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degree of

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By

HEIDI ANN COHENOUR GORDON

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THE SONGS OF DAVID W. GUION

A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR THE  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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## ABSTRACT

David Wendell Guion (1892-1981) published nearly one-hundred fifty songs for voice and piano, ranging from sacred art songs to arrangements of folk songs. Born and raised in Texas but spending much of his adult life in the Northeast, Guion wrote songs that encompass a wide range of styles and demonstrate the mixture of the cultivated and the vernacular that is an integral facet of American music.

This document explores Guion's contributions to the American song repertoire through discussion of selected pieces and examination of some of the biographical, societal, and musical influences upon them. Guion wrote three main types of songs: arrangements of cowboy songs, African-American influenced songs which he named *Songs of the South*, and original art songs ranging from light parlor pieces to serious compositions about war and religion.

The first two chapters of this document include an introduction and a brief biography and discussion of Guion's compositional style. Each of the three main types of songs is explored in its own chapter. After a short conclusion and the bibliography, two appendices give further information about this little-known composer. The first appendix is a discography of Guion's vocal music, and the second is a comprehensive chart of Guion's songs, listing each song and its category, publication information, lyricist, key, range, and additional information.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

David Wendell Guion (1891-1982) was a respected American composer who wrote approximately one-hundred fifty songs ranging from arrangements of cowboy songs and spirituals to diverse original songs. His body of published works stands as a prime example of the intermixing of high and low culture that is an integral facet of American music. This document explores Guion's style and his contributions to the American repertoire through analyses of selected songs and examinations of some of the biographical, societal and musical influences upon those compositions.

Guion wrote songs that fall roughly into three distinct categories, each with its own subgroups. Cowboy folk arrangements and original songs based upon Western themes and exhibiting some of the cowboy song characteristics form one group. A second category includes the songs based upon African-American music. These are Guion's arrangements of spirituals, the *Songs of the South*, and the five songs from his unfinished opera *Suzanne*. Art songs make up the largest category of Guion's songs. These art songs vary greatly in content and scope, and many are classified here in subgroups for clarity. A comprehensive chart listing all of Guion's published songs by category is also included in Appendix I.

Guion's songs spanned roughly fifty years of publication, and they comprise the majority of his approximately two-hundred fifty compositions. Many of his songs,

especially the settings of cowboy folk songs and the spirituals, were later arranged for choral ensembles and chamber groups. The arrangements of folk tunes were mostly published early in his career, while most of his later output consisted of original songs.

Guion's arrangements of American folk songs provided a boost to a career that gathered steam when he moved as a young man from Texas to New York City, where he published his sheet music and participated in theater and radio shows. His arrangement of "Home on the Range" popularized the formerly obscure cowboy tune and became Franklin D. Roosevelt's favorite song.<sup>1</sup> Sets of American folk songs made fashionable finales in recitals, and the public recognition Guion gained from "Home on the Range" led to the inclusion of his songs on concerts given by such celebrated singers as John Charles Thomas, Lawrence Tibbett, Oscar Seagle, Enrico Caruso, Sophie Braslau, Theodor Uppman, and Mabel Garrison.

As Guion was finding success in New York, his reputation continued to grow in his native state as well. His "My Cowboy Love Song" was chosen as the theme song for the *Cavalcade of Texas*, a musical about the history of the state featured at the Texas Centennial Exposition of 1936. The high point of his career came in 1950, when he received several honors. He was named by the National Federation of Music Clubs as the greatest American folk music master next to Stephen Foster. The first week of February was deemed David Guion Week by the Texas Federation of Music Clubs, who sponsored a state-wide series of concerts celebrating Guion's music. The Houston Symphony Orchestra commissioned a work from him that became the fourteen-movement *Texas*

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<sup>1</sup> Donna Bearden and Jamie Frucht, *The Texas Sampler: A Stitch in Time* (Austin: Governor's Committee on Aging, 1976), 164.

*Suite*, and he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas.

Before the cowboy song became part of the national consciousness in the 1920s, many composers believed that much of what could truly be considered American folk music stemmed from African-American culture.<sup>2</sup> Guion grew up hearing Black American music at home from his family's domestic servants. He attended church regularly with a woman he called Mammy Neppy, and he listened to music played by other servants named Uncle Andrew and Ol' Coxy. Guion arranged many of the spirituals he heard them sing, and he transcribed several of their fiddle tunes played for piano. Some of his earliest published songs were the *Darkey Spirituals*, which were fourteen arrangements of African-American folk songs published separately by M. Witmark & Sons in 1918. Guion felt sympathy for African-Americans and their music, and he avoided writing minstrel music with its degrading subjects. Still, his spirituals and the original songs based on African-American music that he called *Songs of the South* reflect the somewhat patronizing attitude common among whites in his day towards minority groups in general.

Guion's habit of mixing high and low cultures was part of an American trend that continues today. For instance, the newly-coined *popera* is in vogue, in which a popular singer like Sheryl Crow or Michael Bolton performs famous opera arias, sometimes with new lyrics. While some believe that *popera* is a positive movement because it introduces a classical genre to millions who might not normally embrace it, others take offense because popular singers are not generally capable of performing opera the way lesser-

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<sup>2</sup> Katie Lee, *Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle: A History of the American Cowboy in Song, Story and Verse* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2001), ix.

known but accomplished opera singers can. In Guion's day, a similar controversy existed. Some musical personalities like Walter Damrosch believed that a clear demarcation should exist between classical and popular music, while others believed the two could intermingle successfully. Guion clearly belonged to the second camp, as did Leopold Stokowsky, who often presented mixed programs of classical, popular and avant-garde selections in his NBC broadcasts,<sup>3</sup> and Aaron Copland, who appropriated Appalachian folk music for his compositions with great success. Guion enjoyed a similar triumph in his 1952 premiere of *Texas Suite* with the Houston Symphony Orchestra. Hubert Roussel of the *Houston Post* wrote in his review of the work that it "closed the gap between high music and the rodeo a few blocks away."<sup>4</sup>

Guion's songs exhibit several recurrent technical devices that bring consistency to his diverse songs. For example, he often writes changes of mode where the lyrics depict a sudden brightening or darkening of mood. Chromatic-third modulations and stark returns to A sections following explosive piano interludes are also common. Guion's penchant for word painting illustrates some of his most inventive details, seen in art songs like "Sea Demons," in which the piano depicts violent storms, or in an arrangement of "Brazos Boat Song," with its gentle waves.

In general, the accompaniments of Guion's songs tend to contain material that is even more interesting than that found in the vocal line. For example, in "Embers," the accompaniment consists of continuous fast-moving triplet arpeggios that evoke fire and convey an emotional intensity that is not heard in the vocal line except for a brief moment near the end of the song. Guion's ability to write prominent accompaniments in his songs

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Horowitz, *Classical Music in America: A History of its Rise and Fall* (New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 404.

<sup>4</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 167.

is an outgrowth of his early training on the piano, and is one of the tools that allowed him to successfully arrange folk tunes for concert performance.

Guion was born in the small West Texas town of Ballinger on December 15, 1892. His life was characterized by his early exposure to people from all walks of life and the music they made. His family owned a ranch when he was young, and he was attracted to songs he heard the cowboys sing there, as well as the music made by the family servants who had traveled with his father from Mississippi after the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> He undertook piano studies in Texas and Illinois before moving to Vienna to study with Leopold Godowsky. Upon returning from Vienna, he lived in Texas and New York City before settling in rural Pennsylvania. The early 1940s saw publication of a large number of his songs, many of which are among his best in their technical structure and emotional sincerity, such as “At Close of Day” and “Song of the Wind.” After moving back to Texas in the late 1960s, Guion continued to publish a stream of compositions and was a prominent fixture in the Dallas classical music scene.

Even when Guion lived far from Texas, he often visited his native state, where his tendency to freely borrow musical ideas from divergent styles was typical of the mixed culture there. At the time of Guion’s birth, Texas was populated by diverse groups of settlers from other states, recent European immigrants, and long-time Mexican, Anglo, and African-American residents. Each group was fiercely loyal to its roots, but each also influenced the others through natural association. Thus a dynamic regional culture was born, in which the distinctive music of any particular group of people could easily be added to and mixed with the music of another group for a completely new sound.

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<sup>5</sup> Olin Chism, “Remembering a Musical Native Son,” *Dallas Times Herald*, 25 October 1981, sec. H, p. 3.

The folk music of Western European immigrants who populated the rural regions of the Eastern United States or who moved West in search of land or money proved to be the source for composers who wished to incorporate a distinctly American sound into their music after World War I. The populist mindset of artists who approved of mixing high and low cultural elements led to folk-flavored works by prominent composers like Aaron Copland and John Jacob Niles.

Guion was different from many of his contemporaries in that his unique childhood experiences yielded a personal affinity for both the cowboy songs and for African-American music. He was also intrigued by folk songs that were not introduced to him directly. Guion was open-minded about inspiration, believing that something useful could be derived from all music. For instance, rock music, which he thought sounded mostly bad, was useful to him for its interesting beat.<sup>6</sup> His embrace of so many types of music, combined with his intentions to produce classical compositions, allowed him to write a wide range of songs that impress with their musicality and diversity.

### Rationale for the Study

Guion is no longer widely known, and little has been written about him. A few of his songs are included in art song anthologies, but most of his published songs are out of print. He was a prolific composer who was able to support himself from sales of his music from a young age, which indicates that his songs appealed to a large number of people during his lifetime. This document will explore the appeal of his songs. Changes in the American music industry and in American society in general, as well as a penchant for isolation on Guion's part and the typecasting that came with being known as a

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<sup>6</sup> Don Safran, " 'Home' Gave Him the Range," *Dallas Times Herald*, 1 November 1959, sec. Roundup, p. 10.

composer of cowboy songs, may have all contributed to his current obscurity. The division between musical styles in America renders it difficult at times for a composer to be recognized as both a competent, serious musician and as a successful transcriber of popular folk songs. Irrespective of current recognition, this document examines Guion's songs from both a musical standpoint and from a social perspective.

#### Purpose of the study

Guion's musical style and his artistic sensibilities can best be defined through analytical discussion of his music. In order to discover the recurrent technical and thematic elements that collectively comprise his style, each of his published songs has been examined. Eleven of them were chosen for in-depth discussion in this document because they each provide several prime examples of Guion's favorite characteristics. All three of Guion's major categories are represented in the eleven songs, which span his most productive years.

Besides a discussion of musical elements, background material such as information about lyricists, dedicatees, circumstances surrounding a particular composition, and the history of certain types of music will be discussed in order to construct a comprehensive view of Guion's songs. Of the eleven songs chosen for discussion, there are two transcribed cowboy folk songs and one transcribed cowboy song from a known source; one transcribed spiritual and two original songs based on black American music; and five original art songs not based upon folk music, one of which is a sacred song. The pieces chosen for discussion are listed on the next page.

All Day on the Prairie, 1930, Early cowboy song  
Home on the Range, 1930, Famous and controversial cowboy song  
Brazos Boat Song, 1936, Cowboy song of historical note  
Hark from de Tombs, 1918, Spiritual  
Voodoo, 1929, from Guion's unfinished opera, *Suzanne*  
Mistah Jay-Bird, 1934, Song of the South  
My Own Laddie, 1919, Art song designed after folk songs  
The Voice of America, 1941, Patriotic art song  
At Close of Day, 1942, Art song with references to Guion's mother  
Song of the Wind, 1942, Art song about the continuity of life  
The Cross-Bearer, 1942, Religious art song

#### Related Literature

Guion's published songs are the primary resources for this study. Other sources include sheet music, research documents, regional books and journals, newspaper articles, various unpublished sources, recordings, and books on American classical and folk music. Direct observations of many sources are made possible through the permission of James Dick at the International-Festival Institute in Round Top, Texas. Scholarly theses yield information about the Guion archives at Baylor University, the composer's piano music, and his setting of a famous folk song. Chapters and articles in regional books and journals yield colorful insights into Guion's life and music. Guion was featured in a plethora of newspaper articles, which are useful in gaining more information about him while assessing his public image. Memoirs and personal letters from Guion's family and friends help in determining why the composer chose to set certain material. Textbooks and scholarly articles on American music are instrumental in establishing the musical environment in which Guion lived.

Guion is the focus of two graduate theses and is the main subject in a chapter of a dissertation. A master's thesis by Shirley McCullough entitled "David Guion and the Guion Collection" explores the collection of Guion manuscripts and letters housed at Baylor University.<sup>7</sup> Much of the information Steve Buchanan used for his doctoral thesis called "The Piano Music of David W. Guion and the Intersection of Musical Traditions in America After World War I," came directly from Guion via interview.<sup>8</sup> Buchanan explores Guion's style as seen in his compositions for piano. Several pages of Kevin Mooney's doctoral dissertation, "Texas Centennial 1936: Music and Identity,"<sup>9</sup> are devoted to Guion and to the composer's role in developing the popularity of the song, "The Yellow Rose of Texas." An extensive biography and chronology of Guion's works are part of a dissertation currently being written by a student at the University of Texas at Austin.

Extensive and sometimes contradictory details of Guion's life are peppered throughout regional books and journal articles. Many of these details appear in the form of entertaining anecdotes. For example, in Martha Turner's *The Yellow Rose of Texas*, the author relates the story of why Guion once hung up the phone on Franklin D. Roosevelt. The composer did not believe an operator who claimed that she had the President waiting on the line.<sup>10</sup> Donna Bearden interviewed Guion, and her chapter about him in *The Texas Sampler: A Stitch in Time* recounts some of the composer's ideas

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<sup>7</sup> Shirley McCullough, "David Guion and the Guion Collection" (M.M. thesis, Baylor University, 1975).

<sup>8</sup> Steven Erle Buchanan, "The Piano Music of David W. Guion and the Intersection of Musical Traditions in America after World War I" (D.M.A. thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1978).

<sup>9</sup> Kevin Edward Mooney, "Texas Centennial 1936: Music and Identity" (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1998).

<sup>10</sup> Martha Anne Turner, *The Yellow Rose of Texas: Her Saga and Her Song*, (Austin: Shoal Creek Publishers, 1976), 77.

regarding the distinctive qualities shared in the folk music of disparate groups.<sup>11</sup> Exie Burford interviewed Guion for an article in *Music Clubs Magazine* in which she affectionately paints the composer as a respectable and somewhat testy person who liked to stay abreast of American musical events, work in his garden, and raise prize dogs.

Newspaper articles, memoirs by family members, and letters yield further biographical details about the composer, as well as information about early musical influences. One article in the *Dallas Morning News* describes plans for a film about the composer and his life,<sup>12</sup> while another is devoted to the controversy surrounding authorship of “Home on the Range.”<sup>13</sup> The majority of newspaper articles about Guion were printed in the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Dallas Times Herald*; further articles and announcements can be found in *Waco*, *Waxahachie*, *Houston*, *New York*, and *Chicago* newspapers. While details about the composer are abundant in the newspaper articles, the vast majority of comments about his music deal only with the cowboy songs. The spirituals and the art songs did not attract as much interest. It is reasonable to assume that, of the three categories of Guion’s songs, those of the cowboy variety would appeal especially to Texas readers.

Guion’s relatives were instrumental in recording his biography and handling his personal effects. His niece, Katherine Freiburger, typed a two-page biography about Guion shortly after his death. In it, she described his family background, his earliest and latest published works, his conservatory studies and subsequent teaching jobs, his professional acquaintanceships with musicians such as George Gershwin and Percy

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<sup>11</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 166.

<sup>12</sup> Betsy Stitler, “Film maker’s work to spotlight Guion,” *Dallas Morning News*, 2 September, 1979, sec. C, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> John Ardoin, “Who Wrote Home on the Range?” *Dallas Morning News*, 30 June 1974, sec. C, p. 1.

Grainger, his bitterness about losing his homestead in the Poconos, and the genres in which he composed.<sup>14</sup> Guion's younger brother Wade submitted a document to the International-Festival Institute entitled "Neil's Guion Saga." In it, Guion's penchant for attending African-American revival meetings with the family servants is revealed, along with the history of how "The Bold Vaquero" supposedly became the first cowboy song to be set as an art song.<sup>15</sup>

Correspondence between Guion and his family, friends and associates yields rich insight into the composer's life. Many of the letters in the archives at the International-Festival Institute are personal in nature, while letters housed in the university libraries mostly contain correspondence with fellow musicians. Guion's close relationship with his family is evident in his personal correspondence. For example, a twenty-four-year old Guion received a letter from his mother admonishing him to not push himself too hard, to rest, and to "not get a big head."<sup>16</sup> In a letter sent to Guion a few years earlier, while the composer was studying in Vienna, his father explains that he has sent him \$1200 for personal expenses and will be supportive of his music studies for as long as he can, but he expects him to make sure that the youngest son of the household is educated, in case the father is unable to fulfill his responsibilities in the future. Guion's father goes on to write that he knows Guion's mother idolizes her son, but that he, as another man,

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<sup>14</sup> Katherine Freiburger, "David Wendell Guion, 1982." TMs (photocopy), David W. Guion Archives, Special Collections Library, The International-Festival Institute, Round Top, Texas.

<sup>15</sup> Neil Guion, "Neil Guion's Saga, 1970." Preface by Wade Fentress Guion. David W. Guion Archives, Special Collections Library, The International-Festival Institute, Round Top, Texas.

<sup>16</sup> Armour Guion, Ballinger, to David W. Guion, Brownwood, 3 September 1917, transcript in the hand of Armour Guion, David W. Guion Archives, Special Collections Library, The International-Festival Institute, Round Top, Texas.

knows what it really takes to succeed.<sup>17</sup> A letter from teacher and composer Charles Finger to Guion relates how Finger remembers what it was like to study in a foreign country, and that loneliness can be a problem. He goes on to write that he knows Guion will be very successful because he has friends and family looking out for him.<sup>18</sup> In all, the impression one gets from the letters is that they were written in conversational tones, as if the correspondents were speaking on the telephone or emailing each other, and much insight about Guion and his world can be gained from reading them.

Another good source of information on Guion can be found in the liner notes of the 1970 album *The Songs of David Guion*. The liner notes state that Guion was the first composer to “extol the beauty of the West,” and they describe a rodeo competition Guion won in Cheyenne. The notes also give background information for some of the songs featured on the album.<sup>19</sup>

For the purposes of understanding Guion’s place in American music, valuable secondary sources dealing with the composer’s areas of specialty were consulted. These sources are books about American classical music and folk music. Some of the books mention Guion directly. Guion’s name appears as an American composer of note in John Struble’s *The History of American Classical Music: MacDowell through Minimalism*. In this book, Guion’s name is included in various charts and a timeline. He is listed as a significant musician, in the same league as Quincy Porter, Leo Sowerby, George Antheil,

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<sup>17</sup> John I. Guion, Ballinger, to David W. Guion, Vienna, 21 February 1913, in the hand of John I. Guion, David W. Guion Archives, Special Collections Library, The International-Festival Institute, Round Top, Texas.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Finger, Frankfurt, to David W. Guion, Vienna, 2 June 1913, in the hand of Charles Finger, David W. Guion Archives, Special Collections Library, The International-Festival Institute, Round Top, Texas.

<sup>19</sup> Richard A. Lamb, *The Songs of David Guion*, jacket notes, Crescendo Music Publications, Inc. CMP 7333, 1970, LP.

and Douglas Moore, among others.<sup>20</sup> Chapter VI of the book discusses the major musical styles that gained dominance in the United States from 1900-1933. Struble also discusses music industry practices of the day, yielding possible insight into Guion's business deals and his personal motivations. For instance, in order to market his songs effectively to a wide range of parlor musicians, Guion often included alternate notes in his songs so that they could be sung by persons with varied ranges and capabilities.

Some of the secondary sources do not mention Guion's name directly but provide historical information. Joseph Horowitz' *Classical Music in America: A History of its Rise and Fall*, discusses several distinctive strains of music that arose in the United States by 1950. The book also refers to the celebrity practice, common among musicians operating in the 1920s and 1930s, of greatly exaggerating or understating aspects of their lives in order to create interesting biographies. Some of the stories Guion told about his life were certainly exaggerated. For instance, one article maintained that Guion was friends with Judge Roy Bean.<sup>21</sup> Actually, he met the famous judge only once, when he (Guion) was a small boy.

In *Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950*, three chapters deal with varied subjects that pertain to this document. Chapter Three, "Mapping the Blues Genes: Technological, Economic, and Social Strands – A Spectral Analysis" by Raymond Dessy, explores the western spread of blues music from the Mississippi Delta.<sup>22</sup> Chapter Seven, "Western Swing: Working-Class Southwestern Jazz of the 1930s and 1940s" by Jean Boyd, lists the contributions to the music of the Southwest from different ethnic groups

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<sup>20</sup> John Warthen Struble, *The History of American Classical Music: MacDowell Through Minimalism*, (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1995), 124.

<sup>21</sup> Stitler, "Film maker's work to spotlight Guion," sec. C, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Raymond E. Dessy, "Mapping the Blues Genes: Technological, Economic, and Social Strands – A Spectral Analysis," in *Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950*, ed. Michael Saffle (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), 51-104.

and states that the culture of that area is tied closely to the landscape,<sup>23</sup> an assertion also made by Evetts Haley in his book, *Frank Reaugh: Man and Artist*.<sup>24</sup> Chapter Ten from *Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950*, written by Donald C. Meyer and entitled “Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra: High, Middle and Low Culture, 1937-1954,” speaks of the American phenomenon of constant interchange between low and high culture.<sup>25</sup>

One of the two distinct types of folk music Guion drew upon for a large number of his songs were cowboy tunes. The history of cowboy songs is discussed in Katie Lee’s book, *Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle: A History of the American Cowboy in Song, Story and Verse*, while the musical characteristics of cowboy songs are listed in Kip Lornell’s book, *Introducing American Folk Music: Ethnic and Grassroot Traditions in the United States*. Two articles in *American Popular Music: Readings from the Popular Press, Volume I: The Nineteenth Century and Tin Pan Alley*, discuss nostalgia’s role in the popularity of cowboy songs and how the music industry fostered such growth. Mooney’s dissertation also mentions the revered status of the cowboy and how this applies to the music surrounding the myth of the West.

Spirituals were the other major folk source Guion used for his songs. Even though his personal contributions to the repertoire of spirituals and other types of songs attributed to African-Americans have not been the subject of previous studies, there are many sources of information about spirituals that help one to understand Guion’s work.

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<sup>23</sup> Jean A. Boyd, “Western Swing: Working-Class Southwestern Jazz of the 1930s and 1940s,” in *Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950*, ed. Michael Saffle (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), 193-214.

<sup>24</sup> J. Evetts Haley, *Frank Reaugh: Man and Artist* (El Paso: Carl Herzog, 1960).

<sup>25</sup> Donald C. Meyer, “Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra: High, Middle and Low Culture, 1937-1954,” in *Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950*, ed. Michael Saffle (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), 301-22.

In the highly interesting *Alan Lomax: Selected Writings 1934-1997*, edited by Ronald Cohen, Lomax lists sources and characteristics of both white and black American folk music and asserts how each influenced the other. More information about the history of black American music exists in both Richard Carlin's *The World of Music: English and American Folk Music* and George Carney's *The Sounds of People and Places: A Geography of American Music from Country to Classical and Blues to Bop*. Eugene Levy's article, "Ragtime and Race Pride: The Career of James Weldon Johnson" in *American Popular Music: Readings from the Popular Press Volume I: The Nineteenth Century and Tin Pan Alley* discusses Guion's African-American contemporaries' treatment of spirituals, while Jeffrey Melnick's "Tin Pan Alley and the Black-Jewish Nation" in *American Popular Music: New Approaches to the Twentieth Century* explores other white composers' treatment of black music during the time Guion was writing his songs.

### Organization and Procedure

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the songs of David Guion. It presents the author's rationale behind undertaking such a study and explains the process by which Guion's songs will be explored. A thorough literature review is included.

Chapter 2 will begin with a brief biography followed by an exploration of the recurrent musical and thematic characteristics found in Guion's songs. The prominent role for the piano in Guion's art songs will be discussed, as will as the composer's treatment of performance directions.

Guion's cowboy songs are the focus of chapter 3. A brief history of cowboy songs and some sources of inspiration for the composer will be followed by discussions

of “All Day on the Prairie,” “Brazos Boat Song,” and “Home on the Range.” These songs were chosen because they each contain one or more examples of musical devices common in Guion’s songs and help to clarify his style and his attitude about the cowboy songs and their significance. The history and controversy of “Home on the Range” will be discussed in tandem with Guion’s tendency to exaggerate certain aspects of his life and how his tall tales contributed to the success of his cowboy songs.

Chapter 4 contains a brief history of the American spiritual, the reasons Guion chose to set spirituals and to compose songs in the African-American vein, and a brief discussion of lyrics with regard to cultural concerns. An arrangement of the spiritual “Hark from de Tombs” will be featured. Discussion of two of Guion’s original songs, “Mistah Jay-Bird” and “Voodoo,” will yield valuable insight into the composer’s unusual social perspectives.

Chapter 5 is a discussion of Guion’s original songs, “My Own Laddie,” “The Voice of America,” “At Close of Day,” “Song of the Wind,” and “The Cross-Bearer.” Attention will be given to two themes in particular: Guion’s devotion to his mother, as seen in “At Close of Day;” and religious topics, as seen in “The Cross-Bearer” and to a lesser extent in “Song of the Wind.” Detailed analyses centered on the most striking points of the songs in this chapter will help to further familiarize the reader with the recurrent themes and musical idiosyncrasies that help define Guion’s style.

Chapter 6 is a summary of the study with conclusions. This chapter is followed by the Bibliography.

Appendix 1 consists of a comprehensive chart including title, year of publication, publisher, category, collection, lyricist, key, and vocal range information for Guion’s

published solo songs. Brief comments concerning dedications, performance issues, and other information are included. Choral settings of songs are noted along with the names of the arrangers. This chart is meant to provide quick access to concise information about Guion's songs for interested performers and scholars.

Appendix 2 is an annotated discography of recordings of Guion's vocal music.

CHAPTER 2  
LIFE AND SONGS OF THE COMPOSER

Biographical Profile

David Wendell Guion was one of several siblings born into a well-off family in Ballinger, a small town in West Texas. From the beginning, his life included a range of experiences and associations as diverse as his musical interests would later prove themselves to be. For instance, he was an expert horseman from a young age and, as an adult, he kept a horse and cabin in Estes Park, Colorado for his personal use in the summertime. Instead of associating himself strictly with his family's Presbyterian church, he preferred to attend church with the family's African-American servants. He also enjoyed participating in their music making outside of church. At the same time, he studied piano and enjoyed learning the songs he heard being sung by the cowboys at family ranch. He declared Bach, Beethoven and Chopin to be his favorite composers. Riding and music aside, he possessed a lifelong interest in art, fine American furniture, and glassware.

Guion's parents both came from families who claimed lineage with such American luminaries as Benjamin Franklin, William Taft, James Polk, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Guion's father, John I. Guion II, was a lawyer and former judge whose own father had been Governor of Mississippi. One of John Guion's acquaintances was

the famous lawman Roy Bean, who once met David Guion and gave the five-year-old composer a gift of candy. The composer's mother, Matilde Armour de Fentresse Guion, was a doctor's daughter from San Saba, not far from Ballinger. A skilled amateur soprano, she was the first to recognize and encourage her son's musical promise. Both of Guion's parents valued education and culture, often traveling eighteen hours by train with their family to Dallas to attend concerts given by famous touring musicians. Sensitive to their son's aspirations and believing in his chances for success, they enthusiastically supported their son in his musical pursuits.

Guion's musical talent announced itself at the tender age of five. Upon returning home from a family outing to the circus, he reportedly sat at the piano and perfectly reproduced the music he had just heard, astonishing all who listened.<sup>26</sup> This incident led to several years of piano lessons in nearby San Angelo, and then further musical studies at the Whipple Academy in Illinois and Polytechnic College in Fort Worth. After deciding that he should expand his horizons, Guion moved to Vienna in 1911 to study at the Konservatorium Wien with Leopold Godowsky. He spent his summers in Innsbruck and thoroughly enjoyed his time in Europe, meeting important musicians like Ferruccio Busoni, Ignaz Paderewsky, Anton Rubinstein, Arnold Schoenberg, Ignaz Friedman, and Richard Strauss. His experience there was so stimulating that he might have stayed in Europe permanently if not for the outbreak of World War I.

Returning to the United States in 1914 at his parents' insistence, Guion stayed in Ballinger for a year before beginning his first teaching post at Daniel Baker College, currently known as Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas. Guion realized while teaching at Baker that his main interest lay not in piano performance or pedagogy

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<sup>26</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 162.

but in composition. Other teaching jobs followed over the next thirteen years at Chicago Musical College, Fairmount Conservatory, the Southwest School of Fine Arts, and Southern Methodist University.

Guion developed his extramusical interests during his years of teaching. He continued to visit his retreat in Colorado and won rodeo competitions in both Estes Park and Cheyenne, Wyoming. During his tenure at Southern Methodist University, he married Marion Ayers in Dallas, but they divorced shortly thereafter. By this time, Guion's mother and some of his siblings had moved from Ballinger to Dallas, following the death of Guion's father.

After the failure of his marriage, Guion decided to make his living as a composer and moved to New York City in the early 1920s. He quickly struck up a relationship with Oscar Sonneck, who was head of the Publications Department of G. Schirmer, Inc., and enjoyed immediate success with his sheet music. Guion's music was used in several stage productions, such as a review called *Prairie Echoes* at the Roxy Theater in Manhattan in 1930. He also wrote the incidental music for *Green Grow the Lilacs*, a folk play written in 1931 by Oklahoman Lynn Riggs which was the source material for Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* Guion's arrangement of the spiritual "De Ol' Ark's a-Moverin," made popular by Metropolitan Opera star soprano Mabel Garrison, was included *The Green Pastures*, a musical about biblical stories told from a rural African-American perspective.

Even though Guion claimed that composition was an avocation for him as opposed to something that he did to make a living,<sup>27</sup> his many career successes in New York could not have been the results of luck. He aggressively promoted his work in New

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<sup>27</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 164.

York the same way he energetically renovated his homes to show off his growing collection of American furniture and glass. While submitting his songs for publication by major houses like Schirmer and M. Witmark & Sons and writing for theater productions, Guion hosted two radio shows for NBC, *Hearing America with Guion* and *David Guion and Orchestra*. These broadcasts gained him widespread recognition and introduced “Home on the Range” and other cowboy songs to Americans who were not necessarily buying sheet music. The cowboy songs Guion submitted for the airwaves are partially responsible for the rapid rise in popularity of the singing cowboy that culminated in films starring Gene Autry and Roy Rogers.

Guion’s good fortune early in his career lay partly in lucky timing. World War I brought with it a new American preference for home-grown products over foreign goods. This preference extended to the arts. Guion’s compositions reflected an interest in American folk music, a nationalistic stance shared by many of his contemporaries. Along with the cowboy songs, some of his earliest published works were the fourteen *Darkey Spirituals* of 1918.

The composer was aware of the popularity of folk music with the public, and he sometimes emphasized those facets of his life that served to tie him to the American general public. For instance, he mentioned that he was self-taught as a composer, implying that a successful musician did not need to learn his craft in European conservatories. To further endear himself to a popular audience, he described his method for composing a song. He claimed that he would simply memorize the poem he chose and wait for the melody to come to him.<sup>28</sup> Savvy to the desires of the people who would

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<sup>28</sup> Exie Burford, “David Guion, American Composer, Speaks Up,” *Music Clubs Magazine*, February 1969, 18.

be performing and listening to his music, he wrote alternate notes in many of his songs so that singers could adjust tessitura and range to suit their voices.

After spending several successful years in New York City, Guion returned to Texas and was commissioned to write for the *Cavalcade of Texas*, a musical about the history of the state set to commemorate the centennial celebration of Texan independence. Guion's "My Cowboy Love Song" became the theme song of the cavalcade, which ran in 1936 at Fair Park in Dallas. The composer was at the peak of his career. However, his good fortune was doused later that year when his mother, to whom he was extremely devoted, died. The year after that, he bought a homestead in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania which he christened Home on the Range. He continued to write, but he was not at the center of events as he had been in New York City. He turned much of his attention to renovating and landscaping his homestead and to collecting art and antiques.

During his nearly thirty years in the Poconos, he often returned to Texas, where his work enjoyed great popularity. In 1950, besides being awarded an honorary doctorate from Howard Payne University, the Texas Federation of Music Clubs named the first week of February "David Guion Week," and celebrated it with concerts throughout the state. That same year, a commission from the Houston Symphony Orchestra led to his composition of the fourteen-movement *Texas Suite*. Hubert Roussel of the *Houston Post* wrote in his review of the 1952 premiere of that work that it "closed the gap between high music and the rodeo a few blocks away."<sup>29</sup>

Having found happiness in the Poconos at Home on the Range, Guion was outraged when the government condemned the land in order to construct a dam. He

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<sup>29</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 167.

fought to keep his home but ultimately lost the battle and moved back to his family home in Dallas. He talked about the experience for the rest of his life.

The government is crooked and corrupt. I told LBJ that to his face. It nearly killed me when the government took it away. I fought it in the courts, but there was nothing I could do about it; they offered me some cheap price and that was it. I finally just gave up. The government took it all away from me. Chopped down all the trees and covered that beautiful land with a stupid lake.<sup>30</sup>

Reestablishing himself in Dallas, Guion attended concerts and performed his own music in recitals. Newspaper announcements regarding Guion's intentions of bequeathing his collections to Baylor University and the University of Texas at Austin proved premature, although both of those institutions did receive some of Guion's manuscripts and letters. Guion met the pianist James Dick after a concert Dick gave in Dallas in the 1970s. The meeting led to an all-Guion concert in 1976 at Dick's International-Festival Institute at Round Top, and Guion ultimately bequeathed to the Institute the vast majority of his musical materials and a good deal of his collection of furniture, cut glass, paintings, lamps, recordings, books, manuscripts, photographs, and archival materials.

Guion's presence is still strong at the Institute. Much of his bequest is on display in the Guion Room there, but some of his furniture is used in parlors of the Menke House, one of the Institute's historic buildings, as was the composer's request. The intricate design for the Institute's concert hall ceiling is based upon a pattern found on one of Guion's glass dinnerware sets.

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<sup>30</sup> Olin Chism, "Wild West and Music Shaped Composer's Life," *Dallas Times Herald*, 1977.

### The Composer's Musical Style

Guion's songs feature such a diverse range of topics and influences that a distinct style inclusive of all the categories is difficult to define. However, patterns emerge when the songs are divided into categories. The cowboy songs and the songs based on African-American music each exhibit compositional devices that help to define the categories from a musical standpoint. For instance, Guion always set the lyrics in his cowboy songs syllabically. While the accompaniments to these songs often contain some elaborate passages, they are simple for the most part, as in "Home on the Range." Many of the cowboy folk song arrangements feature original second melodies that extend the range for the vocalist by a fourth, but the tessitura of these songs generally lies in an easily negotiable middle register.

In contrast, Guion set the lyrics and wrote the accompaniments of his arrangements of spirituals and the *Songs of the South* very differently than in the cowboy songs. He employed about the same total range as he did in the cowboy songs, but the spirituals and *Songs of the South* demand greater versatility from the singer in that the tessitura may change abruptly from one section to another in a given song. For instance, "Oh My Lawd, What Shall I Do?" begins with a section in a low register for the singer, slowly moves through sections of middle and middle-high registers, then returns to low. The vocal line features octave leaps that are never seen in the cowboy songs. Guion ornamented the vocal lines of the spirituals and *Songs of the South* with grace notes and melismas. He often used harmonies associated with jazz in his songs based on African-American music, such as the  $V^{7\sharp 5}$  chord found in "Nobody Knows de Trouble I Sees."

Pentatonic scales feature prominently in the spirituals, as well as slurs marking every phrase clearly.

Of all the categories, Guion's art songs contain the most demanding material for the performers. The art songs often feature dramatic changes in mood with long passages of sustained high notes for the singer and explosive interludes for the pianist interspersed with exposed *pianissimo* sections. While Guion usually began his folk song arrangements on one of the tonic triad pitches, he often obscured tonal centers at the beginning of his art songs by leaving out the thirds of chords or by beginning melodies on unusual scale degrees. For instance, in "The Bell Buoy," Guion maintains the melody at the raised fourth scale degree for the first eight measures of the song. The nostalgia and simplicity that are characteristics of the folk songs are replaced by emotional extremity and complexity in the art songs.

Many of the compositional elements Guion favored are distributed among his body of songs as a whole. For example, he was fond of changing section or mood through sudden or gradual modulation. Guion's chromatic third modulations often include enharmonic respellings. For instance, "Unveil Your Eyes" starts in E $\flat$  Major and modulates to F $\sharp$  Major. Change of mode occurs frequently in Guion's songs and usually takes place at a dramatic shift in the mood or action. In "Only Through Thee, Lord," the despair permeating the A section is followed by an abrupt change from C Minor to C Major when the speaker proclaims that all problems can be solved by trusting in God. When the speaker declares this hopeful sentiment a second time, the key shifts briefly upward through a chromatic passage to rest in D Major.

Chromatic movement from both a horizontal and a vertical standpoint occurs more often in Guion's songs than any other device and is a hallmark of his style. Chromatic movement happens most often in the bass line, but can also be found in the inner voices of the accompaniment, in the melody, and as a basis for modulation. Several examples of Guion's use of chromatic movement and of other musical devices will be highlighted in the songs discussed in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

### Piano in Guion's Songs

The piano plays a prominent role in Guion's songs. Accompaniments sometimes surpass the vocal lines in color and in technical demands. Especially in the folk or folk-flavored songs, a simple melody is often enhanced by a virtuosic accompaniment. An example of an accompaniment taking center stage occurs in the following excerpt from "God's Golden West" (fig. 1). The passage shows a rhythmically simple, mainly stepwise melody paired with an accompaniment that includes complex rhythms and necessitates quick adjustments in hand position.

Because piano virtuosos such as played a large part in the development of the Romantic Lied, a chief feature of this type of song is its powerful piano commentaries regarding atmosphere, plot or character development. In the lengthy postlude of "Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan," the last song in Robert Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, the piano quotes a love motive from earlier in the cycle as a devastated widow remembers the happiness she had felt with her husband. Piano interludes correspond to various psychological scene changes in Franz Liszt's "Die Loreley." The piano lines in Lieder heighten and, sometimes, transcend the texts. Guion became familiar with Lieder when he lived and studied in Vienna. His songs reflect the German

Romantic Lieder composers' tendency to showcase the piano. The piano's prominence in Guion's songs is particularly highlighted in "All Day on the Prairie" and "Hymn to the Sun." While the lyrics of "All Day on the Prairie" depict a hardscrabble life for a cowboy, the accompaniment proves that he obviously has a lot of fun too. Heel-kicking dances occur between the verses until just before the last verse, when the piano assumes a lullaby gait so that the cowboy can go to sleep underneath the stars. In "Hymn to the Sun," the piano lines go so far as to eclipse the voice's part. Underneath a staid melody, continuous rolling arpeggios in the piano lines evoke a dreamlike quality similar to the one heard in another song that mentions the sun, Henri Duparc's "L'invitation au voyage."

Fig. 1. "God's Golden West," mm. 23-26. Notable accompaniment.

The image displays a musical score for the song "God's Golden West," measures 23-26. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor), and the time signature is 6/8. The score includes the following lyrics and performance markings:

*mp* *in time*  
 Where the can - yons are flow - ered With blue - bon - nets wild, And  
*mp* *in time*  
 25 *rit.*  
 crys - tal clear wa - ters Re - flect - ing God's smile.  
*rit.*

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Guion’s songs frequently contain preludes, interludes or postludes that make dramatic musical statements. These statements often foreshadow a future action or comment on what has already happened in the vocal lines. For instance, in the sacred art song “The Lord is My Shepherd,” Guion includes a robust interlude that expresses overwhelming joy after the words “my cup runneth o’er” are sung. A similarly theatrical interlude occurs in “At Close of Day,” when the speaker realizes that a happy reunion with his lost mother is just a figment of his imagination, and he slowly comes back to reality after a moment of great turmoil. In his descriptive piano passages and in his contrapuntal textures, Guion’s approach to song-writing shows the influence of Robert Schumann, of whom he was a great admirer.<sup>31</sup>

Fig. 2. “Hopi Indian Cradle Song,” mm. 15-18. Word painting, moonbeams.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Hopi Indian Cradle Song" in 3/4 time, key of G major. The vocal line (top staff) has lyrics: "Rest here my moon - beam, \_\_\_ Rest, Oh brave war - rior \_\_\_". The piano accompaniment (bottom two staves) features a right-hand part with a melodic line and a left-hand part with chords. A specific section of the piano part is marked with a slur and the text "[moonbeams]", with "L.H." and "R.H." labels indicating the hands. The score includes a double bar line between measures 15 and 16.

Perhaps no musical device occurs more frequently in Guion’s songs than word painting. Word painting occurs in all the different categories from the entire span of the composer’s career. Guion’s piano lines paint pictures describing birds, clouds, storms, dreams, wind, a snapping whip, footsteps, even a boiling pot. Guion used word-painting in “Hopi Indian Cradle Song” to depict delicate moonbeams (fig. 2).

<sup>31</sup> Buchanan, “The Piano Music of David W. Guion,” 53-54.

Guion's treatment of the piano in his songs yields opportunities for true collaboration between the performers. While the singer has words and facial expressions at his disposal, the pianist has his own material to exploit in the introductions, interludes and codas, and with word-painting.

### Guion's Notes on Performance

Guion's folk songs often contain instructions to the performers about the attitude with which one should regard the material. "McCaffie's Confession" is a strophic cowboy song about a condemned man who tells the circumstances of his wife's death and exhorts witnesses to avoid associations with the wrong type of people. At the end of the song, he is executed. Guion includes an entire paragraph in which he insists that singers maintain a serious demeanor for effective delivery, never attempting to inject humor into the performance. He also notes that, out of respect to the integrity of the material, no verses should be omitted, even though the melodies of such folk songs are typically repetitive.

Guion's dynamic and tempo markings often address action or mood with specific language. For instance, "held back," as seen in "Song of the Wind," means to slow down slightly, perhaps by allowing an attack consonant to fall exactly on the downbeat, rather than just before it. Guion writes "like an echo" in "Sinner, Don' Let Dis Harves' Pass." Presumably, this is an instruction to sing a repeated word or phrase more softly than its precedent; but "like an echo" gives a more explicit direction to a performer than a *decrescendo* or *mp* marking would.

Guion wanted his songs to be sung with words and accents that he deemed authentic. For instance, over the beginning of the vocal line in "McCaffie's Confession,"

Guion wrote “Narratively, and with typical Western drawl.” Guion assumed that the people buying and performing his songs could easily emulate a Western drawl, which involves emphasizing instances of [r] in the middle or at the end of words and changing the pronunciation of words such as “oil” from [ɔiəɫ] to [ɔæɫ]. However, Guion did not assume that the persons buying and performing his music could correctly sing in a “typical Black drawl.” Instead, Guion wrote the exact pronunciations he wished to use in the *Songs of the South* and the arrangements of the spirituals in the Black dialect he heard as a child. For example, the word “for” is replaced with “fo’ ” in “John de Bap-a-tist.”

Some of Guion’s directions are entertaining, as in his instruction to “smack” between verses in “A Kiss.” Nonsense syllables, whistles, spoken comments, and shouts are written into some of his songs. For both vocalists and pianists, Guion typically used descriptions which were carefully worded in order to unmistakably convey his intentions with regard to the performance of his songs.

## CHAPTER 3

### COWBOY SONGS

#### Background

Guion's cowboy songs are characterized by a sense of nostalgia. When the composer's reputation began to soar nationwide in the early 1930s, the ever more industrialized American public who listened to his music embraced the ideal of the cowboy, a hard-working figure whose life in the outdoors was free from societal restraints and whose persona was marked by integrity and practical wisdom. This Romantic image of the cowboy was not rooted in reality, where health, money, and justice were serious concerns then, just as they are now, but rather in nostalgia.

Fortuitous timing contributed to the popularity of Guion's cowboy songs. World War I, followed by the Great Depression, brought about a shift in American societal values.<sup>32</sup> After World War I, the United States became a world power and its citizens began to see themselves as protectors who were responsible for ensuring freedom in other countries. Many Americans viewed Europe as an old continent that was past its prime, while their own land furnished unlimited potential for enterprising pioneers. No person fit this Romantic stereotype of the American trailblazer better than the cowboy. Cowboy legends reflected the American ideal that its citizens were hard-working, independent,

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<sup>32</sup> Struble, *The History of American Classical Music*, 189.

honest, and down-to-earth. Technological progress also enhanced the cowboy legend as Americans were exposed to a variety of experiences via radio and movies that had never before been known. Guion's radio programs were some of the first to feature cowboy music. His shows were still new enough in the early 1930s to be novel, and they quickly gained the attention of an interested audience. The music Guion played in *David Guion and Orchestra* and *Hearing America with Guion* helped create a mythology that appealed to the patriotic American masses.

In *Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle*, Katie Lee states that cowboy songs as they are known today stem from Irish folk songs, which are also known for their nostalgic sentiments. Lee writes that Irish songs "adapted rhythmically well to the walking cow pony because of their elastic melodies."<sup>33</sup> Cowboy songs started in the mid-1800s as an amalgamation of songs from other cultures, popular melodies, and minstrel tunes altered with spontaneous innovations.<sup>34</sup> Around 1860, the first wholly original songs written about cowboys took shape. After the invention of barbed wire in 1874 virtually ended the long cattle drives and the cowboy life of legend, the cowboys began to write their own songs as they settled on ranches and wrote music that would recall their glory days on the trail. At about the turn of the twentieth century, their legends were commercialized when composers in Tin Pan Alley, the collection of music publishers and songwriters in New York City who were the driving force behind American popular music around the turn of the twentieth century, published songs about them. This coincided with the period of time in which Guion began to write his cowboy songs.

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<sup>33</sup> Lee, *Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle*, ix.

<sup>34</sup> Lee, *Ten Thousand Goddam Cattle*, 187.

While he lived in New York City for several years, Guion worked with composers, performers, and publishers known for their Tin Pan Alley ties. His first big hit was “Old Maid Blues,” which premiered in a 1918 George M. Cohan review in New York City by Nora Bayes. Many of his songs, including two early art songs, “Embers” and “Ghostly Galley,” along with the *Darkey Spirituals*, were published by M. Witmark & Sons. Although his classical sensibilities and his Southwestern origins set him apart, he shared much in common with other Tin Pan Alley composers. He wrote some of his songs primarily to entertain rather than to edify. He often set catchy lyrics instead of serious poems, as seen in a verse by Web Maddox from Guion’s song “Old Maid Blues.” of 1918.

Getting old, twenty five today I’ve been told,  
Don’t like sitting, cats or knitting  
No! Want a man to keep me on the go,  
Oh, if you want me, Oh, if you’ll have me,  
Just come and take me  
Just come and make me obey you and do as you choose  
I’ll never mumble, I’ll never grumble,  
For you I’ll crumble,  
Be meek and humble, I’m not bold,  
Just got the Old Maid Blues.

In another similarity to the Tin Pan Alley writers, Guion’s songs were published with tempo and dynamic markings written in vernacular terms, showing that he made an effort to connect with the average citizen in his songs. He did not assume that the public was versed in history, and he included short notes about the backgrounds of some of the songs. At the same time, his intentions to enlighten his audience and to set the cowboy songs suitably for serious concert performance show that he possessed a classical sensibility. Guion’s overall body of work renders him hard to classify as strictly a classical, popular, or folk composer. He mixed cultivated, vernacular, and folk music seamlessly<sup>35</sup> to the point that it is impossible to pigeonhole him. Guion’s career is similar

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<sup>35</sup> Buchanan, “The Piano Music of David W. Guion,” 59.

to that of George Gershwin in that his identity as a classical musician was overshadowed at times by his commercial successes. Guion, who was often compared to Stephen Foster, also might fit John Struble's description below. Struble writes of Gershwin,<sup>36</sup>

He was the first [major American composer] to approach classical music from the perspective of a popular songwriter. Had Stephen Foster attempted to write symphonic poems or concertos, Gershwin might have had an antecedent.

Guion was marketed by his publishers as a classical composer who incorporated folk music into his work. His name appears alongside such composers as Harris, Homer, Barber, Brahms, Dvořák, Grieg, and Rachmaninoff on advertised lists of works that are printed on the back covers of sheet music.

It was Guion's early life that fostered his special interest in cowboy songs. He enjoyed listening to the songs he heard from ranch hands, and he rode seriously enough to compete in rodeo events. One person in particular who excited his interest in cowboy music was his first piano teacher, Charles Finger. Finger, an adventurer born in England in 1867 to a German father and an Irish mother, studied music in Frankfurt as a young man before working an array of jobs. Among other things, he was a gaucho in Argentina, a guide for a multi-national ornithological expedition to the tip of South America, a labor organizer, a boilermaker's assistant in New Mexico, a sheep herder in Galveston, a tour operator, and director of the San Angelo Music Conservatory from 1898-1904. He wrote award-winning books based upon his exploits in South America and the Southwest, published a magazine, and eventually settled on a farm in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Even though he left San Angelo in 1904 when Guion was twelve years old, the two stayed in touch throughout the years through letters. Guion's song "Cowboy's Meditation,"

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<sup>36</sup> Struble, *The History of American Classical Music*, 94.

published in 1929, contains a note on the first page that reads “Original words and tune from Charles J. Finger’s collection.” Guion’s own experiences and the ones he heard about from family members and from Finger instilled in him a personal connection with cowboy songs. Because he felt strongly about the importance of the content in cowboy music, Guion often wrote strict instructions to performers to adopt a serious attitude about the songs.

The public liked the idea of a composer who was also a real cowboy, and Guion played up his background to appeal to his audience. Manufacturing a public image in order to sell sheet music or concert seats was a common marketing tool in Guion’s time. For instance, Olga Samaroff gained respect as a Russian pianist, whereas she had previously been unable to launch a concert career with her true birth name and place, which was Lucy Mary Agnes Hickenlooper of San Antonio, Texas. Many of Guion’s printed songs feature pictures of the young composer himself in a cowboy hat. Such gimmicks helped to create an aura of legend surrounding Guion that related him to the heroic qualities attributed to the cowboys. At times, the stories extended the truth.

For instance, many of Guion’s biographical details were not completely accurate as reported in the many articles written about him. Guion’s grandfather was a governor of Mississippi, but his great-grandfather was not, as had been claimed.<sup>37</sup> In another case of inaccurate name dropping, Guion was supposedly friends with famous Texas lawman Judge Roy Bean,<sup>38</sup> when really they had met only once when Guion was a small boy.

Guion’s tendency to exaggerate or fabricate details of his life led to discrepancies regarding “Home on the Range” and other publications as well. For instance, Guion

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<sup>37</sup> Chism, “Remembering a Musical Native Son,” sec. H, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Stitler, “Film maker’s work to spotlight Guion,” sec. C, p. 1.

claimed that his 1936 publication of “The Yellow Rose of Texas” was actually written in 1930, and that his only source of the song was the memory he had of his parents singing it to him when he was little. He claimed that in no way had he been influenced by a strikingly similar arrangement published in 1935 by Nick Manoloff.<sup>39</sup>

While not everything that was reported about him was true, Guion was sincere in his love for American culture. He collected several types of American art. He was particularly fond of pastels and oil paintings by Frank Reaugh, a Texas artist noted for his renditions of longhorn cattle and arid West Texas landscapes. Both men were outspoken in their regard for the study of art and music and felt compelled to capture the short era of the cowboys, one in song and the other on canvas. Guion’s particular gift for captivating Americans with his cowboy songs is the reason they remain his most famous compositions.

#### All Day on the Prairie

Lyrics	Anonymous
Publication	1930, G. Schirmer, Inc.
Key, Range	A $\flat$ Major, Eb4 - Db5
Form	Strophic, with varied piano accompaniment

“All Day on the Prairie,” one of the *Texas Tunes* along with “Home on the Range,” “Little Joe the Wrangler,” “McCaffie’s Confession,” and “Roy Bean,” depicts mythical cowboy life. At the beginning of the song, the singer is instructed to perform “Leisurely, with typical Western drawl.” As is the case in most of Guion’s folk song arrangements, harmonic progressions are generally simple and tonal with occasional surprises. Usually no more than two harmonies appear per measure in this song, and the key never modulates. While the melody remains the same throughout the song, Guion

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<sup>39</sup> Mooney, “Texas Centennial 1936: Music and Identity,” 135-7.

varies the accompaniment and tempo of each verse to suit the words, starting with the first verse.

Fig. 3. “All Day on the Prairie,” mm. 7-12. Harmonic commentary.

The image shows a musical score for the song "All Day on the Prairie" from measures 7 to 12. It consists of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 7-9, and the second system covers measures 10-12. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staff. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major/C minor) and the time signature is 6/8. The lyrics are: "My fire I must kin-dle with chips gath-ered 'round, And boil my own cof-fee with- out be - ing ground." The piano accompaniment includes harmonic commentary below the bass line: "I" under m. 7, "V<sup>7</sup>/vi" under m. 8, "vi" under m. 9, and "ii<sup>o7</sup>" under m. 10. The piano part includes markings for *rit.* (ritardando) and *in time*. The piano part in m. 10 features a *V<sup>add9</sup>* chord and a *Geo.* (Guitar) marking.

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Mm. 1-6 contain a standard progression of I-IV-I-V<sup>7</sup>/V-V-I, but mm. 7-10 contain more complex harmonic language (fig. 3), including a V<sup>9</sup> chord in m. 10. The harmonies are written to suit the lyrics. For instance, the dissonance created with the minor second interval of G $\sharp$  and A $\flat$  in the V<sup>9</sup> chord enhances the unsavory image of the cowboy brewing his coffee made from whole beans over a cow chip fire. Besides commenting musically on what must be awful-tasting coffee, Guion also paints a picture of the cowboy’s naïve and unrefined nature. The cowboy sings the pitches of B $\flat$  and D $\flat$  in m. 9, mistakenly believing that they belong to a dominant chord. Then he automatically moves to the tonic pitches of C and A $\flat$  in m. 10, without noticing that the piano is playing something more sophisticated than plain V-I.

The lyrics of the first verse reveal that the speaker must ride for long distances without any company, and his life contains no luxuries after a hard day's work. This verse is followed by a spirited interlude beginning at m. 11, which is fastidiously marked with *staccati*, *tenuti*, and slurs for a definite effect. The mood of the interlude reveals that the cowboy is content with his no-frills life. The words in the second and third verses support the implications of happiness heard in the interludes, as the lyrics show that what the cowboy lacks in niceties is replaced by the inner peace that comes with personal freedom.

I wash in a pool, dry on a toesack; I carry my wardrobe all on my back,  
 For want of an oven I cook in a pot,  
 And sleep on the ground for want of a cot.  
 And then if my cooking is not so complete,  
 You cannot blame me for wanting to eat,  
 But show me a man, boys, that sleeps more profound  
 Than this big cowpuncher who sleeps on the ground.

Fig. 4. "All Day on the Prairie," mm. 17-22. Stepwise movement in accompaniment.

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 17-19, and the second system covers measures 20-22. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor), and the time signature is 2/4. The piano accompaniment features a steady, stepwise movement in the bass line, with chords in the right hand. Performance markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and the instruction "always r.h." (always right hand) in the piano part.

Lyrics for the first system (measures 17-19):  
 I wash in a pool, — dry on a toe sack; I car - ry my ward - robe  
 all on my back;

Lyrics for the second system (measures 20-22):  
 For want of an ov - en I cook in a pot, And

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Musically speaking, the second verse is similar to the first, except that Guion adds one of his common devices, a stepwise line of largely chromatic tones that is shared among the different voices (fig. 4). True to his habit of including specific instructions to the performers, Guion adds a performance instruction to the pianist in m. 17.

While the accompaniments and interludes of the first two verses are similar, register changes in the third verse signal an impending change that is fully realized in the third interlude (fig. 5). This interlude is longer and features a measure-long extension, and the ensuing introductory measures to the final verse are different than the ones heard in each of the previous verses.

Fig. 5. “All Day on the Prairie,” mm. 37-44. Third interlude.

The musical score for the third interlude of "All Day on the Prairie" (mm. 37-44) is presented in three systems. The key signature is B-flat major and the time signature is 3/4. The first system (mm. 37-40) shows the piano accompaniment with a "no Ped." instruction and a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. The second system (mm. 39-41) continues the piano accompaniment with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The third system (mm. 42-44) includes a vocal line with the lyrics "My ceil - ing's the sky, boys," and a piano accompaniment with a "rit." instruction and a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic.

A change from the bouncy gait of previous verses to a gentle lullaby begins at m. 42. In the final verse, the spare, slow accompaniment cuddles the cowboy to sleep as he sings that his ceiling is the sky, his floor is the grass, the sounds of cattle are his music, rivers are his books, stones are his sermons, and a wolf is his parson. Suddenly, the song reverts to its original tempo and mood as the cowboy presumably wakes up and begins a new day as he whistles the interlude theme with the piano.

### Home on the Range

Lyrics	Brewster Higley	
Publication	1930, G. Schirmer, Inc.	
Key, Range	Low	C Major, G3 – optional C5
	Medium Low	E♭ Major, B♭4 - optional E♭5
	Medium High	F Major, C4 - optional F5
	High	G♭ Major, D♭4 - optional G♭5
Form	AA'BA"	

“Home on the Range” is the definitive cowboy song. With its memorable melody and words, it breathes optimism and nostalgia and is popular worldwide. Guion maintained the dreamy mood of the poem in his song, which has been performed in concert by opera singers like Leonard Warren and Mabel Garrison as well as popular celebrities like Morton Downey and Bing Crosby.

While many persons have claimed authorship of the song since it first appeared in the early part of the twentieth century, Guion’s “Home on the Range” is the legally copyrighted version. Guion never claimed to have written the lyrics, which are drawn from Brewster Higley’s poem “Western Home.” He did, however, claim to be the first composer to set them to music, in 1908. “Home on the Range” appeared in print for the first time in John Lomax’s 1910 collection of folk songs, and it became famous when Guion played his own version of it on his radio shows. The song was President Franklin

D. Roosevelt's self-avowed favorite song, as well as Will Rogers's, and it became a catalyst for the cowboy craze that swept the country. Guion published his arrangement in 1930. Only when fierce disputes arose over the identity of the original composer did he claim that he had really written the song twenty-two years earlier, and that the version that Lomax included in his 1910 folk song compilation was actually a song that Lomax had recorded from an itinerant worker who had learned it at the Guion ranch. Guion told one interviewer that he heard several versions of "Home on the Range" as a cowboy song and combined the words he preferred, then wrote the melody that is so popular today.<sup>40</sup> In another interview, he said that the tune he published was a musical variation of what he heard the ranch hands sing when he was small. According to Guion, the folk song he remembered was somewhat livelier than what he transcribed, and used the words "home here to range" instead of "home on the range."<sup>41</sup>

Legal investigators eventually determined that Daniel Kelley of Kansas was the true composer of the song, although Kelley had never published it and no manuscripts of his version exist. Singer Theodor Uppman was among those who accepted the official ruling. He included Guion's "Lonesome Song of the Plains" on an album on which he also sings "Home on the Range" by Daniel E. Kelley and marks it as the "original version."<sup>42</sup> Guion remained the official copyright holder and never strayed from his claim that he was the first person to write the song. He remained sensitive about the issue all of his life.

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<sup>40</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 164.

<sup>41</sup> Ardoin, "Who Wrote Home on the Range?" sec. C, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> *The Art of Theodor Uppman: Radio Broadcasts 1954-1957*, Bell Telephone Hour Orchestra and dir. Donald Vorhees, Video Artists Int'l, VAI 1181, CD, 2000.

In “Home on the Range” and several other of his cowboy songs,<sup>43</sup> Guion inserts an original section, featuring a distinctive new melody, between verses of a preexisting folk tune. The addition of an original section to a familiar song was intended to set a particular arrangement apart from others and was a common practice among Guion’s contemporaries. The original melody usually has a higher tessitura than the folk melody with which it is paired, a characteristic common in British and American fiddle tunes of the eighteenth century.<sup>44</sup> The accompanying piano lines for the original added section are generally more complex than in the folk verses. For instance, in “Home on the Range,” the tessitura of the original melody (fig. 6) lies a fourth above that of the folk tune, and the left hand of the piano part contains flourishes in nearly every measure. Unlike in some of Guion’s other songs featuring original sections, the differences between the original B section of “Home on the Range” and its surrounding verses are not great enough to interrupt the flow of the song. The formal structure is AABA with a small coda. The A sections consist of uniformly long verses and refrains of eight measures each. The singer has the opportunity to show more technical skill than is generally required of folk music, with four high notes in the vocal line of the new section. Typical of Guion’s songs, however, alternate lower notes are also written so that the song can be performed by a wide variety of singers despite differences in voice type, range, temperament, and technical mastery.

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<sup>43</sup> Others include “Ol’ Paint,” “Little Joe the Wrangler” and “Brazos Boat Song”

<sup>44</sup> Boyd, “Western Swing,” 198.

Fig. 6. “Home on the Range,” mm. 27-38, B section to return of A.

**Slower**  
Guion melody

Oh, give me a land Where the bright dia-mond sand Flows le-isure-ly down the

stream, Where the grace-ful white swan Goes glid-ing a-long Like a

maid in a heav-en-ly dream; Then I would not ex-change My

home on the range, where the deer and the an-te-lope play, Where

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Guion, who often repeats vocal melodies but who always varies details in the accompaniments to highlight certain words or ideas, treats the three A sections in “Home on the Range” differently each time they are played. The first A section features a gentle gait, while a quicker tempo in the second verse reflects the amazement that the speaker feels when he stares into a glittering night sky and knows that the stars are not more

beautiful than his homeland. In the final statement of A, the pianist plays the melody as the singer holds a sustained pitch, lost in reverie. The song is effective in its sincerity as long as the performers treat it without affectation.

### Brazos Boat Song

Lyrics        John William Rogers  
Publication 1936, G. Schirmer, Inc.  
Key, Range Low    C Major, E4-B5  
                  High   Eb Major, D4-G5  
Form    AA'BA''

This song is not about cowboys, but its formal structure, harmonies, topic, and reason for composition bear enough similarities to Guion's cowboy songs that it fits well into the category.

The inside cover of original sheet music of "Brazos Boat Song" contains an account of the history and significance of the song. Printed beside the essay is a silhouette of the song's central figure, Mary Austin Holley, standing with her guitar. Holley, a traveler and a musician who wrote a collection called *Letters from Texas* about what she experienced when she visited that state in 1831, published a song about the Brazos River. John William Rogers wanted to include that song in his play *Westward People*, which commemorates Holley's trip. After an unsuccessful quest to find a copy of the song, Rogers wrote a new version based on Holley's letters. His version consists of a simple melody with guitar accompaniment. The popularity of the song among the play's audience members prompted Guion to write his own version that featured a full accompaniment and a verse of original music. According to the dedication line, Guion wrote "Brazos Boat Song" in honor of the hundredth birthday of Texas.

The formal structure of “Brazos Boat Song” is AABA. Each A section consists of an eight-measure verse and a four-measure refrain containing simple tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords only. The refrains are identical with the exception of the last one, which includes a brief coda. Musical differences among the verses are found primarily in the rhythms. Various effects related to the movements of a small boat on a river are achieved through use of a malleable 6/8 meter. For instance, the piano and vocal lines of the first verse rock gently together with identical rhythms, while the slower second verse contains contrary motion in the accompaniment that creates a rippling effect (fig. 7).

Fig. 7. “Brazos Boat Song,” mm. 11-18. Word painting, waves.

The image displays a musical score for the 'Brazos Boat Song' in 6/8 time. It is divided into two systems. The first system is a refrain, marked 'a bit slower', with the lyrics 'Watch the waves dance in the sun, Watch the waves dance in the sun.' The piano accompaniment for the refrain is characterized by 'a bit slower' and '[Contrary motion, rippling]'. The second system is a verse, marked 'a tempo', with the lyrics 'But one dear stream will call me ev-er, A fair me-an - d'ring Tex - as riv-er,'. The piano accompaniment for the verse is also marked 'a tempo' and features a steady, rhythmic accompaniment.

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The B section, which is the original part that Guion added to the preexisting framework of the song (fig. 8), features an abrupt modulation to the relative minor. At m. 29, tonality is obscured by the absence of the leading tone and by the fact that some of the chords belonging in  $E_b$ Major appear but do not progress. For instance, the  $E_b$ Major chord

at m. 31 sounds like a tonic triad in the original key. It is followed by what sounds like subdominant and dominant harmonies in E♭Major, but the expected tonic does not appear. Instead, Guion has written a sequence from mm. 30-33. After a half-cadence in C Minor, the song unassumingly resumes its original major key in the final verse and refrain that follow.

Fig. 8. “Brazos Boat Song,” mm. 27-34. B section.

The musical score for "Brazos Boat Song" (mm. 27-34) is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 27-30, and the second system covers measures 31-34. The key signature is E-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked "a tempo". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. The vocal line includes the following lyrics: "So green her banks with ten - der gras-ses, So proud the for - ests where she pas-ses, So rich in na - ture's gen - tlest smile- I'd leave my boat and stay a while." The tempo is marked "a tempo" and "rit." (ritardando) is indicated at the end of the phrase.

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America’s love of the Wild West continued after Guion’s time and is still holding fast. It can be heard today in American music running the gamut from classical to popular, from Douglas Moore’s opera *The Ballad of Baby Doe* to the songs of Willie Nelson. The widespread popularity of Guion’s songs cemented his reputation as a composer of cowboy music, to the extent that every article written about him discusses his work in that genre, while often his other work goes unmentioned.

## CHAPTER 4

### BLACK SONGS

Guion's spirituals and his *Songs of the South* were based upon music he heard in his youth from the family servants at their churches and recreational gatherings. Like many composers of his day, he knew that Black songs were popular with the public and that singers liked to program them on concerts. Guion's choices of lyrics and his settings of them reflect not only his unique ideas about Blacks and their music; they also give insight into some of the social beliefs of the mostly white audience for whom he wrote. The spirituals are among Guion's earliest compositions, and they and the *Songs of the South* stand as some of Guion's most creative and versatile compositions.

#### History of Negro spirituals

Spirituals and work songs comprise a uniquely American art form representing a mixture of African and European traits. While British and Spanish hymns, ballads, and dance tunes often served as sources of melodies and texts, the remaining characteristics of the spirituals are all West African. For instance, antiphonal singing, group involvement, syncopation, continuous improvisation, shouted intensity, and uninhibited bodily movements are markers of the spirituals and work songs, as well as other songs created by slaves like the holler. West Africans used percussion-dominated music in most areas of their lives, including work, religion, public ceremony, and rites of

passage.<sup>45</sup> The West African influences still thrive in African-American music today, and in other American music as well, such as Southern gospel, jazz, blues, and rock.

American slaves, many of whom received musical training so that they might entertain slaveholding households, combined their African musical traditions with the Watts hymns they learned when they attended non-segregated camp meetings during the Second Great Awakening of 1790-1830. Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was a Congregationalist minister who is known as the father of English hymnody. He wrote hundreds of hymns, among them “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” and “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.” His ecumenical sensibilities made his songs appropriate for evangelists who wished to spread Christianity to diverse populations during the Second Great Awakening.

Due to the improvisatory nature of West African music, slaves freely added new texts and refrains to the Watts hymns, and they appropriated the fiddle and dance melodies they heard as well, adding words that reflected their unique concerns. Lyrics of the spirituals commonly refer to the longing for freedom from bondage, both in life and after death. Stories abound in the spirituals about various underdog heroes of the Old Testament who conquered powerful enemies, such as Samson, Joshua, David, Moses, and Daniel. Also appearing often in spirituals are grand New-Testament events, such as the appearance of Elijah with Jesus, and persons who served as outspoken witnesses to Christ, like John the Baptist or a man miraculously cured of blindness. The Book of Revelation figures prominently in the spirituals because slaves were converted to Christianity primarily by evangelical Christians during the Second Great Awakening, and

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<sup>45</sup> Kip Lornell, *Introducing American Folk Music: Ethnic and Grassroots Traditions in the United States* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 5.

because the Book of Revelation is about final justice. “Ezekiel Saw De Wheel,” “John the Revelator,” “Hard Trials,” and “Sinner, Don’ Let Dis’ Harves’ Pass,” are traditional spirituals that contain lyrics based on the Book of Revelation.

Because of the deep religious content of their songs, slaves were judged to have been highly religious people as a whole. While this may be true, it is also true that the spirituals were often used as subversive means of communication, disguised as religious songs so that the slaves would not get into trouble. For instance, the words “there’s a great camp meeting in the Promise’ Lan’, walk together children, doncha git weary” in the song “Walk Together Children” refers to a location in Canada that was considered safe for slaves who were attempting to escape to freedom. In “Follow the Drinking Gourd,” what sounds like silly lyrics to the uninformed, “follow the drinking gourd, where the Ol’ Man’s awaitin’ for to carry you to freedom,” was actually coded instructions for the slaves to follow the Big Dipper north, where Harriet Tubman, known as the Old Man because she dressed in men’s clothing, could assist the slaves in their escape efforts via the Underground Railroad. The Jordan river of “Deep River” was code for the Ohio or the Mississippi River. “Deep River,” and “Steal Away” were both songs containing religious lyrics that were sung to signal from one slave to another that the coast was clear for escape, without alerting nearby guards.

The secular equivalents of spirituals are work songs, developed by slaves who engaged in hard manual labor. Later, the songs often became associated with trackliners, men in chain gangs who had to maintain a synchronized gait. One of Guion’s *Darkey Spirituals*, “I Sees Lawd Jesus A Comin’,” features the unusual word “hăh” in each phrase, over which Guion directs the singer to perform “like a sigh.” He was intimately

familiar with African-Americans and their music, and he would have been aware of the collective sigh that is a characteristic of work songs. The accompaniment of the song consists of two block chords per measure in slow 4/4 time for an effect of labored movement, as shackled prisoners walk together slowly, or perhaps as prisoners might walk as they approach their executions.

#### Hark from de Tombs

Lyrics        Sally Hill Scaife  
Publication 1918, M. Witmark & Sons  
Key, Range C Major, G3-E4 (Brudder) G4-A5 (Mammy)  
Form         AB  
Collection   *Darkey Spirituals*

Guion was close to some of the servants in his household, especially with a woman he called Mammy Neppy, to whom he dedicated three of his *Darkey Spirituals*. The only person who received more song dedications than Neppy was the composer's mother. Guion also frequently associated with Black servants Uncle Andrew, a guitarist, and Elijah "Ol' Coxy" Cox, who played the fiddle and taught Guion some of the songs that he later arranged for piano, including "Turkey in the Straw." Guion's interest in African-American life prompted him to start an opera he would call *Suzanne*, based on the Black experience from slave days to the 1930s. Even though the opera was never finished, several songs from it became *Five Imaginary Early Songs of Louisiana Slavery*.

Fig. 9. “Hark, from de Tombs,” first page. Call and response, improvisation.

To Rev. Sinkiller, Uncle Andrew and Mammy Neppy

## Hark, from de Tombs

By  
DAVID W. GUION  
and  
SALLY HILL SCAIFE

SCENE: A “Camp Meetin’.” The preacher stands on the pulpit between two pine torches, reading the Bible upside-down, “Expoundin’ Salvation,” the congregation shuffling and swaying from side to side. He then shouts out the words for the “mourners” to sing.

PREACHER (*Spoken*) “Hark! from de tombs, de doleful soun’. It am de soul’s las’ cry. Sing brudder!”

Very slowly and with much feeling [African improvisation]

*mf* BRUDDER

Hark! from de tombs a doleful

soun', It am de soul's las' cry

PREACHER: (*Spoken*) “Come, mortal man, an’ view de groun’ whar you shall sholy lie. Sing mammy.”

Guion attended church and revivals with Mammy Neppy and was fascinated by what he heard. To convey the experience of a Black revival meeting, he set up a scene for performance in “Hark from de Tombs” (fig. 9). In the call-and-response style, Preacher calls “Hark! From de tombs, de doleful sound! It am de soul’s las’ cry. Sing Brudder!” Brudder’s low-register solo serves as the answer. Evocative of African

improvisation, Brudder sings ornaments around structural pitches in mm. 1-3. After another call from Preacher, a second answer is sung in a high register by Mammy.

Guion would have heard many call-and-response songs at Black church services. Traditional call-and-response includes a call, or the singing of a hymn phrase, from a preacher. A congregation then repeats what the preacher has sung, often adding four-part harmony. In “Hark from de Tombs,” the Brudder and Mammy sing solo responses. However, Guion does include the congregational part of the response in his accompaniment, with its long I, V, and IV chords that emulate the harmonies typically heard in call-and-response music.

#### Guion’s spirituals

The lyrics of “Hark from de Tombs” and the other *Darkey Spirituals*, as well as most of the original songs based on Black music, are set in the dialect of the African-Americans with whom Guion was acquainted. Guion was not unique in his habit of setting dialect. His Black contemporaries William Grant Still, Harry T. Burleigh, and Francis Hall Johnson also captured their own individual versions of Black dialect on paper, as did White composers like George Gershwin. Guion was adamant that the dialect in his songs be pronounced accurately, going so far as to teach a class in diction for the performance of spirituals at Chicago Musical College.

Guion’s spirituals more closely resemble Burleigh’s than they do of any other of Guion’s contemporaries. Both Guion and Burleigh wrote their spirituals at roughly the same time. Burleigh published his spirituals between 1916 and 1928, and Guion’s *Darkey Spirituals* were published in 1918. Both composers used extensive slur markings in many of their spirituals, and both favored the key of D Minor. Both men believed in

the respectability of their source material. Their serious attitude toward spirituals represented a departure from the treatment of Black music earlier in the 1900s, when such songs were often subjected to the degrading slapstick or sentimentalized treatment found in minstrel music.

In any type of song, a composer can accentuate or diminish certain aspects of a text by addition, omission, or repetition of words. When dealing with folk texts that stem from an oral tradition, the composer can take more liberties than are possible with written texts, inserting new words at will in order to address a specific audience. While the spirituals by Guion and Burleigh did resemble each other in several ways, a comparison of the texts they set reveals some subtle cultural differences in the messages each composer promoted. A comparison of the words from Burleigh's "Sinner, Please Doan Let Dis Harves' Pass" of 1917 and the words from Guion's "Sinner, Don' Let Dis Harves' Pass" of 1918 shows how the two composers differed in their textual interpretations:

Burleigh: Sinner, please doan let dis harves' pass, an' die an' lose yo' soul at las'  
I know that my Redeemer lives, Sinner please doan let dis harves pass  
My God is a mighty man of war, Sinner please doan let dis harves' pass

Guion: Sinner don' let dis Harves' a pass, Harves' a pass, an die an' a go to Hell at a las.  
Befo' I'd live in Hell one a day, I'd sing an' a pray my soul away.  
De debbles' got you a in his grasp, You'll die an a go to Hell at a lass.

In Burleigh's version, the speaker uses the word "please" several times, implying that the speaker respects the addressee. This implication is supported by the fact that the speaker avoids using the word "hell" outright, even as he warns that damnation is imminent unless repentance occurs. The description of God as a living warrior underscores both the religious zeal and the earthly battles that are intrinsic themes in spirituals. Burleigh reinforces the militaristic aspect of the lyrics with his energetic

accompaniment. His song is a call to arms against the forces of evil and displays hope that goodness will prevail.

Judging by Guion's choice of words, he imagines a mournful scene in which the speaker quietly begs the addressee, whose soul appears to be at serious risk, to repent before it is too late. Guion leaves out "please" and mentions hell and the "debble" several times. The speaker worries about the addressee's salvation, but offers no empowering scenarios that might attract someone away from evil to a great cause. Guion's speaker could be a mother talking to her wayward adult child, but not someone who feels a proud brotherhood with the addressee. Guion includes some grace notes in the vocal line to show that the speaker's voice falters in grief or fear, or perhaps to lend a folksy quality that implies that the speaker is from a low echelon of society.

The two settings of "Sinner" show some major differences in Burleigh's and Guion's views of African-Americans, differences that both men likely shared with their respective racial groups. Burleigh's setting shows that Blacks believed that God was on their side, and that someday He would help them win victory over their oppressors. Guion, on the other hand, saw the Blacks as mainly concerned with life in their own communities. He did not sense their dissatisfaction with their lot in life and their struggle to better it. As seen in his music and in his writings, Guion's view of African-Americans was that of the Romantic noble savage, which idealizes other cultures while also diminishing them by not acknowledging the fact that all humans are complex beings.

An editorial note from “The Publishers” found on the inside cover of all of the *Darkey Spirituals* was actually written by Guion. The first paragraph of the note yields further insight into Guion’s beliefs about African-Americans and their music.<sup>46</sup>

Darkey “spirituals” are plantation-songs which had their origin for the most part in the camp-meetings and revivals of other days. Spontaneous in their birth, they were never conceived with any direct plan or form, and not until lately have they been perpetuated in a way that enables them to appeal directly to lovers of folk-songs. Underlying them all is a religious fervor for which the race is peculiar, and the idiosyncrasies which accompanied this peculiar manifestation are plainly discernable throughout all the Spirituals. The whimsical aspect of many of them may tempt a smile from the uninitiated, but they must never be sung in any but an intense devotional spirit. To attempt to inject humor into their rendering is to destroy instantly their real value and significance.

Like many composers writing spirituals or even minstrel songs at the time, Guion based his comments and music on his personal experiences with African-Americans. He believed that he understood the entire Black population through his own contact with some of them. His positive memories of time spent with the family servants inspired him to portray their music in a dignified manner. However, his patronizing belief that the spirituals lacked planned organization and would not be recognized without the validation of a bona-fide musician like himself showed that he was largely ignorant of African-American musical traditions. Guion made value judgments of the stylistic discrepancies he perceived between Black American folk music and the Europe-based folk or art music with which he was also familiar, assuming that the distinctive sounds of

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<sup>46</sup> David W. Guion, “Hark, from de Tombs,” lyrics by Guion and Sally Hill Scaife, *Darkey Spirituals*, (New York: M. Witmark & Sons, 1918).

the spirituals were the accidental results of a primitive culture. This assumption can be clearly seen in the remainder of Guion's editorial notes in the *Darkey Spirituals*.<sup>47</sup>

David W. Guion, who has transcribed these Spirituals, being a Southerner by birth, is well fitted for the task, which to him has been a labor of love. In every respect, a finished and accomplished musician, Mr. Guion has the additional and, in this case, inestimable advantage of knowing the darkey well. From his earliest days he has been in close touch with negro music and folk-lore. His work in thus perpetuating these quaint and plaintive melodies, with their characteristic text, constitutes a valuable contribution to the future as well as to the present.

Mr. Guion has succeeded admirably in retaining the true negro interpretations of these peculiar melodies, and has avoided any temptation to spoil them by the so-called modifications of modern professional improvers. Their charm lies in their native quaintness and simplicity – graces that can hardly be improved upon. In their present form, these Spirituals represent a conscious expression of that indefinable unconscious musical impulse so common to the negroes.

Guion devoted much of his early career to writing Black-influenced compositions, including his unfinished opera *Suzanne*, because he was fascinated by the unique qualities of African-American folk music. Although he may not have understood the factors that shaped these “quaint and plaintive melodies, with their characteristic text,” he wished to make them available to the public, as he later did with his cowboy songs.

#### Black folk music in the context of American folk music

The musical ties between Black America and Africa were strong when Guion began writing his arrangements of spirituals and his *Songs of the South*, as they still are today. Even though slaveholders took pains to distance the slaves from their cultural backgrounds, the slaves successfully retained many of their African cultural characteristics, which they passed on to their descendants. As a result, African-American

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<sup>47</sup>Due to his use of the third person and because the editorial notes are signed “The Publishers,” it is not obvious that Guion wrote these himself. However, a draft version of these same notes exists in Guion's own hand.

music has more in common with the music of western Africa than it does with Anglo-American music, even though the legal importation of slaves from Africa to the United States ended in 1808, two hundred years ago.

Alan Lomax, the son of the same John Lomax who was the first to publish “Home on the Range,” continued his father’s work by recording and studying folk music from all over the world. Much of his study was centered in the American South. Lomax’s comparative analysis of African-American, Anglo-American, and African folk music shows that performance practices among African-Americans and Africans have more in common with each other than do African-Americans and Anglo-Americans.<sup>48</sup> For example, while Anglo-American folk music generally features soloists who perform in an imitative fashion, African and African-American songs are geared to choruses, with breakout soloists giving unselfconscious, improvisatory performances. The assured and improvisatory character of African-American folk music is what Guion may have been referring to when he wrote about the “unconscious impulse” in his *Darkey Spirituals* notes. Expressive faces and large movements typical in African and African-American singers reflect a comfort level in public performance that is the opposite of what is felt when the typical white American sings.<sup>49</sup> According to Lomax, the sound ideal in Anglo-American folk music is pure violin tone with little vibrato. African-American folk music, on the other hand, requires varying rates of vibrato and sustained passages of loud singing.

The textual content in the two groups’ folk songs differs from each other as well. African-American lyrics often discuss racial injustice, while Anglo-American lyrics do

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<sup>48</sup> Ronald D. Cohen, ed., *Alan Lomax: Selected Writings 1934-1997* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 256.

<sup>49</sup> Cohen, *Alan Lomax: Selected Writings*, 143-45.

not. According to Lomax, sexual references in African and African-American folk song lyrics occur more frequently than references to romantic love, while the opposite is true in Anglo-American folk songs. Anglo-American folk lyrics often reveal a strong death wish and tend to moralize.<sup>50</sup> African-American folk lyrics incorporate moralizing as a warning that wicked people will burn in hell, but their songs usually do not contain a death wish. Instead, they often contain encouraging messages about imminent freedom from misery.

Guion's *Songs of the South* contain many of the common themes in Black songs. For instance, in "Little Pickaninny Kid" he makes reference to racial injustice, the warning of damnation, and the promise of a later reward. This song, like many of Guion's original songs based upon the African-American experience, is written in Black dialect for an attempt at authenticity. It cannot be performed today in its original form because it includes words and ideas that are unquestionably inappropriate by today's standards.

#### Little Pickaninny Kid

Little pickaninny kid, yuh sho' a-lookin' sad,  
What de white trash done an' did to make yuh feel so bad?  
Mammy (Daddy) heahed 'em call yuh names,  
Yuh cried an' answered back when dey kep' yuh frum dere games  
'Cause yo' skin am black!

But doan' yuh nebber cry no mo', Little Kinkyhead,  
Mammy (Daddy) knows yuh ain't a lilywhite, You's a choc'late  
drop instead!  
All de white folks ain't so white as de good ol' Scriptures say,  
You's a angel, an' de Lawd's Gwine a make yuh white some day!

Little pickaninny kid, Yuh sho' mus' be mo' brave,

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<sup>50</sup> Cohen, *Alan Lomax: Selected Writings*, 145.

Doan' yuh know de Good Lawd came De whole wide worl' to  
save?

Folks dey treated Him so mean, Dey hung Him on a tree;  
How d' yuh spose dey's gwine a be Better by you an' me?

But doan' yuh nebber cry no mo', Little Kinkyhead,  
Mammy (Daddy) knows yuh ain't a lilywhite, You's a choc'late  
drop instead!

All de white folks ain't so white as de good ol' Scriptures say,  
You's a angel, an' de Lawd's Gwine a make yuh white some day!

The word “pickaninny” is no longer considered acceptable, and the possible assertion that God will someday reward the disadvantaged Black child with a change of skin color is offensive by modern standards. While it is doubtful that the song could ever be performed again in public, “Little Pickaninny Kid” is useful in gauging the attitudes of the white Americans who comprised Guion’s target audience.

Songs that reflect values from an era incompatible with modern-day sensibilities is a topic for another document. However, lyrics have been successfully adapted throughout history in order to make music continuously accessible to new audiences. A recent example of this is can be heard on a recording from 1994 of a performance of Dvořák’s arrangement of Stephen Foster’s song “Old Folks at Home.” The album features lyrics revised by Burleigh’s associate Josephine Harreld Love in order to “retain Foster’s original meaning and verbal style while softening the crude dialect and eliminating racial stereotyping.”<sup>51</sup> Because Guion’s spirituals and his *Songs of the South* contain some of his most innovative musical details, it would be rash to summarily dismiss them based solely on questionable lyrics. Thirty-five songs, representing approximately twenty-five percent of Guion’s total song output, are either spirituals or are original songs based upon Black music.

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<sup>51</sup> Benjamin Folkman, *Dvořák Discoveries*, liner notes, BQC, Inc. CD-926, 1996, CD.

## Voodoo

Lyrics Marie Lussi  
Publication 1929, G. Schirmer, Inc..  
Key, Range D Minor, A4-D5  
Form ABA'  
Collection *Five Imaginary Early Songs of Louisiana Slavery*

Guion's twenty-one original songs based on African-American music and themes contain some of his most interesting innovations. For instance, he uses ambiguous chords to create a sinister atmosphere for the aptly named "Voodoo," one of the *Five Imaginary Early Songs of Louisiana Slavery* that were all that remained of *Suzanne*, Guion's abandoned opera. He maintains suspense with registral changes and ornaments.

The influence of Negro spirituals on this song is notable through the use of the common spiritual key of D-Minor, the largely pentatonic melody, and the use of dialect. While "Voodoo" does not incorporate French words, the other four of the *Five Imaginary Early Songs of Louisiana Slavery* feature Black dialect interspersed with French words, in keeping with the location in which the songs are set.

Staccato grace notes evocative of bongo drums decorate chords at the beginning of the song (fig. 10), setting an eerie mood which is continued with the pitches of the vocal line adding a minor seventh to the open harmony. Guion's directions to the singer to perform the "m-m-m" of m. 4 with a "sort of a weird humming sound" confirm his intentions to create a menacing setting.

Fig. 10. "Voodoo," mm. 1-4. Bongo drums.

With rhythmic intensity  $\text{♩} = 120$

De air am full o' tings Wid

*stacc.*

*no Ped.*

3

wings, *m-m-m* De eyes ob snakes an' bats An'

\*) Sort of a weird humming sound.

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Fig. 11. "Voodoo," mm. 6-9. Chromatic descent.

Am some po' sin-ner's soul turned col', Chained t' de Debble in de Debble'sown hole,

*Leo* \* *Leo* \* *Leo* \* *Leo* \*

8

Long-in' fo' t' git out an' shout.

*Leo* \* *Leo* \* *Leo* \* *Leo* \*

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Mm. 6-9 of “Voodoo” show an example of Guion’s creative use of chromaticism. The pitch of D in mm. 6-7 begins a descending stepwise bass line (fig. 11). Following the pattern of this bass line, the pitch at the beginning of m. 9 would be B $\flat$  or A $\sharp$ . Guion includes both of these pitches in one dissonant chord, as well as the next pitch in the series, A $\flat$ . When the dramatic descent of the bass line reaches A in m. 9, Guion includes both of its chromatic neighbor tones A $\flat$  and B $\flat$  in the succeeding piano chord, resolving it to a dominant seventh later in the measure. The chromatic descent might represent a sinner’s slide to hell.

#### Mistah Jay-Bird

Lyrics	David W. Guion
Publication	1934, G. Schirmer, Inc..
Key, Range	D $\flat$ Major, B $\flat$ 4-F5
Form	ABA'
Collection	<i>Five Imaginary Early Songs of Louisiana Slavery</i>

Guion’s “Mistah Jay-Bird” of 1934 is more sophisticated than either his spirituals or the earlier *Songs of the South*. As Guion’s style evolved, accompaniments consisting of repetitive rhythms, block chords, and doubled vocal lines were replaced by varied rhythmic patterns and harmonic complexity, but the piano lines still did not generally garner as much attention as the vocal lines. In “Mistah Jay-Bird,” the accompaniment steals the limelight at the climax of the song.

Like “Wrong Livin’ ” from the same year, “Mistah Jay-Bird” is labeled a slow drag, which is an African-American dance associated with the Blues. Guion writes, “Down South the darkies hate the Jay-bird. It is known as the ‘bird of superstition’ and is seldom allowed to hang around any cabin door.” He also suggests, “This song may be half spoken, half sung. In any case, the singer’s chief concern should be the characteristically syncopated rhythm and the Negro dialect which fit each other

perfectly.”<sup>52</sup> It is significant that Guion mentions syncopation, since the spirituals and *Songs of the South* are his only songs that regularly feature syncopation.

Fig. 12 “Mistah Jay-Bird,” mm. 31-40. Boiling pot.

31 If he got sense he gwine-a leave me be, Cause de skil-let's siz-zlin' an' de

34 wa-ter's bil-in' high. [Steam cloud] {An' (An'

37 some-pin tell me dat ol' Jay-bird sho' gwine-a die!  
some-pin tell me dat ol' Jay-bird mek a good pie!)

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The asymmetrical form of “Mistah Jay-Bird” could be an extension of the disturbance syncopation creates in an otherwise even beat. The sections of this ABA' song are unequal in length and reflect the parts of the story. They measure nineteen, nine, and twelve bars, respectively. The A section of the song reveals the antagonism a

<sup>52</sup> David W. Guion, “Mistah Jay-Bird,” note by Guion, (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1934).

speaker feels toward a jaybird in a nearby tree who is raucously telling her that her lover has abandoned her. The short B section, a snippet of the Blues with its melodic leaps occurring in minor thirds and its slow drag rhythm, contains a common Blues theme of the woman wronged, as the speaker admits that the bird is right. She tries unsuccessfully to get the jaybird to leave until she finds a sudden solution to her problem that cuts short the return of the A section. The speaker's ingenious plan to rid herself of the jaybird is accompanied by one of Guion's most clever examples of word painting at mm. 35-36 of the song (fig. 12).

After thirty-four measures of transparent piano melodies with non-chord tones reminiscent of a squawking bird interrupted by the slow drag section, an Impressionistic cloud of planed second inversion chords suddenly arises. This is a clever and comical moment, because the speaker has just decided to rid herself of the bird by killing and cooking it. The Impressionistic cloud might represent steam billowing out of a pot on the stove. As the cloud dissipates, the singer picks the melody back up on its original D $\flat$ . The song ends with a final picture from the piano, as the bird is caught and dropped unceremoniously into the pot.

While his songs and comments regarding Blacks demonstrate that he believed himself to be their superior both socially and intellectually, Guion's respect for their music was genuine. He thought their music plaintive because of the suffering they had endured, and he felt sympathetic towards them.<sup>53</sup> He differed from many of his colleagues in that he embraced the notion of using spirituals as resources for classical composition. Dvořák's suggestion that American composers write in a national vernacular based partly upon Black folk music, made as it was by a European who did not understand the deep seated racial antagonism between Blacks and Whites in the

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<sup>53</sup> Bearden and Frucht, *The Texas Sampler*, 166.

United States, was met with resistance from many composers who thought it ludicrous<sup>54</sup> that spirituals might provide them with inspiration. At the time that Guion was writing his spirituals and *Songs of the South*, most white American classical composers could not muster any genuine respect for Black music. Guion may not have understood many of the subversive textual subtleties in the spirituals, yet he was different from most of his contemporaries in that he appreciated African-Americans, loved their music, and was able to base his work upon personal interactions, rather than upon fantasies of the exotic.

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<sup>54</sup> Struble, *The History of American Classical Music*, 68.

## CHAPTER 5

### ART SONGS

Guion's art songs can be divided into two periods according to differences in both style and subject matter. His earlier art songs were written before the death of his mother in 1936 and his subsequent move to Pennsylvania. Like the spirituals, cowboy songs, and *Songs of the South*, these earlier art songs targeted the general American market. Composed for performance in the home or on professional recitals, they were usually songs about romantic love in its various stages. Several of them are based on distinct types of folk songs. In contrast, Guion's later art songs are weightier. Longer and technically more demanding for both pianist and singer, they often contain religious subject matter or refer to death or war. After the early 1940s, Guion's song output diminished, but the variety of genres in which he composed increased to include children's choral works and sophisticated cowboy songs. In all, Guion's art songs account for approximately half of his total songs.

#### My Own Laddie

Lyrics        Arthur Hewitt  
Publication 1919, G. Schirmer, Inc..  
Key, Range D $\flat$  Major, A $\flat$ 4-E $\flat$ 5 with an optional F5  
Form         ABA'  
Collection *Two Songs for Medium Voice and Piano*

“My Own Laddie” is one of Guion’s earliest published songs. It reflects the composer’s wide-ranging interest in folk music that is obviously apparent in his cowboy songs and spirituals, but also in his sea chanties like “Sail Away for the Rio Grande” and in his original songs based on folk tunes such as “Love That Could Not Stay.” “My Own Laddie” is an example of one of Guion’s parlor songs, written near the beginning of his career and intended as entertainment for intimate gatherings in middle-class American homes.

Guion placed heavier technical demands on the accompanist than on the singer in his parlor songs. The parlor songs contain short phrases of tuneful melodies, simple harmonic progressions with hints of chromaticism, sentimental lyrics that almost always speak of love or the loss of love, heavy use of the pedal in the accompaniment, and short postludes consisting of stepwise ascents that resolve to a loud, high tonic, like the final choruses of Disney films. Some of the earliest examples of Guion’s parlor songs are “Embers” of 1918 and “Love is Lord of All” of 1919.

“My Own Laddie” is Guion’s only song with lyrics by Arthur Hewitt, a preacher and educator who is most notable for being Robert Frost’s successor as poet laureate of Vermont. It was unusual for Guion to use a poem written by a famous writer for his songs. Generally, he set words by lesser-known, mostly American writers, many of whom he knew personally or who were fellow ASCAP members. Like Brahms, Guion preferred to set accessible lyrics that reflected his love of folk music instead of seeking out more profound poetry. While Hewitt was respected for his literary prowess, the poem of his that Guion chose lacks any subtle symbolism. Instead, it compares the speaker’s emotional state to the changing seasons in a straightforward manner.

“My Own Laddie” consists of three verses with a similar melody in each. The vocal line of the second verse is enharmonically respelled and altered slightly at the change of mode from D $\flat$  Major to C $\sharp$  Minor, corresponding to a change of season mood in the lyrics. The third verse resumes the key of D $\flat$  Major as the song regains the sunny disposition found in the first verse. The melody is reminiscent of a British or Irish folk song, appropriately setting a poem that includes folksy words like “laddie” and “tis.”

Fig. 13. “My Own Laddie,” mm. 13-16. B section, winter.

And the flames are roar-in' up the chim-ney black; There are  
 pic-tures in the em-bers Of those hap-py old De-cem-ber,- Ah, if

C Minor: i i V<sup>7</sup>/V ii<sup>o7</sup> V  
 i V<sup>7</sup>/V V<sup>7</sup>

The accompaniment maintains the eighth-note pulse of the simple vocal line, which it often doubles it in the right hand. Unlike the vocal line, however, it varies significantly in each of the three verses. Guion includes frequent use of the pedal and makes changes in register, in rhythm, and in motion and distance between the two hands, thus adding through the accompaniment a welcome layer of complexity to the song’s

fleeting expressions of longing, joy, and misery. For example, a change of season from summer to winter in the second verse corresponds with wistful memories and brings with it a change in the accompaniment's rhythms (fig. 13). For the first time in the song, Guion stops doubling the vocal line and adds rests in the right hand, painting a picture of a crackling fire and a troubled mind. In m. 15, he repeats nearly the same progression as in mm. 13-14, but arranges the voices in such a way as to allow for chromatic descent in the upper voices, mirroring the falling spirits of the speaker. The drooping chords that occur on the beats in m. 15 are enhanced by a delicate pedal tone that occurs on the off beats. This pedal contrasts sharply with the surrounding harmonies while it retains the overall eighth-note pulse of the song, implying that emotions and events cannot alter the steady passage of time.

Fig. 14. "My Own Laddie," mm. 19-23. Return of Laddie.

*a tempo, though much brighter*  
*mf*

Oh, 'tis warm and sun-ny weath-er, Soft winds once more kiss the heath-er, Dark-'ning

*mf*

21 clouds have giv-en way to skies of blue; For with scarce a sign of warm-in' Gen-tle

Rea Rea

Boundless happiness defines the third verse, when winter ends literally and figuratively as the missing loved one suddenly returns. While the melody is identical to that of the first verse, the accompaniment is livelier, in part because of a heavier concentration of pitches in a higher register. While Guion retains the song's eighth-note pulse, ascending arpeggios, each containing a crescendo, represent springtime breezes and welling emotions (fig. 14).

The figurations of m. 23 are similar to those of m. 15, but the effect is quite different, due to a dramatic alteration of the pedal from a little teardrop or a crackling ember to an exuberant heartbeat. In "My Own Laddie," Guion shows his talent for combining a folk melody with modern touches for a song that is both serious and entertaining at the same time.

#### The Voice of America

Lyrics	John W. Bratton
Publication	1941, G. Schirmer, Inc.
Key, Range	D Minor, D4-G5
Form	<i>Scena</i>

In the early 1940s, Guion, still mourning the loss of his mother and unhappy to see his country at war, largely abandoned his cowboy songs, *Songs of the South*, and light-hearted parlor songs, and began to compose art songs with more serious themes instead. His songs from the early 1940s typically feature thematic fragments and extra-musical references interwoven with long chromatic progressions and theatrical piano solos. Several songs published during this time can be assigned standard formal structures, with combinations of A, B, and C; but a more telling label for them is that of a little scene or *scena*, since they are combinations of varying lyric and declamatory

sections of uneven lengths, interspersed with solo piano passages. For instance, “The Voice of America” can be divided into the following sections.

A
B
A<sup>1</sup>  
mm. 1-50
mm. 51-71
mm. 72-86

However, both the A and the B sections contain several small, dissimilar parts each, so a more complete sense of the song as considered from the perspective of a *scena* is found in the following table (fig. 15).

Fig. 15. “The Voice of America” form chart.

Measures	No. of measures	Description
1-12	12	Introductory section, two measures of piano (snare drum), eight measures of declamatory piano/vocal , two measures of piano (bugle)
13-47A	34 ½	Lyric anthem
47B-50	3 ½	Interlude
51-58	8	Declamatory
59-64	6	Spoken section with accompaniment
65-68A	3 ½	Quotation of hymn
68B-71	3 ½	Interlude (snare drum and church bells)
72-81	10	Lyric anthem, similar to mm. 13-47A
82-86	4	Postlude, similar to mm 47B-50

Guion includes many of the same musical elements in “The Voice of America” that are found in his earlier works, like word painting, prominent interludes, and chromatic progressions. However, the vocal line in this song marks a departure from the earlier works. Unlike with the folk arrangements or parlor songs, the singer who performs “The Voice of America” must be able to negotiate large leaps, abrupt changes in tessitura, sustained high notes, long ascending passages, challenging dynamics, and heavier interpretive demands.

Guion composed the patriotic and religious song “The Voice of America” shortly after the United States entered into World War II. The lyrics are by John Walter Bratton,

an ASCAP composer best known for his song “Teddy Bears’ Picnic.” Guion presumably collaborated personally with Bratton for this song, as indicated by a note on the bottom of the first page that reads “Lyric (for which the title and idea were suggested by Mr. Guion) printed by exclusive permission.” Guion’s influence on the lyrics is easily discernable during a particularly dramatic section of the song, mm. 59-64, when the singer calls upon “Poets, musicians, and cowboys on the plains, lawyers, physicians, and plowboys down the lanes.” This unusual ordering reflects Guion’s regard for poets, musicians and cowboys over lawyers and doctors. Besides ranking lawyers and doctors, who usually get first billing on a list of professions, after the poets, musicians, and cowboys, Guion also ranks them with unglamorous plowboys.

The listener can immediately discern the military theme of “The Voice of America” because of its unmistakable reference to a snare drum playing a marching rhythm in the first measure (fig. 16). Guion only uses one pitch, so the listener is not distracted from the rhythm.

Fig. 16. “The Voice of America,” mm. 1-2. Snare drum.

**Military – With dignity (Moderato)**

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The bugle, another instrument associated with the military because of its reveille calls and the tune “Taps,” is introduced in mm. 10-12 (fig. 17). The bugle call marks the

end of the introduction, after which a lengthy anthem describes America’s role in the world as a God-sent peacemaker.

Fig. 17. “The Voice of America,” mm. 10-12. Bugle call.

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Guion uses ascending chromatic lines and raised sixth and seventh scale degrees to propel the anthem to its climax at m. 47 (fig. 18). The interlude from mm. 47-50 is an example of one of Guion’s characteristic stylistic devices. It serves as a bridge from a lyric section to a declamatory section and similar versions of it can be found in several of his other songs, including “At the Cry of the First Bird” and “The Cross-Bearer.” In each case, the interlude begins in the same dramatic vein as the climax preceding it and ends after it has been gradually reduced to a single pitch class.

Fig. 18. “The Voice of America,” mm. 43-52. Guion interlude.

43 *held back*  
 Hold a plow and work with God, Raise grain, Life to sus - stain. My

47 *in time*  
 friends!

50 *in time*  
 Ma - rines, sail - ors, and sol - diers, men with wings who fly,

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A new section at m. 51 begins with the same spare texture that ends the preceding interlude and grows into a fervent call to arms and prayer, with the lyrics expressing the belief that America will bring peace and prosperity to the world. It culminates in a

quotation of the famous Christian hymn “Onward, Christian Soldiers,” followed by an interlude whose rhythmic motive of triplets on the weak beats recalls the snare drum at the beginning of the song. However, in fig. 19 the triplets are immediately followed by clusters of pitches that emulate ringing church bells. Guion occasionally refers to famous religious or popular tunes in his art songs. Besides the quotation of “Onward Christian Soldiers,” another example can be heard in “What Shall We Do with a Drunken Sailor,” which features a fragment of the nautical tune “Sailor’s Hornpipe” that is familiar to anyone who has heard Gilbert and Sullivan’s *H.M.S. Pinafore* or the cartoons *Popeye* or *Sponge Bob Square Pants*.

The final section of “The Voice of America” recalls the earlier anthem of mm. 13-47, and the song ends with a postlude that is similar to the interlude of mm. 47-50. Guion includes two details in the postlude that change the mood from nervous in the interlude to victorious at the end of the song. He writes the same two scales in mm. 82-83 that he does in mm. 47-48, but he reverses their order so that the second scale now contains only one pitch lowered from the major scale for a brighter effect, and the leading tone present in that scale nudges the piece towards the ending D-major harmony (fig. 20). Thus, with “The Voice of America,” Guion comments musically on the instability felt in the United States after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He waffles between major and minor keys throughout most of the song to represent the unpredictable changes of events during the war, but writes a major harmony at the end to assure his listeners that the eventual outcome will be a positive one. In keeping with the solemnity of war, Guion writes the last chord of the song in a low register.



## At Close of Day

Lyrics David W. Guion  
Publication 1942, G. Schirmer, Inc.  
Key, Range Low C Major, B4-E5  
High E $\flat$  Major, D4-G5  
Form ABA'

“At Close of Day” is one of six songs Guion dedicated to his mother. The lyrics, which he wrote himself, show how deeply her death in 1936 affected him. Guion’s exposure to Lieder during his studies in Vienna clearly influenced this song, in which he uses musical devices typical of German Romantic art songs. These devices include distinctive melodies in the preludes and postludes that are not heard in the vocal lines, non-structural pitches or chords given long values or placed on strong beats, lengthy interludes that represent changes in mental state, chromatic third modulations, and fleeting tonal centers.

Guion starts and ends “At Close of Day” with a poignant melody (fig. 21) reminiscent in both mood and structure of the ones found in Richard Strauss’s songs “Morgen” and “Allerseelen.”

Fig. 21. “At Close of Day,” mm. 1-6. Instrumental melody.

**Moderately slow, and with feeling**

The musical score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 1-3) begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The melody in the right hand is characterized by a chromatic third modulation. The second system (measures 4-6) includes a ritardando (*rit.*) marking. The score is marked with 'Lea' in the bass line.

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Fig. 22. "At Close of Day," mm. 15-30. Longing.

15 *mf*  
I stand near my pia - no And pic - ture you there, Your

19 *cresc.*  
sweet face faint - ly smil - ing. Framed in snow - like hair. I

23 *f* *mf*  
wait for the words — I so loved to hear —

27 *mp slightly slower* *in time*  
“Play for your moth - er, your old, old moth - er, Play for your moth - er, my dear.”

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Love and longing are palpable in the piano part from the beginning. After the vocal line finishes and the listener has heard the words and understands the story behind them, the return of the prelude melody in the postlude is doubly effective in its emotional

impact. In both of the Strauss songs, the singer is heartbroken over the death of a loved one, but finds the strength to go on by believing that he will reunite after death with the person he loves. Guion writes his lyrics in a similarly tragic vein.

At the close of each day, I wait for you then,  
When all is quiet and peaceful within.  
I stand near my piano and picture you there,  
Your sweet face faintly smiling, framed in snowlike hair.  
I wait for the words I so loved to hear  
“Play for your mother, your old, old mother, play for your mother, my dear.”

Then once again my fingers touch softly the keys  
In mood ever changing, tempestuous, at ease.  
Then suddenly I’m reminded ‘tis only a dream.  
My fingers become chilled; my heart stops, it seems!

But as the days pass slowly, one by one,  
I live for these words only: “Play for your mother, play, my son!”

Guion enhances the sense of longing in the song by writing non-structural pitches in the vocal line on strong beats and by avoiding quick resolutions. For instance, what sounds like an imminent  $I^{6/4}$ -V-I cadence beginning in m. 18 takes a more circuitous route in mm. 19-22 than one might expect before resolving to the tonic in m. 23. See fig. 22.

The formal structure of the song reflects the protagonist’s journey from reality to fantasy and back again. Because Guion was a pianist and this song is autobiographical, the piano plays an even more prominent role than usual. At the transition at mm. 31-35 between the first A section and the B section, a reprise of the prelude is heard before the B section begins seamlessly a chromatic third lower. A brief period of exhilaration follows in which the protagonist imagines himself playing for his mother in person again. When he remembers that she is gone and Guion is alone, the desperate yearning he feels is communicated with a highly chromatic interlude of crashing diminished seventh

chords. As emotional exhaustion and resignation set in, the interlude ends quietly with the familiar Guion bridging device, in which chords are deconstructed into single pitches with repetitive rhythms that signal the beginning of a new section (fig. 23). This interlude is reminiscent of one in Franz Liszt’s “Die Loreley,” in which the protagonist sees himself at the site of a terrible shipwreck before returning back to quiet reality in a library.

Fig. 23. “At Close of Day,” mm. 52-61. Emotional interlude.

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system shows measures 52-54. The second system, starting at measure 54, includes performance markings such as *rit. and cresc.*, *ff held back*, and *Ped. held*. The third system, starting at measure 57, includes the lyrics "But as the days pass slow - ly," and performance markings like *mp* and *a tempo*. The score is written for piano and voice.

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## Song of the Wind

Lyrics Lydia Newsom  
Publication 1942, G. Schirmer, Inc.  
Key, Range Low C Minor, C4-D5 (optional Eb5)  
High E Minor, E4- F#5 (optional G5)  
Form *Scena*

Guion's setting of the text in "Song of the Wind" is particularly sensitive.

Creating a new section for each thought expressed in the lyrics, his finished product contains numerous details that highlight individual words or phrases. The poem addresses the serious subjects of cosmic unity and the continuity of life, even after death.

Guion uses word painting at the beginning of the song. The 6/8 meter subdivides into two large beats per measure. Each of these beats contains an ascending arpeggio written as either a septuplet or an octuplet. Guion varies the combinations of septuplets and octuplets for an effect that is reminiscent of a gentle breeze blowing in uneven puffs (fig. 24).

Fig. 24. "Song of the Wind," mm. 1-6. Wind moving.

The musical score for "Song of the Wind" (mm. 1-6) is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-4) features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The piano part consists of ascending arpeggios in both hands, with septuplets and octuplets. The lyrics are: "I lay straight in the tall plumed grass, My". The second system (measures 5-6) continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "hands be - hind my head;". The piano part continues with ascending arpeggios, including septuplets and octuplets. The score is in 6/8 time and includes a dynamic marking of *mf* at the beginning.

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While the breeze wafts along, the words describe a peaceful picture of someone lying in the grass, watching clouds drift across a blue sky. The piano abruptly changes figurations as the speaker breaks his reverie when he notices some birds singing. Guion includes representations of birdsongs (fig. 25).

Fig. 25. “Song of the Wind,” mm. 15-17. Birdsongs.

The musical score for "Song of the Wind" (mm. 15-17) features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "A blue-bird sang, and an o - ri - ole;" and includes a fermata over the word "ole;". The piano accompaniment includes bird-like motifs, such as a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand, both marked with a fermata. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *p* and *pp*, and a tempo marking of *p* *slowly*. The score is written for voice and piano.

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Guion introduces new sections in “Song of the Wind” through variation in the accompaniment, *fermatas*, and breath markings. For instance, as the speaker watches a sunset and begins to doze, Guion quiets the wind and changes the meter to 2/4. He harmonizes the words “As a dreamer there would do” with an unresolved German sixth chord, suggesting the moment when a person drifts into unconsciousness (fig. 26, m. 26).

As the speaker ponders his mortality, Guion writes a funeral dirge in the accompaniment that moves in largely chromatic motion (fig. 27). The horizontally-driven harmonies reflect the speaker’s belief in the continuity of life and in his connection with the natural world.

When the speaker reminds anyone who might grieve for him that he will still be present in the wind, Guion returns to both the wind motive in the accompaniment and to a

short passage of 2/4 time. He affirms the continuity of life by recycling details throughout the song.

Fig. 26. "Song of the Wind," mm. 24-28. Unresolved augmented harmony.

sun flamed low and out, I dreamed, As a  
 dream - er there would do. A wind at e - ven came

E Minor:  $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$

26  $\text{Ger}^{+6}$   $\text{V/VI}$   $\text{VI}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$

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Fig. 27. "Song of the Wind," mm. 34-37. Dirge.

I shall lie a-gain, deep, deep in the grass, My hands a-cross my

$\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$   $\text{Lea}$

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## The Cross-Bearer

Lyrics	John W. Bratton
Publication	1942, G. Schirmer, Inc.
Key, Range	Low            C# Minor, B4-Eb5
	Med. High    E Minor, D4-Gb5
Form	ABA'

“The Cross-Bearer” is one of Guion’s many religious art songs that feature lyrics about human relationships with God, written from the first-person perspective. Other Guion songs of this type include “Mary Alone, Mother of Christ,” “I Talked to God Last Night,” and “Prayer.” In “The Cross-Bearer,” a speaker imagines a scene from the story of the Passion where Christ, abandoned by his followers and treated with scorn by onlookers, carries the heavy cross upon which he will be hung. The speaker compares the people in Christ’s time to modern day people. Guion heightens the drama of “The Cross-Bearer” with chromaticism and word painting.

Guion often achieves dramatic movement in his art songs by juxtaposing harmonic and melodic changes so that the beginning or ending of a section in a song comes as a surprise. In “The Cross-Bearer,” Guion subtly brings about the climax of the song through chromatic modulation from E Minor through G#Minor and EbMinor to EbMajor (fig. 28, m. 40-45). The effect is especially strong in the vocal line, where the rising E Minor scale beginning in m. 40 is diverted in m. 42 to arrive on a high Gb in m. 43. Then, a sudden modal change to major at m 45 underscores the significance of the words “the Savior from Galilee” and signals a new section of the song. Thus, Guion smoothly composes a number of musical shifts in a short span by manipulating harmonic and melodic lines in response to the emotional content of the text.

Fig. 28. “The Cross Bearer,” mm. 38-46. Modulation through melodic manipulation.

38 *mf in time* *cresc.*  
 Where were those lep-ers His touch had cleansed? The blind that He made to  
*mf in time* *cresc.*  
 see? Ah, they had for-got-ten, as do men to-day, The

41 *f* *ff*  
 Sav-ior from Gal-i-lee. I vi-sion a man who

44 *rit.* *mp in time*  
*rit.* *mp in time*

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Also at the beginning of the song (fig. 29) Guion demonstrates his creative word painting by using repetitive neighboring chords to create the effect of slow, weighted steps on level ground.

More word painting can be seen in the returning A section at m. 46. Here, the trudging continues, but Guion writes it going uphill this time, as he combines word painting and chromaticism to paint a painful picture of Christ climbing Calvary Hill.

Fig. 29. “The Cross Bearer,” mm. 1-6. Word painting, heavy footsteps.

Moderately slow, with deep feeling and reverence

Voice

Piano

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

I vi - sion a man who car - ried a cross,

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Many of Guion’s most sophisticated songs are set to the highly emotional poems of John W. Bratton. Bratton’s lyrics contain a mixture of the lofty, as in the references to space and eternity in “The Soul of the Universe” and of the folksy, as in parts of “The Voice of America.” This combination of cultivated and vernacular makes his poems a good match for Guion’s style. Both high and low elements can be found in the text of “The Cross-Bearer.” Guion acknowledges the shifts in lyrics by adapting musically to each change. What makes “The Cross-Bearer” one of Guion’s most sophisticated songs is that he manipulates harmony and rhythm to seamlessly reflect Bratton’s changing images.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

David W. Guion (1892-1981) published nearly one-hundred fifty songs for voice and piano that encompass a wide range of styles and demonstrate the mixture of the cultivated and the vernacular that is an integral facet of American music.

This document explores Guion's contributions to the American song repertoire through discussion of selected pieces and examination of some of the biographical, societal, and musical influences upon them. Guion wrote three main types of songs: arrangements of cowboy songs, African-American influenced *Songs of the South*, and original art songs ranging from light parlor pieces to serious compositions about war and religion.

Guion's cowboy songs proved to be his ticket to fame and fortune. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and entertainer Will Rogers both claimed Guion's arrangement of "Home on the Range" as their favorite song. Guion featured his cowboy songs on two radio shows he hosted in New York City in the early 1930s, just as mainstream Americans were gaining access to radios. His Texas background and experience with the rodeo gave him an air of authenticity that he and his publishers used to their advantage as they marketed his sheet music. Guion's classical music background allowed him to transform cowboy songs from their unsophisticated beginnings to concert-worthy pieces that were programmed by famous singers.

Guion's background inspired him to write not only arrangements of cowboy songs, but arrangements of Negro spirituals as well. Some of his earliest published works were the *Darkey Spirituals*. Derived from established folk songs, the differences in his arrangements as compared to ones written by his African-American peers reveal some of the interesting cultural differences between Black and White Americans of Guion's time, such as their views on religious topics.

Guion also wrote a number of original songs based on African-American music and themes that he named *Songs of the South*. Five of them were originally written for his unfinished opera *Suzanne*. The *Songs of the South* contain syncopation, a style characteristic rarely seen in his other types of songs, and many of them showcase Guion's gift for innovative word painting. Guion wrote the lyrics for the majority of these songs himself. They are often in dialect and sometimes include pejorative words and concepts based upon race that are offensive by today's standards.

Guion's art songs cover a wide gamut of subjects and styles that are based on neither spirituals nor cowboy songs. The lyrics of his short, entertaining early art songs usually reference romantic love and contain simple vocal lines and flashy accompaniments, coinciding with the years he spent writing for stage revues in New York City. His later art songs, written after his beloved mother's death in 1936 and his subsequent move to the Poconos, tend to address weighty subjects like war, life after death, and humankind's relationship with God. These serious songs are generally longer and more complex both musically and emotionally than his earlier art songs. Even for the later art songs, Guion tended to choose lyrics by contemporary American poets who wrote words that appealed to him personally but who were not especially famous.

Guion's songs are valuable to singers in that the tuneful melodies of his early songs make them good choices for beginning vocalists who wish to learn American repertoire, while the interpretive and vocal demands of his later art songs are appropriate for more advanced singers as well. Singers and teachers who wish to program a set of Guion's innovative songs on recitals will find a wide variety of types from which to choose.

Guion was a man of striking contrasts. The image he cultivated of the hardy cowboy composer is but one of the many facets of his persona, which also included devoted son, gifted pianist, and passionate collector of Americana. While his most famous songs are the cowboy ones, he felt that the sacred songs were his true legacy. Although he was classically trained, he was happy to write the occasional commercial song, moving seamlessly from vernacular to cultivated music throughout his entire career. He expounded upon the importance of singing the folk songs with a serious attitude, but he also displayed his sense of humor in those same songs with extensive word painting. He loved his native Texas but chose to spend most of adult life far from the Southwest. He claimed that he thought of composition as an avocation instead of a career, yet he conducted his business carefully.

Even with all his contrasts, Guion remained unchanging in certain ways. What can be seen from a study of his songs is the importance he placed on originality. For instance, he never wrote a strictly strophic song, always preferring instead to alter his accompaniments to set each phrase as perfectly as possible. Guion's songs may sound simple and pleasant upon the first hearing, but closer study of them reveals his constant attention to detail. He made his intentions regarding the performance of each song clear,

sometimes with written notes to the singer or pianist, but usually through specific phrase, tempo, and dynamic markings. Guion's unending drive to set the texts he chose in ever more clever and profound ways makes for highly engaging study and performance.

Many of Guion's most innovative songs have lost their novelty, or they contain words or ideas that make them difficult to program today. However, his keen interest in Americana and his colorful background leave their mark on his songs, which are unique reflections of American societal attitudes and compositional practices of his time.

Scholars can gain insight into such large topics as race and class in America by studying Guion's style and the lyrics of his songs, while the sheet music itself yields a wealth of information through notations from the composer or publishers, as well as the advertisements and cover art. Guion's wide variety of song styles is truly a window into the culture of his time.

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## APPENDIX 1

### COMPREHENSIVE CHART OF GUION'S SONGS

The main body of appendix 1 consists of a chart that contains facts about Guion's songs such as the category into which each song falls, year of publication, publisher, collections, lyricists, key, range, and other information such as dedications or special instructions from the composer. The songs are arranged first by category, and then by year published. Most of the songs fall into one of three major categories: art, cowboy, or African-American songs. The art and African-American categories also contain subcategories. Two small categories entitled other and popular do not fall under any of the major three groupings.

The largest category is art and contains two subheadings, art/children and art/religious. Art/children consists of seven songs that Guion wrote for unison children's chorus and piano. The art/religious category contains thirteen songs that are based on religious, specifically Christian, themes. Cowboy songs include folk song arrangements as well as original compositions. Guion's African-American songs are divided into the Spirituals arranged from folk songs and the original works Guion himself named *Songs of the South*. The popular category contains some songs Guion wrote purely for commercial entertainment. Two unpublished songs written late in Guion's life comprise the Other category. One was written as an anthem for a private school in Dallas, and the other is a monologue set to music, sung from the perspective of a hard-working, under-appreciated policeman.

The lyrics of Guion's songs stem from a wide variety of sources, and the vast majority of them were written by contemporaries of the composer. Guion himself wrote the lyrics to many of his songs. Lyrics in his other songs come from diverse writers including many of his fellow American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) members. Guion often used words by Marie Wardall Lussi in his art songs and *Songs of the South*. Her name appears on the chart in several different versions and spellings, according to what is printed on the sheet music. The lyrics of the collection *from a child's world* were written by Guion's younger brother Wade.

The Key/range section of the chart includes references to optional high or low notes and contains (H) for high key, (M) for medium key, (L) for low key, (MH) for high medium key, and (ML) for medium low key. Middle C is named C4 in this chart. Also included are notes concerning tessitura or technical performance issues in some songs.

The notes section lists dedications and other interesting information about the songs. While most theoretical information has not been included in the chart, striking instances of word painting are noted. Performance instructions from the composer, comments about illustrations, information found on the inside or back covers of the song, names of other songs belonging to a set, technical issues for singers, notes about songs' locations, quotations of other music, types of song such as patriotic or wedding, and information about choral arrangements are also noted.

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
The Ghostly Galley	Art	1917	M. Witmark & Sons	See notes	Jessie B. Rittenhouse	C Minor, C4-Eb5	Grouped with “Embers” “To Armour Fentress Guion”
Hopi Indian Cradle Song	Art	1917	Boosey & Co.		Louis Untermayer	G Major (H), E4-G5 Eb Major (M), C4-Eb5 Db Major (L), Bb4-Db5	Choral arr. by Sumner Salter 1925, then by George Shackley 1942 Lyrics are printed above song Piano depicts moonbeams
Embers	Art	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	See notes	Jessie B. Rittenhouse	G Minor, F4-G5	Grouped with “Ghostly Galley” Dedicated to Helen S. Woodruff
Loss	Art	1918	Boosey & Co.	Two Short Songs	Jessie B. Rittenhouse	Db Major, Eb4-Db5	Grouped with “Within Your Eyes” Lyrics are printed at top of first page “To Armour Fentress Guion” – later removed the dedication
Within Your Eyes	Art	1918	Boosey & Co.	Two Short Songs	Jessie B. Rittenhouse	C Major, C4-F5	Grouped with “Loss” Lyrics are printed at top of first page “To Mary McNeal Dilworth”
Love is Lord of All	Art	1919	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Songs for Medium Voice and Piano	Marie Wardall	Db Major, C4-Gb5	Grouped with “My Own Laddie” M7 leap in second verse
My Own Laddie	Art	1919	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Songs for Med Voice and Piano	Arthur Hewitt	Db Major, Ab4-Eb5 (opt F5)	Grouped with “Love is Lord of All”

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
A Kiss	Art	1920	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Songs for Medium Voice with Piano	Mary Hunt McCaleb	E $\flat$ Major, F4-E $\flat$ 5	Grouped with "Return" Directions to "smack" Excerpts from four "splendid songs" on back cover
Return	Art	1920	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Songs for Medium Voice and Piano	Jessie B. Rittenhouse	D $\flat$ Major, D $\flat$ 4-F5	Grouped with "A Kiss"
Resurrection	Art	1921	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Three Songs for Medium Voice and Piano	Marie Wardall	D Minor, D4-F#5	First of the three songs in set
Life and Love	Art	1921	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Three Songs for Medium Voice and Piano	Marie Wardall	D minor, D $\flat$ 4-opt F#5	Second of the three songs in set
Compensation	Art	1921	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Three Songs for Medium Voice and Piano	Marie Wardall	D Major, C#4-F#5	Third of the three songs in set
Sail Away for the Rio Grande	Art	1925	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Charles J. Finger	G Minor (H), D4-F5 (opt G5) E Minor (L), B4-D5 (optE5)	Arr. Guion Cover states "A Chanty from the Chilean Coast collected by Charles J. Finger" Notes from Finger about working songs and the need to sing them without speeding
Weary	Art	1927	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Gordon Johnstone	E $\flat$ Minor, D4-G $\flat$ 5	From collection "There is No Death and Other Poems"

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
A Heart-Break	Art	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Anon	E $\flat$ Major, C4 (opt B $\flat$ 4) -F5	Not in Round Top collection Alternate notes an octave apart in many cases
The Bell Buoy	Art	1931	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Jessie Rittenhouse	A Major (H), E4-F#5 G Maj (M), D4-E5	
Mother	Art	1931	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Grace Noll Crowell	D Minor, D4-D5	Dedication to "Armour Fentress Guion" Jazz harmonies
When You Go	Art	1931	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Jessie B. Rittenhouse	E Minor, B4 (opt A#4) -E5 (opt G5)	Accompaniment full of octaves
Wild Geese	Art	1931	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Grace Noll Crowell	E Major, D#4-F5 (opt G5)	Marketed same key under two different voice types Piano emulates beating wings and honks of geese
What Shall We Do with a Drunken Sailor?	Art	1933	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Arr. Guion	D Major, C4-D5	Piano depicts a stumbling drunk Laughing and spoken part at the end Quotes famous nautical tune
Creole Juanita	Art	1934	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Marie Lussi	B Minor (L), C#4-D5 E Minor (H), D#4-G#5	Orchestrated version at Round Top, TX Spanish-sounding rhythms
Waltzing with You in My Arms	Art	1934	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Marie Lussi	C Major, D4-F5 (opt G5)	Labeled a waltz, but in 6/8
Prairie Night Song	Art	1935	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Mari Lussi	E $\flat$ Major, B $\flat$ 4-F5	Love song, title and opening section imply Western, but not place-specific
Sea Demons	Art	1938	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Pete Mars	D Minor, D4-E5 (opt G5)	Piano represents stormy, then calm seas

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This Night Can Never Come Again	Art	1939	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Marri Lussi	B $\flat$ Major, G3-D5 (opt F5)	Low tessitura until the end Love song of persuasion
When You Smile	Art	1939	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Adelaide Matthews	A $\flat$ Major, Eb4-A $\flat$ 6	
My Son	Art	1940	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Marri Lussi	C Minor, D4-C6	2 alternate endings with lower notes Technically difficult for singer
One Day	Art	1940	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Marri Lussi	G Minor (H), G4-G5 (opt B $\flat$ 6) E Minor (L), E4-E5 (opt G5)	Tessitura rises as song gains momentum
White Clouds	Art	1940	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Suite #6	Marri Lussi	C-Minor (H), G4-B $\flat$ 6 G Minor (L), D4-F5	High key is tough technically, much <i>passaggio</i> work and ending on sustained high G
The Voice of America	Art	1941	G. Schirmer, Inc.		John W. Bratton	D Minor, D4-G5	Patriotic song Evokes military snare drum and bugle Populist lyrics Reference to "Onward Christian Soldiers"
At Close of Day	Art	1942	G. Schirmer		Guion	C-Major (L), B4-E5 E $\flat$ Major (H), D4-G5	"In memory of my mother"
Go Then	Art	1942	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	B Minor, B4-D5	"Written in memory of my Mother"
Love That Could Not Stay	Art	1942	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	F Major (H), D4-G5 E $\flat$ Major (M), C4-F5 C Major (L), A4-D5	Original words and music A note on bottom left of first page says "Melody based on an old [Irish] folk tune"

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The Song of the Whip	Art	1942	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Mari Lussi	E $\flat$ Minor, B $\flat$ 4-F5 (opt G5)	Many alternate notes can make a higher version Piano emulates a snapping whip
Song of the Wind	Art	1942	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Lydia Newsom	E Minor (H), E4-F $\sharp$ 5 (optG5) C Minor (L), C4-D5 (opt E $\flat$ 5)	Scena, B in four subsections Fermatas and pauses Words allow for better dramatic interpretation than many of the texts Guion set
Life's Journey	Art	1944	G. Schirmer, Inc.		John W. Bratton	C Major, B4-F5 (high option), E4-G5 (low option)	On a Theme by [Francis] Thomé Many alternate notes so singer can use preferred tessitura
The Soul of the Universe	Art	1944	Mills Music Inc.		John W. Bratton	B $\flat$ Major, B $\flat$ 4-F5	Love song Reminiscent of Frost and other poets' references to space and eternity
Too Deep for Tears	Art	1945	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Kate McNeal	B Minor, D4-F $\sharp$ 5	Dramatic ending
My Eternity	Art	1948	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Jessie B. Rittenhouse	D $\flat$ Major (H), E $\flat$ 4-A $\flat$ 6 B $\flat$ Major (M), C4-F5	From poetry collection "The Door of Dreams", original title The Hour Several optional notes given at the end
Unveil Your Eyes	Art	1948	Carl Fischer, Inc.		David Guion and Clark Harrington	E $\flat$ Major (H), E $\flat$ 4-G5 D $\flat$ Major (M), D $\flat$ 4-F5 B $\flat$ Major (L), B $\flat$ 4-D5	Back cover is an ad for "Music of Romance" and four excerpts from songs, including one by Guion and one by Oscar Fox

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Love's Supremacy (Beloved)	Art	1950	G. Schirmer, Inc.		W. Clark Harrington	G Major, E4 – G5 (opt A6)	Sustained pitches in the vocal <i>passaggio</i> Similar in mood and sound to “Dein ist mein ganzes Herz” from <i>Das Land des Lächelns</i> by Franz Lehár
The Hawk	Art	1952	Carl Fischer Inc.		Eric von der Goltz	G Major (H), F4-G5	High tessitura, light mood In 6/8, quick tempo
Rocket Ship	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	C Major, D#4-E5	Choral arrangement for unison children and piano, Color illustrations by Guion's brother Wade in a collection called <i>Toddle Toppers</i> Written shortly before his death
Spoof Woofie Goof	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	G Maj; D4-E5	
Little Green Bug	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	G Maj; D#4-D5	
Birds Come Flying	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	E♭ Maj; B♭4-F5	
Mister Singing Frog	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	C Maj; C4-E5	
Mockingbird	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	F Maj; E4-F5	
Miss Chatty Chipmunk	Art/children	1981	G. Schirmer, Inc.	from a child's world	David Guion	C Maj; B4-C5	

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Prayer	Art/religious	1919	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Hermann Hagedorn	E $\flat$ Major, C4-F5 (opt G5)	“To Leila M. Johnston” Three distinct sections differentiated by meter changes and piano lines Choral arr. Kenneth Downing 1919 for SATB and piano, SSA and piano
Mary Alone Mother of Christ	Art/religious	1922	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Lucile Isbell Stall	F $\sharp$ Minor (H), D4 (opt C $\sharp$ 4) -G $\sharp$ 5 C $\sharp$ Minor (L), A4 (opt G $\sharp$ 3) – D $\sharp$ 5	Compares Mary’s plight as a mother to the protagonist, who lost her son in war
At the Cry of the First Bird	Art/religious	1924	G. Schirmer		Anonymous	B minor, D4-G5	Choral arr by Van A. Christy for 4-part women 1924 Dedicated to Joyce Borden Words from “Collections from Ancient Irish Poetry” by Kumo Meyer
I Talked to God Last Night	Art/religious	1940	G. Schirmer, Inc.		John W. Bratton	B $\flat$ Minor (H), B $\flat$ 4-opt F5 C Minor (M), C4-opt G5 E $\flat$ Minor (L), E $\flat$ 4-opt C6	Choral arr Bryceson Treharne (aka Kenneth Downing) 1941 Written under title - A Vision
The Cross-Bearer	Art/religious	1942	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Daniel S. Twohig	C $\sharp$ Minor (L), B4-E $\flat$ 5 E Minor (MH), D4-G $\flat$ 5	
Hand in Hand, Beloved	Art/religious	1944	Mills Music Inc.		John W. Bratton	B $\flat$ Major, D4-F5 (opt G $\flat$ 5)	Wedding song
Only Through Thee, Lord	Art/religious	1944	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Daniel S. Twohig	C Minor, E $\flat$ 4-F5 (opt G5)	Change from despair to hope reflected in the music

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And God Was There	Art/religious	1946	Mills Music, Inc.		John W. Bratton	D $\flat$ Major, E $\flat$ 4-F5	Dramatic Ends on 4 measures of F5
Mary	Art/religious	1955	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Marie Lussi	E Minor, C4-G5	Alternates lullaby with recit Back page advertises a Guion song for high voice, "Wild Geese"
As We, O Lord, Have Joined Our Hands	Art/religious	1959	G. Schirmer		Arthur V. Boand	E $\flat$ Major, D4-F5 (high option), B $\flat$ 4-E $\flat$ 5 (low option)	Wedding song Optional low notes
The Lord Is My Shepherd	Art/religious	1959	G. Schirmer, Inc.		From 23 <sup>rd</sup> Psalm	B Minor, C4-F#5	"In memory of my mother"
My Lord and My God	Art/religious	1973	Treasure Music Publications		Stanley E. Wilkes	A $\flat$ Major, C4-F5	"Dedicated to Dr. William M. Elliott, Jr." Spoken interlude
They've Taken My Lord Away	Art/religious	1974	Guion Music Company		Guion	E Minor, E4-E5	Not in Round Top collection Derived from traditional spirituals, syncopation, wailing motive Note: "as if singing to oneself" <i>f</i>
The Bold Vaquero	Cowboy	1920	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	F Major, E4-F5	Revised in 1934 Sung by Tex Ritter in movie <i>Rollin' Westward</i> , picture of Tex with on cover Guitar chords included
Cowboy's Meditation	Cowboy	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	D Minor, D4-G5	Written under title, "Texas Range Song" "Original words and tune from Charles J. Finger's collection"

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Lonesome Song of the Plains	Cowboy	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Suite #5	Grace Noll Crowell	Ab Major (H), Eb4-Ab6 F Major (M), C4-F5	Different types of wind serve as metaphors for emotions
All Day on the Prairie	Cowboy	1930	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Tunes	Arr. Guion	Ab Major, Eb4-Db5	Singer directed to whistle Interlude sounds like saloon music Choral arr by Wallingford Riegger for 3-part men 1960, also 4-part men 1959
Home on the Range	Cowboy	1930	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Tunes	Brewster Higley	Gb Major (H), Db4-opt Gb5 F Major (MH), C4-opt F5 Eb Major (ML), Bb4-opt Eb5 C Major (L), G3-opt C5	“Arranged by David Guion with Added Original Melody” At bottom of cover: Victor Record, No. 1525, Sung by John Charles Thomas Choral arr by Wallingford Riegger for TTB 1933, SATB bar solo 1932, SATB bar and tenor solos 1932 Orchestrated
McCaffie’s Confession	Cowboy	1930	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Tunes	Arr. Guion	D Minor, C4-C5	Arr. by Guion, no added melody, Guion credits Finger’s Frontier Ballads and mentions that the incident in the song is based on fact and needs to be performed seriously Marked at beginning “Narratively, and with typical Western drawl”

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Roy Bean	Cowboy	1930	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Tunes	Arr. Guion	G Major, D4-B5	Written under title: Texas Frontier Ballad Same performance note as "McCaffie's Confession" Credits Finger's Frontier Ballads Ends with spoken comment Back cover lists other Guion works including choral
O Bury me not on the Lone Prairie (The Dying Cowboy)	Cowboy	1931	Carl Fischer, Inc.	Cowboy Songs	Arr Guion	G Major, B4-D5	Arrangement of folk Back cover advertises "Notable Radio and Concert Songs" Other song in set is "When the Work's all Done this Fall" for low voice (no other keys given for both songs)
When the Work's all Done this Fall	Cowboy	1931	Carl Fischer, Inc.	Cowboy Songs	Arr. Guion	C Major, B4-(opt G3) - D5 (opt E5)	Humorous Cowboy Song Notes from Guion regarding musical repetition and its function in cowboy songs Grouped with "O Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie"
The Cowboy's Dream	Cowboy	1933	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Cowboy Song	Guion	G Major, E4-G5	Guion added original melody Extra performance notes from composer Choral arr by Bryceson Treharne 1937 for SAB

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Little Joe, the Wrangler	Cowboy	1933	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Tunes	Arr. Guion	G Major, E4-E5	Note from composer at top of first page saying not to omit any stanzas <i>Sympathically, but not too slow</i> Added original melody from Guion
Ol' Paint	Cowboy	1933	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Arr. Guion	D Major (H), D4-F#5 Bb Major (M), Bb4-D5	Under title: Cowboy Song Tip about transposing down in the high version Notes from composer similar to ones in "Little Joe the Wrangler" Octavos arr. by Carl Deis for SAB and TTBB in 1933
Ride, Cowboy, Ride	Cowboy	1934	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Texas Suite #11	Marie Lussi	A Major (M), C#4-F#5 G Major (L), B4-E5	Choral arr by Kenneth Downing Back cover lists more Guion songs
My Cowboy Love Song	Cowboy	1936	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Cavalcade of Texas	Marri Lussi	C Major, E4-G5	Orchestrated by Mario Agnolucci, dance arr by Foster Cope 1936 Official theme song of the <i>Cavalcade of Texas</i> celebrating centennial of state independence

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Brazos Boat Song	Cowboy	1936	G. Schirmer, Inc.		John William Rogers	C Major (L), B4-E5 E $\flat$ Major (H), D4-G5	Inside cover gives a history of the song “In Honor of the One Hundredth Birthday of Texas”
Texas, May I Never Wander	Cowboy	1936	C.C. Birchard & Company		Mark Miner	D Major, E4-F#5	Some alternate lower notes Tribute to Texas Octavo for SSA/piano 1936
The Yellow Rose of Texas	Cowboy	1936	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Words and Music “rewritten” by Guion	D Major, A4-D5 (opt E5)	On Cover: “Written in honor of the One Hundredth Birthday of Texas and dedicated to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt” Not the familiar melody Octavo arr by Carl Deis 1936 for SATB/piano
Carry me home to the Lone Prairie	Cowboy	1937	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	E $\flat$ Major, B $\flat$ 4-F5 (optional G5 at the end)	“After a cowboy song” Choral arr by Willis F. Ducrest for TTBB and SATB choral arr: “For the S.L.I Men’s Glee Club”
God’s Golden West	Cowboy	1947	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Guion	A $\flat$ Major (H), D4-A $\flat$ 6 G $\flat$ Major (M), C4-G $\flat$ 5 E Major (L), A#4-E5	Accompaniment more complex than in the earlier cowboy songs
Roll Along Little Dogies	Cowboy	1947	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Guion	E Major (M), C#4-F#5 D Major (L), B4-E5	Includes calls “Whoopiya, yipiya” Back cover mentions that Lawrence Tibbett programmed Guion’s songs

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Pinto	Cowboy	1948	Carl Fischer, Inc.		Marie Lussi	G Major (H), E4-G5 E♭ Major (M), C4-E♭5 C Major (L), A4-C5	Love song from cowboy to his horse
Hail, Greenhill	Other	1952			David Glenn Hunt		Choral arr. Lindsey Miller Greene Registered in the names of Greenhill School (a private school in Dallas) and Greene
I'm a Cop! (A Policeman's Lament)	Other	1976	Unpublished		Kenneth McKinney and James Tate	C Minor, B♭4-C5	Registered under Guion 1977 Prologue to be performed "as though over CB radio" Similar to a Gilbert & Sullivan Patter song
Old Maid Blues	Popular	1918	T.B. Harms and Francis, Day & Hunter		Web Maddox	C Major, G4-E5	Narrow range, tempo marked at beginning is <i>Lachrymose</i> Lyrics not politically correct by today's standards – a 25-year-old woman begs for a husband, promises to obey and be meek and humble, and not cause trouble; tongue-in-cheek Introduced by Nora Bayes in Cohan Review of 1918 Blatantly commercial in scope

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
Wrong Livin'	Popular	1934	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	B Major, G#3-D#5	Written under the title: A slow drag In black dialect, bluesy
Song of Mexico	Popular	1944	Mills Music Inc.		Rusk Smith and Dave Jillson	Bb Major, Bb4-Eb5	Picture on cover of an Anglo-looking woman with caption "Featured by Hildegard" Commercial in scope Recurring dance rhythm in accompaniment Written in Latino dialect
All of a Sudden	Popular	1945	Mills Music, Inc.		Rusk Smith	Eb Major, C4-Eb5	"Dedicated to the United States Coast Guards and their Sweethearts"
My No-Good Man	Popular	1945	Mills Music Inc.		Eleanor Baird Campbell	Eb Major, Eb4-Eb5	Blues, commercial in scope
Greatest Miracle of All	Song of the South	1918	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Songs of the South	Marie Wardall	G Major (H), D4-G5 D Major (L), A4-D5	Beautiful color illustration on cover Choral arr by Carl Deis for mens chorus, 1925 Dedicated "To Sonny"
Ol' Marse Adam	Song of the South	1918	M. Witmark & Sons		Ruth McEvery Stuart	F Major, A4-D5	Lyrics politically incorrect by today's standards By David W. Guion and Sally Hill Scaife Illustrations and theme of song degrade black males Part of the Black and White series

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Little Pickaninny Kid	Song of the South	1919	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Songs of the South	Marie Wardall	D $\flat$ Major (H), D $\flat$ 4 (opt B $\flat$ 4) – F5 B $\flat$ Major (L), B $\flat$ 4 (opt G3) –D5	Grouped with “Greatest Miracle of All”
Shout Yo’ Glory	Song of the South	1919	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Darkey Songs	Arr. Guion	D Minor, C4-D5	Other of the two is “De Ol’ Ark is a Moverin” Inside Front Cover: DWG notes that the song has never been written down before and was taught to his mother by her “Mammy Sally,” Kurt Schindler notes that the song is probably a black American variation on a Breton folksong about Saint Anne, patron saint of sailors
Run, Mary, Run	Song of the South	1921	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	E $\flat$ Major, E $\flat$ 4-E $\flat$ 5	Uses black dialect, but no performance notes Uses common spiritual reference to “mind how you walk on the cross, your foot might slip on your soul get lost” Advises Mary to get to heaven by running, analogous to freedom

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How dy do Mis' Springtime	Song of the South	1924	M. Witmark & Sons		Ben Gordon	G Major (H), D4-G5 F Major (M), C4-F5 D Major (L), A4-D5	Scored by Georg J. Trinkaus Performance notes in dialect Includes whistling or humming Radio & Concert Series version has includes a list of musical recitations and a simplified accompaniment
L'il' Black Rose	Song of the South	1924	Harold Flammer, Inc.	Two Songs with Piano Accompaniment	Marie Wardall	E $\flat$ Major (H), E $\flat$ 4-E $\flat$ 5 D $\flat$ Major (L), D $\flat$ 4-D $\flat$ 5	Other song in set is "O My Lawd, What Shall I Do?" Uses the word <i>pickaninny</i>
O My Lawd, What Shall I Do?	Song of the South	1924	Harold Flammer, Inc.	Two Songs with Piano Accompaniment	Guion	D Major, A4-D5	Other song of the two is "Li'l' Black Rose" Technically challenging – several register changes and some octave leaps
Praise God, I'm Satisfied	Song of the South	1926	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Arr. Guion	A $\flat$ Major, E $\flat$ 4-E $\flat$ 5	Bottom of p. 1, "After one of the oldest of the unwritten Negro hymns"
In Galam	Song of the South	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Five Imaginary Early Louisiana Songs of Slavery	Marie Lussi	E minor, D4-E5	Black dialect with occasional French words Back cover shows 4 excerpts of "Splendid Songs of David W. Guion"

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De Massus and de Missus	Song of the South	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Five Imaginary Early Louisiana Songs of Slavery	Marie Lussi	E minor, B3-E5	Not in Round Top collection Apocryphal event described, justice will be served In Black dialect
Mam'selle Marie	Song of the South	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Five Imaginary Early Louisiana Songs of Slavery	Marie Lussi	E Minor, D4-E5	Black dialect with occasional French words Prayer to the Virgin Mary Octavos arr by Carl Deis for SATB and for SSA, 1929
To the Sun	Song of the South	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Five Imaginary Early Louisiana Songs of Slavery	Marie Lussi	E minor, E4-E5	Black dialect with no French Accompaniment reminiscent of Henri Duparc's "L'invitation au voyage"
Voodoo	Song of the South	1929	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Five Imaginary Early Louisiana Songs of Slavery	Marie Lussi	D minor, A4-D5	Rhythms depict flying, give a nervous intensity to the song Black dialect with no French

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Please Shake Dem 'Simmons Down	Song of the South	1930	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	A $\flat$ Major, C4-F5	<p>"To Daisy Polk" [an opera singer from Dallas] Mentions that words come from "Southern plantation negroes" with original tune by Guion First syllable of raccoon is accented to fit in with black dialect Full copy not known to exist, all known copies are missing one or more pages</p>
Mistah Jay-Bird	Song of the South	1934	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	D $\flat$ 4Major, B $\flat$ 4-F5	<p>Under title: Slow Drag Composer's notes say "darkies hate the Jay-bird" and that singer should be conscious of syncopation which matches "Negro dialect"</p>
Chloe (Negro Wail)	Song of the South	1936	G. Schirmer		Guion	E Minor, D4-E5	<p>Contains composer's performance notes</p>
De Lawd's Baptizin' (Brudda Sin-Killer's Sermon)	Song of the South	1938	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Clement Wood	D Major, A4-F5	<p>Choral arr for SATB and baritone solo, this choral arr. not in Round Top Program notes about Brudda Sin-killer and his sermons, Guion wrote spoken interlude and exclamations although Wood wrote song lyrics, long song for Guion</p>

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
Lef' Away (Negro Wail)	Song of the South	1939	G. Schirmer, Inc.		Guion	E minor, E4-E5	Marked for medium or low voice, but no alternate pitches
Short'nin' Bread	Song of the South	1941	Robbins Music Corp		Arr. Guion	D Major, D4-F#5	"Adaptation by David W. Guion" Some spoken exclamations like "Yas suh" and "Mmm"
Praise God, I'm Satisfied	Song of the South	1974	Guion Music Company		Arr. Guion	G Major	Choral arr. Walter Montrose in hymn form with piano – sometimes solo, sometimes unison choir, in parts or choir with congregation No intro in solo version, but there is one in choral Guion Choral Music above title
De Ol' Ark's a-Moverin'	Spiritual	1918	G. Schirmer, Inc.	Two Darkey Songs	Arr. Guion	D $\flat$ Major (L), B $\flat$ 4-D $\flat$ 5 F Major (H), D4-F5	"Collected and arranged by" Guion
Hark from de Tombs	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Sally Hill Scaife	C Major, G3-E4 (Brudder), G4-A5 (Mammy)	Arr. by Guion Duet and string parts exist Sets up the scene – a "Camp Meetin", has spoken interlude Two characters, "Brudder" and "Mammy" "To Rev. Sinkiller, Uncle Andrew and Mammy Neppy"

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
Holy Bible	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	G Major, B4-D5	Collected and arr. by Guion "To Neppy, my old black Mammy"
I Sees Lawd Jesus A Comin'	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	E minor, D4-E5	Collected and arr. by Guion "To Neppy, my old black Mammy" String quartet arr. by Guion
John de Bap-a-tist	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	C Major, B4-A5	"To Kate Guion" Some of the same words as Hard Trials, a spiritual set by H.T. Burleigh Refers to John the Baptist as "nothing but a Jew"
Jubilee	Spiritual	1918	Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	B $\flat$ Major, B $\flat$ 4-D5	"Written for and Dedicated to Oscar Seagle" Refers to Milky Way, perhaps he changed original lyrics
Little David	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	G Major, D4-G5	"To Mrs. Louis Untermayer"
My Little Soul's Gwine A-Shine	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	G Major, E4-D5	"Written for and dedicated to Oscar Seagle"
Nobody Knows De Trouble I Sees	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	D Minor, D4-F5	"To Gordon Kay"
Poor Sinner	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	A Major, E4-E5	"Written For and Dedicated to Oscar Seagle" Extensive phrase markings

Title	Category	Pub. year	Publisher	Collection	Lyricist	Key(s), Range	Notes
Satan's A Liar An' A Conjur Too	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	G Major, D4-D5	"To Irene McNeal Swasey" Handwritten notes from Guion giving shout-outs after each phrase
Sinner, Don' Let Dis Harves' Pass	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	E Minor, D4-E5	Collected and arr. by DWG At repeated words, composer's note "like an echo"
Some O' These Days	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	F Major, C4-F5	"To Sally Hill Scaife"
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	E $\flat$ Major, B $\flat$ 4-C5	"To Leila M. Johnston" Extensive phrase markings, also handwritten alternate phrase markings in the copy from Round Top
You Jes' Will Git Ready, You Gwine a Die	Spiritual	1918	M. Witmark & Sons	Darkey Spirituals	Arr. Guion	F Major, C4-F5	"To Sally Hill Scaife" Lots of accents

## APPENDIX 2

### RECORDINGS OF GUION’S SONGS

Concise information about commercial recordings containing Guion’s songs is shown in fig. 30. With the exception of *The Songs of David Guion*, the recordings are on compact disc (CD) and are currently on the market. *The Songs of David Guion* is in long-playing record (LP) format and can be found at the main branch of the Dallas Public Library. In some cases, the CDs are remastered versions of LPs. In those cases, both the year the CD was released and the year of the original recording are marked.

Fig. 30 Commercial Recordings of Guion’s Songs

<p>“Home on the Range” in <i>John Charles Thomas: An American Classic</i>          John Charles Thomas, baritone; Frank Tours, conductor          Nimbus Records <i>Prima Voce</i> series, NI 7838, originally recorded 1931, reissued on CD 1992</p>
<p>“Home on the Range” in <i>Opera Arias &amp; Concert Songs</i>          Leonard Warren, baritone; Frank Black, conductor; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra          Video Artists International, LWC, originally recorded 1950, reissued on CD 2000</p>
<p>“Lonesome Song of the Plains” in <i>The Art of Theodor Uppman: Radio Broadcasts 1954-1957</i>          Theodor Uppman, baritone; Donald Voorhees, conductor; Bell Telephone Hour Orchestra          Video Artists International, VAI 1181, originally recorded 1955, reissued on CD 2000</p>
<p>“At the Cry of the First Bird,” “My Lord and My God,” “I Talked to God Last Night,”          “The Cross-Bearer,” “De Massus and de Missus,” “Hymn to the Sun,” “My Song,”          “Wild Geese,” “Brazos Boat Song,” “All Day on the Prairie,” “Home on the Range,”          in <i>The Songs of David Guion</i>          Don Pratt, baritone; David Guion, piano          Crescendo Music Publications, Inc., CMP 7333, 1970</p>
<p>“Home on the Range” in <i>The Songs of Stephen Foster</i>          John Halloran Singers; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra          Legacy, X-A03-3700, 1994</p>

<p>“All Day on the Prairie,” “Ride, Cowboy Ride” in <i>Let My Song Fill Your Heart</i>  Arthur Woodley, baritone; Joseph Smith, piano  Premier Recordings, PRCD 1002, 1995</p>
<p>“Home on the Range” in <i>Greatest Hits: The Chorus</i>  Vocal Majority; Robert de Cornier, conductor  Sony, ISBN/UPC: 074646268421, 1996</p>
<p>“All Day on the Prairie,” “The Bold Vaquero,” “Home on the Range,” “The Cowboy’s Dream,” “Lonesome Song of the Plains,” “Ride Cowboy Ride,” “Ol’ Paint,” in <i>Songs of the Wild West</i>  Steven Kimbrough, baritone; Dalton Baldwin, piano; John Darnall, guitar  VMS Musical Treasures, VMS CD 126, 2004</p>

Partial information is available for the following recordings.<sup>55</sup>

- “Prayer” in *The Love of God*, Del Delker, contralto, Chapel Records LP 5043
- “I Talked to God Last Night,” Blend Wright Trio, Chapel Records S 5159
- “Unveil Your Eyes,” “Run, Mary, Run,” “Prayer,” and “Mam’selle Marie,” Mary Margaret Edmonson, voice; Marjorie Poole, piano, Sellers Co.
- “I Talked to God Last Night,” Barbara Martin, soprano; Helen Stolz, piano, Magnetic
- “All Day on the Prairie,” James Melton, tenor; David Broekman and Orchestra, RCA Victor Red Seal 10-1237-B/M-1060
- “Home on the Range” in *This Land is Your Land*, Mormon Tabernacle Choir; Eugene Ormandy, conductor, Columbia MS 6747
- “I Talked to God Last Night” in *Forward to Christ*, Barbara Morton, mezzo-soprano, Chapel Records LP 1527
- “Mary Alone” in *Recital of American Songs*, Nancy Tatum, voice; Geoffrey Parson, piano, London Stereo OS 2605 3

Guion’s cowboy songs have been recorded more often than any of his other types of songs. The most famous of his cowboy songs, “Home on the Range,” is found in six of the eight recordings. “Home on the Range” is the only song by Guion on four of these recordings, which are *John Charles Thomas: An American Classic; Opera Arias & Concert Songs; Greatest Hits: the Chorus; and The Songs of Stephen Foster*. Of these, the John Charles Thomas recording is probably the most famous. Each of the recordings

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<sup>55</sup> Buchanan, “The Piano Music of David W. Guion,” 67-69.

features a baritone soloist, with the exception of *Greatest Hits: the Chorus* and *The Songs of Stephen Foster*, which contain choral arrangements of “Home on the Range.”

Other songs besides “Home on the Range” appear more than once. The second most popular recorded song is “All Day on the Prairie,” which appears three times. “Ride, Cowboy Ride” is featured twice. “Ride, Cowboy Ride” is also known as the eleventh movement of Guion’s *Texas Suite*. The fifth movement from *Texas Suite* is a song called “Lonesome Song of the Plains.” It is recorded by two baritones, Theodore Uppman and Steven Kimbrough.

The moods of the two recordings of “Lonesome Song of the Plains” are radically different, affected both by contrasting interpretation of the lyrics and by instrumentation. The words of the song imply that the manifestations of the wind are metaphors for the emotions the speaker feels as he struggles with the absence of a loved one. The melody of this song supports this implication as it suggests the various possible types of wind movement, from a soft breeze sighing through grass to a wailing gale. Theodor Uppman sings the song with orchestra, and the swelling and wailing of the wind is emphasized as the speaker pours out his desperate longing. In the Kimbrough recording, the only accompaniment is provided by an acoustic guitar. The presence of the plaintive guitar, along with Kimbrough’s performance that emphasizes sighing over wailing, effectively heightens the speaker’s lonesomeness.

Kimbrough’s *Songs of the Wild West* is one of two recordings on the list that contain several of Guion’s songs. Other than “Lonesome Song of the Plains” with guitar, Kimbrough performs the remaining six Guion selections with Dalton Baldwin as pianist.

Besides Guion's songs, the recording features other excellent cowboy songs by American composers such as Oscar Fox and Charles Ives.

*The Songs of David Guion* is the only recording that includes songs outside the cowboy category. It was recorded late in the composer's life with Guion at the piano performing with baritone Dan Pratt. The album begins with four religious art songs. There are no spirituals on the record, but included are two original songs based on African-American music from Guion's *Five Imaginary Early Songs of Louisiana Slavery*, "De Massus and de Missus" and "Hymn to the Sun." Two more original songs are included on Side Two, "My Song" and "Wild Geese." Three cowboy songs, "Brazos Boat Song," "All Day on the Prairie," and "Home on the Range," form the last set on the recording.

Since Guion was the pianist and presumably advised the singer on performance issues, this recording is helpful in determining how the composer wanted his songs to be communicated. The album stands as aural proof that Guion meant for his songs to be performed in a straightforward manner, with few opportunities for affectation in art songs, and none in the folk transcriptions. For instance, "My Son" contains continuous rubato, with dramatic text over a prominent piano line. Even though the song reflects highly emotional content, the singer's vibrato is always constant and the tone evenly produced, with the exception of one small scoop at the climax with the words "singing lute." No trace of sentimentality can be discerned in "Home on the Range." The sincere, simple delivery, combined with the ring of a classically trained voice, yields an effective product that any melodramatic flourishes might ruin. In all of the songs on the album, it

is clear that Guion intended for the accompaniment to be delivered in the same simple manner.

Other recordings exist as well. These include non-commercial and commercial recordings that may no longer be readily available. Private recordings of Guion's songs include a performance of three pieces, "Brazos Boat Song," "My Cowboy Love Song," and "Home on the Range," that formed part of a concert given on June 26, 2005 at the International-Festival Institute by pianist James Dick and baritone Jorge Rabuffetti. There is a recording of a lecture recital by this document's author with pianist Beau Mansfield given on October 30, 2006 at the University of Oklahoma. Songs performed on that recital were "Embers," "Nobody Knows de Trouble I Sees," "Some O' These Days," "Love is Lord of All," "At the Cry of the First Bird," "Lonesome Song of the Plains," "Home on the Range," "Mother," "Prairie Night Song," "At Close of Day," "Song of the Wind," "The Cross-Bearer," and "The Lord is My Shepherd."