

MORAVIAN MUSIC FOUNDATION

Finding aid for

Johannes Herbst Collection

Date range: 1661-1800

Bulk dates: 1752-1793

Finding Aid created by Nola Reed Knouse, June 4, 2018

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Creator: Johannes Herbst, copyist

Extent: 31 boxes, 11 linear feet

Abstract: The Johannes Herbst Collection contains over 1,000 anthems and 46 larger works, primarily in full scores, copied by Moravian pastor, teacher, and composer Johannes Herbst (1735-1812). These were his private collection, amassed over a fifty-year time span, and are an unequalled resource for the study of Moravian music.

Call number: H – Archie Davis Center Vault

Language: The material is primarily in German, with some in English.

Access and Use:

Acquisition Information: These materials are in the custody of the Moravian Music Foundation from the Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, NC.

Access Restrictions: The record group is open to research.

Copyright: Copyright is with the Moravian Music Foundation

Cite as: [item], Johannes Herbst Collection [number], Moravian Music Foundation.

History: Johannes Herbst (1735-1812) was born at Kempten, Swabia, and entered the Moravian school for boys in Herrnhut, Germany, in 1743. He learned watchmaking and served the congregation as well with his musical talent, and joined the Moravian Church in 1748. Over the next 38 years he served Moravian congregations in Neusalz, Gnadenfrei, Gnadenberg, Herrnhut, Kleinwelka, Neudietendorf, and Herrnhut (Germany), and Bedford (England). He was called to service in America in 1786, serving first in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. During those years he often traveled to neighboring Lititz to assist with special musical programs, and composed music for the dedication of the new sanctuary at Lititz in 1787. He was called to Lititz as assistant pastor in 1791, and, with his wife, had pastoral responsibility for the married people of the community. He served as headmaster of the Boarding School for Girls in Lititz from 1794 to 1802, and from 1802 to 1811 was senior pastor at Lititz. In 1811 he was called to Salem, North Carolina, and consecrated a bishop before making the 500-mile trip south. He arrived in Salem on May 29, 1811, and served there only seven months before dying on January 15, 1812.

Early in his sojourns, he had opportunity to select and make his own copies of musical compositions. He seems to have begun copying with the earliest anthems composed for the Moravian Church by Christian Gregor and Johann Christian Geisler, dating from the year 1752, and continuing to copy for the remainder of his life. Thus the Johannes Herbst Collection grew over more than fifty years, with the first half of the collection arranged in chronological order (through number 214, written for Christmas of 1779). After his call to America, his ready access to these sources was cut off, and he had to copy from whatever music he could borrow, and was thus unable to maintain the systematic organization of the collection. Correspondence (1791-1793) survives between Herbst and Jacob Van Vleck, a fellow minister and musician serving in Bethlehem, in which specific pieces (some anthems and some larger works) are identified as having been sent to Herbst for copying.

The Johannes Herbst Collection was part of Herbst's personal library and remained in his possession until his death, when it was deposited in the archives of the Moravian community of Salem (now Winston-Salem), North Carolina.

Scope and Content: The condition of the copies indicates that this was a personal collection, never intended or used for performance. The collection is in three parts; part A, Congregation Music, was organized and numbered by Herbst himself, through number 464. Additional scores in his hand which were discovered by catalogers in the 1960s were assigned numbers in brackets and added at the end of the original collection, beginning with [465]. Approximately 1,000 anthems are contained in this part of the collection, representing some 50 composers, over half of them Moravian. The composers most widely represented are Johann Ludwig Freydt (1748-1807), Johann Christian Geisler (1729-1815), Christian Gregor (1723-1801), and Johannes Herbst (1735-1812).

A companion volume to the Congregation Music was filed in the Salem Archives along with Herbst's scores after his death. A bound volume measuring 18 by 24 centimeters, the book contains the complete texts for all the Congregation Music, arranged in the same numerical order as the manuscripts. Throughout the first half of this volume, and sporadically in the

second half, the catalog number is followed by an inscription giving the date (and frequently place and occasion) for which a composition was prepared. At the end of the volume is an alphabetical list of brief text incipits followed by page and catalog number references. There is no index of the composers. Very few manuscripts are missing from the Congregation Music, and these may yet be identified.

Part B of the collection consists of 46 extended works by 24 composers, largely non-Moravian, including C. P. E. Bach, K. H. Graun, G. F. Handel, J. A. Hasse, F. J. Haydn, J. H. Rolle, J. A. P. Schulz, and E. W. Wolf. These were not numbered, and prior to the cataloging work of the 1960s, had been scattered among other collections in the archives. These were arranged by the cataloger in alphabetical order by composer and supplied with Roman numerals to avoid confusion with the numbering system of the Congregation Music. Most of these, like Part A, are in full scores, but a dozen also include sets of parts.

Part C consists of miscellaneous scores, including a book of keyboard pieces, most of which have been identified; *Lieder zum Singen am Clavier*, 152 sacred songs by Moravian and non-Moravian composers; a book of chorales with melody and figured bass; and a book of seven sacred songs for soprano and keyboard.

Title:

- Johannes Herbst Collection

Corporate Names:

- Salem Congregation (Winston-Salem, NC)
- Moravian Music Foundation

Subjects:

- Anniversaries
- Cantatas, Sacred
- Chorales
- Choruses, Sacred (Mixed voices) with orchestra (or chamber orchestra)
- Christmas music
- Duets
- Easter music

- Epiphany music
- Good Friday music
- Holy Saturday music
- Holy Week music
- Opera--Excerpts
- Oratorios
- Passion music
- Pentecost Festival music
- Psalms (Music)
- Responses (Music)
- Sacred dramatic music
- Sacred songs (High voice) with chamber orchestra (or orchestra)
- Sacred songs (Low voice) with chamber orchestra
- Stabat Mater dolorosa (Music)
- Trios (of various kinds)
- Watch night--Songs and music
- Moravian daily text: September 19, 1750 (for example)
- Children's Festival (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries
- Older Girls Covenant Day (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries, etc.
- Single Brothers Covenant Day (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries, etc
- Single Sisters Covenant Day (Moravian Church)--Anniversaries, etc.

Related Materials:

Researchers interested in this archive may also wish to consult the following resources:

The Music of the Moravian Church in America, edited by Nola Reed Knouse. Rochester, New York, The University of Rochester Press, © 2008.

Catalog of the Johannes Herbst Collection, edited by Marilyn Gombosi. Chapel Hill, North Carolina, The University of North Carolina Press, ©1970.

Johannes Herbst, Hymns to be Sung at the Pianoforte, edited by Timothy Sharp. Ann Arbor, Michigan, Steglein Publishing, © 2012.

Bishop Johannes Herbst (1735-1812), an American-Moravian Musician, Collector, and Composer. Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1969.

Other materials in the Archives and Foundation holdings may relate to the topics in this archive. See the archivist for further research assistance.