

And There I Stood with My Piccolo

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And There I Stood with My Piccolo, originally published in 1948, is a zesty and colorful memoir of composer Meredith Willson's early years—from growing up in Mason City, Iowa, to playing the flute with John Philip Sousa's band and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, to a successful career in composing for radio and motion pictures in Hollywood. It was apparent to everyone, except maybe Willson himself, that he was on his way to something big.

Lighthearted and inspiring, it is no surprise Willson's tales caught the attention of prominent Broadway producers. In 1957, just nine years after the publication of this book, *The Music Man* became a Broadway sensation, winning five Tony Awards, including Best Musical. Meredith Willson's musical comedy is to this day arguably the most produced and beloved musical in American culture.

Meredith Willson (1902-1984) was a renowned composer, songwriter, and musician. He is best known for composing *The Music Man* and *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*.

Other Books

Chaplin's War Trilogy. The book examines Charlie Chaplin's evolving perspective on dark comedy in his three war films, *Shoulder Arms* (1918), *The Great Dictator* (1940), and *Monsieur Verdoux* (1947). In the first he uses the genre in a groundbreaking manner but yet for a pro-war cause. In *Dictator* dark comedy is applied in an antiwar way. In *Monsieur Verdoux* Chaplin embraces the genre as an individual in defense against a society out to destroy him. All three are pivotal films in the development of the genre in film, with the latter two movies being very controversial for their time.

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