

**HISTORY OF THE
CAMBRIAN GLEE CLUB
OF VENEDOCIA, OHIO
1918 - 1958**



CAMBRIAN
HALL



Agler's Studio - Thanksgiving Day, 1919.

Absent - Walter Lewis and Thomas Morgan

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The Cambrian Glee Club of Venedocia, Ohio was organized during the spring and summer of 1918 at the instigation of the following members of a male quartet: Howard Hughes, Gwenlyn Jones, Haydn Jones, and Haydn Morgan, which was organized during the summer of 1917, had been very active in singing at numerous church and civic organizations in Van Wert County and sensed the desirability of forming a glee club. The primary aims for the Glee Club organization were to develop an organization which would afford an opportunity for the young men of the community to follow in the footsteps of their fathers and older brothers who were active members of the famous male chorus which flourished in the community from approximately 1890 to 1912 and to maintain the excellent tradition which it had so effectively established; to maintain an interest in choral work for which the Welsh people are so well known; to make it possible for the young men to exercise their God-given talent for their own personal satisfaction and to provide entertainment for those people interested in male chorus singing. Two strict requisites were: only single men were to be admitted to membership and that the accompanist was to be a male.

Upon organization the following officers were elected:

President	Haydn Jones
Secretary	Gwenlyn Jones
Treasurer	Stanley Roberts
Conductor	Haydn Morgan
Accompanist	Austin Pollock

The following young men were elected to membership:

Breese, Ambrose	Jones, Gaylord	Morgan, Wendell
Cole, Lester	Jones, Gwenlyn	Morris, Elliott
Davies, Herbert	Jones, Haydn	Morris, Rees
Evans, Daniel	Jones, Luther	Morris, Rufus
Evans, Harris	Jones, Maldwyn	Owens, Glenn
George, Palmer	Jones, Osborne	Owens, Richard
Hughes, Howard	Lewis, Walter	Pollock, Austin
Hughes, Talmage	Lloyd, Maurice	Rees, Howell
Jenkins, Gordon	Morgan, Haydn	Richards, Howard
Jenkins, Layton	Morgan, Roy	Roberts, Stanley
Jones, Caradog	Morgan, Telford	Thomas, Rufus
Jones, Edward	Morgan, Thomas	Williams, Joseph

Rehearsals were held at the Cambrian Hall on Tuesday evenings.

Concerts were presented in the following communities: Delphos, Ridge School, Columbus Grove Mercer, Wabash (0), Ohio City, Van Wert, Mendon, Middlepoint, Fairmount (Indiana), Columbus, Grove Hill, Spencerville, and Union Township School and numerous concerts at Venedocia.

Financial Highlights

Receipts from concerts 1919-1920 season were \$838.58. Highest receipts for one concert \$175.00; the lowest \$15.00.

The New Year's "Pig Roast" at Weimers restaurant for the Club was \$27.00.

Club action on November 19, 1919 was to engage Dave Rees to start stove fire for rehearsals at 25¢ per night.

Club ruled that each member buy his own black tie and "stiff" collar for concert appearances.

A TYPICAL CAMBRIAN GLEE CLUB PROGRAM

Comrades In Arms
Hail Smiling Morn
Winter Song

Adam
Spofforth
Bullard

Glee Club

*Solo

Nothing Else To Do
Kentucky Babe

German Folk Song
Geibel

**Quartet

In Silent Mead
In Absence

Emerson
Buck

Glee Club

INTERMISSION

Far Away In The South
Oh Rose, My Rose
Those Evening Bells

Adams
Adams
Myers

Glee Club

Mock Sermon (Old Mother Hubbard)

Ambrose Breese

*Solo or Duet

Stars of the Summer Night
Lucky Jim

Woodbury
Parks

Quartet

All Through the Night
Sailors Chorus

Welsh Folk Song
Parry

Glee Club

* In Solo were Daniel Evans, Luther Jones, Maldwyn Jones, Rees Morris, Glenn Owens and Austin Pollock.

In Duet Daniel Evans and Maldwyn Jones.

** Quartet members Howard Hughes, Gwenlyn Jones Haydn Jones and Haydn Morgan

From the Columbus Dispatch issue of January 25, 1920 the following appeared:

"32 farmer boys from Venedocia, Van Wert County will give a concert at University Hall, Ohio State University, as a part of the annual Farmers Week Institute Program."

On the following night a program was presented at the West Broad Street School under the auspices of the Hoge Memorial Presbyterian Church and on Wednesday night, January 28, sang at the old Congregational Church under the sponsorship of the Miami Presbyterian Church.

A program was given at the Jeffrey's Manufacturing Company for our lunches, and by the way, on Tuesday noon fifteen of those singers rode a Buick car back to headquarters with a picture being taken at High and Goodale. On Wednesday noon the club sang for the Columbus Kiwanis Club at the Hotel Deshler (can't Thou forget?) and another BIG event was observing the downtown fire from which exposure all members (save the quartet who were serious fellows went to their rooms for a quiet rest and they were the only ones who escaped a cold and went home on time and in sound health) contracted severe colds, some were unable to return home for several days.

OTHER EXPERIENCES TO RECALL

Glenn Owens and party spending the night at the Kohn Mortuary in Columbus.

Joe Williams, Harris Evans and Palmer George spent sleep-less night at Fairmount, Indiana at the home of a local minister.

Howard Richards first experience with "Sure-Shot" tobacco.

Ed Jones, came out "second best" in the street car race in Columbus as will be noted in the following:

THE TRAGEDY OF A FOUR-ALARM FIRE

As we stood there that crisp winter evening, enthralled by the spectacle of a four-alarm fire, for two country boys this really was something - a sight we shall never forget - the burning of the big Morehouse-Martin Department Store. Apparently we were of the opinion that our wide open eyes should share this unscheduled spectacle with our consils. Remember this was 1919 and imagine if you can, the puffing steam fire engines, shouting firemen and the sight of the then-new aerial ladders lowering fire ladders practically into an inferno of flame to direct a stream of water where it would do the most good. We felt we were quite lucky to be there at that particular time to witness such an awesome sight.

Eventually it dawned upon us that in a very short time we were due at the University Hall, miles away, to give a concert. Proceeding to look for a street car we found to our amazement that no cars were running on High Street within six blocks of the fire. We started out on the run and just as we arrived at the designated corner to board our car, lo and behold it was leaving. Without any hesitancy we proceeded to make the Olympic officials of America proud of our efforts, trying to overtake that car. We soon discovered that the car stopped every two blocks but so did our supply of oxygen. Our speed ration was similar but the stamina of steel far surpasses the stamina of flesh, so the gruelling High Street Marathon continued. We were unable to converse but our minds were in accord, knowing full well that the moments were ticking away and we had a goal to reach. After many, many blocks we discovered flesh was overtaking steel and on closer inspection we noticed a steel basket or cradle on the rear of the car. I never knew for sure just why it was put there but I have the greatest respect for the inventor of same.

With renewed effort and a determination to do or die we made one supreme attempt, a burst of speed that would make a gazelle hang its head in shame, literally throwing our carcasses (I mean our bodies) into that lovely steel cradle. There we lay completely exhausted but with a smirk of triumph on our faces. After a few blocks of this unusual transportation some stool pigeon revealed our whereabouts to the conductor, who immediately informed us in no uncertain terms, that walking would be in order from there on. On extracting our weary bones from that haven of steel we discovered we were but one block from the main entrance of the University. Without even thanking the brass-buttoned gentlemen for the inexpensive but appreciated ride, we again took up our race with time for the remaining distance. As we breezed up the ramp (We later discovered that it was no ramp but steps) again smiles of accomplishment were exchanged, but as we burst through the front doors, horror of horrors, our comrades, one by one, were filing onto the stage. Our smiles of triumph immediately turned into looks of gloom and despair. We had run our course, reached our destination, yet had not accomplished our purposes.

Nothing to do now but become spectators. We watched as they gradually sealed the void that was to have been filled by two members whose late supreme efforts were in vain but whose hearts were on that stage that night. As we sat there listening with pride to those marvelous renditions we were saddened at the conclusion of each, well aware of the fact that we were not sharing (as in the past) the joy one receives from an outburst of applause. Also we were quite concerned as to whether our comrades would have forgiving hearts and would again receive us into their group. It was with great humility we made our appearance back stage immediately after the final curtain call. After sincere apologies and detailed explanation we were, to our great joy, forgiven. With jubilant hearts two tired but happy boys rested well that night.

May the Morehouse-Martin Store never burn again, but if it should it is our hope and wish that no choral group of rural extraction be in the fair city at that time.

Courtesy of Ed Jones & Bill Lloyd

Collection taken by Howell Rees at Pennsylvania Station at Dunkirk.

Layton Jenkins quote: "I Never Did and I Never Will."

Gaylord Jones losing the auto race to Daniel Evans due to Gaylord's two trips through the hedge fence.

"Pig Roast" at Weimer's on New Years Eve 1919 in Van Wert.

Shorty Breese's hypnotic power causing women in Fairmount, Indiana to hit the floor.

Rees Morris captivating audiences with smile and belly laugh.

Quartet almost failed to finish "Lucky Jim" at Wabash Ohio due to sincere sympathy and the "redhandkerchief."

The zero weather trip to Ridge School Concert.

Howard Hughes and Haydn Morgan experiences some difficulties for making the Columbus trip without their respective School Boards' permission.

It was the intention of the committee to include the "Mother Hubbard Sermon" which was effectively given by Ambrose on many occasions, but after forty years we regret that Ambrose was unable to recall it.

In the fall of 1920 Haydn Morgan left the community and Oswald Jones took over the duties of conductor.

During the summer of 1930 Haydn Morgan, after telling of the organization and its activities to an acquaintance in Buffalo, New York, was asked if the club ever held a get-together or reunion; that touched a spark and Haydn Morgan immediately wrote President Haydn and suggested such a meeting and from there Bill Haydn took over and on Saturday night just previous to Labor Day in 1930, the club held its first reunion at our old rehearsal place, the Cambrian Hall. It was a huge success and since then we have held an annual reunion except in 1952 when the club sang for the National Gymanfa Ganu in Columbus, Ohio on the customary reunion date; however the club held their banquet and rehearsal at the Seneca Hotel just prior to the concert. The club sang, augmented by several non-members from Venedocia and received many glowing comments on their singing.

After the establishment of the "reunion meetings" the music committee of the church at Venedocia invited the club to sing at the Sunday morning church service each year also that we swell the ranks of the male section at their evening Annual Gymanfa Ganu. This was always a thrill for the Club members, especially those who had moved from the community for their life's work. This practice was terminated in 1956 due to the difficulty of adequate rehearsal time and perhaps the honest statement should be made that most of the "Club Members" were by this time "Grandfathers" and that the old "vocal apparatus" was showing signs of the wear and tear of the earlier days. Since 1956 our faithful member of the first tenor section, Maldwyn Jones, of Chicago, has most ably represented the club each year in solo. The first few years of the reunion were strictly "stag" held at the Cambrian Hall to sing, visit, tell stories and recall past experiences with soft drinks and sweets for refreshments. Later when we had a little more change in our pockets we hit the banquet table, alternating between Maude's Restaurant in Delphos or The Whithall Inn in Van Wert; then when we really became "flush!", at least we wanted to appear thus, we invited our wives to be our guests with whom

we have enjoyed wonderful banquet suppers given by one of the Women's Church Organizations of the Venedocia Church. The 25th Reunion Anniversary was held in 1955 in Delphos with Reverend Harry Griffith, of Van Wert, as speaker. Too much praise cannot be given to the local committee on affairs for the reunions. President Bill has really made fine committee appointments.

Annual announcements of our chorus reunions are only a part of the duties our faithful secretary Gwen Jones has dispatched through the years. The accumulated records -- since the inception of the chorus -- are evidence of the diligence and devotion. Without them this brochure would not have been possible. To Gwen our sincere appreciation and thanks.

We are justly proud that our director Haydn Morgan has become a composer of national reknown. Church services across the country are enriched as choirs echo his anthems. To this date well over a million copies of his compositions have been published.

This leaflet has been presented in the hope that forgotten instances might be recalled, fading memories revitalized and reminiscence be unrestrained. We are grateful for the common birthright of Venedocia, a religious, song-loving community. May the Lord bless us in our remaining years on earth.

The club has indeed been blest in that all but five of the members are still living. Those who have gone to their reward are as follows:

Talmadge Hughes	1922	Second Bass
Elliott Morris	1927	Second Bass
Luther Jones	1950	First Tenor
Rufus Morris	1954	Baritone
Richard Owens	1956	Second Bass