



The Dismal Swamp

**Bernard Covert
(1805-1882)**

**Arranged for the
Amphions of the Empire State
by
Prof. T. Wood
(1824-1895)**

The Dismal Swamp

B. Covert

S
They made her a grave too cold — and damp For a heart so warm — and

A
They made her a grave too cold and damp For a heart so warm — and

T
They made her a grave too cold — and damp For a heart so warm and

B
They made her a grave too cold and damp For a heart so warm and

4
S
true, ——— And she's gone to the lake of the dis - mal swamp Where

A
true, ——— And she's gone to the lake of the dis - mal swamp Where

T
true, ——— And she's gone to the lake of the dis - mal swamp Where

B
true, ——— And she's gone to the lake of the dis - mal swamp Where

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7

S all night long by her fire - fly lamp She pad - dles her light ca -

A all night long by her fire - fly lamp She pad - dles her light, her

T all night long by her fire - fly lamp She pad - dles her light ca -

B all night long by her fire - fly lamp She pad - dles her light, her

10

S noe. Her fire - fly lamp I soon shall see, Her

A light ca - noe. Her fire - fly lamp I soon shall see, Her

T noe. Her fire - fly lamp I soon shall see, Her

B light ca - noe. Her fire - fly lamp I soon shall see, Her

13

S pad - dle I soon shall hear; Long and lov - ing our

A pad - dle I soon, I soon shall hear; Long and lov - ing our

T pad - dle I soon shall hear; Long and lov - ing our

B pad - dle I soon, I soon shall hear; Long and lov - ing our

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16

S life shall be, And I'll hide the maid in a cy - press tree, When the

A life shall be, And I'll hide the maid in a cy - press tree, When the

T life shall be, And I'll hide the maid in a cy - press tree, When the

B life shall be, And I'll hide the maid in a cy - press tree, When the

This system contains four staves of music for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics are: 'life shall be, And I'll hide the maid in a cy - press tree, When the'. The music is in a common time signature and features various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some notes beamed together. There are also rests and a fermata over the final note of each line.

18

S foot - steps of death draw near, When the foot - steps of death draw near.

A foot - steps of death, of death draw near, When the foot - steps of death draw near.

T foot - steps of death draw near, When the foot - steps of death draw near.

B foot - steps of death, of death draw near, When the foot - steps of death draw near.

This system contains four staves of music for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics are: 'foot - steps of death draw near, When the foot - steps of death draw near.'. The music continues with similar note values and phrasing as the first system, ending with a double bar line.

S A - way to the dis - mal swamp he speeds, His path was rug - ged and

A A - way to the dis - mal swamp he speeds, His path was rug - ged and

T A - way to the dis - mal swamp he speeds, His path was rug - ged and

B A - way to the dis - mal swamp he speeds, His path was rug - ged and

This system contains four staves of music for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics are: 'A - way to the dis - mal swamp he speeds, His path was rug - ged and'. The music features a mix of note values and rests, with a key signature change to one flat (B-flat) indicated by a flat sign on the bass line.

The Dismal Swamp

25

S sore, _____ Through tan - gled jun - i - per, beds of weeds, Through

A sore, _____ Through tan - gled jun - i - per, beds of weeds, Through

T sore, _____ Through tan - gled jun - i - per, beds of weeds, Through

B sore, _____ Through tan - gled jun - i - per, beds of weeds, Through

28

S Man - y a fen where the ser - pent feeds, And man nev - er trod _____ be -

A Man - y a fen where the ser - pent feeds, And man nev - er trod, nev - er

T Man - y a fen where the ser - pent feeds, And man nev - er trod be -

B Man - y a fen where the ser - pent feeds, And man nev - er trod, nev - er

31

S fore. _____ And _____ when on earth he lay down to sleep, If _____

A trod be - fore. And when on earth he lay down to sleep, If _____

T fore. _____ And _____ when on earth he lay down to sleep, If

B trod be - fore. And when on earth he lay down to sleep, If

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34

S slum - ber his eye - lids knew, _____ He lay where the dead - ly

A slum - ber his eye - lids, eye - lids knew, He lay where the dead - ly

T slum - ber his eye - lids knew, _____ He lay where the dead - ly

B slum - ber his eye - lids, eye - lids knew, He lay where the dead - ly

37

S vine _____ doth weep Its _____ ven - om - ous tear, _____ and night - ly steep The

A vine _____ doth weep Its _____ ven - om - ous tear, _____ and night - ly steep The

T vine _____ doth weep Its _____ ven - om - ous tear, _____ and night - ly steep The

B vine doth weep Its ven - om - ous tear, and night - ly steep The

40

S flesh with blist - 'ring dew, _____ The flesh with blist - 'ring dew. _____

A flesh with blist - 'ring, blist - 'ring dew, The flesh with blist - 'ring dew. _____

T flesh with blist - 'ring dew, _____ The flesh with blist - 'ring dew. _____

B flesh with blist - 'ring, blist - 'ring dew, The flesh with blist - 'ring dew. _____

The Dismal Swamp

S And near him the she - wolf stirred — the brake, And the cop - per snake breathed in his

A And near him the she - wolf stirred the brake, And the cop - per snake breathed in his

T And near him the she - wolf stirred — the brake, And the cop - per snake breathed in his

B And near him the she - wolf stirred the brake, And the cop - per snake breathed in his

47
S ear, — Till he start - ing, cried, — from his dream a - wake — “Oh!

A ear, — Till he start - ing, cried, — from his dream a - wake — “Oh!

T ear, — Till he start - ing, cried, — from his dream a - wake — “Oh!

B ear, — Till he start - ing, cried, — from his dream a - wake — “Oh!

50
S when shall I see the dusk - y lake, And the light — ca - noe of my

A when shall I see the dusk - y lake, And the light ca - noe, — ca -

T when shall I see the dusk - y lake, And the light ca - noe of my

B when shall I see the dusk - y lake, And the light ca - noe, ca -

The Dismal Swamp

53

S dear!" He reached the lake, and a me - teor spark Quick

A noe of my dear!" He reached the lake, and a me - teor spark Quick

T dear!" He reached the lake, and a me - teor spark Quick

B noe of my dear!" He reached the lake, and a me - teor spark Quick

56

S o - ver its sur - face played; "Wel - come," he cried, "my

A o - ver its sur - face, sur - face played; "Wel - come," he cried, "my

T o - ver its sur - face played; "Wel - come," he cried, "my

B o - ver its sur - face, sur - face played; "Wel - come," he cried, "my

59

S dear one's light," And the dim shore ech - oed for man - y a night The

A dear one's light," And the dim shore ech - oed for man - y a night The

T dear one's light," And the dim shore ech - oed for man - y a night The

B dear one's light," And the dim shore ech - oed for man - y a night The

The Dismal Swamp

62

S name of that death - cold maid, _____ The name of that death - cold maid. _____

A name of that maid, — that death - cold maid, The name of that death - cold maid. _____

T name of that death - cold maid, _____ The name of that death - cold maid. _____

B name of that maid, that death - cold maid, The name of that death - cold maid. _____

S Till he made him a boat from birch - en bark, Which car - ried him off from the

A Till he made him a boat from birch - en bark, Which car - ried him off from the

T Till he made him a boat from birch - en bark, Which car - ried him off from the

B Till he made him a boat from birch - en bark, Which car - ried him off from the

69

S shore; _____ Long he fol - lowed that me - teor spark, The

A shore; _____ Long he fol - lowed that me - teor spark, The

T shore; _____ Long he fol - lowed that me - teor spark, The

B shore; _____ Long he fol - lowed that me - teor spark, The

The Dismal Swamp

72

S wind was high, and the night was dark, And the boat re - turned no

A wind was high, and the night was dark, And the boat re - turned, re -

T wind was high, and the night was dark, And the boat re - turned no

B wind was high, and the night was dark, And the boat re - turned, re -

75

S more. And oft from the In - dian hunt - er's camp, This

A turned no more. And oft from the In - dian hunt - er's camp, This

T more. And oft from the In - dian hunt - er's camp, This

B turned no more. And oft from the In - dian hunt - er's camp, This

78

S lov - er and maid so true, Are seen at the hour of

A lov - er and maid, and maid so true, Are seen at the hour of

T lov - er and maid so true, Are seen at the hour of

B lov - er and maid, and maid so true, Are seen at the hour of

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81

S
mid - night damp, To cross the lake by their fire - fly lamp, And to

A
mid - night damp, To cross the lake by their fire - fly lamp, And to

T
mid - night damp, To cross the lake by their fire - fly lamp, And to

B
mid - night damp, To cross the lake by their fire - fly lamp, And to

84

S
pad - dle their light ca - noe, And to pad - dle their light ca - noe.

A
pad - dle their light, their light ca - noe, And to pad - dle their light ca - noe.

T
pad - dle their light ca - noe, And to pad - dle their light ca - noe.

B
pad - dle their light, their light ca - noe, And to pad - dle their light ca - noe.

Oliver Ditson
(1852)

Bernard Covert (1805-1882) was born in New York and grew up near Franklin, New York. He lived in Albany and became a well known singer and composer giving solo concerts with temperance music as his specialty. He also became acclaimed for his “temperance duo” with singer and composer Ossian Dodge. His career eventually led him to settle in Brooklyn. He appeared with many other popular singers of the time including Joseph P. Webster. He also travelled with Horace Greely singing political songs at Greely’s events. Many of his compositions were performed by the Hutchinson Family Singers, one of the popular musical troupes of the mid-century. His best-known pieces were “The Sword of Bunker Hill” and “Jamie’s on the Stormy Sea.” He remained a popular and successful performer until his death. He died in Newburg, New York.

Theodore Wood (1824-1895) was born in New York. He became a teacher of music and was superintendent of music in the public schools at Albany, Saratoga, Sandy Hill, and Lansingburgh, New York. He taught privately, gave class instruction in vocal music, and was music leader at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Albany. He led singing conventions throughout the region and was often assisted by his brother Robert M. Wood, who was also a musician. He later left New York and moved to North Carolina. He taught classes on congregational music at churches in a number of locations including Asheville and Pine Bluff. He died in Morganton, North Carolina. He wrote music for pedagogical use, arranged songs for performance by musical troupes and published the “Heavenly choir: a collection of hymns and tunes for all occasions of worship, congregational, church, prayer, praise, choir, Sunday school, and social Meetings (1876).”

Southern States: Dismal Swamp, VA

The Lake of the Dismal Swamp

Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

Written at Norfolk, VA

A young man at the South is said to have become fearfully and hopelessly deranged by the death of his affianced bride. In his madness he constantly asserted that she was not dead, but had gone to the lake of the Dismal Swamp, a beautiful sheet of water situated in the midst of an extensive and dreary morass, inhabited only by wild beasts and loathsome reptiles. He often insisted upon going in search of her, and at length eluded the vigilance of his keepers and escaped, and as he was never heard from, it was supposed that he perished in the attempt to find his lost one. In the song the poet has attempted to give language and form to the vagaries of a diseased imagination, and to suggest a possible and pleasing termination to his perilous wanderings. (from 1852 Ditson publication)

They made her a grave too cold and damp
For a heart so warm and true,
And she's gone to the lake of the dismal swamp
Where all night long by her firefly lamp
She paddles her light canoe.

Her firefly lamp I soon shall see,
Her paddle I soon shall hear;
Long and loving our life shall be,
And I'll hide the maid in a cypress tree,
When the footsteps of death draw near.

Away to the dismal swamp he speeds,
His path was rugged and sore,
Through tangled juniper, beds of weeds,
Through Many a fen where the serpent feeds,
And man never trod before.

And when on earth he lay down to sleep,
If slumber his eyelids knew,
He lay where the deadly vine doth weep
Its venomous tear, and nightly steep
The flesh with blistering dew.

And near him the she-wolf stirred the brake,
And the copper snake breathed in his ear,
Till he starting, cried,— from his dream awake—
“Oh! when shall I see the dusky lake,
And the light canoe of my dear!”

He reached the lake, and a meteor spark
Quick over its surface played;
“Welcome,” he cried, “my dear one's light,”
And the dim shore echoed for many a night
The name of that death-cold maid.

Till he made him a boat from birchen bark,
Which carried him off from the shore;
Long he followed that meteor spark,
The wind was high, and the night was dark,
And the boat returned no more.

And oft from the native hunter's camp,
This lover and maid so true,
Are seen at the hour of midnight damp,
To cross the lake by their firefly lamp,
And to paddle their light canoe.

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