

Up the Ocklawaha: Maud Powell and Marion Bauer at the Crossroads
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Recordings of *Up the Ocklawaha*

Donne e Doni (Women and Gifts), *Donne e Doni*, private release, 1994. Purchase from Susan Pickett at Whitman College, Department of Music.

Nevelson Duo, *American Music for Violin & Piano* Albany Records, 2004. This recording was used for all audio examples during today's presentation.

Rachel Barton Pine, *American Virtuosa: Tribute to Maud Powell*, Cedille Records, 2007.

Timeline of events surrounding the creation of *Up the Ocklawaha*

February 1912: Powell travels up the Ocklawaha River

Sometime between February & May 1912: Powell tells Bauer about the trip

May 1912: Bauer completes the tone poem

Sometime between February & December 1912: Powell writes a poem about her experience

December 15, 1912: Premiere of Bauer's tone poem, performed by Powell

December 22, 1912: Powell's poem appears in print for the first time (see reverse side for text)

January/February 1913: Bauer's tone poem is published by A. P. Schmidt, including a paraphrase of Powell's poem used as an epigraph (see reverse side for text)

Extended excerpt from Erminie Kahn, "The Aims of Marion Bauer, Expression of All Moods in Music Sought by Composer Almost Unique in Writing for Piano—Her Scholarly Musicianship," *The Musical Leader* 39, no. 23 (3 June 1920): 550.

Marion Bauer: "...You know Maud Powell lived across the hall from us [Marion and her sister Emilie Frances Bauer] a few years ago, and we became very good friends. She had great faith in my ability and often said, 'I want you to do for the American composer what I have tried to do for the American woman violinist.' She always urged me to write something
5 for her, and I always demurred, saying, 'Wait until I have the inspiration.' One day I met her on the street, and she said 'You must come up with me. I want to tell you about a wonderful experience I had a few days ago.' I went with her to her apartment, and there she told me about a night trip she had made up the mysterious Ocklawaha River in the Florida
10 Everglades; that the grotesque weavings of the thick Spanish moss about the trunks and on long tree branches had cast gloomy, ominous shadows and that on the upper deck of the boat they had built a fire of pine-knots to dissipate the gloom, and when the flames shot up and illuminated the scene it was at once grand and awful. She described it with such earnestness that I was deeply impressed with the picture which had been forming itself into the musical
15 images in my mind ever since she had begun to talk. I went to my rooms and immediately set to work at the piece, having a theme knocking insistently at my head. And so, a few hours later, I went back to her and showed her the almost completed sketches. There were tears in her eyes when she handed it back to me and said, 'It is just as though you had been there.' So she played it and it was really hers."

Unattributed paraphrase of Maud Powell's poem, included in the published score of *Up the Ocklawaha* (A. P. Schmidt, 1913). Phrases copied from the original poem are underlined.

A boat glides silently up a swift and tortuous river.
The bark-stained waters race madly through a mighty swamp.
Giant cypresses stand knee-deep in noisome ooze,
losing their birthright in the vampire clutch of the deadly Tillandsia (Spanish moss.)
The trees seem shrouded in death rags.
The mournful swish of the dying branches against the Hiawatha
as she pushes up-stream, is the primeval forest's last
whispered appeal to humanity for release from its awful fate.

Up the Ocklawaha: An Impression by Maud Powell (phrases included in the paraphrase above are underlined), from the article "Here is a Poem by Maud Powell," *San Francisco Examiner*, December 22, 1912.

A stream of <u>bark-stained waters</u> , A <u>swift</u> and turgid river. A restless, twisting, <u>tortuous river</u> , Bankless, through a cypress swamp, 5 Escaping to the sea.	Dancing a demon death-dance. 35 (Masses of moss, mid-air.) The gaunt trees tremble and groan, Buried alive in the terrible swamp, Choked in the <u>clutch of a vampire weed</u> , Strangled in tangles of hideous moss.
Through Florida's mighty inland swamp, Rank, dark, malarious, fearsome, (Hell's Half Acre hidden within) Where noble trees of giant estate 10 <u>Stand knee-deep in the noisome ooze</u> . A dying forest, sapless and sear, Lifts lean arms to leaden skies. Gaunt limbs shrouded in Spanish moss, A parasite's rags, swathing, loathsome. 15 The <u>deadly tillandsia</u> , vegetable vermin, Merciless air-weed wrecking a wood, Sapping the soul of the primitive wood.	40 The pine-knot fires, in lurid relief, Double the curse in the ink-black waters. Imaged clear in the mocking stream, The forest of doom, in two-fold gloom, Stands helpless. 45 There is no solace in the mirrored depths Of the Ocklawaha.
The daylight dies— Leaden skies are changed to black. 20 Up the Ocklawaha The Hiawatha plows her way. Silent-footed, the dusky crew Build pine-knot fires to pierce the night. The arrowed flames trick and cheat the eye: 25 Wanton shapes infest the trees, (Hanks of poisonous moss in the air) Things fantastic, gruesome, grim, That quiver and start and quicken to life. Grinning gargoyles, nodding their masks. 30 Menacing imps, tiptilting aloft. Against the night's abysmal black. Swinging, swaying, a phantom throng, 'Meshed in a somber death-dance,	Softly speeds the Hiawatha, Searching her way through the haunted swamp. The pilot-wheel turns with a gentle lilt, 50 (Trusting darkies guiding the boat With stealthy instinct, true, unerring) Paddle-blades dip with a rhythmic splash. Branches brush by with a broadside swish. A wild bird calls across the swamp, 55 A new breeze blows from the far-off gulf, A message of dawn is in the air. Crystal clear from the distant lake The virgin head waters rush, Washing the sin of the night away. 60 The erstwhile spell of the forest lifts, The vision's fevered force is spent. The soul escapes the hated thrall, Tortured thoughts are laid to rest, The nightmare is no more. 65 Peace at last Up the Ocklawaha.