

Singers in Portland Choirs



Mrs. Walter Reed

FROM the dawn of authentic history—perhaps earlier; from the time the myths of tradition began to be chronicled as facts, music has been the handmaid of religion. No religious service has been complete without harmonious adjuncts of melody. This is as true today as it has ever been. In fact, the importance of music in the forms of Christian worship is growing. It is already so firmly established that, in most churches, the musical directors and choir singers are selected with as much care as are the sextons, and the time is spent by many a clergyman, however eloquent, can continuously draw and hold large congregations without the powerful aid of a well-trained choir of cultured voices.

Portland is particularly fortunate in its choir singers. Few cities of this size exist that can boast of so many singers of real merit. Some of these are well known, and have achieved at least a good measure of local celebrity, while others, with voices equally good, are known only to the few hundreds of people who are delighted with their sweet singing in their own sanctuaries.

Some representative members of various Portland choirs are pictured on this page. Some of their faces are familiar to every lover of music in the city; others are recognized in smaller circles.



Susan Gambell

one of the best known—perhaps the best-known baritone soloist in the city—is Dom J. Zan, director of the choir at St. Mary's Cathedral, which is one of the best choirs in Portland. His first appearance as a soloist was in the Multnomah Amateur Athletic Club's production of "Habeas in the Wood," in April, 1892. He took part in all the Multnomah burlesques and entertainments for several years following. His first church engagement was as baritone in the mixed quartet at Trinity Church. Several years later, Mr. Zan was engaged as director of the St. Lawrence choir, which position he held for four years, when, on account of severe illness, he was compelled to resign. Owing to his efforts, while director of the St. Lawrence choir, the organization reached a high state of proficiency, and enjoyed the reputation of being one of the best volunteer choirs in the city. Mr. Zan was pressed, upon his recovery, to again accept the direction of the choir, but declined, owing to the arduous duties connected therewith. Last November he was engaged as baritone soloist at the cathedral, and, shortly after the first of the present year, he was appointed director of the choir, which consists of a quartet of soloists and chorus. He has sung in oratorio and cantatas, and frequently appears in concert.

Popular Contralto.
Among Portland's most popular contralto singers is Mrs. Max M. Shillock. She is a native daughter of Oregon, and, coming from a musical family, at an early age developed marked talent as a vocalist. She appeared frequently at concerts, when yet child, and, at the early age of 10

years, was considered equal to the requirements of small church choir. She studied but little with local teachers, acquiring her musical education almost entirely under the tutelage of the eminent composer, Sig. A. Rotoli, of Boston, who desired to prepare her for the operatic stage. However, as her ambition did not lie in that direction, she has confined the exercise of her talents to concerts and church work. For four years she was a member of the examining committee of the choir of the First Congregational Church, and for two years sang at the Synagogue. She then sang two years in the Third Presbyterian Church. During the past two years she has been director of the Grace M. E. Church chorus choir.

Mrs. Shillock is one of the moving spirits in the Portland Musical Club, having been a member of the examining committee almost from its inception, and she has been otherwise closely identified with the musical affairs of the city during her residence here. Her voice is a pure contralto, of good range and of sympathetic quality. She is accorded a hearty reception at concerts in which she appears, and it will doubtless be a source of regret to many to learn that she has resigned her position as director of Grace choir, and will soon leave for Eastern Oregon, to remain during the summer.

Sings Soprano.
Miss Susan M. Gambell is solo soprano and choir director of the Forbes Presbyterian Church, where she has been for the past year. Her work has given great satisfaction to the congregation of that church. Miss Gambell has been studying vocal culture many years, being one of Mrs. Walter Reed's best pupils, and she took a course of study with Francis Stuart, of San Francisco. Her voice is a clear, high soprano, of sweet and sympathetic timbre. Under the able direction of Miss Gambell, the quartet choir at the Forbes Presbyterian Church bids fair to become one of the best in the city. Miss Gambell is full of love for her art,



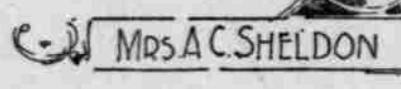
Miss Anna Stuart

operas as "Erminie," "The Bohemian Girl," "The Mascot" and "Il Trovatore." Since coming to Portland, she has been regarded as one of the first singers in this city.

Mrs. Sheldon was for several years solo soprano at St. Mary's Cathedral; is a member of the well-known Treble Clef Club, and is also first soprano in the Portland Ladies' Quartet. The Musical Club is fortunate in having her as an active member. At present, she is soprano in the quartet choir of the First Presbyterian Church, where, and elsewhere, she has won many admirers for her vocal skill. Her voice is a high soprano, clear, full, and used always with the best musical taste.

Anna Stuart, Soprano.
Miss Anna Stuart has a soprano voice of the largest range, covering nearly three octaves. She acquired her musical education in this city, having studied four years with Mrs. Walter Reed. She has given much pleasure with her splendid singing at Grace Methodist Church and also at the Taylor-Street Methodist Church. Last year she sang in the First Presbyterian Church choir. She was selected for her eminent fitness, and she successfully drilled a chorus of 45 voices of the Willamette Glee Club, at the Chautauqua at Gladstone Park. She is at present engaged in the choir of the United Presbyterian Church.

Sings Purest Contralto.
Mrs. Walter Reed is one of Oregon's sweetest contralto singers. She is a native of California, where she received her early musical training. In amateur opera, oratorio, choir work and on the concert stage, she has always been prominent, while many of the well-known singers of Portland owe their vocal training to her.



Mrs. A. C. Sheldon

pleasing stage presence and a most charming personality.

Sings Heavy Bass.
Charles H. Hoeg sings in the quartet of the Synagogue choir. He recently came to Portland from San Francisco, and was well known in the musical world there, having been a member of the Howard Presbyterian quartet, since the dedication of the new church edifice of that congregation, several years ago. He was also a member of the Loring Club, of San Francisco, a male voice society of many years' standing, and he belonged to other well-known vocal organizations, having been second base of the Apollo Male quartet, which attained great popularity during its existence.

Mr. Hoeg has also been heard in this city at the First Congregational Church, during the absence of a regular member of the choir of that church. He possesses one of the best bass voices in Portland. It is deep, heavy, absolutely true, of remarkable sweetness and unusually rich in quality.



Mrs. Shillock

High Soprano.
Mrs. Albert C. Sheldon sings soprano at the First Presbyterian Church. She is a native of Victoria, B. C., and was educated at St. Ann's Academy, receiving her first musical training in church work in the chapel choir there. She made her debut in her native city in the beautiful cantata "The Ancient Mariner," the local press giving her most flattering notices, praising especially her higher tones. Mrs. Sheldon is always a favorite in Victoria, and has been sent for repeatedly since coming to Portland to take part in musical events there. A few weeks ago she received a letter asking her to go to Victoria and sing the leading role in "Rob Roy." She has taken leading roles in such

both vocal and instrumental music, after a five years' course.

She came directly to Portland, about eight years ago, and has since concert work in all the cities in the Pacific Northwest. She sang, with much success, in symphony at San Francisco, and has done oratorio work in this city, Seattle, Salem and Eugene. She has taken the leading parts in "Creation," "Messiah," "Elijah," "Crucifixion," "The Gethse," "Mikado," "Chimes of Normandy," "Martina," "Galatea," "Carmen," "Royal Middy," "Fatiniza" and many other oratorios and grand and comic operas.

Young Soprano of Promise.
Miss Eva West, who is winning laurels as an operatic soprano singer, is at present engaged in the choir of St. Francis' Church. She was for several years, in the choir of the Third Presbyterian Church, and she also sang, for a while, at the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church. Her musical education was received entirely in this city, her beautiful voice being a Portland product. Besides being full of sympathy, of velvety quality, well schooled and even, it has great power and most flexibility and range.

Cathedral Soprano.
One of the most attractive singers in the splendid choir at St. Mary's Cathedral is Miss Agnes Watt, soprano soloist. Miss Watt is a native daughter of Oregon and received her early musical training in this city. She then took a course of three years' study in the Boston Conservatory of Music, under Louis C. Elson and Sig. Augusto Rotoli. After returning to Portland she continued her studies with Mrs. Walter Reed, and had two years' private tutelage under Francis Stuart, of San



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One of the best-known and most-meritorious of the contralto singers of Portland is Mrs. F. J. Raley, who is soloist in the choir of the First Congregational Church. Prior to her present engagement she sang with much success at the Taylor-Street Methodist and Calvary Churches. Mrs. Raley never studied abroad, having obtained her knowledge of music from Portland teachers. Her voice is said to be one of the purest in the city, and its clearness has often been remarked.

W. A. Montgomery.
W. A. Montgomery, bass of the quartet of the First Congregational Church, has held his present position for the past five years. His voice is a rich, round baritone, well adapted for church quartet work. Mr. Montgomery has been intimately connected with musical matters in this city for the past eight years, and church work is not the only sphere in which he shines, as he has won many encomiums for his singing in local amateur opera presentations. He is baritone in the Quinnum Club.

A Rector Who Sings.
Rev. Dr. A. A. Morrison, rector of Trinity Church, does not confine his religious work to preaching and praying. He is a power for good as a soloist. He has a strong baritone voice of delightful quality, which is essentially fitted for oratorio singing. He has had large musical experience in this line of work in New York City, where he began by taking solo parts in the great oratorios, when he was but 20 years old. From that time to the present he has lived in an atmosphere impregnated with the best musical thought of the day, and is accordingly able to speak with authority on this subject. Portland people have already had an opportunity to judge of his musical skill, and there is some talk of inviting the reverend singer to establish an oratorio society in this city.

Cathedral Choir Tenor.
Henry W. Hogue is tenor of the Cathedral quartet. He is a Portlander, and his high, clear voice is very strong and pure. This natural advantage, coupled with an intelligent musical rendition, renders his selections very popular. Mr. Hogue sang for a short season in the Congregational choir, and also for a more extended time in the Unitarian choir. He is the second tenor of the Quinnum Club.

Some Other Singers.
Bert Brown, bass of the Unitarian quartet choir, has been connected with musical organizations in this city, both mixed and male choruses, as well as male



Miss West

quartets, for the past several years. For some time previous to going to the Unitarian Church he was bass soloist in the vocal choir in Trinity Church. His voice is of the deep, resonant order and makes an excellent foundation for quartet work.

M. L. Bowman, bass of the First Presbyterian Church quartet, has made rapid strides in his chosen work and ranks high in Portland's large category of singers. He has sung in male quartets for the past few years. His voice is heavy and deep, though smooth and musical, and is under excellent control.

Mrs. Berta Grimes, contralto of the quartet choir of the First Baptist Church for the past six months, though practically a stranger in Portland, has rapidly come to the front as one of the city's most intelligent musical interpreters. She is favorably known in Forest Grove for her excellent choir and solo work. Her voice is true and pure in quality.

Mrs. Lois MacMahon has been the soprano of the First Baptist Church quartet for the past six months. She has not been regularly engaged, professionally, although her work in churches is well known. Her voice is of a clear, brilliant quality, high and resonant, and blends admirably. Her solo work is conscientious and intelligent.

Mrs. E. E. Coursen, although not now regularly engaged in church choir work, was, for several years, leading soprano at Trinity and the First Presbyterian Church. Her soulful singing and sweet, clear voice are some of the most pleasant memories of choir work in Portland. Unfortunately incapacitated from public singing by a severe throat affection, Mrs. Coursen was the recognized leading soprano of this city. At present, she is temporarily taking Mrs. Sheldon's place in the quartet at the First Presbyterian Church.



Mrs. Bloch-Bauer

Music at Pacific University, Forest Grove, was brought to a high standard during the two years Mrs. Reed had charge of the vocal department there. She also trained and conducted the Choral Union, of Forest Grove, a chorus of 50 voices, in a number of oratorios and cantatas. At present, Mrs. Reed has charge of the vocal department of St. Helen's Hall, where she is training a chorus of 60 voices for the cantata "King Rene's Daughter," which will be given after Easter.

The residents of Seattle will always remember the successful performance of the "Gethse," given there by amateur talent and staged entirely by Mrs. Reed. Perhaps, however, Mrs. Reed is best known as a choir singer. Her first appearance in a choir here was at the Taylor-Street Methodist Church. Since then, she has sung at Trinity, Temple Beth Israel and the First Presbyterian Church. She



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is now solo contralto of the Catholic Cathedral, St. Mary's. The Treble Clef Club was organized by Mrs. Reed six years ago, as was also the well-known Portland Ladies' Quartet, in which she sings second alto.



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Any mention, however incomplete, of the choir singers of Portland, that did not contain the name of Mrs. Ross Bloch-Bauer, would savor of the tragedy of "Hamlet" with the Prince of Denmark left out. Mrs. Bloch-Bauer is choir director and soprano soloist in the choir at Temple Beth-Israel. She sang soprano at the First Congregational Church for five or six years before she became connected with the Synagogue choir. She began her musical education in Portland, and followed it up at the Vienna Conservatory of Music, where she was graduated, in



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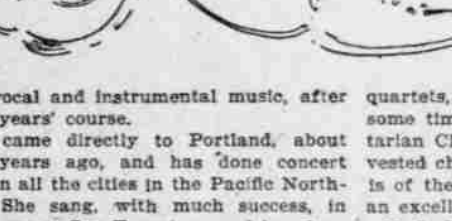
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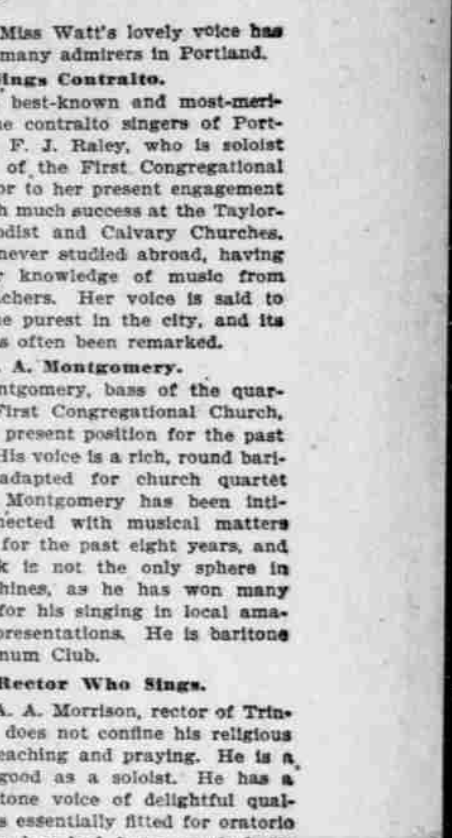
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