

## A Musical Addendum

Iowa continues to be a favorite theme for composers. The writer can recall vividly one of his favorite Iowa songs which he had the privilege of singing as a solo in the chapel at the University of Dubuque in the spring of 1926. The composer, Coe Pettit, who called Mason City his home, was at the organ, and the words and music of his "Iowa I Love Best" made a deep impression on the students who came from many lands.

### *IOWA I LOVE BEST*

I've been to California  
That wondrous state of gold;  
I've seen the Rocky Mountains,  
Their majesty unfold;  
I've seen great New York City,  
Her buildings and her throngs;  
But 'cross the Mississippi  
Is right where I belong.

#### *Chorus:*

I-o-way, I-o-way,  
I am dreaming of you;  
Your fields bright and gay,  
Smiling skies above you;  
Land where mother's lullabies,  
Lulled her babes to rest;  
Sweet land of my childhood days,  
'Tis I-owa I love best.

Some sing of Bonnie Scotland,  
For there their hearts are tied;

Some sing of sweet Kil-lar-ney,  
 For Ire-land is their pride;  
 But I will sing of I-o-wa,  
 That beautiful rich land;  
 If you could gaze out o'er her,  
 I'm sure you'd understand.

I thought I'd like to travel,  
 I thought I'd like to roam;  
 So then to realize my dreams,  
 I wandered far from home;  
 Now since I've seen the others,  
 I know what I like best;  
 I'll take my good old I-o-wa,  
 And they can have the rest.

One of the latest of the "Iowa" songs to achieve popularity is that by Meredith Willson, copyrighted in 1944 and reprinted herewith. Willson was born in Mason City, Iowa, in 1902, educated in the local high school and Damrosch Institute of Musical Art, and has become a well-known musical director, conductor, and composer, popular with radio audiences.

*IOWA — IT'S A BEAUTIFUL NAME*

I - o - way, I - o - way  
 That's how they sing it in the Tall Corn Song  
 Other people call it I - "O" - WA  
 And they're both just a little bit wrong.

*Chorus:*

I - O - WA, it's a beautiful name  
 When you say it like they say it back home,  
 It's the robin in the willows,  
 It's the postmaster's friendly hello.

I - O - WA, it's a beautiful name  
 You'll remember it wherever you roam;  
 It's the sumac in September,  
 It's the squeak of your shoes in the snow.  
 It's the Sunday school and the old river bend,  
 Songs on the porch after dark;  
 It's the corner store and a penny to spend  
 You and your girl in the park.  
 I - O - WA, it's a beautiful name  
 When you say it like they say it back home,  
 It's a promise for tomorrow  
 And a mem'ry of long, long ago.

*Chorus:*

I - O - WA, it's a beautiful name  
 When you say it like they say it back home,  
 It's the robin in the willows,  
 It's the postmaster's friendly hello.  
 I - O - WA, it's a beautiful name  
 You'll remember it wherever you roam;  
 It's the sumac in September,  
 It's the squeak of your shoes in the snow.  
 It's the picnic ground and the whip-poor-will's call,  
 Acorns and dew on the lawn;  
 It's the County Fair and the Odd Fellow's Hall,  
 Meeting the circus at dawn.  
 I - O - WA, it's a beautiful name  
 When you say it like we say it back home,  
 It's a promise for tomorrow  
 And a mem'ry of long, long ago.  
 I - O - WA, what a beautiful name,  
 When you say it like we say it back home.

Iowa will always be deeply indebted to those native sons who have paid tribute to their homeland.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN