This Edition marks the first publication of the full score and complete text of *Johnny Johnson* (1936), Weill’s earliest work specifically composed for his new American audience. The Group Theatre had put Weill in contact with the North Carolina playwright Paul Green (1894–1981) and opened the production at the Forty-Fourth Street Theatre, New York, on 19 November 1936. It ran for just short of two months, closing on 16 January 1937. The Group, however, lost confidence in *Johnny Johnson* during rehearsal, and the version it performed was subject to drastic cuts and last-minute revisions. During the New York run, Green attempted to remedy the defects, preparing a new text for publication that he also submitted to the Federal Theatre Project, which mounted productions in Boston and Los Angeles in May 1937. Weill was in Hollywood at the time, and the latter production further benefited from his advice. The textual and musical sources nonetheless remained confused, as several theater companies complained, even after Weill produced a vocal score in 1940. Six years after Weill’s death, Green worked with Stella Adler (formerly of the Group Theatre) on a revival of *Johnny Johnson* (1956); a recording of the music was made that same year. Fifteen years later, Green, Lotte Lenya, and Lys Symonette (Weill’s musical assistant on Broadway from 1945 to 1950, and Lenya’s accompanist and musical adviser from 1950 to 1981) worked up a revised version that opened briefly in New York in April 1971 and became the one sanctioned for performance. The present Edition, however, returns to the text as Green revised it in December 1936, and more or less as Weill saw *Johnny Johnson* on stage in Los Angeles in May 1937 (even though some small cuts were made there, too). That is the most complete version of the work ever performed.

*Johnny Johnson* reveals a great deal not just about Weill’s attempts to adjust artistically to life in America but also about new theatrical experiments in the mid-1930s, as well as changing political circumstances in a world where war was clearly on the horizon. Much documentation survives for the work in its various incarnations: besides the textual and musical sources themselves, we also have printed programs, press notices, draft scripts and subsequent redactions, rehearsal and production notes, correspondence and memoranda, diary entries, (auto)biographical writings, and transcriptions of interviews and other oral histories. The impact of all these materials on specific issues pertaining to the Edition is detailed in the Critical Report, and the present Introduction draws on them as well.¹

I. Weill, Green, and the Group Theatre

*Johnny Johnson* appears to owe its inception to Weill’s introduction to Harold Clurman, a member of the Group Theatre, during the winter of 1935–36. The composer had arrived in New York City on 10 September 1935 to work on the upcoming production of *The Eternal Road*. The meeting with Clurman prompted the idea of a new musical-theatrical collaboration that would be Weill’s first written specifically for the American stage; it would also be the Group’s first venture into such terrain. For Weill, this was not the only possibility in the cards. On 31 January 1936 Weill wrote to his publisher, Heugel, in Paris about plans that included a musical with Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur (the authors of *Jumbo*), adding that “similarly I am having discussions with the Group Theatre, the most modern and newest theater company in New York. They are also very interested in me.”² Although a New York production of *Die Dreigroschenoper* in April 1933 had not gone down well, Weill had already gained a reputation in some circles there by way of a production of *Der Jasager* (also April 1933) under the auspices of the Henry Street Settlement Music School, conducted by Lehman Engel and directed by Sanford Meisner (who played Captain Valentine in *Johnny Johnson*), as well as by reports of his work in Germany. Given the Group’s own commitment to social drama and its participation in the rise of leftist theater during the Depression years, it was a logical partner for the composer newly arrived on American shores.³

It seems to have been Clurman’s codirector, Cheryl Crawford, who suggested a collaboration between Weill and Paul Green (who at that time taught philosophy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; he would become a professor of drama there in 1938). Green, a classmate of Thomas Wolfe, had won a Pulitzer Prize in 1927 for his play *In Abraham’s Bosom* and had been associated with the Group since its inception in 1931 (its first production was Green’s *The House of Connelly*); his play *The Enchanted Maze* was already under consideration for a Group production in 1936–37. He had seen *Die Dreigroschenoper* in Berlin during his Guggenheim Fellowship there in 1928–29, and he had also encountered in Germany the Russian director Alexei Granowski, who inspired him with his ideas on new forms of musical theater.⁴ Although Green may seem an odd choice to collaborate with Weill, he was a poet as well as a playwright and therefore could also write song lyrics, which was a distinct advantage from many the Russian director Alexei Granowski, who inspired him with his ideas on new forms of musical theater.⁴ Although Green may seem an odd choice to collaborate with Weill, he was a poet as well as a playwright and therefore could also write song lyrics, which was a distinct advantage from Green’s “fascinated with the element of music in the theatre.”⁵ In his post-Berlin phase, he made serious attempts to incorporate music in his African American plays, including *Tread the Green Grass* (1928–32) and *Shroud My Body Down* (1935)—both with music by UNC colleague Lamar Stringfield—and *Roll, Sweet Chariot* (1928–34), with music by Dolphe Martin; Green later suggested that *Roll, Sweet Chariot* was the first of his so-called symphonic dramas.⁶ None achieved critical success—only *Roll, Sweet Chariot* played in New York, for one week in early October 1934—and Green’s attempts to bring music, dance, and pantomime into the dramatic frame were mostly limited to folk or folklode melodies in simple arrangements. Clearly, however, Green would be receptive at least to the idea of a musical play.⁷

Clurman visited Green in Chapel Hill in early April, and Crawford wrote to Green on the 10th to move the project forward: “Let me know what you think of Schweik. The play on him was culled from three volumes and it might be easier to ascertain the merits of the story from reading that in translation rather than the book. We all think it’s a fine idea for an American anti-war comedy in almost revue style and Weill is not only a very talented composer but an exceptionally brilliant theatre man as well.

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He believes that the script can be done in four or five weeks of steady collaborative work.”9 The notion of drawing upon Jaroslav Hašek’s novel The Good Soldier Švejk (1921–22)—already adapted by Erwin Piscator and others (including Brecht)—as a play (1927–28)—appears to have been Weill’s. Green was presumably also familiar with Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck and Carl Zuckmayer’s 1931 play Der Hauptmann von Köpenick.9 The theme was, of course, timely, given the Italian invasion and occupation of Ethiopia (annexed on 7 May 1936) and the events leading up to the Spanish Civil War (begun on 17 July). It also played into a broader repertory of novels and plays of the 1930s responding to the ravages of World War I, or war in general, in grotesque terms:10 for example, Irwin Shaw’s play of the 1930s responding to the ravages of World War I, or war in general, in grotesque terms:10 for example, Irwin Shaw’s play of the 1930s responding to the ravages of World War I, or war in general, in grotesque terms:10 for example, Irwin Shaw’s play of

Crawford and Weill visited Green in Chapel Hill in early May to map out a scenario for their new play. Weill found him “a curious fellow” and was “not sure whether he’s able to handle this project.”11 As for Crawford, on her return she thanked Green for his hospitality and offered advice:

I am positive that if you write this play in the spirit you would a movie script and have a good time, and don’t worry in the first draft very much about the plot or character motivations, that the final significance that we all want the script to have, can be taken care of in the last draft. . . . Kurt says not to think too much about the music as that can be fitted in and prepared for in later drafts. All we need in the beginning is a good, amusing story.12

In his own thank-you letter after his Chapel Hill visit, Weill also made some pointed suggestions for the first act (“The main problem, in my opinion, is to give the first part a real suspense”), identifying the key dramatic moments as Johnny Johnson’s decision to enlist in the army—motivated by “the dreams of his girl (romantic heroism) and the propaganda of the government (democracy, liberty)” —and then the “trick” by which he is able to go to Europe. Crawford’s codirectors Clurman and Lee Strasberg appear to have had mixed feelings about the project, but they were eventually persuaded later that summer by the Group actors’ enthusiastic response to Weill’s description of the play and rendition of some of the music.13 Still, Crawford apparently remained the prime mover in the project (she later called it “her baby”), and she received special credit for it in the New York program (see Plate 10).14 Weill also seems to have felt that his professional relationship with Crawford was one of the more positive things to emerge from Johnny Johnson. His contract with the Group was prepared on 1 June, and Green’s on 29 July.15

In 1936, as in previous years, the Group spent the summer lodged at the Pine Brook Club in Nichols, Connecticut, where it rehearsed, took classes (dancing, acting, poetic reading, and singing, with fencing optional), and provided weekly entertainment for the inn’s guests. Crawford, Weill, Lenya, and Green rented a nearby house (although Green later moved elsewhere) for June–August 1936, during which time Green did much of his work on the play and consulted with Group members to revise and refine the script. Weill apparently wrote most of the music then as well, in some cases drawing on previously composed material.16 Furthermore, he coached the Group actors by teaching them songs from Die Dreigroschenoper; he also presented a lecture titled “What Is Musical Theatre?” on 27 July discussing his prior work in Germany and what he thought were the new possibilities for the United States.17

Green sent regular progress reports to his wife, Elizabeth Lay Green:

[9 June] I’m going to push through night and day on this thing and try to get a good working draft by the end of the month. If it goes well and the Group decide to open with it, they will need me back sometime in July and August. . . . I am not any too thrilled over the story I’ve worked out so far, but I hope for the best.

[13 June] Last night I read the first part of Johnny Johnson to Cheryl and Kurt and they liked it very much. I am the least enthusiastic so far. The plan is still to open with it if we possibly can get it in shape by August. I shall stay here till the end of June, hoping to get it pretty nearly scripted and then come home. It may be that I’ll have to come back up here, but I hope not. . . . I believe it’s going to be easy working with Kurt, and already I have given him a funeral hymn song which he is going to develop for the opening. He liked it very much—again. Some of his melodies from former things are very nice—his wife sings some of them rather well, especially the one about eight sails and fifty cannons [“Seeräuber-Jenny” from Die Dreigroschenoper].

[3 July] Johnny Johnson is doing fairly well, though I’ve had to drive myself to the job, feeling lazy most of the time.

[9 July] It is not entirely decided here whether to open the Group season with Johnny Johnson or not. It all depends how far along I get in the next week or ten days. I am proceeding at a terribly slow gait. But it’s going to be pretty good, I can already see that.

[13 July] Johnny Johnson alas creeps on at a snail’s pace. I’m still planning to leave here Sunday afternoon.

[30 July] Cheryl has read the play several times and seems to think it is practically ready to go into rehearsal, but how strange to say I am the one who feels least encouraged about it. Or is it strange? Really, yesterday I was so sick of the pile of conglomerate material that I felt as if I would never get anything worthwhile out of it. But I’m tackling it again and will know the worst or best the first of next week. I have told to the group that I want to if possible get away around August fifteenth. Kurt thinks everything will be finished from my point of view by that time. And in fact it may be better for me to be gone since he seems to have such good ideas as to how he wants to stage it, though I’m sure if I were present during rehearsals I could make a lot of places better. So unless absolutely necessary to stay here, you may expect to see me around the middle of the month on my way to Hollywood.

[undated, but early August] Johnny Johnson is progressing poly-wise. Slow—slow—who but what with cutting and compressing what I’ve done [it] seems to be very good. Anyway the Group people like it—I don’t always trust their judgment, though mine seems to fit well where their’s [sic] breaks down), and the present plans are to start rehearsals near the end of the month for opening in October. Kurt has written a lot of beautiful melodies for the lyrics, and he has hopes of a great success. Cheryl says he and I will make more money on this than we’ll know what to do with. Uncle Sam will tell us.18

Elizabeth Lay Green, herself a poet, must have been involved in discussions about Johnny Johnson during her husband’s periodic returns to Chapel Hill over the summer. At some stage she also provided a version of the lyrics for at least two of the songs: “Oh the Rio Grande” (no. 20) and “Song of the Guns” (no. 22).19

Harold Clurman remained skeptical about the project. On 18 June he wrote to his cousin and close friend Aaron Copland, “Kurt Weill and Lenja are living at Cheryl’s house up there. Weill is working with Paul Green on that play they all concocted together. I hope it turns out alright.” On 19 July he told Copland that “the Paul Green–Kurt Weill opus is progressing—a first rehearsal draft is due to be completed August first—but this is a complex affair (technically speaking) and I’m not yet certain that it comes off. Anyway this play seems to me to need a great deal of preparation so it is hardly likely to be our first [of the season].”20 On a reading of the play to the Group on 2 August, as Green noted in his diary, Clurman let loose “a long, hysterical harangue pointing out obvious little values in script, etc.” He was somewhat more positive when he wrote to Donald Oenslager (who designed the sets for Johnny Johnson) on 20 August asking him to come out to Nichols (“We would like you to read a script and have time to think about it—so the earlier you come the better it will be for all of us”).21 However, Clurman may also have had his own agenda: the other play being worked on at the summer retreat was Clifford Odets’s The Silent Partner, and Clurman was hoping to persuade Copland to write the incidental music—either to scoop Crawford or to gain what could have
been a spectacular coup for the Group, with both Weill and Copland in its 1936–37 season.27

In an interview almost forty years later (8 February 1974), Green discussed the creative processes involved in Johnny Johnson, including the fact that the text and music went hand in hand and that Group actors had significant input, even at the level of shaping individual lines of text.28 He also noted here and elsewhere that he both admired and felt frustrated with the Group’s political leanings, its commitment to Stanislavsky, and its working methods rooted in what seemed to him endless improvisation and relentless critique. His early draft of Act I (Tt1) reveals something of the state of the play by the end of that summer: although the six scenes are close in outline to the final text, there are significant differences in detail, and not all the songs have been fixed (for example, “Aggie’s Song” has four stanzas, and “The West-Pointer’s Song” has a different text that does not fit the music). The first scene in particular would be greatly changed: it involves the unveiling not of a monument to “peace” but, rather, of a tombstone for “Dan,” a hero of the Spanish–American War (1898), who turns out (to rather limp comic effect) to be a horse; Green’s earlier ideas for the scene also suggest a number of other scenarios for it, including one based in Washington, D.C. (as Johnny Johnson and Minny Belle visit the city on a Sunday School outing).29 The tombstone explains Minny Belle’s “Epitaph” to Dan—the first version of “Democracy Advancing” (for which the piano-vocal score Vh survives)—presumably the “funeral hymn song” that Green noted to his wife on 13 June (see above). The subsequent revision also left some loose ends that were never resolved. The title of Grandpa Joe’s song in Act I, Scene i in the published vocal score (Ve), “The Battle of San Juan Hill,” derives from this first version, referring to the battle that took place on 1 July 1898 in Cuba. The removal of Dan required reworking the text, so that instead it extolled Grandpa Joe’s exploits “Up Chickamauga Hill” in a Civil War battle (18–20 September 1863)—a change that forced Green into some uncharacteristic historical lapses (Chickamauga was, in fact, a creek, and General Francis C. Barlow, mentioned in the song, did not fight there). Musical material composed but apparently dropped during this period includes the first of a series of three songs for Minny Belle in Lii (her “ballad of the dauntless soldier” noted in Tt1, 33; this may be the untested “Minnie Belle’s Song” in Vh) and a trio in Lii (the recruiting office) for Sergeant Jackson, Captain Valentine, and Dr. McBray (“We Need a Man,” in Vh, reworking “Lied des Gerichtsvollziehers” from Der Kuhhandel; this trio was evidently removed prior to Tt1).30

II. Rehearsals and Premiere

Despite Clurman’s reservations, various New York newspapers (e.g., the Mirror and Herald-Tribune) announced on 4 August that the Group would open its 1936–37 season with Johnny Johnson, followed by Clifford Odets’s The Silent Partner (which Odets never finished).31 The Group continued its weekly performances at Pine Brook through August, usually on Wednesdays, with an additional performance on Monday, 31 August; these consisted of one-act plays, along with Weill songs performed by Lena. After their final performance on Saturday, 12 September, the Group returned to the city.32 Although the New York Herald-Tribune reported on 23 August that neither Johnny Johnson nor The Silent Partner was ready, rehearsals for Johnny Johnson began in the Belmont Theatre either on Monday, 14 September (if we are to believe Green), or on Monday, 28 September (as reported in the Herald-Tribune on 24 September), with the intention to open in late October.33

Lehman Engel had already approached Weill in July 1936 about the possibility of acting as musical director for Johnny Johnson (Weill wrote on the 27th that he would recommend him to the Group), evidently on the basis of a recommendation from Copland to Clurman, and he was in place by 17 September, when he met with the Executive Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, to discuss in general terms contractual arrangements for the musicians.34 It remained unclear who would direct the play; however: shortly after the Group’s return to New York City, Clurman relinquished that role to Strasberg on the grounds that he was overburdened with administrative tasks.35 We do not know when Weill sent the copyists piano-vocal materials for rehearsal purposes (leading to Vm1 and Pm1) and his full score (Fh) for extraction of the instrumental parts (Im1); the parts, at least, seem to have come quite late in the process. Meanwhile, Green continued writing and revising his text: he wrote to his wife on Saturday, 17 October, that he planned to have “almost the last touches” completed by the following Wednesday. He later recalled the dismal time he had trying to figure out how to end the play and his ultimate dissatisfaction with its conclusion.36

As usual, a regular flow of press releases from the Group’s publicist, Emanuel Eisenberg, and from the agents of individual actors kept the newspapers informed of the play’s progress (or lack thereof).37 The New York Daily Worker noted the casting of the title role (Russell Collins) on 28 September; the New York Herald-Tribune listed other cast members on 8 October (Phoebe Brand, William Challee, Morris Carnovsky, Jules Garfield, Elia Kazan, Sanford Meisner, Art Smith, and Albert Van Deldker). On 15 October the New York Times added Lee J. Cobb and Joseph Pevney to the list (along with Luther Adler, Robert Lewis, Paula Miller, Eunice Stoddard, and Ruth Nelson), and on the 28th the New York World-Telegram reported completion of the casting (Romain Bohnen, Grover Burgess, Herbert Ratter, and numerous others). On 21 October, the New York Times and other newspapers mentioned a ten-piece orchestra to be directed by Lehman Engel (though more players are in fact needed). The Herald-Tribune reported on 25 October the Group’s appointment of Lasar Galpren to instruct the actors in body technique and dramatic gesture. On 27 October and 3 November, the New York Times noted the inclusion of twenty musical numbers. The state of the play also gave rise to speculation: the New York American reported on 28 October that Clifford Odets had been brought in to knock things into shape, although the rumor was countered in the New York Times on the 31st. The financing, too, met with doubt, at least until the New York Times could report (on 10 November) that John Hay (Jock) Whitney—a prominent playboy, racehorse owner, and the founder of Pioneer Pictures, who later became a diplomat and philanthropist—was backing the production.38 The Group also generated interest through a series of lectures and colloquia on modern drama at the New School for Social Research on alternate Saturday mornings, starting on 10 October.39

As the opening approached, the Group’s press office started issuing longer press releases and also printed a publicity flyer:

. . . This is an American folk legend, full of the humors of old vaudeville and the provincial family album, but sharpened with brilliant comments on the madness of contemporary life—ranging from wars that make the world safe for democracy to the affectsations of mental healing. Johnny Johnson is an American Don Quixote whose simple wisdom and uninhibited honesty expose the folly of his fellow men.

While this is a play with songs, it is not a musical show. The singing arises naturally from the situations of the imaginative story and the verses of the song flow as simply as the prose of the speech. Paul Green, whose dramatic pictures of American folk life have greatly enriched the literature of our stage, wrote the story; and Kurt Weill, the distinguished European composer, wrote the tuneful, gay and touching music.

The Group Theatre believes Johnny Johnson to be the most unusual and entertaining play it has presented thus far.40

The press took up the thread and started to carry longer stories about the play and its collaborators. Thus on Saturday 17 October the Midwest Pictorial featured a two-page spread on the Group and its activities over the summer leading up to Johnny Johnson: “While the play is studded with songs, it is not a musical show in the traditional sense. The lyrics written by Green, and scored by Weill, flow naturally as an opera aria from the situations in which the characters find themselves. They are written with the directness and casualness of prose speech, and attain a tuneful, gay and mocking quality not usual in the tin-pan alley songs America consumes.”
Well continued the theme in his article “The Alchemy of Music,” published in Stage in November (with the subtitle “Music may be the ingredient that will transmute the play into living theatre”). In interviews with Well carried in the Daily Worker (10 November, with the headline “A Musician Who Devotes His Talent to Theatre”) and repeated in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle (15 November, under the headline “Music in Exile”), the Newark Ledger (17 November), and the New York Post (5 December), we likewise learn that “Johnny Johnson will be the first effort in America of a basic fusion of drama and music in the legitimate theatre” and, moreover, “that Kurt Weill is not here on a visit, as he was in Paris and London; he is here to stay, since he is convinced that the important popular experiments he began in Germany can achieve completion in this country more readily than anywhere in the world.”

While most of these early accounts were prompted by Group press releases, Johnny Johnson appears to have captured some interest, particularly in the left-wing papers. It may also have stood out amid the relative paucity of high-class theatrical offerings in the 1936–37 season, one regarded both at the time and in retrospect as somewhat lackluster. From September until early January, the D’Oyly Carte Opera Company ran a series of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas at the Martin Beck Theatre; White Horse Inn opened on 1 October; Cole Porter’s Red, Hot, and Blue, starring Jimmy Durante, Ethel Merman, and Bob Hope, had its premiere on the 29th (with sets by Donald Oenslager, who also designed Johnny Johnson plus seven other new shows between September and December); the short-lived Romberg–Harrbach Forbidden Melody began on 2 November; and Rodgers and Hart’s On Your Toes, which had opened on 11 April 1936, transferred to the Majestic Theatre on 9 November. Not that Johnny Johnson was ever mentioned in the same breath as such conventional musical fare—if anything, it was linked to “social” dramas of the season, such as the Federal Theatre Project’s productions of John C. Moffitt and Sinclair Lewis’s It Can’t Happen Here (26 October), which was a satire on a fascist dictator ruling America (a thinly veiled portrait of Senator Huey Long); E. P. Conkle’s 200 Were Grown (20 November), about the recent fiasco of government-sponsored set-downs (under the headline “War and Minny Belle no longer sings its “epitaph” but, rather, “Democracy Advancing” (and Grandpa Joe recounts his exploits “Up Chickamauga Hill”)); in Lii, Aggie’s Song has a longer text (nine stanzas) involving exchanges between Minny Belle and Grandpa Joe, who argue over Johnny Johnson’s suitability as a prospective husband; and Minny Belle enters toward the end of L.v to take a final farewell of Johnny as he embarks for France (the text of the song “Farewell, Goodbye” is a still later addition to T2). In Act II, Scene ii space is left, but no words given, for the reprise of “Captain Valentine’s Song” and for “Oh the Rio Grande”; “Johnny’s Dream” and “Song of the Guns” are in a separate scene; the French Nurse has a reprise of “Mon Ami, My Friend” at the end of II.ii; and in place of what became “The Dance of the Generals” is a Gilbert and Sullivan-type chorus (“Hay-hay-hay-hee-hee / Six little happy little boys are we”). Finally, Act III, Scene iii contains a long opening monologue for Johnny, although a penciled note adds, “All of Johnny’s speech here is cut. He has scene with the child and then stands alone on the stage and sings a very beautiful song about his faith in what he believes and in the world.”

The Group made major changes to the music as opening night approached. At a meeting with the Executive Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, on Thursday, 12 November, Crawford reported that “many musical numbers are being cut” and that the Group was “still pruning the numbers in the show.” Although her report was intended to reinforce the classification of Johnny Johnson as a “dramatic show” (and therefore to reduce the requirement for, and cost of, musicians), it seems clear that these musical decisions were being made, rather, for what the Group considered to be artistic reasons. The internal notes on the run-throughs suggest that it was quickly decided to drop Minny Belle’s “Farewell, Goodbye” from L.v because of its lackluster sentimentality (Green later moved the song to Lii, although Weill never followed suit). Weill had designed the song to include a march (for the soldiers to exit) prior to a brief return to the main melody (for Minny Belle left alone, it seems), then moving to an instrumental version of “Johnny’s Song” to cover the change of scene to L.v. The cut forced Well to rethick the soldiers’ exit (he adopted an instrumental version of “Democracy Advancing” instead), as well as his plan to use “Farewell, Goodbye” for the instrumental Interlude between III.i and III.ii (he replaced it with “Oh the Rio Grande”). “Aggie’s Song in Lii seems to have been cut early in the run-throughs, as was II.ii (with “Song of the Wounded Frenchmen”), which the Group felt would not work in the larger theater. Scenes iv–v in Act I (the drill ground and bayonet run) were combined in a single scene, while retaining, at least for the moment, “The Sergeant’s Chant” and “The West- Pointer’s Song,” although Captain Valentine appears to have lost the continuations of his song in Liii and L.iv (but not L.v and II.ii, somewhat inconsequentially). “Song of the Goddess” (L.vi) was cut after the Monday run-through because the words could not be heard. Dropping it created further problems with the musical sequence beginning at the end of L.v (already disrupted, we have seen, by the removal of “Farewell, Goodbye”). The production first adopted the ending of the “Song of the Goddess” (mm. 30–55) as an instrumental conclusion to the act (also curtailting the prior instrumental version of “Johnny’s Song”), but Weill then replaced it entirely with a five-measure cadiyal flourish that seems to have been hastily composed. This cut also forced the removal of the (wordless) reprise of “Song of the Goddess” in II.lii, so there was no return via New York Harbor at the end of Act II. Rather, the Group decided to incorporate II.viii (the death of Johann) within the “flashes” in II.vii during “In Time of War and Tumults,” for which Weill revised the ending to conclude the act.

All these changes preceded the compilation of T3, which served as the prompt script for the Group production. Even after that script, however, further cuts and changes were contemplated. The first two scenes of Act I
caused anxiety because they were thought irrelevant to the main action, and because the staging of I.i was not working out. A late proposal to recast them into a single scene—beginning in the Tompkins house (I.ii) and interpolating the declaration of war and Johnny's indecision over enlisting—was not enacted. There was some discussion about removing the character of Aggie Tompkins entirely ("Aggie's Song" had already disappeared, as noted above), but she was retained. "Johnny's Dream" in I.ii appears to have been dropped, and the following "Song of the Guns" was under threat, although it finally justifiably itself. Green and others made a strenuous case for playing out "The Allied High Command" (II.v) in speech rather than song (and without underscoring), and even performing the laughing-gas episode toward the end of that scene over just a drum roll (as Weill had originally planned, so it was claimed), thereby removing "The Dance of the Generals." It seems that "The Battle" in II.ii (which does not accompany any battle but instead underscores events prior to the resumption of war) was a candidate for similar treatment. Elsewhere, concerns about the interference of the songs in the dramatic action led to the repeated insistence that they be reduced to one stanza (for "Oh the Rio Grande" and "Mon Ami, My Friend") and delivered in the manner of recitative—more spoken than sung, an approach deemed successful with "Captain Valentine's Song" in I.iii and its surviving repetitions. It is not clear, however, whether any of these changes took place, and indeed, there would probably have been a resistance to them on practical grounds given that the Group was subsequently disallowed by the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802, from dismissing any of the musicians used in the pit once Johnny Johnson opened.48

During the final run-throughs, members of the Group became increasingly convinced that they had a disaster on their hands. The opening had originally been announced for late October, then Saturday 14 November, and then Tuesday 17 November (as it remained until very late in the day).49 Some advocated postponement and even, perhaps, a road tour. In the end, however, the opening was delayed just two days, until the 19th, ostensibly because of mechanical problems with speeding up the nineteen set changes, as the newspapers reported, although some further noted that the cast had difficulty coordinating with the orchestra.50 Opening-night telegrams had a slight air of desperation mixed with wishful thinking: according to Weill's to the Group, "whatever may happen tonight your performance of Johnny Johnson will live in the history of modern theatre as the rebirth of the great theatre culture."51 The list of scenes in the program for the opening night (there is no list of musical numbers) omits I.v (already conflated with L.v in Tt3), L.vi, and I.x (II.iiii was conflated with II.vii), although it is clear that Johnny still had his speech in L.vi (albeit without "Song of the Goddess"), and that scene was restored in the listing included in the program for the week beginning 30 November.52 It is not clear precisely what further changes, if any, were made during the run, although the conflated drill-ground scene may have been cut (as Green remarked much later).53

"Johnny's Song" in III.iiii (beginning "When man was first created" in Tt3—"the only time Johnny sings in the play") created controversy. Weill was clearly on the lookout for one or more hit songs from Johnny Johnson that might generate income by sheet-music sales and other performances live and on the radio. Feeling that Green's text was ill-suited to such a purpose, Weill (or perhaps his publisher, Chappell) approached the stock lyricist Edward Heyman for a new set of words: Heyman (1907–81) had been noted for Nacio Herb Brown, Rudolf Friml, Morton Gould, Johnny Green, Sigmund Romberg, Vincent Youmans, and others. Weill then argued that Heyman's lyrics ("To Love You and To Lose You") should be used in the play, but Green strongly disagreed and demanded of Crawford his right to approve or reject the words ("We have all had a lot of difficulty in getting the play across to the public even in its present state and I have no wish to add to that difficulty").54 In the end, a compromise was reached whereby a hodgepodge text (also published separately in the sheet music) was used in performances of Johnny Johnson, starting with Heyman's words but then reverting to Green's after four lines. Green was never happy with that outcome, although he was also dissatisfied with his original text: he wanted to revise it for the 1956 revival (but never did, it seems) and did so somewhat halheartedly for the 1971 one.55 Indeed, Green's documents concerning Johnny Johnson imply that he was unhappy with the entire ending of the play because he thought it lacked punch.

Clurman and Crawford both recall being surprised at how well the first performance went, but said that the press reviews condemned the production to failure.56 The opening-night reviews (appearing on 20 November) were certainly mixed, although many noted the audience's final cheers and Paul Green's impassioned (or, some suggested, desperate) curtain speech citing Woodrow Wilson. The mainstream New York critics sat on the fence or tended toward the negative. For Richard Watts, Jr., in the New York Herald-Tribune, Johnny Johnson was "a disturbing and often hilarious medley of caricature, satire, musical comedy, melodrama, farce, social polemic and parable"; for Gilbert W. Gabriel in the New York American, it was "a strange, brave bungle." Brooks Atkinson ended his review in the New York Times, "And so people who believe that plays should be written about intelligent themes and who also relish experiments in form have something to be thankful for this morning. The Group Theatre has sponsored the first departure from polite mediocrity of the season. If it is not all buoyant, that merely proves, in this column's opinion[,] that the aim has been high. Most of Johnny Johnson rings true because it has been written by a natural man who has a flavorsome speech and a glorious imagination." Burns Mantle in the New York News found the play sincere but fumbling and awkward (he also included a stock publicity photo of Dorothy Brackett identified as a cast member, although she was not), while Willella Waldorf in the New York Post thought that it needed more time to settle: "At best it is a brilliant satire on the war-mindedness of nations. At its worst it is amateurish foolery. In its present form the production is best viewed as a series of more or less disconnected scenes. Like a revuegoer [sic], you enjoy some of them and are bored stiff by others."

Recurring refrains in the reviews were that Johnny Johnson was hit-and-miss, that the serious theme was undermined by the burlesque satire (although the comic moments were relished, with Morris Carnovsky receiving special plaudits as Dr. Mahobod), and that the Group was unable to cope with either the play or the music. Watts found the score "the joy of the evening" and almost as good as Weill's Die Dreigroschenoper, while Gabriel noted that "for this sometimes uproarious, now and then weakly effective, most often confusing and windy and scrabbling parable Mr. Weill has composed music which certainly matches. Simple, slyly parodying, cruelly insinuating music. Music of a curiously corrosive quality, staining and etching and eating deeply into all the nonsense on stage." Most reviewers, however, ignored the score, or dismissed it as irrelevant and intrusive (as did John Anderson in the New York Evening Journal). Evidently no music critics from the major newspapers wrote about the play—they typically reviewed only opera and concerts—and their lack of input counted against a work such as Johnny Johnson. Nor did any of the reviews pick up on the claims made by Weill in prior articles and interviews of a unique (and, at least potentially, a uniquely American) fusion of music and drama, although Marc Blitzstein came closest in the November–December issue of Modern Music. Perhaps this fusion was not a concern for drama critics, or perhaps the nationalism implicit in such a claim, even if Weill had been able to satisfy it, would have seemed inappropriate coming from a German who had so recently arrived in the United States.

Johnny Johnson fared better—perhaps revealingly, given its apparent intended audience—in the non-Manhattan papers. Arthur Pollock wrote a highly favorable review in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle in terms he reiterated in the Christian Science Monitor: "So you see, here we have something very jolly and sad, hopeful and discouraging, bitter and sweet, derisory and tenderly compassionate. It is a play you cannot help but be fond of." For Michael March of the Brooklyn Citizen, the play was "unbelievably hybrid and unorthodox in content and structure, but in parts moving and sometimes hilarious. . . . The music of Kurt Weill['], German exile, is brilliant, and it is probably responsible for much of the charm that lies inherent in
Johnny Johnson." The Brooklyn Times-Union felt that "back of all the work's eccentric manners is to be found an earnest, almost spiritual quality that is genuinely impressive," and the Union City Center News (N.J.), on 1 December insisted that "the critical tongue wagging and head shaking of New York's demigod critics has become so automatic and axiomatic that this suburbanite reviewer wants it known here and now that he is not a case for the psychiatrists when he carries his parade banners for the Group Theatre's Johnny Johnson."

In addition to reviewers from the outer boroughs, the left-wing press took significant interest in the play both before and after its opening, with the Daily Worker (20 November), People's Press (21 November), and Socialists Call (also the 21st) carrying photographs of Russell Collins as Johnny (with Paula Miller as the French Nurse in the People's Press). The Daily Worker printed reviews of Johnny Johnson on 21 and 25 November (by Charles E. Dexter) and, more briefly, on 7 December: here the feeling was, again, that the play only intermittently reached its target—despite the "expert musical range-finding of that anti-Nazi exile, Kurt Weill"—and that although Act III saved the day, Green had missed the point that there needed to be an uprising against the captains of industry who sponsor the machinery of war. The unsigned comment on 7 December reiterated the ambivalence: Johnny Johnson "is the liberal Paul Green's sometimes brilliant attack upon the forces which caused the Great War. . . . It is well worth seeing, although you may not like the romanticized conclusions which Mr. Green draws."

The Jewish papers were also favorable, broadly speaking, as were Jewish groups in general: the performance on Monday 23 November was to be attended by the Women's Auxiliary of Temple Israel (so the Nassau Star reported on 5 November), and on 8 January, the Union Temple Bulletin (Brooklyn) noted that that evening Dr. Tedesche (the Rabbi of Union Temple) was to preach a "sermonic review of [the] Broadway Play" entitled "Johnny Johnson Speaks Words of Peace." 5 Further good reviews appeared in the women's dailies and weeklies, as well as in the college press. Women's Wear Daily (20 November) thought that the Group acted "splendidly," that the music helped establish the mood, and that the theme was important. New York Woman, which had carried a one-page article on the Group on 25 November, said on 2 December that Johnny Johnson was "in spite of anything you have heard to the contrary—a gripping play, the first event of dramatic importance this year."

In part as a result of these alternative views, it seems, some of the more mainstream critics appear to have been moved to return to the Forty-Fourth Street Theatre and to write reevaluations that toned down their prior criticisms. Brooks Atkinson's second review in the New York Times, on 29 November, took into account the music ("Mr. Weill's trenchant and brilliantly orchestrated score has a great deal of strength to give to the Group's acting"), while the Nation on 30 November ("the Group's finest and freshest show since Waiting for Lefty"), acknowledged "composer Weill for the weird, haunting little ballads and Europeanized fox trots which immensely help to articulate the play."

"When Man Was First Created" ("Johnny's Song") "on streets, in subways, in bath tubs and on terraces from one end of this comely island to the other." The next day's report in the Cincinnati Billboard, that Johnny Johnson was "the most pretentiously silly claptap of the season," had already been countered by proposals for a Pulitzer Prize or Drama Critics' Circle Award (suggested in the Daily News-Record on 27 November).

Interest continued in the press through December. The Nation ran a balanced review by Joseph Wood Krutch on 5 December (noting the "mordant commentary" of music that is "more perfectly realized" than the play and "serves to give a unity that the text itself is not always able to maintain"), and photos of the production appeared in the New York Midweek Pictorial on 9 December. Finally, the Brooklyn Times-Union featured a long article about lead actor Russell Collins on Sunday 20 December, in which he admitted that he sang "Johnny's Song" in a low key—D major, he thought (as it is in Fb)—because of his inability to sing high notes; he also commented that the play originally had a great deal more music and "live or six" other scenes: "It was like Parsifal or something, until they took a pair of scissors to it." 6 Musical America carried an interview with Weill on 25 December where he claimed credit for thinking up "Song of the Guns" but also sidestepped the relevance of Johnny Johnson to the looming events in Europe; the Brooklyn Daily Eagle published a similar interview with Weill on 20 December and provided a history of the Group on the 27th; on 30 December, New York Woman nominated the production for a 1937 Drama Critics' Circle Award; and on 5 January 1937, the Daily Worker carried an article by Lee Strasberg about the play.6 Two days earlier, the New York Herald-Tribune had reported that "Johnny Johnson now seems to be an indefinite tenant of the Forty-Fourth and will probably keep the Group busy for some time to come." Alas, that was not to be.

The Literary Digest (2 January 1937) noted the apparent oddity of critics returning to write second reviews of a Broadway production. But the reevaluation of Johnny Johnson in late November and early December may also have reflected external circumstances that made it seem more timely. Franklin D. Roosevelt, newly elected to his second term as president of the United States, delivered the opening address at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace in Buenos Aires on 1 December 1936. Although the focus was on Pan-American issues as part of the "Good Neighbor" policy that had lain at the heart of his first term, Roosevelt expanded the scope of the argument both in the opening address itself and in a speech made before the Brazilian Congress in Rio de Janeiro on 27 November (en route to Buenos Aires). These speeches were widely covered in the U.S. press, and the Buenos Aires one was broadcast live on numerous radio stations. Roosevelt noted the progress since the last Pan-American conference in Uruguay in 1933:

"I am profoundly convinced that the plain people everywhere in the civilized world today wish to live in peace one with another," he continued, even though "beyond the ocean we see continents rent asunder by old hatreds and new fanaticisms." "Can we, the Republics of the New World, help the Old World to avert the catastrophe which implies?" Roosevelt asked rhetorically. "Yes; I am confident that we can," he replied, urging international collaboration, the dissemination of democracy, and free trade. Roosevelt then hedged his bets: in a comment widely reported in Europe, he argued that "in this determination to live at peace among ourselves we in the Americas make it at the same time clear that we stand shoulder to shoulder for mutual safety and our mutual good." Nonetheless, the hugely successful speech was largely interpreted as a plea for world peace, an attack on war in any form, and a defense of American neutrality on the long-established principles of the Monroe Doctrine. Johnny Johnson had found its most powerful spokesman.

Negotiations for movie rights to the play took place in December (and again in 1937 and 1938), but they came to naught. At about the same time, Green began to prepare a version of his text for publication, drawing on Töd but also seeking to restore elements of the play that had been cut or distorted in the Group production. He completed this revision on or around 19 December and mailed it to his publisher (French) on the
28th, with a note that "I am anxious to get the book out before the play has a chance to close—if it should have such a chance in the next couple of months."62 Early January he had also sent a copy of this script to the Federal Theatre Project (see below), which was then retyped on stencils and mimeographed (T4). This revised version included "Aggie's Song" and "Farewell, Goodbye" (now in Lii); it reinstated Liv and I.v as two separate scenes; it included "Song of the Goddess" at the end of I.v; and it restored II.i and II.ii. However, it evidently did not include "Johnny's Song" at the end of III.iii (which instead has Johnny just whistling his tune), whether because Green was still unhappy over the Heyman controversy or because he remained dissatisfied with his text.63 But at some point he must have communicated the words of "Johnny's Song," which were added to T4 as a separate note.

French sent three copies of galley proofs (T0) on 30 January 1937; the text is very close to T4 except for the ending, apparently adjusted in T4 on the basis of subsequent communication from Green.64 However, in correcting the proofs (which he returned on 3 February), Green excised Liv-v and the text of "Song of the Goddess" (also cutting the second stanza of "Song of the Wounded Frenchmen" and part of "Oh the Rio Grande") and made other minor changes; thus the first printed edition (T1), copies of which reached Green in late March, reflects these excisions and distances itself from T4 accordingly.65 It is not clear whether this treatment was a matter of preference or simply forced by the need to issue a serviceable version of the play that would run to time. In early 1938, Green printed the removed Liv-v as a separate one-act (and single-scene) play 

It wants you to know that you have my thanks and admiration for your splendid collaboration. It was always a difficult and uncertain job with me, made more so by the fact that my listening ear obscured the vision of my seeing eye, and I'm sure that without your full experience in the musicalized theatre we could not have got anywhere. And of course behind it all was Cheryl. All in all, I think it was a job worth doing, and I hope that we have the chance of doing something of the same sort in the movies together.67

By the end of January, Weill had moved to Hollywood to seek opportunities in the film industry. As for the Group, the difficulties during the rehearsals of 

Johnny Johnson and dissatisfaction with the production—compounding the failure of its prior new production, Erwin Piscator and Lena Goldschmidt's The Case of Clyde Griffiths (which closed after only nineteen performances in March 1936)—provoked a severe crisis of morale, with strong questioning of the Group's ethos and organization.68 Despite initial rumors that it would continue to stage a Sunday series of one-act plays (to start on 24 January, according to the New York Herald-Tribune on 3 January), the Group disbanded temporarily, telling the press simply that Clifford Odets had failed to deliver on The Silent Partner and that there was a paucity of other performable material. Many of its members moved to Hollywood, and although the Group re-formed the following season (without Crawford and Strasberg, who had resigned), it never fully recovered.

Despite its mixed fortunes on the New York stage, Johnny Johnson gained second place (to Maxwell Anderson's High Tor) for a New York Drama Critics' Award for the best American play in 1936–37.69 It also received the 1937 Claire M. Senie award from the Drama Study Club on 9 April; some newspapers nominated it for a Pulitzer Prize; and Burns Mantle included a digest of it in The Best Plays of 1936–37 (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1938).70 Weill claimed it was a "sensational success" in a report sent on 28 July 1937 to Alfred Kalmus of Universal Edition, Vienna, summarizing his first two years in the United States: "As you know, it is very difficult here, especially for someone who speaks his own musical language, but the situation in the theater is still better and healthier than anywhere else, and I believe I can get to the point here where I can continue what I began in Europe."71 While the composer was exaggerating, his claim was not wholly unjustified, given that by mid-1937 Johnny Johnson had also gained favor in productions outside New York City. In early January 1937 Frederic McConnell, director of the Cleveland Play House (which had discovered Russell Collins, the first Johnny), asked the Group for permission to do Johnny Johnson with Collins in the lead; news reached the New York Times (21 February) that it would open in Cleveland in March for a five-week run; and the play opened on the 10th, running for four weeks.72 Weill expressed his concerns to Lenya on 20 February: "I got a very nice letter from Cheryl. Please give her my regards, and tell her I think it's impossible to perform Johnny Johnson with piano alone (as they apparently intend to do in Cleveland)."73 According to the program, the Cleveland production was done with piano and violin in the end. Nine
songs were included (not seven as announced in the Cleveland Plain Dealer on 13 March): “Democracy Advancing,” “Oh Heart of Love,” “The West-Pointers’ Song,” “Oh the Rio Grande,” “Song of the Guns,” “Mon Ami, My Friend,” “The Psychiatry Song,” “A Hymn to Peace,” and “Johnny’s Song” (to the original “When man was first created”). The list of scenes on the program shows that I.ii was cut (did Minny Belle then sing “Oh Heart of Love” in I.ii?) but the training-camp scene (conflated) was included, as was the New York Harbor scene (I.vi, although no Goddess is listed in the cast). Acts II and III followed the Group production (i.e., omitting I.i and II.i). The reviews in the Cleveland Plain Dealer on 11 and 12 March noted that “the Playhouse eliminates a good deal of Weill’s music, which subtracts somewhat from the effect of the play.”

III. The Federal Theatre Project

Hallie Flanagan, the energetic director of the Federal Theatre Project, had expressed interest in an FTP production of Johnny Johnson as early as mid-October 1936, and sometime in December, Green seems to have written to her to renew the idea.83 He did so at the same time as he was revising his text for publication, a task he completed on or around 19 December (see above). Whether or not as a result of Green’s prompting, Flanagan herself went to see the play and wrote enthusiastically to her husband on 17 December:

I must see Johnny Johnson over again with you. Feeling as you do about Paul, you would love his hero. The rather dumb country boy, the tombstone maker who enrols because he is sick of tombstones, and reads Wilson’s speeches and believes in them. He is so like Paul Green that I kept remembering the night in his living room. To me this is the most potent of all the plays against war because it is funny and sad and infuriating and inevitable.84

Flanagan wrote to Green on or just after 18 December in terms that remind us of the political orientation of the FTP and of Flanagan, seems genuinely to have been caused by what the FTP argued all along—namely, the WPAs sudden announcement of significant financial cutbacks.

Large-cast productions served the FTP’s purposes well—given its mandate to create employment—as did those involving music: most FTP units in large cities had access to orchestras (sometimes in collaboration with the FTP’s sister organization, the Federal Music Project) to provide overtures, entr’actes, and scene-change music, as well as for underscore and, in the overly political plays, for one or more rousing songs.85 The introduction of music also gave the FTP’s work an innovative edge: in mid-1937 FTP Variety/Vaudeville units began producing musical revues more strongly tied together by way of plots focusing on political satire; these included William Sully’s Machine Age (Brooklyn, 30 April 1937), with music and lyrics by Bert Reed and Darl MacBoyle (on applying modern industrial techniques to the musical-comedy business, with songs such as “Knocking Down the Bosses”), and the amirial vehicle Ready! Aim! Fire! by Gene Stone and Jack Robinson (music by Clair Leonard), which opened in Los Angeles on 22 October.86 Furthermore, Flanagan was also keen on national initiatives, such as the simultaneous opening of It Can’t Happen Here in eighteen cities on 27 October 1936, as a means of extending and consolidating the FTP’s reach. Thus on 1 December 1936—the same day as Roosevelt’s speech in Buenos Aires—she issued a set of instructions to the regions:

The first week in February or March we want as many Federal Theatres as possible to open simultaneously, each with a different, new, hitherto unproduced play. . . . In the spring, possibly April, we wish every unit, including marionette, vaudeville and dance, to launch a production against war. These plays need not be new, but may be revivals or well-known present[ed] day works. In the case of vaudeville, dance, Children’s or marionette units, the production may, of course, be only a short number. The point is that all the resources of the Federal Theatre for a certain period in the spring will be launched in an attack on war.

Flanagan also noted that “no publicity is to be given at present to either of these two plans.”87

At the conference of the FTP’s newly convened Play Policy Board on 22–24 January 1937, it was firmly agreed that FTP projects for the next three months would include “the launching between the date of our entry into the World War [6 April 1917], and the day when we commemorate the men who died in the Civil War, May 30, of a series of war plays.” Specifically:

By March 1 we should be able to announce the names of the units throughout the country doing plays on this subject, and a statement of what these plays are. We decided that any such list should include No More Peace, Johnny Johnson, Bury the Dead, Trojan Women, The Peace of Aristophanes, Lysistrata, and Blocks.

After a good deal of discussion we barred from the list Journey’s End and What Price Glory, deciding that both of them were claustrophobic documents glorifying war.

We discussed the possibility of dramatizing an article by Hiram Moth-erwell for New Theatre [sic]. This article is entitled “Stars and Stripes on Broadway,” which appeared in the April 1955 issue of New Masses. This ar-
ticle has to do with war plays and war songs, which have always preceded a war. Pierre de Rohan suggested excerpts from these songs and plays done in juxtaposition with the film of actual war published some time ago by Laurence Stallings. Frank Merlin's vaudeville unit or Alfred Kreyberg's group would seem to afford the best productive possibilities.71

The list of appropriate plays was expanded over the next month, as the Play Reading Department in the FTP's National Play Bureau (later the National Service Bureau, based in New York), which was headed by Converse Tyler, considered some seventy antitwistar titles.72 As we shall see, two regional FTP offices (Boston and Los Angeles) mounted Johnny Johnson in response to this directive.73 On 21 April, Green also approved the idea of adapting Johnny Johnson for the FTP marionette theater in Philadelphia, but it is not known whether this version was ever realized.74

Green was a staple FTP playwright—his The House of Connelly had an FTP production in Los Angeles in February–March 1937—and, as a Southern writer working on socially responsible themes, he had a degree of cultural clout in ways that suited the FTP's philosophy.75 He approached the FTP with Johnny Johnson at the best possible moment, and although the FTP later deemed Weill's royalty request of $50 per week too high—it was the amount Green would have received—some agreement must have been reached with the composer.76 By early January, Green had sent a copy of Johnny Johnson for review by the Play Policy Board, and on the 16th (the day of the New York closing), the National Play Bureau asked Weill to send his "piano score" for photostating; that same day the New York Telegraph reported that the FTP would be performing Johnny Johnson across its regions. On 25 January, Georgia Fink of the FTP office in Los Angeles wrote to Green acknowledging receipt of a script (whether from Green or from the New York FTP office is unclear) and asking for a second copy for the San Francisco unit. This was the revised text that Green had submitted to French for publication in December (see above). When Green received the galley proofs of the printed text, he also sent a marked-up set (noting most but not all of the deletions and other changes) to Los Angeles; Fink acknowledged receipt of these annotated proofs on 11 February.77 By then, however, the Los Angeles FTP office had already created stencils so as to mimeograph copies (Tt4) of Green's original submission—the full version of the play—and had sent (or was on the verge of sending) copies to New York; eventually it was forced to revise these stencils to produce a text (Tt5) that ended up similar to Tp1.78 Although Tt4 was used in performance, Tt5 became archived as the FTP's "library" copy, which would subsequently cause confusion. Meanwhile, Johnny Johnson was formally approved by the Play Policy Board on 8 February 1937.79

The routine process would have been for the office of the National Play Bureau to produce all the materials necessary for any FTP production of the play (i.e., copies of the script and the music). In this case, however, the Los Angeles FTP office produced the new script, while the new set of scripts, and others will be done as they are needed," and by the end of the performance, six of the play's musical numbers would be abstracted from the weekly reports submitted by each department of the Los Angeles unit to the district supervisor, Ole Ness, and thence to the FTP state and regional offices. We also have letters to Green from Mary Virginia Farmer, who shared directing duties with Jerome Coray, as well as surviving performance material and a production bulletin prepared by the unit's Research Department to be kept on file both as a matter of record and for the benefit of subsequent performances. As was customary FTP practice, the bulletin contains a synopsis, director's notes, details of the costumes and sets, and photographs from the production, along with a copy of the program and a digest of press reviews and audience reactions.112

The choice of Johnny Johnson was announced to Los Angeles FTP employees in the second week of February; the Los Angeles Times reported the project on the 28th. Regular claims in the West Coast newspapers that the play was a "current" Broadway hit and had taken New York "by storm" suggest that the FTP press office was engaging in hyperbole. For the week ending 19 March, the Los Angeles FTP's Music Department reported that "six of the Johnny Johnson songs have been copied from the original manuscripts, and others will be done as they are needed," and by the end of the month, one Mr. Grudzinski was giving singing lessons to the intended cast.113 On 24 March, Farmer contacted Green:

We are starting now on Johnny Johnson, due to open May 14th. There are a number of things we want to consult you about so another letter will go to you in a day or two. Weill is here and we have seen him once briefly. Next week we plan to spend some time going over the entire musical score with him. I think he can be of considerable help to us.

We are planning to use the camp scenes and also the wounded French
Weill does indeed seem to have gone through the performance materials in the Los Angeles FTP office: Vm2/Pm2 contain annotations in his hand, as well as other comments (perhaps added earlier by Engel in New York; see Plate 6) reflecting experience of the Group premiere.

In early April, the Research Department gathered images of World War I uniforms and related matter, and Frederick Stover started designing the sets. By the second half of the month, the Construction Department was working on the sets and properties, and the Costume Department was trying to locate a cheap source for the uniforms (in the end the American ones came from government surplus, while the others were rented from Universal Studios, although German ones proved difficult to find). Reports on the costumes and properties make reference to, among other things, a daisy wreath (for I.i) and other flowers, a sewing machine and miniature tombstone (I.ii), a chart (I.iii), “American Beauty” roses (for the Camp Doll in Liv–v), four dummies (I.v), falling pads (for characters jumping over walls, etc.; I.v, II.i, III.i), two different trenches (II.i, II.ii), three cannons (II.iii), a rifle silencer (for the sniper in II.iii), “sent couches” (presumably for the hospital scene, II.iv), a platform for the Allied High Command (II.v), and various desks, tables, and chairs. On 17 April Ole Ness, in his own weekly report, noted that “there has been a great deal of preparation of the production Johnny Johnson but opening the show has been postponed two weeks, due to the lack of coordination between the author’s changes in the original script and the music score. Much of the music used must be revised or replaced. The Music Department of the project is doing all in its power to complete the score at the earliest possible date.”

Discrepancies between Tp4 and Tp1 led to uncertainty about the format of the play. Although Green had implied that the corrected version of Tp0—and therefore Tp5—was his preferred version of the play, Farmer clearly decided to adopt Tp4, for the most part, instead. Thus she included Liv and I.v as separate scenes (not conflated as in New York), and also II.i (with “Song of the Wounded Frenchmen”). However, according to the program and the production bulletin, the Los Angeles production eventually omitted the two New York Harbor scenes (I.v and II.i), losing “Song of the Goddess”—although Johnny’s speech to the Statue of Liberty may have been placed at the end of I.v—and also adopted the short version of the end of Act II, conflating II.v–vii as had been done in New York.

The confusions affected various sections of the Los Angeles FTP office. Lewis Jenckes, in the Construction Department, was unable to produce a budget estimate for the production “because I keep getting stuff every day” (so he wrote on 13 May). Edith McLaughlin in the Costume Department was frustrated because the cast list took so long to be fixed. The Music Department was placed under increasing pressure. Its weekly report on 30 April noted that “copying is going as rapidly as possible on Johnny Johnson, but because of the large amount of music needed for the Vaudville shows on definite dates, the majority of the copyists are working on the latter” (this report also indicated that from that point on, a staff pianist would attend all Johnny Johnson rehearsals). As of 14 May, “the orchestrations for Johnny Johnson are being checked as rapidly as possible. Due to the condition of the original score and because of the many errors and omissions in it, it is necessary to make a new copy of each part. This needs a great deal of time as every bar must be numbered and compared to the piano parts. Some numbers demand a full orchestration and therefore have to be arranged.”

The next week, “Thursday [20 May] the entire copying and arranging department worked until five o’clock the following morning in order that the Johnny Johnson orchestrations would be ready for rehearsals.” This report also noted that “the recordings for Johnny Johnson will be made Saturday morning,” presumably the gramophone recording of “Democracy Advancing” in I.i (the recruiting office) and perhaps III.iii (the marching band).

Farmer reported further to Green on 12 May:

We are opening at the end of this month or the first week in June. We are making a production which we hope will move fast with lots of life and vitality. We are using a great deal of rhythmic and stylized movement against a series of painted drops in which we hope to bring out the satire of each locale and event in some form of scenic comment. The costumes will be slightly exaggerated to go with this approach.

The actors all like working this way—it’s a hard job for some of them. I think we’ll get a good show out of them, and several excellent performances. The Minnie Belle [sic; Lenore Kingston] is delightful (except that she can’t sing); the Johnny [G. Brian Morgan] is a fine young type for the part, not quite enough experience and punch to do the part full justice though his understanding and appreciation of it are good.

Any chance of your getting out to see this performance?

Green did not go to Los Angeles, although he made some suggestions about the staging based on his New York experience. To achieve the “rhythmic and stylized movement” that Farmer mentions, the cast included seven or eight dancers lent by Myra Kinch, head of the Dance Department. Of greater concern, however, were the “slightly exaggerated” costumes, which Edith McLaughlin in the Costume Department felt (writing on 13 May) would reflect badly on her staff: “We have followed the sketches very closely, as well as special notes on color as set up in the design department. They are doubtless intended to be quite eccentric, and because of the nature of the design, period and color harmony, are very much that way.” She was also worried about cost overruns: “This has been a tremendous show to set up, and “there has been an endless number of collar decorations, buttons, belts, etc. To see the show one would never dream that the wardrobe costs on it were so great.”

Despite McLaughlin’s worries, the production came off well. Howard Miller (assistant FTP director in charge of the Western Region) had already written proudly to Hallie Flanagan on 29 April that “Johnny Johnson looks wonderful. And if it doesn’t look better than the New York production I’ll eat my grass hat—the one with the feathers on it.” Even Weill was fairly enthusiastic over the results, as he reported to Lenya on 29 May:

Yesterday was the Los Angeles premiere of Johnny Johnson. I went to a few rehearsals and helped them a little bit. It’s the biggest project the WPA has undertaken up to now; of course, it has inferior actors—but a charming, very young Johnny (the play works quite differently with a young Johnny), a big (fouzy) orchestra and chorus, and very interesting sets. That the second act received the strongest reaction by far demonstrates how greatly the performance differed from the New York one. They included the “French Wounded” chorus and did the “Dance of the Generals” in its entirety, which proved most effective. As the premiere last night everything was still very rough and not quite ready, especially musically, but it was definitely a great success; the people reacted marvelously—they laughed a lot, were dead silent during the “Gun Song” (which got lots of applause, as did all the other songs), and gave a tremendous ovation at the end. The press, too, seems to be good. They’ll play it for six to eight weeks.

The Los Angeles Times, rarely a friend to the Federal Theatre and Music Projects, noted (6 June) that Johnny Johnson was “warmly acclaimed.” Frank Mattauer, in the Los Angeles News (29 May), thought that pacifists would like the play but that others might be “a bit puzzled to account for the huzzas that floated west from Manhattan when the opus opened on Broadway last fall”; he did not quite know what to make of the play’s mixture of “pacifist bromides with satirical flips,” although he admired the drill-ground scene (Liv) and the handling of the wounded French soldiers (II.i). W. E. Oliver in the Los Angeles Herald Express (31 May) thought it “a swell show for Memorial Day”: “Songs are interspersed as in a Gilbert and Sullivan show. The music of Kurt Weill effectively backgrounds the action and at times plays a forefront part in building up some tremendous theatrical effects.” Like Weill, Oliver also seems to have felt that Act II was particularly successful. The Pasadena Star News on 7 June noted the capacity audiences drawn to this “fascinating production of a stimulating and unusual play,” wherein “the musical score by Kurt Weill sets off Mr. Green’s recitatives with pungency and spirit.”

Dorothy McBrayer, assistant to Nunnally Johnson at Twentieth Century–Fox and a friend of Green’s, was also thrilled. While on a vacation touring the East Coast and Midwest, she had recently visited the author in
Chapel Hill but returned to Los Angeles in time to see the production. She wrote to Green on 4 June:

The play has been running nearly a week and the box office said they were sold out every night. I saw an unusually highbrow crowd at this performance—movie stars (!), agents, etc. Full house and most appreciative. They stood in their tracks after the curtain fell and were the longest (time) moving out of the theatre. They seemed stunned or something. They knew the play was over but they didn’t want to go and just stood and applauded and were deeply moved. The two New York harbor scenes were omitted but the other two scenes which you cut were retained. The orchestra was good and put the music over beautifully. I am so glad you familiarized me with the music before I saw the play because I appreciated it more. It was something like knowing the motives of Wagner before seeing the Ring performed.

The sad strains of Johnny’s song early in the play hit at the song that was to come and when it did come, it tore at my heart it was so beautiful and lovely. Especially was I moved to hear your words sung instead of the other ones. I find I can’t make out your writing on the sheet music so will you please send me a printed copy of the words, also the real title of the song! The Rio Grande song was lovely too and beautifully sung. But Minnie Belle was something of a washout and could only speak her song, and its poignancy was a little lost, but not to me because I had played the tunes several times in Kentucky and knew them well. I am so very happy that I didn’t miss this production by staying away too long. I loved it, every bit of it, and I nearly burst with pride to think it was your work. For the first time I understand why you feel as you do about the picture business and prefer the theatre. The American theatre needs you and it won’t be long before you are its leading playwright.

Attendance was good, and in early June the press was told that the run was being extended by “popular demand.” According to FTP reports, around 22,000 people attended the thirty-three performances (other sources note thirty-four); given that the Mayan Theatre seated 1,492, the effect was about 22,000 people attended the thirty-three performances (other times). The show averaged about 45 percent capacity, which was high for the FTP. A concerted advertising campaign included the customary press hyperbole:

Here is truly a production with a high purpose, in a remarkable dramatic form—something an American audience will recognize as vital. . . . Kurt Weill’s music makes Paul Green’s vivid play a musical comedy picture of a universe careening toward a crazy destruction. Satirical song numbers help to make the players into caricatures of solid, inflexible people who are swept from the dedication of a Peace Monument into loud acclaim for mass murder. In [the] Federal Theatre’s production of Johnny Johnson, the world war is created from mechanical phrases, sing-song ideas, choral effects and ballet schemes showing our doughboys dancing off to war like children at play. The backdrops to the settings change from logic to madness—movie stars (!), agents, etc. Full house and most appreciative. They stood in their tracks after the curtain fell and were the longest (time) moving out of the theatre. They seemed stunned or something. They knew the play was only a vehicle for entertainment. Many felt the “message of the play” but feared it “did not go far enough” as an indictment against war. Criticals of minor importance were frequently found, but in general the opinion prevailed that the songs and lyrics should have been omitted.

Johnny Johnson would have been repeated at the Greek Theatre but the forced schedule changes cancelled this booking.

Weill’s enthusiasm for the production led him and Max Reinhardt to propose to the Los Angeles FTP an updated version of Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s Das Salzburger Große Welttheater (1922), to be staged outdoors in the Los Angeles Greek Theatre during the summer of 1937, with some 250–350 performers, including a choir and orchestra each of fifty or so musicians; Weill then approached Green as a possible partner, but the project never came to fruition. The national FTP office also commissioned a second collaboration between Green and Weill, first titled Columbia but eventually The Common Glory, about the founding of the U.S. constitution. It was to be a grand historical production along the lines that Green had recently developed in The Lost Colony, an outdoor drama first staged at Manteo on Roanoke Island, N.C., in summer 1937 (Weill and Lenya saw it in August) and still an annual fixture today. Hallie Flanagan no doubt saw The Common Glory as an opportunity for the FTP to make a grand patriotic statement: it was to open in March 1938 concurrently in ten cities. Weill and Green worked sporadically on it beginning in August 1937—Green eventually produced an unimpressive draft of Act I and an outline for the rest—but the project soon stalled, chiefly, it seems, because of Green’s procrastination. Their relationship cooled as a result, particularly as Weill found a more dependable collaborator in Maxwell Anderson for Knickerbocker Holiday. Meanwhile, Johnny Johnson remained on the FTP books as available for performance, and in November 1937 the FTP included it in a list of thirty-six antitwar plays deemed worthy of revival. But there are no other documented FTP productions of the play.

IV. Later Productions

There were two further stagings of Johnny Johnson in 1937, both at universities. The one by the University of California Little Theatre at Wheeler Auditorium, UC Berkeley, on 1–2 October 1937 presumably used the FTP materials from Los Angeles, also with some reference to the original New York form. It included Liv and I.v (as a single scene, as in New York, and not as two, as in Los Angeles) and also the New York Harbor scene (I.vi; although there is no Goddess in the cast list). Act II followed the FTP production, incorporating II.i but removing II.ii (thus, with the short version of the end of Act III). Only two musicians are listed in the program (piano and violin?), and we have no inventory of the musical numbers. Johnny Johnson was also staged by the Carolina Playmakers in Memorial Hall at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (directed by Frederick “Proff” Koch) on 29 and 30 October 1937. Act I, Scenes iv–v, and II.i were cut, and the text appears largely to have followed Tp1; the full orchestration was used, but we have no list of musical numbers.

In early and mid-1937, Soviet producers had expressed interest in a Moscow production, although it was scuppered by Green’s refusal to write a more affirmative ending. However, the play maintained a presence on the amateur, semiprofessional, and university circuits, particularly in the storm clouds of war once again loomed on the horizon: documented performances include the Washington Civic Theatre (at the Wardman Park Theatre, Washington, D.C., from 23 March to 7 April 1938; Green was present for some of the rehearsals), the University of Florida at Gainesville (late 1938, it seems), the University of Iowa (February 1939), and the Dock Street Theatre in Charleston, S.C. (11 December 1939). Green’s royalty statements from French suggest other performances (probably without music) at Stanford University (30 August or 1 September 1938) and in Minneapolis (31 December 1938), Norman, Okla. (23 February 1939), Long Beach, Calif. (23 February 1939), Riverside, Calif. (8 March 1939), Iowa City (20 March 1939), Santa Barbara (15 November 1939), Chicago (February 1940), Schenectady, N.Y. (4 March 1940), Hoboken, N.J. (13 April 1940), Columbia, S.C. (3 June 1940), and Springfield, Ill. (August–September 1940). Lotte Lenya included “Mon Ami, My Friend” in her cabaret repertoire during her brief nightclub engagement in New York in
formance materials. Green had already told French in late February 1937 that he wanted a piano score prepared and copies made available for productions. F. Cowles Strickland (Washington Civic Theatre) asked about “the drilling scene which I saw in New York,” while Charles Meredith (Charleston) was a little confused: “If there is much difference between the published play and the working prompt 'script [sic] I would appreciate it very much if you could secure a working 'script for us which could be returned as soon as differences [have been] noted. I seem to remember your saying that there was a song at the end sung by Johnny that could not properly be included in the printed copy.” The main concern, however, was access to the musical performance materials. Green had already told French in late February 1937 that he wanted a piano score to be bound but would pass it on as soon as he got it back. The Washington performance was done with just (Hammond?) organ accompaniment; immediately thereafter, Green asked the director for the score for another production. The Charleston production had only organ and piano. Vance Morton, director of the University of Iowa performance, asked Green on 1 December 1938: “I am convinced in my own mind that I want to use the musical background. I find that we can rent the orchestral score from New York, but I can not find [sic] the musical settings of the individual songs as written in the script. They are not published. Could you give me any help as to where I might find the music for the songs? We will be willing to rent them, of course.”

However, it was the Charleston performance—which was delayed because of the non-arrival of the music—that seems to have prompted significant action. Green sent a telegram to French: “Hope something can be done about photostating piano score for Johnny Johnson. Play seems timely now and I am pushing it with amateurs and movie studios. Dock Street theatre wishes immediate production of play and writes me for help in securing music. Am referring their request to Brandt.” He also wrote to Frank Sheil on 10 October 1939, who replied on the 18th:

Immediately upon receipt of your letter of October 10th, we got in touch with the Brandt & Brandt office, which has been exclusively handling the music of Johnny Johnson. While we quote and collect royalties for the production of the play, by arrangement with Brandt & Brandt we refer to them those groups wishing to use the music, and that office ships same directly.

Mr. Koppleman of Brandt tells us that last Wednesday, at the request of the Dock Street Theatre, he shipped to you a piano score of Johnny Johnson for use in the Dock Street production. I do hope that it reached you in time for these people to go ahead with the staging of the play.

We impressed upon Mr. Koppleman that it would be advisable to have available sufficient copies of the music to handle any demands for the play, as we have noticed (evidently due to the present European war situation) that there is a new interest being shown in the play by amateur production groups.

Brandt & Brandt told us that there were but two sets of orchestrations available, and these were both in the hands of Mr. Weill. At our request they got after Weill and finally reached him last night, and he said that if Samuel French would be willing to publish the piano score, he would put it in A-1 shape for publication purposes. We advised Brandt & Brandt that we were perfectly willing to make such publication and they have promised us that immediately the piano score is returned to them after the Dock Street production, they will turn it over to Mr. Weill, who tells them he can put it in proper shape within a week after it is delivered to him. Just as soon as this is done and we get the corrected copy, we shall get the publication under way.

If Mr. Weill for any reason fails to make and turn over to us for publication a perfect copy of the piano score as mentioned above, then I think that in the long run it will pay you to revise the play so that it can be used without the music.

In the mean time will you kindly impress upon the Dock Street people the importance of getting the score back to Brandt & Brandt immediately after their production, or, if they have abandoned the idea of doing the play, ask them to return it now. It might be a good idea also for either you or them to let us know when the score is on the way back so that we may keep in touch with Brandt & Brandt and try to insure a prompt job on it by Mr. Weill.

(The “two sets of orchestrations available” that Weill was said to have are presumably Im1 and Im2.)

Green’s recent reprint of Tp1 in his anthology Out of the South: The Life of a People in Dramatic Form (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939) may also have helped renew interest in the play. For his part, Weill had in fact been promising to produce a vocal score since at least December 1937, when he wrote to Green (on the 11th) that “I have almost all the material for the Johnny Johnson score and will get the rest in Los Angeles. But it is quite a job to adapt to your book-version of the play.” However, he had other projects to work on, and the cooling of his relationship with Green in the wake of The Common Glory no doubt dampened his enthusiasm. Weill eventually got down to the task in December 1939, much to Green’s expressed relief:

It’s good news that you have a chance and the time to get the Johnny Johnson score out in published form. I will look forward to seeing it. As to Johnny’s final and only song, I suggest that you include it, perhaps with a footnote saying it can be sung by Johnny first before he leaves the scene on his wandering through the world. I haven’t got the words to that song, but think I could remember them and write them out for you in case you haven’t them. In no case, of course, should the love lyric of Haymms [sic] or whoever he was be used.

By mid-January 1940, French had cleared the rights with Chappell for the four songs printed as sheet music in 1936, and the printed vocal score (Vp) was registered for copyright with the Library of Congress on 28 August 1940. This score presents much of the music, adapted mostly, though not entirely, to Tp1; it has some oddities, inconsistencies, and errors, suggesting that it was only casually thought through in production terms (this is discussed in more detail in the account of the sources in the Critical Report). Meanwhile, Green took Sheil’s advice and hedged his bets by preparing a nonmusical version of the play ostensibly for amateur groups unable to handle the music; he submitted this version to French on 31 October 1939. Weill, however, took strong exception to at least one production of Johnny Johnson without the music (at the Provincetown Playhouse in New York City from 2 to 17 May 1941); he argued that it was as absurd as doing Tristan und Isolde as a straight play.

Weill remembered Johnny Johnson well enough to use some of its music in his score for the propaganda film Salute to France (released on 13 October 1944), including the treatment of “La Marseillaise” at the beginning of “The Allied High Command” for the opening and closing credits, as well as some of the music for “The Battle” in an interior scene using war footage. After Weill’s death (1950), Green was loosely involved in the production of Johnny Johnson at the Carnegie Hall Playhouse, 21–28 October 1956, directed by Stella Adler (who had served on the production committee for the Group Theatre premiere); he suggested cuts (including “Oh the Rio Grande” and “Song of the Gun”), commented on performance issues, and proposed rewriting the lyrics to “Johnny’s Song,” although he apparently never did so. Because of family illness, however, he did not attend the performance. The conductor was Samuel Matlovsky, who had been musical director for the off-Broadway revival of The Threepenny Opera (in Marc Blitzstein’s adaptation) opening in March 1954. Matlovsky also led the recording of Johnny Johnson (made earlier in 1956) with a different cast, including Burgess Meredith (Johnny), Evelyn Lear (Minny Belle), and Lotte Lenya (French Nurse); the record includes all the music.
save “The Sergeant’s Chant,” “The West-Pointer’s Song,” and “The Tea Song.”

Later university performances of *Johnny Johnson* (UCLA, 1967; Harvard, 1970; NYU, date unknown) were again hampered by the lack of available musical materials; Green, frustrated once more, produced another spoken version for amateur consumption in or around 1968. This development presumably encouraged Lys Symonette and Lotte Lenya to create a new, two-act version of *Johnny Johnson*. Their production opened at the Edison Theatre, New York, on 11 April 1971, after a number of previews beginning on 3 April (originally planned for the 1st); however, it closed that same day, apparently because of financial misadventures. Green played a more active role here, revising his text, providing lyrics for the first appearance of the music of “Johnny’s Song” at the end of I.i (originally an instrumental interlude), and attending rehearsals and previews but not the opening night. For the music, Symonette and Lenya took care to review the 1936–37 materials prior to preparing new parts, but they clearly felt the need to adapt the score to theatrical exigencies. In Act I, Scenes iv–v re- remained deleted, although “The Sergeant’s Chant” was used to cover the scene change from I.ii–iii (i.e., prior to the recruiting-office scene, with Johnny marching incompetently), and “The West-Pointer’s Song” became the instrumental introduction to Act II (the production played in two acts, divided between the original I.ii and I.iii). On the other hand, Lenya and Symonette restored the two New York Harbor scenes, including “Song of the Goddess” and its wordless reprise, and also created a version of Minny Bell’s “Goodbye” for inclusion in I.ii, as Green had proposed in his text for *Tp0* (and therefore in *Tp1*). French published for sale a new edition of the play reflecting these changes, and this version was adopted for later performances in the 1970s, including those in Bochum (11 November 1973 to 9 January 1974; conductor David Kamien rewrote the string parts for wind instruments, much to Lenya’s dismay) and the Finnish National Theatre (5 February 1975 through September). In 1974 David Drew produced a Songspiel rereworking of parts of *Johnny Johnson* (also incorporating some of the music rejected early on), titled *War Play*, it was performed in Berlin on 13 September 1975 as part of the Berliner Festwochen’s Weill tribute celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of his birth. However, the 1971 two-act *Johnny Johnson* has been the sole version authorized for performance until publication of the present Edition.

V. A Musical Play?

Green could never decide how best to describe *Johnny Johnson*. For *Tp0* he gave the play a subtitle, “The Biography of a Kindly Man,” but the modifier kept changing: “The Biography of a Common Man” in *Tp1*; “The Biography of a Good-Natured Man” in one copy of the 1968 spoken version (with a whole new subtitle, “A Play Against the Madness of War,” in another); “The Biography of a Friendly Man” in drafts for the 1971 production. No less troublesome was the question of genre. Green was quoted in *Newseum* (28 November 1936) on the “crazy” idea of a play in which “the first act is a comedy, the second a tragedy, and the third a satire,” and Brooks Atkinson’s review in the *New York Times* (20 November 1936) picked up on something similar: “It is part fantasy, part musical satire, part symbolic poetry in the common interests of peace; and also one is compelled to add, part good and part bad.” Preliminary advertising in the *New York Times* called *Johnny Johnson* “a play with music”—perhaps following Weill’s sometime preference for his European theater works (*Stücke mit Musik*)—but soon shifted (e.g., on 16 November) to “a legend,” the term also used in the opening-night program; other sources would later call it “a fantastic drama” and “a fable.” However, reviewers returned to “a play with music,” which they even reframed as “a musical play”—a term that attributed to both the text and the music greater dramatic aspirations than might normally have been expected from Broadway musical theater. Green also used his collaboration with Weill to nurture his ideas for what he called “symphonic drama,” although he was never quite clear on what this meant, and for him the matter soon went in a different direction. There is no question, however, that the playwright and the composer, both in the creative process and in their aesthetic intent, sought some kind of novel marriage of music and drama, even if Green and the Group Theatre grew doubtful of its feasibility as opening night approached.

Green often claimed that the title of *Johnny Johnson* honored the name most frequently encountered among American soldiers in World War I. Among literary sources mentioned in connection with the work, Carl Zuckmayer’s play *Der Hauptmann von Köpenick* (1931) may have provided the notion of a lowly individual (in Zuckmayer’s case, a cobbler, based on a real-life figure) masquerading as a military officer to overcome a faceless bureaucracy; and Jaroslav Hašek’s novel *The Good Soldier Švejk* (1921–22) may have inspired various episodes of army life. However, Green typically drew more on personal experience. Having served as an officer in World War I he knew firsthand the dangers, as well as the tedium and even absurdity, of battles dictated by faceless generals safe behind the walls of their high-command posts. He also identified with the idea of the “simple” man whose commonsense was at odds with the world (he often cited Charlie Chaplin as a model). Moreover, Green had been a passionate advocate for the proposed League of Nations and professed to read regularly the speeches of Woodrow Wilson. During World War II he also adopted the voice of Johnny Johnson in an article in the *Raleigh News and Observer* (N.C.) to justify the present military action as a battle for democracy.

As a play *Johnny Johnson* has its ups and downs. Green often used the stage as a puppet, with an earnest sententiousness that slows the action. Most would agree that Act II is the most successful; that Act I takes too long to gain momentum; that Green’s undoubted talent for satirical caricatures of the absurd (the recruiting office in I.iii, Dr. Mahodan in III.i) suffers from excess; and that the ending, while poignant, seems unsatisfying (though it is hard to envision any other resolution). The dialogue falters when Green gets bogged down in minor if not irrelevant plot details (the Camp Doll’s roses in I.iv, the long debate over the League of Nations by the inmates of the house of balm in III.ii) or allows a comic situation to overstay its welcome (the entry test in the army recruiting office in I.i, the joshing between soldiers in the trenches in II.ii); it is no coincidence that the FTP in Los Angeles attempted to shorten such passages so as to streamline the production. The long passages of uninterrupted speech also suggest that Green never quite decided what the role of music in general, and Weill’s music in particular, might be in the theater; a similar impression emerges from their later, unsuccessful collaboration on *The Common Glory*.

For his part, Weill claimed in early 1937 that he was looking for “a new form of music play [sic], plays with poetic implications which rise at times to fantasy, plays in which words and music do not merely consort with [sic] each other but are so closely mated that they are ‘bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.’” He probably did not find it in *Johnny Johnson*, and in the end he must have been left somewhat nonplussed about both Green—who, after all, was no Brecht or Kaiser—and American musical theater. His lecture on the latter presented to the Group on 27 July 1936 was inevitably full of optimism over the possibilities, both in general and with regard to *Johnny Johnson*. This lecture drew special attention to the appeal of having a statue, on the one hand, and cannons, on the other, contribute to the musical discourse—comments suggesting that the idea, at least, of a “Song of the Goddess” and a “Song of the Guns” was fixed fairly early in the work’s genesis. Indeed, Weill called the latter the “nucleus” of the play in his interview in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* published on 20 December 1936. In general musical terms, however, Weill faced the problem of accommodating his style to American tastes, with which he was still gaining familiarity. Probably too much ink has been spilt on the extent to which “Johnny’s Song” might reflect Weill’s early struggles to adapt to the “typical” Tin Pan Alley/Broadway 32-measure song form (“AAB”); in fact, “Oh Heart of Love” comes closer to that model—which was by no means unique to Broadway (or to the 1930s) and was subject to greater variation than is often assumed. Still, the score for *Johnny Johnson* certainly does contain an odd mixture of styles. Some numbers could have—and very occasionally did—come straight from one of Weill’s German *Stücke mit..."
**Mikael (such as the opening sequence, which begins with an instrumental version of “Das Lied vom Branntweinhändler” from Happy End),** with or without an occasional twist (as in “The Psychiatry Song”). Other evident sources are French cabaret (for example, “Mon Ami, My Friend” or “Captain Valentine’s Song”—the latter with its echoes of the instrumental “Tango Habanera” from Marie Galante, for which Roger Fernay provided the text “Youkali” in 1935, and whose musical ending Weill also borrowed for the end of “Song of the Goddess”);**179 Gilbert and Sullivan operetta (“The Tea Song”); and a presumed American fount of waltz-ballads (“Oh Heart of Love”), cowboy songs (“Oh the Rio Grande”), glees (“A Hymn to Peace”), and even Southern hymns (“Asylum Chorus”).**170 It is perhaps no coincidence that the numbers with less obvious, or more diverse, musical roots prove more intriguing; they also appear more embedded within the drama rather than simply accessory to it. “Song of the Goddess” and “Song of the Guns” work to great theatrical effect—as Weill predicted in his July 1936 lecture—as does “In Time of War and Turmuts,” with its vivid counterpart to the horrors of war.

“In Time of War and Turmuts” forms part of a remarkable progression of more or less continuous music from “The Allied High Command” through to the end of Act II. Weill appears to have been concerned with such larger musical structures from the outset: he sketched and, it seems, composed the first four musical items in Act I (and therefore, in effect, also the fifth) as a single sequence, albeit to a different version of the text, and he and Green planned the end of L.v through L.iii in a single arc (from Minny Belle’s “Farewell, Goodbye” through an instrumental version of “Johnny’s Song” and on to “Song of the Goddess” to finish the act), although they eventually departed from this plan. Similarly, but on a smaller scale, “The West-Pointer’s Song,” one of the best-developed numbers in the play, extends nicely into the following action by virtue of what seems to be a later addition to the original draft as the soldiers do their bayonet exercises before a final chorus. Related to these concerns is Weill’s apparent interest in having music recur at different points in the play. The iterations of “Captain Valentine’s Song” (I.iii, L.iv, L.ii, L.iiii) with their rambling story line should probably count as an experiment gone wrong, but the wordless reprise of “Oh Heart of Love” in II.iii (during “Johnny’s Dream”) is moving. Further, the carefully judged returns of instrumental versions of the march first introduced in “Democracy Advancing” (I.iii—II.iii) (by way of a recording), L.v (after “Farewell, Goodbye” had been removed), II.i (a reprise apparently dropped at one point, though preserved in this Edition), and III.iii—make their mark, not least as increasingly ironic comment on just what such militaristic music might represent.

Other returns may simply be a response to the need for utilities to cover scene changes and the like: the use of “The Tea Song” for the Interlude between II.iii and II.iv is a case in point. Whereas the instrumental reprise of “Farewell, Goodbye” that originally came at the end of III.i (after Minny Belle has taken her final farewell of Johnny Johnson) may have had relevance, its replacement (when “Farewell, Goodbye” was dropped) by an instrumental repetition of “Oh the Rio Grande” appears to be purely functional. However, in Act I and much of Act II—and in what seem to be the early layers of the compositional process, before more immediate pressures were brought to bear—Weill carefully employed such interludes to act as a transition (e.g., from I.i to I.iii) or to establish a new situation, as with the effective use of army bugle calls (probably suggested by Green), as when the action shifts to the camp drill ground for L.iv (no. 10).**172

The two most striking cases of such musical returns are, of course, the reapparance of “Song of the Goddess” in II.ii (even if it was cut in the early productions) and the instrumental arrangements of “Johnny’s Song” (no. 39) heard several times—at the end of I.i (no. 5; for which Green provided lyrics in 1971), in L.vi (no. 16), originally in II.v (at the end of no. 28, but ultimately dropped), and in II.iii (no. 33)—prior to its vocal version at the end of the play. A draft of the song for voice and piano accompaniment (the latter with some gaps) survives with a quite different text: this begins with the verse “Please don’t tell a soul / I’ve run away from home / I’m running far away, / I’m going to Paris, / I’m going to Paris today,” followed by a refrain with the music used for “[Johnny’s Song]” (in F major, as the song appears in nos. 16 and 33, but with note values halved; see Plate 7).**173 The refrain has the rather awkward words “I’m going to Paris, / Where the streets are paved with gold,” continuing to a passage for “Voices” (“Too late, too late / You’ve missed your only chance / At excitement and romance”) prior to returning to the main melody, where the piece breaks off. The incomplete text is rough and ready in the manner of work in progress.

Green said later that Weill had written the melody for “Johnny’s Song” in Europe but wanted to find a place for it in his new American play—several commentators have noticed the similarity of its opening with “[I]t attends un navine” in Marie Galante, which may be what Green meant—and that in contrast to much of the rest of Johnny Johnson, here the playwright was forced to fit words to preexisting music.**174 On the face of it, the “Paris” version of the song (and its preceding verse) would seem to have very little to do with the play, although it is hard to see who other than Green could have provided those words. It has been suggested that Weill wrote it instead for a cabaret performance by Lenya in the vein of the short “song drama” The Fräulein and the Little Son of the Rich, also composed in summer 1936.**175 However, Green’s early notes for Johnny Johnson outline (as a possible II.i) a scene in a “cattle car” (i.e., on a train) where Johnny appears to mingle with French civilians, including a “French girl,” who perhaps could have sung about running away to Paris.**176 The cast list at the beginning of Ti1 (which contains the text only of Act I) reveals a possible vestige of this scene: it names Jacques (a French peasant), Madame (his wife), Madelaine (a “French girl”), and Mademoiselle d’Armentières in a position suggesting the beginning of Act II (these characters are no longer present in Ti2).**177 Once this scene was dropped (eliminating the “Paris” song, if indeed it had been included), the decision to use the melody instrumentally in Johnny Johnson—and to associate it with the title role—appears to have preceded the decision to give it new words as Johnny’s final song. In the melody enters at the end of Minny Belle’s “Farewell, Goodbye” (in that song’s original position at the close of L.v), whose lyrics appear as a later insertion into Ti2, whereas this script, which handles III.iii somewhat differently, indicates the presence of “Johnny’s Song” only by way of an (even later?) pencilled annotation.**178 As we have seen, Green’s text for “Johnny’s Song” became a source of contention after Weill turned to Edward Heyman for new lyrics. But the use of a recurring musical theme for the main character that receives full realization only at the end of the play ties things together quite strongly, and Weill would employ similar strategies in later stage works (including “My Ship” in Lady in the Dark).

Although it is relatively easy to attribute the weaknesses of Johnny Johnson to Green’s script—as did most of the play’s first reviewers—the somewhat disorienting mixture of styles in Weill’s score probably did not help matters. Harold Clurman, writing in 1949, felt that the music had not received due credit: “Johnny Johnson was not a success—although it had its admirers. Only one or two of the critics remarked on the original quality of the score, in which Weill managed to combine elements of a peculiarly sensuous and melancholy nature with typically American musical folkloric materials—a strange but affecting mixture, superior, in my opinion, to most of what Weill has subsequently written.”**179 Although Clurman’s comment reflects the reception of Weill in the United States in the 1940s and beyond (with the notion that the later “American Weill” had sold out his European roots so as to achieve commercial success), he captured some of the essence at different levels and in different ways. Yet the work retains its fascination, and some more recent, well-received...
productions—for example, at the Odyssey Theatre, Los Angeles, in June 1986, and at the Theater des Westens, Berlin, in early 1996—suggest that it can hold its own on the stage.

VI. The Edition

A complete account of the textual and musical sources for Johnny Johnson and their chronology, as well as their use in the Edition, appears in the preface to the Critical Report. Given the mandate of the Kurt Weill Edition to produce the fullest, most internally consistent version of a given work, any edition of Johnny Johnson as rendered by the Group Theatre on 29 November 1936 would be unsatisfactory because of the successive cuts and other changes made, more and more haphazardly, over the course of production. Conversely, a creative redistribution of the work and its component parts in the manner of the 1971 version of the score, however effective the result, would lack any historical justification and would exceed the bounds of what Green and Weill together sought to create.

Fortunately, the FTP production that opened in Los Angeles on 28 May 1937 offers an effective solution (the FTP production opening in Boston on the 25th seems to have been more in the vein of the Group Theatre version). The Los Angeles production is thus the performance “event” to which the Edition most closely relates, at least in terms of what appears to have been intended, if not always enacted. It followed a script authorized by Green and incorporating revisions that he undertook immediately after the Group premiere, although not the further changes made as he saw this script into print. As we have seen, Weill offered advice to the directors in Los Angeles and expressed approval of the result, at least in part. Moreover, because this production made almost complete use of the music, it allows its fullest transmission for modern performance. The “privileged source” for the text in the Edition is therefore the first FTP script (Tp4, very similar to Tp6), and for the music, Weill’s original full score (Fh). In the case of the music, however, the Edition also takes into account the 1940 vocal score (Ve), which is essential for the vocal lines, even if it is less useful in broader terms, owing to Weill’s forced efforts to match the music to the published text of the play (Tpi1). Ve was also rather carelessly prepared and printed, it seems, and its dynamic markings are often inconsistent and irreconcilable with Fh (major discrepancies where useful are noted in the Critical Report) and also within Ve itself, such that they have been ignored in the Edition, leaving the vocal lines here without dynamics save where more than one voice is singing. These dynamics will depend, anyway, on the broader musical context and on matters of interpretation. Other musical sources considered here include Weill’s sketches (Dh), his fair copies (Vh), various piano(-vocal) rehearsal materials (Vm1, Pm1, Vm2, Pm2), the songs published as sheet music in 1936 (Ae), and the sets of instrumental parts associated with the Group production (Im1) and with the Los Angeles FTP one (Im2).

Given the challenges of collaboration and the ad hoc revisions inevitably made during rehearsal and performance, these textual and musical sources are understandably complex. Thus the orchestral score for Johnny Johnson (Fh) typically lacks vocal lines, and a few passages have parts left blank for Weill to complete in a second pass (although in some cases, such as the percussion part in no. 18, mm. 31–65, he never did). As usual, the instrumental parts (Im1/2) contain performance annotations of indeterminate date indicating cuts, corrections, revisions, and modifications (e.g., to dynamics). Green’s text as followed in the Edition (Tt4) is somewhat more secure, since he prepared it separately, although it, too, contains annotations of a later date marking minor revisions and cuts. But the only significant addition made to Tt4 in the present Edition is the German text for “In Time of War and Tumults” (no. 31)—this text is also lacking in Ve—which has been conflated here from late nineteenth-century sources probably known to Green and Weill.

For the music, the Edition prints, either in its main text or in the appendix, everything present and complete in Fh in its current state. With one exception, the Edition does not include music that is incomplete in Fh as it now survives. It therefore omits a “reminiscence” of “Aggie’s Song” at the end of Li (related to Tt2 but cut prior to Tt3) and also the link to what was intended to be a foreshortened instrumental statement of “Johnny’s Song” played as Johnny enters immediately after “The Allied High Command” in lvi (this statement is present in Pm1, Vm2/Pm2, and Im1/2, but Fh has only the link to it). The exception is the original ending to “Song of the Wounded Frenchmen” in lii, which features an instrumental statement of “Democracy Advancing” immediately following Johnny’s “Lafayette, we are here!” This ending was removed from Fh, having been dropped in favor of the more funereal music that appears in Pm1 and, Ve (and that was slightly reworked in Fh for “In No-man’s-land” in liii). The Ve version is transcribed in the Critical Report, but because no instrumentation survives, the Edition reverts to the music that was dropped. Fh also does not contain the following:

- the Interlude after Li (no. 12);
- the appearance of “Captain Valentine’s Song” in Lvi (no. 9d);
- the “bugle” call to assemble the soldiers in Lvi (no. 14);
- the revised Interlude after Lvi (no. 15);
- the appearance of “Captain Valentine’s Song” in liii (no. 9e);
- the Interlude after liii (no. 25);
- the Interlude after liiii (no. 35);
- “A Hymn to Peace” (no. 37), which is purely vocal;
- the instrumental return of “Democracy Advancing” in liii (no. 38).

However, with the exception of nos. 14 (taken from Im1) and 37 (from Ve), these numbers all involve music already present elsewhere in Fh in some form or other. Thus, every musical note in the Edition has Weill’s authority by way of Fh and/or Ve, save the following:

- the ending of the “short” (Ve) version of “Aggie’s Song” (no. 6), taken from performance annotations in Pm1 and Im1/2;
- the vocal lines for the second and subsequent iterations of “Captain Valentine’s Song” (nos. 9b–e; derived from no. 9a);
- no. 14, taken from Im1, a set of instrumental parts presumably sanctioned by the composer;
- and the percussion part in no. 18, mm. 31–65, which completes an apparent lacuna in Fh.

The Edition allows for the shortened version of the end of Act II adopted by the Group Theatre and, eventually, by the FTP in Los Angeles (with the action of liii taking place during “In Time of War and Tumults” in liii, and with lii removed); this version requires a more fully scored ending to “In Time of War and Tumults” (no. 31). However, the Edition relegates to the Critical Report the abrupt five-measure ending to i.ii. The Critical Report also includes the melodies for two popular songs that Green cued in his text but that Weill did not use: Grandpa Joe’s “When two are alone in a parlor at eve” in lii (Green dictated the music to Lys Symonette in preparation for the 1971 production) and Private Harwood’s “Keep your head down, Allemand” in lii (based on a well-known song from World War I).

The Edition gives in an appendix two surviving items that are complete in Fh but do not fit the present version of the play, even though they each appear to have been used somehow in performance: the “long” version of “Aggie’s Song” (no. A6), and Minny Bells’s “Hedward, Givebye,” as originally located in Lvi (no. A15), also with the option (documented in the Critical Report) to use it in lii. The version of “Aggie’s Song” relates to the longer text in Tt2 (extending Aggie’s stanzas into an exchange between her, Minny Belle, and Grandpa Joe), although even this text does not quite match the music. The Los Angeles FTP production may have considered using this version for the shorter text in Tt4, adding stage business in the middle; the evidence is unclear. The music (minus voice) could also serve as a utility if needed. The other song, “Hedward, Givebye,” was designed (in Tt2) to allow Minny Belle to appear in lvi, where it could still work quite well. When revising his text in December 1936, Green moved the
song to Lii, where it appears in T4e and Tp1. Preparations for the Los Angeles FTP production may have attempted to include "Farewell, Goodbye" in Lii, but there is no indication that it was ever performed there (or anywhere else) until Lys Symonnette’s 1971 edition; nor does it quite fit. Well did not include the song in Ve, even though, so Phoebe Brand (the first Minny Belle) reports, he thought it the best in the play.193

The preface to the Critical Report and the subsequent notes on individual numbers explain editorial decisions made in the course of handling the musical sources and provide details of all significant variants therein, as well as other factors that have prompted editorial action. In accordance with the policy of the Kurt Weill Edition, the notes adopt a less rigorous approach for the spoken text: they make no attempt to offer a full collation of the privileged source (T4e) with its predecessors and successors, although they comment on them and on other issues as needed to aid interpretation.

VII. Some Performance Issues

Staging Johnny Johnson is no easy matter, and while approaches that the Group Theatre adopted in 1936 and the Los Angeles FTP in 1937 set no limits on any modern staging, an account of them may help clarify at least some of the issues involved.

As presented in the Edition, Johnny Johnson has sixty-nine speaking roles, though a good number are very small. Sixteen characters sing solo: in order, the Mayor, Minny Belle, Grandpa Joe, Aggie Tompkins, Captain Valentine, Sergeant Jackson, the West-Point Lieutenant, the Statue of Liberty, the English Sergeant, Private Harwood, the French Nurse, the Chief of the Allied High Command, the American and German Priests, Dr. Mahodan, and Johnny Johnson. The score also requires a mixed vocal ensemble in I.i and an all-male one in I.v, II.i, II.ii, II.v, and III.i and III.ii. The Group Theatre performed the play with a cast of thirty-six (thirty-five after cutting "Song of the Goddess"); the cast list in the original Playbill does not include Mito Smith (I.i), Private Jesel (in I.i; the role was taken by Private O’Day), the Statue of Liberty (I.v), the Lieutenant (II.i), and the Guard (III.i); the members of the Allied High Command (II.v) were slightly reduced in number; and only one military policeman appeared in II.viii. The Los Angeles FTP production had a cast of sixty, with an additional forty-six extras: clearly the FTP had no concerns about numbers, since it was in the organization’s best interests to employ as many actors as possible. Therefore the Los Angeles production expanded the membership of the Allied High Command—e.g., by including a Russian colonel and an Italian general—and also doubled up the brothers in the house of balm.

Of the characters with individual songs, the Mayor, Minny Belle, Aggie Tompkins, the West-Point Lieutenant, the English Sergeant, the French Nurse, and Dr. Mahodan appear in only one scene. While not perhaps the most serious use of resources, this arrangement does allow the possibility of doubling up roles. The Group certainly did so: to give the most prominent examples, Luther Adler played the English Sergeant (II.ii), the Belgian Major-General (II.v), and Brother Henry (III.i); Roman Bohnen, Grandpa Joe (I.i–ii), the American Commander-in-Chief (II.v), and Brother Claude (III.i); Morris Carnovsky, the Chief of the Allied High Command (II.v) and Dr. Mahodan (III.i); Lee J. Cobb, Dr. McCray (III.i), the French Major-General (II.v), and Brother George (III.ii); Elia Kazan, Private Kearns (I.v–v, II.i) and Dr. Freed (III.i); Tony Kraber, the Editor (I.i), Private Harwood (I.v–v, II.i), and Brother Theodore (III.i); Robert Lewis, the Mayor (I.i) and the French Premier (II.i); and Art Smith, Sergeant Jackson (I.v–v, II.i), the Doctor (II.i), and Brother Thomas (III.i). Aside from bit parts, the only male actors taking just one role in the Group production were Grover Burgess (Anguish Howington; I.i–ii, III.i–iii), Jules Garfield (Johann Lang; I.i, I.i–ii), Sanford Meisner (Captain Valentine; I.i–ii, I.i–iii), Joseph Pevney (West-Point Lieutenant; I.v), and, of course, Russell Collins (Johnny Johnson). In contrast, the Group and FTP cast separately the principal female roles (seven including the Goddess), no doubt to make more effective use of available personnel in what is a strongly male-dominated play.194 However, doublings are possible here as well, except for Minny Belle (she appears in Li-ii, II.i, III.i, and III.ii, plus I.v, if one adopts the handling of this scene given in the appendix to the Edition). The 1971 version of Johnny Johnson (omitting I.v–v) was done with eleven male and four female actors, reducing the number of villagers, soldiers, generals, and inmates. But for the complete text, even the most economical casting would require at least twenty actors (three of them female); it is by no means a small production.

The Los Angeles FTP production bulletin for Johnny Johnson discusses at some length the problems of staging "fifteen scenes which vary in style and character from Gilbert and Sullivanesque vaudeville, slapstick, rural sketch, abstract stylization to straight realism—the whole interspersed with songs and musical numbers, some of which are tied into the action of the moment, some standing by themselves." The full version in eighteen scenes requires sixteen sets if one plays I.i and II.i on the same set, and likewise II.vii and II.viii. Donald Oenslager’s designs for the Group production were praised for their eccentric modernism but criticized for overpowering the action. His use of a revolve, however, provided an elegant solution for the rapid scene changes: most sets took up half the revolve (although the ruined churchyard for II.iii seems to have gone deeper), either running parallel to the front of the stage or (in Act III) at an angle to it.195 The Los Angeles FTP production instead had painted drops, with a combination of full- and half-stage sets, and some scenes (e.g., II.iv) done "in one.

The vocal lines of Johnny Johnson are not particularly ambitious, although "Johnny’s Song" has a wider range, and "Song of the Wounded Frenchmen" and "Song of the Guns" have some tricky harmonic moments. Characters tend to sing solo only once (with the exception of Minny Belle and Captain Valentine). For "Song of the Goddess," Green later noted that "in the New York production the dark figure of a woman representing the Statue appeared among the sleepers as if an animal in their dreams and sang her song as a threnody over them"; and of "Song of the Guns," he remarked that "the soldiers themselves sang this cannon song."196

The instrumentation requires a fairly compact pit band of at most twelve players: clarinet (also clarinet), alto/baritone saxophone (also clarinet), two trumpets, tenor trombone, two violins, violoncello, guitar (also banjo), timpani/percussion, Hammond Organ, and piano (this is discussed further in the Critical Report). When Well began his score he planned for a ten-piece group, with the second trumpeter shifting to second violin as needed, and just one keyboard player on the Hammond Organ. This group later expanded with the addition of a separate second violinist in addition to the second trumpet, while the final "Johnny’s Song" has two parts for Hammond Organ and piano: if one of those keyboard instruments was played by the musical director (Engel), there would, in the end, have been eleven players in the pit.197 The scoring comes closest to the instrumentation that Well had used in the Mahagonny Songspiel in 1927—two clarinets one doubling bass clarinet, alto sax, two trumpets, trombone, piano, timpani and percussion, two violins—if slightly mellower in the reed instruments, and richer in the strings, than in other works by Well from his Berlin period.198 Although Well had already developed a predilection for reed-type keyboard instruments (normally the harmonium, but the accordion in Marie Galante and parts of Der Kuhhandel), he was introduced to the Hammond Organ in the United States, and by George Gershwin, it seems. The "model A" (patented in 1934 and first manufactured in 1935) had two five-octave manuals and a two-octave pedalboard. According to Well (quoted by reporter Paul Davis in early 1937):

This instrument has an identity all its own. It is so responsive—it functions, you know, with the speed of light—that it gives you superb attack, as sharp as a piano. An organ, yes, but there is nothing oily or unctuous [sic] about the tone. Yet it can be as subtle and insinuating as you please. Or you can get the most terrific forzando [sic] from it. There is no limit to the volume. You can multiply it indefinitely by adding more sound cabinets, and by locating your cabinets where you choose, your sound will emanate from any given spot. You can see what an asset such an instrument is to the theatrical and picture producers.199

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Notes

1. Quotes given here retain spellings and errors found in the original documents while regularizing small stylistic details (such as giving play titles in italics). Square brackets indicate editorial insertions.

2. WLA, Box 47, Folder 7; “De même j’ai des conversations très intéressantes avec les membres du Group Theatre, le théâtre le plus moderne et le plus jeune de New York. Là aussi il y a un intérêt énorme pour moi”; translated in WPD(6), 163. The New York Herald-Tribune, 6 December 1937, reported that Johnny Johnson began over a dinner party with Lee Strasberg and Weill, although it was Cheryl Crawford who chose Paul Green. Robert Lewis (who first played the Mayor and French Premier) later said that Crawford had been prompted to consider Weill by Janet Flanner (the Paris correspondent for the New Yorker); “Robert (Bobby) Lewis: Oral History Interview with Peggy Meyer Sherry” (29 May 1991), in WLRC, Series 60. The New York Times, 21 October 1936, reporting on the revival of Johnny Johnson directed by Stella Adler (formerly of the Group Theatre), noted that the idea of the musical came specifically from Adler. Compare also Howard Charmian, The Fervent Years: The Story of the Group Theatre and the Thirties (New York: Knopf, 1945), 183: “We befriended Kurt Weill, and Stella Adler insisted that he must do a musical play for us along lines he had made known in Germany.” However, rivalries between members of the Group, especially after its demise, make it very difficult to discern truth from invention.

3. For the context, see Ben Blake, The Awakening of the American Theatre (New York: Tomorrow Publishers, 1935). One prominent figure in Blake’s portrait of the labor stage—union of dance, pantomime, song, the word, and acting.

4. See Paul Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama: A Search for New Theatre Forms,” in Drama and the Weather: Some Notes and Papers on Life and the Theatre (New York: Samuel French, 1958), 1–44 (on pp. 15, Green reports that he told his wife, on seeing Die Dreigroschenoper in Berlin, that “the people were a sorry lot, but there was something about the way the music and the story mixed together that I liked”). For Green and Granowski, see ibid., 16–21; Green, “Music in the Theatre,” in The Hamburger: View, Some Papers and Letters on Life and the Theatre (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943), 81–89 (a slightly different, later version of part of this text was published as “Music in the Theatre” in his Dramatic Heritage [New York: Samuel French, 1958], 38–41). Both Harold Charmian (The Fervent Years, 183) and Cheryl Crawford (One Naked Individual: My Fifty Years in the Theatre [Indianapolis: Bobbs- Merrill, 1977], 91) also claimed their own, and the Group’s, fondness for Die Dreigroschenoper, which they said they knew from the recording.

5. The Fervent Years, 184.

6. These works, and also Johnny Johnson, are discussed in Vincent S. Kenny, Paul Green (New York: Twayne, 1971), 77–91. For Roll, Sweet Chariot and “symphonic drama,” see Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama,” 27. Stringfield was also the founder and chief conductor (1932–38) of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra; he, too, was a Pulitzer prizewinner, and he was to be involved in Green’s The Lost Colony (1937).

7. Compare also Green’s diary entry (UNC/PG, vol. 8) for 14 January 1936: “Thinking on Stokowski, Martha Graham, Trudi Schoop, Granowski and meeting planned by Mrs. Isaacs—Something I am after whether stage or screen—preferably for me stage—union of dance, pantomime, song, the word, and acting. Fraud Green Grain, Roll Sweet Chariot, Shoved My Body Down only suggestions of what I want.”

8. Crawford, letter to Green, 10 April 1936, in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers (held in the Manuscripts Collection, Schwartzman Building), Box 21, Folder 5.

9. Lee Strasberg said (in an interview with Ronald Sanders, April 1978) that the idea of Švejk emerged from a conversation with Weill in Strasberg’s living room (he does not say who else was there), in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Folder 5. Others, however, attribute the idea to Crawford; see Kay L. Grismer, “Cheryl Crawford Presents . . . : A History of Her Broadway Musical Productions 1936–1949,” Ph.D. diss., Wayne State University, 1993, 20. A staging of Piscator’s version of Havel’s novel at the Hedgerow Theatre (Media, Penn.) was announced in the Philadelphia Record on 4 October 1936 as a U.S. premiere; this article also noted that the Group Theatre was planning Green’s “adaptation” as Johnny Johnson. Weill had already considered Švejk in Berlin and would return to it later in his career; see David Drew, Kurt Weill: A Handbook (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 408; Nils Grosch, “‘in einer einzelnen humoristischen Figur den phantasistischen Irrtum des Krieges aufzeigen’. Weil, Eisler and the Music for “Schweyk”, in De Hasek à Brecht: fortune ita- lienne de la figure de Chvéïk, ed. Marie-Odile Thirouin, Les Cahiers de l’ILCEA 8 (Grenoble: Institut de Langues et des Cultures de l’Europe et de l’Amérique, 2006), 153–66.

5. For Zuckmayer, Green claimed in a letter to Cheryl Crawford of 22 April 1975 to have seen in Berlin the (earlier) film Der Hauptmann von Köpenick (1926); see A South- ern Life: Letters of Paul Green, 1916–81, ed. Laurence G. Avery (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 684. Crawford herself mentions drawing on Havel, Büchner, and Zuckmayer, “and even Dvořák Mblie” [1918], a popular novel of let-

12. Crawford, letter to Green, 11 May 1936, in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 21, Folder 5. For the Chapel Hill visit, see also Weill’s letters to Lenya of 3, 6, and 7 May 1936, in W-L(L), 193–94. In her 11 May letter, Crawford also suggested that Green might meet up with her, Weill, and Lenya in Virginia Beach during their vacation the following week. She then wrote to Green from Virginia Beach saying that she was reluctant to drive to Chapel Hill and urging him to produce the promised draft of Act I, or at least something to demonstrate his commitment to Weill, lest Weill spend the summer in Paris; see her undated letter in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 21, Folder 5. This letter also mentions that Weill had found “four or five books in the library of comic stuff” on which he was taking notes, and it refers to a scenario (for all three acts) that appears to have found some favor within the Group.

13. Weill, letters to Green, 19 May 1936 (Act I suggestions), Tuesday (undated; enthusiastic response), in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 21, Folder 5. There is a third letter in this sequence from Weill to Green (24 June) while the latter was briefly away from the Group summer camp.


15. These dates derive from references in later sources; I have not found the original contracts. Signing was delayed by the requirement that all parties be members of the Dramatists’ Guild, which Weill was not (see his letter to Harold Freedman [Brandt and Brandt], 11 July 1936, in W-L, Box 47, Folder 4), and by other unspecified issues (see the letters to Green from his publisher in UNC/P Gulf Folder 379). The Kurt Weill Foundation business files also contain a copy of a general memorandum of agreement between Weill and Green to prepare Johnny Johnson (unsigned and undated), with both holding equal rights to it.

16. Green and Weill arrived in Connecticut on Monday, 8 June; see Lenya, letter to Rita Weill, 5 June 1936, in W-Fam, 345–46. They preceded the Group, who arrived toward the end of June, after their touring production of Clifford Odets’ Awake and Sing! had closed in Newark, N.J., on 20 June; see the New York Evening Post, 17 June 1936. Crawford recounts that Weill composed at the piano beneath her bedroom (One Naked Individual, 94). For his borrowings from earlier works (in particular Happy End and Die Kuhhandel) for Johnny Johnson, see Drew, Handbooks, 274, and also below. The chronology in Hirsch, Kurt Weill on Stage, 144 (which states that Weill completed the score by early July and joined the Group camp in the middle of that month), is incorrect.

17. The text is in W-L, Box 68, Folder 17; facsimile in W-Fam, 165. Notes on the letter by Tony Kraber and Luther Adler—both of whom played in Johnny Johnson—are active in WLRc, Series 80.

18. UNC/P Gulf, Folder 381. For another letters from Green to his wife (one from 18 June), see A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 258–59.

19. On 29 July, Elizabeth Green wrote to her husband (UNC/P Gulf, Folder 4080). “Make that Johnny Johnson a great thing, sweet. You can. Think of him as Everyman, as a humorous Job, and stick to the essential fable of man’s piteous laughable seeking. Do pray don’t dwell on dead horses and burlesque drill to the detriment of your story. You surely have something great there. I can’t quite see it clear because you have so great a quantity of material. But I know you can carve something simple and universal out of it” (her “dead horses” refers to an early version of Lc; see below). For “Song of the Guns,” see Green’s letter to his wife, Friday (undated, but perhaps 11 September 1936), in UNC/P Gulf, Folder 381; here he also refers to the “Generals’ Song,” but this is probably a mistake for “Cowboy Song,” unless Green is referring to the first, texted version of “The Dance of the Generals.” For “Oh the Rio Grande,” Green says (to his letter to his wife, dated only “Monday,” in UNC/P Gulf, Folder 381 (the actual date was probably 12 October 1936)) that Elizabeth Green replied to a letter in the 17th, in UNC/P Gulf, Folder 4080. “I’ve just come from the theatre where we rehearsed your cowboy ballad. Everybody is charmed with it, and Kurt says you will make a lot of money from it . . . that Rudy VaUee, Bing Crosby and all the boys will be singing it. I’ve had a few minor changes in it in order to get a more energetic sort of thing, but they are so small that they don’t count. I was so proud to hear them all praise it! And Tony Kraber sings it beautifully.” Toward the end of this letter, Green says that he wants to publish the play with the music at the back so that he can give his wife credit for both “Oh the Rio Grande” and “Song of the Guns.” Another letter written by Green to his wife, also on a Monday, refers again to her contribution in “Oh the Rio Grande”; see A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 259–60 (but this letter most probably dates from the first half of November, and not, as Avery suggests, late August).

20. LOC, Aaron Copland Collection, Box 250, Folder “Harold Chlumberg, 1935–39.”

21. NYPL, Donald Onoe/land Papers and Designs, Box 54, Folder 38. Chlumberg also asked Onoe/land to lecture to the Group on Japanese theater.

22. Clurman made the pitch in his letters to Copland of 18 June and 19 July; see also Crawford and VanDine, 1900, 1922 (New York: St. Martin’s/Marek, 1984), 221. The proposal was dropped because Odets never finished the play; Copland’s first music for the Group was for Irwin Shaw’s The Quiet City (1938).


24. Green’s notebook with jotings on early ideas for Johnny Johnson is in UNC/P Gulf, Folder 3663.

25. For a third song perhaps intended for Johnny Johnson, see the discussion of “I’m going to Paris,” in section V below. Bob Lewis (the original Mayor and French Presidential appointee “We Need a Man” in an interview on 29 May 1991 (WLRC, Series 60), which suggests that it at least went into rehearsal.

26. Unless cited otherwise, quotations from newspapers on the New York production are taken from the clippings in the Group Theatre scrapbook in NYPL, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, Z-174, vol. 12 (a few of these are also in UNC/P Gulf, Fold- ers 386, 36060A). Odets was somewhat distraught by his relationship with this production star Louis Rainer, whom he married on 9 January 1937, and by his emerging writing commitments in Hollywood.

27. Bridgeport Post, 30 August 1936 (Lenya), 11 September 1936 (final performance). The latter also noted that Johnny Johnson would be ready for rehearsal in another week.

28. The New York Post, 10 September 1936 (a Thursday), noted that Paul Green had returned to the city in preparation for rehearsing Johnny Johnson. In a letter dated only Friday (11 September), Green informed his wife that he would be moving to the Hotel Bristol in the city on Sunday (13 September) to start rehearsals the next day (see the undated letter in UNC/P Gulf, Folder 381): “Really it is good now as I’ve got it built, and it will be much better before I’ve finished.” According to this letter, rehearsals (still in Connecticut) “began in earnest yesterday”; Green also notes “a good big announcement in the N.Y. Times” (which on 10 September 1936 reported the intended opening in October). Equity salary rules allowed a rehearsal period of five weeks before a cast needed to go on full pay (and therefore a show needed to open); although the Group may have been able to obtain a waiver from these rules, the non-Group actors would have required some accommodation.

29. Weill, letter to Engel, 27 July 1936, in Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, MSS 39 (The Lehman Engel Papers), Box 18, Folder 567. Engel had conducted Weill’s Der Jasager in a production under the auspices of the Henry Street Settlement Music School in April 1933. For Copland, see Engel, “Kurt Weill and I” (1972), in WLRC, Series 80; and also the notes on Engel’s interview with Ronald Sanders on 2 April 1978 in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Folder 5.

For Engel and Morris Stonezuk (the orchestra conductor for Weill’s American shows) meeting with the AFM, see Elmer Holmes Bobo Library, New York University; Robert E. Wagner Labor Archives, American Federation of Musicians, Local 802. Minutes of the Executive Board Meetings (1936 = Rev no. 7438/8, call no. 5264), 401. “Members Stanzig [sic] and Engel appeared before the board asking prices for the production of Johnny Johnson which will be produced by the Group Theatre. They were given the proper information.” Cheryl Crawford and other members of the Group Theatre appeared before the Board on 24 September (ibid., 415) to secure the classification of the play as a “dramatic show,” allowing “book prices” (rather than higher musical-comedy ones) for musicians. The move to the Forty-Fourth Street Theatre prompted further discussions with AFM about house musicians on 5 November (ibid., 496–97), and the classification was confirmed on 12 November (ibid., 509: “the provided music is cut to a minimum”), although the AFM wished to keep the matter under review.

On 11 August 1936 Engel later interviewed Stonezuk, they recalled one “Struovogel” (presumably Ignaz [Ignace] Strafogel) acting as assistant conductor and pianist for Johnny Johnson; see the notes in Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University, MSS 39 (The Lehman Engel Papers), Box 6, Folder 184. One assumes that Engel also played the piano on a band when needed.

30. Clurman, The Ever-resent Years, 187. In a letter to Elia Kazan of 17 May 1937 (Wesleyan University, Cinema Archives, Elia Kazan Collection), Clurman said he regretted having been dissuaded by Strasberg from having Kazan and Stella Adler direct Johnny Johnson (before Clurman himself took it—or so he suggested in an interview with
Ronald Sanders on 20 February 1978, in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Folder 5).

31. A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 262 (lastouches); interview with Rhoda Wynn on 8 Feb-
uary 1974 (ending). For the latter, see also James R. Spence, Wartime the Sahara:
Revolution of Paul Green from 1894 to 1937, ed. Margaret D. Bauer (Raleigh, N.C.:
North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2008), 221.

32. Of course, such releases, especially from agents, must be evaluated carefully for accu-

33. Cheryl Crawford also noted the financing to Donald Oenslager on 10 November
(UNC/PG, Donald Oenslager Papers and Designs, Box 55, Folder 4): “I can’t tell you how
swell I think you are to have waited so uncomplainingly for your money. Whitney
came through at last, not for quite as much as we had hoped, but for enough to se-

34. Green participated in a discussion of “The Problem of the Poetic Play” on 24 Octo-
ber; see the notice in the New York Herald-Tribune, 23 October 1936.

35. From the copy in NYPL, Margaret Barker Papers, Box 19, Folder 21. The flyer notes
that Johnny Johnson was set to open in late October.

36. Reprinted in Kurt Weill Newsletter 4, no. 2 (Fall 1986): 7–8; a German translation is
in GS2, 148–54.

37. Compare also the interview with Weill in the American Hebrew, 8 January 1937, pp.
756–57, 760. In addition, the New York World-Telegram, 14 November 1936, ran an ar-
icle on Paul Green: “The Group’s imminent presentation of Johnny Johnson has
drawn the acutely shy son of North Carolina into our midst again, but his firm in-

38. White Horse Inn was directed and produced by Erik Charell, who was known to Weill
in Europe and became associated with him in the United States; for the latter, see Tim
Carter, “Birthday at the Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802 (meeting on 10 November)

39. New York Times, 17 November 1936, reports on Green’s address that the play is “based
on a theme about a President and his efforts to stop war.”

40. This chronology is confirmed, broadly speaking, by the minutes of the Executive
Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802 (meeting on 5 November),
497, which notes that the Group was considering the Forty-Fourth Street Theatre in
the week of 23 October, with negotiations continuing until 2 November, and that a “rea-

doing night” (26 May 1937) review of the Boston performance of

41. Grismer, “Cheryl Crawford Presents . . . ,” 36, indicates that the first preview (as she
calls it) took place on 13 November (a Friday). Detailed notes on the run-throughs
survive in UNC/PG, Folder 384b. The Jamaica Courier (Queens) reported on 13 No-

42. The size of the sets generated controversy among the Group. Donald Oenslager’s orig-
inal technical drawings (M1; in NYPL, Donald Oenslager Papers and Designs, Box 75) were based on a forty-foot wide prosenium (with a viewable stage thirty-four feet wide) containing a central revolve twenty-five feet in diameter, in far edge twenty-seven feet from the front of the stage. The fact that two trees used for Li were twenty
feet high gives a sense of the scale.

43. So both Lehmberg and Morris Storozek claimed in interviews in 1978 with Ronald
Sanders; see the notes in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Folders 5 (Engel; 2 April) and 13 (Storozek; 18 May).

44. Minutes of the Executive Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802
(meeting on 12 November), 509.

45. Cheryl Crawford, however, later said that “Song of the Goddess” was sung on opening
night (One Naked Individual, Marc Blitzstein’s review of Johnny Johnson in Modern Music

46. UNC/PG Folder 384b contains a series of notes on each run-through (unsigned and
unattributed, but perhaps by Cheryl Crawford), as well as a report by Green (by hand
and then typed up) on a post-premiere performance. UNC/PG Folder 394 contains a
repeated 12 November 1936 letter to Frances Thompson (the Group’s audience manager)
to Crawford regarding that evening’s run-through.

47. These revisions were still in discussion after the opening, to judge by Elizabeth Green’s
suggestions on rewriting the scene in a letter to her husband of 25 November 1936, in
UNC/PG, Folder 4080.

48. Minutes of the Executive Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802
(meeting on 1 December), 553.

49. New York Times, 10 September 1936 (late October); 15 October (14 November); 27
October (17 November). Clurman (The Feverent Years, 188–89) notes the “panic” that
ensued from the previews.

50. New York Times, 16 November 1936 (mechanical problems); New York American, 17
November (coordinating with orchestra; the notes eighteen scenes; ingenious)
Clurman (The Feverent Years, 188) and Crawford (One Naked Individulal, 96) each
refer to nineteen sets, although the longest possible version of Johnny Johnson, com-
prising eighteen scenes, would require only sixteen sets (Li and Li.ii are on the same
set, and presumably Li.ii and Li.iii are as well.

51. These telegrams are in the Group Theatre scrapbook in NYPL, Billy Rose Theatre

52. Copies of the opening-night program are in UNC/PG, Folders 3060A, 3080B;
WLRIC Series S8A36 (which also includes programs for the weeks beginning 30 No-
ember, 7 December, and 28 December). A partial copy of the program for the week
beginning 30 November also survives in LOC/FTP, Box 958. In none does the cast
list include a Goddess, although the program in Burns Mantle’s The Best Plays of 1936–37, 432–33 (and also in the International Broadway Database at <www.ibdb.com>-

53. In his interview with Ronald Sanders (5 April 1978), Green called his lyric “doggerel”; in
his disbelief at the reviews.

54. Greene, untitled telegram to Crawford, in UNC/PG, Folder 378. See also Weill, let-
ter to Max Dreyfus (Chappell), 20 December 1936, in WLA, Box 47, Folder 3, tran-
scribed at <www.kwf.org/kwf/component/content/article/33-

55. In his interview with Ronald Sanders (5 April 1978), Green called his lyric “doggered”;
see the notes in NYPL, Ronald Sanders Papers, Box 20, Folder 5.

56. Clurman, The Feverent Years, 189–90; Crawford, One Naked Individual, 97.

57. Compare also the lengthy article on Weill in the American Hebrew, 8 January 1937
(pp. 756–57, 760), which comments favorably both on Johnny Johnson and (at a greater
length, inevitably) on The Eternal Road.

58. Oddly enough, the Boston Globe (26 May 1937) review of the Boston performance of
Johnny Johnson likewise compared the title character to Pansal.

59. Weill also claimed elsewhere that “Song of the Guns” was his idea, and one of his first
for the play; see Paul Davis, “Kurt Weill in Hollywood—But Not of It,” in WLA,
Box 74, Folder 4, transcribed at <www.kwf.org/kwf/component/content/article/33-

60. Roosevelt’s speech was printed in full in the New York Times, 2 December 1936; the
above quotations are taken from the text given in John T. Woolley and Gerhard Pe-

61. The New York Times, 13 November 1936, reported that John J. Waidberg (a theatra-
cal attorney in Hollywood) was trying to sell the film rights to Johnny Johnson and the
play Double Dummy (which opened on 11 November). However, Hunter Lovelace (an
agent in Los Angeles), writing to Green on 12 January 1937 (UNC/PG, Folder 416), was
somewhat dismissive of the possibilities of selling Johnny Johnson to the studios (the
script discussed here is unnamed but is most likely to be anything other than Johnny
Johnson). For the possibility (January 1937) of a film version produced by Wal-
ter Wanger with Burgess Meredith in the title role, see Grismer, “Cheryl Crawford
Production,” 7–43. No note from Helen Thompson to Weill regarding Weill’s

62. Minutes of the Group Theatre in a letter to her husband of 25 November 1936, in
UNC/PG, Folder 4080.

63. Members of the Executive Board of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802
(meeting on 1 December), 553.
71. The New York Times reported the closure on 9 January 1937, saying that it was for financial reasons: business had been good over the holidays but had recently fallen off (both of which are true; see the previous note). Grismer ("Cheryl Crawford Presents ... . . . 41) says that Crawford announced the closing on 12 January.

72. For earlier promptings to give Johnny Johnson the Drama Critics’ Award, see, above, and also the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 14 March 1937. High Tor and Johnny Johnson were the two shows left in the running after a cumbersome process of elimination, but most critics had already (but at an unknown date) and Green later quoted it in this form in a letter to Jonathan Daniels of 2 February 1970 (in A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 297–98); Sheil, letter to Green, 29 May 1937, in UNC/PG, Folder 407, the printed edition came off the press that morning. Its publication was noted in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle on 18 April.

73. William Kozlenko, editor of The One-AcT Play Magazine (in which TpP appeared), has acknowledged receiving the text on 15 February 1938, in UNC/PG, Folder 449.

74. Copy in UNC/PG, Folder 394. On 28 December 1936, Molly Day Thatcher, playreader for the Group, solicited a new one-act play from Green for performance in April 1937 (see her letter in UNC/PG, Folder 394); “From our point of view, it’s a chance to work both more freely and experimentally, and without all the ponderousness and financial headaches of a big production. And that’s true for the writers too.”

75. WLA, Box 48, Folder 36.

76. For the critical report sent by the Actors’ Committee (Stella Adler, Roman Bohnen, Morris Carnovsky, and Elia Kazan) to the Directors of the Group Theatre (Chapel Crawford, Harvey Boland, and Lee Strasberg) gathered in December 1936, in NYPV, Luther Adler Papers, Box 4, Folder 1. Although this report points some of the problems of Johnny Johnson (in particular, the sets and costumes, as well as Strasberg’s weak direction and “intolerant bullying” of Lehman Engel), it focuses more on the failure of the three directors to achieve coherent organization, effective rehearsals, proper artistic vision, and a secure financial position to pay adequate salaries. The report ends by recommending a thorough overhaul of the Group or, failing that, its closure.

77. For earlier promptings to give Johnny Johnson the Drama Critics’ Award, see, above, and also the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 14 March 1937. High Tor and Johnny Johnson were the two shows left in the running after a cumbersome process of elimination, but most critics had already (but at an unknown date), and Green later quoted it in this form in a letter to Jonathan Daniels of 2 February 1970 (in A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 297–98); Sheil, letter to Green, 29 May 1937, in UNC/PG, Folder 407; “Johnny Johnson was the most interesting of last season’s controversial plays and the only one of the social dramas that appeared to score a definite impression.” With your permission I would like to include excerpts from it in next fall’s Issue of The Best Plays. I view of my lack of enthusiasm over the Group Theatre production this request my surprise you. Mante, however, is the editor of a Year Book and not its dictator. Anyway, my quartet was more with the Group than it was with Johnny. I have always been a little resentful of their partisan attitude and financial reasons: business had been good over the holidays but had recently fallen off (both of which are true; see the previous note). Grismer (“Cheryl Crawford Presents ... . . . 41) says that Crawford announced the closing on 12 January.

78. Frank Sheil, letter to Green, 7 January 1937, in UNC/PG, Folder 406, reporting that McConnell approached Crawford; New York Herald-Tribune, 17 January 1937 (Collins to do Johnny Johnson in Cleveland); Cleveland Plain Dealer, 16 February (rehearsals began on the 15th).

79. “Vous cherchez un seul qui ne parle pas allemand. / In view of my lack of enthusiasm for the Group Theatre production this request my surprise you. Mante, however, is the editor of the Year Book and not its dictator. Anyway, my quartet was more with the Group than it was with Johnny. I have always been a little resentful of their partisan attitude and financial reasons: business had been good over the holidays but had recently fallen off (both of which are true; see the previous note). Grismer (“Cheryl Crawford Presents ... . . . 41) says that Crawford announced the closing on 12 January.

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85. Flanagan’s colleague, Hiram Motherwell, wrote her on 18 December: “You asked to be reminded to write Paul Green”; in NARA/FTP, Box 176, Folder “Hallie Flanagan Papers”. The problems of the Group remained unresolved until the end of 1937 (see the previous note). Grismer (“Cheryl Crawford Presents ... . . . 41) says that Crawford announced the closing on 12 January.

86. Frank Sheil, letter to Green, 7 January 1937, in UNC/PG, Folder 406, reporting that McConnell approached Crawford; New York Herald-Tribune, 17 January 1937 (Collins to do Johnny Johnson in Cleveland); Cleveland Plain Dealer, 16 February (rehearsals began on the 15th).

87. Hal Eaton wrote Weill on 29 May 1937, in UNC/PG, Folder 407: “Long eulogy by Hal Eaton for Johnny Johnson. I have always been a little resentful of their partisan attitude and financial reasons: business had been good over the holidays but had recently fallen off (both of which are true; see the previous note). Grismer (“Cheryl Crawford Presents ... . . . 41) says that Crawford announced the closing on 12 January.

88. Green, letter to his wife, 17 October 1936, in UNC/PG, Folder 174: “Hallo Flanagan up from Wash. to breakfast this morning. She wants—after N.Y. showings—to open Johnny in many W.P.A. theatres throughout the country, using W.P.A. orchestras and actors.” Elizabeth Green replied (UNC/PG, Folder 408): “I wonder what the Army and Navy propagandists will think of Johnny Johnson as a government play. It’s an interesting development anyway.” Green’s contacts with Flanagan were probably aided by Frederick (“Piotr”) Koch, head of the Drama Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who acted as an FTP regional adviser.

89. Varied and fascinating comments on the FTP to go into the January issue; see The Best Plays, 1933–1934, ed. Avery, 262–63.

90. Hal Eaton wrote Weill on 29 May 1937, in UNC/PG, Folder 407: “Long eulogy by Hal Eaton for Johnny Johnson. I have always been a little resentful of their partisan attitude and financial reasons: business had been good over the holidays but had recently fallen off (both of which are true; see the previous note). Grismer (“Cheryl Crawford Presents ... . . . 41) says that Crawford announced the closing on 12 January.

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91. NARA/FTP, Box 493, Folder “Meetings #1.” Motherwell was head of the Play Policy Board: “The request of Mr. Weill’s agent, for $50.00 per week, is entirely out of proportion to anything we have paid heretofore.” In fact, a standard royalty of $50 per week was normal for a playwright, but not, it seems, for the provider of any music for an FTP play (for whom weekly royalties seem to have ranged from $3 to $18). Evans clearly was not aware of the amount of music in Johnny Johnson or, for that matter, of the equal-royalty agreement between Green and Weill.

92. All this FTP correspondence is in UNC/PFG, Folder 405. According to a diary entry for 19 February, Green sent copies of this script to other producers as well for possible performance.

93. On 11 February, Motherwell wrote to Green: “Mrs. Georgia Fink, Director of the Regional Service Bureau in Los Angeles, California is mimeographing the play and has advised me that you are sending her a set of proof pages. I am sorry for the duplication of efforts but we had to be sure, in this office, that Mrs. Fink was mimeographing the New York FTP copy. I have asked her to send you several copies of the play before it is mimeographed.” The LOC/FTP copy of Tt4 has annotations to make it conform to the galley proofs (they refer to those proofs on the final page), and Tt5 incorporates almost all of these changes; the NARA/FTP copy of Tt4 has similar, but less comprehensive, annotations. However, we have no firm date for Tt5. On 24 February 1937, Stanley Richards, assistant to the business manager of the National Play Bureau, wrote to Fink: “We are disturbed that the mimeographed copies of Johnny Johnson [presumably Tt4] do not carry any limiting statement of copyright control of the play etc., and we are therefore enclosing a flyer which we feel should be attached to each copy of this mimeographed script.”

94. This approval date is noted on the index cards for Johnny Johnson in LOC/FTP, Box 72-273-1. These (and another set in LOC/FTP, Box 75-1) give outline production details, which, however, are not wholly accurate. The playwright’s reports in LOC/FTP, Box 192: 1938–39 and other “scores” and “extracts” in LOC/FTP, Box 41 (Tt10), although some are undated, including one from the California Play Bureau that reads: “This unusual script combines a variety of moods and scenes into a superb fantasy with music, and was successfully produced on Broadway by the Group Theater during the 1936–37 season. The main character of Johnny Johnson is a quixotic young man in what he sees as an impending war. His apparent naivete is shown to be a beacon of hope shining through a world that is a bleak one..." Johnny Johnson materials were being turned over to the National Play Bureau because of plans for production elsewhere in the country, that original materials were being returned to the Group Theatre (which had insisted on having them back), and that "the work we have done to date on the score of Johnny Johnson is sufficiently mature to make a clean copy from an almost illegible script, but nothing has been done about phostating because that lies in the province of the Play Bureau." Presumably this work relates to Vm2/Pm2. The report on 17 March notes that during the present week, the office had been “checking” forty pages of “orchestral score” in the week ending 5 February; it is not clear for what. Julius Evans’s letter to Flanagan of 10 February 1937 (NARA/FTP, Box 38, Folder “Hiram Motherwell: Play Policy Board”) notes that “the Johnny Johnson materials were being turned over to the National Play Bureau because of plans for production elsewhere in the country, that original materials were being returned to the Group Theatre (which had insisted on having them back), and that “the work we have done to date on the score of Johnny Johnson is sufficiently mature to make a clean copy from an almost illegible script, but nothing has been done about phostating because that lies in the province of the Play Bureau.” Presumably this work relates to Vm2/Pm2. The report on 17 March notes that during the present week, the office had been “checking” forty pages of "Johnny Johnson scores.” The initial version with some frequency changes and in the hands of Lovett and Minsky may in fact be those of Simeon Jurist, a copyist in the Music Department.

95. Shell, letter to Green, 2 March 1937, in UNC/PBG, Folder 407: “I have been in touch with Brandt & Brandt concerning the music for Johnny Johnson and they tell me that while they had been in hopes of the Federal Theatre making a number of sets, they have so far made but a single copy of the orchestration. This is now in the possession of Brandt & Brandt and I believe they are holding it for the production at the Cleveland, Ohio, Playhouse. I believe as you do that at least a piano score ought to be made ready and that several copies of this should be available to handle any calls we get for this play. I shall keep in touch with Brandt & Brandt to see what solution they finally work out in connection with this music.”

96. LOC/FTP, Box 232.

97. This article also noted that Green had given a reading of the play before a large audience in Chapel Hill.

98. The Chicago plans are noted in UNC/PBG, Folder 405; see also Weill, letter to Lenya, 24 April 1937, in WLL1/LG/2, 24-37. Discussions began as early as January 1937, and the idea appears to have been prompted by Art Smith (the original Sergeant Jackson), who was to become the production supervisor of the Chicago FTP unit (see the Chicago News, 16 June 1937).

99. Contracts were requested on 6 April and signed on the 9th, see NARA/FTP, Folder “Mack, Jonathan B.” (Mack was state director for the FTP in Massachusetts). Mack noted the fire and the postponement in a letter to the National Play Board on 20 May.

100. The production was first announced in the Boston Herald on 25 April 1937 (to open on 17 May). A copy of the program is in LOC/FTP, Box 1094, and there is one photograph of the production in LOC/FTP, Box 1178.
107. There is a note recording the Boston run in the Tpt 1 part in im1. The cast list given in the review of the opening night in the Boston Evening Globe, 25 May 1937, excludes characters in the drill-ground and bayonet-run scenes. Also, there is no reference to the English scene (ii.i), Sister of the Ossian (iii.ii), or Anguish Howington, Jr. (iii.iii), but these may have been accidental omissions. The announcement of the opening in the Boston Traveler, 22 May 1937, notes thirteen scenes. The FTP returned the copy of the script used in Boston to French on 13 December 1937, so it would not have had the script been cut in-house; see NARA/FTP, Box 176, Folder “Samuel French, Inc. (C. T. O’Leary)?”.

108. NARA/FTP, Box 120, Folder “MA—General” (9 April 1937). Press clippings are in NARA/FTP, Box 129, Folder “Johnny Johnson.”

109. UNC/PG, Folder 405; also in UNC/PG, Folder 405.

110. NARA/FTP, Box 120, Folder “MA—General.”

111. Thirteen scenes are presented on the FTP copy of Pm2 (as reported in the Los Angeles Times), noting three acts and nine scenes (as did the}

112. Some responses to an audience questionnaire distributed to San Francisco theatergoers time to make the changes into his uniform. I hope you can work out your production somewhat in this manner. If not, then I suggest that you let Johnny keep on his civilian trousers and have only the army blouse (coat) and hat on. Such a change could be made later (iii); iii.ii. This would be perfectly in line with historical accuracy and would as little as not to add to Johnny’s comic uniqueness.” Green did approve of using the original words for “Johnny’s Song” (not “To Love You and To Lose You”) and concluded: “May I add a note from hard experience: If your actors are not good at singing, please have them do as much of their songs in recitative as possible.”

113. The dancers were presumably used in the crowd, soldier, and battle scenes; annotations in im2 also refer to a dance in “Up Chickamauga Hill.”

114. NARA/FTP, Box 37, Folder “J. Howard Miller #1.”

115. “Gestern war in Los Angeles Premiere von Johnny Johnson. Ich bin zu ein paar Proben gegangen und habe ihm eine ein paar Gelegen kommen werden. Es war das erste Grosse WPA-Aufführung, die sie bisher gemacht haben, viel frischer und unbedenklicher als die New Yorker Aufführung, natürlich schlechtere Schauspieler, aber ein reizender ganz junger Johnny (das Stück wirkt ganz anders mit einem jungen Johnny), mit großem (schlechtem) Orchester, Chören und sehr interessanter eco. Daß die Aufführung anders war als New York, kannst Du daran sehen, daß der zweite Akt weitaus am stärksten wirkte. Sie haben den ‘french wounded’-Chor gemacht und den ganzen Tanz der Generale, der außerordentlich wirkte. Es war gestern abend, bei der Premiere, noch sehr rob und un- fertig, besonders musikalisch, aber es war ein ausgesprochen großer Erfolg, die Leute haben glänzend reagiert, viel gelacht, Tonstille mit dem gau gau (der großen Applaus hatte wie überhaupt alle songs), Riesenapplaus am Schluss. Auch die Presse scheint gut zu sein. Sie werden es 6–8 Wochen spielen. W-L-L(II), 245, translated in W-L-L(II), 424–63. It is not clear what Weill might have meant by a “big” orchestra—save perhaps additional string players—unless he was just making the point that the full instrumentation was used. For the performance, see also Weill’s letter to Hans Weiß, 31 May 1937, in W-Fam, 350–52. Here he reports intended performances in ten cities in the course of the year, which was clearly wishful thinking.

116. Clippings are in NARA/FTP, Box 129, Folder “Johnny Johnson.”

117. UNC/PG, Folder 419.

118. NARA/FTP, Box 119, Folder “CA—Los Angeles.”

119. NARA/FTP, Box 82, Folder “FTP—Lists of Plays #3” (21,878 attended). See also the semimonthly reports in NARA/FTP, Box 103, giving a total of 22,419. Attendance was, inevitably, highest in the first half of June. It is worth comparing this with other FTP productions in Los Angeles around this time. Reuben’s Boys, 28,624 (61 performances); The Merchant of Venice, 22,509 (51); It Can’t Happen Here, 24,657 (53); Paul Green, The House of Connelly, 4,797 (21); Lynn Riggs, Green grow the Lilacs, 4,521 (22). The semimonthly report for the period ending 15 July in NARA/ FTP, Box 103, notes that Johnny Johnson involved 102 performers, 38 technical staff, 2 supervisors, and 5 others; the 50 percent of box-office receipts that went to the FTP (the rest went to the theater) came to $4,108.55.

120. NARA/FTP, Box 108, Folder “CA Promotion Dept. 1937–38.” This press release also notes that the show “played to capacity houses for many months on Broadway and promises to achieve a similar record at the Mayan.”

121. NARA/FTP, Box 254. On closing at the Mayan, Johnny Johnson was to move to the (outdoor) Greek Theatre in Griffith Park, Los Angeles, for the FTP’s summer season (as reported in the Los Angeles Times, 4 July 1937, which gave the opening as 7 July). The FTP printed a flyer (LOC/FTP, Box 1094; opening 13 July), but the play was changed at the last minute to Midsummer Varieties.

122. Miller, letter to Hallie Flanagan, 29 April 1937, in NARA/FTP, Box 37, Folder “J. Howard Miller #1.” Weill called Green about the project on 15 April; see UNC/PG, Folder 427. Green noted in his diary for 14 April that he had declined the invitation. He had already been in contact with Max Reinhardt about a possible American version of Hofmannsthal’s Jedermann (which was done in the Hollywood Bowl the previous year); see his diary entry for 11 January 1937.


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130. Some responses to an audience questionnaire distributed to San Francisco theatergoers after an FTP performance of Eugene O’Neill’s Beyond the Horizon in November–December 1937 noted Johnny Johnson as a play worth reviving; see the report in LOC/FTP, Box 112, Folder 2.1.22. Green asked French to send a script and a copy
of the score to the Chicago office of the FTP in October 1938; see the letters in UNC/PG, Folders 441 (Garrett Leverton, 12 October), 482 (carbon copy of telegram from Green to French). Emmet Lavery (Director of the Play Department in the FTP National Service for the Arts, Letters to Ole Ness in the Los Angeles FTP office on 5 July 1938 in response to Ness’s request for musicals available through the FTP (NARA/FTP, Box 166, Folder “Music Clearance”): “Have you ever tried Johnny John- son in San Francisco? It might go as well there as it did in Los Angeles.” Nothing seems to have come of this, however. The FTP regularly included Johnny Johnson in its list of approved plays, and in addition to the fuller production bulletin, a synopsis and brief production details were available from the Los Angeles office; see <http://memory.loc.gov/amnm/fedp/tfad.html>, Box 967, “Synopses of Plays—I—E. R. Production of the West—L.A.”; images 31–32. This material notes nine scenes (in three acts and five acts (a village park, a cottage, a living room, a trench, a meeting room, and an asylum), which is a minimalist approach. However, the synopsis (which is not divided by acts or scenes) refers to Johnson’s “queue” behavior in the training camp, suggesting the presence of live—en—

133. A copy of the Berkeley program is in UNC/PG, Folder 3080A.

134. A copy of the Chapel Hill program is in UNC/PG, Folder 3080A. According to Green’s diary entry for 1 October to 1 November, the production was “not too hot.” Green had previously done a one-man reading of Johnny Johnson at the Women’s Col- lege of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, on 27 April (see the appreciative letters in UNC/PG, Folder 400), as he did elsewhere on the university circuit in 1937 and early 1938.

135. See the letters in UNC/PG, Folders 400 (Lev Bulgakov), 403 (Sergei Dimanov), and 409 (Pyas Haskell; also in A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 279–80 [as Haskall]), as well as Haskell’s letter to Green of 4 October in WLA, Box 48, Folder 249. The idea is also noted in Green’s diary of 8 April 1937. Haskell asked Green to rewrite the ending to have Johnny fight for his cause to the end; Green noted in his diary (10–26 November 1937) that his unwillingness to do this caused the idea to collapse. See also A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 279n. 3 (and ibid., 586, 681).

136. For Washington, D.C., see the letter to Green from the director, F. Cowles Strickland, in UNC/PG, Folder 466 (“We are getting considerable support from large labor groups and government workers and are reaching a larger audience than is usual for us”). The production had been announced in the Washington Post, 12 September 1937; it received several favorable reports in the Post (e.g., on 22 March 1938). Herman Spivey, Director of English Courses for the Summer at the University of Florida, Gainesville, refers to a “recent performance of Johnny Johnson by the Florida Players” in a letter to Green of 9 January 1938 (note 1939). Green had visited there in January 1938 to give a reading of the play; see the letter from Lester Hale, director of dra- matics in the Department of Speech, University of Florida, to Green in Green’s opinion on Weill’s complaint (UNC/PG, Folder 596); Green replied on 27 May (WLR, Series 40) that he thought the composer was overreacting, and he sug- gested getting a ruling from the Dramatists’ Guild on the issue of omitting the music. The Prowncourt Playhouse production was directed by Alfred Saxe (the original American Priest); see the announcement in the Christian Science Monitor, 21 April 1941. The New York Times, 25 April 1941, said it would be a “somewhat modified” version of the play; its review on 3 May was mixed.

137. Pie, Handbook, 342–43. Weill appears to have composed the score in spring 1944; it is not clear how this might relate to Weill’s request to Lenya for a copy of the vocal score of Johnny Johnson on 22 April 1944, in WLA, Box 48, Folder 3079B (and compare to 21 April 1944 in Tt5, 401–02). Another later use of Johnny Johnson appears in “Toohil Heart” in One Touch of Venus (1943), which draws on the introduction to “Oh Heart of Love”.


139. MGM E. 3447, released in February 1957. MGM issued several Weill recordings in this decade; instrumental versions of some songs from Johnny Johnson, paired with film music by Aaron Copland, had already appeared on MGM E3334 (with Arthur Wint and conducting the MGM Studio Orchestra). The Heliodor reissue of Johnny Johnson (April 1964) sold an average of 6,000 copies per month within two months of its release; see the listing in Billboard, 18 June 1966, 44.

140. Burgess Meredith claimed in his autobiography that in 1936 he “tried out” for a role in Johnny Johnson “but was turned down by the Group Theatre”; see his So Far, So Good, A Memoir (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1949), 59. He maintained a strong interest in the piece, working with Lyt Symonette in the early 1980s to create a wholly rewritten version of the play, with new characters, that might square with some of the music. Hepreviously revived the production in 1972; see the announcement in the Christian Science Monitor, 21 April 1941. The New York Times, 25 April 1941, said it would be a “somewhat modified” version of the play; its review on 3 May was mixed.

141. UNC/PG, Folders 3064A, 3064B, 3065A, 3076. This version has two acts, the for- mat later adopted for the 1971 production. Lenya’s apparent reluctance to permit per- formances of Johnny Johnson with its music in the 1960s, added to the urgings of Green’s publisher, may have prompted Green to prepare the new version; see the let- ters in UNC/PG, Folder 3077B (and compare A Southern Life, ed. Avery, 661).

142. UNC/PG, Folders 3068C, 3068A, 3068E, 3068A, 3068E, 3077C, 3077D, 3077A.

143. A copy of the Bochum program is in UNC/PG, Folder 3060A; and documents are in UNC/PG, Folder 3079B; details of the Finland performance are in UNC/PG, Folder 3079C. Other productions are covered in UNC/PG, Folders 3079D (Chapel Hill, March 1976), 3079E (Indiana University Theatre, March 1972; Los Angeles, June–July 1986).


145. On the ubiquity of the concept of the “common man” in this period, see Conn, The American 1930s, 114.

146. The digest in The Best Plays of 1936–37 is subtitled “A Fantastic Drama in Three Acts”; for the reprint of Tt1 in Green’s 1939 Out of the South anthology, the play was called “A Fable of Ancient and Modern Times.”

147. The term was not unprecedented, having been associated in the 1920s with operetta as distinguished from less “elevated” musical comedy; see Bruce d. mcelroy, “Lady in the Dark” in Biography of a Musical (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 777–79. For the connotations, see also Carter, “Oklahoma!” 174.

148. See Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama,” 27, on Roll, Sweet Carousel (1934). “Music drama’ didn’t seem the right term for the play. For there was more than music. ‘Bal- lad opera’ it could be, not ‘opera.’ “Festival drama’ was too loose and ‘mimisoning,”
‘Lyric drama’ lacked entirety. Finally, ‘symphonic drama’ seemed right. Yes, a ‘sounding together’ in the true meaning of the Greek word. And so I adopted the form and have used it for a number of other like dramas that I have written since.” Green later associated the term primarily with his outdoor dramas such as The Lost Colony.

162. For example, in his interview with Rhoda Wynn on 8 February 1974, Green recalled how he wrote to the Department in Washington asking for the most common name in the American Expeditionary Forces: the reply indicated that there were more than five thousand John Johnsons (the second most common name was William Smith). For a slightly different figure (thirty thousand American Johnsons, three thou-
sand named John), see Grismer, “Cheryl Crawford Presents . . . ,” 23.

163. See, for example, Jaroslav Hasek, The Good Soldier Svejk, trans. Cecil Parott (London: Penguin, 2000), 27 (a veterinary surgeon acting as army doctor), 64–65 (medical ruses to avoid conscription, including injecting paraffin into the arm), 153 (the Church advocating peace, then war), 154 (a bussobody lady from the Association of Gentlewomen for the Religious Education of the Troops visiting a hospital and be-

164. See Green enlisting in World War I “inspired by the idealism of Woodrow Wilson” and seeking to “help make the world safe for democracy,” see his “Symphonic Out-
door Drama,” p. 3. For other events and memories that may have made their way into Johnny Johnson, see Spence, Wassertirn der Sahara, ed. Bauer: 25–26 (Green’s mother furiously pedaling a sewing machine while arguing with her husband), 36 (the “two snakes”).

165. Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama,” 7 (“certainly never could I get enough of Char-

166. The song is in WLA, Box 12, Folder 209, and therefore is associated with

167. Stephen Hinton (UNC/PG, Folder 3073) make frequent reference to such ma-

168. The Statue of Liberty also figures prominently in Green’s very early notes for

169. If we were dealing with the conflict that is to come, an entirely new play would have to be written. The last war didn’t really save the world for democracy; the next one will.”

170. Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama,” 7 (“certainly never could I get enough of Char-

171. He had so, somewhat parodically, in “The West-Pointer’s Song” (which in an earlier form in T2 has the final refrain: “Then it’s hate, hate, hate, a deadly hate / For the beast, beast, beast outside our gate”; an even earlier version in T1, which does not fit the music, is stronger still).

172. Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama,” 7 (“certainly never could I get enough of Char-

173. The song is in WLA, Box 12, Folder 209, and therefore is associated with Johnny Johnson material, but it is unclear when this placement occurred.

174. Green’s comment is in the 8 February 1974 interview with Rhoda Wynn; in his 5 April 1978 interview with Ronald Sanders, Green said that the music for “Johnny’s Song” had been written in Berlin. For the music being written first, see also Green, “With the Group Theatre,” 54–55.


176. See UNC/PG, Folder 3063. Green’s handwriting here is very hard to decipher.

177. This, in turn, may explain the reference to “My Madelon of Paree” in the first line of “Mon Ami, My Friend.”

178. In his interview with Rhoda Wynn on 8 February 1974, however, Green suggested that he and Weill had planned all along to use the melody first instrumentally and then as a song to end the play.

179. Green’s comments reported in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 20 December 1936 (in Hinch, Kurt Weill on Stage, 139): “This play deals with the last war, not the next. . . . If we were dealing with the conflict that is to come, an entirely new play would have to be written. The last war didn’t really save the world for democracy; the next one will.”

180. Compare also Charman’s remarks on Weill in All People Are Famous (Instead of an Autobiography) (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1940), 127–30, where he un-

181. See the notes in UNC/PG, Folder 3072. Green possibly made up “When two are alone in a parlor at eve”; no source can be traced. Even though his dictation of the melody for “Keep your head down . . . ” is fairly accurate, the Critical Report relies on Worton David’s original (as published in 1918), although it retains Green’s “Alle-

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184. Compare Charman, The Freest Hairs, 192, which briefly discusses the problems faced by the Group in developing strong female roles.

185. Notes made during the Group rehearsals suggest that the curtain still came down be-

186. Compare also the instrumentation of Marie Galante (1934): A Sax (Fl Cl), A Sax (Cl), T3as (A Sax), T2p–2, Tbn, Pno, Accn, Grt (Bjo), Perc, Vn I–II, Va, CB.

187. According to the minutes of the Executive Board of the American Federation of Mu-

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189. Quoted in Davis, “Kurt Weill in Hollywood—But Not of It.”