



Slave deck of the barque "Wildfire," captured by the U.S. steamer "Mohawk," is from a woodcut that appeared in an American newspaper circa 1860. A steady flow of forced immigrants helped reinforce and keep alive an African tradition in American music. (The Bettman Archive)

Newport Gardner (1746 - c. 1826) is one notable example. At the age of fourteen, he was sold to Calib Gardner in Newport, Rhode Island. Early evidencing a propensity for music, he was allowed by Mrs. Gardner to study with a singing master after teaching himself to read. His superior intelligence enabled him to quickly learn the rudiments of reading and writing music. He became a teacher of a fair-sized singing school in the City, and was able to purchase his freedom in 1791. He then opened his own music school and composed many tunes. One of his anthems was performed in Boston in 1825.

During this century, one of the more unique forms of entertainment that the slaves performed for themselves (at first) was called the Jubilee. Generally, it was held on Sunday on the plantations, and it helped to relieve the tensions and tedious ignominy of the work week. However, the high spirits, infectious humor and "primitive" steps afforded the master and his guests a different form of amusement. At this time, the slaves poked fun at their master's ways, attitudes and culture in an "innocent" manner that was reminiscent of the bards in that far-off home in Africa. Apparently the meanings were obscure enough for the slaveholders not to recognize themselves. Here, improvisations and embellishments on standard themes were common. In addition, original songs were extemporaneously composed to fit an immediate situation. "Call and response," a form which became common to gospel and spiritual music, with the soloist giving evidence to his or her importance, indicated the great complexity of African music, and the seemingly unlimited skills the artists possessed.

Typically, the whites would adapt this form into a caricature of the Jubilee, and take it on stage in the nineteenth century. Thus, the minstrel, with its cork-blackened faces, exaggerated dialects and insulting buffonery, was born.

--ANTEBELLUM-SOUTH PERIOD 1800 - 1865

After America fought for and won its freedom from Britain's tyrannical laws, it systematically set about to prostitute its Declaration of Independence, by proclaiming in Article 1, Section 2 (3) of the Constitution that "...three fifths of all other persons..." shall be excluded from enjoying the emancipation so recently won. This statement indicates that, although slaves were considered to be a bit above an animal, they were still less than human. To further address and reinforce slavery as an institution, Article 4, Section 2 (3) states: *No person held to service or labor in one state, under the law thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.*

Thus, even a free man was not safe; it was his word against a white man's that he was not to be returned to bondage. In the decade from 1790, when the first U.S.

census was taken, to 1860, the last census before the Civil War, the Black population increased from some 750,000 to over 4½ million. Blacks constituted 19.3% of the total U.S. population in 1790, and 14.1% in 1860. Dramatic increases in white immigration served to lower the proportionate increase in the Black population.

In 1790 about 12% of all Blacks were free, but by 1860 the percentage dropped to about 8%. Roughly half of free Blacks were found in the North. Those who were in the south most often were concentrated in the urban centers of New Orleans, Charleston, Baltimore, Washington, Richmond and Petersburg.

Slaveholders were a small percentage of the white population; fewer than 25%. Of this number most had less than twenty slaves.

Although a Congressional Act abolished the slave trade, on January 1, 1808 the invention, fifteen years earlier, of the cotton gin revitalized the need for slaves in a way that the founding fathers never visualized. Cotton was king, and the agrarian south became more determined to circumvent a useless law.

There was little to ameliorate the spirits of the slaves during these dolorous days. Each tedious day was replaced by another; it was inevitable that music would continue to be an important focus in their lives. Often, the insatiable need for beauty and order in a Sisyphean life could only be produced in song.

No where was this more evident than in the fields. Many of the work songs that the field hands sang or

Bill Nickleberry and Max Pittman practice what we preach...conservation. And save PGE customers about \$110,000 a year.

This year, Bill, Willamette Center building Manager, and Max, the Center's Superintendent, along with the rest of the PGE Watt Watching staff will help save about \$110,000 through conservation measures being practiced at the Willamette Center building complex, PGE's headquarters.

Bill and his co-workers are putting to use many of the conservation techniques we've been advising customers about for more than eight years. The conservation techniques in use include thermopane glass windows, insulation and weather-stripping. Since the Center

was first occupied, the air in the building has been heated mainly by body heat, office machine heat and the heat from overhead lights.

As a result of their efforts and by making more efficient use of construction pre-planning, Bill, Max and fellow employees and tenants have been able to reduce the energy use at the Willamette Center by 12 percent, or almost 3 million kilowatt-hours. At today's rates, that's a savings of almost \$110,000 a year. Savings that are more important now than ever before.

Electricity costs are going up everywhere, it's not just here. Both private and public utilities throughout the country are facing soaring costs. Higher equipment costs, fuel costs and interest rates have everyone on a tight budget. And the rapid increase of new residential and business customers in the region is another strain on existing supply.

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