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Band Schools of the United States: A Historical Overview

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Millions of students have participated in school bands since the inception of the school band movement in the United States during the 1920s. This phenomenon has its roots in the immense popularity of professional and amateur concert bands prior to the 1920s, when many early school band directors were involved with these bands as leaders and performers. Because of the continuing popularity and strength of school bands, one of the main functions of many collegiate schools of music is the preparation of leaders for these organizations.

Bands and Bandsmen: The United States before 1920

From the 1890s until peaking around 1910, scores of independent, professional touring bands roamed the United States playing at local "opera houses," amusement parks, resorts, and fairs. Other professional activities included bands attached to numerous traveling circuses, government sponsored military bands, and, after about 1910, bands attached to traveling Chautauquas. There was already a flourishing brass band movement in the United States prior to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. By 1889, approximately 10,000 bands existed in the United States, growing to about 18,000 by 1908. Band and orchestra journals of the period, such as the *Metronome* and *Dominant*, even began to carry advertisements on behalf of amateur and semi-professional groups that were seeking tradesmen who could play instruments and would relocate to their towns. Tradesmen sought included barbers, tailors, cigar makers, miners, grocers, harness makers, printers, butchers, bakers, and photographers.¹

¹Raoul Camus, "The Golden Age of American Bands-A Second Look," *Journal of Band Research* 15 (Spring 1980): 1-9; Leone Meade, "The Military Band in the United States," *Harper's Weekly Supplement* 28 September 1889, 785; and "History of American Music," in *American History and Encyclopedia of Music* 8 (1908): 283-84.

Most of the participants in bands during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were males, although there were some professional and amateur women's groups, and women sometimes participated in male-dominated amateur bands. Amateur bands often functioned as social clubs for a town's young men. Although people of all ages participated in these groups, the members were generally men in their late teens and twenties. Bands made up of pre-adolescents (usually boys) were commonly referred to as "juvenile bands."²

During the early part of the nineteenth century, itinerant bandmasters were as common as itinerant singing school masters. As towns and cities grew during the nineteenth century, many itinerant bandmasters were able to settle in a permanent location, although they still had to hustle to make a living for themselves and their families by engaging in a variety of activities. In the pre-World War I era, many local "music men" maintained hectic schedules that might include leading town bands, instructing bands in neighboring towns and villages, leading dance orchestras, leading theater orchestras at local opera houses, teaching private lessons on various instruments, working as church musicians, arranging or composing for bands and small orchestras (with some individuals establishing their own music publishing companies), and perhaps working in some other side line, such as operating music stores and even non-musical work. In addition to this, much of the professional playing work at this time was not only itinerant, but seasonal as well. The nature of professional band and orchestral work during this era, then, often tended to blur any attempt to distinguish strictly between amateur and professional.³

A great deal of crossover occurred between band and orchestral musicians during the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. There were few large municipal symphony orchestras in the United States during the nineteenth century, however. Most orchestral work was in the form of small dance and theater orchestras. It was not uncommon for professional musicians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to play several wind

²Margaret Hindle Hazen and Robert Hazen, *The Music Men* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987), 47, 55-59.

³*Ibid.*, 26-29.

and string instruments and to engage in both orchestral and band work in order to survive. Increasing standards of performance and competition brought about more specialization by the 1920s.⁴

The 1920s

Much that is commonplace at the end of the twentieth century emerged during the post-war era of the 1920s. Technological advancements such as radio, improved roads and automobiles, motion pictures with sound, and the popularity of jazz changed the recreational habits of Americans. The phonograph, invented in 1877, had been growing in popularity since the turn of the century. These things caused drastic changes in the world of bands as well. During this time, school bands largely replaced amateur bands, and college and university bands developed into the large, elaborate organizations that are familiar today. Some groups of amateur and semiprofessional caliber could still be found in towns and cities (such as bands sponsored by companies, fraternities, and ethnic clubs), but the small, town-village adult amateur band became largely a thing of the past.

Most professional touring bands had disappeared by this time also, and their musical functions were taken over by large municipal symphony orchestras and Washington, DC-based government military bands sponsored by the Army, Navy, and Marines. Chautauquas and other itinerant work largely disappeared, and although the circus maintained some popularity during this era, their number was reduced drastically, especially during the economic depression of the 1930s. A large number of theater musicians were thrown out of work by the advent of sound pictures in the late 1920s. Finally, dance orchestra work became a more specialized venture, with elements of jazz creeping into even the “sweetest” of bands.

The Rise of School Bands

There was a strong demand during World War I (1917-18) for performers and leaders for government military bands, and both

⁴Hazen and Hazen, *The Music Men*, 17, 199-200; and Raoul Camus, “Bands,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, 1986 ed.

amateurs and professionals enlisted. The return of these personnel to civilian life after the war was perhaps the most immediate impetus for the rise of school bands.⁵

School bands were not unknown before the 1920s. William Bates argued in 1912 that “The introduction of the study of instrumental music has never been systematically attempted, although sporadic attempts in the form of school orchestras and bands are made here and there.”⁶ By 1925, however, an unidentified writer in the *Metronome* could write: “Rare is the high school of today which has not its band.”⁷

As the school band movement grew, leaders of adult amateur and semi-professional groups, and those who had been members of professional bands, became school band directors. The loss of many theater playing jobs in the late 1920s brought additional professional players into school band and orchestra directing. Some of the earlier school band and orchestra directors were female choral-general music teachers who made efforts to start instrumental music programs in their schools. Formal education requirements for early school bandmasters were lax, but strengthened over time. The school band movement provided stable employment in a central location in a profession that formally had been based on itinerant, seasonal work or that had required participants to perform a multitude of functions for the local community.⁸

⁵William Carter White, *A History of Military Music in America* (New York: Exposition Press, 1944), 101; *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 3 (March 1918): 17; *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 3 (October 1918): 60; and “Bandsmen Jump Off!” *Metronome* 34 (October 1918): 60.

⁶William Lester Bates, “Instrumental Training in Public Schools,” *Metronome* 28 (April 1912): 14.

⁷“The Town Band That Was,” *Metronome* 41 (15 October 1925): 15.

⁸James A. Keene, *History of Music Education in the United States* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1982), 291; Michael Mark and Charles Gary, *A History of American Music Education* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 271; N. M. Aldrich, “The School and College Band,” *Musical Messenger* 14 (May 1918): 12; and Gilbert Wilson, *H. A. VanderCook, The Teacher* (Chicago: VanderCook College of Music, 1971), 8.

Training for Bandsmen

Before circa 1910, few opportunities existed in the United States for formal, systematic training aimed specifically toward bandsmen. In Europe, however, there were some government sponsored institutions. One such institution was the Royal Military School of Music (Kneller Hall) in Great Britain, established in 1857, which trained military bandsmen. No reputable government sponsored school in the United States existed until 1911, when the U. S. Army School was established at Fort Jay, Governor's Island, New York. During the nineteenth century, many professional musicians were European immigrants who had received their training in Europe. A bandsman in the United States desirous of a career as a professional usually had to rely on a "patchwork quilt" of private lessons, participation in amateur and semi-professional groups, and self-instruction.⁹

Conservatories in the United States followed European models, especially that of the Leipzig Conservatory. With few exceptions, these schools concentrated their training efforts in the traditional areas of voice, piano, and orchestra. Some confusion arises over the term "conservatory" as well. In the nineteenth century European sense of the word, it meant a system that included graded class instruction (group instruction at various levels of advancement). Eventually, Americans rejected the notion of group instruction for applied lessons on a student's major instrument in favor of private instruction. Sometimes, however, the word "conservatory" meant a few loosely associated private teaching studios rather than a school with a comprehensive curriculum of music theory, applied lessons, and participation in ensembles.¹⁰

Several private schools offered instruction for bandsmen through correspondence or in person. The bulk of this activity took place after about 1909. With the rise of bands in public

⁹Henry George Farmer, *Military Music* (London: Max Parrish and Co., Ltd., 1950), 53-67; Mark Fonder, "The Patrick Conway Military Band School," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 40 (Spring 1992): 65-66; and Hazen and Hazen, *The Music Men*, 36-37.

¹⁰Keene, *A History of Music Education*, 278-280; Fonder, "The Patrick Conway Military Band School," 65; Hazen and Hazen, *The Music Men*, 37; and "So-Called Conservatories," *Leader* (October 1895): 388.

schools, colleges, and universities during the 1920s and 1930s, colleges and universities developed curricula for training bandmasters, replacing these early band schools. Developed college bands, such as those at the University of Illinois and Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, were the exception prior to the 1920s. Early college bands were generally recreational organizations, often lead by local musicians on a part-time basis, faculty members with an interest in music, or even talented students. The development of bands in public schools, colleges, and universities during the 1920s and 1930s brought about the demand for a large body of trained professionals, which in turn led to the establishment of degree programs in colleges and universities.¹¹

Early Schools

It is difficult to say when and where the first formal school for bandsmen was established in the United States, but this honor probably belongs either to the Dodworth family of New York City or to James Baxter and his Baxter University of Music in Friendship, New York. The Dodworths were a musical family of English immigrants consisting of a father, Thomas Dodworth, and two sons, Allen and Harvey. These men were the most prominent and influential bandsmen in the United States prior to the Civil War and the emergence of Patrick Gilmore. Allen Dodworth developed over-the-shoulder style brass instruments, and his family's band was one of America's first to convert to an all-brass instrumentation (1834).

References to the Dodworth School for bandsmen are scant, but it probably existed during the Civil War to train Union Army players and bandmasters. The Dodworths may have trained as many as fifty bandmasters and five hundred players for the Union Army. In 1853, Allen Dodworth produced his text, *Dodworth's Brass Band School*, which provides insights about what may have been taught at the school. The text consists of information on the

¹¹Lamar K. McCarrell, "A Historical Review of the College Band Movement from 1875- 1969" (Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1971), 55, 114-15; and Harold Bachman, *The Biggest Boom in Dixie* (Gainesville, FL: Harold Bachman, 1969), 8.

basic rudiments of music, such as notation, pitch, rhythm, tempo markings, and expression marks (style and dynamics); requirements for balanced instrumentation; advice on the selection of instrument brands; descriptions, ranges, transpositions, and fingerings; basic brass pedagogy on such topics as articulation, embouchure, and breathing; and information for field performances on parading and drilling and drum and bugle calls. The text also includes full scores of eleven standard pieces arranged for brass band and a dictionary of musical terms.¹²

James Baxter's early career was that of a largely self-taught itinerant singing school master, bandmaster, and violinist. In 1853, he established Baxter's Music Rooms in Friendship, New York. Several name changes may have reflected a gradually expanding curriculum. In 1870, Baxter's institution became the Baxter University of Music, with seven faculty members and a curriculum that included instruction in voice, keyboard, theory, and band and orchestral instruments, including ensembles. During the period 1866-69, the institution was known as the Allegheny Academy of Music, with Baxter as principal and A. N. Johnson as president (Johnson had been president as early as 1864). Johnson had been a student and associate of Lowell Mason in Boston and also had European training. Johnson brought European conservatory methods, including graded class instruction, to Baxter's school. Both Baxter and Johnson produced a number of published texts, collections, and method books.¹³

Baxter University was divided into three basic departments of study: sacred music, secular music, and orchestra and band music. The "preparatory" course in the band and orchestra department included "the study and practice of one stringed instrument, one wood and brass instrument, and Thorough Base." The "academic"

¹²Robert Garofalo and Mark Elrod, *A Pictorial History of Civil War Era Musical Instruments & Military Bands* (Charleston, WV: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1985), 106; and H. W. Schwartz, *Bands of America* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1957), 50.

¹³Frederic Fay Swift, *James Baxter: An American Pioneer Music Educator* (Oneonta, NY: Swift-Dorr Publications, Inc., 1971), 16-18, 25-27, 59-75; "Prospectus, Baxter University of Music" (Friendship, NY: n.p., 1870); and Jacklin Bolton Stopp, "A. N. Johnson: Out of Oblivion," *American Music* 3 (Summer 1985): 152-70.

course included the study of harmony and composition as well as “elaborate solo playing” and “ensemble practice in Overtures, Symphonies, Oratorio and Opera.” The orchestra and band course at the “academic” level was designed to prepare students “to conduct Band or Orchestra, in field or concert.” Almost all students in the 1870 catalogue (thirty-five men and 115 women), however, are listed as taking the sacred, secular, or an “elective” course, which allowed the student “to deviate from an established course.”¹⁴ No one is listed strictly as taking a course in orchestra and band music, although the school had at least one brass band and two orchestras on different levels of proficiency. The main focus of the school appears to have been the production of competent church musicians, choral directors, and private teachers. Due to financial difficulties, the Baxter University of Music ceased to exist in 1883.¹⁵

Dana’s Musical Institute

For purposes of this study, the most important pupil of Baxter and Johnson’s school was William H. Dana (1846-1916) of Warren, Ohio, who received a diploma in July 1869. Dana founded his “Musical Institute” in Warren in the fall of 1869. He also pursued additional studies in Europe, published several theory texts (including a text on band arranging), and was instrumental in founding the Music Teachers National Association (1876), the first permanent association of musicians in the United States. Dana’s Musical Institute became one of the most prominent American music schools of its day. One of its most noteworthy features was its band department, and undoubtedly the Dana institute was the only music school that offered training for bandsmen throughout its entire period of existence (1870-1941).¹⁶

Like other conservatories of the period, the early Dana school offered graded class instruction, but eventually it rejected group

¹⁴“Prospectus, Baxter University of Music.”

¹⁵Ibid.; and Swift, *James Baxter: An American Pioneer Music Educator*, 45-47.

¹⁶For a detailed account of the Dana school and band department, see Michael D. Martin, “The Band School of Dana’s Musical Institute, Warren, Ohio, 1869-1941” (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1997).

instruction in favor of private lessons for major instruments. By the 1890s, Dana's core curriculum consisted of a daily one-half hour private lesson on the major instrument, a daily ensemble rehearsal, a daily class lesson in theory, a daily class lesson in sight-singing and ear-training, and a weekly class lecture on a selected topic in music history. Attendance at a daily oratorio (chorus) class was required of all pupils, regardless of major instrument, as well as attendance at the school's weekly concerts. Study of minor instruments and conducting was available but not part of the core curriculum.¹⁷

Dana found retaining "high-profile" faculty difficult in the small, obscure, mid-western city of Warren. By 1890, his staff consisted of individuals trained primarily at Dana's Musical Institute. However, most of the staff, which consisted of seven to twelve members throughout the school's history, possessed additional credentials, such as published compositions, membership in well-known professional groups (such as the Sousa Band), and various other types of professional activities and studies.¹⁸

Many Dana pupils achieved prominence in the band field, including school band directing. After William Dana's death in 1916, the school continued operation under his son, Lynn B. Dana (1875-1941). The school faced severe difficulties during the 1930s due to the economic depression and increasingly stringent requirements for teacher certification. Several temporary solutions included making liberal arts courses available, which were needed for teacher certification. These changes led to a merger with Youngstown College of nearby Youngstown, Ohio in 1941.¹⁹

Other Schools Before 1900

Practically the only sources of information about the possibility of other training schools for bandsmen during this period are journals such as the *Leader*, *Dominant*, and *Metronome*. The increasing number of schools that advertised instruction on band

¹⁷Ibid., 230-33.

¹⁸Ibid., 208-13.

¹⁹Ibid., 185-92. The school is now the Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University.

instruments coincided with the growth of the amateur-professional band movement during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

The nature of some of these schools is questionable, because some of the advertising “conservatories” were nothing more than loose associations of private teaching studios, rather than schools with comprehensive curricula of applied music, theory, and ensemble participation, such as the Baxter University of Music or Dana’s Musical Institute. In addition to Dana’s Musical Institute, other schools that advertised instruction on band instruments during this period included the Boston Cornet Conservatory under John Hammond (established c. 1886), the Broad Street Conservatory in Philadelphia (established c. 1886), the Neave Music School in Salisbury, North Carolina (established by 1887), the Detroit Cornet School (which advertised in 1892 that it was connected with the Detroit Conservatory), the Mansfield (Pennsylvania) Normal School of Music, and the Conn Conservatory of Music in Chicago (established 1896), which included such virtuosi as Jules Levy and E. A. Lefebre among its faculty.²⁰

Of the above mentioned schools, the most interesting from a music education perspective was the Mansfield Normal School of Music under Hamlin E. Cogswell. A department of the Pennsylvania State Normal School at Mansfield, this school offered instruction in music, including band and orchestral instruments, as early as 1871. Cogswell, a well-known figure in music education during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, joined the faculty in 1887 and was the only music instructor. By September 1893, however, the music faculty consisted of six people. The school emphasized the training of public school music teachers, primarily in vocal teaching methods. However, the curriculum included instruction in instrumental music, including orchestra and band, as well as theory, harmony, music history, art, literature, and teacher training.²¹

²⁰Ibid., 127-31.

²¹Keene, *A History of Music Education*, 207; “Our Advertisers,” *Dominant 1* (September 1893): 24; and *Dominant 4* (August 1896): [advertisement on unnumbered page].

The Shenandoah Collegiate Institute and School of Music

Of some historical interest is the Shenandoah Collegiate Institute and School of Music, located in Dayton, Virginia. It was established in 1875 as a primary school, but reorganized shortly thereafter as the "Shenandoah Seminary" to include music instruction (voice and keyboard). The school became the "Shenandoah Institute" in 1884 and the "Shenandoah Collegiate Institute and School of Music" in 1902.²²

Two former Dana pupils, brothers James H. and Will H. Ruebush, were associated with the school. James Ruebush joined the faculty in 1886 and remained until 1936. He served as director of the school for a period of time beginning in 1909. Will Ruebush joined the school in 1894 and taught piano, organ, cornet, "and other musical instruments." He organized a band at the school by 1911, and was also director of the famous "Stonewall Brigade Band" of Staunton, Virginia. By 1911, the school was advertising instruction in voice, piano, organ, choral directing, composition, and all band and orchestra instruments, and it maintained a band and an orchestra. Due to financial difficulties, the school was moved from Dayton to Winchester, Virginia in 1960, where it remains to this day.²³

Schools, 1900-1909

There appears to have been little new activity during the first few years of the twentieth century. However, the Siegel-Myers School of Music, later known as the University Extension Conservatory, was established in Chicago in 1903. This was a correspondence school with a variety of course offerings, including a cornet course designed by A. F. Weldon. Teaching music by correspondence was not entirely new and would become, by the second decade of the twentieth century, a popular means of instruction at

²²James Richard Wilkins, *The Impossible Task* (Harrisonburg, VA: n.p., 1985), 1.

²³*Ibid.*, 12-13, 17; *Metronome* 27 (August 1911): 21; *The Music Times* (Warren, OH: Dana's Musical Institute, 1918), 1; and *The Institute* (Warren, OH: Dana's Musical Institute, 1929).

a time before the existence of modern highways and extensive offerings by colleges and universities.²⁴

A. F. Weldon was a well-known cornetist, bandmaster, composer, and pedagogue whose students included Hale A. VanderCook (1864-1949), Bohumir Kryl, and many other virtuosos of the day. He designed a “beginner’s course” and an “advanced course” for Siegel-Myers. These courses made extensive use of photographs for the teaching of various aspects of embouchure, tonguing, breathing, and hand position, and included illustrations of common faults. Weldon was one of the earliest American pedagogues to put forth the idea of “non-pressure” brass playing to increase range and endurance, a popular pedagogical idea for many years thereafter. Weldon died in 1914, but Siegel-Myers continued to offer his course. Siegel-Myers (University Extension Conservatory) was still advertising in 1930.²⁵

Siegel-Myers also offered correspondence courses in harmony, counterpoint, composition, and orchestration. The school stated that “If our Course in Harmony, Composition, and Orchestration is taken in connection with the Advanced Cornet Course, it will enable you to compose and arrange for the different instruments of a band or orchestra, and to manage and teach such organizations.”²⁶ Other similar correspondence schools were established after 1910.

²⁴Advertising by correspondence schools appeared sporadically in band and orchestra journals during the 1890s. An early example was an advertisement for a flute course by Charles T. Howe of Columbus, Ohio in the *Metronome* 8 (July 1892): 21. Howe was an agent for Rittershausen Boehm flutes who later expanded his course offerings to include “all instruments, singing, and harmony,” and was still active in 1916. *Jacob’s Band Monthly* 1 (March 1916): 50.

²⁵Siegel-Myers Correspondence School of Music,” *Dominant* 17 (February 1910): 28-29; “To Weldon Cornet Students,” *Metronome* 30 (June 1914): 12; and “The Death of A. F. Weldon Makes Siegel-Myers’ Course of Cornet Study Invaluable,” *Metronome* 30 (July 1914): 1. A fundamental concern of brass players and pedagogues is the use of excessive mouthpiece pressure against the embouchure to achieve increased upper playing range. This practice tires the embouchure muscles quickly, decreases endurance, and actually decreases the ability to perform in the upper range by limiting the lips’ ability to vibrate. Some pedagogues went so far as to hang a brass instrument from a string and require a student to learn to produce tones with reduced pressure against the embouchure.

²⁶*Dominant* 17 (February 1910): 28-29.

A few new schools for on-site instruction were established during the first decade of the twentieth century, including two that were essentially “break-aways” from Dana’s Musical Institute. The first was H. Clark Thayer’s Susquehanna College of Music of Clearfield, Pennsylvania, established in 1906. Thayer received a diploma from Dana in 1881 and served on the Dana school’s faculty from 1881 until 1890 and again from 1903 until 1906. In the interim, he lived in Canton, Ohio, where he worked as a free-lance musician and director of the Thayer Military Band, the same group that gave Karl L. King his first professional performing experience.²⁷

The Susquehanna College of Music curriculum, taught by a faculty of five, included voice, piano, theory, and offerings by orchestra and band departments. The school advertised in August 1907 that “our pupils have recently appeared with the following organizations: Sousa’s, Innes’, Brooke’s, Kryl’s, Kilties and others.”²⁸ The most well-known pupil was probably Victor Grabel, who had transferred from the Dana school. After Thayer’s death in 1926, the school continued operation under his daughter and son-in-law. The school retained the name “Susquehanna College of Music” until about 1952, but may have consisted largely of private teaching studios from the 1930s on.

The second school was the Warren (Ohio) Military Band School, founded by Bradford D. Gilliland (1872-1931). Gilliland was a pupil at Dana’s Musical Institute circa 1887-88. He played solo cornet with Brooke and Sousa, conducted the famous Kilties Band of Belleville, Ontario, Canada, and succeeded his uncle, H. Clark Thayer, as bandmaster of Dana’s Musical Institute in 1906 before resigning his post in 1909 to form his own school. The faculty consisted of Gilliland, a woodwind instructor, and a theory instructor. Former members of top professional bands, such as Sousa’s, served on the faculty. The four-year curriculum was largely modeled after that of the Dana school. In 1923, Gilliland accepted an offer to merge his school with Wittenberg College of Springfield, Ohio. He resigned his post at Wittenberg in 1925 and

²⁷For a detailed account of Thayer’s career and school, see Martin, “The Band School of Dana’s Musical Institute,” 135-37, 258-68.

²⁸*Dominant* 15 (August 1907): [advertisement on unnumbered page].

was later a band and orchestra director in the public schools of Trumbull County, Ohio.²⁹

The same year Gilliland broke away from Dana's Musical Institute to form his own military band school (1909), H.A. VanderCook established his famous school in Chicago. VanderCook was cornet soloist and assistant director of Weldon's 2nd Regiment Band of Chicago, and he served as a teaching assistant to Weldon as well. VanderCook's early career had been as a cornetist and conductor of various bands, including circus bands.³⁰

The early curriculum of the VanderCook Cornet School consisted of small group instruction in conducting (including interpretation), brass instruments (including extensive study of pedagogy), and harmony. In 1922, the curriculum was expanded to include a course to meet the growing demands of school music programs. Like his teacher, Weldon, VanderCook was a proponent of the "no-pressure" system of playing. In 1941, VanderCook turned over the daily operation of his school to his former pupil and assistant, H. E. Nutt. Through a large number of successful former students, VanderCook continued to influence the field of school band directing for years after his death. The VanderCook School of Music is probably the only school for training bandmasters today that remains in much its original form.

Correspondence Schools after 1910

After about 1910, a growing number of individuals offered lessons on various instruments and music theory by mail. The most important schools' course offerings for bandsmen constituted a more or less comprehensive curriculum in performance, theory, and conducting.

William Eby established his "Virtuoso Cornet School" in Kansas City in 1910, offering instruction in cornet by mail. Eby moved to Buffalo within a few years, and after 1918, he began

²⁹For a detailed account of Gilliland's career and school, see Martin, "The Band School of Dana's Musical Institute," 137-42, 297-313.

³⁰For a more detailed account of VanderCook's career and school, see Edwin Gilbert Wilson, "H. A. VanderCook, the Teacher" (D.M.A. diss., University of Missouri at Kansas City, 1970).

gradually expanding his course offerings to include other brass and woodwind instruments. The school became known as the “Virtuoso Music School.” Eby was not a musician by profession, but he was a Harvard-trained lawyer who played several instruments proficiently. Nevertheless, he had a gift for problem solving and analysis, which he applied to the areas of brass and woodwind pedagogy. Like other pedagogues of the day, he was a proponent of the “no-pressure” system of playing to increase range and endurance. Several of Eby’s students, including players from top professional bands, endorsed his course. By 1924, Eby had added a correspondence course in directing. During the 1920s, he also began expanding into the area of publishing, offering various texts and methods written by himself and others. The school was still advertising in 1930.³¹

Frederick Neil Innes (1854-1926) was one of the top bandmasters of late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1916, having virtually given up on the professional touring band business, he established a correspondence school called the “Innes School of Music” in Denver, Colorado. This school offered courses in band and orchestra directing, and studies in cornet, alto horn, trombone, and baritone horn. Innes also advertised that he would accept a few advanced pupils for personal instruction in Denver. Like many other pedagogues of the period, Innes was a proponent of the “no-pressure” system of playing. He made use of “Innes’ Modeling Compound,” from which students made plaster casts to identify embouchure problems.³²

Innes gives some insight into pedagogical practice and theory of the day:

³¹“Virtuoso Music School’s Fifteenth Year,” *Metronome* 40 (October 1924): 78; “Special Summer Session at Virtuoso Music School,” *Metronome* 42 (15 May 1926): 55; *Metronome* 27 (August 1911): 10; Alton A. Adams, “The Band,” *Jacobs’ Band Monthly* 2 (August 1917): 58-61; “W. M. Eby, A.B., M.A., LL.B.,” *Jacobs’ Band Monthly* 1 (November 1916): 90-91; “Adam F. Eby,” *Metronome* 44 (February 1928): 65; *Jacobs’ Band Monthly* 1 (November 1916) 31, 90-91; *Jacobs’ Band Monthly* 2 (April 1917): 75; *Musical Messenger* 14 (January 1918): 25; and “A New Course in Band and Orchestra Directing,” *Metronome* 39 (May 1923): 67.

³²Schwartz, *Bands of America*, 270-71; *Metronome* 36 (December 1920): 66; and *Metronome* 38 (January 1922): 57. Various sources give founding dates for Innes’s school ranging from 1915-18.

Don't let anyone tell you that pressure-playing can be cured by puckering-up the lips, or by this contraption or the other. The Tension System as taught by Innes is the only possible cure.³³

In 1923, Innes held a six-week summer course in Denver "for the teaching of Band, Orchestra, Opera and Concert Directing, Elementary, post-Graduate and Pedagogical Classes."³⁴ That September, he moved the school to Chicago, where he offered private and group instruction classes in person on all woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments, as well as band and orchestra directing. The correspondence courses continued to be offered, but expanded to include all the instruments of the concert band. The total size of the faculty as advertised in December 1923 was a dozen members. Early in 1924, the C. G. Conn Corporation took over Innes's school and renamed it the "Conn National School of Music," with Innes as managing director. This school offered summer sessions for band, orchestra, and public school music teaching in 1924, 1925, and 1926. Attempts to continue the Conn school after Innes's death failed.³⁵

VanderCook entered a growing field of correspondence teaching with the introduction of a course in directing by February 1917. This course taught proper stick technique and made extensive use of photographs, diagrams, and musical examples. In June 1923, VanderCook advertised that:

I have taught the art of Directing Band and Orchestras for the past twenty-five years. I am the PIONEER in teaching this art, for about eight years ago I wrote and compiled the very first Course on Directing ever published.³⁶

³³*Metronome* 39 (April 1923): 55.

³⁴*Metronome* 39 (November 1923): 57.

³⁵*Metronome* 39 (August 1923): 31; *Metronome* 39 (October 1923): 53; *Metronome* 40 (March 1924): 97; *Metronome* 41 (March 1925): 61; and *Metronome* 42 (1 July 1926): 54.

³⁶*Metronome* 39 (June 1923): 21. See also *Musical Messenger* 13 (February 1917): 2; Alton A. Adams, "The Band," *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 2 (July 1917): 58-62; and H. A. VanderCook, "A Course in Orchestra and Band Directing," *Metronome* 43 (1 October 1927): 37-38.

VanderCook often complained of competent players who, when handed the baton, would embarrass themselves with their lack of knowledge of even the most basic baton technique. The art of conducting was new in the nineteenth century and probably not often taught as a separate study with a sequenced curriculum of techniques. Students who had been taught to play an instrument and perhaps had studied music theory formally were often forced to “pick up” a knowledge of conducting through observation and trial and error. VanderCook also introduced a cornet correspondence course in 1922. Like other courses of the day, it emphasized the “non-pressure” system of playing and made extensive use of photographs.³⁷

Fortunato Sordillo (d. 1952) was a well-known Boston musician who played trombone with Sousa, Pryor, Conway, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. By 1917, he had established a correspondence school for brass in Dorchester, Massachusetts, which moved to Boston by July 1918. By 1920, he had taken on a partner in the venture, Carl E. Gardner, a percussionist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Gardner was also a composer and theoretician who produced several theory texts and percussion method books published by Carl Fischer. The Sordillo-Gardner Correspondence Courses included all brasses, three percussion courses (drums and traps; bells, xylophone, marimba, and chimes; and timpani), band and orchestra conducting, and several theory courses, including elementary theory, harmony and composition, arranging, and form and appreciation of music. Like other pedagogues of the era, Sordillo emphasized “non-pressure” playing. He became supervisor of instrumental music in the Boston Public Schools in 1924 and assistant director of music in 1926.³⁸

³⁷*Musical Messenger* 13 (February 1917): 2; *Metronome* 24 (September 1918): 13; *Metronome* 25 (February 1919): 16; *Metronome* 27 (December 1921): 20; *Metronome* 28 (October 1922): 32; *Metronome* 28 (November 1922): 30; and H. A. VanderCook, “The Modern Method of Cornet Playing in Twenty Lessons,” *Metronome* 43 (1 October 1927): 43-44.

³⁸*Jacobs' Band Monthly* 2 (April 1917): 85; *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 3 (July 1918): 52; *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 5 (August 1920): 78; *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 51 (November 1920): 84; *Metronome* 42 (November 1926): 35; Fortunato Sordillo, “Avoid Pressure Playing on the Trumpet,” *Metronome* 42 (1 February 1926): 68-69; “Fortunato Sordillo Receives Notable Appointment,” *Metronome* 42 (September 1926): 31; “Mostly About Bands and Bandsmen,” *Jacobs' Band Monthly* 11 (September 1926): 10; and William H. Rehrig, “Sordillo, Fortunato,” in *The Heritage Encyclopedia of Band Music*, 1991.

Schools After 1910

Several schools for on-site instruction were established after 1910. The most significant were the U. S. Army School at Fort Jay, Governor's Island, New York (1911), the Losey Military Band School of Erie, Pennsylvania (1914), the Conway Military Band School of Ithaca, New York (1922), and the Ernest Williams School of Music of Brooklyn, New York (1922).

The U. S. Army established a school for Army bandmasters at Fort Jay, Governor's Island, New York in October 1911. The school was a joint venture between the Army and the Institute of Musical Art of the City of New York. The curriculum followed European military band school models. Training was under the general supervision of Frank Damrosch at the Institute of Musical Art. However, the course work took place at both Fort Jay on Governor's Island and at the Institute of Musical Art. Arthur Clappé was in charge of the Fort Jay course work, which included the study of band instruments, military band arranging, conducting, and pedagogy. Classes in harmony, musical form, composition, ear training, and orchestra practice were held at the Institute of Musical Art.³⁹

During World War I, with the large demand for new bandmasters, the school was authorized to examine civilian musicians to qualify them to undergo a brief training course at the school. In September 1921, the school was moved to The Army War College in Washington, DC, at which time it severed its relationship with the Institute of Musical Art. The school closed in 1928 for economic reasons.⁴⁰

Frank H. Losey (1872-1931), a well-known bandmaster and march writer, founded the Losey Military Band School in 1914 in Erie, Pennsylvania. Losey received formal training under Hamlin Cogswell in cornet, harmony, and arranging, and later was a teacher of brass (1895-97) at Cogswell's Mansfield (Pennsylvania) Normal School of Music. From 1902-08, he was

³⁹For a more detailed account of this school, see White, *History of Military Music in America*, 234-42.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 242.

chief editor for Carl Fischer and later was chief editor for the Vandersloot Music Company.⁴¹

Little evidence is extant on the Losey Military Band School. The faculty probably consisted of a half-dozen teachers. In July 1920, the enrollment was two hundred pupils, although many were probably part-time local students. On 1 December 1919, Losey assumed a position with the Edison Phonograph Company. He was still owner of the Losey Military Band School, but its supervision fell largely to his assistant, Charles R. Campbell.⁴²

Patrick Conway established his Military Band School in Ithaca, New York in 1922. It was affiliated with the Ithaca Conservatory of Music. Conway had a long association with the town of Ithaca and its music conservatory as leader of the Ithaca Band (which became known as "Pat Conway and His Band" in 1908), and as a member of the Ithaca Conservatory faculty. The three-year curriculum required the study of a major and minor instrument, harmony, counterpoint, composition, solfeggio, music history, and class instruction on all band instruments. Conway engaged top professional players from major symphony orchestras and his own band as faculty members. In 1926, the curriculum was broadened to include preparation for teaching in public schools.⁴³

After Conway's death in 1929, Ernest Williams replaced him as head of the school, which became known as the Ithaca Military Band School. However, Williams left Ithaca in 1931 to reorganize his own school. By the 1931-32 school year, the Ithaca Military Band School had been taken over by the Ithaca Conservatory of Music department of music education.⁴⁴

Ernest Williams was one of the great cornet-trumpet virtuosos of his day, having played with Sousa, Conway, Goldman, and the

⁴¹"F. H. Losey," *Metronome* 19 (July 1 903): 8; and "F. H. Losey," *Musical Messenger* 16 (July 1920): 3.

⁴²*Musical Messenger* 16 (February 1920): 16; *Musical Messenger* 16 (July 1920): 3; and *The Heritage Encyclopedia of Band Music*, s. v. "Losey, Frank H." No evidence is available about Campbell.

⁴³For a detailed account of Conway's Military Band School, see Fonder, "The Patrick Conway Military Band School," 62-79.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

Philadelphia Orchestra. He was also a bandmaster and composer who maintained his own publishing company. Although Williams' own literature on the school gives 1922 as the founding date of the Ernest Williams School of Music, the school at that time was nothing more than a private teaching studio at his residence in Brooklyn. A school with a comprehensive curriculum of applied lessons, theory instruction, and ensemble participation was not achieved until Williams returned from Ithaca in 1931.⁴⁵

The three-year curriculum included private lessons on a major and minor instrument; vocal and instrumental conducting; music history and theory, including sight-reading and dictation, melody-writing, harmony, keyboard harmony, form and analysis, band arranging, counterpoint, composition, and orchestration; classes in woodwinds, strings, and brasses; and participation in vocal and instrumental ensembles. Students were also required to compose works for band and orchestra for an annual competition. The faculty consisted of some of the most distinguished musicians of the era, including Mayhew Lake (1879-1955), Eric Leidzen (1894-1951), and several others who had played with major symphonies.⁴⁶

World War II severely curtailed the activities of the Brooklyn school, which was discontinued in 1943. Williams had established a summer school in Saugerties, New York in 1930, which continued to operate. Williams died in February 1947, and his brother, clarinetist Jan Williams, last operated the summer music camp in 1947.⁴⁷

Conclusion

Other schools undoubtedly offered instruction in band instruments as well as theory and ensemble performance. By the time Ernest Williams established a full curriculum in 1931, many colleges and universities had curricula in place. This is not to say,

⁴⁵For a detailed account of Ernest Williams's school, see Keith Robert Winking, "Ernest Williams, Virtuoso and Educator: A Biographical Survey of His Philosophies and Techniques" (D.M.A. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1993).

⁴⁶Winking, "Ernest Williams, Virtuoso and Educator," 16-20, 22-23.

⁴⁷Ibid., 29-30, 32, 41.

however, that some colleges and universities did not offer instruction in band instruments prior to the 1920s. Many colleges and universities had established bands before the 1920s, although most of these bands, with a few notable exceptions, were rather crude. If the institutions also offered lessons, which undoubtedly a few did, and perhaps a course in harmony, one could argue that these schools were offering rudimentary training programs in instrumental music. It is difficult to draw a definite line between the full-fledged, comprehensive curricula being offered at many of the schools mentioned above and what was simply the availability of private lessons on an instrument and ensembles in which to participate.

The influence of professional players and directors was great in the early development of school bands, not only in such things as instrumentation and literature, but also in pedagogy and performance standards. Not many generations have passed since these men were active during the 1920s and 1930s. Many band directors active today could trace a “genealogy” of perhaps only three or four generations to such individuals as Innes, Conway, VanderCook, or Sousa. Studying the history of instrumental music can help educators become aware of their heritage and how it has influenced the philosophical underpinnings of their own teaching.