

Two late 18th century songbooks in the Christiansfelder Collection

von Suzanne Summerville, Alaska

In the *Musical Quarterly* of July 1973 (1), an article by Joan O. Falconer on the Second Berlin Song School in America in which she discussed Moravian musical traditions and their European antecedents traced through the *Lieder zum Singen am Clavier* was published. The *Lieder zum Singen am Clavier* is a collection of songs, both sacred and secular, made by Bishop Johannes Herbst. It is a primary source of the American-Moravian branch of the Second Berlin Song School and contains 152 songs for voice and keyboard copied either from published works of the late 18th century or newly composed by Herbst and his fellow Moravian Brethren. Printed music during this period was not readily available to those of modest means and so it was often copied by hand. The songbook belonging to one person with compositions coming from several sources was common.

There are two such songbooks dating from the late 18th century extant in the collection of music to be found in Christiansfeld, Jutland, now Denmark. The songbooks are part of the collection of approximately 1700 manuscripts and 500 printed compositions discovered in the cupboards near the organ in the Christiansfelder Moravian Church by Frands Ole Overgaard of Aarhus University in 1970 and catalogued for the Danish RISM project. Christiansfeld is one of the best preserved Moravian communities, and has only recently been the focus of international theological, historical, and musical research. As in Herrnhut and other established Moravian communities or *Brüdergemeinen*, the people of Christiansfeld had their worship services and their private lives enriched by an astonishing assortment of choral and instrumental activities. The breadth of these activities, not only hymn-singing and the traditional use of wind-bands, is attested to by the hundreds of anthems, oratorios, and songbooks, both in manuscript and print, which have recently been rediscovered in the Christiansfelder archives.

The importance of the music archives approximates that of the collections in Herrnhut, Zeist, Bethlehem, and Winston-Salem. It now makes up a major portion of the Danish RISM catalogue. Mr. Overgaard's discovery was made when he and Dr. Anders Pontoppidan Thyssen, also of Aarhus, had been doing extensive research in Christiansfeld for an important study of Danish church history, particularly that of southern Jutland (2). Mr. Overgaard notified Prof. Søren Sørensen of the Institute of Musicology, University of Aarhus, of his find, and Prof. Sørensen and Nanna Schiødt of the Royal Library in Copenhagen went to Christiansfeld to investigate the possibility of incorporating the collection into the large RISM project in Denmark (3). Sybille Reventlow, at that time a student helper in the Royal Library Music Department, was chosen to catalogue the 1700 manuscripts and printed compositions. The collection was sent to Copenhagen in June 1971 and the sorting began. Sybille Reventlow's

unpublished dissertation, concerned mainly with the sacred music of the collection from 1770 through 1880, appeared in 1973 (4).

Key to the musical archives in Christiansfeld is the catalogue DKCh R679 which is kept together with the compositions in the archives of the Pastor's House, Lindegade 26, directly across the street from the church. This catalogue, organized in six parts, was also found in the cabinets near the organ. It contains information representing the years 1790-1810, 1820-1840, and 1870-1894. It was a working register for a musically active *Gemeine*, showing the musical tastes of the Christiansfeld organists and congregations over the years. Almost everything mentioned in the catalogue can still be found today in the archives (5).

The history of the Moravian Church in Denmark can be traced to the late 1720s. Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf had excellent relations with the Danish court at that time. Sophie Magdalena, the daughter of his cousin, the Markgräfin Sophie Christine von Brandenburg-Culmbach, was married to the crown prince. Zinzendorf was present at the coronation of King Christian VI and his queen at the palace chapel of Frederiksborg in 1731. This stay in Copenhagen led directly to his interest in a mission to the slaves on St. Thomas in the West Indies. Only two months after the departure of David Nitschmann and Leonard Dober for the West Indies, another small group of missionaries left Herrnhut for Danish Greenland. The royal court preacher and a group of Danish pietists had helped to make this possible. The freedom which was allowed the Moravian movement in Denmark in the early 1730s was to be short lived. Both Zinzendorf and August Gottlieb Spangenberg were soon ordered out of the country. The movement, however, had won enough dedicated followers, both in Copenhagen and Jutland, to remain alive and even to flourish under the difficult conditions of the next several years (6).

In 1766 Christian VII came to the throne. His personal physician and minister of state, Johann Friedrich Struensee (his father had been the general superintendent of the Lutheran Church in Schleswig-Holstein), persuaded the mentally ill king to sign the Royal Concession of 1772 which allowed the Unitäts-Direktion in Herrnhut to purchase the unoccupied royal estate Tyrstruphof (or Tyrstrupgaard). Soon after, Johannes Prätorius and Jonathan de Brient were called upon to found the new colony. Together with the business manager and chief builder Johann Gottfried Arndt they worked closely and well. The settlement's first meeting hall was dedicated on 13 November 1773. The room was soon too small and a large church, constructed out of small yellow sandstone bricks, was erected in 1776. This Germanspeaking settlement in the south of Jutland between Haderslev and Kolding flourished in both its religious and commercial life. By the year 1795 there were 580 members and pupils in the settlement schools (650 if members of the Diaspora are included) (7).

There are two songbooks dating from the early 1790s in the collection which give us a close look at the compositions known and practiced at that time. They both belonged to women and are particularly interesting because of the inclusion of a great many secular compositions. The owners of these songbooks were Gertraudt Christina Müller and Dorothea Catharina Nielsen.

The songbook of Christina Müller is dated 1791. Its 80 pages plus title page are encased in cardboard and leather in beige and light brown. The first section includes secular songs from the Second Berlin School. Compositions 46 and after are religious, often short responses, songs of praise, and portions of larger works. These solos and small ensembles which always include the soprano line lead one to believe that Sister

Müller was a soprano. The final portion of the songbook is given over with only two exceptions to practice pieces for keyboard. The fingering is very carefully worked out. Besides the songbook, Sister Müller was the owner of several printed works which included six sonatas for piano and violin by Jan Křitel Vanhal (DKCh R1018) and a copy of the Rolle oratorio *Abraham auf Moria*. This copy was inscribed "Dieses Buch gehört der Schwester Christina Müller nach meinem Tode - A.C. Alleleft 1797."

Christina Müller was a member of the Unmarried Sisters' Choir (8) in Christiansfeld when she died on the 5th of January 1846. She did not write her own *Lebenslauf*. The writer of her biography, which can be read in the archives of the church, was very sorry that she had not written about her "particular gifts" and her long "Pilgrim Trip" through life. She was born on the 6th of May 1771 in Hjerting, close to the port of Esbjerg on the western coast of Jutland. Her father, Michael Müller, was director of customs. Her mother, also named Gertraudt Christina (Bron), and father were in contact with the newly formed Moravian community in Christiansfeld and opened their home to the brothers and sisters who travelled from Esbjerg to Holland by ship. The four Müller children were sent to school in Christiansfeld. Christina and her younger sister moved into the *Mädchenanstalt* in January 1782. In August 1785 she joined the *Gemeine* and had her first communion on the 26th of November that same year. In 1804 she went to Niesky and stayed for over a year. The writer of her biography said that it was there she recognized that she had a "particular talent" for music and so she was allowed to study. It was said that she gained much pleasure from her music and that she was happy to make music for the pleasure of others. She became ill on the 3rd of January 1846 and died two days later at the age of 74 years and 8 months.

If anything, the owner of the second songbook, Dorothea Catherina Nielsen, was the more remarkable of the two women. She was born on the 29th of September 1762, in Brügge, a village south of Kiel about half way to Neumünster. She lost her father when she was ten and stayed on with her mother until her confirmation. From that date she was forced to "earn her bread under *Fremden Leuten*". When she was twenty-five visited Christiansfeld for the first time. It is written that she was so overcome by the surroundings that she could do little but cry. Although she had to return home, she felt that she belonged to the *Brüdergemeine* from that day forward (May 4, 1787). Nielsen was very poor and saw little way out of her restricted life at that time. However, "God showed her the way", and she was able to move to Christiansfeld the next June. On the 14th of September 1788, she was taken into the *Gemeine* and celebrated her first communion in October 1790. At this point in her *Lebenslauf* (9) another person continued her biography in the same script. Nielsen spent most of the rest of her life taking care of the Stannager sisters. She nursed the first sister who lived to be 93 and then took over the responsibility of the second sister.

In 1796 she herself became ill and was forced to move into the Unmarried Sisters' House in April. She grew weaker, but remained lucid to the end. She died on the 20th of December 1796, when she was only 34 years old.

The songbook of Catherina Nielsen (DKCh R853) contains forty-five separate compositions, mostly of a sacred nature. No fewer than 13 entries match those in the song book of Gertraudt Christina Müller. In both volumes the first "aria" is an anonymous "Wenn ich einsame Tränen weine".

Two collections of Johann Friedrich Reichardt make up the majority of

the identifiable musical selections in the two songbooks. They are his *Oden und Lieder von Klopstock, Stollberg, Claudius und Hölty mit Melodien beym Klavier zu Singen* published in Berlin bei Joachim Pauli in 1779 and his volumes of *Lieder für Kinder aus Campe's Kinderbibliothek* published first in 1781 in Hamburg by Herold. As there was a great amount of travel between Hamburg-Altona and Christiansfeld, it is only logical to expect the Christiansfelders to have had access to music published in the nearest German cities. Hamburg and Altona were actually separate cities in the 18th century. It is known that Johann Friedrich Reichardt's mother was a follower of Zinzendorf and sang some of the Brethern's songs to him when he was a child (10). Together with those of J. A. P. Schulz, Reichardt's many *Lieder* had a central place in the *Hausmusik* of the Goethe *Zeit* throughout the German speaking world.

Both songbooks contain Reichardt's "Preis der Jugend", "Erntelied", "Das Nordlicht", "Lied eines Schwindsüchtigen", and "Der Schmetterling". Müller copied fifteen more including two Gleim poems, "Der Bauer" and "Der glückliche Bauer", three Fritzen songs, "Am Weihnachtsabend", "An den Tod", and "Fritzen an ein Paar Tauben", plus "Juncker Hanns", "Der Mann im Lehnstuhl", "Der Aufschub", "Des Morgens", "Am Geburtstage", "Winterlied", "Morgenlied", "Vom Wert des Lebens", "Lied eines Fröhlichen", and "Wer wollte Gottes Hand verkennen".

Sacred compositions to be found in Catherina Nielsen's songbook include five by Johann Ludwig Freydt (1748-1807), an important Moravian composer and music teacher at the famous *Pädagogium* in both Niesky and Barby (11). They are versions for soprano and keyboard of "Ich seh, ich seh mit Haufen", "Lieblichkeiten, die nicht aus", "Meine Leiche Jesu", "O möcht sich mit Lebendgen Farben", and "Wiederholt's mit süssen Tönen". Originally these pieces were for one or two voices with strings, keyboard, and other obligato instruments.

Several other sacred compositions can also be traced through the Herbst Collection (12). They include a simplified and transposed version of "Ich stehe mit bewegten Herzen" by Gottfried Johann Gebhard (born 1755), "Wie so selig" from *Schlaf in Frieden* by Ernst Wilhelm Wolf (1735-1792), "Eilt wie verlobte" in a soprano version of the SSAAB chorus "Ja Dank- und Loblieder" adapted from *I Pellegrini: Tu portas nobis* by Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783), "Ihr weich geschaffner Seele," an aria from the very popular *Der Tod Jesu* by Graun, and "Sanftes Lied" from Joh. Hein. Rolle's *Jesu ward ein Mensch und Starb für Dich*.

However, Sister Nielsen had a lighter side to her nature, and her songbook is brought to a close with a charming mezzo allegro, "Eine Tyrolerin auf dem Jahrmarkt".

Footnotes

- 1) Falconer, Joan O.: The Second Berlin Song School in America, *Musical Quarterly*, (New York: G. Schirmer, Juli 1973) pp. 411-440
- 2) Thyssen, Anders Pontoppidan: Vaekkelsernes Frembrud i Danmark i første Halvdel af det 19. Aarhundrede, VII Bind, Vaekkelse, Kirkefornyelse og Nationalitetskamp in Sonderjylland, Number 46, Special-Trykkeriet Viborg, 1977
- 3) Schiødt, Nanna: MUSIKAT. A Method of Catalogueing Music

Manuscripts by Computer, as applied in the Danish RISM Manuscript Project, *Fontes Artis Musicae* (Kassel: Bärenreiter 1976/IV), pp. 158-166

and

Kirstein, Finn.: *MUSIKAT. A Technical Description of the Danish RISM Catalogueing Project*, *Fontes Artis Musicae* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1977/II)

- 4) Reventlow, Sybille: *The Music Repertory from 1770-1880 at Christiansfeld*, unpublished dissertation, University of Aarhus, 1973 (in Danish)
- 5) Summerville, Suzanne: *Music in Christiansfeld, Denmark - Yesterday and Today*, *Moravian Music Foundation Bulletin* (Winston-Salem: The Moravian Music Foundation, Fall-Winter 1977), pp. 10-12
- 6) Knudsen, Elmo: *Die Brüdergemeine in Dänemark*, *Unitas Fratrum* (Utrecht: Rijksarchief, 1975), pp. 207-224
- 7) Geller, Fritz: *Gotteshaus und Gottesdienst in der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine* (Verlag von Gustav Winter in Herrnhut, 1929), pp. 59-62
- 8) Choirs were groups of Moravian worshipers, divided by age, sex, and marital status.
- 9) Also in the Archives of the Church in Christiansfeld
- 10) Zentner, Wilhelm: *Johann Friedrich Reichardt: Eine Musikerjugend im 18. Jahrhundert*, printed in *Deutscher Musik Band 20* (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse Verlag 1940), pp. 32-33
- 11) Summerville, Suzanne: *Johann Ludwig Freydt (1748-1807): A Moravian Composer*, unpublished dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, 1977 (in English and German)
- 12) Gombosi, Marilyn (ed.): *Catalog of the Johannes Herbst Collection* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 1970)

Zusammenfassung

Zwei Liederbücher vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts im Christiansfelder Notenbestand

Bereits 1973 hatte Joan O. Falconer einen Aufsatz über die zweite Berliner Liederschule in Amerika unter anderen anhand der "Lieder zum Singen am Klavier" des Brüderbischofs Johannes Herbst veröffentlicht. S. Summerville, Professorin für Musik an der Universität in Fairbanks, Alaska, beschreibt hier zwei verwandte Liederbücher, die sich in Christiansfeld gefunden haben und die ebenfalls Liedgut der zweiten Berliner Liederschule enthalten. Das erste stammt von Gertraudt Christina Müller, geb. 1771 in Hjerting bei Esbjerg, gestorben 1846 in Christiansfeld, das zweite von Dorothea Catherina Nielsen, geb. 1762 in Brügge bei Kiel, gestorben 1796 in Christiansfeld. Beide Liederbücher enthalten zahlreiche Kompositionen des im 18. Jahrhundert beliebten und verbreiteten Musikers Johann Friedrich Reichardt, dessen Mutter eine Anhängerin Zinzendorfs war. Die geistlichen Lieder stammen von Johann Ludwig Freydt, Johann Heinrich Rolle, Johann Adolf Hasse u.a. Diese Lieder dienten offensichtlich nicht nur der privaten Übung, sondern wurden bei feierlichen Anlässen in der Familie, in den Chorchäusern und der ganzen Gemeinde aufgeführt.