

Letters



I have your request for clarification ("Last Post", *Bulletin* XV-1, Spring 1981) of the meaning of American in *American Music*. We refer to the Western Hemisphere as well as to anything emanating therefrom wherever it may appear.

Perhaps the stated aim of the Sonneck Society "to disseminate accurate information and research dealing with all aspects of American music and music in America" describes our purpose as succinctly as possible.

As for the howler you mention, it resulted from an attempt to compress a more detailed statement of mine previously published in the Sonneck Society *Newsletter* (Vol VI, No. 1, Spring 1980, pp. 2-3). A copy of the full text is enclosed, but I call your particular attention to the next-to-last paragraph. There I pledged to try to avoid prejudice, to maintain an open forum, "to deal with all the music of all the Americas of whatever time and whatever place." I ended with the statement: "Once Americanness has been established, then our only other criterion must be quality of scholarship." I hope this puts us in a little better light.

- Allen P. Britton
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