Organized in 1925, The Revelers were an influential American popular musical act. Among the most successful artists performing on radio and recording during the late 1920s and 1930s, The Revelers—a quintet comprising four singers and a pianist—were integral both to the mainstreaming of jazz and to the promotion of American songwriters Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers, and George Gershwin, among others. Their pioneering style influenced a generation of vocal groups, serving as a template for subsequent jazz-inflected acts including the Ink Spots, Comedian Harmonists, and The Boswell Sisters. The Revelers sold millions of records, conducted acclaimed international tours, and, due to their long-standing tenure on the NBC radio network, garnered a reputation as the world’s premier vocal ensemble.

The purpose of this document is the preservation of select arrangements composed for The Revelers by Ed Smalle (1887–1968) and Frank J. Black (1898–1969) through the creation of modern performance editions. Seven editions of songs made popular by The Revelers were constructed using handwritten charts drawn from a recently discovered collection of scores that was once the property of the original group. The songs selected provide a cross-section of styles and suitably represent the creative output of Smalle and Black.
The score collection is unique, containing the only extant copies of hundreds of historic, unpublished arrangements composed by Smalle and Black for The Revelers. The seven editions presented here are intended for performance and future publication.
THE VOCAL ARRANGEMENTS OF ED SMALLE AND FRANK J. BLACK:
SEVEN PERFORMANCE EDITIONS OF SONGS FOR MALE
QUARTET MADE POPULAR BY THE REVELERS

by

Craig Alan Phillips

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Approved by

Carla LeFevre
Committee Chair
This dissertation, written by Craig Alan Phillips, has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair  Carla LeFevre
Committee Members  Welborn E. Young
                   Donald Hartman
                   Sarah B. Dorsey

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Musicological research is necessary to promote understanding of and appreciation for the role popular music has played in the development of the cultural identity of the United States. The scarcity of documentation, negative biases toward popular music prevalent among historians, and the degradation of extant media and materials pose serious threats to the preservation of indigenous American music, particularly the output of early pioneers of recorded and broadcast entertainment.1

In 2015, I located a large collection of manuscript scores that were once the property of The Revelers, arguably the most successful recording and radio vocal quartet of the 1920s and 1930s. The collection—discovered in an attic in Redding, Connecticut where it had languished since the early 1980s—contains 512 handwritten, unpublished song arrangements composed for The Revelers by Ed Smalle (1887–1968) and Frank J. Black (1898–1969). Included are many of The Revelers’ recorded hits, as well as unrecorded works not heard or performed since they aired in the 1930s.

The purpose of this document is the preservation of the arrangements of Ed Smalle and Frank J. Black, and, with it, the legacy of one of the most influential radio and recording acts of the early 20th century. Working from original handwritten scores and verifying their contents against extant audio media (commercial recordings, electrical

transcriptions, archived radio broadcasts, etc.), I have created modern performance editions of twenty-nine Smalle and Black song arrangements.\(^2\) The seven scores presented here are a sample of the larger body of completed performance editions. They provide a cross-section of styles and suitably represent the output of both composers.

Table 1

Performance Editions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Composer(s)</th>
<th>Arranger(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>“Chloe”</td>
<td>Music: Charles Daniels</td>
<td>Arranger: Ed Smalle/Frank J. Black</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Gus Kahn</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Arthur Schwartz</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Jack Yellen</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Gus Kahn/Frank Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>“Oh Miss Hannah”</td>
<td>Music: Jessie Deppen</td>
<td>Arranger: Ed Smalle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Thekla Hollingsworth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Ira Gershwin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lew Brown, Ray Henderson</td>
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Beyond the scope of this document, I plan to publish an anthology of authentic Revelers arrangements. Not only would the anthology be the first of its kind, but it

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\(^2\) An electrical transcription, or E.T., is a phonograph recording made exclusively for radio broadcast and not for commercial sale.
would also fulfill an unmet goal of the original ensemble to make their signature songs publicly available.\(^3\)

\(^3\) “Arrangements,” *New York Sun*, June 1, 1935.
CHAPTER II
THE REVELERS

Organized in 1925, The Revelers were the most successful vocal ensemble of the early electrical era.\textsuperscript{4} They were integral both to the mainstreaming of American jazz and to the promotion of songwriters Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers, and George Gershwin, among others. Their sophisticated song arrangements—the work of pianist-arrangers Ed Smalle and Frank J. Black—combined innovative vocal scoring and harmonic syntax to produce a style that inspired a generation of vocal groups including the Ink Spots, Pickens Sisters, Andrews Sisters, and the Comedian Harmonists, to name but a few. Some popular music historians count The Revelers among the earliest pioneers of vocal jazz, pointing to the use of extended and altered chords and the implementation of stylistic devices such as scatting and instrumental mimicry.\textsuperscript{5} Detractors, however, object to the broad application of the term “jazz” with regard to their music, drawing distinctions, some along racial lines, between urban “hot” and urbane “sweet” varieties.\textsuperscript{6} Regardless of where on the jazz-pop continuum their music falls, The Revelers were heralded as innovators in their day. George Gershwin, for instance, considered the group to be exemplars in jazz singing:

\textsuperscript{4} The electrical era refers to a period in the history of recorded sound in which electrically-amplified microphones were used to make recordings: 1925-1947.
\textsuperscript{6} Will Friedwald, \textit{Jazz Singing: America’s Great Voices from Bessie Smith to Bebop and Beyond} (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1990), 157.
For any singer, an excellent training in jazz rhythms is the study of the phonograph records made by . . . the Revelers. The quartet singing of the Revelers is marvelous, not merely in their perfection of rhythm, but also in their unique ability to get unusual and skillful orchestral effects with the voice.7

The Shannon Four

The original Revelers—first tenor Franklyn Baur (1903–1950); second tenor Lewis James (1892–1959); baritone Elliott Shaw (1887–1973); and bass Wilfred Glenn (1881–1970)—began their musical partnership under a different name: The Shannon Four. By design, The Shannon Four was stylistically analogous to celebrated male quartets of the 1900s and 1910s such as the Peerless, American, and Haydn quartets. They were organized to fill a valuable market niche for the Victor Talking Machine Company. In 1917, Victor executives tasked Glenn, a young but experienced recording artist, with the assembly of a new male quartet aimed at replacing The Orpheus Quartet, a successful but ailing group on the company’s roster.8 Male quartets were among the top-selling artists in record label catalogs since the earliest days of the commercial recording industry. While demand for the old-fashioned repertoire of close-harmony quartets was on the wane during the 1910s as interest in jazz and dance music surged, it was a prudent business decision for Victor to retain a male quartet on their rolls.9 Ethnomusicologist Gage Averill estimates that male quartets accounted for 20% of the top-selling recordings between 1900 and 1920.10 Glenn proved successful at assembling a winning combination

10 Averill, 64.
of voices; The Shannon Four achieved wide acclaim recording traditional close-harmony fare.

**Acoustic Recording Process**

Prior to 1925, sound recording was entirely mechanical. The process of recording, often referred to as acoustical recording, captured sound without the aid of a microphone or electrical amplification. A cone-shaped recording horn was the conduit for transmission of sound between its source and the recording device. Actuated by sound waves channeled through the horn, the sympathetic vibrations of a stylus attached to a floating diaphragm at the small end of the horn scrawled sound-modulated grooves into a malleable medium (foil, zinc, wax, etc.) on a rotating disc or cylinder.\(^\text{11}\) To ensure the highest fidelity possible, the performances had to be loud. This is largely to blame for the strident and raucous quality of some early recordings. Another technical limitation of the acoustic process was the limited range of recordable audio frequencies.\(^\text{12}\) Quite simply, certain instruments, female voices included, did not record well. Male voices, along with banjos, xylophones, trombones, saxophones, and a few other instruments, did.\(^\text{13}\) This accounts in part for the proliferation of male vocal quartet singing in American popular music during the first decades of the 20th century.

The rigor of acoustic recording was an occupational hazard for singers as it required them to produce as much sound as possible in order to ensure high-fidelity recordings. Strong, durable voices were a necessity. As such, most recording artists


were classically trained stage and concert singers.\textsuperscript{14} This was true not only of soloists, but also of quartet singers.

As evidenced by the high representation of quartet singing in the output of early popular recordings, vocal quartets arguably benefited from technical limitations that favored male voices; however, quartet singing was a beloved tradition in the United States prior to the advent of recorded sound. Male singing societies, vaudeville foursomes, and minstrel groups were ingrained in the cultural vernacular as early as 1830.\textsuperscript{15} The commercial recording industry capitalized on the existing popularity of the male quartet. As a result, pioneering recording acts such as the aforementioned Peerless, American, and Haydn quartets achieved unprecedented levels of commercial success, recording hundreds of songs and selling millions of recordings. Baritone S. H. Dudley—a member of both the American and Haydn quartets—alleged to have earned $12,000 in 1900 from recording alone.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{Electrical Recording Process}

As early as 1922, radio began to pose an existential threat to the recording industry. Consumers possessing the necessary hardware could receive free entertainment over the airwaves. Moreover, the audio quality of radio broadcasts, produced with electronically amplified sound-signal pickups, offered a significant improvement over the sound of acoustic era commercial recordings.\textsuperscript{17} The age of the microphone had arrived. By 1925, every major recording label had converted to electrical recording to compete

\textsuperscript{15} Averill, 23.
\textsuperscript{17} Sutton, 147.
with the sonic realism of radio. With the advent of microphones and vacuum tube amplification, a significantly wider dynamic range could be captured on record.\textsuperscript{18} This not only expanded which instruments could be represented accurately—including those poorly suited to the acoustic recording process—but also the very nature of performing in the studio. No longer were musicians required to blare and bellow into a recording horn. Electrical recording allowed for greater nuance, tonal variety, and rhythmic complexity. Reveler Franklyn Baur summarized the importance of this advancement in recording technology:

\begin{quote}
The invention of the electrical process was of greater significance than the average layman realizes. Not only are the finished records incomparably better from every standpoint, but the strain on the singer is immeasurably eased. A record can be made in exactly one-third the time it used to take, and no longer is it necessary for us to nearly crack our throats singing into that hated horn. Indeed, it was only the thoroughly competent and well-trained voice that ever escaped unaffected by these conditions.\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

It is no accident, then, that its arrival coincided with the formation of The Revelers.

When Victor Records made the switch to electrical recording, Wilfred Glenn and Franklyn Baur proposed a change in artistic direction. Both were frustrated with the stylistic conventions and worn repertoire of The Shannon Four. They wanted to explore a jazz-inflected approach inspired by popular dance bands. Victor executives authorized their reinvention as a jazz combination and dubbed the group The Revelers.\textsuperscript{20} To complete the transformation, the quartet was augmented by an up-and-coming jazz

\textsuperscript{19} Peter Hugh Reed, “Lest We Forget,” \textit{Phonograph Monthly Review}, September 1927, 494.
\textsuperscript{20} Riggs, 158-63.
pianist-arranger, Ed Smalle. Smalle was given charge over the group’s musical direction. The vocal panache of the four singers coupled with Smalle’s fleet fingering and inventive arrangements proved a winning marriage. The quintet’s second disc, a Smalle arrangement of Harry Akst’s “Dinah” issued by Victor Records in December 1925, became a runaway hit. “Dinah” propelled The Revelers to stardom, purportedly selling in excess of two million copies worldwide.21

From there, a string of hit records followed including “Valencia,” “Baby Face,” “I’m Looking Over A Four-Leaf Clover,” “Happy Feet,” and “Birth of the Blues.” Though exclusive to Victor Records, the group moonlighted on other labels, performing under various *nomes de disque*. On Columbia Records, they appeared as The Singing Sophomores, and on Brunswick Records, The Merrymakers, all the while continuing to record traditional close harmony as The Shannon Quartet. In 1927, Ed Smalle was replaced by Frank J. Black, a multi-talented musician who would soon rise to great prominence in the radio industry. Baur, too, left the group around the same time in order to pursue a career as a concert soloist. He was eventually replaced by tenor James Melton, a future film and opera star. The lineup of first tenor Melton, second tenor James, baritone Shaw, bass Glenn, and pianist-arranger Black would prove to be the most successful version of The Revelers.

Popular music historian Joel Whitburn estimates that The Revelers generated thirteen “Top 20” hits between 1926 and 1930, including one of the earliest renditions of

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Jerome Kern’s “Ol’ Man River” from *Show Boat* (1927).\(^\text{22}\) Prior to the near collapse of the recording industry following the Wall Street Crash of 1929, the group was prolific, recording more than seventy releases for Victor Records alone between 1925 and 1930.\(^\text{23}\) In addition to their success as recording artists, they were among the first musical acts signed to the nascent National Broadcast Company (NBC).\(^\text{24}\)

The Revelers’ reign as “radio’s most popular vocal quartette” began in 1926 with a regular engagement on *The Eveready Hour*, the first major variety show in broadcast history.\(^\text{25}\) Their radio career continued uninterrupted for nearly fifteen years. By 1930, they had “appeared on sixteen commercial radio programs and at one time appeared on national radio networks four hours a week.”\(^\text{26}\) The popularity of The Revelers endured throughout the 1930s, and the group remained NBC’s house vocal quartet. Their program credits on the NBC network included featured appearances on the *House of Wrigley*, *Cities Service Concerts*, *Seiberling Tires Hour*, *Palmolive Hour*, and *The Voice of Firestone*, among others. In 1932, the quartet was given their own weekly half-hour radio program over the NBC network that featured not only their standard four-voice-and-piano selections, but also songs accompanied by string quartet and a 16-piece string ensemble.\(^\text{27}\) According to press materials prepared by the National Broadcasting and Concert Bureau and verified in reports published by industry journals, The Revelers were

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\(^{24}\) Riggs, 158-63.
\(^{26}\) “Revelers Known by Many Names,” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, October 15, 1930.
\(^{27}\) NEA service, “Revelers Given Their Own Hour,” *Evening Independent, St. Petersburg, Florida*, August 18, 1932, 4.
among the highest-paid radio performers. A column in the December 1934 issue of *Radioland* pegs the group’s annual income at $200,000.\textsuperscript{28} Adjusted for inflation using Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index data, that sum converts to $3,582,194 in 2016 USD.\textsuperscript{29} The figure is all the more impressive when its Depression-Era context is considered.

Though radio program sponsors required The Revelers to perform under pseudonyms (e.g., Palmolive Four, RCA Radiotrons, R&R Entertainers, Dodge Quartet, Seiberling Singers, etc.), their signature sound was unmistakable. The group was known to millions of radio listeners and record buyers around the world. Starting in 1927, The Revelers conducted regular international tours, performing in some of Europe’s most prestigious music halls, cabarets, and vaudeville houses. Event listings in *Billboard* magazine indicate tour stops in virtually every European capital city and performances as far afield as Russia and Egypt. Consistently, they were met with great enthusiasm and critical acclaim, overcoming the biases of the European cultural elite:

Ordinarily, it would be unthinkable that [American musicians] could intrude into the province of Brahms, Beethoven and Liszt. Furthermore, it would be simply inconceivable that anyone would care to hear something offered by this nouveau riche country. Yet, . . . [The Revelers] drew such a crowd of musically seasoned Viennese that two hundred of them had to be seated on the stage, and there was hardly room for the young Americans to make their proper entrances and exits.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{28} “Bits about Broadcasters,” *Radioland*, December 1934.
\textsuperscript{30} “Packed Houses Hail Revelers Abroad,” *Hartford Courant*, April 20, 1930.
The role they played in the introduction and dissemination of American popular music abroad was significant. It is effectively summarized in a review of the group’s Paris debut reprinted in translation in *The Christian Science Monitor* in 1928:

> The [Revelers] have played a considerable part in the spreading of mechanical music in France. . . . Many of our countrymen, indeed, proved systematically hostile, not only to the ideal of the [phonograph], but also to its repertory. Jazz and Negro music was spoken of only with scorn. Now, the vocal quartets of the [Revelers] appeared so musical, so distinguished in writing, so ingenious in harmony, and so well thought out in tone color, that their fame spread like a puff of powder.31

According to multiple accounts in *Variety* magazine, the group’s popularity abroad was so pervasive that venues began presenting imposter quartets billed as The Revelers.32 In 1935, the group incorporated to “protect their fair name against imitators.”33

**Song Arrangements**

The Revelers built their repertoire around the output of a new generation of Tin Pan Alley songsmiths such as Buddy DeSylva, Ray Henderson, and Buck Hanley, among others.34 The songs, many of which were written for musical comedies of the day, featured urbane lyrics, sophisticated harmonies, and danceable rhythms. In their arrangements, Smalle and Black accentuated these elements, creating a new paradigm for

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34 Tin Pan Alley was a nickname for the network of songwriters and publishers operating in New York City during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
quartet singing: virtuosic, instrumental, and rhythmically active. It marked a clear break from traditional close harmony. Baritone Elliott Shaw described the style shift:

The secret of our individuality lies in the development of a new type of ensemble singing, in which we break away from the traditional quartet manner and treat the songs rather as an orchestra would. We use the various voices as so many instruments and have entirely eliminated any suggestion of the oldtime [sic] barbershop quartet.\(^{35}\)

The wooden vocalism and maudlin sentiment of acoustic era quartets were rendered obsolete by the modern approach of The Revelers. The novelty of The Revelers’ sound did not go unnoticed. Volney Hurd, writing for *The Christian Science Monitor* in 1927, went so far as to call it “saxophonic”:

[The Revelers] have developed a new branch of vocal activity, which this writer feels is best described as “vocal orchestration.” Marked rhythmic changes, modulations, changes of key and all the things one might expect from a good orchestration are present.\(^{36}\)

Ed Smalle and Frank Black rightly received much of the credit for The Revelers’ pioneering sound. Smalle, the architect of many of the group’s first hits, was hailed by *The New Yorker* as having “revolutionized quartetting” with his “amazing arrangements.”\(^{37}\) Replaced by Black in 1927, his tenure with the group was short-lived, but his danceable, happy-go-lucky treatment of rhythm and clever chromatic “snakes”

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and “swipes” established The Revelers’ sound. Many of the group’s biggest sellers were Smalle arrangements: “Dinah,” “Nola,” “Gonna Charleston Back to Charleston,” “No Foolin’,” etc. Black then built on Smalle’s compositional style and in many ways professionalized it. His arrangements exhibited much more discipline than Smalle’s, incorporating fewer “doo-wacka-doo” instrumental effects and improvised solos and more formal structure. Black capitalized on the range and power of The Revelers’ four singers—each an established concert, recording, and radio soloist—in order to create a style that hybridized popular music and light opera. Under Black’s supervision, The Revelers achieved a reputation as “the greatest of all present-day singing male organizations, ultra-modern idealizers of popular themes aided by delightful voices and perfect diction.”

The Revelers were equally at home in popular music and what was termed “semi-classical” by radio program directors. Their versatility as singers (i.e., the ability to sing both classical and pop music) set them apart in an era increasingly dominated by crooners like Morton Downey, Rudy Vallée, and Bing Crosby. John K. Ames, writing for Radio Digest in 1929, takes great pains to deny that America is “jazz mad,” using the “cultured brand of music” delivered by The Revelers as proof that audiences prefer “classical and semi-classical selections.” The repertoire of the ensemble, while heavy on show tunes and pop songs, included classical works by Rachmaninov, Strauss, and Saint-Saëns adapted by Black for male voices. Though no scores or recordings exist, Black’s

[38] Snakes and swipes are terms in the barbershop singing lexicon used to describe chromatic alterations to a chord by non-melodic vocal parts. Their function is transitional.
arrangement of George Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” for piano and male quartet was a hit with radio audiences and remained a fixture in The Revelers’ concert repertoire.

By the early 1930s, The Revelers had become enshrined as radio stars, but Ed Smalle’s invaluable contribution to the group’s early success was effectively written out of their history. In press materials and network narratives, Frank Black was given sole credit for the premier status of the group. In an article published in 1934, Esquire magazine ignores Smalle completely and attributes The Revelers’ success entirely to Black:

The Revelers . . . are Frank Black’s creation. When he heard them in 1924, they were in the barbershop class. Since then they have become the world’s leading male quartet. Frank Black had the idea of having men sing instrumentally instead of vocally. He knew four saxophone players breathed alike, intoned alike, phrased alike and enunciated alike. So he wrote arrangements for The Revelers to sing just that way. . . . He fostered the toe-tapping, “doo-wacka-doo” singing with which The Revelers shelved the “Sweet Adeline” quartets for good.41

In the latter half of the 1930s, The Revelers’ visibility waned. The group ceased touring and, according to the NBC radio commercial program index, their activity on the network was reduced to one regular engagement by 1938, The Richardson & Robbins Radio Hour.42 It is unknown if circumstances aside from flagging popularity lead to their retirement, but The Revelers left the airwaves in 1940, effectively disbanding. Their last known concert performance was a Rotary Club event in Dover, New Jersey, April 1940.43

41 Carleton Smith, “Fame and Frank Black,” Esquire, March, 3, 1930, 34.
42 Revelers Quartet, Index Cards, NBC Collection, Recorded Sound Research Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
43 Concert program, Dover Rotary Club, April 2, 1940, in the author’s possession.
Ed Smalle (1887-1968)

Edwin “Ed” Smalle was born November 3, 1887 in Roxbury, Massachusetts. He began his career demonstrating songs for sheet music sellers in Boston and New York as early as 1902. In 1914, Smalle was hired by Harry Von Tilzer Publishing Company as répétiteur, providing instruction to a list of prominent stage and recording artists that included Al Jolson, Fanny Brice, and Fred Astaire. His job at Von Tilzer led to an association and eventual recording partnership with famed tenor Billy Murray with whom he recorded a series of top-selling duets. Smalle’s distinctive comic tenor, voguish piano playing, and skill at arranging were in steady demand; from 1919–1925, he built a respectable freelance career recording for virtually every recording company operating in the American Northeast. In 1925, he was enlisted as pianist-arranger for The Revelers. The success of the group, due in large part to Smalle’s trendsetting arrangements, resulted in a range of opportunities for Smalle on the NBC and Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) networks, both as performer and music director. He became one of the most sought-after arrangers in the industry, scoring songs for singing combinations including the Leaders Trio, Seven G’s, Frim Sisters, Vagabond Glee Club, and the Eton Boys. The impetus for his departure from The Revelers in 1927 is unknown, but he continued to arrange for the group intermittently and oversaw the publication of a series of male quartet arrangement anthologies in the late 1930s billed as “successfully introduced by The Revelers.”

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and 1937, the Robbins Folio of Modern Quartettes for Male Voices series does not contain any authentic Revelers arrangements, but rather simplified imitations composed by Smalle for amateur quartets.

Failing health forced Smalle to retire from radio and recording in 1940. He relocated to Westerly, Rhode Island where he remained active as a music teacher until his death on November 23, 1968.

**Frank J. Black (1898-1969)**

Frank Jeremiah Black was born in Philadelphia on November 29, 1894. He began his formal musical training as a boy soprano at the historic St. Clement’s Church in Downtown Philadelphia, but as early as age nine he was playing piano for a local nickelodeon. Black studied organ as a teenager and later claimed that the technique of registration greatly informed his arrangements and orchestrations.\(^{46}\) He graduated from Haverford College with a degree in chemistry, but chose instead to pursue a career in music upon landing a well-paying job playing piano in a hotel dance orchestra.\(^ {47}\) Black continued his studies under the renowned Hungarian pianist-composer Rafael Joseffy, commuting weekly to New York City from Philadelphia where he was by then co-owner and sole performer of a successful piano roll company. In 1915, he was engaged by the Fox Theatre in Philadelphia to write and arrange songs for vaudeville acts. Soon, his reputation as a gifted orchestrator and conductor was attracting the attention of larger venues. In 1916, Black was appointed assistant director of the Century Theater in New

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\(^{46}\) Smith, 124.

York City. There, he developed associations with many of Tin Pan Alley’s brightest young stars.

Between 1921 and 1926, Black was orchestrating, arranging, and directing on- and off-Broadway musicals for George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Jerome Kern, and Rudolf Friml, among others. His affiliation with Brunswick Phonograph Company began in 1925 when he was contracted as General Musical Director. It was there that he began his affiliation with The Revelers who were recording for the company under the alias The Merrymakers. How it was that Black came to replace Ed Smalle in the group is unknown, but he assumed duties as pianist-arranger in 1927. Refining their sound and providing them with an enormous catalog of signature arrangements, he remained the “power behind the throne” for the rest of The Revelers’ career.

Beginning as early as 1922, Black began affiliations with the companies that would eventually emerge as leaders in the radio industry: American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T), Radio Corporation of America (RCA) and NBC. Positioned as he was, and being a gifted composer, conductor, and performer, Black quickly established himself as an authority in the nascent field. The success of The Revelers across myriad NBC radio programs further cemented his reputation. In 1928, he was appointed Musical Director of NBC, a post he would retain for twenty years.

Black established the NBC String Symphony in 1932 and was credited with professionalizing the NBC Symphony Orchestra, which he co-conducted alongside

Arturo Toscanini and Leopold Stokowski.\textsuperscript{49} He was a tireless champion of classical music and took very seriously the role radio had to play in its promotion. As David Ewen summarized it,

Black devoted himself assiduously to the cause of good music over the air, and few musicians have served this cause so stubbornly. . . . As conductor of the Magic Key Hour, the String Symphony, and the NBC Orchestra, Frank Black persistently brought the greatest music of the past and the present to nationwide audiences. . . . One of his radio series, for example, was devoted exclusively to the works of young and lesser known American composers who, Black felt, deserved a hearing.\textsuperscript{50}

After leaving his post at NBC in 1948, Black continued to work as conductor intermittently throughout the 1950s. He served as conductor for Revelers alumnus James Melton’s \textit{Harvest of Stars} program, and later \textit{The Jane Pickens Show}.

Frank Black died in Atlanta, Georgia on January 29, 1968.

\textsuperscript{49} Paul Girard, “Frank Black and His String Symphony,” \textit{American Music Lover}, July 1935, 75-6.
CHAPTER III
SCORE COLLECTION: DISCOVERY AND DESCRIPTION

As stated in the introduction, I located the collection of Revelers arrangements in 2015. When I began my research, however, I was unaware of its existence. I knew that the arrangements were never published nor authoritatively transcribed by a second party, as no records of registration exist in the U.S. Copyright Office, and neither composer is represented by modern-day publishers or performance rights organizations (e.g., Broadcast Music, Inc. [BMI], The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers [ASCAP], etc.). Furthermore, a thorough search of library holdings revealed that no papers or documents related to the arrangements existed. Given the sophistication of Smalle and Black’s arrangements, however, I felt confident that they had been fully scored (i.e., “written out”) at the time they were composed. If true, I reasoned, the scores might yet exist. My slim hope was that they remained in the possession of a relative of Smalle, Black, or one of the other members. Soon after embarking on a search for descendants, I discovered that the story of The Revelers did not end when the original group disbanded around 1940.

In 1947, original member Wilfred Glenn rebooted The Revelers with a new lineup of singers.51 The reformed Revelers, coasting on the name and reputation of the original group, experienced modest success as a touring act. They remained on the concert circuit

until Glenn retired in 1955. At that time, he sold the business and the group’s vast library of arrangements to a tenor in the reformed Revelers named Thomas Edwards. In an article in *The New York Times*, Edwards called the purchase of 1,500 Revelers arrangements “as much a gift as a sale.”

Under his leadership, The Revelers persevered for two decades more. Following Edwards’s departure in 1973, ownership of The Revelers was transferred again, possibly to a baritone of Edwards’s vintage named Raymond Murcell. This transition was evidently less successful; the group was shuttered for good shortly thereafter. The last documented performance of The Revelers occurred in 1981.

Both the knowledge that The Revelers remained active into the 1970s, and the confirmation of the existence of a collection of arrangements validated and invigorated my investigation. Using newspaper articles and promotional material, I was able to construct a near complete personnel record of The Revelers spanning three decades, 1947–1975. Over several months, by way of letter mailings, ancestry database searches, want-ad placements, and general internet sleuthing, I succeeded in locating a significant number of relatives and associates of both the original members and singers in latter-day Revelers lineups. While most were generous with the information they possessed, no one knew what became of the group’s signature arrangements. I continued to search, going so far as writing every person with the last name Lamphere living in and around Detroit in the hopes of locating a relative of Marion Lamphere, Wilfred Glenn’s second wife.

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54 “Concert – Amway Convention, Trenton War Memorial Auditorium,” July 11, 1981, in the author’s possession.
Out of leads, I nearly abandoned the search. Thankfully, a comment left on a blog post delivered a breakthrough.

In 2008, Ben Sisario, arts columnist for *The New York Times*, published an essay via his personal Blogger.com account titled “Exposed! The real Frank Black.” It was a pithy but comprehensive account of Frank J. Black’s musical career.\(^{55}\) I had read the post several times, but never bothered to scan the comments left by other readers. Twelve replies deep in the comment thread, I found the following message dated January 12, 2012 from a user named *cberber*:

Hello All, My father was a reveler in the late 60s early 70s and left us about 9 milk crates full of original hand annotated Frank Black scores. I am wondering if there is any interest out there for these, It is a very large collection.

Within days, I had secured a telephone number for *cberber*, or Chris Berberich. Mr. Berberich was the son of the late Hugh Berberich, a baritone in the last formation of The Revelers. I soon learned that his account of the music in his possession was accurate. He had inherited hundreds of shabby, handwritten scores bearing Frank Black’s signature. On closer inspection, I discovered that the collection also contained a modest number of arrangements composed by Ed Smalle.

The score collection is unique. It contains the only extant copies of hundreds of authentic Revelers arrangements dating from the early 1920s to the late 1930s. Authenticated by photographic evidence, the scores are the very ones used by the group

in the radio and recording studio. The list of composers whose songs are featured in the
collection reads like a who’s who of great American songwriters: Irving Berlin, Cole
Porter, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers, George Cohan, etc. Often
written at the request of the composer, Smalle’s and Black’s arrangements were first
generation interpretations of songs in the canon of the “Great American Songbook.” The
Revelers’ versions of “Blue Moon,” “It’s De-Lovely,” “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes,”
“Singin’ in the Rain,” and many others were among the earliest presentations of what are
now revered American pop standards. The scores to their historic arrangements of these
songs exist only in the collection.

Each arrangement is stored in its original folder. The contents vary, but typically
the folders contain a master vocal score and charts for four individual voices.
Commercial sheet music for the song on which an arrangement is based is commonly
included. As to be expected with paper documents of early 20th century vintage, the
physical condition varies. Some are well preserved; others are deteriorating, damaged by
mold, water, and heavy use. In many cases, notation is obscured and parts are missing or
fragmentary. Very few folders in the collection contain dedicated piano scores for the
quartet arrangements. The most plausible explanation for this is that accompaniments
were improvised at the keyboard by arrangers Smalle and Black; therefore, no score was
needed. Regardless, few piano parts exist, which complicated the process of creating
performance editions.

The collection includes fewer arrangements by Smalle than Black. This is due in
part to Smalle’s two-year tenure with The Revelers as opposed to Black’s thirteen-year
association. As stated above, many of the group’s early hits were Smalle arrangements; however, most are absent from the collection, including songs such as “Lucky Day,” “Collegiate,” “Birth of the Blues,” and “Dinah.” It might be the scores were removed or lost; it is also possible the scores only existed as disposable sketches or outlines. In support of this theory, the Smalle arrangements for which scores exist in the collection are best described as chaotic. Many are scrawled across the page with notes and instructions scribbled in margins or on loose supplemental sheets. It is not improbable, therefore, that the original scores were too disjointed to warrant saving. Frank Black’s scores, by comparison, are orderly. In terms of navigation, it is generally easier to determine his intent, and to locate material even if it does not appear in sequence on the score.

Many of the scores include parts for additional instruments, violins in particular. Given the uniformity and style of the manuscript, it appears that these were added later for the purpose of radio variety shows. Regardless, it is not within the scope of this document to restore parts for added instruments.

The available literature on the arrangements of Ed Smalle and Frank Black is virtually nonexistent. Biographical information on Ed Smalle, for instance, is limited to basics and only is available in the form of liner notes and in summaries on the websites of collectors and record enthusiasts. In the case of Frank Black, the information available is more robust, but no serious attempt at cataloging his output or creating a definitive accounting of his career has been made. The New York Performing Arts Library in New York City possesses a folder of useful material on Frank Black (e.g., press clippings,
photographs, press releases, etc.), but it is a small collection and contains no musical scores.

The arrangements composed for The Revelers by Smalle and Black were never published, neither were they formally registered with the U.S. Copyright Office. Furthermore, there are no estates overseeing the management of intellectual property, and neither Smalle nor Black is protected by performance rights organizations such as ASCAP and BMI. In sum, their arrangements have expired into the public domain and copyright has been forfeited.
CHAPTER IV
PROCEDURES

The seven arrangements featured in this document represent a cross-section of a much larger body of performance editions prepared from the original scores. A complete list of the twenty-nine performance editions created is found in Appendix A. As stated in the introduction, a future goal is the publication of an anthology, or series of anthologies, of historic Revelers arrangements.

In selecting the arrangements to include in this document, I have attempted to present a wide range of styles and techniques so as to represent fully the quality, ingenuity, and diversity of the work of Smalle and Black. Also, an additional, non- artistic limitation affected which songs are presented herein. The publishers controlling the use of songs that remain under copyright were largely uncooperative, presenting many obstacles to the use of the material they ostensibly manage. Alfred Music was the exception; I was granted permission on February 7, 2017 to include six songs under a “fair use” designation that allows for educational usage of copyrighted material managed by Alfred Music. Ethelbert Nevin’s “Narcissus” is the only song included here that is not under its management. It is safely in the public domain according to the print licensing department of The Music Sales Group. As a further precaution against unauthorized use of copyrighted material, pages three and five of each score have been voluntarily omitted from the final form of this document.
The process of creating definitive performance editions from the handwritten originals was labor intensive. It required the reassembly of all score content (e.g., vocal parts, piano accompaniment; lyrics; etc.), the error-checking of reassembled musical material against reliable audio media, and the typesetting of a modern score. As explained in Chapter III, the physical state of many of the handwritten scores made interpreting composer intent difficult. In addition, parts were sometimes fragmentary or missing entirely. For example, both tenor charts for “Dancing in the Dark” were missing and with “Oh Miss Hannah,” the material for tenor 1 was but an incomplete outline sketched across four loose pages. Similar gaps existed elsewhere. Accordingly, reconstruction was necessary. A combination of two methods of reconstruction was applied: transcribing content from available audio sources, and inferring composer intent based on knowledge of stylistic and compositional conventions.

Essential to creating definitive performance editions was the preparation of piano accompaniments. Of the arrangements presented here, only “Dancing in the Dark” featured a fully-scored piano part. “Narcissus,” a piano solo adapted for The Revelers by Frank Black, employed Ethelbert Nevin’s original composition but in a form modified by Black. Black’s modifications were not committed to score. The other songs neither included piano music nor provided instructions of any sort. To correct this problem, I enlisted the help of pianist-composers Anthony Patterson of Alma College and Philip Orr of Rider University. Both are skillful improvisers and comfortable in a range of pop and jazz styles. I provided Patterson and Orr with dossiers for each assigned song that included a master vocal score, sheet music for the song on which the arrangement was
based, and all relevant audio recordings. I instructed them to construct idiomatic approximations based on the provided recordings that would be suitable for modern-day use. Given the improvisational style of Smalle, Black, and the other pianists that appear on Revelers recordings, I determined it was not useful to create note-for-note transcriptions of the piano accompaniments. As further justification of this decision, I offer that the role of the piano in most Revelers songs was supportive and not independent, existing to provide a rhythmic foundation and to double the vocal parts. In the case of “Chloe” and “O Miss Hannah,” I requested that specific non-commercial recordings be used as bases for piano parts: an electrical transcription recorded in 1937 and a radio broadcast from 1936. This decision was strictly aesthetic; I simply preferred the non-commercial versions to their commercially recorded counterparts.

To achieve as broad a base of information as possible, I extended my search for relevant audio material beyond The Revelers’ commercial recordings. These secondary audio sources included electrical transcriptions, archived radio broadcasts, and film soundtracks. A significant amount of material was gathered, not only from libraries and collections around the country including the NBC Radio Collection at The Library of Congress, but also items acquired from private collectors and families of the group’s members. To date, I have been in contact with relatives of nearly every original Reveler: Barbara Eisen, granddaughter of bass Wilfred Glenn; Filly Meunier and Abigail Shaw, granddaughters of baritone Elliott Shaw; Margo Nutt, daughter of tenor James Melton; Craig Arnold and Lou DiCrescenzo, grandsons of tenor Louis James; and Lauren

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56 The Revelers were featured in several short subject feature films produced by Warner Brothers/Vitaphone and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in the late 1920s. Only two Vitaphone films survive.
Stephens, granddaughter of pianist/arranger Ed Smalle. Unfortunately, none had audio materials of any value. They did, however, share memorabilia, ephemera, and many interesting stories.

One of the challenges of creating definitive performance editions was reconciling differences between what appeared in the scores and what was sung in the studio. The economics of recording in the 1920s did not allow for endless retakes. As such, it is likely that producers settled on what they considered to be the best take of a session. Discrepancies existing between written score and recording therefore might be errors deemed passable. Then again, it is possible that alterations or corrections were made during a session that were committed to recording but never written down. There are many examples of seemingly intentional changes: chord respellings, subtle changes to lyrics, notes or passages being reassigned to another singer, etc. On a case-by-case basis, it was necessary for me to determine whether or not anomalies were intentional and to modify the scores accordingly.

Similar to the need to reconcile disparities between the written score and recording, accounting for the vocal contributions of Ed Smalle presented a vexing challenge. On The Revelers’ early recordings, Smalle sometimes scatted along, adding an ornamental, albeit intermittent, fifth vocal part. Rarely do his interpolations appear in the written scores, but in certain cases they expand the arrangement in a valuable way. For example, Smalle provides additional backing vocals to the second tenor’s whistled obligato during the introduction to “Oh Miss Hannah,” mm. 1-6. His contribution adds a 7th to an otherwise spare duet between the first tenor and baritone. Unlike the decorative
scatting he applied to other songs, Smalle’s singing on “Oh Miss Hannah” produced valuable additions. As such, they are included in the performance edition, reassigned to the otherwise tacet bass voice.

In developing the process of creating performance editions, it was necessary to determine how much to account for style with regard to musical notation. As a performer in a professional vocal chamber ensemble, I appreciate a composer or editor who provides enough information to gauge how a piece is to be performed, but not so much as to impose a fixed interpretation. The Revelers’ style was undeniably idiosyncratic, but to slavishly notate their every nuance would result in a hyper-detailed score that is tedious to navigate if not altogether arbitrary. These performance editions are intended for practical use. Accordingly, I approached notational detail in moderation in order to produce scores that are visually straightforward but honor crucial stylistic and interpretative features such as dynamic contrasts, articulations, and events related to tempo. I concluded that recordings of The Revelers, widely available on commercial compilations, can provide supplemental interpretive guidance for any musicians interested in historical performance practice (i.e., singing “just like” The Revelers). An added justification for applying a moderate-versus-heavy approach to score detail is the original scores—even those that include penciled-in markups by the original members—provide very few instructions. Furthermore, they rarely agree from chart to chart.

The songs of The Revelers predate the arrival of swing music. Because of this, the notation of swung eighth notes is not consistent in the handwritten scores of Smalle and Black who tended to copy verbatim the rhythmic patterns that appeared in the
commercial sheet music. In most cases, they employed dotted eighth – sixteenth patterns (\(\text{\footnotesize \(\frac{\text{\textcircled{6}}\text{\textcircled{2}}}{\text{\textcircled{6}}}\)}\)). The repetition of this pattern in long swung passages is not only cumbersome visually, but also fails to account for the true triplet feel of swing (\(\text{\footnotesize \(\frac{\text{\textcircled{2}}\text{\textcircled{2}}}{\text{\textcircled{6}}}\)}\)). I elected, therefore, to replace the dotted eighth – sixteenth pattern with straight eighth notes (\(\text{\footnotesize \(\frac{\text{\textcircled{6}}}{\text{\textcircled{6}}}\)}\)). In those passages requiring swing, instructions for adjusting metric modulations appear above the staff. This permits both easy toggling between swung and straight sections as well as preserving the rhythmic integrity of the non-swung ("snapped") dotted eighth – sixteenth when needed.
CHAPTER V

PERFORMANCE EDITIONS

In this chapter, each of the seven performance editions is preceded by a photograph of a page from the original score. These excerpts provide insight into the state of the handwritten originals, the notational style, and miscellaneous marginalia. The performance editions include full attributions: songwriters, lyricists, and arranger. Under each title, information related to the commercial recording is provided.

The final versions of the performance editions appear in piano-vocal score format. This is different from their original handwritten format. The Revelers, when not performing songs from memory in concert, sang from charts that included only their vocal parts. I determined that the piano-vocal score format is more suitable for modern use, allowing singers to scan vertical relationships, anticipate entrances of other voices, and track piano accompaniment. The piano-vocal score format is also more economical in terms of overall page count.

To maximize legibility, each vocal part has been assigned a separate staff. This lowers the chance of confusion in music that features tight chord voicings and frequent voice crossing. In addition, secondary lyric material (often in the form of non-lexical vocables such as “ta-loo-ta loo-too” and “vodee-odee-oh”) is rendered more readable when it is distinct from other voice parts.
Figure 1. “Chloe” - Baritone Chart.
Chloe
Recorded November 29, 1927
The Singing Sophomores - Columbia Records

Gus Kahn (1886 - 1941)

T1

Chlo - e! Chlo - e! Some one call - in', no re ply.

T2

Chlo - e! Chlo - e! Some one call - in', no re ply.

Br

Chlo - e! Chlo - e! Some one call - in', no re ply.

B

Chlo - e! Chlo - e! Some one call - in', no re ply.

Piano

Night shade's fall - in', hear him cry:

Chlo - e! Chlo - e!

Night-shade's fall - in', hear him cry:

Chlo - e! Chlo - e!

Night-shade's fall - in', hear him cry:

Chlo - e! Chlo - e!

Night-shade's fall - in', hear him cry:

Chlo - e! Chlo - e!

Charles N. "Neil Moret" Daniels (1847 - 1943)
Arr., Ed Small (1887 - 1968) / Frank J. Black (1894 - 1968)
Empty spaces meet his eyes, empty arms out stretch'd. He's cry-in' through the black of night, I

If it's wrong or right, I gotta go where you are...
got-ta go where you are for no place could be too far, where you are.

got-ta go where you are for no place could be too far, where you are.

got-ta go where you are for no place could be too far, where you are.

got-ta go where you are for no place could be too far, where you are.

Ain’t no chains can bind you, if you live I’ll find you. Love is call-in’ me, I got-ta go where you

Ain’t no chains can bind you, if you live I’ll find you. Love is call-in’ me, I got-ta go where you

Ain’t no chains can bind you, if you live I’ll find you. Love is call-in’ me, I got-ta go where you

Ain’t no chains can bind you, if you live I’ll find you. Love is call-in’ me, I got-ta go where you
I'll be search-in' for you! 'Cause if you are lost there, let me be there, too!

search-in' for you! 'Cause if you are lost there, let me be there, too!

Through the smoke and flame, I gotta go where you are. For no place could be too
far, where you are! Ain't no chains can bind you, if you live I'll find you!

far, where you are! Ain't no chains can bind you, if you live I'll find you!

far, where you are! Ain't no chains can bind you, if you live I'll find you!

far, where you are! Ain't no chains can bind you, if you live I'll find you!

Love is callin' me, I gotta go, gotta go,

Love is callin' me, I gotta go, gotta go,

Love is callin' me, I gotta go, gotta go,

Love is callin' me, I gotta go, gotta go,
got-ta go, got-ta go, I got-ta go where you are! My Chlor-e!
got-ta go, got-ta go, I got-ta go where you are! My Chlor-e!
got-ta go, got-ta go, I got-ta go where you are! My Chlor-e!
got-ta go, got-ta go, I got-ta go where you are! My Chlor-e!

Red
“Dancing in the Dark”

Figure 2. “Dancing in the Dark” - Baritone Chart.
Dancing in the Dark

Recorded July 24, 1930
The Revelers - Victor Records
from the 1931 revue The Band Wagon

Howard Dietz (1896 - 1983)
Arthur Schwartz (1900 - 1984)
arr., Frank J. Black (1894 - 1968)

underneath the stars, dancing in the dark, dancing together.

way, dancing away, dancing together.

way, dancing away, dancing together. We're dancing in the

way, dancing away, dancing together.

rall. . . . . . a tempo

[Music notation]
Ah_

We're
dancing in the dark

til the tune ends, we're dancing in the dark and it soon ends.

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here

waltzing in the wonder of why we're here and time hurries by, we're here
dark underneath the stars. What though love is old, what though song is old, through them

we can be young singing a love song. Hear this heart of mine, make yours part of mine, dear one,
wondering why we're here (Why are we here?) time is in a hurry hurrying by, we're here and

wondering why we're here (Why are we here?) time is in a hurry hurrying by, we're here and

wondering why we're here (Why are we here?) time is in a hurry hurrying by, we're here and

wondering why we're here (Why are we here?) time is in a hurry hurrying by, we're here and

gone. Looking for the light of a new day to love, it will brighten up the night

gone. Looking for the light of a new day to love, it will brighten up the night

gone. Looking for the light of a new day to love, it will brighten up the night

gone. Looking for the light of a new day to love, it will brighten up the night
82

if you do stay to love while we're dancing to the music we can face the music together.

88

der. Dancing in the dark underneath the stars, dancing in the dark with you.

der. Dancing in the dark underneath the stars, dancing in the dark with you.

der. Dancing in the dark underneath the stars, dancing in the dark with you.

der. Dancing in the dark underneath the stars, dancing in the dark with you.
“Happy Feet”

Figure 3. “Happy Feet” - Tenor 1 Chart.
Happy Feet
from Paul Whiteman’s King of Jazz
Recorded October 7, 1930
The Revelers - Victor Records

Jack Yellen (1892 - 1991)
Milton Ager (1893 - 1979)
Arr., Frank J. Black (1894 - 1968)

Brisk swing \(_{=92}\)

Happy feet... I got snap-py feet... I got tap-py feet... I got dance-in!
You hear ‘em a tap tap tap!

Happy feet... I got snap-py feet... I got tap-py feet... I got dance-in!
You hear ‘em a tap tap tap!

Happy feet... I got snap-py feet... I got tap-py feet... I got dance-in!

Brisk swing \(_{=92}\)

Happy feet... I got snap-py feet... I got tap-py feet... I got dance-in!

Piano

Happy feet... I got those hap-py feet!
Give them a low-down beat... and they begin

Happy feet... I got those hap-py feet!
Give them a low-down beat... and they begin

Happy feet... I got those hap-py feet!
Give them a low-down beat... and they begin

Happy feet... I got those hap-py feet!
Give them a low-down beat... and they begin

Happy feet... I got those hap-py feet!
Give them a low-down beat... and they begin
48

dancin'. I've got those ten little tap-pier toes and when they
dancin'. I've got those ten little tap-pier toes and when they
dancin'. I've got those ten little tap-pier toes and when they

hear a tune, I can't controll my dance-in heels to save my soul! Wary blues. can't get in-
hear a tune, I can't controll my dance-in heels to save my soul! Wary blues. can't get in-
hear a tune, I can't controll my dance-in heels to save my soul! Wary blues. can't get in-
hear a tune, I can't controll my dance-in' feel to save my soul! Wary blues. can't get in-
Happy feet! Fluff!

When you find that your mind keeps you worried and blue, you can always let your happy feet keep your disposition sweet!

Dye wanna see what makes me feel the way I

Happy feet! Fluff!

When you find that your mind keeps you worried and blue, you can always let your happy feet keep your disposition sweet!

Happy feet! Fluff!

When you find that your mind keeps you worried and blue, you can always let your happy feet keep your disposition sweet!
You can tell, from those ten little tap-tap-tap-pin' toes, and when they hear a tune, can't control, dance-in' heels to save, my soul! Weary blues, can't get in to my shoes because my shoes refuse to ever grow.
I can't cheer-eful when I get an earful of music sweet (can I dance?)

wear-y! I can't cheer-eful when I get an earful of music sweet (can I dance?)


feet! I got happy feet! They like low-down beat and they begin da-da-da-da-da-dance-in!

feet! I got happy feet! They like low-down beat and they begin da-da-da-da-da-dance-in!

I got those, I got tappy toes! When they hear a tune can't control my dance-in' heels to save

I got those, I got tappy toes! When they hear a tune I can't control dance-in' heels to save

I got those, I got tappy toes! When they hear a tune I can't control dance-in' heels to save
Wear-y blues, they can't get my shoes because shoes refuse to ever grow

Tuh tuh tuh tuh tired and weary. My feet snap-pin', a tap-a-tap-a-tappin' to music sweet! (I got feet!)

Tuh tuh tuh tuh tired and weary. My feet snap-pin', a tap-a-tap-a-tappin' to music sweet! (I got feet!)

Tuh tuh tuh tuh tired and weary. My feet snap-pin', a tap-a-tap-a-tappin' to music sweet! (I got feet!)

My feet snap-pin', a tap-a-tap-a-tappin' to music sweet! (I got feet!)
I got happy, I got happy, I got happy, I got happy feet! I got happy feet! Puh!

I got happy, I got happy, I got happy, I got happy feet! I got happy feet!

I got happy, I got happy, I got happy, I got happy feet! I got happy feet!

I got happy, I got happy, I got happy, I got happy feet! I got happy feet!
Figure 4. “Narcissus” - Bass Chart.
Narcissus
Recorded April 27, 1928
The Revelers - Victor Records

P. C. Warren
Adapted/expanded by Frank J. Black

Ethelbert Nevin (1862 - 1901)
Arr., Frank J. Black (1894 - 1968)

Andante

T1

T2

Br

B

Andante

Piano

My garden lies a slumbering in the sun, and

...garden lies a slumbering in the sun, and

...garden lies a slumbering in the sun, and

...garden lies a slumbering in the sun, and

...garden lies a slumbering in the sun, and
in the still silence of after-noon there sounds the fountain's soothing crown:

Narcissus, I love you! petals born with a heart of gold, your
drowning my senses, leaving me as in a dream.

breath of the lilac,

breath of the rose.

mingle and mount on vivrant and quiet air, still in the balmy currents that flow.

mingle and mount on vivrant and quiet air, still in the balmy currents that flow.

mingle and mount on vivrant and quiet air, still in the balmy currents that flow.

mingle and mount on vivrant and quiet air, still in the balmy currents that flow.
Tempo primo

love you so!

...garden lies a-slumbering in the sun, and in the stillly

love you so!

My garden lies a-slumbering in the sun, and in the stillly

love you so!

...garden lies a-slumbering in the sun, and in the stillly

love you so!

...garden lies a-slumbering in the sun, and in the stillly

Tempo primo

si-lence of af-ter-noon there sounds the foun-tain’s sooth-ing croon: Nar-cis-us,

si-lence of af-ter-noon there sounds the foun-tain’s sooth-ing croon: Nar-cis-us,

si-lence of af-ter-noon there sounds the foun-tain’s sooth-ing croon: Nar-cis-us,

si-lence of af-ter-noon there sounds the foun-tain’s sooth-ing croon:
I love you! I seem to dream of melodies wafting by that sob and throb re-

I love you! I seem to dream of melodies wafting by that sob and throb re-

I love you! I seem to dream of melodies wafting by that sob and throb re-

I love you! I seem to dream of melodies wafting by that sob and throb re-

I hear a clear sweet note afloat

I hear a clear sweet note afloat

I hear a clear sweet note afloat

I hear a clear sweet note afloat
rall... Lento

love song. Dear est flow's, sweet Nar - ciss-us.

still re-ech-oes love song. Dear est flow's, sweet Nar - ciss-us.

re-ech-oes just like a sweet love song. Dear est flow's, sweet Nar - ciss-us.

rall... Lento
“Oh Miss Hannah”

Figure 5. “Oh Miss Hannah” - Tenor 2 Chart.
Oh Miss Hannah
Recorded September 24, 1925
The Revelers - Victor Records

Thekla Hollingsworth Andrew (1888-1971)

Jessie L. Deppen (1881 - 1956)
Arr., Ed Smallie (1887 - 1908)
Oh, Miss Han-nah, ain't you com-in' out to-night? De mock-in' bird am a-sing-in' an' de

moon am shin-in' bright, de roses am a-nod din', an' a sway-in' in de breeze,
drowning my senses, leaving me as in a dream

breath of the lilac,

breath of the rose,

mingle and mount on vibrant and quivering air, still in the balmy currents that flow
Han nah, de cotton fields am white as snow, way out on de ribber I can

Hear de steamboats blow, zhub-oo. De music and de moonlight hab got me in a trance, oh

Hum, hum.
Lawn-y me, Miss Hannah, let's go to dat dance! Let's go to dat dance! Oh, Miss
_ Zoup zoup zoup zoup zoup, let's go to dat dance! Let's go to dat dance! Oh, Miss
_ Zoup zoup zoup zoup zoup, let's go to dat dance! Let's go to dat dance! Oh, Miss
_ Zoup zoup zoup zoup zoup, let's go to dat dance! Let's go to dat dance! Oh, Miss

Hannah, ain't you com-in' out to-night? De mockin' bird am a sing-in', an' de
Hannah, ain't you com-in' out to-night? De mockin' bird am a sing-in', an' de
Hannah, ain't you com-in' out to-night? De mockin' bird am a sing-in', an' de
Hannah, ain't you com-in' out to-night? De mockin' bird am a sing-in', an' de
moon am shin-in' bright.  
moon am shin-in' bright.  
moon am shin-in' bright.  
moon am shin-in' bright.  
moon am shin-in' bright.  

Hum, hum.  
Hum, hum.  
Hum, hum.  
Hum, hum.  
Hum, hum.  

Put on your Sunday go to meet-in' clothes an' come a-long, please.
“Sunny Disposish”

Figure 6. “Sunny Disposish” - Baritone Chart.
Sunny Disposish

Recorded September 14, 1926
The Merrymakers - Brunswick Records

Ira Gershwin (1896 - 1983)

Philip Charig (1902 - 1960)
Arr., Ed Small (1887 - 1968)

Freely

T1

Try to keep a sun-ny dis-po-sish, sun-ny dis-po-sish, sun-ny dis-po-sish. Sun-ny dis-po-sish will

T2

Just try to keep a sun-ny dis-po-sish, sun-ny dis-po-sish, sun-ny dis-po-sish. A sun-ny dis-po-sish will

Br

Try to keep a sun-ny dis-po-sish, sun-ny dis-po-sish, sun-ny dis-po-sish. Sun-ny dis-po-sish will

B

Freely

Piano

always see yout through when up a-bove the skies are black 'stead of be-ing blue. Mis-ter Trou-ble makes our fa-ces

always see yout through when up a-bove the skies are black 'stead of be-ing blue. Mis-ter Trou-ble makes our fa-ces

always see yout through when up a-bove the skies are black 'stead of be-ing blue. Mis-ter Trou-ble makes our fa-ces

always see yout through when up a-bove the skies are black 'stead of be-ing blue.
grow long, grow long, but a smile will have him saying "So long, so, so long." Really does it

grow long, grow long, but a smile will have him saying "So long, so, so long." Really does it

grow long, grow long, but a smile will have him saying "So long, so, so long." Really does it

grow long, grow long, "So long, so, so long." Really does it

pay to be a gloomy pill, it's absolutely most ridiculous positively all. The rain may pit-ter

pay to be a gloomy pill, it's absolutely most ridiculous positively all. The rain may pit-ter

pay to be a gloomy pill, it's absolutely most ridiculous positively all. The rain may pit-ter

pay to be a gloomy pill, it's absolutely most ridiculous positively all. The rain may pit-ter
or castles crumble down
If the blues appear just make the best of them, just make a jest of them,

or castles crumble down
If the blues appear just make the best of them, just make a jest of them,

or castles crumble down
If the blues appear just make the best of them, just make a jest of them,

or castles crumble down
If the blues appear just make the best of them, just make a jest of them,

don't be poss-es'd of them
plat-i-tu-di-nous, here's what I be-

don't be poss-es'd of them
At the risk of sound-ing ra-ther plat-i-tu-di-nous, here's what I be-

don't be poss-es'd of them
At the risk of sound-ing ra-ther plat-i-tu-di-nous, here's what I be-

don't be poss-es'd of them
plat-i-tu-di-nous,
but a smile will have him saying "So long, I've gone to stay!" Real-ly does-n't pay to be a gloom-y pill, it's

"So long, I've gone to stay!" Real-ly does-n't pay to be a gloom-y pill, it's

The rain may pit-ter pat-ter, it

a-b-so-lute-ly most ri-dic, po-si-tive-ly nil. The rain may pit-ter pat-ter, it

a-b-so-lute-ly most ri-dic, po-si-tive-ly nil. The rain may pit-ter pat-ter, it

a-b-so-lute-ly most ri-dic, po-si-tive-ly nil. The rain may pit-ter pat-ter, it
really doesn't matter for life can be de-lish with a sun-ny dis-po-sish. Ah!

really doesn't matter for life can be de-lish with a sun-ny dis-po-sish. Ah!

really doesn't matter for life can be de-lish with a sun-ny dis-po-sish. Ah!

really doesn't matter for life can be de-lish with a sun-ny dis-po-sish. Ah!

(opt'l)
Figure 7. “The Varsity Drag” - Tenor 2 Chart.
The Varsity Drag
Recorded October 26, 1927
The Revelers - Victor Records

Buddy DeSylva (1895 - 1950), Lew Brown (1893 - 1958)
Ray Henderson (1896 - 1970)
Arr., Frank J. Black (1894 - 1968)

Here is the dance the Varsity Drag. You'll love to do the Varsity Drag! Better not be late, just be

Here is the dance the Varsity Drag. You'll love to do the Varsity Drag! Better not be late, just be

Here is the dance the Varsity Drag. You'll love to do the Varsity Drag! Better not be late, just be

Here is the dance the Varsity Drag. You'll love to do the Varsity Drag!

Piano

up-to-date, you will think it's great, the Varsity Drag. Now, here is the Drag, see how it goes; Down on the heels,

up-to-date, you will think it's great, the Varsity Drag. Now, here is the Drag, see how it goes; Down on the heels,

up-to-date, you will think it's great, the Varsity Drag. Now, here is the Drag, see how it goes; Down on the heels,

Now, here is the Drag, see how it goes; Down on the heels,
That's the way to do the \textit{Var-si-ty Drag!} You will find that it's hot-ter than hot,

That's the way to do the \textit{Var-si-ty Drag!} You will find that it's hot-ter than hot,

That's the way to do the \textit{Var-si-ty Drag!} You will find that it's hot-ter than hot,

That's the way to do the \textit{Var-si-ty Drag!} You will find that it's hot-ter than hot,

new-er than new, mean-er than mean, blu-er than blue, gets as much ap- pluase as wuv-in' the flag or

new-er than new, mean-er than mean, blu-er than blue, gets as much ap- pluase as wuv-in' the flag or

new-er than new, mean-er than mean, blu-er than blue, gets as much ap- pluase as wuv-in' the flag or

new-er than new, mean-er than mean, blu-er than blue, gets as much ap- pluase as wuv-in' the flag!
learn how it goes; Every body do the Variety Drag! We've always thought, knowledge
learn how it goes; Every body do the Variety Drag! Hmm
learn how it goes; Every body do the Variety Drag! Hmm
learn how it goes; Every body do the Variety Drag! Zuzu zum zum zum

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Right here at Tuit, we're up-to-date; we teach a great new
taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm

is taught, we should be taught to dance. Hmm
First lesson right now; you'll love it and how you'll love it! Here is the Drag.

When you do the Varsity Drag, then you start in once again.

Down on the heels when you do the Varsity Drag, then you start in once again.

Up on the toes when you do the Varsity Drag, then you start in once again.
answer to the call when your dan-cin’ pro-fess-or cries: “Ev-ry-bo-dy down on the heels

answer to the call when your dan-cin’ pro-fess-or cries: “Ev-ry-bo-dy up on the toes

answer to the call when your dan-cin’ pro-fess-or cries: “Ev-ry-bo-dy stay af-ter school.

“Ev-ry-bo-dy

When you do— the Var-si-ty Drag it’ll make a dan-cin’ fool of you. Here is the Drag, see how it goes;

When you do— the Var-si-ty Drag it’ll make a dan-cin’ fool of you. Here is the Drag, see you it goes;

When you do— the Var-si-ty Drag it’ll make a dan-cin’ fool of you. Here is the Drag, see how it goes;

learn how it goes! When you do— the Var-si-ty Drag. Here is the Drag, see it goes;
down on the heels, up on the toes. That's the way to do the Vari-si-ty Drag!

You will find that it's

bottler than hot, new-er than new, mean-er than mean, bluer than blue, gets as much ap-plause as wav-in' the
learn how it goes. Ev'ry body do, the Varsity Drag! You'll find that it's hot-ter than hot! Drag!

learn how it goes. Ev'ry body do, the Varsity Drag! You'll find that it's hot-ter than hot! Drag!

learn how it goes. Ev'ry body do, the Varsity Drag! You'll find that it's hot-ter than hot! Drag!

learn how it goes. Ev'ry body do, the Varsity Drag!

Oh, you'll love to do the Varsity Drag!

Oh, you'll love to do the Varsity Drag!

Oh, you'll love to do the Varsity Drag!

Why don't you learn to step to the Drag? Oh, you'll love to do the Varsity Drag!
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION/FUTURE APPLICATIONS

This collection of scores is a fragile link to an important era of American popular music. It is a handwritten record of one of the most significant radio and recording acts of the early twentieth century. This project represents an important step toward the preservation of the arrangements of Ed Smalle and Frank J. Black, and, with it, the legacy of The Revelers.

The seven arrangements presented here are but a small sample of the wealth of content contained in the collection of Revelers’ scores. It is my hope that work related to the project will extend beyond this document and the goal of publishing an anthology of historic Revelers arrangements will be met. Once available, the performance editions of the arrangements of Ed Smalle and Frank J. Black may serve as a touchstone for further research into the significance of American popular music, particularly the output of early pioneers of recorded and broadcast entertainment.

As explained in Chapter III, scores to certain songs in The Revelers’ catalog are not contained in the collection. It is possible that these scores yet exist. In 2015, I made contact with Pamela Murcell, daughter of the late Raymond Murcell, the supposed manager of The Revelers in the group’s final days. Ms. Murcell shared with me a folder of music containing two photocopied charts of a Frank Black song arrangement composed for The Revelers that is absent from the score collection. While not a
complete score, the charts augur possible future discoveries. She believes that more Revelers music exists among her father’s possessions.

In terms of the score collection itself, work is underway to locate a permanent archival home for The Revelers library. This will ensure that the material will be preserved and available for future researchers, students, and musicians.
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“Bits about Broadcasters.” Radioland, December 1934.


“New Records.” *New Yorker*, June, 26, 1926.


## APPENDIX A

### MASTER LIST OF PERFORMANCE EDITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Composer(s)</th>
<th>Arranger(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Bam Bam Bamy Shore”</td>
<td>Music: Ray Henderson Lyrics: Mort Dixon</td>
<td>Arranger: Ed Smalle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Chloe”</td>
<td>Music: Charles Daniels Lyrics: Gus Kahn</td>
<td>Arranger: Ed Smalle/ Frank J. Black</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Clap Yo’ Hands”</td>
<td>Music: George Gershwin Lyrics: Ira Gershwin</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Comin’ Home”</td>
<td>Music: Jessie Deppen Lyrics: Thekla Hollingsworth</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“Don’t Wait Too Long”</td>
<td>Music/ Lyrics: Irving Berlin</td>
<td>Arranger: Ed Smalle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>“Evenin’”</td>
<td>Music/ Lyrics: Neil Moret, Richard Whiting</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>“Good News”</td>
<td>Music/ Lyrics: Buddy DeSylva, Lew Brown, Ray Henderson</td>
<td>Arranger: Ed Smalle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Happy Feet”</td>
<td>Music: Milton Ager Lyrics: Jack Yellen</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>“In A Little Spanish Town”</td>
<td>Music: Mabel Wayne Lyrics: Sam Lewis, Joe Young</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>“Mine”</td>
<td>Music: Buck Hanley Lyrics: Buddy DeSylva</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>“Moonlight on the Ganges”</td>
<td>Music: Sherman Myers Lyrics: Chester Wallace</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>“Narcissus”</td>
<td>Music: Ethelbert Nevin Lyrics: Gus Kahn/ Frank Black</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>“No Foolin’”</td>
<td>Music: Buck Hanley Lyrics: Buddy DeSylva</td>
<td>Arranger: Frank J. Black</td>
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<td>Song Title</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics</td>
<td>Arranger</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>“Oh Miss Hannah”</td>
<td>Music: Jessie Deppen</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Thekla Hollingsworth</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>“Orientale”</td>
<td>Music: Cesar Cui</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Laurence Hope</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>“Sing Something Simple”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Herman Hupfeld</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>“Sing You Sinners”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Sam Coslow, Franke Harling</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>“So Blue”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Buddy DeSylva, Lew Brown, Ray Henderson</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>“Smoke Gets In Your Eyes”</td>
<td>Music: Jerome Kern</td>
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<td>Lyrics: Otto Harbach</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>“Strike Up The Band”</td>
<td>Music: George Gershwin</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Ira Gershwin</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>“Sunny Disposish”</td>
<td>Music: Philip Charig</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lyrics: Ira Gershwin</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>“There’s Rain in my Eyes”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Milton Ager, Joe McCarthy, Jean Schwartz</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>“Was It A Dream?”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Sam Coslow, Larry Spier, Addy Britt</td>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>“What Is This Thing Called Love?”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Cole Porter</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>“When Yuba Plays the Rumba on the Tuba”</td>
<td>Music/Lyrics: Herman Hepfeld</td>
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APPENDIX B

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<td>Dancing in the Dark</td>
<td>Howard Dietz Arthur Schwartz</td>
<td>Dancing in the Dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunny Disposish</td>
<td>Phillip Charlg Ira Gershwin</td>
<td>Sunny Disposish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varsity Drag</td>
<td>Lew Brown B G De Sylva Ray Henderson</td>
<td>Varsity Drag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Feet</td>
<td>Milton Ager Jack Yellen</td>
<td>Happy Feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh Miss Hannah</td>
<td>Jesse Deppin Thekla Hollingsworth</td>
<td>Oh Miss Hannah</td>
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Publisher of book: self
Date of publication: 05/2017
Publication format (hardcover, softcover, etc.): doctoral dissertation
If publication is a magazine or other subscription:

Circulation of publication: 1
Number of measures used (for music reprint): 1

Price of book: 0
Print run: 1
Synopsis of book:
The core of my dissertation is the reconstruction of arrangements composed by Frank J. Black (1894–1968) and Ed Smeale (1887–1966). They were created in the 1920s/1930s for the radio/recording quartet The Revelers. The autograph scores (all of which were Language (English only)): English
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