

OTTERBEIN MUSICIANS AT ANNUAL MEETING

The Otterbein College Men's Glee Club and Brass Choir will present several selections reminiscent of Civil War days at the Ohioana Library's Annual Meeting and Luncheon for Ohio Authors and Composers on October 29 at the Neil House, Columbus. This is appropriate, since Otterbein and its location, Westerville, have their own connection with the war.

In the 1850s Westerville, which was a strong abolitionist center, was an important refuge site for the underground railroad. One of the homes which sheltered the fugitive slaves was owned by Bishop William Hanby. It was at this time that his son, Benjamin R., gained inspiration for his immortal "Darling Nelly Gray." Benjamin, who was graduated from Otterbein in 1858, penned the song while a student there. His famous ballad has been called the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of American song.

Ironically, Hanby acquired little wealth from his song. Having failed to copyright it, he received only \$50 in a settlement with the publisher. His publisher is said to have written:

Dear Sir:

Your favor have received, "Nelly Gray" is sung on both sides of the Atlantic. We have made the money and you the fame, that balances the account.

Indeed Hanby did receive fame, and it was not limited to just one song. He

wrote many other pieces which further enhanced his reputation.

Benjamin R. Hanby is not, however, a forgotten name in a by-gone era. Another Otterbein graduate, Earl R. Hoover, '26, now judge of the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court, has done considerable research on Hanby's career. A noted speaker, Hoover has addressed many groups on the "Stephen Foster of Ohio."

Thus the 36-member Men's Glee Club and the Brass Choir will be presenting a little of the Otterbein tradition in their performances at the annual meeting.

The history of the Otterbein Music Department dates back to the 1850s. The first piano was acquired in 1851. The Men's Glee Club is now in its 102nd year. So indeed, Ben Hanby can be recognized as one of the first and foremost contributors to music at Otterbein.

The Men's Glee Club, directed by Dr. L. Lee Shackson, will present an arrangement of Hanby's "Old Shady" and "Black Brigade," by Dan Emmett of Mount Vernon, better known for his classic, "Dixie."

Professor Robert A. Westrich will lead the Brass Choir in performing a Stephen Foster medley, the traditional "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" and several other selections.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY offers instructions in sixty-nine languages, including ten in the Uralic-Altai group.