Cincinnati's successful wooing of Theodore Thomas in 1878 was acclaimed as a cultural triumph. This majestic pose strikingly resembles the statue of the Maestro in the Music Hall foyer.
The Musical Legacy of Theodore Thomas

by Joseph E. Holliday

When, in 1878, the officers of the newly-organized College of Music of Cincinnati secured Theodore Thomas of New York City as the school’s first musical director, it was regarded as a cultural triumph. As the Albany (N. Y.) Journal said, “Cincinnati danced hornpipes over the capture of Theodore Thomas.” The local newspapers proudly printed the congratulations from the press of other cities on the acquisition of this prize musical personality. As for Thomas’s own reaction, he was weary of the continual tours and travel which he found necessary to keep his orchestra personnel employed, and he looked forward to “settling down.” He also welcomed the financial security insured by an annual salary of $10,000. Thomas was highly enthusiastic about the challenge and opportunities in Cincinnati: “its good geographical location” for a music college, its considerable professional talent for a symphony orchestra, and “the first-rate summer garden business for the summer employment of musicians.” Thomas later wrote that “music had been a large part of the daily life of the Cincinnati people, and the city at that time ranked second only to New York, Boston, or Philadelphia in musical achievement.”

When Thomas assumed direction of the college he was no stranger to the city. He had started his western orchestral tours in 1869, blazing a trail so frequently traversed that in music history it has been called “the Thomas Highway.” Cincinnati was an important stop on this highway. Before he took up residence in the city in 1878, this peripatetic director had played eleven concert series there. A strong rapport had been established early between him and music-loving Cincinnatians. On a visit in 1872, the idea of a choral-symphonic musical festival was born at a dinner at the home of George Ward Nichols. Mrs. Nichols (Maria Longworth) proposed such a festival, asserting that if Thomas would assume its artistic direction, “she would find the men who would take charge of the business details.”

With the thirty-seven-year-old Theodore Thomas as the musical director, it was Nichols himself who took charge of the “business details,” aided by C. A. F. Adae, banker; Bellamy Storer, Jr., attorney; Dr. C. C. Miller; and John Shillito, prominent merchant, who acted as treasurer. A guarantee fund of $50,000 was subscribed to underwrite any financial loss—a method already tested in guaranteeing the city’s industrial expositions. The list of subscribers
is evidence of the community support these leaders could muster. Not only did it include individuals, but at least fifty-seven business houses and industrial firms made the guarantee of this venture unique in nineteenth-century support of civic culture. Certainly Nichols and his associates had the confidence of the business community. Retail houses, such as John Shillito and L. C. Hopkins, dry goods; the music trades, such as John Church, Smith and Nixon, and Rudolph Wurlitzer; the large breweries of Christian Moerlein and C. Windisch and Muhlhauser; industrial firms such as M. Werk and Procter and Gamble, soap and candles; and Hall's Safe and Lock Co., appear on the list of subscribers. The Cincinnati Commercial editorialized that Cincinnati was “pioneering in high art,” and that pioneering, of necessity, had to include the financing of that art.

The first May Festival of 1873 was so successful that the event was continued on a roughly biennial basis. Thomas was the director of the first sixteen festivals. They constituted the strongest tie between him and the city. The musical eminence of Cincinnati largely rested on the successes of these early festivals. However, Theodore Thomas's other contributions to the cultural heritage of Cincinnati were equally significant and enduring.

As an important stop on “the Thomas Highway,” Cincinnati acquired much of its appreciation for orchestral music from the eleven visits of the Thomas orchestra between 1869 and 1878. These visits were not merely “one-night stands;” they ranged from three to twenty-three concerts on each visit. On two occasions the Thomas orchestra presented programs in collaboration with the local Harmonic Society. The largest in the city, this choral society was directed by Carl Barus, well-known German-American musician, and its president was George Ward Nichols. Another musical alliance was with the eminent Russian composer and pianist, Anton Rubinstein. Two joint concerts were presented in Cincinnati in March 1873, at one of which the pianist-composer conducted the orchestra in his own symphony, The Ocean. It was the first performance of this work in the United States and was frequently played in New York later in the season. Thomas believed that his concerts with Rubinstein in 1873 “made a lasting impression. They gave the country the great artistic impetus for which it seemed at last to be ripe.”

The greatest popular impact of Thomas's Cincinnati concerts, however, came from a series given at the Highland House, atop Mount Adams, in August and September 1877. It was during this decade that Cincinnatians constructed inclines to carry residents out of the crowded basin area, and built hilltop houses for entertainment and recreation on the brows of the hills surrounding the city. At the Highland House, perhaps the most popular of these, the Thomas Orchestra played twenty-three concerts from August 20 to September 10, 1877. Throngs of listeners crowded the belvedere, which seated 1,400, and the esplanade, which could accommodate 4,000 more. On several evenings the newspapers reported 4,000 in attendance, and seldom
less than 2,500. Nor were all of these residents of the city. In one week alone, no fewer than eighteen railroad excursions brought in out-of-town tourists, the Thomas concerts being advertised as the occasion for the excursions. The *Gazette* reported that "though the frescoed walls and glittering candelabra of the opera house were wanting, [these concerts] were as brilliant as any of the great gatherings during the winter season." The season ended with a testimonial concert to Thomas on September 10. Two years later, Thomas's Cincinnati Orchestra played another successful series of twenty-six concerts at the Highland House with the same popular response. The *Boston Advertiser* commented on the availability of good summer music and entertainment in Cincinnati by observing:

*The admission fee to the Theodore Thomas concerts given by an orchestra of over fifty first-class musicians is twenty-five cents, a large plate of good ice cream is ten cents, and the charge for taking care of horse and carriage is ten cents. These are the prices at fashionable summer night concerts.*

The unusual success of the summer concert season of 1877 was one of the compelling reasons that led Thomas to accept the post of musical director in the new college to be organized the following year.

The College of Music was chartered as a non-profit organization on August 16, 1878, on the wave of musical enthusiasm generated by the May Festival of that year, held in the new Music Hall. Its moving spirit was George Ward Nichols. Nichols had assumed leadership in musical and artistic affairs shortly after his arrival in Cincinnati in 1868. It was Nichols who channeled, organized, and gave direction to the musical interest in the city at that time. He had the capacity and drive to develop music as a civic enterprise. As the husband of Maria Longworth he had wide social contacts, enabling him to move in circles in which he could enlist financial support for musical activities. He won the confidence of many of the well-to-do men in the community, had good organizational ability, and was an excellent promoter. No small part of his success as a promoter lay in understanding the value of the news media in developing and gaining public support; he had served on the staff of the *New York Evening Post* before and during the Civil War. Nichols was, for a time, concurrently president of the Harmonic Society, the May Festival Association, the Music Hall Association, and the College of Music.

The original stockholders of the College of Music included many of the business leaders of the community. Joseph Longworth, John Shillito, George K. Shoenberger, David Sinton, Rufus King, and Robert Mitchell were among the largest. Its largest stockholder and greatest benefactor, however, was Reuben R. Springer. Springer had made a fortune in the commission and riverboat business before the Civil War and had greatly increased it by judi-
icious investment in railroad stocks. His wife, long invalided, had died in 1869 and there were no children. A devout convert to Roman Catholicism, he was a heavy contributor to diocesan charities and other civic enterprises. While music was not his only philanthropy, it was his chief one. Moreover, he had civic vision. At the time Andrew J. West made his initial contribution to construct an art museum in Cincinnati, a heated dispute arose over its location. Springer, who was one of the contributors to a matching gift, argued for the location of the museum in Washington Park, envisioning a cultural center near Music Hall. But the proponents of Eden Park won in that dispute. Springer's will distributed about $600,000 to charities and the arts. He was a modest, unassuming man. For example, he could not be persuaded to attend the dedication of his statue, which now stands in the foyer of Music Hall, but instead sent a letter of appreciation. 19

A close friendship—almost a father-son relationship—ripened between Nichols and Springer. They worked as a team, combining organizational and financial leadership in developing the musical resources of Cincinnati during the 1870's and 1880's. The May Festivals, Music Hall, and, finally, the College of Music represented their joint interests. They had high hopes for the future of the college under Theodore Thomas's direction.

In recruiting a faculty, Thomas was responsible for bringing to the city several highly skilled musicians who remained in the community to teach after he left. Probably the most eminent of these was Otto Singer. Singer was primarily a music theorist and pianist, but he was also an able chorus master. A product of the Leipzig-Weimar music schools in Germany, he had studied under Franz Liszt. He came to the United States in 1867 as the protégé of Thomas. After teaching in New York City, he was sent by Thomas to Cincinnati in 1873 to conduct the chorus rehearsals for the May Festival of that year and remained in the city until his retirement in 1892. At various times he directed the Harmonic Society, Maennerchor, Musik-Verein, and the Dayton (Ohio) Philharmonic Society. Leonine in appearance, and a martinet in exactness, Singer commanded respect for his thorough teaching techniques. 20

To occupy the principal chairs in the string section of the orchestra and to teach in the college, Charles Baetens, viola player, Adolph Hartdegen, violoncellist, and Simon Jacobsohn, probably the foremost violin teacher in the country, came to the city. 21

The foundation of a symphony orchestra was the first community effort of the college; it was also closest to Thomas's interest. He planned for an orchestra of sixty or seventy performers, which, in time, would be expanded to ninety or one hundred. While Thomas brought the few principals to Cincinnati with him, he expected to make use of talent already in the city. He stated in his Autobiography that "he found an orchestra superior to that of any city west of New York" when he first visited Cincinnati. 22 It was not necessary, therefore, to build an orchestra by importing players, as he later
did in organizing the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Cincinnati's professional musicians had already organized their own orchestra, financed on a concert-to-concert basis. Two men had been chiefly responsible for keeping it alive—Louis Ballenberg and Michael Brand. Both were professional musicians. Brand was the son of a Cincinnati German-American musician. He had played the violoncello in theater and garden orchestras while still in his teens, and then went to New York to study under Karl Anshutz, one of the foremost composers and conductors in the country at that time. For four years he had played with Theodore Thomas's New York Orchestra and then returned to Cincinnati. While Brand was the better musician, Ballenberg's talents were chiefly managerial. The latter was the son of a German "Forty-eighter," who was brought to this country by his parents. As a flutist, he had played in the old Pike's Opera House orchestra and had toured the country with several opera troupes. He later became the leading impresario in the city. One of his most significant contributions to Cincinnati's musical evolution was his management of a series of Sunday afternoon "Pop" concerts in the 1880's.

The Brand-Ballenberg "Grand Cincinnati Orchestra," as it was called, of forty to fifty performers was the nucleus around which Theodore Thomas's Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra was organized. Other professional musicians were enlisted to bring its strength to sixty performers. Though it was not a student orchestra, the College of Music employed the director and the three principals of the string sections, and managed the advertising and other business details. Season ticket subscriptions were the chief source of operating funds. At a time when the financing of the performing arts was in an experimental stage in this country, the management of this orchestra by a college constituted a novel approach. Concerts by the orchestra were the highlight of Thomas's activities while director of the college. During the two seasons he was in Cincinnati, twenty concerts were given, with an equal number of public rehearsals, now called matinees. Only passing reference can be given to the works performed, but it is noteworthy that two symphonies by Johannes Brahms received their first performances in Cincinnati on these programs. Two works were also played for the first time in the United States: Karl Goldmark's Penthesilea Overture (December 3, 1879) and Antonin Dvorak's Slavonic Rhapsody No. 3 (February 4, 1880). Since the average attendance at these events was about two thousand, the popular base of appreciation for good orchestral music was considerably strengthened.

As previously noted, during the summer of 1879 this orchestra played another long season of twenty-six concerts at the Highland House, with gratifying results. At the final concert on September 11, President Rutherford B. Hayes, Generals William T. Sherman and Philip H. Sheridan, U. S. Attorney-General Charles Devens, and a number of accompanying dignitaries brought national attention to the orchestra by their attendance. All were in the city for the opening of the city's Industrial Exposition. Hundreds of extra gas jets
Thomas's two seasons, 1877 and 1879, of "Pop" concerts at the Highland House were an appealing way to broaden music appreciation.
were installed in the Highland House for that gala performance, at which more than four thousand persons were present. While Thomas was musical director of the college he continued as director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Society, commuting to New York once a month. During his second year in the city, this sought-after musician was also elected director of the New York Philharmonic Society and continued his monthly visits to New York to conduct concerts of both societies. These multiple posts held by Thomas were most unusual at the time, but it is another indication of his eminence. However, it created suspicion in Cincinnati that he never intended to regard his post at the College of Music as more than temporary.

While the orchestral seasons of 1878-1880 aroused a new interest in symphonic music, it was not the only type to which the College of Music director gave a thrust. The chamber music concerts inaugurated by Thomas were equally significant. The appeal of this kind of music has always been limited. Attempts had been made earlier by local musicians to give a series of chamber music performances, but seldom did they last for more than one season. Thomas organized a College of Music String Quartette, which continued for several decades, although not with the same personnel. Thomas himself was its first violinist until he was forced to retire because of the pressure of other duties, and Henry Eick took his place.

Chamber music concerts are generally regarded as appealing only to the musically sophisticated. In terms of wide community interest, probably the inauguration of an annual Christmas-season performance of Handel's oratorio, *The Messiah*, was of much more consequence. A tradition was established which continued for a number of years for the May Festival chorus to give such a performance. With the same director of the symphony orchestra and the festival chorus of six hundred, these organizations could be easily combined to present this oratorio with truly festival strength. This first holiday presentation occurred on Christmas night, 1878. The *Messiah* presentations reached their peak in December 1881, when, with Adelina Patti as one of the soloists, an audience of seven thousand packed Music Hall. While these Christmas performances became part of the city's regular musical season until 1887, and were later revived, never again did they have quite the glamour, excitement, and sensation of this memorable performance in 1881 with the great Patti.

Choral singing was the foundation on which the reputation of the Cincinnati May Festivals rested. The residence of Thomas in the city enabled him to effect a reform in the quality of the choruses of the festivals, which was of great consequence in the maintenance of their high standards. The inspiration for the first festival was the annual Saengerfest of German singing societies. At these gatherings the male choruses competed in song. The pattern of combining a number of societies to form a chorus was employed for the first three festivals. For example, the local newspapers reported that
twenty-three singing societies with a total membership of nearly 1,200 composed the first chorus. Thirteen of these were from Cincinnati, eight from other Ohio cities, one from Titusville, Pennsylvania, and one from Charlestown, Indiana. Membership in these societies, however, provided social opportunities as well as musical, and often included persons with mediocre talent. With such a large number of units, there were also difficulties in establishing "uniform tempo and style" for superior works, to say nothing of the impracticality of securing attendance for rehearsals away from home. Consequently, Thomas organized a Cincinnati Chorus for the festival of 1880, membership in which was attained by a high level of vocal proficiency, instead of mere membership in a society. Persons were admitted to the chorus as individuals, not through their membership in organizations. This new plan met with heated opposition from some societies. Considerable tact and mediation were required in effecting this transformation, but, with the help of Lawrence Maxwell, Jr., an eminent lawyer and skilled musician, the opposition was overcome. This was a basic structural change in the composition of the festival chorus, and it more than proved itself.

More than six hundred selected singers were trained by Thomas and his chorus master, Otto Singer, for the festival of 1880. The exacting and difficult Missa Solemnis of Beethoven, which in all likelihood received its first performance in the country at this festival, was so well sung that the chorus was lauded by critics as probably the best in the country. It was universally acclaimed. The eminent music critic of the New York Tribune, J. R. G. Hassard, wrote that "there never had been anything like the chorus in America and no better chorus singing can be heard in the world." George P. Upton, critic for the Chicago Tribune, stated that this rendition of the Missa was "one of those great incomparable performances to which words can not give expression." Had Theodore Thomas not been resident in the city to mold these singers into a final choral ensemble by frequently conducting rehearsals himself, this excellence could never have been attained so early in May Festival history. It marked a great step in the quality of the programs.

The combination of civic leadership from such men as George Ward Nichols, Reuben Springer, and others, with the musical authority of Thomas, was a truly dynamic force for the development of that art in Cincinnati. Seldom have these forces been so harnessed in any community. The names of Joseph Longworth, John Shillito, David Sinton, Jacob Burnet, A. Howard Hinkle, Robert Mitchell, Peter R. Neff, and Nichols and Springer occur on several lists of major musical associations. The College of Music, the May Festival Association, and the Music Hall Association had nearly-interlocking stockholders. It was unfortunate that these forces could not remain integrated. A rupture came when Theodore Thomas submitted his resignation as musical director of the College of Music on March 4, 1880, following a dispute over a proposed reorganization of the college.
It was generally claimed by Thomas's friends that his resignation came as the result of a disagreement over standards of musical scholarship; the directors insisted that pupils of all levels of ability be accepted and therefore "no high standard of scholarship was possible;" and "the college was regarded as 'a commercial venture'." It is true that some differences of viewpoint were expressed over the educational objectives of the college, but this is too simple an explanation and does not take into consideration Thomas's personal altercation with Nichols.

Thomas had submitted two sets of requests: one related to the educational development of the institution, while the other would have changed its internal administration. The latter was a means of ending a personal grievance against Nichols, president of the board. Thomas became convinced that the academic year should include not more than two terms, whereas it had been operating on four terms. The assignment of pupils to teachers, he insisted, should be his responsibility. He also urged that all members of the orchestra receive salaries. A detailed program for the Doctor of Music degree was also presented by him to the board. Toward nearly all of these aims the board members professed to be working in good faith. The crucial point was the insistence by Thomas that he be given "the exclusive direction of the school in all its departments." Nichols, as president of the board, had assumed personal administration of college finances and business. Thomas believed, with justification, that Nichols had encroached upon the academic direction of the institution. While at no place in his communications did Thomas state a personal complaint against Nichols, it was well known that personal animosities were behind Thomas's request for "exclusive direction."

This was essentially the encounter of two strong personalities rather than a clash over artistic incompatibilities. At forty-five years of age, Thomas was a distinguished, energetic, and vigorous person. Although an unrivalled orchestral director, he had faults. His relationship with his arch-rival, Leopold Damrosch, does not indicate a person of magnanimous disposition. At the time of Thomas's appointment as director of the college there was doubt expressed in some quarters about his ability as an administrator. Later, during the 1890's, when Thomas was in Chicago, the possibility of establishing a musical college at the University of Chicago was proposed, with the expectation that the Chicago Symphony Orchestra could share in the Rockefeller endowment. Thomas insisted that neither voice nor piano should be taught in such a school, and the project was dropped. This did not represent a very broad view of music education.

On the other hand, there is abundant evidence that Nichols was difficult to work with. To many persons he was arrogant—"too full of his own individuality for the most comfortable enjoyment of easy social friendship," as one of his friends states. Nichols had no regular profession at this time and was free to devote all of his time to the success of the new college. He became too zeal-
The founding of the College of Music in 1878 was generated by the overwhelming response to the May Festivals. The school was enriched by the teaching talents of Otto Singer, brought to Cincinnati by Thomas to be festival chorusmaster.

SEASON OF 1879-'80.

College of Music of Cincinnati.

THEODORE THOMAS, Musical Director.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

GEO. WARD NICHOLS, President.

PETER RUDOLPH NEFF, Treasurer.

R. K. SPRINGER, Secretary.

THEODORE THOMAS, Musical Director.

GEO. WARD NICHOLS, President.

PETER RUDOLPH NEFF, Treasurer.

R. K. SPRINGER, Secretary.

FACULTY:

OX* 1B79-'80.

THEODORE THOMAS, Musical Director.

GEO. WARD NICHOLS, President.

PETER RUDOLPH NEFF, Treasurer.

R. K. SPRINGER, Secretary.

FOLEY, B. W  CHOKUS CL.

LAMIES, ARTHUR DAME E LANGUAGES—GERMAN

LA VILLA, MADAME ADELAIDE LANGUAGES—ITALIAN.

LA VILLA, SIONOR PAOLA VOIC.

MARKS, PETER M.

HARDEE, M. CORNE.

JACOBSOHN, S. E.

FIRST PROFESSOR OF THE VIOLIN.

A. D. M. E. LANGUAGES—GERMAN.

ITALIAN.

LA VILLA, MADAME ADELAIDE LANGUAGES—ITALIAN.

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MARKS, PETER M.

HARDEE, M. CORNE.

JACOBSOHN, S. E.

FIRST PROFESSOR OF THE VIOLIN.

A. D. M. E. LANGUAGES—GERMAN.

ITALIAN.

ADVANTAGES OFFERED.

THE FALL TERM begins October 14th. Students will be received on and after October 8th.

THE VERY LOW RATES OF TUITION place the unequalled resources of the College within reach of all persons.

STUDENTS will have the advantage of private instruction.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION in the Voice, Piano, Organ, Violin,

and other Orchestral Instruments is the rule; Class Instruction the exception.

CLASS INSTRUCTION is given in Vocalization, Theory, Elocution, and Languages at extremely low prices.

CHORUS CLASSES. Chorus singing forms a part only of the work of these classes. Pupils will be instructed in all such points relating to time, accent, rhythm, musical expression, etc., as will enable them to sing and play intelligently. They will be taught to read at sight; to sound a given note without the help of an instrument; to sing with proper light and shade; and some knowledge of elementary harmony. In short, all necessary theoretical knowledge will be acquired in these classes, and the pupils will thus be enabled to give their whole time to the technical part when with a teacher for special study. These classes are FREE, and all students in the College are required to attend them unless excused by the Director.

SPECIAL BRANCHES can be studied together with the rudiments, or a complete musical education, theoretical and practical, can be secured.

BEGINNERS will be received and taught in the College. Neither advanced nor elementary knowledge is a requirement for admission.

STUDENTS will have the advantage of the Chorus Classes, Lectures on the History of Music, and the invaluable instruction which comes from admission to the Rehearsals of the great Orchestra and the Organ Concerts. All this will be FREE.

EIGHT ORCHESTRAL AND SIX CHAMBER CONCERTS will be given during the coming season in the Music Hall, under the direction of Theodore Thomas.

ORGAN CONCERTS on the great Music Hall Organ will be given twice a week by Geo. E. Whiting, Professor of the Organ in the College, Festival and Official Organist.

THE MUSICAL SEASON of '79-'80 will otherwise be unusually brilliant, and students will thus be afforded frequent opportunities to hear and study master-works in all branches of the art.

BOARD AND LODGING. The College will make every effort to obtain for students good board and rooms at cheap rates. Board and rooms can be had in private families for $4.00 per week, and upwards. Strangers in the city can come at once to the office of the College, with the certainty of finding information about board and lodging.

SITUATION OF THE COLLEGE. The College occupies the magnificent Music Hall Building. The rooms for study and practice are large, well lighted, well ventilated, and well heated. The Music Hall is in the center of the city, in a healthy locality, and is easily of access by street-cars.

APPLICATION for admission or information may be made at any time at the office of the College, Music Hall Building, or by letter to Peter Rudolph Neff, Treasurer of the College, Cincinnati, O.
ous and intrusive. The stage was reached where he was literally looking over Thomas’s shoulder in the office. This would annoy any man, particularly one accustomed to acting largely on his own judgment, as was Thomas. Since he believed his professional reputation was at stake, Thomas’s request that the board of directors release him from his contract was peremptory.

Of course this feud extended into the other musical organizations. Thomas’s resignation from the college did not include his resignation as director of the May Festival of 1880. The festival chorus of six hundred staged a demonstration for Thomas at its rehearsal on the evening of March 9, 1880. The director’s stand was decorated with flowers. When Thomas appeared at the door of the stage, “a great cheer went up,” with the organ booming out great chords. Resolutions were read requesting Nichols to resign as president of the May Festival Association and urging Thomas to remain with the College of Music. Thomas replied that “the chorus must separate the Festival from the College of Music” and work harder than ever, “because I mean that this festival shall be the greatest artistically and every other way, that we ever had.” Two days later Nichols resigned the presidency of the May Festival Association and was replaced by Edmund Pendleton, a more neutral civic leader. Peter R. Neff and Jacob Burnet, Jr., directors of that organization as well as directors of the College of Music, also resigned from the board of the festival.

Frozen out of the May Festival Association, the restless Nichols refused to relinquish his leadership in musical affairs in the city. He turned his energies to the organization of Opera Festivals. For four years Cincinnati enjoyed brilliant opera seasons by the best companies in the country. Competition between the May Festival-Thomas supporters and the Opera Festival-Nichols supporters was keen for a few years, but it declined in 1884. That year was a dark one for Cincinnati in many ways. The greatest flood of the Ohio River to date reduced attendance at the Opera Festival, while the courthouse riots had an adverse effect on attendance at the 1884 May Festival.

The division in the musical community took several years to heal. Reuben R. Springer died in 1884 and his close friend, George Ward Nichols, died the following year. Upon the death of the latter, Peter R. Neff, a retired businessman, assumed the presidency of the College of Music. Neff, a friendly, tactful man, was successful in healing the wounds but he was never the dynamic leader that Nichols was.

Theodore Thomas’s departure from the College of Music in a storm of controversy should not blind us to his other contributions to the city’s musical progress during and after his residence in Cincinnati. He brought the prestige of a great name in the musical world to the newly-formed college. He organized and directed a civic orchestra which was one of the significant forerunners of the present Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and his chamber music concerts gave impetus to that form of musical art in the city. His long series of “Pop” concerts at the Highland House was of consequence in fostering an
appreciation for good music at a popular level. The Cincinnati musical community was enriched by the addition of several excellent musicians, expressly brought here by him, who remained in the city after he left. Thomas continued as the director of the May Festivals until his death in 1905. Sixteen festivals, extending over a period of thirty years, were held under his direction. They are benchmarks in American musical progress. Nor did the College of Music whose direction Thomas relinquished in 1880 decline after his departure. It continued its solid growth as a durable institution, to be merged in the 1950's with the Conservatory of Music.

JOSEPH E. HOLLIDAY is Professor of History and Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, at the University of Cincinnati.

(1) Quoted in Cincinnati Daily Gazette, June 16, 1879. Hereafter referred to as Gazette.
(2) Examples found in Gazette, Aug 27, Sept. 5, 1878; and Cincinnati Daily Commercial Aug. 28, 29, 30, 1878. Hereafter referred to as Commercial.
(3) George P. Upton, ed., Theodore Thomas, a Musical Autobiography (Chicago, 1905), 2 vols., I, 56, 75, 77. This volume contains Thomas's autobiography and reminiscences of him by Upton, a prominent Chicago music critic and close friend. A later edition, with additional notes, was issued in 1964 by Leon Stein. Hereafter referred to as Upton and Stein, Theodore Thomas.
(4) Interview with a New York Tribune reporter, quoted in Commercial, Aug. 30, 1878. The correspondence leading to Thomas's acceptance of this post is printed in Rose Fay Thomas, Memoirs of Theodore Thomas (New York, 1911), 144-151.
(5) Upton, op. cit., I, 78.
(6) Upton, op cit., I, 78-79; Rose Thomas, op. cit., 73-74; H. E. Krebbiel, An Account of the Fourth Music Festival, 1880 (Cincinnati, 1880); History of the Cincinnati Musical Festivals and the Rookwood Pottery by their Founder, Maria Longworth Storer (pamphlet). The title of this last pamphlet is misleading; most of it is devoted to the Rookwood Pottery and that part dealing with the festival was not written by Maria Storer. Dates for this dinner vary; 1872 is probably the correct one. The first husband of this remarkable woman, a daughter of Joseph Longworth, was George Ward Nichols, who died in 1885. Her second husband was Bellamy Storer, later Congressman and U.S. Minister to Belgium, Spain, and Austria-Hungary. During their residence in Washington, D.C. a close friendship developed between the Storers and the Theodore Roosevelts. A feud later erupted between the families and the publication of the "Dear Maria" letters of Roosevelt attracted national attention in the press. See Henry F. Pringle, Theodore Roosevelt (New York, 1931), 454-458. For a gossipy account of Maria Longworth, see Alvin F. Harlow, The Serene Cincinnatians (New York, 1950), 388-391.
(8) May 4, 1873.
(9) These concerts were given on March 9, 1872 and October 23, 1875. Two young local soloists, Miss Emma Cranch and Miss Josie Jones, were introduced. Both became well known in their respective fields. Miss Cranch later traveled with the Thomas Orchestra, singing over 150 concerts with it. See Church's Musical Visitor, May, Sept., Dec., 1873; May, 1875; May, 1879.
(10) Gazette, Mar. 22, 24, 1873; Commercial, Mar. 24, 1873; Upton, op. cit., I, 134. Rubinstein's biographer erroneously states that the first American performance of this symphony was given in New York City in April 1873. Its popularity was so great
that during the summer garden concerts by the Thomas Orchestra in that city, New Yorkers would "cry" for The Ocean. See Catherine Drinker Bowen, Free Artists, the Story of Anton and Nicholas Rubinstein (New York, 1939), 245, 248.

(11) Upton, op. cit., I, 63-64.

(12) Gazette, Aug. 15, 20, 21, 22, 1877; Sept. 3, 1877. The inclined plane to the brow of Mount Adams was able to transport 2,000 persons per hour. See Gazette, Aug. 20, 1877.

(13) Ibid., Aug. 23, 24, 30, 1877.

(14) Ibid., Sept. 11, 1877.

(15) Quoted in Gazette, July 30, 1879.


(17) A list of the stockholders in 1880, with the number of shares held by each, was printed in the Gazette, March 8, 1880 and Commercial, March 7, 1880. At that time there were forty-nine stockholders of whom thirteen held twenty or more shares of stock. Two business firms, the Burnet House and Robert Clarke and Co., printer, owned stock—an early example of corporate music patronage.


(22) Upton, op. cit., I, 78. See also Gazette, Aug. 28, 1878.

(23) The Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio of the Nineteenth Century (Cincinnati, 1876), 211; Mathews, op. cit., 604; Armin Tenner, Cincinnati Sonst und Jetzt (Cincinnati, 1878), 87-88; North American Saengerfest, 1879 (program), 15.

(24) For examples of these "Pop" concerts, see Times-Star, Feb. 9, Oct. 21, 1889.

Biographical sketches of Ballenberg are in: The Biographical Encyclopaedia of Ohio of the Nineteenth Century, 219-220; Tenner, op. cit., 105-106; Mathews, op. cit., 703; obituaries in: Deutsche Pioneer Verein von Cincinnati, 40 Deiwenjahr, 30 Mai, 1908; Times-Star, May 29, 1908. Complimentary concerts were often tendered to Ballenberg by other musicians in the city in gratitude for his labors for them. For examples, see Gazette, Dec. 4, 1865; Church's Musical Visitor, VIII (March, April, 1879).

(25) "Report to the Stockholders of the College of Music," Commercial, Jan. 13, 1880. This was seven years before Henry L. Higginson founded the Boston Symphony Orchestra. See John H. Mueller, The American Symphony Orchestra, a Social History of Musical Taste (Bloomington, Indiana, 1951), 78.

(26) Brahms's symphonies had only recently been composed. In 1877 there had been a race between Thomas and Leopold Damrosch in New York to play the Brahms Symphony No. 1 for the first time in the United States. Damrosch won by one week.
See Mueller, *op. cit.*, 189.


(28) Upton, *op. cit.*, I, 86, 150-151. Under his contract with the College of Music, Thomas had to return twenty percent of his salary from the New York societies for time spent away from his duties in Cincinnati. Thomas's admirers felt this was "a hard bargain" driven by Nichols. See Rose Thomas, *op. cit.*, 151.

(29) *Commercial*, Nov. 3, 1878; May 5, 7, 1879; Mar. 3, 1880.

(30) A list of the important programs for these chamber music series can be found in Upton, *op. cit.*, II, 246-248.

(31) This oratorio had been presented at the Third May Festival in 1878.


(33) *Commercial*, Dec. 30, 1881. Patti reportedly received $6,000 for her performance. It was on this occasion that the temperamental Patti claimed to have been slighted by not being led to her seat on the stage and then by finding that another soloist, Anna Louise Carey, was already seated in the first chair to the right of the conductor.


(35) *Gazette*, Oct. 9, 20, 21, 22, 28, Nov. 10, 1879. Maxwell was a devoted friend and admirer of Thomas and served as his legal counsel on several occasions. See Rose Thomas, *op. cit.*, 175-176.

(36) *Commercial*, May 20, 1880.


(38) Two short, undated articles written by Thomas give a general idea of his vision of an ideal college of music: "On the Need of a Musical University in America" and "A Plan for a Musical University." Needless to say, his chief interest was in the education of instrumentalists for an orchestra. He did not believe this type of institution should teach beginners. See Rose Thomas, *op. cit.*, 153-155.

(39) Shortly after Damrosch arrived in America he met Thomas in a New York music store. Thomas is reported to have said: "I hear, Doctor Damrosch, that you are a very fine musician, but I want to tell you one thing—whoever crosses my path I crush." See Walter Damrosch, *My Musical Life* (New York, 1923), 22.


(42) Thomas told newspaper reporters that he had to lock his office to prevent interruptions by Nichols. "He [Nichols] cannot understand a quiet rebuke," said Thomas, "His persistence and the pettiness of his annoyances were like the buzzing and sting of a horse-fly; you can't remember each particular sting, but all together they cause a painful irritation." Thomas also stated that Nichols was "not entirely truthful." See *Gazette*, Mar. 6, 1880.


(44) *Commercial*, Mar. 11, 1880.

(45) These festivals are described in detail in Joseph E. Holliday, "Cincinnati Opera Festivals During the Gilded Age," The Cincinnati Historical Historical Society *Bulletin*, XXIV, No. 2 (April, 1966), 131-149.