

# HOMER RODEHEAVER AND THE RISE OF THE GOSPEL MUSIC INDUSTRY

KEVIN MUNGONS and DOUGLAS YEO

From tent revivals to radio and records with a gospel  
music innovator

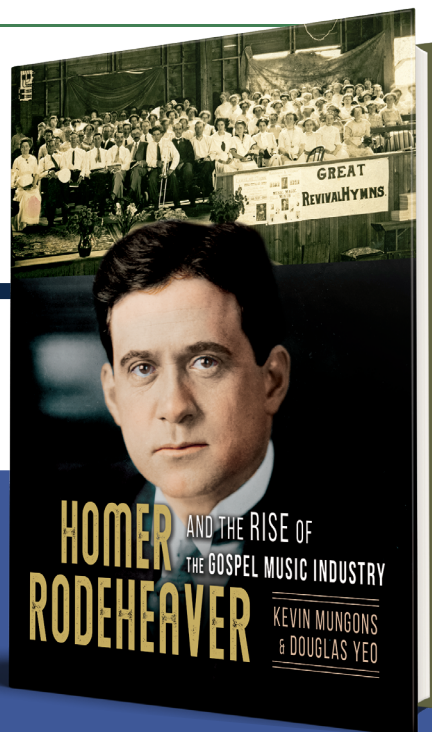
"I am truly taken by the book. It is good, informative, comprehensive, and free of the usual assortment of clichés, academic hems and haws, and over-spiritualization. It takes the often over-simplified view of music and revivalism and exposes it to a fascinating cross-weave of thought, content, and context which, to my embarrassment, I thought I had already had a handle on. I recommend it without reservation. There is no doubt in my mind that general readers and specialists alike will benefit from reading this book."

—**HAROLD BEST**, emeritus professor of music and dean emeritus of the  
Wheaton College Conservatory of Music

Homer Rodeheaver merged evangelical hymns and African American spirituals with popular music to create a potent gospel style. Kevin Mungons and Douglas Yeo examine his enormous influence on gospel music against the backdrop of Christian music history and Rodeheaver's impact as a cultural and business figure. Rodeheaver rose to fame as the trombone-playing song leader for evangelist Billy Sunday. As revivalism declined after World War I, Rodeheaver leveraged his place in America's newborn celebrity culture to start the first gospel record label and launch a nationwide radio program. His groundbreaking combination of hymnal publishing and recording technology helped define the early Christian music industry. In his later years, he influenced figures like Billy Graham and witnessed the music's split into southern gospel and black gospel.

Clear-eyed and revealing, *Homer Rodeheaver and the Rise of the Gospel Music Industry* is an overdue consideration of a pioneering figure in American music.

**KEVIN MUNGONS** is a writer for print and digital platforms and an editor at Moody Publishers. **DOUGLAS YEO** was bass trombonist of the Boston Symphony and has taught trombone at Wheaton College and Arizona State University.



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