

IN MEMORIAM

RICHARD ALAN WATERMAN (1914-1971)

Richard A. Waterman, one of our leading ethnomusicologists, died of a heart attack on November 8, 1971, in Tampa, Florida. Born on July 10, 1914 in Solvang, California, he received his primary and secondary education in Santa Barbara. After attending Santa Barbara State College 1930-1932 and U.C.L.A. 1932-1934, he withdrew from college to work for two years. In 1936-1937 he returned to Santa Barbara State College and completed his A.B., after which he was a teacher and counsellor at the Santa Ynez Valley Union High School, 1937-1940. He attended the Claremont Colleges in 1940-41, receiving his M.A. in Anthropology after writing a thesis on the functionalism of Bronislaw Malinowski under Morris E. Opler.

He came to Northwestern University on a University Fellowship in 1941, just before Pearl Harbor. I knew him as a brilliant student in the fall semester, before I left for government service. Before I returned he had been appointed to the Department and promoted to Assistant Professor, having written his dissertation on "African Patterns in Trinidad Negro Music" and received his Ph.D. in Anthropology in 1943. For many years he was my colleague and very close friend at Northwestern, serving as Instructor 1943-1945, Assistant Professor 1945-1951, and Associate Professor 1951-1956. In 1953-1954 he taught as Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Washington.

To my personal regret he resigned from Northwestern to go to Wayne State University where he was Associate Professor 1956-1961 and Professor 1961-1968. He taught at U.C.L.A. in the summer of 1958, and he served as Chairman of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Wayne State University from 1959 to 1962. In 1968 he resigned from Wayne to become Professor at the University of South Florida, Tampa, where he had gone as Visiting Professor in 1966 for reasons of ill health.

The record of these events is incomplete and at times contradictory. I am deeply indebted to Alan P. Merriam for allowing me to benefit from his extensive efforts to verify them, and I recommend to you the obituary which he wrote for *Ethnomusicology*. I have found it very difficult to write even these few lines about someone to whom I have felt so close.

Waterman's early writings, in particular after his visit to Cuba, were central to the current arguments about "African Influence on the Music of the Americas," the title of his paper at the International Congress of Americanists in New York in 1949. In this important article he cited the dominance of percussion, polymeter, off-beat phrasing, overlapping call-and-response, and metronome sense as features derived from Africa, developing some of the points he had made in his earlier article on "'Hot' Rhythm in Negro Music." Other early papers dealt with the music of West Africa, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and a Chicago Negro church. In the summer of 1946 he did field work in Cuba and Puerto Rico, and in 1948 he returned to Cuba for a summer during which he recorded in Havana and Matanzas. In later years his interests shifted, but in 1963 he published another important article on this subject entitled "On Flogging a Dead Horse: Lessons Learned from the Africanisms Controversy."

His interest in jazz never failed, however. He played a mean string bass and was known to many of the leading jazz musicians, often sitting in with them for a number or two when they came to Chicago or Detroit. He was active in campus jazz groups, playing regularly with the professors' Academic Cats at Northwestern and frequently with a group which met in my Evanston basement. Dick rarely missed an opportunity to play, whatever his own schedule or however far he had to lug his instrument. One of his last papers, read at Dallas in 1971 and intended for submission to *Ethnomusicology*, is on "Ethnomusicology of the Small Dance Band in the Tampa Bay Area."

I had the pleasure of working with him on our joint article on "African and New World Negro Folklore" (1949). And even after the brief flurry of our local Filthy Speech Movement and the more recent rash of pornography, I recommend the superbly anticlimatic paper which he read, tongue-in-cheek and completely dead-pan, to the meetings of the American Folklore Society on "The Role of Obscenity in the Folktales of the 'Intellectual' Stratum of Our Society" (1949).

From 1947 to 1951 he published a series of seventeen sections of a Bibliography of Asiatic Music, ranging from Armenian to Mongolian, in *Notes*, the Journal of the Music Library. He was editor of the report on Folklore Research in Latin America in the *Journal of American Folklore* (1951), and he authored an encyclopedia article on "African Negro Art and Music" (1953), and the general article on music for the *Handbook of Latin American Studies* (1954, 1955, 1957, 1958).

In 1952 Waterman received a Fulbright fellowship and a grant

from the American Philosophical Society for a year's field work among the Yirkalla of Arnhem Land. He was accompanied by his wife, Patricia, who also held a Fulbright fellowship and who later taught with him at Wayne and South Florida. Beginning in 1958, most of his major publications dealt with Australian music and culture, including the book which he edited jointly with Arnold R. Pilling, *Diprotodon to Detribalization: Studies of Change among Australian Aborigines* (1970).

He was of course very active in the Society for Ethnomusicology, serving on several Program and Local Arrangements Committees, as Record Editor of *Ethnomusicology* 1963-1964 and as its Associate Editor 1964-1966. He was a Councillor of the Society and in 1958-1959 its First Vice President. He was also President of the Wayne State University Federation of Teachers in 1957-1958, Visiting Lecturer for the American Anthropological Association in 1965, and President of the University of South Florida chapter of Sigma XI in 1969-1970.

Despite this record, those of us who knew Dick well must regret that his death has not permitted him to leave in print more of his ideas, for he was imaginative and brilliant; and, as his recent publications clearly show, he was an anthropologist as well as an ethnomusicologist. Above all, Waterman was an exceptional teacher, popular, informal, stimulating, and generous of his time to both graduate and undergraduate students. Our students in Evanston were full of praise for him, and I am certain that his teaching abilities have also been appreciated in Seattle, Los Angeles, Detroit, and Tampa. Dick will be greatly missed by his many, many friends.

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