

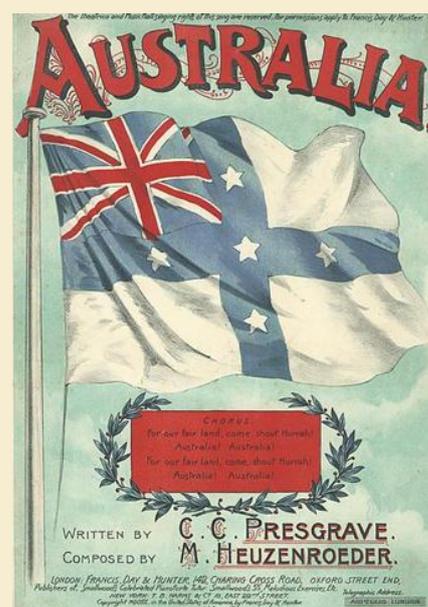
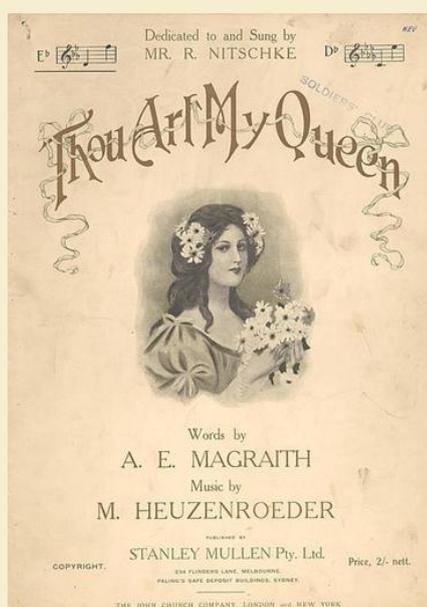
# MORITZ HEUZENROEDER

Moritz Heuzenroeder immigrated to Australia in 1872. He was associated with the South Australian German Club and founder of the Adelaide Harmonie Society. He also wrote and produced several operettas in Adelaide in the 1880s including *Singvogelchen* and *Onkel Beckers Geschichte* (1882) and *Faust and Grechen* (1883). Heuzenroeder completed *The Windmill* comic opera in 1891 and collaborated with Harry Congreve Evans on the opera, *Immomeena* (1893). He moved to Barossa Valley town of Tanunda in early 1897 but died unexpectedly later the same year.

The youngest son of a German doctor of medicine, Moritz/Mauritz Heuzenroeder<sup>1</sup> was born in Ottersberg, Germany on 15 July 1849. In his childhood he developed a passion for music through piano lessons, and eventually undertook a course in advanced composition theory at the Stuttgart Royal Academy of Music (Germany). In 1872, shortly after having completed his studies, he immigrated to Australia, a decision which was perhaps influenced by his visit to the country seven or more years previously. Upon arriving in Australia he settled in Adelaide and quickly established himself as a teacher of singing and piano. Perhaps not surprisingly many of his friends were ex-patriot Germans and he subsequently became closely associated both personally and professionally with organisations such the South Australian German Club.

In 1882 two of his operettas, *Singvogelchen* and *Onkel Beckers Geschichte* were staged by an amateur company in Adelaide's Albert Hall (the latter on 3 Nov.). The following year he wrote the comic opera *Faust and Gretchen* (1883) for the German Club. That year also saw Heuzenroeder present an acclaimed series of concerts at the Victoria Hall in Gawler Place for Adelaide's upper social circle, which included the state governor Sir William Robinson, a keen patron of music and composer in his own right. It was around this time, too, that Heuzenroeder established the Adelaide Harmonie Society (AHS), an organisation for which he undertook the roles of music director and conductor. It was through the AHS that he presented his own works, along with contemporary light operas from various composers. Following the completion of another comic opera, *The Windmill* (1891), Heuzenroeder began collaboration with local writer Harry Congreve Evans that resulted in the most impressive work of his career, the two act opera, *Immomeena* (1893). Although only one ballad remains from the entire score, along with a libretto booklet containing the spoken dialogue and lyrics, it is clear from reviews published after both the 1893 premiere and 1894 revival that the work was met with much approval from critics and public alike. In addition to his operatic works, Heuzenroeder also composed for various other music forms, including songs, patriotic odes and piano pieces.

In early 1897 Heuzenroeder moved to the Barossa township of Tanunda, a place he had visited many times over the years as both a recitalist and accompanist for touring singers. On November 9 that same year, however, he died unexpectedly (aged only forty-eight), leaving the local community bereft of an important musical benefactor. Indeed, during the short period that he lived in the area Heuzenroeder was instrumental in founding a local orchestra, along with a choral society at nearby Angaston. As both teacher and recitalist, too, Moritz Heuzenroeder had no doubt played a vital role in helping to establish the importance of music within the state of South Australia during the last decades of the nineteenth century.



Images courtesy of the National Library of Australia

<sup>1</sup> Heuzenroeder's Christian name is often spelled Mauritz in both primary and secondary sources. The AVTA has settled on Moritz in order to maintain consistency.

## MUSIC THEATRE WORKS

- 1882: **Singvogelchen** [operetta] • **Onkel Beckers Geschichte** [operetta]  
1883: **Faust and Gretchen** [comic opera]  
1891: **The Windmill** [comic opera]  
1893: **Immomeena** [comic opera]

## FURTHER REFERENCE

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Expanded and updated from Clay Djubal, "What Oh Tonight." Ph D Diss. U of Qld (2005), Appendix D.

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