, the Fourth Violin Sonata was premiered in 1940 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in a performance by violinist Eudice Shapiro and pianist Irene Jacobi. Henry Cowell arranged for a subsequent performance at Carnegie Hall on February 25, 1942 by well-known Hungarian violinist Joseph Szigeti and pianist Andre Foldes, who later recorded the work for *New Music Quarterly*

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5 Ives, *Memos*, 72.
Recordings. Ives was no doubt excited to have his work featured by such revered performing artists, particularly in light of the fact that most of his music had received little attention.

The Fourth Violin Sonata was Ives’ attempt to recall the excitement that he had experienced as a boy at camp meeting services that his father directed near Redding, Connecticut from around 1890-93. With his son assisting at the melodeon, George Ives led the singing of the louder hymns with his slide cornet (an instrument designed to go up in pitch with the rising fervor of the congregation), and employed a violin for the more subdued selections. The impact of such experiences on young Charles Ives can be seen in many works from his mature period that seek to capture the mood of the camp meetings. The Second and Third Symphonies, the First String Quartet, the Second and Fourth Violin Sonatas, and the song The Camp-Meeting are examples.

Though complex, the Fourth Violin Sonata is one of Ives’ most accessible works. For this reason, it serves as a particularly useful starting point, not only for one interested in the four violin sonatas of Charles Ives, but also as an initiation to the subtleties of his style in general. The sonata is technically less demanding than many of Ives’ other compositions, and it offers a straightforward introduction to his use of the compositional procedure which J. Peter Burkholder calls cumulative setting. To facilitate its interpretation, Ives provides a description of the camp meeting in the published score.

The purpose of this paper is to provide contextual information necessary to affect a sympathetic performance of the Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano by Charles Ives. After the presentation of pertinent biographical information, a discussion will follow of

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7 Swafford, 417.
8 Ives, Memos, 133.
the development of American gospel hymnody, the influence of the Progressive era on
Ives' music and thought, and attitudes towards the use of vernacular music as
compositional material in the late nineteenth century. The subsequent analysis of the
Fourth Violin Sonata will explain the formal structure and its use of borrowed material,
and it will provide suggested stylistic techniques for the performer.
II. Biography

J. Peter Burkholder divides Charles Ives' life into six biographical periods.\(^1\) His youth, which spanned from his birth in 1874 until his departure for Yale in 1894, was strongly influenced by his father, George Edward Ives (1845-1894). Ives' apprenticeship (1894-1902) included the years spent at Yale under his teacher Horatio Parker and his first years in New York. After resigning a position as organist at Central Presbyterian Church in New York, he entered a period of *innovation and synthesis* (1902-08) in which he engaged in a productive isolation. *Maturity* (1908-18) followed his marriage to Harmony Twichell (1876-1969), whose influence reinforced Ives' political idealism, literary interests, Progressive objectives, and Transcendental sentiments. During the period in which Ives wrote his *last works* (1918-27), a developing friendship with Henry Cowell contributed to the first publications and performances of his music in almost twenty years. With his compositional career behind him, Ives spent the final stage of his life *revising* (1927-54) and editing previously written works.

*Youth* (1874-1894)

From his birth on October 20, 1874, until he enrolled at Yale in 1894, Charles Ives' youth was fairly typical for a boy from a small New England town except for the musical experiences he shared with his father. He was an average student with a preoccupation for sports. One of his proudest moments from this period was the defeat of the Yale freshman baseball team by the Hopkins Grammar School team, of which he was the pitcher.\(^2\) Childhood hours were spent with his younger brother, Joseph Moss Ives, in their woodshed-turned-pretend-grocery-store (where Ives learned his first lessons in

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\(^2\) Swafford, 78.
business), playing ball, and listening to and participating in their father’s musical experiments. Although as an adult he lamented the hours spent practicing while others were out “...driving grocery carts, or doing chores, or playing ball,” he seems to have enjoyed a contented childhood.

The Ives family took great pride in their genealogical heritage and passed family stories like heirlooms to Charles Ives, whose memories of them would resurface years later in his writings and music. For example, his family traced its roots in New England to 1637, and it had made Danbury its home since the American Revolution. A favorite family story recounted the occasion when Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was brought to Danbury by Charles’ uncle Joseph Moss Ives in the 1850s, stayed in the family house. Another story detailed how Charles Ives’ grandmother, Sarah Ives, led a group of women to a town near Danbury to rescue a runaway slave from his captors and reportedly “raised so much hell that they let him go.” In 1862, during the American Civil War, George Ives became the youngest band leader in the Union Army. Family legend holds that upon reviewing the troops, General Ulysses S. Grant said to President Lincoln, “It’s the best band in the army, they tell me. But you couldn’t prove it by me. I know only two tunes. One is ‘Yankee Doodle’ and the other isn’t.” Ives later called stories such as these the “‘inheritance’ from his forbears & father” that created an “interest in wanting to make his own paths around the hills & mountains.”

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3 Ives, Memos, 55.
4 Swafford, 12.
6 Swafford, 25.
7 Ibid., 14.
Around the age of six, Charlie, as he was known, received musical training from his father. George and other members of his band developed Charlie's proficiency in drums, organ, violin, and cornet. As time went on, George found better keyboard instructors from the area to guide his son's rapidly advancing ability. His father remained his teacher of theory, giving him not only a firm grounding in theory, counterpoint, history, and literature, but also exposing Charlie to a world of musical experimentation that captivated both their attentions.  

George's eccentric musical experiments were numerous and notorious in Danbury, and many of them would reappear years later, in one way or another, in his son's compositions. George Ives had both sons sing hymns from beginning to end in different keys while he played the piano in a third, which served to strengthen Charles' ear and expanded his vocabulary. George marched two opposing bands past each other (remembered in the Fourth Symphony) and had Charlie stand across a pond while he played his cornet (reflected in the song Remembrance). In the latter, the image of sound receding into an echoing distance later came to symbolize for Charles Ives his relationship with his father, as seen in the text of Remembrance: "A sound of a distant horn, O'er shadowed lake is borne—my father's song."  

From his earliest memories of his father, Charlie accepted George Ives' obsession with the world of sound as perfectly natural:

Papa is standing in the back garden in the middle of a thunderstorm, listening to the ringing of the bell from the Congregational church next door. Papa runs inside to the piano and tries to make the sound, but he can't find the notes to make the piano sound like the bell. With growing exasperation he runs outside over and over again, listening hard, trying

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8 Swafford, 43.
9 Ibid., 92.
again and again to find it on the piano, and Mama shouting at Papa for his foolishness.\footnote{Swafford, 42-43.}

In a 1930s postscript to this memory of his father trying to re-create the sound of the bell, Ives recounts his father’s use of quarter tones to play “in the cracks between the piano keys” advising his son that “Everything in life is relative…Nothing but fools and taxes are absolute.”\footnote{Ibid, 12.}

The bond between father and son seemed unbreakable and, as Henry Cowell observed, “…the son has written his father’s music for him.”\footnote{Cowell and Cowell, 18.} Stuart Feder, psychiatrist and biographer of Ives, fully explores the unusually close relationship between Ives and his father in Charles Ives: “My Father’s Song.” Simply stated, he submits that the impetus for Ives’ compositional activity was the death of his father, who was lost at a critical point in his son’s development, and whose musical experiments formed the foundation of Ives’ musical innovations. While Feder may emphasize this point at the expense of other important influences, there is much truth in his statement that they “…were more like each other than like anyone else in their lives.”\footnote{Stuart Feder, “Decoration Day: A Boyhood Memory of Charles Ives,” The Musical Quarterly 66 no. 2 (April 1980): 234-61.}

As Charlie grew, he was at his father’s side through many experiments. He recounts the following in a 1925 article in Pro Musica Quarterly:

My father had a weakness for quarter-tones—in fact he didn’t stop even with them. He rigged up a contrivance to stretch 24 or more violin strings and tuned them up to suit the dictates of his own curiosity. He would pick out quarter-tone tunes and try to get the family to sing them. But I remember he gave that up, except as a means of punishment, though we got to like some of the tunes which kept to the usual scale and had quarter-tone notes thrown in. After working for some time he became sure that some quarter-tone chords must be learned before quarter-tone melodies
would make much sense and become natural to the ear and so for the voice.

He started to apply a system of bows to be released by weights which would sustain the chords—but in this process he was suppressed by the family and a few of the neighbors. A little later on he did some experimenting with glasses and bells and got some sounds as beautiful sometimes as they were funny—a complex that only children are old enough to appreciate.

But I remember distinctly one impression (and this was about 35 years ago). After getting used to hearing a piano piece when the upper melody, runs, etc., were filled out with quarter-tone notes (as a kind of ornamentation), when the piece was played on the piano alone there was a very keen sense of dissatisfaction—of something wanted but missing.  

The camp meeting provided an important laboratory for the musical experimentation of George Ives. Observations and memories of his father as song leader at camp meeting services in Redding, Massachusetts, would prove to be particularly influential on Charles’ writings and compositions in later years. Ives discovered at one of these meetings that a composition by George Ives provided counterpoint to a hymn by William H. Doane. This combination was later used as thematic material in the first movement of the *Fourth Violin Sonata*.

In addition to assisting his father at the keyboard during the camp meetings, Charles Ives gained further experience as a professional church organist. At the age of 15, he became the youngest salaried organist in the state of Connecticut.  

His father enforced a daily four-hour practice regiment, which enabled him to devour a substantial repertoire of difficult music. Charles’ exceptional talent encouraged his father to hope that his son would become a concert artist, but shyness made him shrink from the stage.

At a public performance of *Holiday Quickstep*, which Charles composed at age thirteen

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14 Cowell and Cowell, 20.
15 Swafford, 50.
16 Ibid., 51.
for his father’s band, he failed to appear at his post on the snare drum. The Cowells relate, “...when the band came marching down Main Street past the Ives house playing Charlie’s piece full tilt, the boy was discovered nervously playing handball against the barn door, with his back to the parade.”

When Danbury folks asked what he played, he liked to say “shortstop.” Jan Swafford notes insecurities in the young artist and the fear of attacks on his masculinity. He quotes Ives:

As a boy [I was] partially ashamed of it—an entirely wrong attitude, but it was strong....When other boys, Monday A.M. on vacation, were out driving grocery carts, or doing chores, or playing ball, I felt all wrong to stay in and play piano. And there may be something in it. Hasn’t music always been too much an emasculated art?

In 1890, George Ives reluctantly resigned his post as director of the Danbury Band. Swafford suggests that his decision to do so was likely the result of the inability of the modest earnings for his musical pursuits to provide the anticipated expenses of two sons’ college educations. Due to his financial circumstances, George felt forced to take a job as a clerk at his uncle’s hat factory, where he worked under the supervision of his wealthy nephew. The following year, he took a position as a teller in the Danbury Savings Bank, which his father had founded. George Ives had given his entire life to music, partially in an effort to avoid “clocks, bosses, and suits,” but in the end, he was forced to do what was best for his family, and, as Swafford states, “…he seems to have taken little pleasure in it.”

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17 Cowell and Cowell, 27.
18 Ibid.
19 Ives, Memos, 130-31.
20 Swafford, 70.
21 Ibid., 71.
22 Ibid.
Charles Ives left Danbury for New Haven in the spring of 1893 to attend the Hopkins Grammar School in preparation to apply to Yale. He embraced this newfound freedom by over-extending himself with sports and an organ position at Saint Thomas Episcopal Church in New Haven. Studies took up what was left of his time. When he was advised at Hopkins to delay his application to Yale so that he could be better prepared, George Ives became furious and blamed his son’s slow progress on his diversions. The relationship between father and son at this time began to strain as Charles stubbornly sought to assert the independence that George was reluctant to grant.\(^{23}\)

In the summer 1893, Charles Ives had an unexpected opportunity to travel with his uncle, Lyman Brewster, to Chicago for the World’s Columbian Exposition celebrating the 400\(^{th}\) anniversary of Columbus’ voyage. At the fair were the entertainers Houdini, Buffalo Bill, and Little Egypt, and he heard the Chicago Symphony, French organist Alexandre Guilmant, and the marches of John Phillip Sousa. Ives may also have heard young pianist and cornetist Scott Joplin play the new syncopated style of Ragtime.\(^{24}\) Within the next ten years, Joplin would be called the “King of Ragtime,”\(^{25}\) and soon after, Ives would begin to incorporate this style into his own music, including the third movement of the *Fourth Violin Sonata* and the second movement of the *Third Violin Sonata*. The influence on Ives’ music of the new styles he heard at the Columbian Exposition of 1893 is similar to the impact Eastern music had on the young composers Debussy and Ravel at the Paris Exhibition of 1889. Ives missed by a week hearing

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\(^{23}\) Swafford, 72.

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 73.

Antonín Dvořák conduct his *Eighth Symphony* at the “Bohemian Day” celebration on August 12.\(^{26}\) Commenting on the experience in an article in New York’s *Daily Tribune*, Dvořák observes:

The Exhibition itself is gigantic…and to write of it would be a vain undertaking. It must be seen and seen very often, and still you do not really know anything, there is so much and everything so big, truly made in America.”\(^{27}\)

Following his three-week hiatus from school, Ives returned to Hopkins to take his examinations. From this point, the memory of his hometown would slip into a nostalgia for the perfect union of family and community, a topic that he revisited years later in his mature compositional period. That winter George had a very serious discussion with Charles that would prove if not influential, prophetic for his son. George Ives had been forced, he felt, to abandon his career as a musician out of loyalty to his family. The popularity of postwar band music waned near the end of the century, and with his belated entrance into business, he must have felt something of a failure at both pursuits.\(^{28}\) Years later, Charles Ives’ wrote:

Father felt that a man could keep his music-interest stronger, cleaner, bigger, and freer, if he didn’t try to make a living out of it. Assuming a man lived by himself and with no dependents…[he] might write music that no one would play, publish, listen to, or buy. *But* if he has a nice wife and some nice children, how can he let the children starve on his dissonances…. So he has to weaken (and as a man he should weaken for his children), but his music more than weakens—it goes “ta ta” for money—bad for him, bad for music, but good for his boys!!\(^{29}\)

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\(^{27}\) Tibbetts, 94, note 15.

\(^{28}\) Swafford, 71.

\(^{29}\) Ives, *Memos*, 131.
Apprenticeship (1894-1902)

Ives’ apprenticeship period began in 1894 with the launch of his career at Yale. His first meeting with his teacher, Horatio Parker (1863-1919), seems to have confirmed his father’s caution about dissonances and the distaste for them by contemporary American ears. When asked to present some compositions, Ives offered At Parting, a piece written when he was 14. When Parker’s eyes reached the last measure he said, “...There’s no excuse for that-- an E-flat way up there, stopping there unresolved and the nearest D-natural way down two octaves....” Ives relayed the encounter to his father who retorted, “Tell Parker that every dissonance doesn’t have to resolve, if it doesn’t happen to feel like it, any more than every horse should have its tail bobbed just because it’s the prevailing fashion.”  

Two weeks later George Ives died and Charles’ devastating loss was borne for several years to come. During the years before he departed for Yale, Charles Ives had asserted his independence, straining the relationship. At this delicate point in his career, his father and musical collaborator was taken from him, and he no doubt regretted that he would not have the chance to resolve their differences. From the death of his father until his marriage to Harmony Twichell in 1908, Ives struggled to find a balance between the influences of his father’s innovative experimentation and the traditional European values that were strictly enforced during his studies with Horatio Parker. Around 1919, Ives reflected:

I remember...that before I went to college, I was interested. I found a pleasure...in browsing in my father’s library that I never found in college. My mind seemed to stop at my first freshman recitation as soon as I felt smothered by the compulsory constant proximity of 300 classmate minds.

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30 Ives, Memos, 116.
31 Swafford, 80.
Compulsory ideas of tutors, compulsory traditions of professors, compulsory courses, compulsory freedom of thought, compulsory chapel—...all four years in complete dullness of mind. But after receiving the sheepskin (the most appropriate thing I had received for a long time), I felt free to think again, and I'm gradually getting straightened out.”

Although he never admitted it, Ives did receive from Parker invaluable instruction in the European classical tradition. Ives' music from the period is characterized by fine craftsmanship and a command of long stretches of time. It was particularly the development of his skills as a symphonist that he owed to Parker. The First String Quartet, subtitled "From the Salvation Army," serves as a poignant example of Ives' struggle with his own sense of style inherited from his father and the formal expectations of his teacher. In the quartet, he uses fiddle tunes, marches, gospel rhythms, and the like. He also incorporates a well-crafted fugue, composed for Parker's class, based on the hymn From Greenland's Icy Mountains by Lowell Mason. The predominance of traditional facets in Ives' music during this period shows the influence of his teacher. During his studies with Parker, who reflected contemporary cultural attitudes towards indigenous American music, Ives was forced to yield to his curricular demands.

While at Yale, Ives, who was unable to come to satisfactory terms with his teacher, sought solace in his friendship with the older John C. Griggs, choirmaster at Center Church, who recognized the talent in the newly appointed young organist. While Griggs did not always agree with Ives' tastes, he always kept an open mind. After Ives slipped in a particularly dissonant piece at church, Griggs said:

Never you mind what the ladies' committee says; my opinion is that God must get awfully tired of hearing the same thing over and over again, and

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32 Ives, "George's Adventure and The Majority," in Memos, Appendix 9, 227.
33 Swafford, 135.
34 Ibid., 113-14.
in His all-embracing wisdom he could certainly embrace a dissonance—
might even positively enjoy one now and then.35

Ives graduated from Yale in 1898 to the surprise of some of his fellow students. He seemed to invest more in his social life than in his studies, and as a result maintained a D+ average. The following years were spent in New York in an apartment Ives shared with some Yale classmates, which they fondly called “Poverty Flat.” Ives’ roommates tolerated the jarring strains emanating from his piano, and they all generally had a good time. One of these young men was David Twichell, who years later would become Ives’ brother-in-law.

Ives took a position as organist at Central Presbyterian Church in New York in 1899. Several works from this period are lost, including the trumpet sonata (ca. 1901) from which the first movement of the Fourth Violin Sonata was derived.36 Other works from this period include the First Piano Sonata, the First and Second Symphonies, and portions of the Third Symphony.

In 1902, Ives premiered his choral cantata Celestial Country. Swafford explains that although Ives had been resentful of Parker’s dogged strictness regarding modeling works by established composers, here he clearly imitates Parker’s composition Hora Novissima.37 Ives chose Henry Alford’s Latin hymn Forward! Be Our Watchword, which he mistakenly believed to be a text by St. Bernard of Cluny, from whom the text for Parker’s cantata had been taken. While the two works share similarities, Ives’ attempt to yield to Victorian musical principles by modeling on the work that had brought so much success to his teacher fell flat in the end. In spite of polite approval from critics

35 Cowell and Cowell, 35.
36 Ives, Memos. Appendix 3, 165.
37 Swafford, 161.
and the audience, Ives became profoundly disappointed in himself. He had forfeited his musical convictions, and had yielded to the expectations of the audience he grew to despise, just as his father had warned eight years earlier. 38 Ives quickly resigned his post at Central Presbyterian and embarked on a long and illustrious career in the insurance business, restricting his composition to weekends, holidays, and the commuter train to work.

I seemed to have worked with more natural freedom, when I knew that the music was not going to be played before the public, or rather before people who couldn’t get out from under, as is the case in a church congregation…. To a body of people who come together to worship—how far has a man a right to do what he wants, if he knows that by so doing he is interfering with the state of mind of the listeners, who have to listen regardless…. A congregation has some rights. 39

Innovation and Synthesis (1902-1908)

From 1902-1908, Ives embarked on a difficult but formative period in his life. The most significant developments were his courtship with Harmony Twichell and the events that created uncertainty in his professional life.

The gradual inclusion into the Twichell family and the resulting courtship and marriage to Harmony Twichell was the most positive event during his adult life. Ives’ initial introduction was through his friendship with classmate David Twichell. In 1896, David invited a group of friends, including Charles, to join the Twichell family at Keen Valley in the Adirondacks, where Charles met Harmony for the first time. 40 While in college, Charles Ives had heard David’s father, the well-known minister Joseph Twichell,
preach at the Yale campus just six days before the death of George Ives. Reverend Twichell was a respected minister from Hartford to New Haven. He had served as a chaplain in the Civil War for a division of the Army of the Potomac where he saw every major campaign of the most important Union army, and it is likely that he heard George Ives’ band at some point. Ives was warmly accepted into the Twichell family, and he became a regular visitor at their home in Hartford, Connecticut.

Joseph Twichell was a disciple of Horace Bushnell (1802-1876), who was called “the father of American religious liberalism.” Bushnell, who upheld the importance of the individual through a more direct relationship with God through Jesus, was considered radical in his time and still progressive a century later. With its humanistic approach to Christianity and its emphasis on service to mankind, Bushnell’s theology influenced the development of the Social Gospel movement in the late nineteenth century. Although the Twichells rejected some of Bushnell’s positions, his vision of Christianity greatly influenced their lives, and through them, the music and activities of Charles Ives.

The Twichell family counted as friends the literary giants William Dean Howells and John Greenleaf Whittier. Among their friends in Twichell’s congregation were Charles Dudley Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the children’s favorite, Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), who lived next door. Joseph Twichell traveled extensively with Twain in Europe and the U.S., and it was Twichell’s suggestion that encouraged Twain to publish his tales of life on the Mississippi. Before their marriage, Harmony

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41 Swafford, 86.
42 Ibid., 171.
43 Ibid., 172.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
took Charles to visit the Clemenses. Presuming the prospective bridegroom had been brought for his inspection, Twain said, "Well, the fore seems to be all right; turn him around and let's see about the aft!"\(^{48}\)

Harmony had grown up in this rich environment. She entered nursing school in 1898, which was highly unusual for the time. Her decision to delay marriage and pursue a career that most middle-class women would disdain reveals her Progressive ideals of service to humanity.\(^{49}\) Over the years, Harmony and Charles had maintained a casual friendship through their relationship with her brother. Harmony heard Ives play at Center Church and was his date at the Yale Junior Prom, but so far the relationship was platonic.\(^{50}\) On July 30, 1905, however, Charles and Harmony went on a date to hear Dvorák's *New World Symphony*, and their courtship began.

In August of that year, Charles spent six weeks with the Twichells at Saranac Lake. Ives had taken that vacation because he felt on the verge of a nervous breakdown due to over-extension at work and resulting depression. Both his composing and business had stagnated, but in that momentous visit to the Adirondacks, Ives began to compose again.\(^{51}\) By the end of August, he had composed the *Three-Page Sonata*, an arrangement of *Watchman* (which was later expanded for the *Fourth Symphony* and used in the *First Violin Sonata*), and a setting of *Beautiful River* for cornet and strings. The last became the third movement of the *Fourth Violin Sonata*.

Shortly after his return to work, Ives endured the unsettling and scandalous investigation by the Armstrong Committee before the New York State Legislature. The

\(^{48}\) Cowell and Cowell, 46.  
\(^{49}\) Swafford, 174.  
\(^{50}\) Ibid., 169.  
\(^{51}\) Ibid., 177.
inquiry exposed unethical practices by the three largest life insurance companies, with
particular attention paid to the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York and its
subsidiary, the Raymond Insurance Agency—Ives’ employer. The impact on Ives of the
Armstrong investigation will be more fully developed in the section of this paper dealing
with the Progressive era.

Maturity (1908-1918)

Ives’ mature period began with his marriage to Harmony Twichell in 1908. In the
ten years that followed, Ives succeeded in establishing a very successful career in the
insurance business with his partner, Mike Myrick, became involved in important social
and political issues of the time, and wrote or reworked the majority of the compositions
for which he is known, including the four violin sonatas.

Charles Ives found in Harmony Twichell, as he had in his father, someone who
supported even his most experimental music. The surviving letters between the two
reveal an extraordinarily close relationship and demonstrate the extent to which Harmony
looked after his frail physical constitution and nurtured his complexities. Ives expressed
his gratitude towards Harmony and his father in Memos:

One thing I am certain of is that, if I have done anything good in music, it
was, first, because of my father, and second, because of my wife. What
she has done for me I won’t put down, because she won’t let me. But I am
going to put this down at least: ...she never once said or suggested or
looked or thought that there must be something wrong with me—a thing
implied, if not expressed, by most everybody else...She urged me on my
way—to be myself!

With Harmony, Ives revisited the Transcendental heritage and folklore surrounding his
past life in Danbury. Ives’ political beliefs were tied to Transcendental philosophy from
his youth. After his marriage to Harmony Twichell, there is a marked fusion of these

52 Ives, Memos, 114.
beliefs with the humanistic concerns of Bushnell and his followers and the reforms
sought by the Social Gospel and Progressive movements. Views on humanism shared by
Charles and Harmony Ives were gradually incorporated into the composer’s music and
into his social and political activity. It also brought the couple an adopted daughter,
Edith, through their involvement in an endeavor called the Fresh Air Program, which
brought inner-city families to the country during the summer.\textsuperscript{53}

Throughout this period, Ives’ theories and philosophies of business and politics
became fully developed and integrated. In his younger years he had witnessed a shift
from the predominance of agrarian communities and family ties, represented for him by
the camp meeting, to the brutality of modern industrial capitalism.\textsuperscript{54} Ives reflected his
political, social, and economic beliefs through numerous topical and political
compositions and writings from this period.

After years of watching the horrors of the First World War from a distance, the
United States entered the conflict in 1917. Ives was vehemently against involvement
until the sinking of the Lusitania in 1915. Many pacifists followed Woodrow Wilson’s
call for war following the tragedy, and Ives applied himself to the effort vigorously. At
this time, his socio-political concerns and complications with the family of his newly
adopted daughter distracted his attentions from musical composition.\textsuperscript{55} He tried to enlist
as an ambulance driver in a unit of Yale men, but was declared unable to serve due to
poor health. Determined to help the war effort, he fought to create $50 war bonds in
order to enable low-income Americans to participate in the fight. Meeting resistance
from a committee, which included Franklin D. Roosevelt (who was absent on the day of

\textsuperscript{53} Swafford, 273.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 210.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 284.
the decision), Ives campaigned aggressively and swayed the committee. Later that night, he suffered a collapse, from which he never fully recovered.

Ives’ health has been the subject of much speculation. The presence of diabetes, diagnosed in 1931, could explain his illness from as early as 1905 and his subsequent collapse in 1906. Diabetes is hereditary, and may have been the cause of the strokes of George Ives at age forty-nine and Moss at sixty-three. Swafford cites manic-depressive disease, or bipolar disorder, as a possible cause for Ives’ explosiveness and irritability, while Stuart Feder asserts that Ives’ health problems were the result of anxiety and depression. Recent scholarship by Gayle Sherwood, in “Charles Ives and ‘Our National Malady,’” suggests that neurasthenia was the cause of Ives’ collapses of 1906 and 1918. Neurasthenia was a late-nineteenth century term for a mental disorder characterized by irritability, fatigue, weakness, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms, thought to result from weakness or exhaustion of the nervous system. Sherwood states that this condition “locates...[Ives’]...identity by nationality, ethnicity, gender, economic and social class, education, profession, environment and lifestyle.” If this diagnosis is accepted, the prescribed treatments—long periods of rest and seclusion, marriage, and avoiding emotional stress—might suggest that Ives’ relationship with Harmony and his activities in music, business, and politics, were dictated by this condition. Although Sherwood’s argument is well developed, Ives himself might be inclined to disagree—

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56 Swafford, 286.
57 Ibid., 286-87.
59 Sherwood, 555-584.
61 Sherwood, 584.
62 Ibid., 570-71.
"It's funny how many men, when they see another man put the 'breechin' under a horse's tail, wrong or right, think that he must be influenced by someone in Siberia or Neurasthenia."63

Last works (1918-1927)

After the second collapse in 1918, the year 1919 marked an explosion of activity, in spite of Ives' poor health. Perhaps sensing the potential brevity of his life, new priorities were pursued obsessively: to increase his earnings in order to provide for his family in case he died; to have his music heard while he could still be involved;64 and to try to prevent repetition of the atrocities of war through political reform. His business, which earned some $15,000,000 in twelve years (in 1920s dollars), outgrew its nearest competitor by eleven million dollars.65 From 1919-20 he completed his insurance essay The Amount to Carry, and the political essays The Majority (which he had begun earlier), Concerning a 20th Amendment, and George's Adventure. While his business successes were meteoric, and his political activities were numerous, the recognition of his music grew much more slowly.

The Concord Sonata, which had been virtually finished by 1916,66 was prepared in ink score for publication in 1919, and Essays Before a Sonata, which was intended to be a preface to each movement, was, due to its length, published as a separate book. In a flurry of activity, he completed the Fourth Symphony, finished in concept by 1916, worked on the colossal Universe Symphony, and published 114 Songs in 1922. With the exception of a few other works, these were his last compositions.

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63 Ives, Memos, 27.
64 Swafford, 288
65 Ibid., 311.
66 Swafford, 276.
Efforts to gain exposure for his music consumed the remainder of his energy. Undaunted by the cold reception by musicians at a reading of *Decoration Day* at Carnegie Hall in 1920, Ives continued his campaign. He sent many copies of the *114 Songs*, the *Concord Sonata*, and *Essays Before a Sonata* to anyone he thought might be interested. During this time he made contact with his earliest supporters: T. Carl Whitmer, composer; Henry Bellamann, composer and later dean of the Curtis Institute of Music; and Clifton Joseph Furness, lecturer and writer on music. Through his connection with these men, Ives was cast as a “Scriabinist,” perhaps for lack of a more appropriate designation, which resulted a decade later in his introduction to Katherine Heyman, John Kirkpatrick, Elliott Carter, Henry Cowell, and Dane Rudhyar. He had also gotten the attention of at least one composer of international fame and popularity. Although he never returned the call, George Gershwin tried to reach Ives by telephone in 1924.

Following these years of extreme activity, Ives was exhausted and his compositional career was finished. In 1926, Harmony recalled that “he came downstairs one day with tears in his eyes, and said he couldn’t seem to compose any more—nothing went well, nothing sounded right.”

*Revising (1927-1954)*

With his compositional career behind him, Ives spent the rest of his life copying, arranging, and editing works from earlier years, often adding more dissonance and more complexities. These were activities in which he had long been engaged, and after his

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67 Swafford, 316.
68 Ibid., 319-320.
69 Ibid., 323-24.
70 Ibid., 341.
71 Harmony Ives, interview by John Kirkpatrick, in *Memos*, Appendix 19, 279.
retirement in 1929, he was able to devote more time to them. The principle musical accomplishment of Ives’ last period was the gradual recognition of his work.

In recent years, controversy over the dating of Ives’ music, particularly in the 1920s, has been an important topic in Ives scholarship. Research has revealed that Ives misdated some of his compositions, and in some cases, such as the Fourth Symphony, appears to have done so intentionally.\(^{72}\) In many instances, however, Ives’ own precise dating of his compositions may have been virtually impossible due to his processes of sketching, revising, and rearranging, which sometimes extended over a period of several years. Jan Swafford suggests that the principle reason for Ives’ inconsistency was his conflict between music and business, and that Ives may have felt that his loyalty to Ives & Myrick may have been questioned if it were discovered that while on leave for poor health, particularly in the 1920s while composing the Fourth Symphony, he was often engrossed in composition.\(^{73}\)

Among the earliest to recognize Ives’ importance was Henry Cowell, an Ultra-Modernist composer, the founder of New Music Quarterly, and a founding member (with Varèse and others) of the Pan-American Association of Composers.\(^ {74}\) Cowell began to correspond with Ives in 1927, only months after Ives had announced to his wife Harmony that he could no longer compose.\(^ {75}\) The new friendship with Cowell proved vitally important for both men. Cowell drew attention to Ives through the publication of much of his music in New Music Quarterly and directly or indirectly influenced the performance of several of Ives’ works before audiences in Europe and the United

\(^{72}\) Swafford, 343.
\(^{73}\) Ibid., 344.
\(^{74}\) Ibid., 370.
\(^{75}\) Ibid., 368; 366
States, while Ives anonymously contributed over a thirty-year period one third of the expenses for Cowell’s *New Music.* Through Cowell, Ives also formed a lifelong friendship with composer Carl Ruggles.

Henry Cowell introduced Ives to conductor Nicolas Slonimsky, whose short-lived but prominent career directly, or indirectly, brought several important performances of Ives’ works. Slonimsky premiered *Three Places in New England* with the Chamber Orchestra of Boston in New York’s Town Hall in 1931. From this point until 1933, Ives works were performed by the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris (on a program that featured Bartók’s first piano concerto with the composer at the piano), Berlin Philharmonic, Hungarian Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and in Vienna, Hamburg, and Dresden. The success of Ives’ music in Europe prompted Aaron Copland’s 1932 performance of songs by Ives at the first Festival of Contemporary American Music (Yaddo Festival) in Saratoga Springs.

Interest in Ives’ music continued to grow as Ives began writing *Memos* in 1932. Not intended for publication, many of the unfiltered sentiments would likely have been reworked had he known of its future publication. Burkholder writes that Ives attempted to “disinherit himself from European music” in order to “have everyone perceive him as a great original, coming out of nowhere, with no one but George at his back.” His successes were mounting as Ives embarked on a fourteen-month European tour with his

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77 Swafford, 371.
79 Swafford, 384-86.
80 Ibid., 386.
81 Ibid., 392.
family. While in London, Ives recorded some of his music at Columbia’s Abbey Road studios. As his notoriety grew, he became the most celebrated figure of the circle of composers presented in *New Music.* Upon his return to America, the Young Composers Group, which was sponsored by Aaron Copland, and included Bernard Herrmann, Elie Siegmeister, Arthur Berger, Henry Brant, Jerome Moross, Vivian Fine, Lehman Engel, and Irwin Heilner, had gathered around Ives. This group represented a shift in American music away from the avant-gard and Modernists that had been championed by Slonimsky. Aaron Copland wrote of his evolution from avant-gard composer to populist: “During those years [the Depression years of the 1930s] I began to feel an increasing dissatisfaction with the relations of the music-loving public and the living composer....I felt that it was worth the effort to see if I couldn’t say what I had to say in the simplest possible terms.” By 1934, the Pan-American Association was finished, and Ives, who had relatively little in common with the organization besides an interest in promoting contemporary music, seemed to show the way for the younger generation, whose mixture of Americana with French influences would be thought of as the American school until the 1950s. Writing in 1990, Elie Siegmeister recalled that:

Up to that point [when they became aware of Ives] the leader and “role model”...was, of course, Aaron....But Aaron, Jewish Brooklyn boy that he was, still had a slight Frenchy...tinge to him...that made him a little precious....When Ives burst upon me, mainly through Henry Cowell, Benny Herrmann, Jerry Moross, Nicky Slonimsky, ca. 1931, it was like the real path for an American composer suddenly opened up, and one that’s been with me ever since....[While] I’m a very different composer than Ives...we share so much in common—identity with common things, even commonplace things, and derive much of our thought and feeling from everyday American life, and are not afraid to use “found objects” as

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83 Swafford, 394.
84 Ibid., 396.
86 Swafford, 399.
the themes for our stuff; and also (very important) are deeply anti-academic, anti-German, anti-theory as the source of music.\textsuperscript{87}

By the middle of the 1930s, Ives watched the appreciation for his music bloom, often from his bed, to which he was confined for days and weeks at a time by diabetes.\textsuperscript{88} In 1937 he met pianist John Kirkpatrick, whose premiere of the \textit{Concord Sonata} in 1939 secured Ives' place in history.\textsuperscript{89} Kirkpatrick would go on to organize Ives' papers and manuscripts, and was his champion for the next fifty years. The growing interest in the composer is indicated by articles in \textit{Life} and \textit{Time} magazines, an inquiry (which was later abandoned) about the violin sonatas by Jascha Heifetz,\textsuperscript{90} the performance of the \textit{Third Violin Sonata} by Sol Babits and Ingolf Dahl in 1940,\textsuperscript{91} performances in the Evenings on the Roof concert series, the 1945 release of the \textit{Concord Sonata} by Columbia Records (which was a classical best-seller),\textsuperscript{92} and Lou Harrison's 1946 performance of the \textit{Third Symphony} which won Ives the Pulitzer Prize in 1947.

Also in 1947, the Cowells started their Biography of Ives, which took eight years to complete.\textsuperscript{93} Ives had suspended his friendship with Henry Cowell in 1936 after Cowell had been arrested and convicted on a homosexual morals charge.\textsuperscript{94} Shortly after Cowell's announcement of marriage to Sydney Robertson, Ives resumed their friendship. Almost immediately, Cowell persuaded Columbia Records to record the \textit{Concord Sonata}, and in 1942 arranged the performance and recording of the Fourth violin sonata by

\textsuperscript{87} Elie Siegmeister letter to Jan Swafford, 9/23/1990, quoted in Swafford, 397.
\textsuperscript{88} Swafford, 401.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 411-13.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 413.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 413.
\textsuperscript{92} Cowell and Cowell, 113.
\textsuperscript{93} Swafford, 425.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 405.
Joseph Szigeti and Andre Foldes. Ives himself made a recording in 1943 at Mary Howard Recordings in New York, including The Alcotts and the song They Are There! Portions of this recording and others, including the takes from Abbey Road, are available on the compact disc Ives plays Ives, which was released in 1999 on the CRI label.

Although he went to few concerts, Ives had said that he would attend if the New York Philharmonic ever performed his Second Symphony at Carnegie Hall. Instead, he listened to its premiere by orchestra, Leonard Bernstein conducting, on the radio at a neighbor's house. Ives, weakened and anxious, listened in West Redding on the radio as Harmony, Edie and her husband, Joe Twichell, and Henry and Sydney Cowell sat in a box at Carnegie Hall. As the crowd erupted in approval after the performance, Swafford describes the scene as Ives "got up, spat in the fireplace, and walked into the kitchen without a word." Nobody could figure out whether he was too disgusted or too moved to talk. Likely it was the latter. Bernstein would later call Ives "Our first really great composer, our Washington, Lincoln, and Jefferson of music." While recovering from an operation for a double hernia in Roosevelt Hospital in New York, Ives suffered a stroke, and on May 19, 1954, Charles Ives passed away. Edie Ives recalled that as she and Harmony held his hands, Ives "seemed as if transfigured—that it was a kind of intimate communion of unspoken awareness she could never have

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95 Swafford, 416-17.
96 Charles Ives, Ives Plays Ives: The Composer at the Piano in Four Recording Sessions, 1933–1943, CRI, CD810.
97 Cowell and Cowell, 135.
99 Swafford, 428-29.
100 Ibid., 429.
imagined... a kind of serenity resolving all the tensions of his life, that somehow persisted intact quite a bit after he had quietly stopped breathing.”

III. Thematic and Stylistic Determinants in the music of Charles Ives:

The Gospel Hymn and Revivalism

The gospel hymn is a type of religious song popularized during the urban revivalism of the 1870s-90s. A relationship between Ives and revivalism can be clearly seen in his predilection for gospel songs as source material and his choices of programmatic titles. Examples include the Fourth Sonata for Violin and Piano, entitled “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting”; the third movement of the Second Violin Sonata, subtitled “A Revival Service”; the fourth movement of String Quartet No. 1, based on the militant Stand up, Stand up for Jesus!; the revival song General William Booth Enters into Heaven; the use in the Second and Fourth Violin Sonatas of the revival hymn Shall We Gather at the River; and the use of Watchman in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony and the third movement of the First Violin Sonata. Furthermore, the depiction of the confusion, dissonance, and extreme dynamics of revivalism became a stylistic tendency in many of Ives’ musical compositions.\(^1\) As a part of the revival movement, camp meetings began in Danbury, Connecticut and surrounding areas in the late 1870s. Charles Ives recounts such gatherings and their use of the gospel hymn:

I remember, when I was a boy—at the outdoor Camp Meeting services in Redding, all the farmers, their families and field hands, for miles around, would come afoot or in their farm wagons. I remember how the great waves of sound used to come through the trees—when things like Beulah Land, Woodworth, Nearer My God to Thee, The Shining Shore, Nettleton, In the Sweet Bye and Bye and the like were sung by thousands of “let out” souls. The music notes and words on paper were about as much like what they “were” (at those moments) as the monogram on a man’s necktie may be like his face. Father, who led the singing, sometimes with his cornet or his voice, sometimes with both voice and arms, and sometimes in the quieter hymns with a French horn or violin, would always encourage the people to sing their own way. Most of them knew the words and music

\(^1\) Rosalie Sandra Perry, Charles Ives and the American Mind (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1974), 75.
(theirs) by heart, and sang it that way. If they threw the poet or composer around a bit, so much the better for the poetry and the music. There was power and exaltation in these great conclaves of sound from humanity.²

While the gospel song is primarily associated with the revivalism of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it was derived from traditions established as early as 1700 in the American colonial period. Early New England Protestantism was based on the Calvinist view of an avenging and wrathful deity, and Genevan tenets of the sanctity of work seemed well suited for pioneers struggling against an unforgiving wilderness.³ However, as life in the New World became more tenable and the formation of the Republic neared, Americans reacted to the harshness of the Calvinist theology still maintained by some Puritanical New Englanders in favor of a more individualistic and humanistic form of evangelical Protestantism.⁴ A complete discussion of the development of early American religious music is more involved than the scope of this paper will allow. Its development here is nevertheless warranted since each of the source tunes employed in the Fourth Violin Sonata has roots in revivalism and the camp meeting, and, as Ives’ program note in the published score indicates, the composer attempted to represent the milieu of the borrowed tunes in this work. The advent of the gospel hymn is further enhanced since, within its own evolution, its development reflects a similar dichotomy to that which existed between Ives’ musical aesthetics and the American musical climate of his time.

The gradual development of early American sacred music was largely the result of English Protestantism, particularly through the influence of the texts of Isaac Watts

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² Ives, Memos, 132-33.
⁴ Ibid.
(1674-1748) and the hymnody of John (1703-91) and Charles (1707-88) Wesley. While Watts’ hymns appealed to older Puritan sects, the Wesleys’ compositions were preferred by more evangelical groups. Isaac Watts sought to write down to “the level of vulgar capacities” and provided hymns for “the meanest of Christians,” while the Wesleys, who were active in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, “brought religious hymnody still nearer to the masses by endowing it with the elements of personal emotion, spiritual spontaneity, and evangelism.” Evangelical Protestantism came to New England in Calvinist guise through the work of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), who ignited in the Connecticut Valley a series of religious revivals in the 1730’s and 40’s known as the First Great Awakening. Through the work of evangelist George Whitfield, Methodism (the American offshoot of the Wesleys) helped to spread the movement to the frontier regions of the southern colonies.

The transition from American colonial history, under British rule, to its sovereignty as a nation in 1776 fostered new creative opportunities that appeared first in sacred music written in New England. William Billings (1746-1800), who was considered the father of New England music and the best American-born composer of the eighteenth century, published in 1770 The New-England Psalm-Singer, which was the first collection of entirely American music and the first tune book published by an American composer. American patriot Paul Revere engraved its frontispiece, and the texts were taken primarily from Isaac Watts and Mather Byles. In the psalm collection,

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7 Gabriel, 32.
8 Crawford, 127.
Billings, whose notoriety grew through his patriotic music during the American Revolution, challenged Puritanical hypocrisy and championed independence of the composer saying, "...I don't think myself confin'd [sic] to any Rules for Composition...it is best for every Composer to be his own Carver."\(^{10}\) Dissemination of compositions by Billings and others was aided by the development of three-week "singing schools" which typically involved the teaching of clefs, syllables, notes, keys, and durations (semibreve, minim, crochet, quaver, semiquaver, demisemiquaver), with the melody in the tenor, harmony in the bass, and the counter-melody in the alto voice.\(^{11}\)

After winning its independence in 1781, the young nation began efforts to establish an American musical identity. At the end of the century, Andrew Law (1749-1821), a devout Calvinist and the earliest American psalmist, influenced the American strain of sacred music in three principle ways.\(^{12}\) First, he published compilations of music by American psalmists that had traditionally been reserved for European composers. Second, as his tastes began to change, he began to strongly prefer the European model as superior to the American. In *The Musical Primer*, Law states that "...A considerable part of American composition is in reality faulty" and holds the harsh manner of American singing responsible for the slow development of American composers.\(^{13}\)

The harshness of our singing must be corrected. Our voices must be filed. Every tone must be rendered smooth, persuasive and melting: and when a number of voices are joined together, they must all...be in the most perfect tune. Then, nor till then, shall we sing well, and be able to

\(^{10}\) McKay.
\(^{11}\) Jackson, 7-8.
\(^{12}\) Crawford, 127.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., 128.
distinguish between compositions of genuine merit, and those that are merely indifferent.\textsuperscript{14} Modeling on the European tradition, Law moved the melody from the tenor line to the treble and began to virtually exclude American compositions from his hymnals.\textsuperscript{15} Third, around 1800, Law developed and copyrighted a system of musical notation that resembled that of the early shape-note tradition.\textsuperscript{16} As a result of his efforts, Law’s influence helped to shift the developing indigenous American tradition to the less refined rural areas of the country, which ironically preserved its tunes through a manner of shape-note notation that resembled his own innovation. In the end, Mr. Law’s notational system did not survive because the pair of William Little and William Smith copyrighted a system of musical notation in 1798, shortly before Law’s, that was to be used in the first shape-note tunebook. \textit{The Easy Instructor}, which remained in print into the 1820s, included a triangle \textit{fa}, oval \textit{sol}, square \textit{la}, and diamond \textit{mi} while retaining the musical staff.\textsuperscript{17} The four-shape system developed by Little and Smith is similar to the that used in the \textit{Sacred Harp} hymnal, published by Benjamin Franklin White and Elisha J. King in 1844. Wildly successful in the southern United States, the \textit{Sacred Harp} reflected the older three-voice tradition with the melody in the tenor.

The shape-note tradition became popular in a surge of religious evangelism that occurred during the Second Great Awakening (1780s-1830s). The revival of the First Great Awakening (1730s to 40s) found its home in the camp meetings that began along the Kentucky-Tennessee border during this period. Camp meetings, a uniquely American

\textsuperscript{15}Crawford, 129.
\textsuperscript{16}Crawford, 127.
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., 130.
contribution to Protestant Christianity, began in 1800 in Logan County, Kentucky, before spreading to Ohio, the Carolinas, and even back toward New England. Evangelical preachers, especially those of the Methodist and Baptist denominations, traveled extensively in the rural frontier to meet gatherings of families from the surrounding areas who convened for extended periods (as long as a week) to reaffirm their Christian spiritualism and to maintain close ties with their community.

Writing in 1915, Louis Benson speaks of Methodists, the most influential of the American evangelical groups, when he writes:

The people were ignorant...the preachers were itinerant, the meetings as often as not in cabins or in the fields, and the singing largely without books, other than the one in the preacher's hand. The tunes [had to be] very familiar or very contagious, the words given out one or two lines at a time if not already known. Under these conditions the development of...a rude type of popular song, indifferent to anything in the way of authorized hymnody, seems to have been inevitable. The Singing Schools of the 1770s found a new home in this evangelistic movement and the need for music at the all-day revival services resulted in the advent of the camp-meeting hymn. Benson notes that, "...an illiterate and often vulgar Revival Hymnody" developed as "an incident of the choice of the revival method of church growth. It is of the very nature of revival enthusiasm to develop its own song."

Spontaneous song became a marked characteristic of the camp meetings. Rough and irregular couplets or stanzas were concocted out of scripture phrases and every-day speech, with liberal interspersing of hallelujahs and refrains. Such ejaculatory hymns were frequently started by an excited auditor during the preaching, and taken up by the throng, until the meeting dissolved into a "singing-ecstasy" culminating in a general hand-shaking. Sometimes they were given forth by a preacher, who had a sense of rhythm, under the excitement of his preaching and the agitation of his

18 Jackson, 215.
20 Ibid.
audience. Hymns were also composed more deliberately out of meeting, and taught to the people or lined out from the pulpit.

Many of these rude songs perished in the using, some were written down, passing from hand to hand. The camp meeting song books which began to appear in the first decade of the nineteenth century doubtless contain such of these as proved effective and popular....

[The Camp-Meeting Hymn]...is individualistic, and deals with the rescue of a sinner: sometimes in direct appeal to “sinners,” “back-sliders,” or “mourners;” sometimes by reciting the terms of salvation; sometimes as a narrative of personal experience for his warning or encouragement. The Camp-Meeting Hymn is not churchly, but the companionships of the rough journey to the camp reappear in songs of a common pilgrimage to Canaan, the meetings and partings on the ground typify the reunion of believers in Heaven, and the military suggestions of the encampment furnish many themes for songs of a militant host, brothers in arms in the battle of the Lord.... A longing for the heavenly rest and a vivid portrayal of the pains of hell were both characteristic; and a very special group of hymns was designed for the instruction and encouragement of the “seekers,” who at the close of the sermon came forward to the stand, or “altar,” and occupied the “anxious” bench.  

This manner of worship was disliked by Puritanical and Calvinist sects from New England, who sought to reform American religious music through advocating the sobriety of the European model. Preferences in music were mirrored in theology as New Englanders favored intellectual, moral, and spiritual worship through edification, while evangelists sought a more direct spiritual connection through praise. Edification was based on reason, explanation, control, and the improvement of the individual, while praise focused on the individual and his personal relationship with God. Richard Crawford states that New Engander’s practice of worship through edification was significantly important, since it was not centered on God, but rather on those who

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21 Benson, 292 ff.
22 Crawford, 135.
23 Ibid.
worshiped God.\textsuperscript{24} He states that, "...it is this fact...that beginning in the early nineteenth century divided Protestant music making into two distinct branches."\textsuperscript{25} The division manifested itself along geographical lines, impacting the development of American music. As those from the urban areas of the northeast produced numerous tunebooks based on European models, they also criticized the practice of shape-note hymnody due to perceptions of implied vulgarity and stupidity in its practitioners. The tradition held fast, nevertheless, in upstate New York, western Pennsylvania, the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, the Ohio River Valley, and regions farther west and south.\textsuperscript{26} As a result, hymn tunes, fuging tunes, and the like survived in the shape note collections.\textsuperscript{27}

In the urban northeast, Lowell Mason (1792-1872), a Bostonian hymn composer, reacted to the raucous nature of some of the frontier music by introducing reforms in church music and music education. Mason took the European tradition as his model when producing his correct, straight-forward style that appealed to middle-of-the-road musical tastes and became standard in American Protestant churches.\textsuperscript{28} He reached such immense popularity that the largest Protestant denomination includes more hymns by him in their hymnals than by any other composer.\textsuperscript{29} Mason's hymns feature four-part harmony with the melody in the highest voice (rather than the tenor), with chordal progressions and voice leading that follow European guidelines. In addition to his importance as a hymnodist, Mason's work in developing music education in the Boston public school system was revolutionary.

\textsuperscript{24} Crawford, 135.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 131.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Swafford, 96.
Mason, along with William Bradbury (1816-1868) and others, aligned himself with the philosophy of German immigrant Hans Gram (1754-1804), who advocated an end to the unrefined worship style of the frontier tradition. In an effort to overthrow America's homespun past in favor of a more modern approach, Gram was the first to propose the substitution of terms *quarter note* and *eighth note* in the place of crotchet and quaver.

By the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, early American musical traditions had waned in the more populated areas of the United States, but had survived in rural areas, particularly in those regions that clung to shape notes. Mason was Ives' favorite hymn composer. Ives was, nevertheless, one of the first to challenge the belief held by Mason and his school, that American standards must be raised through the imitation of European models.

After the early American musical traditions had been pushed out of New England, they found a home in the upland South. Folklorist George Pullen Jackson noticed a dramatic reduction between 1860 and 1870 of the regions in which these traditions preserved their singing conventions, fusing tunes, and modal hymns. Following the Civil War, the *Sacred Harp* tradition shrank from the rural regions of every state along the Eastern seaboard to a smaller area that included Kentucky and extended south to lower Alabama. Nevertheless, in the decades that followed, the tradition flourished in another form.

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30 Stevenson, 86.  
31 Ibid., 86.  
32 Ibid., 87.  
33 Swafford, 96.  
35 Stevenson, 87.
By the 1870s a more liberal version of the revival and camp meeting developed in the northeast. This movement was one of several reform movements that swept the country beginning in the 1870s in response to the economic disparities and social inequalities of the Gilded Age, a term coined by Mark Twain to reflect the excesses and injustices of the post-Civil War era. As America was transformed from a rural-agrarian federation to an industrial, urban nation-state, the Revival movement of the 1870s employed aspects of revivalism from earlier in the century “to psychically triumph over the ‘new’ and industrial present.” This conservative reaction by the urban worker and rural farmer to the rapid changes brought by the industrial capitalism of the Gilded Age resulted in the reintroduction of camp meetings throughout the northeast. Although more moderate than the revivalism of the early nineteenth century, it resembled its predecessor in the promotion of worship through praise.

Revivalism favored a conservative view of reform through the stress of two main principles: first was the importance of emotion in religion; second was the significance of the individual. Revivals begun earlier in the century in the South, excited crowds of believers into “orgies of religiosity [with] folks singing their hearts out and sometimes bawling and writhing on the ground from the sweet lash of the spirit.” Camp meetings and revivals begun in the North shared the emotional excitement of their southern counterparts, but did not generally approach their extremity. The second principle of revivalism, the significance of the individual, implies a more direct relationship with the Almighty while responding to the dehumanization of society brought by the industrial

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36 Tibbetts, 8.
37 Perry, 72.
38 Ibid., 72.
39 Swafford, 96.
developments of the nineteenth century. In essence, the revival fostered the triumph of intuition over rationality and innocence over experience.\textsuperscript{40} Ives was exposed to this tradition at an early age and he reflects both its emotional dynamism and humanism in many of his compositions, including the Fourth Violin Sonata.

The enthusiasm in the 1870s for the gospel hymn developed through the camp meeting and the revival use of the folk hymn. Dwight L. Moody, whose most significant activity occurred from 1873-1883, was widely known as a revival preacher in the United States and England. He believed that the regeneration of individuals could affect a change in society, and that all political, social, and economic reform could, and should, be associated with revivals.\textsuperscript{41} Although Moody was unmusical himself, he recognized the tremendous connection of music to religious experience. Moody's moderate form of evangelism gained momentum in large cities through its emphasis of folk hymns, the songs designed for the education of children in Sunday Schools, and through the rapid growth of the Young Men's Christian Association.\textsuperscript{42} Each of these encouraged hearty singing with the message of religious experience and growth. Philip P. Bliss, a widely known and loved musician, often sang for the meetings and later Ira D. Sankey left his YMCA work to become the song leader and soloist for Moody.

Sankey and Bliss published a joint collection called \textit{Gospel Hymns and Sacred Songs} in 1875, followed by 5 more editions, which included their own works as well as the hymns of Lowell Mason, William Bradbury, William Doane, and many others.\textsuperscript{43} The

\begin{center}
\textsuperscript{40} Perry, 72.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 74.
\textsuperscript{42} Crawford, 444-445.
\end{center}
songs in these collections appealed to masses of people and were effective in evangelistic
services where they provided simple expressions of Christian experience and salvation
with emotional, repetitive phrases. The words were quickly learned and easily
remembered, and the tunes were simple melodies, usually with a refrain. They were
easily sung with the melody in the top voice supported by simple harmony that did not
change very often. Contributors in this movement besides Bliss and Sankey included
Robert Lowry, William Doane, William Bradbury, and others. In 1895 Ira Sankey
published with James McGranahan and George Stebbins (Philip Bliss had died in 1876)
what they considered to be a complete collection of gospel hymns from the preceding
decades. The influence of revivalism and its use of the gospel hymn can be seen in the
fact that of the eleven hymn tunes quoted in the four violin sonatas (excluding nine
borrowed secular tunes), ten are included in Sankey’s collection of gospel hymns with the
singular exception of a hymn composed by Sankey himself. Furthermore, John
Kirkpatrick lists in his “Index of Tunes” over fifty different hymns quoted by Ives, with
most taken from the tradition of Moody, Bliss, and Sankey.

The use of religious themes in Charles Ives’ music reveals an integration of his
sophisticated musical ideals with the manner and emotion of revivalism. The ten Psalm
settings he wrote between 1895 and 1900 include some of his most innovative
experimentation. Psalms 25, 54, 67, 90, 100, 135, and 150 include an array of
compositional techniques that include the use of a twelve-tone row, tone clusters,
polymeter, and the juxtaposition of augmented chords against a whole-tone scale.

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44 Ira D. Sankey, James McGranahan, George C. Stebbins, Philip P. Bliss.
45 Perry, 80.
46 Ibid., 73.
47 Perry, 79.
While Ives does not display a similar treatment of musical borrowing in these works as
he did in his overt use in other compositions, his convictions and intentions are not as
different as they might appear to be. Perry states that in spite of the jarring vocabulary
Ives may have used in these Psalms, they demonstrate a sincere and traditional religious
feeling.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{48} Perry, 80.
IV. The Progressive Era and the Topical Music and Writings of Charles Ives

Recent scholarship has revealed that Ives' political activism was an undercurrent in much of his thought, and unlike other facets of his life, it did not diminish with age, greater isolation, and creative decline. As Michael Broyles states:

One point about Ives is clear: his political views cannot be separated from other aspects of his life. His prose writings, his business career, and his music must be examined as a unit....His music...is a commentary on life, the past, the social order, and world about him as observed from his highly idiosyncratic perspective.²

Ives scholars, including J. Peter Burkholder and Jan Swafford, have related the political activity of Charles Ives to the reform initiatives of the Progressive era. More recently, scholars Michael Broyles and Judith Tick have suggested that Ives' interests in concurrent developments in American politics might more accurately reveal his motivations. The latest research on Ives' political constitution is fascinating and will likely be a leading topic in Ives study for several years. In terms of this paper, however, it is less important to discuss at length the various subtleties of these differences than it is to offer a sketch of the general movement of reform during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as it pertains to Ives. Since the Progressive movement was the dominant thrust during his years of innovation, synthesis, and maturity, an overview of its influence will be discussed.

The Progressive movement, which lasted from roughly 1900-1920, addressed politically many of the religious concerns of the Social Gospel (or Social Christianity) movement, which became a recognized movement in the 1870s. Rosalie Sandra Perry summarizes this period as follows:

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² Broyles, 119.
In a sense, the progressive movement and the social gospel were really one movement in which the secular and the sacred were mixed. The general characteristics of Social Christianity involved, first, a dominant ethical strain and emphasis placed on the realization of the Kingdom ideal in the present world; second, a realistic appraisal of religion's task; third, a new and realistic view of sin in terms of the implications of a solidaristic society whose members were responsible for its corporate sins. The fourth and most important belief was in progress. A missionary zeal to accomplish this progress was a fifth characteristic that gave a note of crisis and a sense of urgency to Social Christianity. The whole movement, in short, attempted the formation of the law of love in terms equal to the demands of modern society.3

Using the same ardor applied to the abolition of slavery in the 1850s, the Social Gospel movement focused attention on reform in the new era of industrial civilization. Its principles of reform profoundly influenced American thought to the degree that they became a national religious and social goal.4 The first publication of the Social Gospel movement was a book from 1876, called Being a Christian, by Washington Gladden (1836-1918). Gladden, whose theories were developed through his discipleship of Horace Bushnell, believed that ethical behavior originated from the principle that a man should love his neighbor as himself.5 Bushnell challenged Calvinist theology through his promotion of a more direct relationship with Christ, who, according to the minister, was a forgiving judge and a divine figure of love and compassion.6 The Social Gospel, and its derivative the Progressive movement, combined Darwinian theory with Bushnell’s humanitarian ideals, influencing the religious left to shift their attention from saving the individual in society (the objective of revivalism in the 1870s) to reforming society at

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4 Ibid., 78.
5 Gabriel, 311.
6 Ibid., 172.
large. Like Gladden, Joseph Twichell was a disciple of Horace Bushnell. Through his relationship with the Twichell family, Ives was strongly influenced by the Social Gospel movement. Ives was exposed in his formative years to both the liberal Social Gospel movement and the conservative revival movement of the 1870’s and 1880’s. While his music reflects the revival sermons in rhythm, programmatic content, and desired audience response, Rosalie Sandra Perry states that Ives “...thoroughly believed in the dogma of the social gospel—the ‘myth’ of progress.”

Near the turn of the twentieth century, the Social Gospel movement focused attention on the need for political reform. In the 1890s, laissez-faire policies and social Darwinism of the Gilded Age came under attack during the Populist, and later, the Progressive movements. An early catalyst for change was the 1890 photographic journal of police reporter Jacob Riis. In How the Other Half Lives, Riis depicted the horrible conditions of slum life helping to spark a movement toward greater social responsibility.

The Progressive era, which occurred from roughly 1900-1920, spans Ives’ mature period in which his philosophies of art, politics, and business coalesced. The Progressive movement began with Theodore Roosevelt’s 1901-09 Republican Presidency in which he attempted to depart from nineteenth century laissez-faire policies and to establish more a more democratic government by redressing the imbalances of power that large-scale industrialism had produced. His proposals included regulation of transportation and industry, tax reform, labor laws, and social welfare legislation. Following his second

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7 Perry, 72.
8 Ibid., 73.
term, Roosevelt handpicked in 1908 William Howard Taft for the 1909 Republican presidential bid to continue his progressive agenda. When Taft proved more allied to the Republican Old Guard than to Roosevelt’s more liberal wing of the party, the former president announced in 1912 his candidacy for Republican presidential nomination.

After his defeat to Taft for the nomination, Roosevelt and his supporters formed a new party called the Progressive, or Bull Moose, party with Roosevelt as their nominee. The Progressive platform advocated federal legislation establishing minimum standards of industrial safety and health; minimum wages for women; the eight-hour day in many industries; medical, old-age, and unemployment insurance; stronger regulation of interstate business; a tariff commission; public ownership of natural resources; graduated income and inheritance taxes; improved educational services for immigrants’ and government supervision of securities markets. It endorsed collective bargaining, the establishment of industrial research laboratories, government-business cooperation to extend foreign commerce, the creation of a department of labor, and the prohibition of child labor. Protesting what it called “the unholy alliance between corrupt business and corrupt politics,” the platform included measures for initiative, referendum, and reform.\(^{10}\) This issue, called initiative and referendum (or I & R), was particularly important to Charles Ives. In the end, the Progressive movement succeeded mostly in its influence on reform. It did not gain the national support needed to win at the polls, but by splitting the Republican party, it made possible Woodrow Wilson’s Democratic victory in the 1912 election.

The Progressive movement essentially came to a halt with the outbreak of World War I, but not before much of its agenda had become law. Legislation was passed on

women’s suffrage, urban reform, ballot referendum and recall, tax reform, direct election of senators, increased regulation of big-time capitalists and their business trusts, and the beginning of a welfare state.\textsuperscript{11} The departure by the Progressive faction removed liberal influence from the Republican Party just when liberals were on the verge of controlling it, which in turn helped to move the Democrats in a progressive direction.\textsuperscript{12} The political ramifications of this movement are still evident in the present conservative and liberal stances on the modern Republican and Democratic parties, respectively.

Ives’ first strongly political statements occurred around 1912 when he began to write songs in response to election campaigns, sent letters to prominent politicians and newspapers, and wrote his treatises on business and political reform.\textsuperscript{13} Before 1912, his only overtly political statement in music was the campaign song of 1896 supporting McKinley. As the reforms of the Progressive era gained momentum, however, Ives increasingly integrated his socio-political philosophies with music, resulting in a significant shift towards political activism. Early examples include the \textit{Second String Quartet}, the chamber orchestra piece ‘\textit{Gyp the Blood’ or Hearst!? Which is Worst?!}, and the song \textit{Vote for Names}.

In a sketch for the \textit{Second String Quartet} Ives wrote, “S.Q. for 4 men-who converse, discuss, argue (in re ‘Politick’), fight, shake hands, shut up-then walk up the mountainside to view the firmament.”\textsuperscript{14} In the movement entitled “Arguments” Ives depicts the process of debate, including the portrayal of political stonewalling by a

\textsuperscript{11} Swafford, 146.
\textsuperscript{12} Dictionary of American History, revised edition, s.v., “Progressive Era.”
\textsuperscript{13} Broyles, 121.
rhythmic ostinato in the second violin, which proceeds obliviously to the other voices.¹⁵

In the margin Ives explains, “saying the same thing over & over & louder & louder—
ain’t arguing.”¹⁶ In the chamber orchestra piece ‘Gyp the Blood,’ Ives criticizes the
sensational coverage by William Randolph Hearst’s tabloids, the New York Morning and
Evening Journals, of the scandalous assassination of Herman Rosenthal by Gyp the
Blood (Harry Rosenthal) and the million-dollar payoffs to the police that were uncovered.

Ives generally felt that the repetition of slogans and hooks used in the “yellow
newspapers,” a term coined at the time, were subversive to the political process.¹⁷

Gyp, a prominent criminal, (legally) gets the gallows—Hearst, another
prominent criminal, (not legally) gets the money. Hearst’s newspapers
make Gyps. He sells sensational bunk to the soft-eared [and] soft-headed,
and headlines and pictures that excite interest in criminal life among the
weak-brained and defectives. An old-fashioned western horse thief is a
respectable man compared to Hearst. When the American people put
Hearst with the horse thief, “on the rope,” American history will have
another landmark to go with Bunker Hill, and perhaps a new song to go
with The Battle Cry of Freedom.¹⁸

As the trial of Gyp the Blood developed, the campaign season before the
presidential election of 1912 was under way. Although Ives was vehemently supportive
of many of the reforms sought by the Progressive Party, he reveals in the song fragment
Vote for Names, for which he also wrote the text, his skepticism of the ability and
commitment of the candidates in the Presidential election of 1912. Although brief, Vote
for Names is a salient example of the union of his thoughts in prose and music. On a
sketch Kirkpatrick dates Election Day (November 5, 1912), Ives writes above three
identical chords, “this, this or this?? A Sad chord—a hopeless chord—a chord of

¹⁵ Judith Tick, “Charles Ives and the politics of direct democracy,” in Ives Studies, ed. Philip Lambert
(Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 149.
¹⁶ John Kirkpatrick, 60, quoted in Tick, 149.
¹⁷ Tick, 148-49.
¹⁸ Ives, Memos, 60.
futility—Same 3." The sad chord represented Teddy Roosevelt, the hopeless chord
President Taft, and the Chord of futility, Woodrow Wilson. The text for the song and
Ives’ explanation are as follows:

\[
\text{Vote for names! Names! Names!}
\]
\[
\text{All nice men!!}
\]
\[
\text{Three nice men: Teddy, Woodrow & Bill}
\]
\[
\text{After trying hard to think what's the best way to vote I say: Just walk}
\]
\[
\text{right in and grab a ballot with the eyes shut and walk right out again}
\]

The ambiguities, personal animosities, eloquent platitudes, mis-statements
due to party politics and election campaign hysterics would be obviated to
some extent….It is discouraging for thinking persons and the majority (the
people) are thinking nowadays—to go to the polls and find nothing on the
ballots but a mass of names and party emblems staring dumbly up at
them.”

Other works from this period include several about the first World War, such as

He is There!, In Flanders Field, and Tom Sails Away. The first is a moving justification
of the war against tyranny, and the latter deal with the personal sacrifice and tragedy of
the conflict. \(^{21}\) By 1920, Ives’s musical composition had nearly ceased. Nevertheless,
incensed by the election of Harding and the implied repudiation of the League of Nations,
Ives wrote the song An Election, or Nov. 2, 1920. In this work Ives expresses his political
frustration through textual and musical quotations that include Walt Whitman’s O
Captian! My Captain!, Ives’ own setting of Lincoln, the Great Commoner, and the Star
Spangled Banner. \(^{22}\)

One of the early scandals brought about by the regulatory reforms of the
Progressive Movement very nearly caused Charles Ives grave difficulty, and his narrow

\(^{19}\) Swafford, 151.
\(^{20}\) Charles Ives, Essays Before A Sonata and Other Writings, ed. Howard Boatwright (New York: W.W.
\(^{21}\) Broyles, 120.
\(^{22}\) J. Peter Burkholder, All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing (New Haven
and London: Yale University Press), 364.
escape helped to shape his political and business activities during the following years. After disillusionment with attempts to pursue music professionally, and following his father’s advice, Ives entered the insurance business in 1898 as an actuarial for the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, before being reappointed to the Raymond agency in 1899. In 1905, a New York state committee, headed by Charles Evans Hughes, discovered serious mismanagement in the three largest insurance companies—Equitable, New York, and Mutual Life—whose officers had used company funds to purchase political favors and deal illicitly with Wall Street financial houses.23 The Armstrong Committee gave extraordinary scrutiny to Richard A. McCurdy, President of Mutual, who had established his son Robert McCurdy as manager of the Raymond agency. Mutual suspiciously pumped to the Raymond Agency large policies and paid high commissions to its agents.24 The Raymond Agency was found to be one of the worst offenders, and the committee specifically investigated the compensation of agents and agencies. Ives not only worked for the Raymond Agency but was also assigned to the section that dealt with agents.25 Further discomfort for Ives came in the testimony before the committee of two of Ives’ cousins, Granville H. White (who had secured for Ives an appointment with Mutual)26 and Robert Grannis, who were questioned about nepotism in the agency. Transcripts of the investigation were published daily in the New York Times.

24 Broyles, 136.
Thankfully for Ives, his junior status in the company did not put him directly in the line of fire of the commission.  

Michael Broyles cites the Armstrong investigation as one of the most significant formative events in Ives’ adult life. Ives had suffered two collapses by this point—one just before the Armstrong Committee investigation in 1905 and one several months after its conclusion in 1906. The Ives legend typically holds that while recuperating from his second collapse, and with the eminent termination of the Raymond agency, Julian Myrick visited Ives and they decided to start their own company. Ives and Co. began operating on January 1, 1906 with Myrick as his assistant through affiliation with Washington Life, which was in turn bought by Pittsburgh Life and Trust in 1908, leaving them once again out of work. Mutual then decided to take them back, and they embarked on their meteoric rise to the top of the insurance business. Broyles offers an alternative to this sequence of events which, given circumstantial evidence, seems quite plausible. Washington Life, which sponsored Ives and Myrick in 1907, was originally a subsidiary of Mutual. The Armstrong Committee regulated the amount of insurance that the “big three” could carry, and according to Broyles, Washington, whose relationship to Mutual in 1906 is likely but unclear since all records have disappeared, became a convenient way for Mutual to clean their books. Washington Mutual took Ives back in 1908, although he had never really left, and since Myrick in the meantime had proven his worth, the two were able to join forces again in their new company, “Ives and Myrick.”

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27 Broyles, 137.  
28 Ibid., 135.  
29 Feder, 180, cited in Broyles, 139.  
30 Charron Fullerton, interview by Stuart Feder, quoted in Broyles, 140.  
31 Broyles, 140-41.
The insurance scandal had an unsettling effect on Ives. His future uncertain and his chosen profession in turmoil, he had to come to philosophical and financial terms with the world of insurance. In his own defense, Richard A. McCurdy, President of Mutual Life, inadvertently offered Ives an answer to his moral dilemma. Stating the philosophical ideal, which was met with laughter by the committee, McCurdy stated:

> Every person ought to understand when he takes a policy of life insurance that he is not doing it solely for his own benefit, but he is participating in a great movement for the benefit of humanity at large and for every other person who comes in and takes a policy in that company, and in that way joins the great brotherhood.

McCurdy continued that Mutual was founded as a “great beneficent missionary institution,” and that “profits were not thought of, were not dreamed of.” In evangelical terms he claimed that his mission was “to extend the benefits of life insurance as far as possible within the limits of safety and as far as practicable into every town and hamlet of this country.” For the young and impressionable Charles Ives, whose interests until this point had been sports, social activities, and music, this banter was taken seriously. As Broyles states, McCurdy’s testimony is “…an almost exact statement of the beliefs that would guide Ives’ work in the insurance industry and by extension become part of his overall philosophy.”

The near proximity of the Armstrong scandal, the influence of the developing relationship with Harmony Twichell, and the example of his father’s failing attempts at business, helped Ives to develop a philosophy of life that later translated into political beliefs. In his endeavors in business these can be seen in The Amount to Carry—

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32 Broyles, 141.
34 Ibid.
35 Broyles, 142.
Measuring the Prospect, a revolutionary document from 1920 that provided an invaluable resource for agents in the insurance industry. Based on an earlier version from 1910 that was purely technical, the 1920 edition represents the assimilation of the deeper questions he pondered at the time. In the example below, Ives mimics McCurdy’s testimony in tone, but differs in his earnest appeal for the protection of the common man that he believed could be provided by insurance.

The great majority of men today, in this country at least, know, perhaps only subconsciously, that a life insurance policy is one of the definite ways of society for toughening its moral muscles, for equalizing its misfortunes, and hence—the old problem—of supplying a fundamental instinctive want. Because this is now appreciated, no matter in what degree, the normal mind today knows that to carry life insurance is a duty—thought it may consciously think of it purely as a duty to the family, and only that. Thanks to the pioneer agents of the last two or three generations, who pounded out the “gospel,” perhaps only crudely, and with methods more emotional and personal than we have to use today—thanks to these persistent distributors of premises, the business man, the professional man, the wage earner of 1920, admits this duty. And what interests him now is to know how he can do his duty as it ought to be done.36

Ives’ belief in the insurance business was paralleled in his romanticized idealization of the New England town meetings and camp meetings, which became symbolic subjects, not only for his musical composition and business activities, but also for his political writings. His vision of the town and camp meeting encompassed his passionate vision of direct democracy, an initiative of the Progressive movement and the principle issue of Ives’ essay, “The Majority,”37 the significance of which will be discussed below.

Although his particular idea was more radical, Ives shared with the Progressive Party an interest in direct democracy—“the empowerment of voters to bypass their

36 Ives, “The Amount To Carry,” in Essays, 239.
elected representatives in making, approving, or revoking laws, recalling officials, electing senators, or nominating political party candidates."^{38} Judith Tick cites some 875 published sources between the years 1910-1914 that relate to the issue of Initiative and Referendum,^{39} the term applied to the issue of direct democracy, and notes that friends and relatives of Ives later recalled how "he sincerely felt that the basic decisions of great moment in our political lives should be made by the people rather than the politicians."^{40}

One of the principle beliefs of the Direct Democracy movement was that war could be averted if the decision to fight were subject to the process of Initiative and Referendum.

In the case of Ives, and indeed many Progressive supporters of the I&R movement, the sinking of the _Lusitania_ in 1915 was an important catalyst in shifting the movement from pacifism towards support of Wilson’s call for war in 1917.^{41} Horrified by the assault, Ives wrote the orchestral piece _From Hanover Square North, at the End of a Tragic Day, the Voice of the People Again Arose_. The piece was Ives’ attempt to capture the mood on the Elevated platform as crowds of New Yorkers gathered, singing the gospel hymn _In the Sweet Bye and By_. Swafford describes Wilson’s call to engage Germany as “a Progressive crusade on a global scale” in which the President proclaimed to Congress that “the world must be made safe for democracy.”^{42} Ives had been strongly opposed to entering the war, but at this point he shifted his support to Wilson, which is reflected in his essay, “Stand By the President and the People.”^{43} In the essay he calls for a “war for democracy,” with the proviso that the decision to do so should not be made by

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^{38} Tick, 134.


^{41} Broyles, 121.

^{42} Swafford, 277.

^{43} Ives, “Stand by the President and the People,” in _Essays_, 134-38.
those of the wealthy "property" class. Citing seven examples in which wealth and political power had created a conflict of interest, Ives states "The time has almost come when no man who has personal property to the amount of, say, $100,000, should have any active part in a government by the people."44

At this time, Ives desperately sought to help the war effort in some way. He became heavily involved in the Red Cross and Liberty Loan Drives. After a failed attempt to enlist as an ambulance driver, he devised another plan. As a member of the Liberty Bond Committee, he campaigned for a $50 bond to involve working people in the war. The idea was similar to his promotion of small insurance policies, since both were intended to broaden the participation in and benefits of the democratic process.45 On October 1, 1918, he fought aggressively to establish the bond at a public hearing before the Liberty Bond Committee. Chairman Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had previously rejected the idea, was ill that day and sent a representative. After a shouting match, Ives won the argument and "Baby Bonds" were established.46 Late that night, still agitated over the debate, Ives suffered a heart attack from which he never fully recovered.

After the war, Ives resumed his efforts supporting initiative and referendum, and after the ratification of the constitutional amendment extending suffrage to women in 1920, he proposed an amendment to establish national direct democracy.47 He printed flyers that were distributed at the Republican National Convention and planned to do so at the Democratic convention. Peppered with Emersonian terminology and symbolism, Ives wrote:

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44 Ives, "Stand by the President and the People," in Essays, 137.
45 Swafford, 284.
46 Ibid., 284.
47 Tick, 145.
[The masses] will need no intermediary. The many are autogenerating a collective-personal social consciousness. Their governments, by natural processes, are passing from the indirect to the direct; it doesn’t take a biologist to observe this tendency... And so the day of leaders, as such, is gradually closing—the people are beginning to lead themselves—the public store is being opened; the Common Heart, the Over-soul and the Universal Mind are coming into their own.48

He also continued his fight, which he had begun in 1914, for an international governmental organization that Ives called, in his essay that bears its name, the “People’s World Nation (or Union).” The 1920 election of Harding shattered his hopes with the implied end of the subsequent proposal for the League of Nations. In poor health, Ives retreated into anger, cynicism, and isolation.49

Between 1919-20, Ives wrote “The Majority,” his largest single essay, in which he clearly delineates his concerns with the American democratic system. Both the song and the essay entitled Majority were revised between 1919-1920 from the original version of the 1910s called “The Masses.” The ideas presented in the essay date back to before 1916 at the latest, and they had evidently been on his mind for some time.50 The principle points in the essay were: (1) the notion of direct democracy, by referendum; and (2) a limitation of property or wealth.51 The selected examples demonstrate Ives’ principle objectives as well as his faith in the majority:

Who are going to run things in this country—in this world, for that matter? A few millionaires, a few anarchists, a few capitalists, a few party-leaders, a few labor-leaders, a few political-leaders, a few “hystericals,” a few conservatives, a few agitators, a few cranks, a few this, a few that, or YOU!—the Majority—the People?52

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48 Ives, Essays, 143; 160.
49 Broyles, 153.
50 Ibid., 121.
51 Ibid.
52 Ives, Essays, 142.
The open mind of the Majority (the People) has been to a great extent over-supervised by the timidity of the closed mind of the Minority (the Non-People); for the Minority is selfish and the Majority is generous.\textsuperscript{53}

But until the three last men of this world die, the divinely inspired Majority influence will guide mankind, we believe, more and more completely, and, with fewer and fewer lapses, lead it to eventual perfection. It will always be the compelling force, the social over-soul, the moral solution of every problem of the man-relation, whether measured in terms of the community, of the country, or of the world.\textsuperscript{54}

As Jan Swafford states, Ives "came of age when the country saw itself as undergoing a second youth, when in the lights of bright inventions and good intentions problems old and new were being solved and every problem seemed solvable."\textsuperscript{55} If Ives has defied controlling labels of particular currents during the Progressive era, it is partly because his beliefs and convictions transcend party categories.\textsuperscript{56} Whether or not he can be associated with a particular movement or initiative, his numerous writings, songs, and proposals are examples of how integrated were his thoughts in business, politics, and music. It was to become his belief that business, namely that insurance, had the obligation and the means to protect the common man and his family. In politics, he strove to achieve a perfect democratic world society with equal representation. Through his music, Ives was empowered to express his emotions and experiences in a manner that transcended linguistic considerations.\textsuperscript{57} Paraphrasing Ives himself, Swaffard states that "In...[Ives']...life and art, the fabric of existence wove itself whole."\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{53} Ives, \textit{Essays}, 143.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 150.
\textsuperscript{55} Swafford 147.
\textsuperscript{56} Tick, 141.
\textsuperscript{57} Broyles, 147.
\textsuperscript{58} Ives, \textit{Memos}, 97, paraphrased in Swafford, 212.
V. In Search of a National Style: Charles Ives and the Rejection of an American Musical Prototype

By the time Charles Ives entered Yale in 1894, a debate in literary circles over national cultural identity had been going for more than fifty years.\(^1\) In *The American Scholar*, Ralph Waldo Emerson declared that Americans must divorce themselves from dependence on European cultural models and “walk on our own feet [and] speak our own minds.”\(^2\) In *November Boughs* (1885), Walt Whitman upheld speech as the universal “absorber and combiner.” The English language, through the incorporation of slang, assimilated contributions from all cultures and ethnic groups through renewing the language. Whitman felt that vernacular speech is a kind of process that is “...not made by dictionary makers...” but “...by masses, people nearest the concrete, having most to do with actual land and sea...”\(^3\)

The development of an American musical identity required, and lacked, a representative like Whitman or Emerson to champion and cultivate its natural resources to a viable artistic level. Had there been a figure of similar stature promoting and cultivating indigenous American music, Charles Ives might have received a more sympathetic reception. As it happened, Ives’ acceptance by the academy was delayed due to staunch attitudes of New England conservatories upholding the supremacy of European music, while disparaging the artistic merit of American vernacular, popular, and religious music.

Before the revival movement of the 1870s occurred, American sacred music had diverged geographically and stylistically into the traditions of the urban northeast, which

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\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Tibbetts, 8.
favored a European model, and the rural vernacular music of the Southern *Sacred Harp* tradition. For a time, however, little distinction was made in secular music between American popular and Old-World classical repertoire.⁴ During the parlor days of Stephen Foster (1826-1864), operatic arias were sung alongside Scots-Irish tunes and African American “plantation songs.”⁵ Later in the century, as perceptions changed, Charles Hamm observes that “…classical music became more and more associated with the cultural and economic elite,” who restricted their support for the arts to European traditions.⁶ The New England conservatories’ exclusive promotion of music from western Europe is revealed in such sources as *Dwight’s Journal of Music*. John Sullivan Dwight described the “musical babble” of eclecticism as appealing only to “a commonplace majority” rather than a “higher plane of spiritual aesthetic gratification.”⁷

[Amer] [Amer-] [danger] [demon] [strations], as a duck takes to water. Stunned with all its glory, with breast full of patriotism, and ears full of “Yankee Doodle” and “Hail Columbia,” what can we have to say, or what report of music as Art? And verily it is a bad time with us, in respect of music…. The Psalmody of the country choir and the dancing master’s fiddle, the waltzes and variations of the music shop…and “Jim Crow” [i.e., Stephen Foster]…are not apt to visit the popular mind with deep emotions of true music. Handel should be heard more, and Haydn, and Mozart, and Beethoven…. [Liberty will] bring its own ruin unless there shall be found some gentler, harmonizing culture,…a sweet sense of reverence for something far above us, beautiful and pure…. We need this beautiful corrective to our crudities.⁸

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⁵ Tibbetts, 8.
⁷ Tibbetts, 9.
⁸ Quoted in Swafford, 99.
Dwight’s remarks symbolized the prevalent attitude in classical music circles towards American vernacular music. Ives, on the other hand, refused to take sides between American vernacular and European genres and ideals:9

Once a nice young man (his musical sense having been limited by three years’ intensive study at the Boston Conservatory) said to Father, “How can you stand it to hear old John Bell (the best stone-mason in town) sing?” (as he used to at Camp Meetings) Father said, “He is a supreme musician.” The young man (nice and educated) was horrified—“Why, he sings off the key, the wrong notes and everything—and that horrible, raucous voice—and he bellows out and hits notes no one else does—it’s awful!” Father said, “Watch him closely and reverently, look into his face and hear the music of the ages. Don’t pay too much attention to the sounds—for if you do, you may miss the music. You won’t get a wild, heroic ride to heaven on pretty little sounds.”

Ives was not alone in his disappointment in the “do-it-proper boys” of the New England conservatories. Henry E. Krehbiel rebuked the class stratification implied by Dwight’s journal in 1892:

The very notion that one body of music is superior to all others and can be understood and “appreciated” only by a small, privileged segment of the population is in itself elitist.... Less remarked was the fact that this cultural divide corresponded to ethnic and national divisions as well: most of the elite were of Anglo-Saxon descent, most “others” were Irish, Italian, black, German, Scandinavian, and soon Central European and southern Mediterranean.11

Many European masters had visited the United States by this time. Anton Rubinstein arrived for a twenty-month tour in 1872, Offenbach in 1876, Delius in 1884, and Tchaikovsky in 1891 for the opening of Carnegie Hall. Offenbach, writing in 1877, lamented the lack of state and federal support of the arts:

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9 Swafford, 99.
10 Ives, Memoirs, 132.
You need especially a conservatory where you can develop excellent students if you get the right faculty; that is to say, by calling and retaining in your country artists of merit from Europe...[In this way in just twenty years American culture can stand on its own feet.] Twenty years for your students to become masters, twenty years for you to become no longer mere tributaries of European art....

As if in response, Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber persuaded Gilded Age barons Andrew Carnegie, William K. Vanderbilt, Joseph W. Drexel, and August Belmont to support the founding in New York of the National Conservatory of Music of America in 1885. Mrs. Thurber, whose philanthropy included the first Wagner festival in New York in 1884, the founding of the American Opera Company in 1885, and the sponsorship of the New York debut of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1888-89, assembled an impressive faculty and student body which offered a progressive curriculum modeled after the system she had observed at the Paris Conservatoire. The National Conservatory gained a reputation for being "specially successful in helping students of foreign birth and certain special classes, like the blind and those of Negro blood." Thurber, who poured much of her fortune into the institution, struggled for many years to secure government funding of a national conservatory system, which included satellite institutions in every metropolitan area. In her 1888 appeal to the Senate and House of Representatives, Thurber echoed Offenbach's observation:

America has, so far, done nothing in a National way either to promote the musical education of its people or to develop any musical genius they possess, and that in this, she stands alone among the civilized nations of the world....

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13 Emanuel Rubin, "Dvořák at the National Conservatory," in Tibbetts, 54-55.
14 Ibid., 56.
16 Rubin, 62.
Although approved by Congress and signed into law by President Harrison in 1891, her dreams of a federally supported conservatory were never realized. After many years of fiscal instability, the stock market crash of 1929 proved to be fatal. She continued the fight until the end of her life, and it was not until 1952 that the state of New York declared the conservatory officially defunct for failure to file mandatory operational reports.\(^{17}\) In spite of its unfortunate demise, the conservatory had a major impact on American music. Its principle achievements were setting the standard for post-secondary music education in the United States; establishing what remains the curricular philosophy of American music schools; enabling minorities and women the opportunity for advanced education and professional engagements; and bringing Dvořák to America.\(^{18}\)

In 1891, Mrs. Thurber persuaded Antonín Dvořák to become the Director of the National Conservatory. He began the post in the fall of 1892 and remained the conservatory’s head for almost three years. Twenty years later she reflected, “In looking back over my thirty-five years as president of the National Conservatory of America, there is nothing of which I am so proud as having been able to bring Dr. Dvořák to America.”\(^{19}\) Mrs. Thurber brought Dvořák to the United States to forge an American school of music as he and his countrymen had done in Bohemia.\(^{20}\) His assignment was made clear to him:

The Americans expect great things of me. I am to show them the way into the Promised Land, the realm of a new, independent art, in short a national style of music!… If the small Czech nation can have such musicians, they

\(^{17}\) *The New York Times*, 18 September 1918 (sec. 6), p. 4, col. 1, quoted in Rubin, 75.

\(^{18}\) Rubin, 75.


\(^{20}\) Swafford, 109.
say, why could not they, too, when their country and people are so immense.\textsuperscript{21}

While in America, Dvořák was exposed to the music of Native American traditions and developed a particular interest in the African-American tradition. His interest in the latter was cultivated in part through his friendship with a gifted singer and student at the conservatory named Harry T. Burleigh, who often appeared at the Dvořák household where he sang spirituals for the composer.\textsuperscript{22} The second and third measures of one of these, Dvořák’s favorite, \textit{Go Down, Moses}, was employed in the second theme of the first movement of the \textit{New World Symphony}.\textsuperscript{23} Furthermore, early Burleigh biographer H. C. Colles asserts that Dvorak’s re-orchestration of the theme of the Largo in the symphony, from clarinet and flutes to the English horn, was due to its closer resemblance to Burleigh’s voice.\textsuperscript{24}

Dvořák’s compositions from the American period, which include the \textit{“American Quartet,”} Op. 106, the \textit{String Quintet}, Op. 97, the \textit{Violin Sonatina}, Op. 100, the \textit{Biblical Songs}, \textit{Symphony No. 9 “From the New World,”} and the \textit{Cello Concerto}, feature the use of plagal cadences, drone accompaniments, rhythmic ostinatos, and strongly syncopated rhythms (with the Scotch snap especially preferred).\textsuperscript{25} While these devices have some precedents in works written before arriving in America, Dvořák employed pentatonicism, flattened leading tones, and ‘primitive’ thematic material—features common to African-American (and Anglo-American) spirituals—in the American years more than in any

\textsuperscript{21} Dvořák letter to Dr. Emil Kozanek, 12 October 1892; in Otakar Sourek, ed., \textit{Antonín Dvořák: Letters and Reminiscences}, 152, quoted in Graham Melville-Mason, “From London to New York: Dvořák’s Introduction to America,” Tibbetts, 34.

\textsuperscript{22} Jean E. Snyder, “A Great and Noble School of Music: Dvorak, Harry T. Burleigh, and the African American Spiritual,” in Tibbetts, 130.

\textsuperscript{23} Snyder, 131.

\textsuperscript{24} John Clapham, \textit{Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1966), 90, quoted in Snyder , Tibbetts, 132.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
other period. Burleigh’s demonstrations of the use of the flatted seventh in many of the slave songs reportedly caused Dvorak to jump up and ask, “Is that really the way the slaves sang it?” Burleigh continued:

I have never publicly been credited with exerting any influence upon Dr. Dvorák, although it is tacitly believed that there isn’t much doubt about it, for I was with him almost constantly, and he loved to hear me sing the old melodies. Walter Damrosch once alluded to my having brought these songs to Dvorák’s attention, but there was so much discussion and difference of opinion as to the value of the intimation that in the songs of the Negroes lay the basis for a national school of music and the controversy waxed so hot that all reference to the real source of his information was lost sight of.  

On May 21, 1893, the New York Herald published an interview with Dvorák in which he held African-American music as an important resource for creating an American school of music:

In the Negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music. They are pathetic, tender, passionate, melancholy, solemn, religious, bold, merry, gay or what you will....There is nothing in the whole range of composition that cannot be supplied with themes from this source.”

It is unlikely that Dvorák was aware that the African-American gospel and spiritual hymns were derived from early American popular hymnody of the Anglo-American shape note tradition. While later stylistic developments and performance practice of African-American gospel hymns were distinctively Black, the texts and music were derived from vernacular white hymnody. Ives expressed dissatisfaction with the generally accepted notion that the African-American tradition developed independently:

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27 Harry T. Burleigh, from remarks in a New York Philharmonic Society program, March 1918, quoted in Snyder, 134.
In some of the churches, and in the camp meetings, I remember hearing hymns written in rather even time sung with the off-accent.... The negroes [sic] took many of the phrases, cadences (especially plagal—they liked the fah chord), and general make-up, and the verse and refrain form, and the uneven way many of these hymns were sung rhythmically, especially the choruses. The congregation would get excited and start a strong phrase by a shortening of the phrase before. The negroes [sic] took and exaggerated some of these things in their own way.... The Gospels used the 4th and 7th sometimes, but the negroes [sic] were still too near Africa and the oriental five-tone scale to get these. But it was not, to my mind, these physical techniques as much as the fervor, conviction, and a real human something underneath, that the negroes [sic] heard in these Gospel Hymns and reproduced in a little more dawdling way, their own way.

Some thirty years ago, in a downtown corner saloon in New York, I picked up a Puck or Judge magazine and saw a set of verses. The writer had apparently heard some negroes [sic] workers singing in a stone quarry in Georgia while breaking and chipping stone. I don’t remember the words, except a kind of dodgerel about “breakin’ de deblil on de haid”—but the tune was Nettleton, with a blow on the third beat.... Nettleton was one of the Gospel and Camp Meeting Hymns, and down in the Redding Camp Meetings I heard it sung with exactly those accents, almost shouted. I used it, or partly suggested it, in a string quartet...and also later in a violin sonata [the third movement of the Third Violin Sonata, entitled “The Revival”].

While Ives is complimentary to both traditions, he laments the lack of appreciation in the northeast for the Anglo gospel hymn. Defending his use of vernacular music in the Adagio Cantabile of the Second Symphony, Ives writes:

Some nice people, whenever they hear the words “Gospel Hymns” or “Stephen Foster,” say “Mercy me!: and a little high-brow smile creeps over their brow—“Can’t you get something better than that in a symphony?” The same nice people, when they go to a properly dressed symphony concert under proper auspices, led by a name with foreign hair, and hear Dvorák’s New World Symphony, in which they are told this famous passage was from a Negro spiritual, then they think it must be quite proper, even artistic, and say “How delightful!” But when someone proves to them that the Gospel Hymns are fundamentally responsible for the Negro spirituals, they say, “Ain’t it awful!”—“You don’t really mean that!”—“Why, only to think!”—“Do tell!”—I tell you, you don’t ever hear

30 Ives, Memos, 53-54.
Gospel Hymns even mentioned up there to the New England Conservatory.\textsuperscript{31}

Dvorák left the United States in 1895, one year after Ives enrolled at Yale. With Dvorák’s departure, Ives lost what might have become a strong advocate shortly before he faced the decision to shift his concentration from music to business, in order not to “starve on his dissonances.” Two years before Dvorák’s departure from America, he chaired the committee that awarded Horatio Parker, then 30 years old, a prize from the National Conservatory for the cantata \textit{Dream-King and His Love} in 1893.\textsuperscript{32} Parker, who, like Dvorák, had joined the faculty of the National Conservatory one year earlier, also composed in 1893 the oratorio \textit{Hora Novissima}, which over the next few years brought him national prominence. The success of \textit{Hora Novissima} helped secure Parker the Battell Professorship of the Theory of Music at the newly created Yale School of Music in 1894,\textsuperscript{33} the year young Charles Ives arrived. Parker, who had studied with Chadwick in Boston and with Rheinberger in Munich, failed to follow Dvorák’s directive to pattern an American national music from domestic resources. In response to Dvorák’s suggestion that a national school could be based on African-American (and by extension Anglo-American) and Native American music, Parker proclaimed in the 1890’s that there existed no indigenous American music of any value whatsoever.\textsuperscript{34} Parker instead joined George Chadwick and John Knowles Paine in forming what has been called the Second New England School (the First was comprised of the colonial-era composers who

\textsuperscript{31} Ives, \textit{Memoirs}, 52.
\textsuperscript{34} Kearns, 40, quoted in Swafford, 110.
followed William Billings); thus they secured the influence of Victorian values and the Germanic compositional tradition for years to come.35

35 Swafford, 108.
VI. Performing the Fourth Violin Sonata: Analytical and Stylistic Considerations

The music of Charles Ives is almost always about something, whether it is a particular event, as it is in the case of the Fourth Violin Sonata, an experience, an emotion, or a belief. In the Prologue of Essays Before a Sonata, Ives asks, “...is not all music program music?” In the program note included in the published score of the Fourth Violin Sonata, Ives reveals his intention to express the general fervor and emotionalism of the revivals of his youth and his recollection of a day set aside for children at the camp meeting services in Redding, Connecticut. Ives’ characteristic use of source material and its incorporation in the form is integral in representing the scenes described in the program: the childlike simplicity of the first movement with its bellowing end; the ethereal atmosphere of the outer portions of the second movement contrasted with its bombastic middle section; and the short but uplifting last movement, which culminates in an unfinished statement of the hymn, Beautiful River. It is incumbent upon performers of the Fourth Violin Sonata to fully understand the formal procedure employed by Ives in each movement in order to reveal its significance in concert. It is also necessary to consider certain performance practice issues when preparing the sonata, so that an interpretation resembling Ives’ highly idiosyncratic musical style can be achieved.

Analysis of the Fourth Violin Sonata: Ives’ Use of Cumulative Setting

Charles Ives’ use of pre-existent material is more prevalent and has a greater extra-musical significance than works by any other composer. Perhaps Ives’ greatest influence on later composers was his manner of incorporating borrowed tunes into his

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1 Ives, Essays, 4.
own unique musical style. Ives’ use of American vernacular music as compositional material led the way for the “Americana” school of the 1930s, which grew around Aaron Copland. However, like Bartók, Ives in the end disavowed nationalism preferring to reach the universal through the particular: “If local color, national color, any color, is a true pigment of the universal color, it is a divine quality, it is a part of substance in art—not of manner.”

Ives’ preoccupation with musical borrowing may have been first developed through his activities as a professional church organist from ages fifteen to twenty-eight. Charles Ives was an extraordinarily gifted performer whose duties routinely included improvised preludes and postludes on given hymn tunes as a part of the worship service. His performances and studies of variation sets by Dudley Buck, John Knowles Paine, and Johann Christian Heinrich Rinck resulted in, among other works, Ives’ Variations on “America” for organ.

Many of his musical experiments were first tested on the organ where he often worked into his music quotations of familiar tunes. According to Ives, some movements of the First String Quartet were first tried in the church service. The fugal first movement of the quartet, composed during in 1897 or 1898 as an assignment for a class with Parker, is an example of Ives’ blend of traditional compositional devices with the quotation of pre-existent melodies. Later used in the third movement of his Fourth Symphony, this movement features a fugal subject paraphrased from Lowell Mason’s

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2 Swafford, 331.
3 Swafford, 139.
4 Ives, Essays, 81.
6 Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 70.
hymn *Missionary Hymn* (or, *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*) with a countersubject derived from Oliver Holden’s *Coronation*. In this example, Ives demonstrates his ability to adhere to European models, namely the fugue, while asserting his own interest in the quotation of American vernacular music. Ives likely garnered little favor from Parker, whose feelings about the use of hymns as source material were made clear to him. According to Ives, Parker felt that “…in music they should have no place. Imagine, a symphony, hearing suggestions of street tunes like *Marching Through Georgia* or a Moody and Sankey hymn….”

Ives’ extraordinary attraction to the use of borrowed material had roots in his sense of aesthetics while serving as a practical means of conveying his programmatic ideas. J. Peter Burkholder, in *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing*, lists fourteen methods of quotation employed by Ives roughly in order of their first appearance in his music.

From his earliest compositions of 1887-88, Ives used *modeling* as a means of incorporating some aspect of an earlier work (ie. the form, procedures, part of its melodic material, etc.) in his creative process. Examples include *Holiday Quickstep, Slow March, The Polonaise*, and others. By 1888-89, Ives was using the traditional method of *variations* on a given melody (ie. *Fantasia on “Jerusalem the Golden”*). Ives found a more sophisticated and malleable means of using previously existing material through *paraphrasing* an existing tune to form a new melody, countermelody, theme, or motive (ca 1890-1892), as he does in the second variation of *Jerusalem the Golden*. Experiments with setting an existing tune with a newly composed accompaniment began around 1890-

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8 Ives, *Memos*, 132.
9 Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 3-4.
1891 with *March No. 1.* A method developed early in the history of Western music, Ives used the *cantus firmus* technique (*March No. 1*) in which a tune is expanded into longer note values and set against a more quickly moving voice or texture. Burkholder cites *medley,* in which two or more existing tunes are stated successively in a movement, as occurring around the same time as *cantus firmus* in *March No. 1.* The combination, often used by Ives in a joking manner, of two or more existing tunes in counterpoint is called *quodlibet* and was used in a sketch from around 1892. Ives’ use of *stylistic allusion* featured reference not to a particular work but rather to a style [*Memories* (1897) and *Psalm 67* (ca. 1898) are examples]. Under Parker, Ives began *transcribing* previously existing works for new mediums such as his 1898 arrangement for string quartet of Beethoven’s *Piano Sonata in F minor,* Op. 2, No.1. In *Yale-Princeton Football Game* (ca. 1899), Ives employed *programmatic quotation* to represent an extramusical program. *Cumulative setting* was first used by Ives around 1902 in *Fugue in Four Keys on “The Shining Shore.”* Cumulative setting and its use in the *Fourth Violin Sonata* will be discussed in detail below. The combination of quoted and paraphrased tunes, which is then integrated into a musical structure that features modeling, paraphrase, cumulative setting, or a narrative program, is termed *collage* by Burkholder. *Overture and March “1776”* (ca. 1903-8) and *Country Band March* (ca. 1905-14) are early examples of *collage.* *Patchwork* refers to Ives’s stitching together of fragments of quoted material. It was first used in *Largo Cantabile (Hymn)* around 1904-14. The final method of Ives’ use of musical borrowing is *extended paraphrase,* as seen in *The Housatonic at Stockbridge* (ca. 1908-19), which incorporates the paraphrased melody of an entire work or section.
Of the fourteen methods of musical quotation discussed by Burkholder, the use of cumulative setting is “...by far the most common form in Ives’ concert music between about 1907-1920,”\textsuperscript{10} and occurs overall in 10 of the 12 movements that comprise the four violin sonatas. Cumulative form is defined as “...a thematic, non-repetitive form in which the principal theme is presented, not at the beginning as in traditional forms, but near the end, and is preceded, not followed, by its development.”\textsuperscript{11} In cumulative form the repetition of a large section of music, as in sonata or rondo forms for example, is avoided in favor of a continual development that leads to a definitive statement of the theme. Ives’ themes are invariably drawn from previously existing tunes, which are then set in cumulative form. Burkholder designates the use of a particular tune in this way as cumulative setting.\textsuperscript{12}

Burkholder observes several possible explanations for Ives’ attraction to the procedure. He notes Henry and Sidney Cowell’s observation that Ives:

...feels that music, like other truths, should never be immediately understood; there must always remain some further element yet to be disclosed. A complete musical statement, in all its clarity and simplicity, like any absolute truth, is an ultimate, not a beginning. Ives reserves it, therefore, for the culmination of a work.”\textsuperscript{13}

Burkholder suggests that Ives’ use of cumulative setting may have also been born out of a tradition in religious services and revivals in which the church organist would “improvise a fantasy on motives drawn from a hymn tune that concludes with a full statement of the

\textsuperscript{10} Burkholder, \textit{All Made of Tunes}, 138.
\textsuperscript{11} Burkholder, \textit{All Made of Tunes}, 138.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 137-38
\textsuperscript{13} Cowell and Cowell, 142, quoted in Burkholder, \textit{All Made of Tunes}, 138.
melody, as a prelude to worship or to singing the hymn.”¹⁴ Ives’ vast experience in, and observation of, religious services and camp meetings make this idea viable.

Perhaps the most fascinating of Burkholder’s theories about Ives’ attraction to the form is the similarity of cumulative setting and the improvised sermons of American folk preachers.¹⁵ In this tradition, the closing statement of the sermon is typically drawn from the words of a hymn or gospel song that distills the message of the preceding lecture. Burkholder cites the example the speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. in which he summarizes the civil rights movement, vowing that “we as a people will get to the Promised Land,” before closing with “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!,” which are the first words of The Battle Hymn of the Republic.¹⁶

The treatment of cumulative setting in the Fourth Violin Sonata is standard in the outer movements and somewhat modified in the second movement. As typical cumulative settings, the first and last movements offer their themes in fragments, which are then developed and clarified throughout the course of the work. Countermelodies are paired with themes and are developed in a similar manner of gradual clarity. Ives’ countermelodies are drawn both from existing tunes and original compositional material. The themes and their corresponding countermelodies are given in completion, and in tandem, only at the end of the movement. The second movement of the Fourth Violin Sonata differs slightly from the more standard cumulative settings found in the outer movements through its mixture of ternary and cumulative forms.

The following analysis of the Fourth Violin Sonata is taken from J. Peter Burkholder’s All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing. This

¹⁴ Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 148.
¹⁵ Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 148.
¹⁶ Ibid.
book, with its thorough discussion of the composer’s incorporation of pre-existent material, is an essential companion for one studying the music of Charles Ives.

**First Movement**

The first movement of the Fourth Violin Sonata is drawn from an earlier piece for trumpet and organ (now lost) composed around 1901.\(^{17}\) Between 1890-93, Ives attended the camp meeting services in Redding, Connecticut, where his father led the singing. Ives, who often played keyboard at these gatherings, seems to have discovered at one of them that the first five bars in the hymn refrain of William Doane’s *Tell Me the Old, Old Story* fit in perfect counterpoint with the *Fugue in B-flat* by George Ives, since a pencil sketch of the combination survives.\(^{18}\) In the program note included in the 1942 publication of the score, Ives misidentifies the hymn as *Work for the Night is Coming* by Lowell Mason. Rhythmically Mason’s hymn is nearly identical to the refrain of *Tell Me the Old, Old Story*, which likely explains Ives’ mistake. (Example 1, Mason’s hymn indicated by arrows)

The first movement is a typical cumulative setting in which the complete theme and its countermelody appears in full at the end of the movement. Ives constructs the theme/countermelody complex in two halves, which will be separately developed through the course of the movement. The first half of the theme/countermelody complex (called T1/CM1) is comprised of the refrain of W.H. Doane’s *Tell Me the Old, Old Story*, with a countermelody drawn from the exposition the fugue. Example 2 illustrates, in original form, the origins of the theme complex. The second half of the theme (T2) consists of a


\(^{18}\) Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 180.
paraphrased part of the verse of *Old, Old Story*, with a short tail of the fugue subject. Its
countermelody (CM2) is a chordal figure of originally composed material. (Example 3)
A derivative of CM2 accompanies the T1/T2 complex. Both themes appear with their
countermelodies in their entirety for the first time at the end of the movement. (Example
4) Burkholder’s analysis shows how cleverly Ives developed the subject and
countermelody from the fugue and the hymn. He notes that although only parts of the
fugue and the hymn verse occur as thematic material, by the end of the first movement,
the remainder of the hymn and all but two measures of the fugue have been included.\(^{19}\)

The movement opens with solo piano stating CM2, before the entrance of the
violin in measure four introduces the majority of T2. Measure eight includes opening
motives of T2 in the piano and T1 in the violin. Following a quasi-cadenza in the piano
on motives from T1 and T2, the second section begins in measure sixteen with the
beginning of the fugue, CM1, marked “slightly slower.” Two measures later, T2 returns
in the violin, transposed up a half-step. An episode begins in measure 21, which
continues until measure 44. It includes fragments of T2, the third phrase of the hymn
verse, and motives from the fugue. Measures eleven and nine of the hymn are presented
in measures 24-25 in the piano and 36-38 in the violin. Measure 39 features the return of
T2/CM2 material, again up a half-step. The third section begins in measure 44, where T1,
CM2, and CM1 assert control. This section contains almost all of the fugue except for its
closing phrase. CM1 is given in complete form in measure 47 in the piano with an
accompaniment from CM2, while the violin plays the second fugal voice. Measures 47-
56 are taken from mm. 1-19 of the fugue, while measures 52-55 in the violin are drawn

\(^{19}\) Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 178-80.
from measures 9-10 and 2-4 of the hymn. The *subito piano* indication in measure 56 begins an episode between violin and piano on material from measures 20-21 of the fugue. Bars 22-42 of the fugue are represented in measures 59-69 in the piano, while the violin plays T1 and the end of the hymn verse (taken from mm. 15-16) in measures 68-69. The cumulative setting is revealed in measure 70, as the themes are at last given in complete form with T1 in octaves (*ad lib*) in the violin, CM1 and accompaniment drawn from CM2 in the piano. Measures 76-77 includes a fugal episode in the piano, which comes from measures 44-47 of the fugue. As T1/CM1 are completed in measure 77, a sudden drop to *pianissimo* marks the arrival of the second half of the theme (T2) and its countermelody (CM2), with a closing tag of fugal material in measure 83.

**Example 1**

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Old, Old Story - William Doane

Verse 1

Tell me the Old, Old Story, Of seen things above, Of Jesus and His grace, Of Jesus and His love.

Verse 1

Tell me the Old, Old Story, As in a little child, For I am weak and weary, And help less and derelict.

Refrain

Tell me the Old, Old Story, Tell me the Old, Old Story.

Work for the Night is Coming - Lowell Mason

Work, see the night is coming, Work, tread the morning heart;

(Old, Old Story)

Tell me the Old, Old Story, Of Jesus and His love.

(Work for the Night is Coming)

Work while the dew is sparkling, Work while the spring is born;
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“Tell Me the Old, Old Story” (complete) with the first measures of “Work, For the Night is Coming”
Example 2

“Old, Old Story” with Fugue in B-flat by George Ives (both in original form)

Example 3

T2 derived from measures five and six (repeated three times) from the hymn. CM2 included below.
Example 4

m.70

Culmination of the First Movement (T1/CM1, T2/CM2)

Second Movement

The structure of the second movement mixes cumulative setting and ternary form.

The theme for the first and third sections is derived from the refrain of William Bradbury’s Jesus Loves Me (T, Example 5) and its countermelody is paraphrased from the same source (Example 6, derivation of CM indicated by upward stems) while the middle-section theme (MT, Example 7) is drawn from measures 9-10 of the hymn.
Example 5

Jesus Loves Me

Wm. B. Bradbury

Je - sus loves me this I know, For the Bi - ble tells me so:

Lit - tle ones to Him be - long; They are weak but He is strong.

Refrain (T material)

Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so!

Example 6

CM derived from "Jesus Loves Me"
Example 7

MT (consugarocko)

MT derived from measures 9-10

Example 8

Culmination of the movement
As the movement opens, all three themes are introduced by the piano before the entrance of the violin in measure two. The tonal center of the first section is ambiguous, although by its end it centers on E Major, and the measures are largely unbarred. As the violin enters in the second measure, an extended section of opening ideas of T, MT, and an abbreviated form of CM, are explored by both instruments. The countermelody is given in complete form in the violin (marked cantabile) beginning in measure five over an arpeggiated accompaniment in the piano. The opening section slows and calms until the abrupt entrance of the middle section, indicated Allegro (conslugarocko). This section for solo piano fully explores the middle section theme material through repetition and diminution. The third section begins in measure 30 with a return to a varied version of the theme in D Major (over a G pedal), played by the piano with an altered countermelody in the violin. In measure 34, the theme is again in the piano (in A Major) with the countermelody in the violin. Finally, in bar 38, the theme occurs, in E Major, complete for the first time in the violin with the countermelody in the piano.

Third Movement

The third movement is based on a sketch for cornet and strings from 1905, which was later assembled as the third movement of the sonata around 1914, and was arranged as the song At the River around 1916. In the song, Ives curiously begins, after a four-bar introduction, with the arrival of the theme/countermelody complex, which corresponds to measure 37 of the sonata movement. Since it lacks the preceding development, the song cannot be called a cumulative setting. While only 36 measures longer than the song, the third movement of the Fourth Violin Sonata is a compact

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20 Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 193.
21 Ibid., 194.
cumulative setting which takes its theme from the verse and refrain of Robert Lowry’s *Beautiful River* (Example 9). The theme is fairly straightforward, with the exception of measure 43-44 and 52-54, which occur as chromatic alterations of bars 7-8 and 15-16 of the hymn, before proceeding in the following measures (45 and 55, respectively) with the original material from the hymn. The countermelody is also simple, consisting of the top voice of the chords given to the piano in measures 37-55. (Example 10)

**Beautiful River**

*Rev. Robert Lowry*

**Example 9**

\[\text{Shall we gather at the river}\]

\[\text{Where bright angel feet have trod; With its crystal tide for-}\]

\[\text{ever Flowing by the throne of God?}\]

\[\text{Yes, we’ll gather at the river; The beautiful, the beautiful}\]

\[\text{river Gather with the saints at the river, that}\]

\[\text{flows by the throne of God.}\]
Example 10

Culmination of the Movement (T1/CM1)
The movement opens with fragments of the theme in the piano, which are repeated and expanded by the violin in bar five and following. Measure 14-18 is an extension of this material. The countermelody is introduced in the violin in measure 19 with a simple accompaniment in the piano. Measure 27 states the end of the theme in the violin, while the accompaniment continues in the piano. An extension in measure 33-36, which is similar to bars 14-18, leads into the arrival of the theme and its countermelody in measure 37. The complete theme is heard in the violin with its countermelody and accompaniment in the piano. Measure 56, which serves as a closing tag, is comprised of the first measure of the theme in the violin with portions of the countermelody in the piano.
Stylistic Suggestions to the Performer

An informed performance of the Fourth Violin Sonata will involve the study of several primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include Ives’ song *At the River*, which is closely related to the third movement of the fourth sonata, and the written discussions of his musical philosophies and anecdotes about all four violin sonatas found in *Memos* and *Essays Before a Sonata*. Secondary sources of particular importance are Jan Swafford’s *Charles Ives: A Life with Music*, which offers a thorough biographical background of the composer, and J. Peter Burkholder’s *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing*, which serves as an essential companion through its analysis of each movement of the four violin sonatas. The 1968 dissertation by Eugene Gratovich, entitled “The Sonatas for Violin and Piano by Charles E. Ives: a Critical Commentary and Concordance of the Printed Editions and the Autographs,” is useful in identifying numerous discrepancies between Ives’ manuscripts and the published scores. It is somewhat less helpful in the case of the Fourth Violin Sonata, however, since no autograph ink score survives. Ives was, however, involved in the publication by Arrow in 1942, and his penciled corrections on the Photostats are included in the published score.22 Interestingly, in an earlier version of the Fourth Sonata, a fourth movement was included which Ives tore out to revise as the third movement of the Second Violin Sonata.23

In addition to the technical difficulties of performing Ives’ music, arriving at a style that approximates the composer’s written descriptions of how his music should, or

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23 Ibid.
should not, be played is exceedingly difficult. It is often easier to determine what Ives would not like. Throughout Memos, he colorfully criticizes many of the styles and composers with whom performers are usually most familiar. Writing in the 1930s, Ives had much to say about “Rollo,” a literary character who came to symbolize for Ives the literal mind’s inability to imagine anything beyond what it was taught.24

When I think of some music that I liked to hear and play 35 or 40 years ago—if I hear some of it now, I feel like saying “Rollo, how did you fall for that sop, those ‘ta tas’ and greasy ringlets?” In this I would include the Preislied [from Die Meistersinger], The Rosary, a certain amount of Mozart, Mendelssohn, a small amount of early Beethoven, with the easy-made Haydn, a large amount of Massenet, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, etc. (to say nothing of Gounod), most Italian operas (not exactly most of the operas, but most of each opera), some of Chopin (pretty soft, but you don’t mind it in him so much, because one just naturally thinks of him with a skirt on, but one which he made himself). Notwithstanding the above slants, which many would say are insults, it seems to me, as it did then and ever, that still today Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms (No) are among the strongest and greatest in all art, and nothing since is stronger or greater than their strongest and greatest—not quite as strong and great as Carl Ruggles, because B., B., and B. have too much of the sugar-plum for the soft-ears—but even with that, they have some manhood of their own. I won’t say that their best is better or worse than any music before or since—I won’t say, because I don’t know—and nobody knows, except Rollo!25

Ives’ note in the published score of the Fourth Violin Sonata offers the first clues for making stylistic decisions, since it not only offers a program for the sonata, but also implies stylistic considerations. Ives’ suggestion that an incident at one of the camp meetings illuminated the relationship between the fugue and “Old, Old, Story” seems a bit unlikely, at least in a literal sense, but it is probable that he discovered it as a teenager between 1890-93 while he played for camp meetings.26 Ives’s inclusion in the note of the boy (presumably Ives) practicing at the melodeon is noteworthy, however, since it gives

24 Charles Ives, Memos, ed. John Kirkpatrick, Footnote 1, 26-27.
25 Ives, Memos, 134-35.
26 Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 180.
further credence to Stuart Feder’s assertion that, through his music, Ives sought to relive the relationship with his father.  

Ives’ indications of articulation and accentuation are relatively numerous, although used with little variation, throughout the score of the sonata, while implications of expressive vibrato and intonation are left to the discretion of the performer. As with music by any composer, the syntax in which Ives writes requires careful consideration and interpretation. In an effort to assist in this regard, the following description of the general elements employed in the work will be given before a more detailed account of performance considerations in each movement is provided.

Ives uses three notational indications throughout the sonata: accents (>); carats (∧); and dots (•). Clear differentiation should be made between accents and carats throughout the sonata. Although each instance should be considered individually, in general accents in the violin should be stung while carats are heavily dragged with the bow. In the piano, corresponding indications of accents and carats should be observed. Accents can be achieved through a combination of finger and arm-generated percussive strokes of the key, followed by a quick vertical release. The deeper articulation of carats requires a heavier depression of the key with weight from the arm. It is interesting to note that Ives most often uses carats in moments of dissonance or in regions of thematic or rhythmic alteration. Ives uses dots above or below a note to indicate staccato articulation. The second and third movements are virtually devoid of the figure. Exceptions in the second movement include the violin statement of MT in staves two and three of page eight and the pizzicato passages, and in the third movement, only measure

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27 For a detailed discussion of this matter see Stuart Feder, Charles Ives: “My Father’s Song”, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992)
three features dots in the piano where they occur in conjunction with more frequently used carats. Since dots occur almost exclusively in the first movement, their treatment will be included in the discussion of that movement.

The use of vibrato and expressive intonation in Ives' music requires a great deal of thought. Vibrato should serve the character before all else. In truth, much of the music Ives emulated was not highly refined. In this sense, constant oscillation is not appropriate in many instances in the *Fourth Violin Sonata*. Accents and carats should be vibrated, with a generally wider and slower vibrato for the latter. Vibrato in thematic material should be determined through textual and structural considerations. If, for instance, Ives uses fifths that can (and should) be played on open strings on the violin, as he does in measure 24 of the first movement, vibrato is undesirable. However, in measures 9-18 of the third movement, a wide, slow vibrato on the "g" string will accentuate its similarity to ragtime, particularly on notes indicated with articulation or emphasis. The use of expressive intonation should be considered as well. It may in fact be preferable to play certain notes a bit under pitch in order to highlight, to use a jazz term, "blue" notes (i.e. the last eighth-note in measure fourteen of the third movement, indicated with a carat).

**First Movement**

Ives' description in the published score of the first movement of the *Fourth Violin Sonata* includes both programmatic and stylistic indications:

The First Movement (which was sometimes played last and the last first)—was suggested by an actual happening at one of these [children’s day at the camp meeting] services. The children, especially the boys, liked to get up and join in the marching kind of hymns. And as these
meetings were “out-door,” the “march” sometimes became a real one. One day Lowell Mason’s—“Work for the Night is Coming” [sic, this should be Tell Me the Old, Old Story] got the boys going and keeping on between services, when the boy who played the melodeon was practicing his “organicks of canonicks, fugaticks, harmonicks, and melodicks.” In this movement, as is remembered, they—the postlude organ practice (real and improvised, sometimes both)—and the boys’ fast march—got to going together, even joining in each other’s sounds, and the loudest singers and also those with the best voices, as is often the case, would sing most of the wrong notes. They started this tune on “ME” so the boy organist’s father made him play “SOH” hard even if sometimes it had to be in a key that the postlude was not in just then. The boys sometimes got almost as far off from Lowell M. as they did from the melodeon. The organ would be uncovering “covered 5ths” breaking “good resolutions” faster and faster and the boys’ march reaching almost a “Main Street Quick-step” when Parson Hubbell would beat the “Gong” on the oaktree [sic] for the next service to begin. Or if it is growing dark, the boys’ march would die away, as they marched down to their tents, the barn doors or over the “1770 Bridge” between the Stone Pillars to the Station.  

As a typical cumulative setting, the first movement is end-weighted and reveals the theme/countermelody complex only at the conclusion of the movement. Ives’ indication that the loudest voices were the best, even if they sang most of the wrong notes, indicates something of the fervor to be evoked in its culmination. Four materials are employed: Theme 2 is a march, with accents on the “wrong” beats; its countermelody, CM2, is an originally composed chordal figure that serves as accompaniment to the march; Theme 1, the refrain of the hymn Old, Old Story, is a boisterous tune with an eight-bar structure; the fugue by George Ives serves as its countermelody, CM1, and displays a fairly traditional treatment of contrapuntal writing. Burkholder’s analysis clearly shows how these components are related.  

When preparing the sonata for performance, each theme should be examined and constructed individually. Burkholder’s analysis of the movement can be best

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implemented by assembling the themes with their countermelodies at the end of the movement before working backward. In this way, the preceding development should lead inevitably to the final arrival of the theme/countermelody complex. T1, borrowed from the refrain of *Old Story*, is constructed in two-bar gestures. The most rhythmically interesting feature of the theme is the dotted-eighth—sixteenth note figures in the first bars of the couplets. The precision of the rhythm is less important than its propulsion toward the following bar, where the downbeat (corresponding to "Story" in the text) should be emphasized. A fugue by George Ives was borrowed as the countermelody to T1. There is little expressive quality in this countermelody, which provides contrast to its theme through its dry and studied character. T2 and CM 2, which represent the march described in the program note, feature frequent staccato indications notated by dots. CM2 features four statements of a four-note motive consisting of two half-note figures followed by a staccato quarter-note (sometimes slurred in with the half note), which leaps by fourth or fifth to an accented quarter note before falling back to the next four-note grouping. The staccato indications beneath the opening half-note figures in the piano should be held and gently articulated before playing the highly clipped quarter note that follows. The subsequent accented quarter note can be moderately stung, but should flow smoothly to the repetition of the four-note motive. While the accented quarter note in T2 can be treated in a similar fashion to the accented figure in CM2, the staccato figures in T2 should be played differently. The staccato quarter notes (under a slur) should be played on the string and with approximately half a bow for each. They suggest a rather square and somewhat banal character, which can be achieved through a simple forearm articulation with the bow. By contrast, the eighth-note staccato figures
should be played off the string, leading to the subsequent weak quarter before landing squarely on the accented quarter note on the second beat. Other occurrences of staccato figures include those on sixteenth notes in the violin (ie. measure 21) and on slurred quarter note groupings (measure 62). The percussive character of the sixteenth notes in the violin can be facilitated through using a heavy jété stroke and a flat ribbon of hair, while the slurred staccato quarters may be clipped short at the end of the gesture.

As the T2/CM2 complex is introduced in the opening measures of the movement, careful attention should be paid to avoid pedantic or overly refined execution. The rather four-square features of both themes should emphasize the accents of the ordinarily weak second and fourth beats, which can be facilitated by a light treatment of the preceding beat. T1 is introduced in the violin in measure eight, where the subito mezzo-forte indication should be somewhat jarring and crass in performance, and the brassy quality of the open A, D, and G strings are preferred. Ives interrupts the movement repeatedly with the use of these pitches in the violin, perhaps representing a fiddler tuning an instrument. Carats in measures 9 and 10 should be preceded by the lifted treatment of the short quarter note. The pianist’s quasi-cadenza in measure 12 and 13 highlights the ascending four eighth-notes in measure twelve (which is drawn from inverted T2 material) and the corresponding descending figures in bar thirteen, which may be difficult to properly voice due to the crossing of the left hand as the chords are rolled. Following the cadenza, the a tempo arrives immediately in the character of the opening bars of the movement.

The second section begins in measure sixteen with the entrance of CM2 in the piano. Marked slightly slower, the fugue subject should be clearly voiced and not clouded by the chordal accompaniment. The sober style of the CM2 material contrasts with the
more emphatic statement of T2 in the violin, marked *forte* and up a half-step from its original statement. The episode that begins in measure 21, and continues until measure 44, features abrupt character changes as each entrance of motives from the fugue and the third phrase of the hymn are introduced. Measures 11 and 9 of the hymn are presented in measures 24-25 in the piano and 36-38 in the violin. As the piano takes primary material in measure 24, the violin accompanies with perfect fifth figures. To produce the fiddle-style effect of tuning, indicated here by the use of open strings, the violinist should use full bows with speed at the beginning of each of the half notes. Syncopation in the following bar of the violin part is derived from the fugue and should be marked slightly, but not accented. Both violin and piano engage in the fugue in measure 28 with an articulation indicated *marcato*. Kaleidoscopic entrances of the fugue, T2, and the hymn verse continue until measure 39, which includes the return of T2/CM2 material. Again up a half-step, and with *fortissimo* and *faster* indicated, the entrance in measure 39 of the T2/CM2 complex is the most excited moment up to this point, and will not be surpassed until the arrival of the complete theme complex in measure 70. The successive heightening of enthusiasm is described in the program note:

> The boys sometimes got almost as far off Lowell M. as they did from the melodeon. The organ would be uncovering "covered 5ths" breaking "good resolutions" faster and faster and the boys’ marching reaching almost a “Main Street Quick-step”...²⁹

The third section, which begins in measure 44, includes almost all of the fugue. In measure 44, the momentum abruptly relaxes with the assertion of T1, CM2 and CM1. The reduction in dynamic to *forte*, and the dominance of T1 suggest a more lyrical approach in the violin, where the words “Tell me the Old, Old Story” come briefly into

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²⁹ Ibid.
focus. Again, "Story" should be emphasized in measure 45 (beat three) and 46 (the last quarter note triplet in the bar), where the violin displaces the rhythm in a rag-like manner, indicated with carats on "Old" and "Sto-" and an accent on "ry." Ives' rhythm here approximates the inflexion of ragtime, which had become very popular at the turn of the century. The prominent feature is the displacement of the beat and, as such, its importance as a gesture should supersede its rhythmic precision. The violin returns to fugal material in measure 48. Meanwhile the piano features the sobriety of the fugue subject in the right hand, accompanied by the first complete statement of CM1 since the opening of the movement in the left. The rapid entry of the themes in this section can be confusing to the performer. It is suggested that in rehearsal, silent beats be placed between the end of one theme and the beginning of the next. By systematically dividing the time value of the silent beats in half (ie whole-note, half-note, quarter, eighth) until it is eliminated, the duo can learn to shift more abruptly from one theme to the next without danger of anticipating the character of the following material. Measures 52-55 in the violin are drawn from measures 9-10 and 2-4 of the hymn, representing the texts "Tell me the Story simply" and "unseen things above," respectively. The thematic treatment of the latter resembles the text as the B-flat quarter notes in the violin (measure 54-55) are marked with carots in a similar manner to that used in singing the hymn. They should be swung with sufficient vibrato and bow speed. This can be accomplished by using a sforzando vibrato at the beginning of each of the notes accompanied by a fast, accented bow. Beginning with the subito piano indication in measure 56, the transition from piano to mezzo forte to forte should be starkly contrasted, helping to create the feeling of the boys' march coming closer. Measures 59-69 become continually faster and louder as
they approach the culmination of the theme. As fragments of the hymn theme are introduced in the violin, a motivic accelerando, in a manner similar to the dynamic progression in the previous section, which propels the tempo forward in stages can heighten the arrival in measure 70 of the theme.

The themes are at last given in complete form starting in measure 70 with T1 in octaves (ad lib) in the violin and CM1 in the piano. The score includes technical suggestions for the octaves in the violin part by Joseph Szigeti, who advocates the use of a combination of first/fourth finger octaves and first/third—second/fourth (or “fingered”) octaves, with the upper octave played in eighth-note values while the lower is sustained for its full metric value. With respect to Mr. Szigeti, the use of regular “1-4” octaves throughout, sustained and with sufficient amounts of bow, will thicken the texture and yield a more fiddle-like character. The statement of Tell Me the Old, Old Story should occur as something of an explosion and triumph after the preceding pages. A sudden drop to pianissimo follows in measure 78 as the second half of the theme, T2, in the violin joins CM2 in the piano. The second theme and its countermelody should resemble the spirit and intensity of the same material in the opening of the movement, but as if from a distance. Little bow should be used, but bow distribution should maintain the same proportion as in the opening. Active vibrato, especially on the carat in measure 79, can help maintain the excitement within pianissimo. A subtle distinction between the end of the march and the fugue tag in measure 53 is optional. It may be achieved simply by default through the difference in color of a fourth finger on the “g” string. Since it risks disruption of the closing measures of the movement, its overemphasis may be undesirable. The boys’ march dies away as CM2 continues in the piano, accompanied by
syncopated figures in the violin. Marked *decrescendo non rallentando*, the last five bars may represent the march fading into the distance, and as such, should maintain an excited character without losing intensity as it casts the preceding development of the movement into relief.

**Second Movement**

The second movement borrows material from William Bradbury’s *Jesus Loves Me*. This simple children’s hymn was an immediate favorite during the Sunday School movement. Its simple, straightforward text and pentatonic melody have helped it to become one of the most widely known religious-based tunes.  

Ives treats the tune with sentiment, introspection, and reflection, leaving the impression of an adult looking back to the memory of the singing of children, rather than the representation of the singing itself. Familiarity with the text, and the manner in which “loves” is gently emphasized in the refrain will help to inflect the theme. The violinist should choose a warmer, more expressive vibrato for pitches corresponding to “loves.” Its equivalent in the piano would be similar to a *tenuto* accent.

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Jesus loves me! this I know
For the Bible tells me so
Little ones to him belong
They are weak, but He is strong.
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**Refrain:**

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Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so!
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The second movement is more difficult in several ways than the outer movements. Technically, it is much more demanding, and its text painting of the pastoral scene described in the program note demands more attention to considerations of color.

In Ives’s words:

The Second Movement is quieter and more serious except when Deacon Stonemason Bell and Farmer John would get up and get the boys excited. But most of the Movement moves around a rather quiet but old favorite Hymn of the children, while mostly in the accompaniment is heard something trying to reflect the out-door sounds of nature on those Summer days—the west wind in the pines and oaks, the running brook—sometimes quite loudly—and maybe towards evening the distant voices of the farmers across the hill getting in their cows and sheep.

But as usual even in the quiet services, some of the deacon-enthusiasts would get up and sing, roar, pray and shout but always fervently, seriously, reverently—perhaps not “artistically” — (perhaps the better for it).—“We’re men of the fields and rocks, not artists”, Farmer John would say. At times these “confurorants” would give the boys a chance to run out and throw stones down on the rocks in the brook! (Allegro consugarocko!)—but this was only momentary and the quiet Children’s Hymn is sung again, perhaps some of the evening sounds are with it—and as this Movement ends, sometimes a distant Amen is heard—if the mood of the Day calls for it—though the Methodists and Baptists seldom called for it, at the end of their hymns, yet often, during the sermon, an “Amen” would ring out as a trumpet call from a pew or from an old “Amen-Seat.” The Congregationalists sometimes leaned towards one, and the Episcopalians often.32

The expansive texture and ambiguous tonal center indicates that Ives will explore new colors and textures in this movement. The first section is largely unbarred, which reveals its open-ended character. All three themes are exposed in the opening statement of the piano, which is then repeated and expanded in the violin. The difficulty of the violin entrance in measure two can be obviated by starting up-bow on the “G,” breaking the chord on a down-bow, beginning the next chord up, and returning down on the “A-

32 Ives, Sonata No. 4, p. 21.
C.” This will avoid string-crossing problems, while maintaining the softness of the theme. The piano accompaniment, while meticulously written, reveals an almost impressionistic quality. Portraying the “outdoor sounds of nature on those Summer days—the west wind in the pines and oaks, the running brook…” in the arpeggiated figures in the piano, requires the careful execution of pedaling, balance, and rhythm in order not to cover the violin or to be so thick that the top and bottom voices in the piano are unclear.

The third stanza is marked *poco agitato* as Ives pushes forward in swirling colors. The pivotal point comes at *a tempo* in the fourth stanza of page eight, where the violin has the theme, altered but recognizable. A series of departures in the violin of both T and CM material ensues with an arpeggiated accompaniment in the piano. The violinist should consider playing on the “g” string in the second and third stanza of page nine. Not only will it provide a richer color, but it will also eliminate to some degree balance problems that may exist with the piano. Text-painting of the sound of a distant cowbell from across the hill begins in the third stanza of page ten, where the pianist’s left hand punctuates the arpeggios in the top voice with the “c#-f#” figures. The opening section slows and calms before the abrupt entrance of the middle section theme.

The middle section, indicated *Allegro (conslugarocka): Faster and with action*, is a virtuosic display of Ives’s more experimental side. Highly chromatic but with “C” prominent in the bass, the middle-section theme explores the full dynamic range and tessitura of the instrument while suggesting a ragged style. Programmatically, it reveals much of the sentiment reflected in Ives’ writings about the raw expression of emotion he found so attractive in the camp meetings of his youth:
But as usual even in the quiet services, some of the deacon-enthusiasts would get up and sing, roar, pray and shout but always fervently, seriously, reverently—perhaps not "artistically"—(perhaps the better for it).—"We're men of the fields and rocks, not artists", Farmer John would say. At times these "confurorants" would give the boys a chance to run out and throw stones down on the rocks in the brook! (Allegro conslagarocko)…

Ives gives frequent, but inexplicit, indications throughout the section: forte (m. 9), crescendo and gradually faster (m. 18), fortissimo (m. 20), triple forte (m. 27).

Maintaining forward momentum in this section requires careful dynamic planning and attention to the accent indications. Sensitivity to the phrase structure of the middle section theme, which increases in frequency, will help to propel the motion forward to the return of the "A" section in measure 30. Beginning in measure nine, four bars of 3/8 include two complete statements of the theme, followed by a two-bar-plus-two-sixteenth-note tag. Measure fifteen begins the cycle again (in 4/8) from the second beat of the bar. One complete statement of the theme follows with a four-bar tag that begins in measure seventeen. The middle of measure 20 begins a series of statements of the first half of the middle section theme, spinning wildly until the return of the first theme in bar 30. Ives’ careful indications of accents and carats throughout the middle section are very important. Those indicated above the syncopated "D♯-E" seconds in measure twenty three should be emphasized in a manner that relates them to the "D-E" seconds at the arrival of the third section in measure 30, marked Andante con spirito.

The relationship of the middle section with the third section may serve to let the excitement die more gradually. The dynamic structure and tempo modulation from measure 30 until the end of the movement is critically important. Both should be carefully mapped in order to achieve a slow descent to the conclusion. Balance issues are
treacherous, and the theme should always be slightly more present than the
countermelody and accompaniment. Intonation can become an issue for the violinist,
particularly as dynamics become softer. Most often, if there is a problem, it is playing
too high, particularly the notes “c#”, “f#”, “g#”, and “e.” A few minutes of matching
pitch with the piano in rehearsal can prove invaluable in performance. The dissonant
chordal planing used in the piano is not enough to disguise the theme, somewhat altered
and written in the top voice, but it does serve to create an unfocused dreamlike texture.
The countermelody in the violin is altered slightly from the first section. It includes
quintal pizzicati, which may again represent the tuning of a fiddle or may
programmatically represent the “outdoor sounds of nature on those Summer days.”

In measure 34, which has slowed to Adagio cantabile, the movement is brought
closer to its conclusion as the theme in the piano becomes more focused and settles into a
relaxed range, while the violin renders the countermelody above in an unaltered state,
down an octave and in pianissimo. For reasons similar to those on page nine, the
violinist should consider playing the cantabile countermelody predominantly on the “d”
and “g” strings. The downward stems in the left hand accompaniment imply a gentle
emphasis with pedaling, while the legato quintuple figures create a hypnotic quality that
serves as background to the thematic material above. The countermelody in the violin
offers support for the theme, but due to its higher tessitura, is prone to imbalance.
Avoiding the “e” string where possible can help, but must be carefully monitored.
Thematic material exchanges in measure 38, now slowed to Largo cantabile, as the
theme occurs complete for the first time in the violin with the countermelody in the
piano. In order to project the simplicity of the last statement of the theme in the violin, a
simple fingering is suggested involving first and second positions on the "A" and "D" strings. Vibrato should be present, but not intrusive, and the piano's countermelody and accompaniment should take care not to cover the tranquil theme above.

**Third Movement**

The third movement is significantly more compact than the previous two movements, taking less than two minutes to perform. The culmination of the theme/countermelody complex occurs at measure 37, just over halfway through the 57-measure movement. Ives describes the scene as follows:

The Third Movement is more of the nature of the First. As the boys get marching again some of the old men would join in and march as fast (sometimes) as the boys and sing what they felt, regardless—and—thanks to Robert Lowry—"Gather at the River."

Robert Lowry wrote both text and music for the hymn, *Beautiful River*, which offers hope and affirmation of meeting lost loved ones in the afterlife:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Shall we gather at the river} \\
\text{Where bright angel feet have trod} \\
\text{With its crystal tide forever} \\
\text{Flowing by the throne of God?}
\end{align*}\]

Refrain: \[\text{Yes, we'll gather at the river} \]
\[\text{The beautiful, the beautiful river—} \]
\[\text{Gather with the saints at the river,} \]
\[\text{That flows by the throne of God.}^{33}\]

Ira D. Sankey, song leader and soloist for the revivals of Dwight Moody, offers an anecdotal remark on the hymn:

The year after it was written, on Children's Day, in Brooklyn, when the assembled Sunday-schools of the city met in bewildering array, this song was sung by more than forty thousand voices. There was not a child from the gutter or a mission waif who did not know it.

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Lowry describes his hymn as "...brass-band music, [which] has a march movement, and for that reason has become popular." 34 Ives' treatment of the third movement, which was based on a sketch for cornet and strings, reflects Lowry's description of the hymn in several ways. Throughout the movement, the layering of voices on top of one another in the chordal accompaniment figures, the irregular rhythms, and the jazz-like treatment of the instruments resemble this sort of music.

As the movement opens, fragments of the theme are introduced in the piano before being repeated by the violin. Throughout the movement, Ives' features a swinging "long-short" pattern that resembles the word "gather" in inflection. The frequent use of carats and accents suggest, as Ives indicates in the score of the Third Violin Sonata, that they should be "ragged." This effect can be realized by playing on the front side of the beat with an initially wide vibrato, imitating the sound of mutes used by jazz trumpeters. The dark quality of the violin's "g" string is favored when possible. Following the entrance of the violin in measure five, the answer by the piano in measures 6-8 resembles a jazz riff. The violin resumes the swinging exploration of thematic material in measure nine, with an accompaniment in the piano similar to that used in the opening. The countermelody, which is introduced in the violin in measure 19 with accompaniment in the piano, is reminiscent of a brass band, with its blaring and accented double-stops. The use of fourths, fifths, and accents in fortissimo, the momentary metric shift to three in measure 25, and the doubling between violin and piano, contribute to the piercing color in this section. As the texture thickens in measure 25, the character of the stacked voices should resemble measure eight. These chordal figures have a role in the development of

34 Sankey, 118.
the movement, and should be brought out of the texture dynamically. As the end of the theme is given in the violin in measure 27, the countermelody and accompaniment continue in the piano, where the direction of the stacked chords is first inverted in measure 27-28 before descending in measure 28-29. Ives’ chromatic alteration of the theme in measure 28 invites expressive intonation and rhythm before the following two bars offer momentary resolution of the theme. By playing in measure 28 the “a” high and “f♯” low (scooping into it) and lingering a bit rhythmically on the “f♯,” greater distortion can be achieved, heightening the sense of resolution in the following bars. The carats and accents indicated in measures 30-36 in the violin are ragged while the piano accompanies with material from the opening of the movement. A difference between the stung accented figures of measures 33-34 and the heavier “wah-wah” inflection of the carats in the following two bars is desirable. Pulling back slightly on the last beat of measure 36 can intensify the arrival of the theme and countermelody in measure 37. As in measure 28, the chromatic alteration of the hymn in measure 43 should be distorted while the stacked chordal accompaniment ascends. The movement relaxes in measure 45 as the alteration of the theme is “corrected” before a sudden pause. In measure 46, the violin explodes in the refrain of Beautiful River, as the chordal accompaniment becomes more prominent and excited. In measure 52, the same chromatic alteration in the theme propels momentum towards the compressed stretto of the chordal accompaniment, arriving in a surprisingly calm “Yes, we will gather, we will…” before the emphatic statement of “gather at the river” in the violin. The tag in measure 56 leaves the movement, and sonata, seemingly unfinished. The performer must decide how to treat this unusual conclusion. Kevin O. Kelly observes, “What happens beyond death remains an
unanswered question, despite the religious faith in an afterlife put forth in the preceding verse.” Violinist Kenneth Goldsmith relayed Sydney Cowell’s explanation that the meaning of the tag lay in the text, where the listener is expected to complete the verse, answering, “That flows by the throne of God.”

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36 Kenneth Goldsmith, interviewed by Curt Thompson.
Conclusion

The growth in popularity of the music of Charles Ives in the last twenty-five years is largely due to the gradual change in perceptions of American music that began in the 1930s. Since the Cowells’ biography of 1955, scholarship has revealed greater understanding of the complexity of the composer. Building on the work of John Kirkpatrick, biographers and musicologists have in recent years provided invaluable resources to those who perform, study, record, and celebrate Ives’ music. In this regard, the biographical influences on Charles Ives, the revival movement of the 1870s, the reform initiatives of the Progressive era, and attitudes towards American music are particularly important in understanding the context in which the *Fourth Violin Sonata* was written. Furthermore, the structural use of cumulative setting, the attached program note, and Ives’ choice of source material reveal an extra-musical significance from which stylistic decisions may be extrapolated.

Ives’ relationships with George Ives and with Harmony Twichell were profoundly influential on his development as a composer. From his relationship with his father, Ives acquired an open-minded approach to composition that, while fully versed in the European tradition, freely incorporated inventive devices. In spite of harsh criticism by his contemporaries, Ives maintained confidence in his abilities as a composer through his marriage to Harmony Twichell, from whom he also developed a keen awareness of the social and political issues affecting the world around him.

The influence of the revival movement of the 1870s can be seen in Ives’ preoccupation with the gospel hymn and his use of the reverse-developmental form known as cumulative setting, which J. Peter Burkholder suggests may have roots in the
tradition of American folk preachers concluding a sermon with a hymn that distilled the meaning of the preceding oration. Within the development of revivalism, parallels exist between the divergence of American vernacular music from the European model and Ives’ delayed acceptance by the musical academy.

Recent scholarship has investigated the importance of the general movement of reform during the progressive era of 1900-1918, which coincided with Ives’ mature compositional period. During these years, the Armstrong Committee investigation of unethical practices in the insurance industry and the First World War were particularly influential on Ives’ integration of his political, business, and compositional activity. The degree to which his philosophies were related is reflected in the numerous topical writings and compositions from the period. While not overtly political in nature, the idealization of the camp meeting in the program note included in the published score of the *Fourth Violin Sonata* reflects Ives’ social and political philosophies of democracy and the significance of the individual in society.

The difficulties Ives experienced as an aspiring professional musician after his graduation from Yale were to a considerable degree foreshadowed in Antonín Dvorák’s residency at the National Conservatory of America. During the nearly three years he lived in the United States, Dvorák concluded that an American national school could be based on the African-American tradition of gospel hymnody. While he may have been unaware of the close relationship between this tradition and that of Anglo-American hymnody, Dvorák’s proposal was met with stiff opposition by the musical establishment, which by that time included Horatio Parker. Ives’ study with Parker was more beneficial to his development than he cared to admit. However, the disapproval of Parker, and
others of the Second New England School, of the use of American vernacular music as 
source material contributed to the delay of Ives’ acceptance and recognition as a 
composer for many years.

The *Fourth Violin Sonata* is the most accessible of the four violin sonatas, and for 
this reason it is a particularly useful place to begin the study of Ives’ music. While it is 
technically less demanding than some of his other compositions, it presents many of the 
same challenges found in Ives’ larger works. The principle difficulty in performing the 
Fourth Violin Sonata is interpreting a compositional style that, although imbued with 
American ingredients, is ironically foreign to many musicians. Familiarity with the tunes 
used as source material and the manner in which they are incorporated in each movement 
through the use of cumulative setting is paramount. Determining performance objectives 
indicated by the program note included in the score is one means of creating the 
atmosphere of the camp meeting services that were so important to Ives, while familiarity 
with other primary sources, such as *Memos* and *Essays Before a Sonata*, can aid in 
developing performance decisions that concur with Ives’ idiosyncratic musical aesthetics. 
A compelling performance of the *Fourth Violin Sonata* requires an understanding of the 
contextual influences on Charles Ives and the resulting treatment by the composer of 
American vernacular traditions within his own unique and sophisticated compositional 
manner.

As the music of Charles Ives becomes more frequently studied and performed, 
Americans will hopefully more fully discover the wealth of indigenous musical 
resources, which have often been sadly overlooked, before those traditions that inspired 
Ives fade into the distant past. Writing in 1946, Lou Harrison stated:
I suspect that the works of Ives are a great city, with public and private places for all, and myriad sights in all directions....In the not-too-distant future it may be that we will enter this city and find each in his own way his proper home address, letters from the neighbors, and indeed all of a life, for who else has built a place big enough for us, or seen to it that all were equally and justly represented?

Such is the work of Ives. And if we here, in the United States, are still really homeless of the mind, it is not because men have not spent their hearts and spirit building that home...but simply because we refuse to move in.1

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1 Lou Harrison, in *Listen* 11, 1946.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


