

Problems in the Performance and Historiography of English Popular Church Music¹

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Since the 1970s, interest in what has come to be known as West Gallery music (implying both a period and a style) has developed significantly.² This music can be defined simply as the vernacular church music of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England – mostly metrical psalms and occasional hymns set as plain tunes, fuguing tunes, and anthems.³ I use the term ‘vernacular’ to imply popular usage and appropriation – art music can become vernacular music if performed according to popular stylistic norms.⁴ I take the view that it is not the origin of music that is important, it is its usage that is of crucial interest. 1

Since the 1980s, the UK has boasted a national organization, the West Gallery Music Association (WGMA), which encourages performance and publication of this material.⁵ A number of amateur groups exist for the performance of this music in many parts of England.⁶ A significant number of recordings of popular church music from this period have become available, and some academic work on the subject has been undertaken and published.⁷ A kindly view of all this activity would see it as a good thing in that it has stimulated a considerable number of amateur performers to revive a highly suitable and sometimes exhilarating amateur music from the past. 2

All revivals run the risk of misrepresenting what they are seeking to revive, and this is especially true when music has come down to us almost entirely in manuscript and print – that is, without a living performance tradition from which to learn. A trained violinist presented with a collection of Irish dance music and asked to play a reel may well be able to make a good job of it as far as an interpretation of the notes on the page is concerned, but the performance will not sound much like that of an Irish fiddler brought up in the traditional way of playing. Give a concert band a set of parts from a New Orleans marching band, and the result will not sound much like New Orleans music. The difficulties of interpreting historical music are practical, philosophical and ideological. Musical notation is a very imperfect way of communicating musical practice, and in performing music from the past, we inevitably mediate that music through our own views and assumptions about what it was and/or what it ought to have been.⁸ The justification for work on historically informed performance practices is that there is something to be 3

gained from learning what we can about the ways in which different styles of music were performed in the past. The area is, however, fraught with difficulties.

Two volumes of conference papers, respectively titled *The Gallery Tradition: Aspects of Georgian Psalmody*, and *Georgian Psalmody 2: The Interaction Between Urban and Rural Practice*, give a good indication of recent research interest in west gallery music – or, more simply, gallery music.⁹ The conference that gave rise to the papers published in the first volume was an interesting, if rather tense, affair, with real differences of approach demonstrated by people coming from different musical and philosophical backgrounds.¹⁰ We can broadly describe the participants as folk revivalists on the one hand and early music specialists on the other, but such descriptions inevitably run the risk of creating stereotypes. Different perspectives can not only provide insights but also impart an inevitable focus of vision, which may marginalize certain aspects of the field being studied.

Vernacular church music challenges our systems of musical classification. Is it a sort of folk music,¹¹ or a lesser part of the great tradition (in Redfield's sense) of Baroque and Classical music?¹² In truth, it partakes of both of these, and therefore presents us with something of an anomaly¹³. It poses a challenge: either to dismiss and exclude it, which has been the position adopted in much writing about church music until quite recently, with a few notable exceptions;¹⁴ or else somehow to position and incorporate it.¹⁵

In this essay, I want to look critically at the work of two colleagues who have interested themselves in the church music of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Peter Holman is a distinguished musicologist and performer (and a colleague in the department in which I formerly worked), and Christopher Turner was a musician, music educator and editor of the first volume of essays mentioned above.¹⁶ For many people, the views of Holman and Turner on the performance and history of popular church music have had a significant influence, and they are therefore worthy subjects for scrutiny.

Holman and Turner often worked together in different ways as performers and academics. What united them, I hope to show, was a sort of thinking about popular church music that does not take account of all the available evidence concerning the genre, and this, I believe, is coupled with misinterpretations of the material they considered. In offering this critique I feel I can contribute to a debate that has hardly yet begun.

Peter Holman and the performance of popular church music

Peter Holman has combined the roles of researcher and performer of music from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He has made a considerable

contribution to our understanding of court and élite musical traditions, and his group, The Parley of Instruments, has made many recordings of music from the early modern period, bringing to light a great deal of previously unknown music. In this first section of my essay, I will consider two albums of music 'from English Parish Churches' directed by Holman. These CDs present performances by Psalmody and The Parley of Instruments, which are musically very accurate in terms of the notation from which they are working, sometimes very fast in tempo. The pieces are performed in a manner that would generally be considered by modern audiences as appropriate for performances of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century art music.¹⁷

Modest claims and historical interpretation

Holman is careful about indicating what he is not claiming to do. It is totally 9
reasonable that he should state clearly that these performances are not 'an exact reconstruction', although perhaps more is known about popular styles of performance than he is happy to admit.

The performances on this recording are not meant to be an exact 10
reconstruction of the way these pieces might have been performed by particular church or chapel choirs at the time. There is much that is still unclear to us about the performance practice of psalmody, and it would be futile to try to reproduce the low standards of ensemble and intonation reported in many contemporary descriptions of country choirs. We also decided not to use regional accents partly because we do not know exactly how people spoke or sang in particular localities in the eighteenth century, and partly because we felt that the use of a generalised Mummerset or Loamshire would strike a false note of quaintness. In general, we have tried to find a performing style that draws on the best practice of the time and matches the directness and vigour of much of the music. The local group Psalmody was formed especially for this recording and consists of professional singers, teachers and students drawn mainly from the Colchester area.¹⁸

There is what would seem to be an admirable honesty to this statement. It 11
could also be interpreted as designed to pre-empt the very sort of critique that I am attempting here. We must also note that the recordings advertise themselves as being music 'from English Parish Churches and Chapels' and 'from English Parish Churches'. This would seem to imply that they represent in some reasonable way what went on in such places of worship of the period, even if the performances 'are not meant to be an exact reconstruction'. In this part of my essay, I will consider some of the elements that make up Holman's statement.

Holman states correctly that there is 'much that is still unclear to us about 12
the performance practice of psalmody'. We could quibble over the singular word 'practice'. In a society characterized by localism, social hierarchy and a poor transport system, it is probable that performance styles, like accents and farming methods, varied widely from place to place. However, I do not

think Holman is really much interested in popular styles of performance, as I hope I will show, and I think more is known about performance style than he will readily acknowledge.

It is very telling that Holman adds 'it would be futile to try to reproduce the low standards of ensemble and intonation reported in many contemporary descriptions of country choirs' – as if this is the end of the story. Low standards of ensemble and intonation are certainly reported in contemporary descriptions, but although some distancing occurs with the use of the word 'reported', the implication is that these accounts are to be generally accepted. Holman makes no attempt at historical source criticism on this point. For a historian, or someone interested in historically informed performance, not to engage in serious source criticism is a significant omission. The problem with Holman's perspective is that it is one-dimensional and seems to lack nuance and insight. I want to propose a more complex view that encompasses notions of competence, style and the ways access to different forms of practical knowledge and understanding are conditioned by social and cultural processes. My earliest published work on popular church music dealt with these issues and I have returned to this theme on a number of occasions.¹⁹ 13

All kinds of music have practitioners of different levels of competence. Competence can be defined as the ability to manage voice or instrument to execute the particular stylistic norms of a particular kind of music. Judgements about performances, casual or focussed, are made from dynamic aesthetic notions, ideas and responses. This may seem straightforward enough but there are two substantial and common problems in this area which stand in need of some elaboration.²⁰ 14

First, humans tend to judge the unknown in terms of internalised criteria related to the known. In musical terms this manifests itself as the judgement of one kind of music by the stylistic norms of another. To do this is to condemn that which is being judged as a failure. Intellectually invalid though this may be, historically this has been an important mode of criticism. A symphony orchestra may give an enthralling performance of a composition but as a piece of improvisational jazz it is a non-starter. We should not condemn the orchestra or composer for this 'failure' – yet historically this is the way countless writers have responded to the experience of vernacular and exotic musics. The hysterical reactions to the emergence of jazz in the first decades of the twentieth century were not caused by the fact that people were listening to poor and incompetently performed jazz; rather, it was that jazz offended people's ideas of how music was constituted, how it ought to be. Judged this way, jazz could be relegated to the realms of non-music, as noise, trash and as morally polluting.²¹ Jazz won through but other musics have not been so fortunate. When such condemnatory ideas are held by the socially powerful, and when they are mixed with other social antagonisms such as those related to class or race, they can quickly become ideologically highly charged and have outcomes which shape musical opportunities, activities and possibilities. 15

The second common problem is to mistake competence for style (or vice versa). A style is a set of elements which cohere into a way of doing things musically (we could call it a musical *habitus*, to borrow an idea from Bourdieu²²). It exists as a set of inter-subjective notions and a related set of musical practices belonging to a social or cultural group. (Style has elements in common with such things as craft methods or accent and dialect in language.) Competence, as I have argued, relates to the degree of skill with which the stylistic elements are managed. The difference between style and competence is crucial; it is the difference between the way you do something and how well you do it. Any kind of music can suffer from incompetent execution. Any kind of music can be performed in what might be considered by the performers of that kind of music as an inappropriate style (although it will be altered in the process). Parochial church musicians no doubt varied greatly in their competence. Informed modern scholars should not make the mistake of confusing competence and style, difficult as they are to disentangle from the historical source materials. 16

The direct evidence concerning country psalmody performance style can be divided roughly into two kinds: the first is incidental evidence that crops up in a variety of different kinds of historical source materials; and the second comes from the oral survivals and descendants of country psalmody in both Britain and the USA. It is my view that elements of style can only be established through consistencies and patterns in the evidence, by a critical and sympathetic reading of the evidence. It is in the nature of historical enquiry that we are dealing with probabilities and reasonable interpretations, not certainties. 17

I have dealt at length elsewhere with the question of the performance style of popular church music,²³ so I will concentrate mainly on one aspect of performance here – namely, the question of volume and voice production. Although what we now describe as gallery music and the eighteenth century development of church choir bands were the products of a church music reform movement – an attempt to bring to order the old style of heterophonic psalm singing – at the local level, there is plenty of evidence that there was a consistency of vocal style and voice production between the performances of newer styles of musical composition and the old heterophonic styles of ‘lining out’ psalm singing. This was despite the efforts of music reformers to make the music of parish churches more ‘artistic’ and despite the work of itinerant singing teachers (some of whom simply catered for popular taste). 18

A burial register from Buxton, East Sussex informs us that a seventeenth-century parish clerk ‘warbled forth as if he had been thumped on the back by a stone’.²⁴ There is considerable further seventeenth- and eighteenth-century evidence that church singers liked to sing in a loud and full-voiced way. In a poem that accompanies an eighteenth-century satirical print of ‘The Church Choristers’ we read that ‘Snap strikes up first with open throat’, that Hodge ‘. . . bellows loud with thundering bass’ and that all ‘Strive who shall make the greatest noise’.²⁵ 19

Dr John Burton gives us an insight into the local musical value system in his 20

1752 account of the singing (most probably of a fuguing tune) at Shermanbury church in Sussex, when he says: 'The more shrill toned they may be, the more valued they are.' Yet his educated ear evidently found this music excessive: 'they bellow to excess, and bleat out some goatish noise with all their might'.²⁶ Holman's own CD notes tell us about the composer of the piece titled 'Vital Spark of Heavenly Flame': 'Harwood was a weaver from Hoddleston near Darwen in Lancashire [...] He supposedly went to sing in Liverpool and "sang until he burst a blood vessel there".'²⁷ An anonymous writer of 1843 praised the decline of choirs that 'sit in a loft with a few instruments of music, bawling out tunes and words'.²⁸

This emphasis on projection and volume recurs in many sources. At 21
Wadhurst, Mr Thomas Cooper and Mr Luard, active church band members in the mid-nineteenth century, are described as 'two of the best and most powerful voices in England'.²⁹ The Hailsham shoemaker, Thomas Geering, in his parish history, recalled a mid-nineteenth-century Hailsham church singer who 'was gifted with a powerful voice and his greatest pride was to be heard at church [...] His voice more than filled the church [...]'.³⁰ The vicar of Lodsworth recalled to K. H. MacDermott in 1917 that at Willingdon in the 1870s, 'they had a choir of young men who sang (or bawled) unaccompanied'.³¹

What clinches this argument for me is the degree of *consistency* in the 22
source materials. Critical accounts from churchmen or lay people who would have church music reformed repeatedly pick on the same 'errors' in performance – but 'errors' may simply represent a way of describing elements of style that do not accord with one's own aesthetics. Such criticisms date from both before and during the period of west gallery music, suggesting some significant continuities between the old-style 'lining out' of plain tunes and the development of a more ornate contrapuntal style in the eighteenth century. Again, I will take the example of volume and voice production.

In the late seventeenth century, Thomas Mace, an early reformer, had complained of 'the whining, toting, yelling or skreeking there is in many country congregations, as if the people were affrighted or distracted'.³² 'R.W', writing in 1734, thought much performance of psalmody was 'very indecent and shocking', and that things would improve if 'the people of every parish, and especially the youth, were trained up and accustomed to an orderly way of singing'.³³ Arthur Bedford, writing a few years later, felt it was necessary that singers 'understand how to sing, I mean according to the rules of Art'.³⁴ William Figg, in his 1811 manuscript, *Psalms and Hymns*, thought that the grossest impropriety in church was 'straining the voice to drown the rest'.³⁵ The men at Rusper sang in 'very harsh and unmelodious tones' when the future folk song collector Lucy Broadwood was young.³⁶

J. A. La Trobe implicitly linked secular and sacred performance styles when 23
he wrote that 'we cannot imagine, that there will echo throughout the courts of Zion any sound that resembles the mean and licentious ditties of the tavern'.³⁷ La Trobe was correct to suggest that there was a consistency of

style between music in the church and secular music-making. We find other observers making similar comments about secular singing. A newspaper account of 1850 tells of 'rude and uncouth singing' at an apple-tree wassailing ceremony (the custom itself was seen by many writers as pagan in origin).³⁸ James Hurdis, in his poem 'The Village Curate', writes of the villagers' 'loud song with stentorophonic voices/Lustily brayed'.³⁹

La Trobe's generalised view of country choirs was that they had 'no idea of instrumental music beyond noise, or of vocal beyond vociferation'.⁴⁰ He wrote of singers performing 'with their whole breath of lungs, each striving to surpass his neighbour in vociferation',⁴¹ and 'as though it were a contest of physical strength'.⁴² A writer in the *Musical Times* of 1849 writes of the lower-class dissenting preacher selecting 'a number of metrical effusions for his followers to bawl as a prelude or wind-up to his "holding forth"'.⁴³ And a writer in the *Parish Choir* in 1847 drew attention to the want of a 'pure tone', and urged the managing of the voice in a way that avoided 'the producing of guttural, nasal or dental sounds'.⁴⁴ 24

Later that year, the *Parish Choir* celebrated the progress of musical reform, the demise of 'Refractory Village Choirs' and of 'the staunch admirers of the Babylonian performances with which they had made the walls of the church resound for many a long year'.⁴⁵ This compares with William Figg's notion, expressed about half a century earlier, that the music in country churches 'frequently consists of a jargon of sounds, destitute of harmony, melody or any other laudable recommendation'.⁴⁶ Figg complained of singers 'straining the voice'.⁴⁷ A few years before Figg, William Vincent had found the ears of congregations in country churches 'wounded with dissonance'.⁴⁸ 25

Early modern travellers coming across alien styles of music would often describe them in ways similar to those in which members of the educated élite described parochial music.⁴⁹ The music of seventeenth-century New England puritans and nineteenth-century African Americans was described in similar ways.⁵⁰ The emergence of jazz and rock and roll were greeted similarly in the twentieth century.⁵¹ Travellers and folk song collectors in the nineteenth century sometimes wondered at the strangeness of what they encountered.⁵² It is as if we have lighted upon a basic type of reaction to the musically unknown from those educated within the Western tradition. Music that is experienced as strange and different – outside the range of what is normally considered acceptable as music – is denoted as the aural equivalent of dirt ('matter out of place'), described by terms such as 'noise', 'inharmonious', 'bellows', 'vociferation'. 26

From these historical accounts, I believe it is possible to build up an impression of what a great deal of popular church music sounded like; and this we can relate to the oral survivals of these traditions. Peter Burke has suggested that the popular culture of the past is an 'elusive quarry' that requires 'oblique approaches' if we are to progress in our understanding. Regressive and comparative methods can be helpful in the study of popular culture – and, by extension, of popular musical forms – if they are used in a critical and reflective way.⁵³ 27

Turning, then, to the second kind of evidence for the performance style of country psalmody, a marked consistency is apparent between these historical accounts of vernacular church music and the experience of its oral survivals and descendants in Britain and the USA. The voice production of leaders of 'the old way of singing' recorded in Scotland and the USA, with their hard, nasal, highly projected voices, could well be described as 'bleating out some goatish noise'. Those who would argue that such evidence has no relevance to the way eighteenth- and nineteenth-century church music was performed need to account for the fact that essentially the same sound world is created in the present day by singers in the 'old way' in the Scottish islands and in rural Tennessee.⁵⁴ The evidence suggests that this type of music must have survived in different places, without any direct contact, for over two hundred years. The Glen Rock Carolers from Pennsylvania maintain a recognizably 'Pennine' style of carol singing even though their ancestors left Yorkshire and Lancashire in 1848.⁵⁵ Recently recorded carol-singing survivals in Cornwall and Yorkshire display much more consistency with the literary and critical accounts quoted above than do Holman's recordings.⁵⁶ 28

To make historically informed modern performances of popular church music from the gallery period, it is important to start from an understanding of the performance style of what folk song collectors describe as 'traditional performers' – people actively involved in music making. In the case of church choirs and bands, it was artisans of village society who comprised the majority of active performers of popular church music. This traditional style is not all one thing – it is rather a collection of characteristics, some of which are stressed by one performer, some by another. It does, however, have a consistency over a long period of time and (taking in the emigrant diaspora) a vast geographical area. I can understand why Leech-Wilkinson has argued: 'Ways of singing and ways of playing change too fast for us to be able to guess backwards', in the context of late medieval music.⁵⁷ But as I have tried to illustrate above, I think we can say some positive things about popular performance style over the past 250 years in connection with vernacular church music, particularly when there is a strong consistency between different types of evidence. 29

I have discussed the elements of this overarching 'plebeian' style at length elsewhere.⁵⁸ Briefly, I would point to such elements as full, chest voice production, idiomatic forms of decoration, aural-recreative processes of performance, and certain characteristic rhythmic approaches to the music. This is highly consistent with the overarching style of performance adopted by numerous 'traditional' singers recorded over the last century by folk song collectors. Practitioners of 'traditional singing' would include such people as the Copper family (whose oral style of harmony singing is partly derived from popular church music), Joseph Taylor, Harry Cox, Walter Pardon, Phoebe Smith and the carol singers of Padstow, Ingbirchworth, and Dungworth.⁵⁹ With some differences of emphasis, it is the singing style of many traditional singers from the USA, be they ballad singers such as Almeda Riddle and Texas Gladden, or various church groups and religious singers.⁶⁰ There is 30

variation within this overarching style, but there is significant commonality. There is more common ground between 'traditional' styles across vast geographical distances than there is between 'traditional' singing and 'classical' singing, and teachers of the latter would consider many elements of traditional singing as 'faults'.

The Norwegian folk music scholar Ingrid Gjertsen has tried to define the key differences between the use of the voice in classical and folk musics. I am concerned that there is a danger of overgeneralisation in such an attempt, and there is a risk of reification in a notion like 'the folk music voice'.⁶¹ The best that such an account can achieve is a description of a considered body of performance; and viewed in that light it can be useful. (The variations in the use of the human voice across the world still manage to amaze me even after years of listening.) Nevertheless, Gjertsen's findings come very close to my own views. For her, classical singing is typified by 'a full voice with a great deal of scope and volume'; the use of prescribed resonances and a wide open mouth; and location of the voice in the head rather than the body of the singer. In contrast, 'folk singing' exhibits different notions of scope and volume, and resonates differently. 'The voice is further forward [than in classical singing], at the front of the singer's mouth, and is more nasal. It resonates in a more concentrated fashion.' She also notes that the 'melodic lines develop more freely' and that the voice seldom goes directly to a defined pitch but rather 'takes a circuitous route, using either glissandos or small embellishments'.⁶² We are reminded of the nasal tone and the frivolous ornaments that church music reformers complained of. (Interestingly, church barrel organs from the period bear witness to 'the amazing degree of musical ornamentation in the way of trills, grace notes, passing notes and gathering notes which are to be found in profusion growing round even the most austere tunes [...]'.⁶³)

It is not that elements of the Baroque and Classical styles were not present in vernacular church music (or other aspects of popular music-making), it is that popular culture is inherently eclectic, appropriating and making use of different elements according to the internal dynamic of the culture. There is no purity in popular culture – contrary to the ideas of the early folk song collectors – rather a promiscuous bricolage of elements, sometimes achieving relative stability, but nevertheless continually in process. Popular culture is an ongoing synthesis of elements available within the culture – but within that process it is its own thing.

To give some specificity to these general comments let me focus on two performances of the same piece. It is the last track of Holman's *While Shepherds Watched* album. The CD notes inform us that

One of the most richly scored pieces in the repertory is by John Foster, gentleman, coroner, humorist and amateur composer of High Green near Sheffield. His setting of Psalm 47 became yet another version of 'While Shepherds Watched', and is still sung in a cut-down version as part of the pub carolling tradition around Sheffield. The original, published around 1820, has remarkably Haydnesque

instrumental passages, scored for a full classical orchestra. It was probably written for one of the choral festivals that were a feature of musical life in northern England in the early nineteenth century.⁶⁴

It is possible that 'Old Foster' was written for a music festival but it is in the vernacular tradition of carol singing around Sheffield that it has had approaching two centuries of vigorous life. I have chosen to compare the performance directed by Holman with a recording of the piece made by Dr Ian Russell at the Royal Hotel, Dungworth on 3 December 1995.⁶⁵ 34

Like its near contemporary, 'Cranbrook', by the Kent musician, Thomas Clark (a tune which has come down to us in oral tradition as 'On Ilkley Moor baht 'at'), 'Old Foster' is what is termed a fuguing tune. In fuguing tunes the last line, lines or phrase of the verse are repeated a number of times with staggered and interlocking parts. In addition 'Old Foster' has a 'symphony' – a passage of instrumental music that may be used as an introduction, interlude and coda. 35

We can compare some salient features of these two performances of 'Old Foster': 36

	Holman⁶⁶	Dungworth⁶⁷
Key	C Major ⁶⁸	A Major
Form	Introduction, symphony + verse six times; symphony to end, with rallentando	Introduction; verse and symphony three times; finishes at end of final verse (no last symphony) with marked rallentando.
Note values	Strict and tight interpretation of written music	Loose and variable performance of aurally remembered note values
Speed of verses	Verse 2 ('Fear not said he') sung in c. 23 seconds. That is c. 240 beats per minute (bpm); this is consistent throughout the piece.	Verse 2 sung in c. 49 seconds. That is c. 112 beats per minute; the speed of the other verses varies between c. 108 and 115 bpm.
Speed of symphonies	As above, c. 240 bpm	Each takes about 30 seconds, giving an average speed of 144 bpm – but there is considerable rubato in the performance including a rallentando at the end of the symphony to come

		back to the verse tempo.
Use of dynamics	Contrast between instrumental symphony and sung verses; verse 4 'The heavenly babe' sung quieter and other dynamic variations noticeable.	Contrast between instrumental symphony and sung verses; all verses sung in a projected, full voiced way.
Use of voices	Head and chest voices; predominance of female voices; choral tradition style	Chest voices; male voices predominant, with females singing tune at male pitch; vernacular song style
Use of parts	Four part, SATB	Basically two parts with some elaboration
Accompaniment	Classical orchestra	Solo electronic organ
Symphonies	At same tempo as verses with marked use of dynamic contrast within the symphony; played strictly 'as written' in terms of note length values.	Faster tempo than verses with no dynamic contrast within symphony; considerable variation in note length values as the organist plays with the musical material ⁶⁹

The analysis could be taken further but this is sufficient to show that these are radically divergent interpretations of what is, on the page, the same musical material. The performances have so little in common that I have sometimes played them alongside each other and had some difficulty in convincing listeners they were essentially the same piece. The 'transposition' (if that is what it is) of the carol down a minor third from its original key of C major, places the piece within the comfortable chest voice ranges of the Dungworth singers.⁷⁰ Where the range of the original might have proved problematic in A major (e.g. verse bars 8–12), musical phrases have been either put down an octave or swapped to the other part.⁷¹

The editors of *The New Oxford Book of Carols* remark that 'Old Foster' 37 'features in most local carol-books in a variety of forms, some debased, some richly transformed through the process of oral transmission'.⁷² Both creation and attenuation are features of oral/aural processes. The 'reduction' of the piece from four parts written to two parts sung and the subsequent moving around of musical material is characteristic of the processes of appropriation and assimilation that is fundamental to many popular musical traditions. A number of manuscript books of the period simply represent pieces as tune and bass although they originally had other parts. The Mount-Dawson Manuscripts give a version of this piece in which four parts are retained but the inner parts are lightly written in whilst the important bass and tune are boldly written.⁷³ The Dungworth performance in some ways

seems to return the piece to the older tradition of having the 'tune' carried by the tenors. Finally, the rubato of the Dungworth singers seems much more a characteristic of many performed examples of popular church music than Holman's strict tempo.

What cannot be doubted is the hold of 'Old Foster' within the Yorkshire pub carol singing tradition. Holman denies 'Old Foster' is a congregational hymn tune, that is, something which would be sung by the whole congregation as opposed to a select group of singers.⁷⁴ However, performances by pub carol singers give the lie to the idea that these elaborate fuguing tunes necessarily excluded the congregation, as the greater part of two centuries of popular use of this tune testifies. If anything, it is the self-consciously virtuosic speed of the Holman performance that would exclude people from joining in. 38

The key question is which performance is closer to 'Music from English Parish Churches' in the west gallery period? I am not claiming that the Dungworth performance of 'Old Foster' is a pure reproduction of nineteenth century popular performance practice (there were no electronic organs then, although there were harmoniums) but rather that it works within the same set of parameters, and exhibits similar properties and characteristics. This conclusion is supported by both historical evidence, evidence of continuity in the carol singing tradition and survivals in oral tradition from both sides of the Atlantic. Even the Dungworth practice of singing four verses of the six of 'While Shepherds Watched' accords with the common nineteenth century practice of singing only four verses whatever the number in a piece as written. 39

John Foster no doubt had good reason to score his piece for classical orchestra but we must be very sceptical about the number of times it was performed and the numbers of people who heard it presented in this way. Most church bands which had instruments had fewer than five. Only very rarely does one come across a band with instruments in double figures. There are English and US examples of highly rhythmic interpretations of fuguing music. However, performing 'Old Foster' at 240 beats per minute renders the role of the piece as a congregational song impossible. The Foster score is marked 'allegro' and the time signature is cut common time, an indication that allows for a variety of interpretation. Setting the tempo at 240 bpm flies in the face of the evidence of later popular performance practice.⁷⁵ The version in the Mount-Dawson Manuscripts show the piece in common time and has no tempo indication. Finally (and conveniently for a CD of Christmas material) Holman has followed popular practice in uniting 'Old Foster' to the words of 'While Shepherds Watched' and not singing the metrical 'old version' of Psalm 47 ('Ye people all one accord/Clap hands, shout and rejoice') which is the text Foster actually set. This would seem to be the only point in which he has clearly followed popular performance practice. 40

In general, what Holman has done to parochial music is akin to what the Edwardian folk song collectors did when they arranged traditional songs for concert performance. As the 'source singer', John England, put it, Cecil 41

Sharp put the pieces into 'evening dress'.⁷⁶ If you play recordings of Joseph Taylor alongside recordings of the arrangements that Percy Grainger made of his traditional songs, it is easy to see what I mean. What is true both of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critics of popular church music and of Holman is what Kathy Ogren has written about critics of early jazz. 'They did not conceive of it as an alternative aesthetic.'⁷⁷

Thankfully, Holman resists the temptation of assuming 'bumpkin' accents. 42 This may in fact be a reaction to the welter of critical disdain that greeted earlier attempts to recreate vernacular church music that did make use of such mummery. But his statement conceals an assumption that, I think, sheds light on the structure of his thought. In choosing 'not to use regional accents', the decision has been made to use the regional accent that is now hegemonic, the Midlands and London form of English that became 'Standard English' – an obvious point to historians of English.⁷⁸ Holman's Essex singers would seem to eschew the regional accent of that county; no doubt Standard English is what they customarily use.

This artistic decision, essentially passive and requiring no particular work on the part of the singers, can be seen to contrast with the active work involved in constructing a 'historically informed' interpretation of this music. These two seemingly contrasting aspects might be seen to relate, however, to Holman's belief that there exists, and that they can reconstruct, a musical 'best practice' for the period. His group has 'tried to find a performing style that draws on the best practice of the time, and matches the directness and vigour of much of the music'.⁷⁹ A single language is matched by a single 'best practice'. 43

The aim is laudable but what does it mean? Whose best practice? Is it the practice of that tiny, tiny minority of the musically educated, who saw themselves as beacons in a dark night of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ignorance? Or is it the best practice of those rather larger groups of people who did what they liked and liked what they did, those singers who were 'vastly proud of themselves', as a nineteenth-century vicar of Berwick put it.⁸⁰ What Holman's performances fail to capture, or even approach, is the gritty excitement of much vernacular music-making or that ecstatic element in committed and enthusiastic performance that can be heard in gospel singing and Sacred Harp music – that which Charles Ives described as 'power and exaltation in these great conclaves of sound from humanity'.⁸¹ 44

Relativism, reappraisal, and the absent element

Elsewhere, Holman has set himself firmly against relativistic notions of musical understanding. He asserts the primacy of authorial authority over popular use. In this regard, I am much closer to Dave Townsend, when he writes: 45

The concerns of art music, the search for a composer's unique and original creation, are not appropriate here; in order to understand it [popular church music], it is necessary to integrate information from

the complete record, printed, manuscript, oral and to accept each as equally valid and valuable.⁸²

Holman cannot accept this.⁸³ The edifice of understanding built up exploring manuscripts and printed works and relating them to an idea of the composer's intentions must be maintained. Authorial intention is held above popular appropriation and use. It is as if Roland Barthes had never lived and no significant discussion had arisen from the type of thinking he represented.⁸⁴ It is as if the recent developments in cultural studies, social history, ethnomusicology and postmodernism have not troubled Holman's world.

Holman's associate, Sally Drage, whose work shows real signs of deepening and developing our understanding of the field, is nevertheless still tied to a similar and conventional style of thinking. In a recent essay, she 'attempts to re-examine the evidence and to consider whether derogatory comments about the repertoire and its performance are justified'.⁸⁵ I have no problem in saying that, given the attitudes, values, and aesthetic and social assumptions of such commentators, their observations were totally 'justified' – they were to be expected. Their vehement and sometimes vicious condemnations are a matter of historical record. There is no universal position of truth from which to make judgements or justifications: all appraisal is historically, culturally and socially situated. 46

Drage's 'reappraisal', therefore, is really part of the same project as Holman's 'best practice', and in the final analysis is an attempt to maintain a unified and inclusive notion of 'music'. Thus she can write: 'When examining music written by amateurs it is not surprising to find some fairly incompetent compositions. Nevertheless much of this repertoire is worthy of performance as well as serious academic consideration'.⁸⁶ I have no problem with the serious academic consideration, and Drage shows herself quite capable of this. The notion of 'incompetence', however, suggests an eternal norm against which it is possible to judge, a norm of which the practitioners of vernacular church music may have been totally unaware; in short, they inhabited a state of ignorance, of not knowing any better. I do not want to dispense with notions of competence; but such notions must be located within the practitioners' own aesthetic, social and cultural context, and within the larger and contested aesthetic field of which their activity comprises a part. 47

Holman is absolutely right when he asserts, 'One of the fascinating features of psalmody is that it combines features of art and folk music'.⁸⁷ However, I cannot hear much 'folk music' in Holman's performances of pieces of parochial music. Instead, currently fashionable ways of performing eighteenth-century music have been applied to items that were widely performed within the vernacular tradition. In a sense, he has subsumed or incorporated English parish church music into the mainstream of Baroque and Classical art music. He has applied a musical *habitus* derived from educated and elite musical traditions to what was, of its nature, for the greater part, a popular or vernacular form of music-making. He has ignored 48

a mass of evidence on the ways in which the music was performed. I suspect this is because of an unconsidered belief that there is a 'right' way of doing these things, or at least a currently acceptable way which accords with his notion of 'the best practice of the time' – a notion that might itself prove to be problematic. As Temperley wrote some years ago, 'Many features of the currently fashionable early music style (or styles) have little or no basis in historical fact.'⁸⁸ In proposing that his performance practice 'matches the directness and vigour of much of the music', one can only assume that by 'music' Holman means the representation of the pieces on the manuscript or printed page. I think there is much more to 'music' than that, and one is forced to suspect that Holman's parochial music performances, superficially attractive and pleasing as they are, are really doing no more than creating 'a novel but historically-sounding style'.⁸⁹

Holman also seems to have ignored a mass of comparative evidence on performance from both the historical record and the surviving performance practices of the English and transatlantic branches of the vernacular church music tradition. He has directed and published performances of parochial music that, on the balance of evidence, must be considered to sound unlike the vast majority of music that came 'from English Parish Churches' in the century before 1840. Ironically, all this seems to have been done in the name of a notion of historically informed performance. It is as if 'historically informed' means picking up on what one likes, what one is comfortable with and ignoring everything else. I cannot get away from feelings of misdirected talent and lost opportunities. 49

In an excellent recent piece, Henry Stobart has redrawn our attention to the significance of fashion in the performance of early music: 'In this move towards more accurate or "historically informed" performance, certain earlier experiments, conventions, tastes or performance fashions fall by the wayside; some of which seem untenable or even laughable from the safe vantage point of the present.'⁹⁰ He goes on to draw attention to what I think is the inevitable selectivity of this sort of performance, 'where performers and audience alike are immensely vigilant about certain historical details but have complete blind spots about many far more significant aspects of the performance'. That statement would seem to fit our case very well indeed: where the exact pitch of an organ is a matter of special comment, but parochial music at large probably only rarely sounded anything like it does on Holman's recordings. It is definitely not reinterpretation that I object to – music is constantly being reinterpreted and recontextualised; rather, it is reinterpretation which does not openly and honestly proclaim what it is that I find a problem. Nor is it high standards that I object to; it is inappropriate standards that are my concern. By default, such music pretends to be what it is not. 50

The Decline of the Gallery Tradition

I will turn now to Christopher Turner's paper on 'The Decline of the Gallery 51

Tradition',⁹¹ which raises a number of vital and related issues. Historical change is a difficult subject; there are no simple or easy answers, and our own relationships to the past as both investigators and revivalists are difficult to negotiate. But although easy answers to difficult questions are not always forthcoming, there are nonetheless more or less likely answers – and it is the more likely ones that we should try to pursue.

I want to limit my comments to three areas raised by the essay: the social composition of church bands and questions concerning the rural population; the social history of popular culture in the eighteenth and the first two thirds of the nineteenth century; and the notion of 'decline from within' of the popular church music tradition. 52

Social Composition and Population

Who were the members of west gallery bands? From what we know, although the social composition ranged from labourers to 'middle-class' occupations such as schoolteachers and clergymen, it was that middling group of village society, the artisans, which overwhelmingly peopled the church bands. The term 'artisan' itself covers a range from employed journeymen to self-employed master craftsmen, and there was obviously geographical variation too. 53

Artisans were generally respectable people who enjoyed a somewhat higher social status, and usually a higher income, than the labouring poor of village society. The independent-mindedness displayed by church bands is inextricably bound up with their artisan character. Artisans were sometimes less dependent for employment on pleasing their social 'betters' than were labourers. (One of the reasons why church attendance was generally higher in rural areas was that some landowners and farmers would dismiss labourers if they were not seen in church.) Artisans had to make their way in village society, but they were also, as a number of historians have pointed out, carriers of more radical social attitudes than other groups.⁹² 54

The impact of the Industrial Revolution on these groups varied over time. Handloom weavers were early victims of industrialisation, but many artisan occupations flourished until the second half of the nineteenth century and the advent of mass-produced and cheaply transported goods. The initial impact of industrialisation was to increase the demand for certain artisan work, and even in the second half of the century some of those artisans whose labour-intensive work could not be replaced by industrial methods of manufacture continued to flourish so long as demand for their services remained buoyant.⁹³ 55

This brings us to a central plank of Christopher Turner's argument: 'the membership of rural gallery bands in the Anglican Church was bound to decline as village populations (and therefore the congregations) dwindled'.⁹⁴ To support this argument we are given percentage figures for the rural population at different census dates: 56

Census	1801	1851	1901
Percentage of population in cities/urban areas	20%	50%	80%

The census of 1901, it is claimed, saw 'an almost exact reversal of the situation of a hundred years before'.⁹⁵ Superficially, this looks convincing – population is draining from the countryside – but there is an element of illusion here. Let us add some more rows to the table:⁹⁶

Census	1801	1851	1901
Percentage of population in cities/urban areas	20%	50%	80%
Total population	8,892,536	17,927,609	32,527,843
Approximate size of rural population	7,114,028	8,963,805	7,481,404

The *percentage* of people living in the countryside was certainly declining in the nineteenth century, but there were more people in the countryside in 1851 than in 1801, and the rural population of 1901 was of the same order of magnitude as that of 1801. It seems the demise of the rural population has been greatly exaggerated! There is no general decline in the number of people in the countryside until the last third of the nineteenth century. In fact the years 1820 to 1850 saw a 28 per cent increase in the rural population – slow compared to the rapid increase in the towns, but still a significant rate of growth. What actually happened in the nineteenth century is a quite staggering increase in population; for every one person alive in 1801 there were almost four living in 1901. Simultaneously, there was a rapid increase in the proportion of the population living in urban areas.

So, while I accept that social and economic factors were involved in the decline of the church bands, and the middle years of the nineteenth century were witnessing the effects of industrial and agricultural change, the significant changes come later than is implied in Turner's essay. We are told that 'many of the gallery bands were at the height of their activity and influence during the period 1820–50'.⁹⁷ I would put the main period of effective church music reform and expulsion of the church bands between 1840 and 1865; the latter date is near the start of 'the flight from the land' and the slow loss of artisan occupations due to industrial production and improved distribution. 57

Actually, the countryside was booming for most of the period 1840–65. As the 'hungry forties' (not hungry for everyone, of course) gave way to the period of Victorian high farming, the demand for food from the increasing population and the rapidly expanding urban areas, and the relative weakness of foreign competition, meant that money was pouring into the countryside. If hindsight suggests that 'rural depopulation', that favourite fear of the 1890s and 1900s, had begun in the 1850s, nobody at that time seems to have noticed it. 'The agricultural nation gave every sign of stability', wrote Alun Howkins.⁹⁸ 58

So, if neither population depletion nor the decline of artisan occupations can explain the timing of the demise of the church bands, I think we have to look elsewhere for explanations for this interesting occurrence. 59

The Social History of Popular Culture

Judging from 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition', one would tend to think that church bands existed in a hermetically sealed world, shut off from all else except, perhaps, the supposed harsh winds of population decline and industrial development. We get little sense from the essay that band members were part of a wider society and participated in a popular or vernacular culture that was itself under attack and undergoing profound change. 50

We know that many church musicians played for country dancing and were often dancers themselves; some were bell-ringers and no doubt many were singers of traditional songs. Many participated in the various calendar customs and popular sporting activities that were widespread in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England – wassailing, morris dancing, rush-bearing, street football, May Day festivities, and so forth. Some may even have participated in the less romantically attractive aspects of that old plebeian culture – bull-baiting, cock-fighting, rough music and bull-running, even wife-selling. 61

I cannot see how we can begin to construct an adequate history of the church bands in isolation from this wider contextual history. Context has become increasingly important in musical studies, but in the work under review I think this is insufficiently developed. The church and church music were but one aspect of these amateur musicians' lives, which embraced many more areas of the social life of their times. The references in Turner's essay show a reading of some primary sources (mostly diaries and reminiscences), secondary material about popular church music (from K.H. MacDermott to contemporary writers), and some very general historical writing, standard reference works, and histories of instruments. What has not been considered is the highly significant body of work on English social history and popular culture that has been created by such writers as E.P. Thompson, Peter Bailey, Robert Storch, Robert Malcolmson, Hugh Cunningham, Bob Bushaway, James Obelkevich, and Alun Howkins – and that is just to scratch the surface of a very considerable literature.⁹⁹ In order to develop an adequate history of popular church music I think it is important that we think outside the context of the church and consider those factors that were impinging on church life and church music (Obelkevich is particularly rich in this area). 62

One cannot understand the attack on vernacular church music outside of the context of a general attack on numerous different aspects of the popular culture of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. As new social classes (in the first place the new industrial and agrarian middle class) emerged in the wake of the development of industrial and agrarian capitalism, one of the ways in which they defined themselves was through 63

characteristic shared attitudes and values. These manifested themselves in two ways. The first was a sort of mutuality within the group – a sort of ‘our view of the world is right because we all believe it’. The second was a hostility towards other groups whose actions and behaviour were seen to be antagonistic, or even dangerous, to those new attitudes and values – which we could characterise as ‘their view of the world is wrong because we all believe it to be wrong’.

The attack on and suppression of the church bands is but one, quite minor, aspect of a much greater process: the attempted, and partially successful, reformation of manners in the nineteenth century. However, the shape, the manner of proceeding, the nature of the language and criticism, the way the different forces were mustered and deployed, were so similar in so many different areas of the attempted reform of popular culture that one simply has to be convinced that all were part of a single, highly significant and unified historical process. You do not have to agree with the social historians of popular culture (they do not agree among themselves), but to write sensibly about the decline of the gallery tradition you have to engage with their work. It is only through such an engagement that we will be able to produce a more adequate account of the demise of the church choir bands. 64

'Decline from within'?

One senses that Turner's essay is really an attempt to write a sort of history without much conflict. This is a history in which impersonal forces cause decline (a gentle word compared with terms like ‘suppression’ and ‘expulsion’, which I use). It is a history in which church musicians suffered a ‘decline in their morale’ and, ‘unable to sustain themselves [...] bowed to the pressure of change and relinquished their role in the gallery – often without complaint’.¹⁰⁰ Yet we know that some of them complained loudly!¹⁰¹ And when they did not complain, we cannot know what feelings of resentment, frustration and ‘decline in their morale’ they suffered. The reason why social historians focus on conflict is that conflict is symptomatic of what is going on in society; conflict is the expression of real tensions that are felt and lived and sometimes articulated in word and action. It is very difficult, and often misleading, to argue a positive case from a lack of evidence – which, I think, is the case with Turner's essay. 65

Historical explanation seeks the various causes that come together to create the conditions for change; but it is wrong to use a piece of evidence that can cut two ways in order to support just one side of an argument. If we use the availability of cheap organs and harmoniums as part of the explanation for the decline of the gallery tradition, then why can we not use the availability of cheap band instruments as a reason for its continuation? Why did the brass band movement (not just confined to the industrial north but also widespread in the rural south) take off at just the moment that the gallery tradition was disappearing? Rural depopulation seems not to have harmed the brass band movement until late in the century, and sometimes brass bands existed in villages that had had church bands. 66

I think it is more fruitful to seek explanations in social, cultural and ideological factors than simply in the availability of cheaper instruments or supposed changes in population. It is in the particular ideologies current among different social groups contending for influence and dominance that we can begin to locate a convincing explanation for the decline of the gallery tradition. What is crucial is the way in which these ideologies related to new and vigorous attitudes and approaches within the church itself. The pressure for church music reform had been there since the eighteenth century, but it was only in the middle years of the nineteenth century that significant change was accomplished. At that time, movements for internal reform within the church found a resonance and sympathy in the new social attitudes and class dispositions. The church's crisis of purpose in response to changing social, economic and cultural circumstances – most significantly but not exclusively manifested in the form of the Oxford Movement – met with a wider cultural impetus for the reformation of manners among the populace in general. As the middle classes' attempts to impose new standards of behaviour were felt in many areas, artisan control of church music, which was considered to be of an 'unrefined' or ignorant character, had to go. 67

The point is that social and cultural change is never just the result of the workings of impersonal forces. Social and cultural change happens because real people in real situations have ideas about how the world should be, and they pursue those ideas. This happens within a social and economic context, which certainly has an influence on the possible outcome of any situation, but which does not wholly predetermine it. Those of us who lived through the premiership of Mrs Thatcher should be able to see that clearly. 68

In the nineteenth century, the 'young men from the college' who went into rural parishes fired up with the ideas of the Oxford Movement were cultural revolutionaries of their day, intent on missionary work among those whom they sometimes considered to be an alien and heathen population. Their approach and attitudes permeated the church, and their emphasis on ideas of respectability and decency resonated with middle-class thought and attitudes at large. Their ideas spread out beyond the doctrinal bounds of Anglo-Catholicism. But the result of their actions was to upset considerable numbers of people when established ways of doing things, including the practices and traditions of popular church music, were overturned. 69

The central question is this: were the church bands killed off, or did they die of natural causes? The answer is: both. Active bands seem only ever to have existed in a minority of churches (I traced evidence of 'bands' in about half the rural parishes of Sussex, but some of these probably had only a very few instruments). Where the musical practice was weak, 'musical reform' was probably a relatively easy task; it may have amounted to no more than the substitution of a harmonium for a couple of band instruments. It is probable that such transitions could have been accomplished 'often without complaint'. Where the tradition was strong and self-confident, and where issues relating to the existence of a church band became embroiled with other social and religious matters, there was a greater likelihood of 70

conflict over the question of 'musical reform', and some of the consequences of reform were spectacular. La Trobe thought that church bands were usually composed of 'rebellious materials' which were in need of 'a master spirit to awe them into order'.¹⁰² Decline is a complex process: many church bands did not go quietly, and many old style musicians bore the resentment of their expulsion for years afterwards.

There is plenty of hard evidence that the demise of church bands was sometimes contested, that self-confident and autonomous artisan musicians did not like having their activity and role taken away from them. The fact of open hostility in some instances suggests the possibility of others where hostility was present but not open, contained but not necessarily absent. Although musical standards must have varied from place to place, there is plenty of evidence that the criticisms of lower-class musicians had as much to do with cultural differences rooted in social class and related cultural values as with musical quality per se. 71

We get a strong flavour of this class hatred in the writing of J.A. La Trobe, who believed that 'rustic performers' had little time for 'mental cultivation'. He felt that men of cultivated minds, when faced with opposition, would endeavour to hide their feelings; but, in contrast, 'with what rudeness does conceit work in the breasts of the lower class of people [...] They never attempt to cloak their feelings by the arts of polished society.'¹⁰³ Military metaphors come readily to La Trobe's pen; he expects a war between clergyman and choir, which may be prolonged, but, with persistence, 'he will finally come off victor'.¹⁰⁴ La Trobe knows that reform is likely to bring difficulties, that the reformer is likely to 'embroil himself in tumults and dislikes',¹⁰⁵ and he advocates gradualism; but he does not anticipate that reform will be achieved 'without complaint' – nor was it in many cases that we know about. What La Trobe and other writers tried to provide were strategies for dealing with complaints. No doubt in some cases such strategies worked; in others they clearly did not. 72

Conclusion

I hope I have shown that Turner's account of 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition' is wanting in a number of respects. The demography is wrongly interpreted. A great mass of important and related historical evidence in the form of the writing of social historians on popular culture, on the emergence of a new sort of class society, and on significant ideological and social changes within the church itself, has not been taken into account. Finally, his account of church band musicians giving up their activity and status 'often without complaint' is contradicted by considerable amounts of evidence. Significant numbers complained and resisted the change. 73

How, then, does Turner's reading of history relate to Holman's recordings of church band music? Although they may not seem overtly connected, with a little reflection, links between them soon become clear. Both rest on an

insufficient and uncritical reading of the historical material. Both are informed by 'common-sense' or 'best practice' assumptions about what constitutes good music and logical musical development. Holman's superficial reading and uncritical acceptance of complaints of widespread 'low standards' makes the 'decline from within' of gallery music a logical outcome: it died because it did not deserve to live.¹⁰⁶ In this light Holman can be seen as rescuing the music from the awfulness of its past performers.

In the work of Holman and Turner, the apparent lack of connection between popular church music and what E.P. Thompson usefully described as 'plebeian culture' allows church music to be considered in isolation from the wider popular culture of pre- and early-industrial England. This involves an implicit denial of that culture's autonomous and eclectic nature, and of its expression through a musical style having its own performance conventions. It also permits the incorporation of popular church music as a junior league member of the mainstream of Western art music. To make this music acceptable for modern audiences by incorporating it into the 'best practice' of the Western art tradition – or at least a currently fashionable version of it – is to deny its own conventions and autonomy, to transmute it into something it was not, to 'misrecognize' its nature and qualities.¹⁰⁷ 74

I think it is romantic to try to create a version of the past that is free of conflict. In such a version, impersonal forces give rise to 'inevitable' changes, people accept pernicious change 'often without complaint'. The impression of popular church music with which Holman and Turner leave us is of a junior branch of refined music, often incompetently executed, even if it can be praised for its 'directness and vigour'. What is invoked is a past from which conflict, aesthetic and social, has been largely removed. Such an imaginary place has more in common with the make-believe world of much of the heritage industry than the real world experienced by people living through difficult times and the destruction of old certainties and ways of doing things. Ultimately, this version of history shows little respect for and little understanding of the musicians and music it purports to re-present. The cosy, sanitised, safe world of the heritage industry resonates with performances too neat and clean to give much impression of what the thing was really like. Perhaps modern audiences prefer a rosy view of the past to honesty. 75

I will end by quoting someone who was much closer to rural society and much closer to the world of the church bands than any modern commentator. In an essay published in 1923, Alfred Williams contemplated 'the reason of the discontinuance and disappearance of the folk-song'. The essay is backward-looking and romantic, but also perceptive, analytical and sharply observed. Among the 'many reasons' for the disappearance of folk song, he gives particular attention to 76

[...] the advent of the church organ and the breaking-up of the old village bands of musicians. That dealt a smashing blow at music in the villages. Previous to the arrival of the church organ, every little village and hamlet had its band, composed of the fiddle, bass viol,

piccolo, clarionet, cornet, the 'horse's leg' and the trumpet or 'serpent'. They were played every Sunday in church. But they did not solely belong to the church. All the week they were free to be used for the entertainment of the people. The musicians had to be continually practising, and much of it was done in public. As a matter of fact, the villages were never without music. And the need of the band kept the wits of the performers alive. They laboured to make and keep themselves proficient, and the training they took both educated them and exerted an unmistakable influence on the everyday life of their fellows. But when the organ came, the village band was dismissed from the church; they were not wanted any more. Their music was despised. There was no further need of them, and the bands broke up. For a while the fiddle sounded at the inns and at the farm feast, and was soon heard no more.¹⁰⁸

The language is most interesting: 'breaking-up' is ambiguous; 'smashing blow' is less so. But at the end of the passage the ambiguity is resolved. The reason the 'bands broke up' is that 'the village band was dismissed from the church; they were not wanted any more [...] There was no further need of them [...] 'Their music was despised.' Williams's emphasis on the wider social and musical role of the village – not just the church – band is most interesting, as is his understanding that its institutional base in the church supported wider music-making. Closer to the events and intimately engaged with people who remembered and had belonged to the church bands, Williams saw the process more clearly than many modern commentators seem able to. His emphasis on church musicians' continual practice and proficiency makes a telling contrast to the uncritical repetition of clichés about low standards. 77

Notes

¹ I would like to thank Dr Ian Russell, Director of the Elphinstone Institute, The University of Aberdeen, for his great help in providing me with material from his collection and information for this essay. This went well beyond what one can reasonably expect of a colleague and a friend. He is not, of course, responsible for any uses to which I have put such material. I would also like to thank Dr Richard Wistreich of Newcastle University for detailed and critical reading of my text and some very helpful suggestions (not all of which I was able to use). I would also like to thank Dr Bennett Zon of the University of Durham, editor of *Nineteenth Century Music Review* and two anonymous readers for comments. I eventually agreed with the editor to withdraw the piece from this publication as I did not wish further to blunt its critical edge.

² Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Vic Gammon, 'Parochial Music in Nineteenth Century Sussex' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Sussex, 1977) were two of the earliest works to indicate a new interest in the subject; more recent works are detailed in the notes below.

³ Like many categorical terms, 'West Gallery music' is not without its problems. It is useful in that it implies both a period and a type of music and is firmly established as part of the discourse but it has romantic associations and the descriptive terms popular church music, vernacular church music, parochial music might serve better. Even the older terms such as parochial psalmody and country psalmody have usefulness.

⁴ I am aware that 'vernacular' has become something of a modish term with conflicting inflections of meaning. I derive my usage mainly from language and the study of domestic architecture. See for example R. W. Brunskill, *Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular*

Architecture, rev. edn (London: Faber, 1978), particularly 22-28. A 'Vernacular Architecture Group' was formed as early as 1952; see <http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lsm1/vag/website/>. The usage of the term 'vernacular' in connection with music (which seems to date from the late 1930s USA) deserves a study of its own beyond the scope of this essay but Archie Green made a useful start some years ago; see Archie Green, 'Vernacular Music: A Naming Compass', *The Musical Quarterly* Vol. 77, No. 1 (Spring, 1993), 35-46. I cannot but agree with Green that the term 'remains a problematic tag' (36) and is a product of the way 'we thrash about for adequate descriptive language' (44). On the link with language, see Thomas Brothers, 'Ideology and Aurality in the Vernacular Traditions of African-American Music', *Black Music Research Journal* Vol. 17, No. 2 (1997), 169-209: 170.

⁵ A good guide to popular church music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is Rollo Woods, *Good Singing Still* (Ironbridge: WGMA, 1995). An impression of national and local activities can be found on the WGMA's website at <http://wgma.org.uk/> [accessed 9 April 2007].

⁶ <http://wgma.org.uk/cho.htm> [accessed 9 April 2007] lists 29 English groups and two overseas.

⁷ An up-to-date list of recordings can be found at <http://wgma.org.uk/Res/audio.htm> [accessed 9 April 2007]. This list of 19 available recordings does not list the unknown number of locally made and sold productions. As this essay will explore, the label 'West Gallery Music' covers a number of different performing styles.

⁸ For a fascinating and recent discussion of some related issues, see Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, *The Modern Invention of Medieval Music: Scholarship, Ideology, Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). John Butt, *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Bernard D. Sherman, *Inside Early Music: Conversations with Performers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) and Nicholas Kenyon (ed.), *Authenticity and Early Music: A Symposium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) are useful sources of ideas and debates. My own introduction to this area, which simultaneously fascinated me and set me questioning was Thurston Dart, *The Interpretation of Music* (London: Hutchinson, 1954).

⁹ Christopher Turner (ed.), *The Gallery Tradition: Aspects of Georgian Psalmody* (Ketton: SG Publishing in association with Anglia Polytechnic University, 1997); Sally Drage (ed.), *Georgian Psalmody 2: The Interaction Between Urban and Rural Practice* (Corby Glen: SG Publishing, 1999). Articles from these books are now available on line at <http://www.psalmody.co.uk/contents/articles.html>

¹⁰ At the conference, as well as giving my own paper on 'The Performance Style of West Gallery Music', I made some observations regarding Christopher Turner's paper on 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition'. After the conference, I wrote these up and submitted them for inclusion in the collection, but they were not published; they form the basis of the second part of the present essay.

¹¹ The term 'folk music' is now widely considered problematic by specialists, but is commonly retained when communicating with those who are not conversant with recent developments in the field.

¹² Robert Redfield, *The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

¹³ I do not want to suggest vernacular church music is unique in occupying an anomalous position. One could cite medieval dance music and eighteenth century Scots fiddle music as examples of musics that do not fit neatly into modern classificatory systems. Perhaps this is a problem common to a great deal of music of the past.

¹⁴ Such exceptions would include K. H. MacDermott, *Sussex Church Music in the Past* (Chichester: Moore & Wingham, 1922) and Percy Scholes's various writings on popular church music in different editions of *The Oxford Companion to Music*.

¹⁵ The thinking here derives from social anthropology; see particularly Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966).

¹⁶ The sad death of Christopher Turner in 2002 robbed us of a colleague and a man with whom I had stimulating and fruitful discussions. I considered whether, in the light of his death, I should proceed with this essay. After consideration and supportive discussions with a number of colleagues, I decided I should, for what follows is a critique of published work. It would have been excellent if Christopher had been able to respond fully and vigorously to my arguments.

¹⁷ Psalmody and The Parley of Instruments, directed by Peter Holman, *Vital Spark of Heavenly Flame: Music of Death and Resurrection from English Parish Churches and Chapels, 1760–1840* (CD, Hyperion CDA67020, 1998); *While Shepherds Watched: Christmas Music from English Parish Churches, 1740–1830* (CD, Hyperion CDA66924, 1996). As part of the background work for this essay, I conducted a focus-group interview. I played selected tracks from Peter Holman's recordings to three musically informed people whom I know and asked for their reactions. All had wide musical tastes and all had some knowledge of popular church music. I recorded and transcribed their reactions. I have not included the transcriptions as part of this essay, but they did help in checking, challenging and clarifying my own thinking, and I would like to thank those who participated in this exercise.

¹⁸ This passage appears in the booklets to both CDA66924 and CDA67020 in an almost unaltered state. Its repetition suggests that it represents Holman's considered position.

¹⁹ Vic Gammon, "'Babylonian Performances': The Rise and Suppression of Popular Church Music, 1660–1870", in Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo (eds.), *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590–1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1981), 62–88.

²⁰ These arguments have been previously explored in Vic and Sheila Gammon, 'The Musical Revolution of the Mid-Nineteenth Century: From "Repeat and Twiddle" to "Precision and Snap"', in Trevor Herbert (ed.), *The British Brass Band: A Musical and Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 122–154.

²¹ Lawrence W. Levine, 'Jazz and American Culture', *The Journal of American Folklore* Vol. 102, No. 403 (1989), 6–22; Kathy J. Ogren, *The Jazz Revolution: Twenties America and the Meaning of Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 153–165.

²² Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, tr. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

²³ Vic Gammon, 'The Performance Style of West Gallery Music', in Turner (ed.), *The Gallery Tradition*, 43–51. There is some material in what follows that has appeared in some of my earlier writings; this is included in order to emphasise particular points.

²⁴ MacDermott Collection, notes and cuttings, Vol. 1, Lewes: Sussex Archaeological Society Library.

²⁵ Print by Samuel H. Grimm (London, c.1770). Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, plate 16, between 168 and 169, reproduces the print and gives its provenance but does not reproduce the poem. Both are reproduced in R. Conyers Morrell, *The Romance of our Old Village Choirs* (London: Churchman, [n.d.]), 17.

²⁶ W. H. Blaauw, 'Extracts from the "Iter Sussexiense" of Dr John Burton', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 8 ([Lewes:] 1856), 250–265: 256.

²⁷ Peter Holman, CD booklet for *Vital Spark of Heavenly Flame*, 3.

²⁸ W. M., 'The Village Singers', *Village Churchman* (1843), 157.

²⁹ MacDermott Collection, notes and cuttings, Vol. 1, 155.

³⁰ Thomas Geering, *Our Parish: A Medley* (Lewes: *Sussex Advertiser*, Hailsham: E.H. Baker, 1884), 104.

³¹ MacDermott Collection, notes and cuttings, Vol. 1, 189.

³² Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument; or, a Remembrancer of the Best Practical Musick....* (London: 1696), 9.

³³ R.W., *The Excellent Use of Psalmody* (Nottingham: 1734), Introduction.

³⁴ Arthur Bedford, *The Excellency of Divine Music* (London: 1733), 25.

³⁵ William Figg, MS of 'Psalms and Hymns', Lewes: Sussex Archaeological Society Library, [probably 1811].

³⁶ MacDermott Collection, Vol. 2, 1–11.

³⁷ J.A. La Trobe, *The Music of the Church Considered in its Various Branches, Congregational and Choral: An Historical and Practical Treatise* (London: 1831), 150.

³⁸ *Sussex Agricultural Express*, 5 January 1850, 4.

³⁹ James Hurdis, *Poems* (3 vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1811), Vol. I, 22.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 2.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 88.

⁴² *Ibid.* 92.

⁴³ Anon., 'How Are the Psalms to Be Used in Public Worship?', *Musical Times* Vol. 3, No. 65 (1 Oct. 1849), 212–19.

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- ⁴⁴ 'Lessons in Singing Vocalisation', *Parish Choir* Vol. 1, No. 14 (Feb. 1847), 111.
- ⁴⁵ 'Refractory Village Choirs', *Parish Choir* Vol. 1, No. 18 (June 1847), 145; see also No. 17 (May 1847), 137.
- ⁴⁶ Figg, 'Psalms and Hymns'.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ William Vincent, *Considerations on Parochial Music*, 2nd edn (London: 1790), 8.
- ⁴⁹ See Frank Harrison, *Time, Place and Music* (Amsterdam: Frits Knuf, 1973) for reactions to exotic musics, for example: 'howlings and confused noises' (20); music 'of little pleasure to Spanish ears' (38); 'The concerts of divers other Savages are no better than theirs, and no less immusical to their ears who understand Musick' (56); '. . . making a noise, which hath not only nothing of harmony in it, but is more like a dreadful howling than any thing of Musick' (62–63, also 65); '. . . a wretched inharmonious voice' (67); 'a confused noise' (88); 'a whining noise' (90); 'their concert, being both destitute of melody and harmony, was of course very disagreeable to our ears, which are accustomed to such perfection in those essential points of music' (180).
- ⁵⁰ Christopher Small, *Music, Society, Education* (London: Calder, 1977, repr. Wesleyan University Press, 1996), 131 [considerably expanded in Christopher Small, *Music of the Common Tongue: Survival and Celebration in African American Music* (Hanover, NH: First University Press of New England/Wesleyan University Press, 1998); Eileen Southern (ed.), *Readings in Black American Music*, 2nd edn (New York: Norton, 1983).
- ⁵¹ Kathy J. Ogren, *The Jazz Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), particularly Chapter 5; Linda Martin and Kerry Segrave, *Anti-Rock: The Opposition to Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Da Capo, 1993).
- ⁵² Richard Heath, *The English Peasant: Studies, Historical, Local, and Biographic* (London: Unwin, 1893), 182–83.
- ⁵³ Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Temple Smith, 1978), 77–87.
- ⁵⁴ *Gaelic Psalms from Lewis* (CD, Greentrax Recordings CDTRAX 9006, 1994); *Old Regular Baptists: Lined-out Hymnody from Southeastern Kentucky* (CD, Smithsonian Folkways SFW 40106, 1997); *Songs of the Old Regular Baptists: Lined-out Hymnody from Southeastern Kentucky Vol.2* (CD, Smithsonian Folkways SFW50001, 2003). Thanks to Jeff Todd Titon for sharing his enthusiasm and expertise in the Old Regular Baptist singing with me.
- ⁵⁵ <http://www.glenrockcarolers.org> [accessed 26 May 2006]. Information and recordings kindly provided by Dr Ian Russell of The Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen.
- ⁵⁶ I cite here the extensive field recordings of Dr Ian Russell made in South Yorkshire and Derbyshire, publications from which are detailed on the Village Carols website at <http://www.villagecarols.org.uk/CAROLS/vcpublications.htm>, and the recordings on *Rouse, Rouse: Christmas carols from Padstow in Cornwall* (Cassette, Veteran Records VT117, 1988).
- ⁵⁷ Leech-Wilkinson, *Modern Invention of Medieval Music*, 4.
- ⁵⁸ Gammon, 'The Performance Style of West Gallery Music'.
- ⁵⁹ See, for example, The Copper Family, *Come Write Me Down: Early Recordings of the Copper Family of Rottingdean* (CD, Topic TSCD534, 2001); *The Voice of the People: The Traditional Music of England Ireland, Scotland and Wales*, ed. Reg Hall (20 CDs, Topic TSCD651–670, 1998).
- ⁶⁰ See, for example, *Voices from the American South: Blues, Ballads, Hymns, Reels, Shouts, Chanteys and Work Songs*, The Alan Lomax Collection: Southern Journey, Vol. 1 (CD, Rounder CD 1701, 1997); *Ballads and Breakdowns: Songs from the Southern Mountains*, The Alan Lomax Collection: Southern Journey, Vol. 2 (CD, Rounder CD 1702, 1997); *Ozark Frontier: Ballads and Old-timey Music from Arkansas*, The Alan Lomax Collection: Southern Journey, Vol. 7 (CD, Rounder 1707, 1997); Texas Gladden, *Ballad Legacy*, The Alan Lomax Collection: Portraits (CD, Rounder 1800, 2001).
- ⁶¹ Listen, for example, to the anthology, *Voices of the World: An Anthology of Vocal Expression* (CD, Le Chant du Monde CMX 3741010.12, 1996).
- ⁶² Ingrid Gjertsen, 'Vokal folkemusikk pa Vesterlander', quoted in Jan Ling, *A History of European Folk Music*, tr. Linda and Robert Schenk (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1997), 116.

⁶³ Canon Noel Boston and Lyndesay G. Langwill, *Church and Chamber Barrel-Organs: Their Origin, Makers, Music and Location – A Chapter in English Church Music* (Edinburgh: Lyndesay G. Langwill, 1967), 20.

⁶⁴ *While Shepherds Watched: Christmas Music from English Parish Churches, 1740-1830* (CD, Hyperion Records CDA66924, 1996). The reference is to John Foster, *A 2nd Collection of Sacred Music* (York: S. Knapton, c.1820).

⁶⁵ *Hark, Hark What News: Village Carols from the Royal Hotel, Dungworth* (CD, Village Carols VC009, 1996). See Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott, *The New Oxford Book of Carols* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); the basic musical material of the piece can be seen 140-42. See also Ian Russell, *A Festival of Village Carols: Sixteen Carols from The Mount-Dawson Manuscripts, Worrall* (Unstone, Sheffield: Village Carols, 1994). For comparative purposes, it is necessary that recordings are representative and not necessarily typical of all aspects of a performance practice.

⁶⁶ Thanks to Peter Roberts of Hyperion for permission to include this recording (license number L2007-060G). Full details can be accessed at <http://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/details/66924.asp>.

⁶⁷ Thanks to Dr Ian Russell of Village Carols for permission to include this recording. Details can be accessed at <http://www.villagecarols.org.uk/PBS/HARK.HTM> and the pub itself has a website at <http://www.royalhotel-dungworth.co.uk/>.

⁶⁸ Somewhat flat; as it is a DDD recording I assume this is due to the use of historic instruments or types of instruments rather than a recording problem.

⁶⁹ Ian Russell points out that this is not typical of the tradition. It is, however, a feature of the performance I have chosen for comparative purposes.

⁷⁰ The piece has also been placed in manuscript and print in the key of Bb major. See Ye *Old Christmas Carols* (Worrall, Sheffield: Bradfield Evening Institute Choral Society, 1969) 5; Lawrence Loy, 'Loy Manuscript', in *Village Carols Archive* (Wadsley, Sheffield: c.1955); Jack Goodison (ed.), *Jack Goodison's Collection of Local & Traditional Carols* ([Stannington, Sheffield]: 1993), 50.

⁷¹ Unaccompanied singers find their own pitch and are not be constrained by pitch as written. Ian Russell informs me that many singers complain when forced to sing with instruments scored in pitches higher than that which is customarily used.

⁷² Keyte and Parrott, *The New Oxford Book of Carols*, 144.

⁷³ 'The Mount-Dawson Manuscripts' (4 vols, Worrall, Sheffield, c. 1873), Vol. 1, 'Organ' [12-13], Sheffield Archives LD 2350 /1-4. Copy kindly supplied by Ian Russell.

⁷⁴ *While Shepherds Watched*, booklet, 8.

⁷⁵ It is not that I feel Holman has it wrong and other revivers of popular church music have got it right. Some of the revivers of gallery music get closer to what I think it may have been like but I have heard few recordings or renditions that achieved a very convincing performance. In a sense, this is the inevitable condition of revivalists. The traditional survivals in Britain and the US remain our best guide.

⁷⁶ A.H. Fox Strangways in collaboration with Maud Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 33.

⁷⁷ Ogren, *The Jazz Revolution*, 155.

⁷⁸ David Chrystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 54-55.

⁷⁹ Holman's use of the word 'time' may be read as confusing: does he mean the Georgian period or the present time? My interpretation is the former.

⁸⁰ Edward Boys Ellman, *Recollections of a Sussex Parson* (London: Skeffington, 1912), 194, 197.

⁸¹ Charles E. Ives, *Memos*, ed. John Kirkpatrick (London: Calder and Boyars, 1973), 132.

⁸² Dave Townsend, 'Processes of Transmission in the Country Psalmody Tradition', in Turner, *The Gallery Tradition*, 27-34: 34.

⁸³ Peter Holman, 'Introduction', in Turner, *The Gallery Tradition*, x, xi.

⁸⁴ Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', tr. Stephen Heath, in Stephen Heath (ed.) *Image-Music-Text* (London: Fontana, 1977), 142-148.

⁸⁵ Sally Drage, 'A Reappraisal of Provincial Church Music', in *Music in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. David Wyn Jones (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 172-93: 172.

⁸⁶ Drage, 'A Reappraisal', 175.

⁸⁷ Holman, 'Introduction', xi.

⁸⁸ Nicholas Temperley, 'The Movement Puts a Stronger Premium on Novelty than on Accuracy, and Fosters Misrepresentation', *Early Music* Vol. 12, No.1 (February 1984), 16–20: 17.

⁸⁹ Temperley, 'The Movement', 18.

⁹⁰ Henry Stobart, 'Authenticity Crimes: The Early Music Racket and the Meys of the World', *British Forum for Ethnomusicology Newsletter* No. 24 (Winter 2002), 10–12: 10.

⁹¹ Christopher Turner, 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition', in Turner, *The Gallery Tradition*, 71–80.

⁹² Gammon, "Babylonian Performances", 65–6.

⁹³ Raphael Samuel, 'The Workshop of the World: Steam Power and Hand Technology in Mid-Victorian Britain', *History Workshop Journal* No. 3 (1978), 6–72.

⁹⁴ Turner, 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition', 75.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 74.

⁹⁶ Figures from John Saville, *Rural Depopulation in England and Wales, 1851 to 1951* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957), 2, 61; Pamela Horn, *The Rural World 1780–1850: Social Change in the English Countryside* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), 254; Alun Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England 1850–1925: A Social History* (London: HarperCollins, 1991), 13.

⁹⁷ Turner, 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition', 74.

⁹⁸ Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England*, 14.

⁹⁹ Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control 1830–1885* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978); Bob Bushaway, *By Rite: Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700–1880* (London: Junction, 1982); Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c.1780–c.1880* (London: Croom Helm, 1980); J. M. Golby and A. W. Purdue, *The Civilisation of the Crowd: Popular Culture in England 1750–1900* (London: Batsford, 1984); Robert W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society 1700–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Howard Newby, *Country Life: A Social History of Rural England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987); James Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825–1875* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Allen Lane, 1982); Paul Schlicke, *Dickens and Popular Entertainment* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985); Robert D. Storch (ed.), *Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth Century England* (London: Croom Helm, 1982); E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London: Merlin Press, 1991); E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Gollancz, 1964); Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo (eds), *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590–1914: Explorations in the History of Labour and Leisure* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1981).

¹⁰⁰ Turner, 'The Decline of the Gallery Tradition', 77.

¹⁰¹ See James Nye, *A Small Account of my Travels Through the Wilderness*, ed. by Vic Gammon (Brighton: QueenSpark, 1982), 15–17, for an account of a new curate's reformation of church music. Peter Robson has uncovered a number of cases of bitter disputes in his researches into church music in nineteenth century Dorset (personal communication) as I did working on Sussex.

¹⁰² La Trobe, *The Music of the Church Considered*, 72.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* 89.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 87.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 89.

¹⁰⁶ An informed and intelligent anonymous reader of this paper thought 'it is absurd to ignore the fact that the bands were no longer serving a useful purpose *in the eyes of the church and chapel authorities*' [my emphasis] – which I completely accept – and 'the gallery tradition had outlived its usefulness while the brass band movement was serving new social purposes' – the question here is usefulness to whom?

¹⁰⁷ I use this term in the way it is used by Bourdieu: it indicates an ideological process, not merely the result of ignorance or misunderstanding.

¹⁰⁸ Alfred Williams, *Folk-Songs of the Upper Thames* (London: Duckworth, 1923), 28.

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