

REGULAR SINGING, OLD WAY OF SINGING (RS/OW)

n.d.: "We are told [where?] that 'as in the case of scripture reading, the more polite and fashionable places tended to accept the new method of singing, while the rural areas vigorously fought against it.' [new paragraph] One proponent of the new singing by note [Cotton Mather, in a letter to Thomas Bradbury dated 22 April 1724; see *Diary of Cotton Mather / Volume II / 1709-1724* (American Classics; New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, [1957]), p. 797] referred to a group in a town ten miles from Boston as being still 'so sett upon their old Howling in the public Psalmody.'" [MA/Carlisle; Wilkins 1976, p. 98]

n.d.: "Another duty of one of the deacons most proficient in music was to stand before the pulpit and set the tunes and beat the time so that all could reasonably sing together. The words of the hymn were lined out. The deacon read the first line and pitched the tune, and the whole congregation joined in singing of the line. Another line was read and the melody was again taken up by the people, and so to the end of the hymn or psalm. This was called 'deaconing the hymn.' It was anything but melodious, and instances are on record which seemed to infer that the congregation was impatient to close, and one vote was 'that the deacon refrain from reading the lines of the last stanza.'" [NH/Goffstown; Hadley 1922, vol. I, p. 397]

1678-1725: lots of stuff on Rev. Thomas Symmes + his writings [MA/Bradford; Kingsbury 1883, pp. 72-81; Perry 1820, pp. 39-41, 50]

1680, 20 June (imagined date): [what follows is an imagined scenario, with the author, Samuel Sewall, visiting Woburn's second church in 1680:] "Deacon [John] Wright arose to announce singing; and, holding in his hand the Collection, entitled the 'New England Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs,' that now forgotten, but once favorite version of our fathers, both in their private and public devotions, he read five stanzas of the 5th Psalm, as follows: [3 stanzas of indented text; p. 96, 2 more stanzas of indented text; new paragraph:] When he had finished reading, I was right glad to hear him give out Windsor, as the tune to be sung; for that is a tune, which, like others of the same class, such as plaintive Canterbury and Little Marlborough, and mournful Bangor and Isle of Wight, and stately Rochester and Wells, grave Colchester and Wantage, sweet-toned Barby and Mear, cheerful York and St. Martin's, and majestic Winchester and Old Hundredth, I am always delighted to hear sung on suitable occasions; but which, from the general change of the public taste in Sacred Music, I am seldom or never likely to hear again. The deacon, having announced the tune, read the first line again, and then, with a tremulous voice commenced singing, in which he was instantly joined by almost the whole of the congregation, sitting, both by old and young, males and females. These, as he read severally a line of the portion he had given out, would catch the words from his lips, and fall in with him in singing it. And never, thought I, had I heard singing, that was on the whole quite equal to this. There was no exact harmony in it, no perfect keeping of time, and much otherwise, at which a critical ear might justly take offence. And yet there was in it that, which to me was exceedingly interesting and

impressive. The sound coming from such a multitude of voices, seemed as the roar of thunder and the voice of many waters. And then, there was such a seriousness in the appearance and manner of the great majority, such an evident engagedness in this act of praise to the Most High, as caused a deep solemnity to pervade the whole congregation, and in my humble opinion much more than compensated for all the musical faults and deficiencies of the performance. Here, thought I, if anywhere, is a specimen of singing to the Lord [p. 97] with the Spirit and with the understanding also, of that melody of the heart which makes even the meanest attempts at melody with the voice an acceptable offering to God through Jesus Christ, and insures his favorable presence in the assemblies of his saints." [MA/Woburn; Sewall 1868, pp. 95-97]

n.d. (early 18th c.): "The first churches to introduce the new way [of singing; regular singing] were Boston, Charlestown, Roxbury, Dorchester, Cambridge, Franklin, Bridgewater, Ipswich, Newbury, Andover and Bradford." [MA/various; Kingsbury 1883, p. 79]

n.d. (early to mid-18th c.): "...the introduction of new tunes in indefinite numbers at once silenced a large portion of the congregation—that portion who had not learned them. Moreover, **those who had learned to sing by rule desired to sing the tunes already familiar as they were actually printed—a difference quite amazing in many a tune.** Hence arose the controversy and division about singing by *note* and singing by *rote*, which took place in almost every parish. This was not a controversy over differing tastes and degrees of knowledge merely, or chiefly, though that had something to do with it; but rather **it was a question of congregational worship—of individual, active service—which had been the thought and sentiment and practice of generations.** And if men [who advocated for regular singing] were disciplined (as in Braintree they were, when this Church was yet a part of that), it was because, by their practice, they were forcing away a majority of the people from what they deemed their duty and privilege; for singing by note involved the singing by a separate number [i.e., a choir, *de facto* or in actuality], much more absolutely than would be true now. And choirs did follow in due time in all parishes. This, in their [i.e., the old way proponents'] view, was singing by proxy, serving God by proxy, the essence of Popery." [MA/Randolph; Randolph 1881, p. 93 (from "History of the Psalms and Hymns and Music of the First Church of Randolph" by Rev. Asa Mann)]

n.d. (between 1708 and 1725): "Mr. [Thomas] Symmes [minister at Bradford 1708-1725] was a good singer himself, and was very resolute to introduce regular singing among his people, who were not at this time accustomed to such kind of singing, however contrary to their prejudices and inclinations. He wrote a kind of serio-jocose dialogue on the subject [*Utile dulci. or, A joco-serious dialogue, concerning regular singing: calculated for a particular town, (where it was publickly had, on Friday Oct. 12. 1722.) but may serve some other places in the same climate, 1723*], which he published, and by these means raised a considerable party spirit in both places of his settlement [Boxford, then Bradford]." [MA/Bradford; Perry 1821, p. 40]

1714: "...the attempt to teach singing by note, thus commenced by Mr. [John] Tufts [in the publication of his tune supplement, which this source says first appeared in 1714], was most strenuously resisted, and for many years, by that large class of persons, everywhere to be found, who believe that an old error is better than a new truth. Many, at that time, imagined, that fa, sol, la, was, in reality, nothing but popery in disguise. A writer in the New England Chronicle, in 1723, thus observes. "Truly I have a great jealousy that if we once begin to sing by rule, the next thing will be to pray by rule and preach by rule and *then comes popery*.'" [MA/West Newbury; Coffin 1845, p. 186]

1717-1724: "SACRED MUSICK. We are in possession of an anecdote which seems to fix the era when singing by notes was first introduced into the churches at Boston. Mr. Timothy Burbank, who died in Plymouth Oct. 13, 1793, aged 90, (precisely to an hour) was born in Malden, and during his apprenticeship at the tailor's trade in Boston, attended Dr. Colman's meeting. He was always uniform in relating that he attended the first singing school* [footnote: "*Mr. B. was a chorister many years at Plymouth..."] and religious society which introduced singing by notes, at Boston. This era, therefore, must have been between the years 1717 [Burbank aged 13 or 14] and 1724 [Burbank aged 20 or 21]." [MA/Boston; Sacred/MHS 1816/1846, p. 301]

1722, up to 8 November: "ANNO 1722 / There having been Sad confusions w^c I often observed from Several years past, (& did often in y^e publick [~~"Observe"~~ crossed out] mention wth trouble & pray might be reform'd) in o^r [p. 163] Singing, Some w^r above oth^{rs} Some before oth^{rs} & and all y^s, as I apprehended for want of going more together w^c I urged to no purpose: & und^{rs} y^t y^r w^s a Rule I Lookt on it, & concieveing y^e Knowl: & keeping to y^{et} rule would prevent y^s Confusion in y^t p^t of y^e publick worship; I promoted learning to Sing to y^t End, Several publick Lect^{rs} w^r had to promote it, y^e [first] I preacht by my Selfe, y^e 2nd by m^r Symes, y^e 3^d by m^r Fisk [editors' note, p. 216: "Revs. Thomas Symmes of Bradford and Samuel Fiske of Salem First Church."] w^r much w^s s^d to incourage it, & in each of w^c y^y Sang 4 time Exact by y^e rule, no man opposing a School w^s set up, māy both men & women learnt. Some indeed w^r not so clear in it, (as by mistake) concieving it popery, but at lenght [*sic*] having been [~~"urged"~~ crossed out] incouraged by Several as by all y^e Deacons, Cap^t Pool & Cap^t Burnap, Ensign Bancroft, Serg^t Thomas Pool, & L^t Bryant (w^o mett wth y^m @ [*sic*; really in original?]) y^e School y^t learnt, y^e first night y^y began sang with y^m, wisht y^m success, 4 of his family attended y^e Schools, he Learnt hims: Sang by rule in his family, diverse months togeth^r, & as I observed often Sang by rule in the [~~"family"~~ crossed out] publick, & as I hear, Set y^e tune by rule 3 times in y^e publick one day, wⁿ I was sick.) L^t Kendal Parker, & urged by some to bring it into y^e assembly & Especially by D: Boutel y^e Eldest Deacon, diverse times. ----- Nov^r 8th being Thanksgiving day aft^r y^e publick worship w^s ov^r I proposed it to y^e church & Congregation to Sing by rule, & by w^t I had heard not expecting any opposition, I s^d That if they w^r all [p. 164]willing I would take y^r Silence for Consent, & No man answerd one word, but all w^r Silent & went away." [MA/Wakefield; Cooper and

Minkema 2006, pp. 162-164; this is the writing of Richard Brown (1675-1732), minister at the First Church of Reading (Wakefield) starting in 1711]

1722, up to 8 November: "An extract from first church record:-- [new paragraph, smaller type:] 'Anno 1722. – There having been sad confusions, which I have often observed for several years past (and did often in the Public mention which trouble and pray might be reformed), in our singing; some were above others, some before others, and all was, as I apprehended, for want of going more together, which I urged to no purpose. [p. 141] And understanding that there was a Rule, I looked on it, and conceiving ye knowledge and keeping of the Rule, would prevent this confusion in that part of our public worship, I promoted learning to sing to that end; several public lectures were had to promote it*; then I preached by myself, and 2d by Mr. Wm. Symes and 3d by Mr. Fiske, where much was said to incourage it and in each of which they sang four times exact by the Rule, no man opposing; a school was set up; many, both men and women, learnt; some indeed were not so clear in it, (as by mistake) conceiving it popery; but at length having been incouraged by several, as by all the Deacons, Capt. Poole, Capt. Burnap, Ensign Bancroft, Sergt. Tho. Poole, Lt. Bryant and Lt. Kendall Parker, (most of whom came to the school), that learnt, the first night they begun, (they?) [parentheses + question mark in source] sung with the wisht success, (4 of his family) (Kendall Parker's [no—Lieutenant Bryant's—see original record, above]) attended the school, he learnt himself; sang by Rule in his family diverse months together; and, as I observed, after sung by Rule in the Public, and as I hear set the tune by Rule 3 times in the public, one day when I was sick [←all this is Lt. Bryant, not Kendall Parker]; and (being) urged by some to bring it into the assembly, and especially by Deacon Boutwell, the eldest Deacon several times; on Nov. 8, being thanksgiving day, after the public worship was over, I proposed it to the church and congregation to sing by Rule; and by what I had heard not expecting any opposition, I said that if they were all willing, I would take their silence for consent, and no man answered one word, but all were silent and went away.' / RICHARD BROWN.'" [Brown, 1675-1732, Harvard '97, was 5th minister in Reading, starting in 1711] [MA/Reading (*recte* Wakefield); Eaton 1874, pp. 140-141] [*from the *New England Courant*, March 21 [*sic; recte* 12?]-19, 1722, quoted in *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, vol. IV (1933), p. 340n: "On Thursday last a Lecture was held at Redding, by a Society of that Place for promoting Regular Singing in the Worship of God. The Reverend Mr. Brown preach'd from Psalm 100. 2. *Come before his presence with Singing*. The Singing was perform'd in Three Parts by about Fifty Persons, some of whom came from the Towns adjacent to assist in the Performance. 'Tis said a Singing-Lecture will shortly be held at Newbury [Brown's birthplace + former place of employment]."]

1722?: "[Tufts's *Introduction...*, 1712] was followed by the Rev. Thomas Symmes of Roxbury in 1722, whose book contained an instructive dialogue in the beginning, wooing us with humor into accepting the 'new way'—that is, reading notes to sing music. Some supposed criticisms by the old guard were [indented, smaller type:]

- (1) that it was a new way, an unknown tongue
- (2) that it was not so melodious as the usual way

- (3) that there were so many tunes, one could never learn them
- (4) that the new way made disturbances in churches, grieved good men, exasperated them and caused them to behave disorderly
- (5) that it was popish
- (6) that it would introduce instruments
- (7) that the names of the notes [fa, sol, la, mi] were blasphemous
- (8) that it was needless, the old way being good enough
- (9) that it was only a contrivance to get money
- (10) that it required too much time to learn it, made the young disorderly, and kept them from the proper influence of the family."

[MA/Concord; Billings 1985, p. 174]

1723, March, August, September, December + 1724, February: "The placid waters of Braintree were suddenly disturbed by the innovation of singing from notes in place of the old custom of chanting line by line after a precentor. The leading ministers of Boston approved this new method, furthered the publication of singing books with printed notes, and converted many of the South Parish. But [Reverend Samuel] Niles, unique among the Harvard graduates of his time in this respect, was less liberal than his congregation. He and his adherents feared lest the new method bring in popery. [footnote: "[*New England Courant*], Mar. 18-25, 1723."] Both parties were obdurate: '...every one may see the Hand of the Devil in the new Way of Singing, as they call it. It is impossible to tell what Disturbance it has made in our congregation for more than a year past, and in particular, the Disorder and Confusion it caus'd the last Lord's Day, cannot be easily related. No sooner was the Psalm set, than the bawling Party made such a hideous Noise, that the Minister forbid the Deacon reading any farther, upon which they carried on their Noise without reading, whereupon the Minister solemnly charged them to forbear; but notwithstanding they persisted in their Disturbance (with unaccountable Yells) to the End of the Psalm.' [footnote: "[*New England Courant*], Aug. 12-19, 1723."] **[note: this is "regular singing"!] Church councils were called to sit on the problem: 'Sept. 16. Last Week a Council of Churches was held at the South Part of Brantrey, to regulate the Disorders occasion'd by regular Singing in that Place, Mr. Niles the Minister having suspended Seven or Eight of the Church for persisting in their Singing by Rule, contrary (as he apprehended) to the Result of a former Council; but by this Council the suspended Brethren are restor'd to Communion, their Suspension declar'd unjust, and the Congregation order'd to sing by Rote and by Rule alternately, for the Satisfaction of both Parties.'** [footnote: "[*New England Courant*], Sept. 9-16, 1723."] A few months later the progressives were in such a majority that Mr. Niles abandoned the meeting-house: [new paragraph; smaller type:] Dec. 9. We have advice from the South Part of Brantrey, that on Sunday the First Instant, Mr. Niles the Minister of that Place, perform'd the Duties of the Day at his Dwelling House, among those of his Congregation who are Opposers of Regular singing. The Regular Singers met together at the Meeting house, and sent for Mr. Niles, who refus'd to come unless they would first promise not to sing Regularly; whereupon they concluded to edify themselves by the Assistance of one of the Deacons, who at their Desire pray'd with them, read a Sermon, &c. [footnote:

“[*New England Courant*], Dec. 2-9, 1723.”] [new paragraph, regular type:] This struggle had a result contrary to the minister’s expectations, when twenty of his adherents went over to the Church of England. [footnote: “[*New England Courant*, Feb. 10-17, 1724.”] This unforeseen disaster seems to have induced him to submit to the majority.” [MA/Braintree; Shipton 1933, vol. IV, pp. 488-489]

1723, 15 August: “*South part of Brantrey, Aug. 15. By this Time every one may see the hand of the Devil in the new Way of Singing, as they call it. It is impossible to tell what Disturbance it has made in our Congregation for more than a Year past, and in particular, the Disorder & Confusion it caus’d the last Lord’s Day, cannot be easily related. No sooner was the Psalm set, than the bawling Party made such a hideous Noise, that the Minister forbid the Deacon reading any farther, upon which they carried on their Noise without reading, whereupon the Minister solemnly charged them to forbear; but notwithstanding they persisted in their Disturbance (with unaccountable Yells) to the End of the Psalm.*” [MA/Braintree; *New-England Courant* 1723]

1723, 10-11 September, 1 December (both dates Julian calendar): “Sept 10, 11. 1723. Mr. Henchman and I set out together for South Braintree, where the Elders and Messengers from Nine Churches met, had a publick hearing of the Matters which are occasion of Difference among them. The result of the Council was read in the meeting house, 11th, p. m. and then Mr. [Thomas?] Walter the moderator concluded with [p. 412] Prayer. We got safe home a little after sun-set. Laus Deo. O Lord restore Peace and Truth and Holiness to that divided Flock.¹ (J[oseph] Sewall.) [bottom of p., footnote; square brackets enclosing entire footnote are original:] ¹ [From the *New England Courant*. Then issued in the name of Benjamin Franklin... :--- [new paragraph] ‘BOSTON, Sept. 16. Last week a Council of Churches was held at the South Part of Brantrey, to regulate the Disorders occasioned by Regular Singing in that place, Mr. Nile [*sic*; Rev. Samuel Niles, 1674-1762], the minister having suspended seven or eight of the Church for persisting in their Singing by Rule, contrary (as he apprehended) to the result of a former Council; but by this [present] Council the suspended Brethren are restored to Communion, their Suspension declared unjust, and the Congregation ordered to sing by Rote and by Rule alternately, for the Satisfaction of both parties.’ [new paragraph] ‘BOSTON, Decemb. 9. We have advice from the South Part of Brantrey, that on Sunday the First Instant [Dec. 1, 1723 is a Sunday in the Julian calendar], Mr. Niles the Minister of that Place, performed the Duties of the Day at his Dwelling House, among those of his Congregation who are opposers of Regular Singing. The Regular Singers met together at the Meeting House, and sent for Mr. Niles, who refused to come unless they would first promise not to sing Regularly; whereupon they concluded to edify themselves by the Assistance of one of the Deacons, who at their Desire prayed with them, read a sermon &c.’....]” [MA/South Braintree; Hill 1890 (source filed under MA/Boston), vol. I, pp. 411-412]

“Weston: Octobr: 22 1723. At a meeting of y^e Brethren of y^e Church in this Town. ... [new paragraph] Then also there was Some Discourse about the Manner of Singing

of y^e Psal Tunes, the late endeav^r to reform & amend it, at which some are offend^d. (as Supposing it a new way) tho' it be an endeav^r only to recover y^e Truth & rectify what is Something Swerved fr^o the Ancient Standard. [new paragraph] The Qⁿ. was put, Whether you do approve of Regul^r. Singing, or Singing y^e Psal-Tunes by Rule? They all Answer^d Affirmatively, but one opposing. [new paragraph] An^r. Qⁿ. was put, Whether you think it best that the Singing of Psalms publickly according to Rule, sh^d. now be proceed^d. to, the next Lords Day? They Ans^r^d. Affirm^{ly}. But 2 otherwise, and 2 or 3 wth Some caveat or Conditⁿ. [new paragraph] And then Serg^t Joseph Allen was desir^d by the Breⁿ. to proceed to Set the Psalms publickly according to y^e best of his skill & understanding." [MA/Weston; Peirce 1901, p. 528]

1724, February – see 1723, March, August, September, December

1724, 7 April, 9 June + 1725, 24 January, 19 February, 18 May: "...on the 7th of April, 1724, the church votes 'to delay the admission of regular singing into the church.' Two months later, June 9th, they vote to 'take a year's time to consider and look into the way of singing called regular,' and 'that if any person or persons shall for the future presume to sing contrary to the lead of the chorister appointed by the church to the disturbance of the assembly and the jarring of the melody, he or they shall be looked upon and dealt with as offenders.' Nevertheless, this very thing happened, and the testimony before the court which followed will throw more light upon the musical ways of the past than any words of mine. The parties concerned have been a century in their graves and cannot be harmed. [long quotation:] 'February 19, 1724-5. The testimony of Jonathan Smith is as followeth, viz.: I being at the house of God or place of worship in Farmington the 24th day of January, 1724-5, it being the Sabbath or Lord's Day, and after prayer our chorister, viz.: Deacon John Hart did fit or set a tune to the psalm that was offered to be sung, which tune is commonly called Bella tune, as well he might, it being as proper or more proper to that psalm than any other tune. And soon after said Chorister had set said tune, I heard an unwonted sound, something like hollow- [p. 18] ing or strong, strong singing to my disturbance and the jarring of the melody, which caused me to observe from whence it came, and perceiving that it came from Capt. Joseph Hawley, I took particular notice of his ascents and descents, and according to my best judgment and observation, said Hawley (after his manner of singing) sang the tune commonly called Southwell, *alias* Cambridge Short Tune, and said Hawley continued said disturbance the greatest part of said singing.' [end of quoted passage; regular text, new paragraph:] John Hooker, Esq., promptly fined Capt. Hawley for a breach of the Sabbath, but as the captain was a member of the General Assembly, he brought the following petition to that body, which states with much humor and with learned puns his view of the case. Though printed many times it is worthy of repetition. [long quotation:] 'To the Honorable, the General Assembly at Hartford, the 18th of May 1725: The memorial of Joseph Hawley one of the House of Representatives humbly sheweth: Your memorialist, his father and grandfather and the whole church and people of Farmington have used to worship God by singing psalms to his praise in that mode called the Old Way. However, the other day Jonathan Smith and one Stanley got a book and pretended to sing more regularly and so made great

disturbance in the worship of God; for the people could not follow that mode of singing. At length it was moved to the church whether to admit the new way or no, who agreed to suspend it at least a year. Yet deacon hart the chorister one Sabbath day, in setting the Psalm, attempted to sing Bella tune, and your memorialist being used to the old way as aforesaid did not know *bellum* tune from *pax* tune, and supposed the Deacon had aimed at Cambridge short tune and set it wrong, whereupon your petitioner raised his voice in the said short tune and the people followed him, except the said Smith and Stanly [*sic*] and the few who sang aloud in Bella tune, and so there was an unhappy discord in the singing as there has often been since the new singers set up, and the blame was all imputed to your poor petitioner, and John Hooker, Esq., [p. 19] Assistant, sent for him and fined him the 19th of February last for breach of the Sabbath, and so your poor petitioner is laid under a heavy scandal and reproach and rendered vile and profane for what he did in the fear of God and in the mode he had been well educated in and was then the settled manner of singing by the agreement of the church.' [end of quoted passage; regular type, new paragraph:] The memorial continues at great length but if all the memorials written by Capt. Hawley during the contention and still preserved were printed, they would make quite a good-sized book." [CT/Farmington; Gay 1891, pp. 17-19]

1724, April, June + 1725, 24 January + 1727 + 1731 + 1737 + 1750: "In 1724 the congregation became embroiled in a controversy over the manner in which psalms should be sung: part of the membership adhered to the old way, and part preferred what was called 'regular' singing, or singing by rule. Although the Puritan settlers of New England arrived with psalm-books that bore musical notations, they gradually wore out and were replaced with books printed in Boston without notes. [new paragraph] Over the course of time, knowledge of even the most frequently used tunes declined to the point where singing was, in the words of Julius Gay, 'desperately bad.' When Psalms were sung in the two Sabbath day services, the opening line was sounded by one of the deacons or by someone with a good ear; the assembly joined until the first phrase was completed. The leader then turned to the second line, which was picked up by the congregation, and so forth, until the psalm was completed. The result was more noisy than melodious. [new paragraph] A movement for reform which urged the adoption of regular [p. 117] singing began around 1720 and picked up support in Farmington. In April 1724 the church voted 'to delay the admission of regular singing into the church,' and in June a decision was made to take up the issue during the next year. It was also voted that if any person attempted to sing 'contrary to the lead of the chorister appointed by the church to the disturbance of the assembly and the jarring of the melody, he or they shall be looked upon and dealt with as offenders.' [new paragraph] Yet this is precisely what occurred. On January 24, 1724 [*sic; recte* 1725], Deacon John Hart, an advocate of the new way, set the psalm to what was called the Bella tune. He was interrupted by Capt. Joseph Hawley who, in a strong voice, 'sang the tune commonly called Southwell, alias Cambridge Short Tune.' After he was fined for disturbing the peace, Captain Hawley appealed to the General Assembly, pointing out that 'his father and grandfather and the whole church and people of Farmington have used to

worship God by singing psalms to his praise in that mode called the old way.’ Hawley blamed Jonathan Smith and another man for introducing a new singing book and for convincing Deacon Hart to set a new tune for the psalm. Captain Hawley, while admitting that he did not know ‘a *bellum* tune form a *pax* tune,’ had assumed that the chorister set the tune wrong, which provoked him to attempt to lead the congregation himself when the confusion arose. [new paragraph] The controversy dragged on. In 1727 the Ecclesiastical Society declared its great dislike of the new way of singing; and in 1731 a council of neighboring ministers attempted to arbitrate the quarrel. The church in 1737 concluded that the decision of the council was too difficult to understand and voted to drop the matter. The church eased its opposition to the new way in 1750, when the society voted to ‘introduce Mr. Watts’ Version of the Psalms.” [CT/Farmington; Bickford 1982, pp. 116-117]

1724, 7 April, 9 May + 1727, March + 1757 + 1762: “During his [Samuel Whitman’s] ministry, a serious controversy occurred in regard to the singing, which is explained in part by the following votes: [long quotation:] ‘April 7, 1724. It was proposed whether they should continue the present way of singing or would admit of regular singing. May 9, 1724, voted, to take a year’s time to consider whether regular singing should be tried or not. [new paragraph:] Voted, that if any person or persons shall presume to sing contrary to the lead of the Quoirister appointed by the church to the disturbance of the assembly, and the jarring of their melody, he or they shall be looked upon and dealt with as offenders. [new paragraph:] March 1726-7. Voted, that we do declare our full satisfaction with the former way of singing psalms in this society, and do earnestly desire to continue therein.’ [end of quoted passage; regular text, new paragraph:] But though so positive then in their adherence to the ‘old ways,’ thirty years later the tables were turned, and in 1757, the society voted and agreed that they would introduce Dr. Watts’ version of the psalms, to be sung on the Sabbath, and at other solemn meetings. At the same time Elijah Cowles was requested ‘to tune the psalm,’ and for that purpose was assigned a seat in the fifth pew. In 1762, Mr. Fisher Gay was appointed to assist Mr. Cowles ‘in setting the psalm,’ and Stephen Dorchester was chosen ‘to assist the chorister in reading the psalms.” [CT/Farmington; Camp 1889, p. 87]

“About the year 1725 there was a considerable agitation in the churches in regard to the methods of singing. The old method of ‘lining out’ hymns was discarded by some, and it was proposed to give to the art of singing more of expression [!]. On this subject, Mr. Dwight [Rev. Josiah Dwight; see passage from Bowen 1926, above] preached a sermon, which was afterward printed, and with a title-page worded as follows: ‘An Essay to Silence the *Outcry* that has been made in some places against *Regular Singing* in A Sermon Preach’d at Framingham. ... 1725.’ The text was from Acts xvii., 6—“These that have turned the world upside down are come here also.’ [new paragraph] Mr. Dwight began his sermon with a consideration of how new things may be misunderstood, and how they may be thought to be turning the world upside down, when, in reality, their effect is wholly good. He then spoke of singing as a natural gift, and of the pleasure it gives when rightly used. To him, it was a good gift of the Father, to be cultivated and enjoyed. Then he proceeded to answer the

objec- [p. 35] tions raised against the proposed reform. He said that the elderly should give up the old way, if the new one elevates the spirit of worship. To those who said that the rejection of the old way would be a condemnation of the fathers, he said: 'And I see not but some congregations, and sundry in many more, are to be blamed for their ignorance and heedlessness about the tunes, that may be can't distinguish one tune from another when sung, and slide out of one tune into another, and do not mind it, or sing the lines of several tunes for one, when a little care and study would have saved the disorder. Therefore I would propose, that there might be many advantages attending a practice which I could wish all our congregations were come into, viz., to name the tune together with the psalm, and all the skillful of the congregation be sure to fall in with the first note and syllable; not is this a bare proposal without experiment, for some of us have been some time in proof hereof, and see its expediency.' He said that the new way is singing in the spirit as much as the old way was, that the disturbance of regular singing was only incidental, that it is approved by Scripture as much as the old way, and that it is a help in promoting piety and devotion." [CT/Woodstock + MA/Framingham; Cooke 1887, pp. 34-35]

"In 1725 Mr. Dwight [Rev. Josiah Dwight (1670-1748), minister at Woodstock, Conn., 1690-1726; minister at Dedham, Mass., 1735-1743] preached a sermon on Church Singing which was repeated in Framingham and published [*An Essay to Silence the Outcry that has been made in some places against Regular Singing*, Boston: for John Eliot, 1725], in which he censured sliding from one tune to another while singing, or singing the same line in different tunes." [CT/Woodstock + MA/Framingham; Bowen 1926, p. 78]

1725 – see 1724

1725, 24 January, 19 February, 18 May – see 1724, 7 April, 9 June

1725, 18 May: "HAWLEY'S MEMORIAL. ... [new paragraph] To the Honourable y^e General Assembly at hartford y^e 18th of may 1725. [new paragraph] the memorial of Joseph Hawley one of y^e house of Representatives humbly sheweth your Memorialist his father and Grandfather & y^e whole Church & people of farmingtown have used to worship God by singing psalms to his praise In y^t mode called y^e Old way. [p. 312] [new paragraph] however t'other Day Jonathan Smith & one Stanly Got a book & pretended to sing more regularly & so made Great disturbance In y^e worship of God for y^e people could not follow y^e mode of singing. at Length t'was moved to y^e church whither to admit y^e new way or no, who agreed to suspend it at least for a year. [new paragraph] yet Deacon hart y^e Chorister one Sabbath day In setting y^e psalm attempted to sing Bella tune—and yo^r memorialist being used to y^e old way as aforesd did not know *bellum* tune from *pax* tune, and supposed y^e deacon had aimed at Cambridge short tune, and set it wrong, whereupon y^e petitioner Raised his Voice in y^e s^d short tune & y^e people followed him, except y^e s^d Smith & Stanly, & y^e few who sang allowd In bella tune; & so there was an unhappy Discord in y^e Singing, as there has often bin since y^e new singers set up, and y^e Blame was all

Imputed to yo^r poor petition[er] [←square brackets in source], and Jn^o Hooker, Esq^r assistant, sent for him, & fined him y^e 19th of febr^y Last for breach of Sabbath, and so yo^r poor petition^r is Layed under a very heavie Scandal & Reproch & Rendered vile & prophane for what he did in y^e fear of God, & in y^e mode he had bin well educated in and was then y^e settled manner of Singing by y^e agreem^t of y^e Church. [new paragraph] Now yo^r Petition^r thinks y^e Judgem^t is erroneous, first, because y^e fact if as wicked as m^r hooker supposd Comes under y^e head of disturbing God's worship, & not y^e statute of prophaning y^e Sabbath: secondly, because no member of a Lawfull Church Society can be punished for worshipping God In y^e modes & formes, agreed upon, & fixed by y^e Society. thirdly because tis errors, when y^e Civill authority sodenly Interpose between parties y^t differ about modes of worship, & force one party to Submitt to y^e other, till all milder methods have bin used to Convince mens Consciences. fourthly because tis error to make a Gent of yo^r petition^r Carracter a Scandalous offender upon record, for nothing but a present mistake at most, when no moral evil is Intended. [new paragraph] Wherefore yo^r poor petitioner [*sic* in original?] prays you to set aside y^e s^d Jud[gement], or by what means yo^r hon^{rs} please, to save you^r poor petition^r from y^e Imputation of y^e heinous Crime Laid to him, & yo^r poor petion^r [*sic* in original?] as In duty &c shall ever pray. / Joseph Hauly." [CT/Farmington; Hawley/NEHGR 1856, pp. 311-12]

1726, March + 1769, May + 1770, March + 1773 + 1779, 5 August: "A singular controversy in relation to the form of conducting the musical portion of public worship in our churches, growing out of attachment to ancient customs and resistance of innovations, arose at an early period. In its progress, it converted the harmony of christians in the house of prayer into discord, and though trifling in its origin, became of so much importance, as to require the frequent directory interference of town meetings, and only arrived at its conclusion when the great revolutionary struggle swallowed up all minor objects. [new paragraph] Anciently, those who joined in singing the devotional poetry of religious exercises, were dispersed through the congregation, having no place assigned them as a distinct body, and no privileges separate from their fellow worshippers. After the clergyman had read the whole psalm, he repeated the first line, which was sung by those who were able to aid in the pious melody: the eldest deacon then pronounced the next line, which was sung in similar manner, and [p. 178] the exercises of singing and reading went on alternately. When the advantages of education were less generally diffused than at present, the custom was established, to avoid the embarrassment resulting from the ignorance of those who were more skilful in giving sound to notes than deciphering letters. The barbarous effect produced by each individual repeating the words to such tune as was agreeable to his own taste, became apparent. The first attempt at the reformation of this 'usual way,' as it was termed, was made March, 1726, when a meeting of the inhabitants was called, for the purpose of considering 'in which way the congregation shall sing in future, in public, whether in the ruleable way, or in the usual way,' and the former was adopted, though not without strong opposition at the time and great discontent after. [footnote: "Its execution was defeated by the resistance of the deacons, who, on the ensuing Lord's day, read line by line as usual, without regard to the vote.

Respectful regard to the feelings of these venerable men prevented the contemplated change.”] Ineffectual application having been made to the selectmen, to convene the people, for the purpose of again discussing the subject, a warrant was procured from John Minzies, Esq. of Leicester, calling a meeting, ‘to see if the town will reconsider their vote concerning singing, it being of an ecclesiastic nature, which ought not to stand on our town records:’ but the article was dismissed. [new paragraph] The next step was, the attempt to procure the aid of some suitable person to lead and direct in the performances. It was voted, May, 1769, ‘that the elder’s seat be used for some persons to lead the congregation in singing.’ The adherents of old usage possessed sufficient influence to negative a proposition for raising a committee to invite a qualified individual to perform this office. In March, 1770, ‘it was voted, that Messrs. James McFarland, Jonathan Stone [Joseph Stone’s father, 44 in March 1770?], and Ebenezer Flagg, sit in the elder’s seat to lead, and on a motion made and seconded, voted unanimously, that Mr. William Swan [Timothy Swan’s father, 54 in March 1770?] sit in the same seat, to assist the aforesaid gentlemen in singing.’ It remained, to gather the musicians to one choir, where their talents in psalmody could be better exerted than in their dispersion, and in 1773, ‘the two hind body seats, on the men’s side, on the lower floor of the meeting house,’ were assigned to those who sat together and conducted singing on the Lord’s day. [new paragraph] The final blow was struck on the old system, by the resolution of the town, Aug[.] 5, 1779. ‘Voted, That the singers sit in the front seats in the front gallery, and those gentlemen who have heretofore sat in the front seats in said gallery, have a right to sit in the front [p. 179] seat and second seat below, and that said singers have said seats appropriated to said use. Voted, That said singers be requested to take said seats and carry on singing in public worship. Voted, That the mode of singing in the congregation here, be without reading the psalms, line by line, to be sung.’ [new paragraph] The sabbath succeeding the adoption of these votes, after the hymn had been read by the minister, the aged and venerable Deacon [Jacob] Chamberlain, unwilling to desert the custom of his fathers, rose, and read the first line according to his usual practice. The singers, prepared to carry the alteration into effect, proceeded, without pausing at its conclusion: the white haired officer of the church, with the full power of his voice, read on, until the louder notes of the collected body overpowered the attempt to resist the progress of improvement, and the deacon, deeply mortified at the triumph of musical reformation, seized his hat, and retired from the meeting house, in tears. His conduct was censured by the church, and he was, for a time, deprived of its communion, for absenting himself from the public services of the sabbath. [new paragraph] The mode of reading prevailed in Boston, and throughout New England, until a few years prior to the last mentioned date [i.e., into the mid-1770s], and in some places beyond it. A relic of the old custom probably still survives, in the repetition of the first line of the hymn by clergymen of the present day.” [MA/Worcester; Lincoln 1837, pp. 177-179]

1726, 12, 28 June: “June 12 · 1726 y^e Psalm being set y^e regular way Some disorderly persons br[o?]ke in and Sang y^e old way or rather made a confused noise to y^e great disturbance of y^e worship of God w^{ch} occasion[e]d a Chh meeting June 28 · 1726 and

the[n? re?] It was agreed by y^e Brēē [Brethren?] unanimously to desire y^e Civil authority [to?] Exert y^r [←their] power for y^e de[t?]ecting and bearing due testimony against Such Iniquity. att y^e Same time It was conclud[ed] y^t [←that] we Sing as formerly for y^e present y^t we may give opportunity for persons to Inform y^mselves as to y^e regular way [horizontal line, separating entries] att y^e same time It was proposed and Sundry of y^e Bre[thr]e[n?] being asked did Express their willingness (after Some time) to sing y^e tunes as they are placed In our Psalm books viz Jos Jenkins Benj marston Roger goodspeed [on probable original copy of the church records, on leaf inserted after this one, the names of Elkanah Hamlin + Benj[amin] Crocker appear here] Jabez Goodspeed and none objected or not above one or two" [MA/Barnstable; Barnstable 1924, original p. 63]

1726, 16 September: "Att a Chh meeting Sept 16 · 1725 [←looks like a 5, but clearly "1726" on probable original copy of the church records, on leaf inserted after this one] Concerning Singing It was then agreed to and Concluded y^t y^e regular way Should be Sung for y^e present" [MA/Barnstable; Barnstable 1924, original p. 63]

1727, March – see 1724, 7 April 9 May

1727, March: "Music has been the subject of frequent discussion, and has been a fruitful occasion for temporary troubles. In March, 1726-7, was passed the following minute: 'This meeting taking into consideration the unhappy controversy that hath been among us respecting singing of Psalms in our public assemblies upon the Sabbath, and forasmuch as the church in this place hath several times in their meetings manifested their dislike of singing psalms according to the method not long since endeavored to be introduced among us being the same way of singing of psalms which is recommended by the reverend ministers of Boston, with other ministers to the number in all of twenty or thereabouts; therefore that the controversy may be ended, and peace gained for this society, this meeting by their major vote do declare their full satisfaction with the former way of singing of psalms in this society and do earnestly desire to continue therein, and do with the church manifest their dislike of singing according to the said method endeavored to be introduced aforesaid.'" [CT/Farmington; Porter 1873, p. 47]

1727, 17 March: "...the Ecclesiastical Society on the 17th of March, 1726-7, expressed their great dislike of the 'way of singing of Psalms which is recommended by the Reverend Ministers of Boston with other ministers to the number of twenty or thereabouts.'" [CT/Farmington; Gay 1891, p. 19]

1727, June: "That he [Rev. Samuel Woodbridge] was a believer in good music is evidenced by the fact that his uncle, Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, gave a singing lecture here in June, 1727. This lecture was printed, and as a glimpse of the olden time let me quote a few sentences from the preface: 'The following discourse was delivered at a lecture for the encouragement of Regular Singing, a comely and commendable practice; which for want of care in preserving, and skilled instructors to revive, has languished in the country till it is in a manner Lost and Dead; yea it

has been so Long Dead, as with some it Stinketh, who judge it a great crime to Recover it againe.' The psalm books in use then in this country had no tunes in them and the tunes themselves had been forgotten. The psalm was lined out and the singing conducted by a leader. Many congregations used only four or five tunes, and often tunes called by the same name were wholly dissimilar in congregations but a few miles apart, which is not strange when it is considered that no notes had been used for nearly a century and the tunes were such as the leader's memory of tradition or inventive skill could furnish. The singing was slow and unmelodious and the Woodbridges [Timothy and his nephew Samuel, minister at the East Hartford First Congregational Church] were very anxious for a return to musical service. The proposed change was fiercely resisted everywhere. Churches were almost rent asunder by the attempt." [CT/East Hartford; East Hartford 1902, p. 42]

1727, 6 June: "In 1727, the pastor of this Hartford Church [the First Church], Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, preached a 'Singing Lecture' at East Hartford, in the pulpit of his nephew, Rev. Samuel Woodbridge. [footnote:] The lecture was delivered in accordance with the action of the North Association of the County of Hartford, at Windsor, June 6, 1727: 'This Association taking into Consideration the Case of Regular Singing are fully of Opinion that persons may well Improve their Time in taking pains to be Instructed in it as a means to bring persons Into the Love of that Excellent Improvement of their minds, and as a proper means to Introduce Singing of Psalms in Private Houses which thro want of Skill is too much neglected. And further we Judge this way of Introducing this way of Singing into our Congregations will much promote the Decency of our publick worshipping of our redeemer in Singing his Psalms; & by the attaining of Vnderstanding In Singing many persons that Sit Silent at that part of worship will be able to open their mouths to the praise of God and Spiritual Edification of others...' [CT/Windsor; Walker 1884, p. 226 + n]

1727, 28 June: "'Another Objection [to Regular Singing] is that it is Endeavoured to be introduced only by *Young Men*...' [CT/Hartford; Rev. Timothy Woodbridge in his singing lecture *The Duty of God's Professing People, in Glorifying their Heavenly Father*, preached at East Hartford on 28 June 1727; quoted in Walker 1884, p. 227]

1727, 6 December-1728, 6 June: "Sundry both of Chh and [other?] Congregation being still uneasy wth y^e Singing [~~desired?~~] y^t Came to the Pastors house In a body and desired y^t we would Sing In y^e old way att Least for Some time whereupon we had a meeting Dec 6 · 1727 and then voted [new line] 1) y^t we would Sing In y^e publick for half a year one day In y^e method Calld ["?"] y^e old way y^e other In y^e regular [new line] 2) att y^e End of y^e half year If we cant agree upon Some method wth Such unanimity as may give a fair prospect of Its being Eventually Comfortable we will refer y^e matter to y^e hearing of a Council and Sit down quiet with their determination [new line] During this half year wh[ile?] we Sang In y^e old way y^e Singing was verry broken and Confused [new line] Bro: [B?] Bodfish Setting y^e Psalm [new line] att y^e End of y^e half year viz June 6 · 1728 we had a meeting and then voted y^t we will Sing y^e regular way for y^e present i e till Such time as y^e Chh order otherwise Reserving this Liberty to such as dissent viz y^t If one quarter-part

Either of Chh o[r?] precinct are desireous of a Council to determin[e] y^e matter and will s[e?]t down satisfied ther[e]with the Chh will then Comply to Call a Council whose advice shall be decisive" [MA/Barnstable; Barnstable 1924, original p. 63]

1728, 9 September: "We get an inkling of the songs of the sanctuary from the following [written by Rev. Timothy Edwards]: '1728 Sept 9. I p^d Bro. John Edwards a 3^{sh} Bill and had of him Mr Chaunceys Book of Regular singing [Nathaniel Chauncey, *Regular Singing Defended*, New London, Conn., 1728] w^{ch} as I remember he told me was 16d.'" [CT/Windsor; Stoughton 1883, p. 96]

n.d. (before 1730) + 1730, 16 April + 1731, 28 October: "The musical exercises in public worship were conducted in a manner similar to the practice of the first church, already described [see below: n.d. (before 1764) + 1764 + 1774 + 1780 + 1780 or soon after]. The deacon 'lined' the psalm, and 'set the tune,' in which the congregation joined. The first attempt to improve this method was by the introduction of music-books, and probably the formation of a choir. This movement produced a strong sensation. The deacon felt that his prerogative was usurped, the congregation were disturbed by the introduction of tunes with which they were unacquainted, and by many worthy people it was viewed as a dangerous innovation. The uneasiness thus created, led to a church meeting in 1730, to devise a plan for the restoration of harmony. The importance the subject assumed may be best estimated by the following record of proceedings. [new paragraph] 'Whereas there has been some difference of opinion in some of the members of this church, relating to the way or method of our psalmody, some thinking that the way or method of singing the psalm tunes which has heretofore been in common use among us, should still be retained by us; but others, that the way or method of singing the tunes by note, as has been of late years introduced into many other churches and congregations in the land, should be promoted and established in this society: for the accommodation of which affair the church is now met. And having first considered, that it is our indispensable duty to harmonize in the way or method of our singing the praises of God, and to use our utmost endeavors to prevent all manner of discord therein, so that we may not only with one mind, but also with [p. 265] one mouth, glorifie God according to that precept, Rom. xv. 6. It was then voted, that considering our present circumstances, the church does judge it to be most conducive to the peace of this people to sing the psalm tunes in the way and method which has heretofore been in common use among us, and accordingly does determine yet to sing them in that way and method.' [new paragraph] At a subsequent meeting this vote was reconsidered, and 'the church having first considered several inconveniences which had arisen from said vote of April 16th, 1730, which were likely to continue and increase, if the said vote should be strictly adhered to for the future, then agreed and voted, That this church does determine to sing the psalm tunes regularly by note, once upon every Lord's day, and once upon fast days, viz. at the first time of singing in the afternoon, and once upon every thanksgiving day also. Voted likewise at the same meeting, That Mr. Joseph Cresey be desired to set the tune, or lead the song, at all such times as the church has agreed to sing regularly by note. Moreover, seeing that an inconvenience and

disorder hath happened by the introduction of a psalm tune which the people of this church and congregation are mostly unacquainted with: wherefore it was agreed and voted, that no psalm tune which has not been in common use among us, shall be speedily introduced, set or sung in this congregation, excepting the tune called St. Marie's or Hackney, and the tune called Commandment tune.' This course of compromise was continued little more than a year, until Oct. 28, 1731, when at a church meeting it was 'voted that they would for the future time, sing (at all times of [p. 266] singing in the public worship) the psalm tunes by rule, according to the notes pricked in our psalm books.' A relative of Mr. Cresey above mentioned, was for many years an efficient leader of the choir." [MA/Beverly (2nd Parish); Stone 1843, pp. 264-266]

1730, 16 April – see n.d. (before 1730)

1730, 7 September + 1731, February: "In Westborough, as in some other places, it was the pastor [Rev. Ebenezer Parkman (1703-1782), Westborough's first minister from 1724 to his death] who was the daring innovator. The earliest murmurs of the strife have died away without record, but on the 7th of September, 1730, the town took the matter up, as indicated in the following...record:-- [new paragraph, smaller type:] 'Pursuant to an order from the selectmen, the town met. ... [p. 116] ... 2ly, uote to see whether or no the town will sing the usual way, and the uote passed in the Affirmative.' [new paragraph, regular text:] In the February following, a church meeting was held in relation to the matter, which had grown to serious dimensions. ... Opportunity was given for complaints, whereupon Thomas Forbush intimated, with an outspoken boldness that shows how heated the public mind had become, that the trouble was occasioned by the pastor's not falling in with the vote of the town. This was speaking out in meeting, and brought the minister to his feet without more ado. The town, he said, had not proceeded according to church rule or civil law or his own counsel; nor yet had he opposed them, nor disturbed them in their singing, but had only appointed the person to read (*i. e.*, 'line out') the psalm and set the tune, and to say what tune should be sung. He proceeded to charge that the town meeting on an [p. 117] article of divine worship was irregular, if not positively sinful, and any church members who had a hand in it were then and there rebuked. [original church records of these proceedings appear below, under 1731, 18 February] [new paragraph] So the parson stood at bay, defying the whole town. What happened thereupon? Did the people rise in their wrath and send him adrift, as they might in these degenerate days? The minister of that time held his office by no such flimsy tenure. He simply proceeded to ask them—not as one who sought their suffrages, but rather as though they might be thankful that they got no more severe handling—if there was still any uneasiness; and no ne responding, he treated them to a brief dissertation on love and unity, and dropped the matter. The victory was plainly his [except that Parkman was against the old way of singing, and the town had voted to keep singing that way—"the usual way"—and evidently that decision held; or did Parkman nullify the town vote by his comments, necessitating a move to regular singing?], by virtue of the divinity that did hedge about a minister in those days; and there is no farther disturbance recorded on that ground for forty

years afterward. It was the minister against the town, and the minister won, not so much by argument—though the argument was on his side—as by authority. That was the power of the early New England clergy; and it was fortunate for the people when, as in Mr. Parkman's case, the minister was disposed to use his power in the interest of popular progress." [So, what's the story here? Did Parkman just put Thomas Forbush in his place, and then the Town continued to sing the "usual way"? Or did Parkman's pointing out that the Town "had not proceeded according to church rule or civil law or his own counsel" somehow nullify their vote to sing the usual way, and necessitate a change to regular singing? Note that the church records (below) end, "It was...signified to the Church [by Parkman, apparently] that the...meeting of the Town upon that article of divine worship [i.e., whether or not to continue singing the "old way"] being irregular if not...sinful, all...Church members as had...an hand in it were reproofworthy, and were thereby reprov'd for it"; that seems like a pretty decisive blow to the Town's vote. And on p. 156 of this source (Deforest 1891), there is this: "The first [step in the history of Westborough's "musical contest"] was taken forty years before [1771], and has been already mentioned. That was the adoption of the use of a greater variety of tunes, and of written music;"—certainly ingredients of "regular singing"—"since that time the psalm had been read, or 'lined out,' one line at a time, and the people had sung as best they could, but without much regard to time or melody"—and here are some key ingredients of the "old" or "usual" way of singing. So it seems that from 1731 to 1771, Westborough was suspended somewhere between the "old way" and regular singing. However, further evidence that Parkman effected a substantial change in Westborough's singing in 1731 comes from Parkman's diary, 25 July 1738, recording that on the 13th he'd visited a Westborough man, Samuel Fay, who had "for Several Years kept himself from seeing me in the pulpit" and whose "chief objections and offence against me were what arose from my bringing in new Singing and my wearing a Wigg." [MA/Westborough; Deforest 1891, pp. 115-117, 156 + Parkman/Walett 1974, p. 49]

1731, February – see 1730, 7 September

1731, 18 February: "Liberty being given to any Br.^r of y^e Chh, und.^r any Dissatisfaction to offer his Sentim.^{ts} (observing Order)[,] B.^r Tho.^s Forbush Spake of y^e Disquietm^{ts} by y^e [←crossed out] Singing; & intimated y.^t he thôt y.^y [←they] were Chiefly Occasion'd now by y^e Pastors not falling in w.th y^e Town in what they had done at the [←?] Town Meeting upon that Article—To which y^e Pastor reply'd that Inasmuch as y^e Town had proceeding [*sic*] in no wise according to Church Rule or Civil Law, & contrary to his Counsel to y.^m touching y.^[ier?] [←their] Determining which Way (as it^{'s} term.^d) to sing, [←comma?] & had not, however, orderly inform'd him of their Votes or managem.^t yr.upon [←thereupon], but yet being und.^r infirmity & indispositions ["of"?] body he had not oppos'd y.^m nor disturb'd y.^m in singing [ac?]cording to y^{eir} own [p. 26] Choice ["Pleasure" crossed out] nor interpos[']d in y^e matter of determi[ni]ng y^e Way, but had only (in his own Office) appointed y^e Person to Read & set y^e Psalm & y^e Tune y.^t Should be Sung; upon all those considerations, y.^t Apprehension of M.^r Forbus[h], was to be thought

Groundless. It was w.thal Signify.^d to y^e Chh y.^t y^e aboves.^d Meeting of y^e Town upon y.^t Article of y^e Divine worship being irregular, (if not to be punctually declar.^d sinfull) all such Chh. Members as had ["directly"?] an hand in it were reproofworthy (& were y^rby [←thereby] reprov.^d for it)" [MA/Westborough; Westborough Church Records, pp. 25-26]

1731, 28 October – see n.d. (before 1730)

1732 (see quote immediately below; the following quote is continued from SINGING SCHOOLS, SINGING MASTERS): "Having learned to sing, the singers naturally wished to give the congregation the benefit of their new acquisitions. This disturbed some old habits, and a town meeting was convened to hear the complaints of those who could not endure 'the singing in the new [p. 404] way,' as they termed it. The matter could not be settled; dispute arose, and the meeting adjourned. Another meeting was called, and after much debate the matter was compromised by voting, 'That this Society Desire and agree to Sing in y^e public assembly on y^e Saboth half y^e time in y^e new and half in y^e old way for six Saboths; and after that wholly in y^e new way.'" [CT/Wallingford; Davis 1870, pp. 403-404]

1732, 8 February: "SINGING, THE NEW WAY AND THE OLD WAY.—The records of Wallingford, Conn., have preserved certain proceedings by 'y^e east wd [←eastward? East Wallingford?] Society' in regard to singing.... [new paragraph] Feb. 8, 1732.—'Voted by the Society that they are willing to comply with what the church did voat concerning singing the new way as it is called.' But the clerk entered the names of fourteen 'decentors.' Under the same date—'Voated that this society Desirs & agrees to sing in y^e publick assembly on y^e Sabath, half y^e time in y^e new & half in y^e old way, for six Sabbath[s]; & after that wholly in y^e new way.' [new paragraph] What transition is here referred to? In Dr. Linsley's discourse on the one hundred and fifth anniversary of the Second Congregational Church in Greenwich, Conn., there is dated a noteworthy revolution in the mode of singing in that church, viz., November, 1764: 'Voted to sing in the congregation without reading line by line.'" [CT/Wallingford, CT/Greenwich; Singing/NEHGR 1888, p. 199]

n.d. (ca. 1732-"before the days of the Revolution"): "The singing of the psalms was without instrumental accompaniment, and books being few, one of the deacons or a chorister pitched the tune and read the hymn, line by line, before singing. ... As neither deacon nor congregation knew any other tunes, York, Hackney, Windsor and St. Mary's did duty in regular rotation. There is a tradition that one old worthy in the exercise of his inalienable right of private judgment, and being too deaf to hear the chorister, always sang York in his high-pitched voice, whatever tune his fellow worshipers were laboring upon. Lining or 'deaconing' the hymns was very generally discontinued before the days of the Revolution, though in spite of strenuous opposition, and a chorister with a long, wooden pitch-pipe became the official 'psalm-setter.'" [MA/Harvard; Nourse 1894, p. 107]

1733, February, July, December: "In Glastenbury [*sic*], the matter [of how the congregation should sing] was quietly and easily disposed of by a vote of the town in February, 1733, directing the congregation in the first society, to sing one-half the day by 'note,' and the other half by 'rule,' and to begin after the next election. / This vote was not entirely satisfactory to the society itself, and accordingly in July following, at a meeting called for the purpose, it was,-- / '*Voted*, that the regular or new way of singing be deferred, and not be sung in the Congregation in this Society on the Sabbath days, until the meeting of this Society in December next, and that, in the mean time this Society, or as many of the inhabitants thereof as can conveniently attend it, do meet once a month at the place of public worship on the second Wednesday in each month, at two of the clock in the afternoon, to learn the said way of singing;--and that there be also three private meetings set up for said singing once a week or fortnight...' / [p. 78] ...At the December meeting of the Society, such progress had been made in learning to sing by rule, that it was resolved to commence on the first Lecture day, that Mr. Woodbridge could preach a sermon appropriate for the occasion." [CT/Glastonbury; Chapin 1853, pp. 77-78]

1733, 20 June, December: "With the coming [in 1732] of [Rev.] Mr. [Daniel] Wadsworth [to the First Church of Christ in Hartford], however, enthusiasm [p. 76] enough was enkindled to induce the Society on the 20th of June, 1733, to take this cautious and tentative action: '*Voted and agreed*, that after the expiration of three months, singing by Rule shall be admitted to be practiced in the congregation of this Society, and until their Annual Meeting in December next; & that then a Vote be Taken whether the Society will further proceed in that way or otherwise.' The two leaders of the opposing methods were then designated 'to take on them the care of setting the Psalm' for the periods specified; 'Mr. William Goodwin as usuall,' and 'Mr. Joseph Gilbert, jr., after the Expiration of the three months.' Tried thus prudently for four [i.e., six?] months, the Society saw its way in December to vote 'that singing by Rule be admitted and practiced in the congregation of this Society,' and Mr. Gilbert was empowered 'to sett the psalm.'" [CT/Hartford; Hartford 1883, pp. 75-76]

1733, 20 June, December: "Formerly the Psalm was 'set' by an appointee of the society, under whose leadership the congregation joined, but after a while, as a specialty, Psalmody was regarded as a serious matter, and this congregation had its trials with it. Nevertheless, in 1733, June 20th, at a special meeting, legally warned, His Honor the Governor in the chair, it was cautiously voted 'that this society are willing and consent [Walker 1884: "Content"] that such of them as encline to learn to sing by rule should apply themselves in the best manner they can to gain the knowledge thereof....that after the expiration of three months, singing by rule shall be admitted to be practiced in the congregation of this society in their public worship on the Lord's Day, and until their Annual Meeting in December next, and then that a vote be taken whether the society will further proceed in that way or otherwise, and as the major vote shall be, so peaceably to practice.' Mr. Wm. Goodwin was requested for the three months to continue setting the [p. 159] Psalms (old style), as Mr. Maynard Day had done, and during the trial of the new experiment Mr. Jos. Gilbert, Jr., would perform that service. It succeeded, was voted into order

in December, and Mr. Gilbert continued with the responsibility of setting the Psalms (new style).” [CT/Hartford; Hartford 1883, pp. 158-59; also in Walker 1884, pp. 228-29]

n.d. (mid-1700s?): “Many were the discussions as to whether they should sing psalms in the ‘old’ or ‘regular’ way. After two years, the ‘regular’ policy carried the day. Men were chosen to tune the psalms.” [MA/Marshfield; Marshfield 1940, p. 94]

1734, 19 March: “Sister Tabitha Fay’s Case was laid before the Chh’s Consideration[,] She having been absent from Com.ⁿ [←Communion] for a Year or Two or More—being with held by her husband, Mr Sam^l Fay, on acc.^t of our Singing: It was also referr.^d to [Cong?] [as in “Congregation”] whether y^e Chh ought not to fulfill y.^{eir} Duty towards y^e said Sam.^l Fay & Dauter Tabitha, Member[s?] of y^e Chh in Marlborô, & tho residing with us yet abstaining year after year from Com.ⁿ with us. The Chh. Voted y^t a Com.^{tee} from y^e Chh Sh.^d [p. 34] be Sent to the Said Family to Labour w.th y.^m for a Composition, especially to [“express”?] y^e Watch and Care of y^e Chh over our Sister M.^{rs} Fay.... [MA/Westborough; Westborough Church Records, pp. 33-34]

1734, 19 December: “In these early days prevailed a custom, which has long since become obsolete in the Congregational churches, though it is still practiced in the congregations of some bodies of professing Christians at the present day. The custom alluded to is the mode of singing, which was done in this manner. A person was appointed to act as chorister, or ‘to set the psalm,’ who selected and ‘pitched’ the tunes; then a line or two was read off, when the whole congregation joined in singing them, and thus proceeding alternately to read and sing the lines, in this manner, till the whole psalm had been sung. It seems, that soon after the formation of this society, it had been discussed whether the church would adopt the new mode of having the singing conducted by a choir for that purpose, or carry it on by the congregation as before. The action taken by the society on this occasion is somewhat interesting, and is here introduced: [new paragraph, smaller type:] ‘At a gen^l Church meeting December 19th 1734, appointed in order to agree upon the mode of Singing the praises of God in publick—and y^e appointment of a Chorister, Voted and agreed, that we will continue to Sing the praises of God in the public worship on the Sabbath, in the common way wherein we have hitherto gone on, Leaving every one to their liberty of learning or not learning to Sing the Regular way, and that when persons have generally Learned to sing by Rule, yet that way of Singing shall not be introduced into the Congregation here, but upon farther agreement and in an orderly way. [p. 227] [new paragraph] ‘2 Voted and agreed that Captⁿ Andrew Hinman (If he will accept it) be the person to set the psalm, and Lead us in the publick praises of God, and that, if Captⁿ Hinman do not accept, then Joseph Hinman shall be the man. [new paragraph] ‘3 Voted and agreed that he who Setts the psalm shall be at his Liberty what tunes to Sing on Lecture days.” [CT/Woodbury; Cothren 1854, pp. 226-227]

ca. 1736 + 1736, 2 July + 1737, January + 1739, February or 1740, February: "In 1736, or thereabouts, there seems to have been quite a commotion in various churches of the colony [i.e., Connecticut], occasioned by a *new fangled* method of singing, introduced by a certain Mr. [George] Beal, and called *Singing by Rule*. In the church of Windsor, its attempted introduction gave rise to much excitement, during which an amusing incident occurred, which is thus naïvely described on the Society Records by Henry Allyn, clerk: [smaller print, signifying quote] [']July 2d, 1736. At a society meeting at which Capt. Pelatiah Allyn was moderator. [new paragraph] "The business of the meeting proceeded in the following manner, viz., the Moderator proposed to the consideration of the meeting in the 1st place what should be done respecting that part of Public worship called singing, viz[.]: whether in their Public meetings, as on Sabbath days, Lectures, &c: they would sing the way that Deacon Marshall usually sang in his lifetime, commonly called the 'Old Way,' or whether they would sing the way taught by Mr. Beal, commonly called 'singing by Rule,' and when the Society had discoursed the matter, the Moderator proposed to vote for said two ways as followeth, viz[.]: that those that were for singing in public in the way practiced by Deacon Marshall, should hold up their hands and be counted, and then that those that were desirous to sing in Mr. Beal's way, called "by Rule," [double quote marks *sic*] would after show their minds by the same sign, which method was proceeded upon accordingly. But when the vote was passed, there being many voters, it was difficult to take the exact number of votes in order to determine on which side the major vote was; whereupon the Moderator ordered all of the voters to go out of the seats and stand in the alleys, and then that those that were for Deacon Marshall's [way] [←square brackets in original] should go into the men's seats, and those that [p. 274] were for Mr. Beal's way should go into the women's seats, and after many objections made against that way, which prevailed not with the Moderator, it was complied with[,] and then the Moderator desired that those that were of the mind that the way to be practised for singing for the future on the Sabbath, &c. should be the way sung by Deacon Marshall as aforesaid would signify the same by holding up their hands, and be counted, and then the Moderator and myself went and counted the voters, and the Moderator asked me how many there was. I answered 42 and he said there was 63 or 64, and then we both counted again, and agreed in the number being 43. Then the Moderator was about to count the number of votes for Mr. Beal's way of Singing called "by Rule," [double quote marks *sic*] but it was offered whether it would not be better to order the voters to pass out of the meeting-house door and there be counted, who did accordingly and their number was 44 or 45. Then the Moderator proceeded and desired that those that were for singing in Public the way that Mr. Beal taught, would draw out of their seats and pass out of the door and be counted: they replied they were ready to show their minds in any proper way where they were, if they might be directed thereto, but would not go out of the door to do the same, and desired that they might be led to a vote where they were, and they were ready to show their minds which the Moderator refused to do and thereupon declared that it was voted that Deacon Marshall's way of singing called the "Old Way," [double quote marks *sic*] should be sung in Public for the future, and ordered me to record the same as the vote of the said Society, which I refused to do under the circumstances thereof, and have

recorded the facts and proceedings.” [double quote mark *sic*] [end of smaller print; new paragraph] At the next meeting in January, 1736-7, Deacon Marshall’s method *was dropped*, and it was ‘*voted*, that the Society would sing in their public meetings, for the year ensuing, one part of the day in the old way of singing, as it is called, and the other half of the day in the new way of singing, called singing by Rule.’ [new paragraph] At last came the triumph of the reformers. [smaller print; new paragraph] ‘Feb. 1738-40 [*recte* 1739? or 1740? –see text of footnote, quoted below]. *Voted*, That the way of singing in public shall be by the way or method commonly called singing by rule, or the way Mr. Beal taught this Society. [new paragraph] ‘*Voted*, That Deacon John Wilson tune the Psalm. [new paragraph] ‘*Voted*, That Deacon John Cook shall read the Psalm.” [CT/Windsor; Stiles 1891, vol. I, pp. 273-274] [footnote on pp. 274-275 records George Beal teaching singing in Windsor in 1727, then comments [p. 275n], “...it is to be noticed that Mr. Beal’s way, commonly called ‘Singing by Rule,’ did not prevail in the Windsor Society until twelve years after he tabernacled [i.e., stayed] with Rev. Mr. [Timothy] Edwards [i.e., 1739; see above], showing the existence of a strong, conservative force in this ancient parish.”]

1736, 2 July – see ca. 1736

1737, January – see ca. 1736

1738, 26 June + 1739, 18 February, 8 March: “Our fathers had their church troubles as well as those living now. Take for example, the matter of singing in the early days. It often was at the greatest remove from harmony. [new paragraph] THE OLD WAY OF SINGING was for the chorister to start the tune with the pitch-pipe, the congregation to follow each in his own fashion at his own tune, and no two persons singing alike, but singing with all their might, ‘like the voice of many waters.’ [new paragraph] The Westerly Precinct of Wrentham, now Franklin, June 26, 1738, [p. 107] voted, ‘To sing no other Tunes than are Pricked Down in our former Psalm Books which were Printed between thirty and forty years Agoe and To Sing Them as They are Prickt down in them as Near as they can.’ [new paragraph] This was a blow at the old way of singing, and March 8, 1739, that church voted not to sing in the old way; and near the close of that meeting the query was raised: ‘To see what notice the church will take of one of the brethren’s striking into a pitch of the tune unusual[l]y raised, February 18, 1739.’ [new paragraph] And it was voted, [new paragraph] ‘Whereas, our brother David Pond, as several of our brethren viz.: David Jones[,] Ebenezer Hunting, Benjamin Rockwood Jr., Aaron Haws and Michael Metcalf apprehends, struck into a pitch of the tune on Feb. 18, in public worship on the forenoon raised above what was set, after most of the Congregation as is thought, kept the pitch for three lines and after our Pastor had desired them that had raised it to fall to the pitch that was set to be suitable, decent or to that purpose. [new paragraph] ‘The question was put, whether the church apprehends this our brother David Pond’s so doing to be disorderly, and it passed in the affirmative and David Pond is suspended until satisfaction is given.’ [new paragraph] David Pond afterwards applied to the Church of Christ, in Medway, for admission. Letters,

which well illustrate the characteristics of the times, were exchanged by the two churches in regard to the case of Mr. Pond. It has been suggested that because of his uncommon height and muscular strength he pitched the tune too high. Whether this, or because of willfulness, others must determine; at any rate he was excommunicated from the church, but some years after made confession of fault, was restored to good standing, and became one of the founders of the Second Church of Christ, in Medway." [MA/Franklin + Medway; Jameson 1886, pp. 106-107]

1738, 26 June, September + 1739, 18 February, 8 March, 18 May + 1745, 30 January + 1749, 5 April + 1752, 12 January, 14 February: "But before we quite leave the old sanctuary, we must step within long enough to listen to what was called the old way of singing. We take up one of the few books—an 'Old Bay Psalm book,' which has been used since 1640 in all the churches in the colony. The eight tunes at the end are from Ravenscroft's collection of 1618. The chorister starts the tune with his pitch pipe. The congregation follow, each in his own fashion and at his own pace, according to the old style in which his grandmother sang the tune in Wrentham or Dedham half a century ago. All sing the same part with an energy begotten of facing northeasters and felling forest trees and driving strings of oxen among their stumps. No two persons sing alike, and the singing consequently sounds, [p. 31] as Rev. Thomas Walter said, 'like five hundred different tunes roared out at the same time.' In one sense it is like the voice of many waters, and this is called the old way of singing. [new paragraph] It had already become a grievance to the ministers who wished to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord, and strenuous efforts had been begun to bring the people back to some harmony of voice, as well as of sentiment. Hence we appreciate this emphatic vote of the precinct June 26, 1738, immediately after the gathering of the young church, viz.:--'To sing no other tunes than are Pricked Down in our former Psalm Books which were Printed between Thirty and forty years Agoe, and To Sing Them as They are Prickt down in them as Near as they can.' This was a Precinct blow at the old way of singing. The older people remonstrated; but the Precinct refused, in September, 'to ease those that were inclined to sing the old way.' The church, March 8, 1738-9, voted not to sing in the old way, but by rule, *i.e.*, according to note; and they chose Joseph Whiting to set the tune in the church. This action of the church, so curiously put in the negative form, has a key to its significance in a solemn query raised, the record says, 'toward the close' of the meeting. As it proved the seed of a large and slow harvest it claims mention. The query is, 'to see what notice the church will take of one of the brethren's striking into a pitch of the tune unusually raised February 18th.' After considerable consultation, the record says, and there well might be, for it was like the spot of Paul's shipwreck, the place where two seas met, it was voted:-- [new paragraph, tighter spacing (smaller type?):] WHEREAS, our brother David Pond, as several of our brethren, viz.: David Jones, Ebenezer Hunting, Benjamin Rockwood, Jr., Aaron Haws, and Michael Metcalf apprehend, struck into a pitch of the tune on February 18th, in the public worship in the forenoon, raised above what was set; after most of the congregation, as is thought, kept the pitch for three lines, and after our pastor had desired them that had [p. 32] raised it to fall to the pitch that was set to be suitable, decent, or to that purpose; the question was put, whether the church

apprehends this our brother David Pond's so doing to be disorderly; and it passed in the affirmative, and David Pond is suspended until satisfaction is given. [new paragraph, regular spacing:] But David Pond was frozen over by this cooling of his high musical ardor, nor would he be thawed into any melting confession. Though the church sent the tender of a reference, he would not meet them. They invite him to a special prayer meeting, but he will not bend. They vote a solemn admonition. He proposes a council; that declined he calls an *ex-parte* council, which is not acknowledged. Then he goes into the second church in Medway, which asks questions about his case and gets a distinct letter in reply, which is followed by a second and more emphatic about harboring malcontents, and a third, too, with replies from Medway—all unsatisfactory. At last, in September, 1751, over thirteen [not 12?] years after that high pitching of the tune, the warmth of a continuous interest melts the icy barriers, and this Pond flows forth in a confession (12th January, 1751-2) and the Medway church joins in sundry acknowledgments (14th February, 1752), and thus the discord is brought down to concert pitch again and the hymn flows on. [new paragraph] But those longings for singing the old way were not confined to one sturdy pro-advocate. The battlefield was staked out at once (May 18, 1739) by a vote of the church, 'that the man that tunes the Psalm in the congregation be limited till further direction to some particular tunes, and the tunes limited are Canterbury, London, Windsor, St. David's, Cambridge, Short 100th and 148th Psalm tunes [comma should be between Short + 100th, not between Cambridge + Short], and Benjamin Rockwood, Jr., to tune the Psalm.' A movement, 30th of January, 1745, to enlarge this musical area was promptly repelled. They will have only a moderate new way, even though when Benjamin Rockwood cannot sing for the failure of his voice, and they choose Jabez Fisher in his place, he declines because the catalogue of tunes is too short for him to enter among them. But this refusal begets thought; [p. 33] and four years' practice has so worn out the eight permitted notes that (April 5, 1749) the church takes off the limitation. They also dismiss Joseph Whiting as chorister and put his pitch-pipe into the mouth of Barnabas Metcalf. With an unlimited range for tunes, the hymn now goes along like a flowing brook, and— [indented, smaller type:] 'Chatters over stony ways / In little sharps and trebles' [end of indentation, regular type:] —for aught I know until this day." [MA/Franklin; Blake 1879, pp. 30-33]

"...in 1739 they [members of the church Society] voted to 'sing by rule, or that which is called the new way in the congregation.'" [CT/New Canaan; Canaan 1935, p. 14]

1739, February or 1740, February – see ca. 1736

1739, 18 February, 8 March – see 1738, 26 June

1739, 18 February, 8 March, 18 May – see 1738, 26 June, September

ca. 1740: "15 [June 1772]. Rev. Atherton Wales was born 1704 in Braintree..., graduated at Harvard College 1726--...ordained Pastor of 2^d Church of Marshfield [Mass.] Nov. 20 1739.... ... [p. 246, 24 June 1772] ... When Mr. Wales was here he told

me, that soon upon his Settling a wealthy Member of his Church took offence at New singing [footnote: "Singing by note (or by rule), introduced into New England about 1720-30."]—by himself, called Ten Councils—got no Satisfaction—and has now gone over to Church of England [!]." [MA/Marshfield; Stiles/Dexter 1901, pp. 243, 246]

1740: "In Eastbury, the regular way of singing met with more opposition [than in Glastonbury]. It was first adopted in 1740, and in a short time after rejected, but again subsequently adopted." [CT/Eastbury; Chapin 1853, p. 78]

1740, 3 September + 1743 + 1745, 6 March: "In about 1740 the church records show that they were having some difficulty with one Samuel Tilden, who was very persistent in singing the 'old way,' and by so doing it made bad work with the other singers in the church, as they wanted to sing the 'new way.' [new paragraph] The following is a portion of the record: 'Sept ye 3rd, 1740. [new paragraph] "The church met to see if they could reconcile Brother Samuel Tilden to the regular way of singing psalms, but all persuasions and arguments being of no purpose, they offered him to sing lyt. (lytany) which he called ye old [p. 135] way at communion [*recte* communion?] or to refer ye case to some of ye Gentlemen of ye neighboring ministry, he choosing of them all himself. But he consented to neither. [new paragraph] "Then a committee was appointed to confer with Mr. Tilden to find what reason he had for refusing to sing the new way. He was asked whether he would be easie if ye church would sing at Sacrament that which he called ye old way, which was what you will serve God one part of ye day an ye Devil ye other. [new paragraph] "Ye church met again to see if they could reconcile him, but to no purpose. [new paragraph] "He finally left the church and the communion. One of the reasons being given in 1743. I asked Mr. Wales [Rev. Atherton Wales, pastor of the Second Church in Marshfield from 1739 to his death in 1795?] if he justified all Mr. John Wales delivered in ye pulpit in Marshfield, which was as he said that persons must be changed from ye estate of infancy, or he was not converted. And also he said that every person in ye meeting house had a Devil in him or by him. [new paragraph] "He also left because the church would not sing the psalms the "old way." [new paragraph] "He refused to pay the church tax. [new paragraph] "David Lapham, being of full age, testifyeth and saith, March ye 6th, 1745. Mr. Ebenezer Damon commanded me to go to Samuel Tilden with him, and we found him in his pasture at work, and when he saw us he run and said, "run, Devils, run," and we followed him to his house and he shut ye door, and we were going to drive away his cattle, and he came out and said, "where a devil are you going to drive my cattle," and Mr. Damon said, "if you will pay your rates we won't," and he said, "you bring in Damn new ways, and make me pay; Pox on you Irelanders, go join to ye pretender, and I command ye peace," and we took his cattle to drive them away.' [new paragraph] The church restored to communion Sam'l Tilden, and Nathaniel Eames withdrew from church as one of the rea- [p. 136] sons because 'ye church had restored to their communion brother Samuel Tilden, who he looked upon as a disorderly walker and an ignorant man, who had not knowledge enough to come to communion.'" [MA/Marshfield; Richards 1905, pp. 134-136]

"1742, May 7. 'The church took a vote to see if the Society would sing in the *new way*, and it passed in the affirmative, *nem. con.* Then being desired to bring in their votes for a TUNER, Mr. Ezekiel TURNER was chosen by a considerable majority.' Previous to this, singing, in most, if not all the New England churches, had been strictly *congregational*, the lines of the hymns being read off by the *Deacon*, who usually pitched the tune, and all, who could [p. 62] sing, joined in the performance." [MA/Hanover; Barry 1853, pp. 61-62]

1743 – see 1740, 3 September

1744, 16 April: "That this church [the second precinct of Rochester, now Mattapoisett] did not escape the controversy as to music which was general at that time is evidenced by the record: 'April 16, 1744, the Chh met to see whither something might be done to remove the great uneasiness that had arisen and had been long subsisting among us about [p. 197] the Rule of Singing in divine worship, or singing by Rule, and after a considerable debate concerning a Vote or Agreement or Covenant (as some called it) which was consented unto by a certain Number of Persons in this place before there was a church gathered here, viz., that the new way of Singing (for so they stiled regular singing) should forever be kept out of ye Prect. Hereupon the vote was called whether the Chh did look upon said act to be but a Vote. Voted in the affirmative; and hereupon the Vote was called whether this Chh do now Judge it most proper for ye future to sing by Rule in ye publick worship of God among us? Voted in ye affirmative.'" [MA/Mattapoisett; Rochester 1907, pp. 196-197]

1745, 30 January – see 1738, 26 June, September

1745, 6 March – see 1740, 3 September

1749, 5 April – see 1738, 26 June, September

n.d. (ca. 1750-1770) + 1770, 24 September, 22 October + 1771, 7 January: "The proverbial difficulty of managing singing, and especially singers, was felt most keenly and treated most unwisely. It is evident that the 'rising generation,' our grandfathers, were weary of the 'leading' of good Deacon [Nathaniel] Warriner, who had now, from the 'deacon's seat' under the pulpit, raised the pitch, and literally led the singing for over twenty years. The people generally felt that there was fulfilled among them the prophecy of the Prophet Amos, 'The songs of the temple shall be turned into howlings.' Singing masters had made their way to the new town. New music came with them. The old tunes were laid aside. Strange feats of voice and limb were performed by mouth and arm when the new singers came into the seats in the gallery. The congregation could not sing. The poor deacon's voice was silent. Great were the 'searchings of heart' among the ancients. Most unfortunately of all, the town took the matter in hand. The wisdom of the fathers forsook them. The flames burned all the more fiercely for being fanned. The second article in the

warrant for town-meeting, September 24, 1770, was 'To see whether they will come [p. 86] into some method or agreement for more Regular Carrying on the Singing in the Public worship in this town than it is at the present time;' [punctuation *sic*] and the third, 'To see whether the Town will be willing to sing four Times in the Publick worship on the Sabbath for the future.' It is pretty evident that this movement originated with the new singers. They appear to be ambitious to excel in quantity as well as quality. There seems to have been no opposition worthy of record to choosing the committee asked for, and ten men were chosen 'to be a Com., to take into consideration the Broken state of this Town with regard to Singing in the Publick Assembly on Sabbath Days, and to consult together and agree upon some Plan or Method whereby to encourage & promote regular and Universal Singing in said assembly, & make report thereof to this or some future meeting.' On the 22d of October, at the adjourned meeting, the committee of ten, Nathaniel Warriner, John Bliss, Thomas Mirick, Moses Stebbins [recipient of Ezra Barker's letter of 31 August 1780, copied here (ca. 1770 + 1780, 31 August); **useful to compare that letter + the present excerpt**], William King, Ezra Barker, Daniel Cadwell, John Jones, Eliezer Smith, and Phineas Newton make an elaborate Report covering two pages of the book of Records in Master [Ezra] Barker's best handwriting, in which a list of twenty-three tunes,--'called Low Dutch, Windsor, Old 100d, New 100d, Stroudwater, Meer, Buckland, Broomsgrove, Bangor, St. Martin's, Warwick, St. Hellens, All-Saints, Little Marlborough, Cambridge, Portsmouth, Southwell, Quercy, Worksop, Wantage, Standish, New York and 149 Psalm Tune,'—[p. 87] is given, which 'shall be made use of in the Publick worship of God in this town;' this 'List is to be transmitted to Mr. Morgan [probably Justin Morgan] (now singing-master in this Town) in order that he may Teach or Instruct his scholars to Sing them according to Rule.' No other tunes are to be introduced without 'consent.' Deaⁿ Nath'l Warriner is to give the lead in singing on the forenoons on each Sabbath & one of the Young Men lately Instructed by Mr. [John] Stickney (as they shall agree among themselves) give the lead in singing in the afternoon of each Sabbath for the space of three months from the Date hereof, excepting when Mr. Morgan is present, then it is expected he will carry the singing.' They also report 'that all who Assist in Singing Shall be at their pleasure either to Stand or Sit when Singing without giving Offence to any; that the singers lately Instructed by Mr. Stickney who are seated in the Gallery of the Meeting House are at their Liberty to make a decent and orderly Exchange of Seats as They Shall agree among themselves and so to Set for the Space of Three Months from the Date hereof and no longer, or else to continue to Set as they were last Seated;' and '6thly' and lastly, 'that whoever shall lead in the singing shall be at Liberty to use the Motion of his hand while singing for the Space of Three Months from the Date hereof or a shorter Space as need shall require.' Thus far 'the committee' 'propose to be tried by Vote.' The committee then recommend, that 'as the Beating with the hand in the Congregation [p. 88] when singing is offensive to some it be laid aside as quick as may be and confine the same to the school only; that all in the Town whose voices will admit of it speedily use proper means to get themselves acquainted with the art of Singing Ruleably & well,--in the mean time' they 'recommend to all both old and Young to Join in Singing in the Worshipping assembly and to sing as well as they can; and lastly,' say they, 'we cannot but

recommend to ourselves & others to study the Things which make for peace, and the things whereby we may Edify one another.' [new paragraph] The town voted what the committee recommended. But it is evident that the flames were not to be quenched by any such appliances. 'Three months' grace and 'no longer' is given to 'Beating with the hand' and occupying 'exchanged seats' if they can agree to exchange, which is very doubtful. The congregation are all to 'sing, as well as they can,' it is true, but to 'Join in Singing' at any rate. The Stickneyites in the 'Gallery' would hardly be satisfied. The compromise is like Nebuchadnezzar's image, gold in the head, but 'clay and iron' in the legs and feet. So it turns out, as the 'three months' are expiring, that an article is inserted in the warrant, January 7, 1771, 'to pass any votes in further addition' to those before passed 'as the Town Shall think proper by further lengthening the Time of the Present Mode of Singing.' This article came from the 'Gallery' party evidently. It is followed by another which came from the 'dea- [p. 89] con's seat,' as evidently. Hear it: 'to make Inquiry into the conduct of *those who call themselves the singers in this Town*, and see wheather they have conducted or proceeded agreeable to the report of the Town's Com^{tee}, and the Town's vote thereupon at our last Meeting and pass such Vote or Votes as shall be thought Necessary in Consequence thereof.' Greek has now met Greek [i.e., the two sides seem equal in strength]. At the meeting it is voted, 'that Deaⁿ Nath'l Warriner Shall continue to Set the Psalm as Usual During the Town's Pleasure; also that Moses Warriner and Jonathan Bliss do the same.' The 'young men' are voted down; the 'Galleries' are in a minority; so it would seem. But there is abundant life in young blood, and, rallying their strength, 'a motion was made whether the singing should be performed in the congregation according to the late mode by Beating with the hand, &c.; it being put, and the House being Divided it passed in the affirmative, 25 against about 19.' The 'Deacon's Seat' now loses, but does not yield; for 'a motion was made' [←close quote erroneous?] to Decide it by the Town List or by Lawful Voters, and after some Debate it was thrown by and the following vote passed, namely, Voted that the Rev. Mr. Mirick [Noah Merrick, pastor from 1741 to his death in 1776] be Desired to call a Society meeting in order to come into some method of Reconciliation with regard to Singing in the Publick worship.' They adjourn; and no more is recorded or known of the result. Poor Mr. Merrick had cares enough of another kind, as we shall soon see, without being dragged into this controversy about the singing. Thus ended [p. 90] the great struggle of the town respecting the method of 'Carrying on the Singing in the Public Worship of God.'" [MA/Wilbraham; Stebbins 1864, pp. 85-90]

1752, 12 January, 14 February – see 1738, 26 June, September

1757 – see 1724, 7 April, 9 May

1762: "As we enter from the porch we pass under the singing seats—set apart when the [meeting] house was enlarged [in 1762] 'for the use of those who shall or have informed themselves in the rules of regular singing so as to be capable of carrying the lead in singing and will sit there for that end.'" [ME/North Yarmouth; Rowe 1937, p. 131]

1762 – see 1724, 7 April, 9 May

n.d. (before 1764) + 1764 + 1774 + 1780 + 1780 or soon after: “The musical exercises of the sanctuary, according to the custom of the times, were conducted by one of the deacons, who officiated as chorister to the congregation. He read the hymn line by line and ‘set the tune,’ in which each member joined ‘by rote,’ in key and measure not always the most exact or harmonious. Probably, as musical taste improved, this desultory practice fell into disrepute; as, by a vote in 1764, the deacons were authorized to select singers, and seats were appropriated to their use, ‘that the spirit of singing psalms might be revived, and that part of worship conducted with more regularity.’ This arrangement continued until 1774, when a choir was regularly installed in ‘the front seats of the south gallery,’ and authorized, by vote of the parish, to pitch the tune and take the lead in singing.’ ... In the course of the succeeding fourteen years [after 1766] several ineffectual attempts were made to abolish the practice of ‘deaconing’ the psalm; but in 1780, the spirit of compromise led to the vote ‘that the psalms be sung in the congregation in the forenoon, by reading line by line, and in the afternoon without such reading.’ This compromise was of short duration. The friends of the ancient order, in yielding a part, paved the way for the loss of the whole, and, sustained by the current opinion, the entire service soon devolved on the choir, as now constituted.” [MA/Beverly (1st Parish); Stone 1843, p. 255]

1764 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1765, 1 August: “In the same warning [of August 1, 1765] was an article ‘To see if the parish will vote that those persons that Come nighest the approved Rule of Singing may have the Previlidge of Being Seated to Gether in the Second Long Seat in the men’s Galery, for the Benefit of helping Each other in said Rule; and that they may be Seated to gather, to prevent Disorder they Desire to be Seated in said Seat, or Elsewhere, to Gather in Said meeting house.’ [new paragraph] It was ‘Voted, that those parsons [*sic*] that Can Sing by Rule Shall Set to Gather in the meeting house in the front Short Seats in the men’s Gallery.’ [new paragraph] Here was an innovation. They had singing-schools, and had learned by rule, and of course had new tunes, and had a choir. How the conservatives bore it is not fully known.” [NH/Chester; Chase 1869, p. 323]

ca. 1765-ca. 1809: “STICKNEY, JOHN, b. in Stoughton, abt. 1742 or 1743, while a butcher’s boy, learned of one [Elijah?] Dunbar, near Boston, the new style of music, and came up into the Connecticut valley, and taught the same in Northampton, South Hadley, Hartford, Wethersfield, New Haven, and other places. In the face of not a little opposition, he persevered, until he had banished the old and introduced the new method of singing.” [Stickney taught singing schools in the Connecticut River Valley from ca. 1765 to ca. 1809] [MA/Hadley; Judd 1863, p. 582]

1766, 2 October: “Voted also to elect some person to set the Psalm or tune, and lead in the singing for six Sabbaths next ensuing upon trial or liking, as a further attempt for regular and religious improvement in that part of divine worship.’ [new paragraph] ‘The brethren then brought in their votes, from which it appeared that Robert Harrington, Jr., was unanimously chosen to this service.” [MA/Lexington; Hudson 1868, p. 331]

“May 21, 1767, voted and granted the third, fourth & fifth seats in the Frunt gallery to those Persons that have been taking pains to learn to sing Ruleable in the Congregation and to aney others that shall be disposed to learn to sing by Rule.” [MA/Westford; Hodgman 1883, p, 79]

1768, 17 January + 1769, 7 May, 22 May + 1772, 12 April, 24 April, 26 April, 3 May + 1773, 21 April: “17 [January 1768]. Preached—sung twice in Forenoon. singers stood up in ye Gallery. New Tunes—some disgusted went out last singing. ... [p. 419] ... ‘May 7 [1769]. Preached. sung without reading ye last time. Clark Phelps, Zechariah Bush, Simeon Ashley and their wives and Clark Moseley went out. [new paragraph] ‘22. Town meeting—about singing.... ... [p. 427] ... ‘12 [April 1772]. Preached. Stevenson [a tune by Joseph Stephenson? --perhaps his fugging setting of Psalm 34?] sung, numbers offended, went out. [new paragraph] ‘24. Singers met here in evening, proposed to me a particular metre for the Sabbath, did not determine. [new paragraph] ‘26. Preached. Singers staid away. I expected we must have omitted singing for want of a Chorister. [new paragraph] ‘May 3. Preached. Singers took their seats. ... [p. 429] ... ‘21 [April 1773]. General Fast in Conn. I preached at Turkey Hills. [new paragraph] ‘The new way of singing opposed, hardly any singing, a meeting of ye singers at Bro. Gay’s. It is a pity that singing in God’s house should be so poorly, when there are a number of good singers in the place.[’]” [excerpts from diary of Rev. John Ballantine, minister at Westfield from 1741 to his death in 1776] [MA/Westfield; Lockwood 1922, vol. I, pp. 416, 419, 427, 429]

1769, May – see 1726, March

1769, 7 May, 22 May – see 1768, 17 January

ca. 1770: “The change in the method of singing was made in this town, as nearly as can be ascertained, about the year 1770, and was not effected without considerable opposition. One reason [p. 531] urged by those who opposed the innovation was, that many of the people had no psalm-books, and could not know what the choir was singing, unless it was read by the deacon. The change was gradual, and began with the first hymn only, but by degrees it was carried through the whole service. When the choir was first introduced into public worship is uncertain, but probably it was about this time. There was very little use for a choir under the old system. Choristers seem to have been employed to set the tune and lead the singing before the choir was formed. But it is probable that the choir did not come in till after the old method of singing was abandoned and singing-schools were established. ... After the new method was adopted, Josiah, Isaac and Jacob Parsons, Caleb Strong and

others, would leave the meeting-house just before the last singing.”
[MA/Northampton; Trumbull 1902, pp. 530-531]

ca. 1770 + 1780, 31 August: “To MOSES STEBBINS, / In WILBRAHAM. (MASS.) / WILBRAHAM Aug. 31, 1780. / SIR. / ... I am now labouring under peculiar difficulties by [p. 784] having my Mind exercised on account of the new Ceremonies and Unscriptural Modes lately introduced into our Publick Worship. [new paragraph] When I wrote to Solomon Warriner [not the psalmodist, born 1778] the other day [8 August 1780; see below], I little thought of my Letter reaching you and Some others which I find it hath. If I had thought of its becoming So Publick I Should have been a little more particular in Some things and Since you have told me that you have Seen my Letter, I will venture to enter upon the Same Theme with you and a Melancholy Theam it is – And not to Mention or Dwell upon the late practice of rising up at Singing the Doxologies and Sitting down while the Preacher hath at any Time any reference to the three Persons in the Trinity; I say, not to dwell upon this Inconsistency, I will Still treat and enlarge upon what you Saw in my other Letter. And let us examine and View it in the Length and Breadth of it from the beginning down to this day. When our singing wanted to be revived, We got Mr. [John] Stickney and lastly Mr. [Justin] Morgan among us for that purpose. I was one who cast in my Mite to encourage the Singing. But they so Suddenly exchanged old Tunes for New ones and introduced them into the Publick Worship and the old ones being neglected it was but a few that could bear a part in the delightful part of Divine Worship. The old Singers became uneasy and began to complain and not without cause, I among the rest, not only for Myself but for others also. The Town took the Matter in hand and at a Legal Meeting [22 October 1770—see Stebbins 1864, p. 86] selected out a number of Tunes, injoining the School [then taught by Morgan; see Stebbins 1864, p. 87] to practice upon them only until further orders. The Clerk was ordered to Serve the Master of the School with a Copy, I think he paid [p. 785] no regard to it, Saving one Night – Likewise the Meeting House was seated as much in favour of promoting the Singing as could be convenient with decency as to Age and Birthright. But alas! where are they now? [new paragraph] Some Tunes were introduced soon which by Some were thought not fit to be Used in So Solemn Worship. Several have Showed their dislike by going out. Also three Persons [likely Deacon Nathaniel Warriner in the forenoon, Moses Warriner or Jonathan Bliss in the afternoon; see Stebbins 1864, pp. 89, 87] were appointed to give the lead in Singing, who have performed well and faithfully according to their best Skill and Judgment (swerving a little, no doubt, sometimes for the Sake of Pleasing, but this by the by). Of late [so, apparently closer to the writing of this letter in 1780] those appointed, for Some reasons are dropped without Sufficient reason, and others Shoved forward in their room without the knowledge or order of the Church, who of right ought to have the first Voice in all Matters of Religious Worship, under their Lord and Master. Mark what follows; Now Seats are Shifted, Some of the Males have Stretched a Wing over upon the Female Side and have intruded upon their Right, and all with this Cloak, v.z. [sic] for the Convenience of Singing. [new paragraph] Were our Antient Pious fore-Fathers permitted to arise from their Silent Graves and to take a view, perhaps they would blush at the Sight. Now Merry Tunes come in a pace, So full of

Cords or Discords that Another Set of good Singers [the 1770 set having been mentioned above] are Shut out of bearing a part in that Worship unless they will be at the pains to learn, and in that case it is not so certain they will not soon be left behind if the Wheals continue to Trundle as they have of late. We Will now take a View of another branch of the Same Tree or at least of the Consequences arising from the Same cause. In the Morning We assemble for Mutual Divine Worship, And it is our Duty [p. 786] So to do. The minister comes; he names a Psalm well adapted for the occasion; the Tunester after the Psalm is read and the hearers preparing their Harps for Solemn Sound and to bear a part in the delightful work of United Singing to the Praise of our common Benefactor, names the Tune, and as if he were independent, cries out, Continue. A few, and those mainly out of the Church, Sing While the Church or the bigger part and the others are obliged Solitarily to hang their Harps upon the Willows. Then prayer begins in which we all join unless we are to blame. After that Singing comes in as before described. Then an Excellent Sermon is preached by which we may all be profited unless we are wanting to ourselves. Then a part and those mainly out of the Church Sing as before. We hear the Sound but know not the Matter Sung unless our Memories are like Brass. Doubtless our Animal Frame (or at least Some of us) is Charmed but our Souls, or Rational parts remain Barren and wither away as the Fields, whereon it rained not. How apt are we and liable to be deceived in this Spot. If our Animals are Charmed at Pleasant Sounds We are Sometimes liable to Suppose that we are profited when at the Same time our rational part remains unedified. In this we are no better perhaps than some of the Dumb or irrational Creatures. For many times we find that Some of them Seem as it were put into a Transport at the Sound of Musical Instruments, or even Singing. But to proceed, As I have described Matters we perceive that the whole of our Publick Worship is thro'out Attended with continuing and resting. When Some are Singing others are out of imploy or proper imploy; and that necessarily for want of knowing the Matter [p. 787] Sung – By this time perhaps Sir, you may be apt to think I am Drifting, but I will assure you I am not. My Heart hangs heavy while I am writing and I think the Subject we are upon affords matter for Lamentation. I would Charitably hope that those few who Sing are sincear, but we must remember that Charity is not blind, it must have its proper Object to fix upon. No doubt, Sir if you will join me in Supposing that by Some Such unscriptural Methods the Antient Churches we read of in our Bibles did little by little insensibly swerve from the Rule taught them and are now and have for a long time been given up to Worship Dumb Tools. We are astonished at the Thought. Is it not high Time that our Church was organized and Church Discipline revived? Where are our Deacons, why don't they take their Seats and perform the Deacon's Duty? or let the Church appoint Some Person to read the Psalm and not leave it to the Young Singers to Say who shall read when there is reading? Why can't you at your end [of the town?] and I at ours join immediately and Settle a Minister* upon Some Conditions which may be Safe and equitable, although perhaps you may think it convenient or Necessary to Divide into Two Parrishes hereafter. But lest I weary my Self and you, I will hasten to a Conclusion and Say, To the Law and the Testimony – I think I read Somewhere in my Bible these Words, viz., Let the People Praise thee, O God, yea let all the People Praise Thee – Perhaps you may say we must be of a Condescending

Temper and why may they not Sing So Sometimes. I answer, They may Sing So every time if the Holy Scriptures will bear them out. Here lye the pinch. – [p. 788, new paragraph] Please to turn your Eye to the following Texts, viz. Romans; 15 Chap. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, vers. – Chap. 16th, 17th and 18[th] verses. I Corinthians 3rd Chap. 10, 11, 12, and 13 vers. II Corinthians 6th Chap. 14th verse to the end. Perhaps you will not be able to judge what Inferences I Draw from those Texts, I leave you to Infer for your Self. If you can without clashing with these Scriptures reconcile me to the present mode of Singing, I will endeavor to have a better Opinion of it. At present I am very uneasy, and I Should be accountable to God and my own Conscience if I did not bear Testimony against it. I View these as not Circumstantial Things, but essential Errors which ought to be rectified. – [new paragraph] I grow weary of Writing and must conclude....” [MA/Wilbraham; Smith/Barker 1931, pp. 783-788] [*This letter, dated 31 August 1780, was written in the middle of a period between settled minsters in Wilbraham (Noah Merrick, 1741-1776, and Joseph Willard, 1787-1794); right in the middle of the Revolutionary War; in the same year when “New Light” disturbances occurred in Newton, Mass. and in rural Maine (and likely elsewhere); about eight months after original Wilbraham settler and long-serving Deacon Nathaniel Warriner had died (on 10 January, 1780); in the year after the first non-Congregational church (Baptist) was built in Wilbraham; and two years before the town would divide into North and South parishes.]

[probably 1770s]: “The change [from the “old way” to choir-led regular singing] was not always made so easily as with us [in Farmington, Conn.]. In some churches the deacons persisted in lining out the psalm; but the new singers having once got well under way with the first line, kept straight on with the rest of the psalm, carrying everything before them like a whirlwind and leaving the deacon in hopeless despair. But not always. We read of one deacon who sat down in grim silence, biding his time, and when the young people had finished their musical antics, arose, and with trumpet tones which rang through the house, announced ‘Now let the people of the Lord sing.’ And they did it, though for the last [p. 22] time, in the good old way.” [CT/Farmington, though barely; Gay 1891, pp. 21-22]

“In the year 1770, Watts’s version of the Psalms, ‘together with his Scripture hymns in the first and third books,’ came into use as a collection of hymns for public worship. Previous to this the New England version had been in use, and the change to a new book was here, as generally elsewhere, attended with no little difficulty and opposition. ... This venerable version, which had long been used as a part of the religious services in the New England churches, [p. 185] could no longer withstand the spirit of innovation. It was compelled to give way to the more appropriate version of Watts, all of which was then adopted except the second book of his hymns. This was rejected on account of its supposed unscriptural character. The change, however, was not made without opposition; and for a time, many of the elderly part of the society could not be reconciled to it. To the old psalms and hymns they felt a strong attachment, and with them were connected some of their fondest associations. They had been accustomed to them from their youth, and to

lay them aside was like discarding an old and well[-]tried friend. The psalmody of modern times, however harmonious to the ears of the young [referring to texts or musical performance here?], struck no chord of unison in their hearts; it excited no feelings of devotion; but on the other hand, seemed like a profanation of the temple of the Most High." [MA/Grafton; Pierce 1879, pp. 184-185] [this passage copied here as well as in TEXT VERSIONS file because it starts talking about different versions of texts, but (at "The psalmody of modern times...") seems to fade into a discussion of ways of singing]

1770, March – see 1726, March

1770, 24 May, 22 August + 1771, 6 March, 18 March + 1773, 18 March, 13 September: "[through p. 25, copied from photostat (at AAS) of Records of Lancaster's Second Church, now in Sterling, Mass.; p. 17:] May 24, 1770 ... [p. [18]] The Chh convers[e]d upon the manner of Singing the divine Praises in public, but came to no vote upon it." [p. 16:] "Aug:^t 22, 1770 The Chh met & voted that y^e use of y^e pitchpipe & taking y^e pitches & keeping time by swinging y^e hand in public worship was not accept[a?]ble to them." [p. 31:] "The first [petition] dated march [6?]. 1771, was a request to call a Chh-meeting [a meeting that Rev. John Mellen, pastor of Lancaster's Second Church, apparently refused or neglected to call], '[p. 32] ... to see what method said Chh will come into, in order for a Reconciliation of y^e Difficulties subsisting amongst us in reference to y^e manner of singing in public Worship.'" [p. 16:] "March 18 [1771] Chh met upon adjournment; voted they were still of y^e same mind about y^e Pitch pipe & taking y^e Pitches, and that they were not willing y^e Chorister ["the"?] beat time according to Discretion[.]" [p. 25:] [March 18, 1773:] "Voted – That the Complaint against the Pastor in reference to w^t he had said relative to the Singing &c [crossed-out passage] was supported[.]" [all that follows is copied from photostat (at AAS) of Records of Lancaster's Second Church, this portion of the Records focusing on a report dated Roxbury, 13 September 1773, of an ecclesiastical council convened to consider 12 complaints against Rev. John Mellen + certain brethren of Lancaster's Second Church; p. 59:] "...from what was publicly said with regard to the Affair of Singing &c it being gen[e]rally allowed that this was one principal ["Root"?] of Bitterness, we are apprehen [p. 60] sive that in the Change made in the Manner of Singing & in the Conduct of that Matter, a proper regard has not been paid to the Scruples & Uneasiness of some, especially of the aged & respectable Members of the Chh: Nor has there been so quiet & peaceable Acquiescence in the Pleasure of the Chh & Congregation, as expressed in their Vote [probably that of 22 August 1770; see above], as we could have wished for: And we embrace this Occasion as on the one Hand to advise that whatsoever any may apprehend to have been unreasonable or offensive may be now freely forgiven & passed over: so on the other Side, we recommend it to all, who encourage or carry on the public singing in the new form, that they Exercise a peaceable & becoming Submission to the united Determinations of the Chh & Congregation, & a prudent Care not to displease especially the aged Part of the Members[,] rather being willing to disuse such Modes of Singing as are confessedly indifferent, than give Offence by the indiscreet Use of them. _____ [new paragraph] Now to the Complaint, In

the Course of the Debate on this Head, [Rev.] M^r [John] Mellen allowed he had given it as his Opinion y^t [p. 61] the Chh had better never have passed those Votes, & ought not to determine such indifferent matters – as using the Pitch-Pipe, taking the Pittch, beating Time, standing or sitting to sing &c. – However when the Chh voted their Displeasure w^h [←with] those Matters, they were laid aside. ____ That after the Votes of the Chh & Congregation were passed he never said the Singers had a Right to bring in those matters which had proved displeasing, but had advised them to drop these Matters & sing as well as they could without. --- The Pastor being publicly blamed for not exerting himself to discourage the things that were disagreeable he answered that he did advise to lay aside the Pitch-Pipe &c ____ The Chorister testified that M^r Mellen insisted much on the singers disusing the disagreeable things. ____ Evidence was called to support the Charge ‘that the Persons that had a Mind to introduce them had a Right[’ ?] &c – Reference was had to a Sermon, part of w^h was read, but nothing appeared exceptionable. Deacon Wh[i]ttcomb testified in support of the Charge: M^r Mellen explained as above ____ Two or three wit [p. [62]] nessed that M^r Mellen told the Singers, they had a Right to use those Matters, but urged them not to use them. ____ [new paragraph] Now whatever Apprehensions there had been of M^r Mellen’s encouraging the Singers to persist in things that were grievous to some of the Chh, yet we are obliged in Justice to him to say, we do not remember any Instance of it pointed out, unless it be a few Words at one time inadvertently, as we apprehend, dropped in Company, referred to in the Complaint, which might be improved contrary to his Design: For it is clear, in the very same Conversation he urged the Singers to a peaceable Submission to the Chh & Congregation: And it doth appear to us that M^r Mellen hath in a Variety of Instances discouraged & endeavoured to prevent such things as were found to be grievous & offensive; so that on the whole we do not find any just Cause of Uneasiness with him on this Account. ____ We recommend it to him, if there should hereafter be Occasion[,] to do what in him lies, that there be no cause of Uneasiness with respect to the Mode of Singing in time [p. 63] to come. ____ [new paragraph] As to M^r Mellen’s encouraging the Prosecution of Offenders in the Law, altho’, as he acknowledged, that in Matters of in[d?]ifferency such as standing or sitting to sing &c – he said he thought Chhs had better not pass or record Votes, yet it does not appear that he ever actually advised that such as make Disturbance in the public Worship by these things should be prosecuted in the Civil Law: He rather expressed himself as we suppose, in Terms of this Import, That if the Singers were Breakers of the Peace, as they were out of the Chh, the Matter might as well or better be settled in the Law ----” [MA/ Sterling; Lancaster Second Church records, pp. 16-[18], 25, 31-32, 59-63]

1770, 21 June: “At a church meeting held in Hardwick at the meeting-house, June 21, 1770, voted, with respect to the present method of singing in public worship, that one half of the portion that shall be sung shall be read, line by line, as has been the former practice in this Congregation, sung in some old tune; that [p. 186] the other half shall be sung without being thus read in some new tune; that the psalm or hymn that shall be appointed to be sung at the Communion Table shall be read, line by line, and sung in some old tune, so called.’ The change, thus partially made,

became entire at a later period; but it was exceedingly disagreeable to many, and of some it is said they would leave the meeting-house while psalms or hymns were sung without having been read, line by line, and return after this offensive exercise was concluded." [MA/Hardwick; Paige 1883, pp. 185-186]

1770, 24 September, 22 October – see n.d. (ca. 1750-1770)

1771, 7 January – see n.d. (ca. 1750-1770)

1771, 6 March, 18 March – see 1770, 24 May, 22 August

1771-1772: "At a meeting of the society [North (Scantic) Parish in Windsor] in April, 1771, it was [new paragraph, smaller type:] '*Voted*, To introduce singing by *rule* in the congregation.' [new paragraph, regular type:] This resolution, it would seem, did not meet with approbation, for at a meeting of the society next year it was in effect rescinded, as follows: [new paragraph, smaller type:] '*Voted*, Not to act upon the article of singing in the congregation.' [new paragraph, regular type:] There were doubtless wise men among them, who, as soon as they perceived what testy folks singers were, resolved to let them have their own way, either to sing in unison, or each one 'on their own hook,'..." [CT/Windsor; Stiles 1891, vol. I, p. 605]

1772, 12 April, 24 April, 26 April, 3 May – see 1768, 17 January

1773: "The disturbing question of singing in worship engaged the attention of the Society [second Church of Christ, Hartford] about this time [1770s]. In 1773 the following action was taken: 'Whereas Messrs. Ebenezer Watson and Epaphras Bull, two members of this Society, with others have been at much pains and trouble in teaching the art of Psalmody to the people and youth of said Society, and have, by their application and assiduity therein, brought the same to very considerable perfection with a view to practice the same &c.; It is therefore Voted and agreed by this Society, that the same shall be introduced for the future (or until this Society shall otherwise order) and they, the said Ebenezer and Epaphras, are desired to attend and lead therein upon the Sabbath or every Lord's Day, according to the mode and form which they have lately practised and instructed, as aforesaid.'" [CT/Hartford; Parker 1892, p. 143]

1773 – see 1726, March

1773, 18 March, 13 September – see 1770, 24 May, 22 August

1773, 21 April – see 1768, 17 January

1773-1782: "The ordination [of James Humphrey] took place Nov. 7th, 1750, and from that time for nearly 25 years Rev. Mr. Humphrey ministered in peace and happiness to his people, until an innovation in the custom of singing [ending lining out] brought on a controversy, which finally, after nearly seven years of exciting

town and church meetings, led to the severing of the pastoral relation, and the dismissal of Mr. Humphrey Feb. 13, 1782, and nearly resulted in the dismemberment of the town [all this is detailed in Clarke 1851]. Indeed, there is but little doubt that the setting off of a portion of Athol to form the town of Orange was effected in consequence of this quarrel and the dismissal of Mr. Humphrey." [MA/Athol; Caswell 1899, p. 49]

1773, 10 June-1782, 13 February: "The first circumstance that occurred to disturb the quiet of the little church at Pequoiag [renamed Athol in 1762] was the same which interrupted the harmony of very many churches in Massachusetts and vicinity some seventy-five or eighty years ago [N. B.: 1770-1775], namely, the innovation which about that time was made in the old custom of singing. Formerly the deacon read the hymns, two lines at a time, which were immediately sung by the choir or congregation [N. B.: lining out persisting after formation of choirs], when two more were 'deaconed out,' which also were executed by the singers, and so on, till the entire hymn was read and sung. Now, it was voted both by the church and congregation to dispense with the deacon's service in the exercise of singing the hymns. This simple change, like all other improvements in religious forms, was regarded by some as an unhallowed desecration of religious worship. The vote was a close one; in the church eighteen yeas and eleven nays; the congregation voted thirty-three in favor of the change and twenty-eight against it (June 10, 1773). Two months' time was allowed by the church 'for the people to Provide themselves with Psalm Books before they Sing without reading.' The completion of the new meeting-house on the common, and the opening of the same for public worship just about this time, may have had a tendency to hasten on this innovation. [new paragraph] But the old-fashioned way of singing was not to be given up without another effort to sustain it. Accordingly, at the desire of William Oliver, Seth Twitchel, John Oliver, Abraham Nutt, [p. 28] and William Bigelow, a meeting was called to see if the church and congregation would reconsider their former vote; but there was still a majority of three or four in the church, and seven in the congregation, in favor of abiding by the former decision to dispense with the deacon's reading. 'Upon consideration,' however, 'to pacify and ease the mind of the aggrieved party, the church consented to read with singing half the time for four sabbaths upon the aggrieved party attending on the public worship.' This vote shows how keenly the minority felt the innovation. Nor did reading half the time for four Sabbaths entirely quiet their disturbed minds. Church meetings are more frequent now than formerly. Deacon David Twitchel [surely a relative of Seth Twitchel; see above] resigns his office in the church. Two years after, Mrs. Susannah Haven, conscientiously anxious, no doubt, to let posterity know how true she was to the better form of worship, expressed her dissent from the change in the following protest, which was entered upon the church records. [new line] 'MRS. SUSANNAH HAVEN'S PUBLIC DECLARATION. / *'To the Church of Christ in Athol and Congregation in said Town.* [new paragraph] 'Whereas, in divine providence my Lott hath been ordained in this Town, where I have enjoyed God's word and ordinance, which I think are dear to me; and should esteem it a great Privilidge Still to enjoy them; but as the Church and Congregation hath altered their manner of Singing; it hath been and is much to my Dissatisfaction and grief, as I

am not able to see how the Continuing the Bass between the Lines of the Tenor [as, for example, in some versions of Holdroyd's WELLS, printed 24 times in America by the end of 1774], is consistent with Singing with the Spirit and Understanding also, as it appears to me that the Understanding must be useless in that unnasary [unnecessary?] part of the Sound; but Considering this as no Essential part of our holy Religion, and y^t I am Sensible y^t I cant do any thing more than hath been done to reform what I Esteem Wrong in this manner of Singing, I Esteem it my Duty in this public manner to Let you know what those things are y^t are greivous to me, and y^t I wholly disapprove of in your Singing. So wishing grace mercy and peace may be multiplied to you, I desire your prayer for me y^t I may be led into [p. 29] the Knowledge of my Duty in all things, and be enabled to Square my Life by the rules of the Gospel. / 'So I remain your Sister in the faith, / 'SUSANNAH HAVEN. / 'Athol, Feb. 22, 1775.' [new paragraph] This innocent change proved a bitter apple of discord to this hitherto remarkably peaceful church. Brother Seth Twitchel absented himself from public worship and the 'special ordinances.' A minister of the Baptist denomination (Elder Whitman Jacobs) commenced preaching in town about this time, and was gathering a few adherents about him. ... Those disaffected on account of the singing seem to have attended somewhat upon his preaching. Mr. John Ballard desired to be dismissed to his society. But the church voted not to dismiss him, and for several reasons, one of which was, that the Baptists received tow of 'our members into their church' before they were dismissed, or 'took any proper measures to obtain a dismission' from the First Church. Committees were appointed to 'converse with our Brother Seth Twitchel,' &c. Church meetings become still more frequent, a circumstance always ominous of evil. More stringent church regulations are adopted. Members are now (1775), for the first time, required to make a 'Relation publicly of their faith and experiences before they are received into full communion.' The church adopt the Cambridge Platform for their 'Rule of Discipline...' August 14, 1775, the church voted, 'That the Pastor should desire every person, hereafter, to sign the Church Covenant upon their being taken into the Church,'—the first and only evidence we have on the [p. 30] church records that subscription to any articles of faith was ever made a requisite to church-membership; and it does not appear from the records that this requisition was ever complied with. The covenant is subscribed only with the names of the ten persons who founded the church. Evidently, some portion of the church are growing more rigid with regard to doctrinal opinions. The subject of the baptism of infants whose parents were not in full communion was discussed. (1777.) The church decided that such baptism is 'warranted by Scripture.' Elements of discord appear more plainly upon the church records for this year. One of the articles recorded in a request for a church-meeting is 'to see if the Church will desire the Rev. Mr. James Humphrey to ask a Dismission from his Pastoral Care of the Church of Christ in Athol.' Upon which, when they came together, the church voted 'that they were satisfied with their Pastor unanimously; only one person, Deacon Haven, voted against y^e pastor, or, in other words, desired him to ask a dismission.' At this meeting, 'our Brother Seth Twitchel promised to *try* to the manner of singing that the Church had voted in, and attend upon public worship and Special Ordinances.' [new paragraph] But the grievous feeling seems to have been too deeply seated for

him to overcome; for, two years after [i.e., 1779], reasons are again offered why he absented himself from public worship, &c. The church voted to 'forgive him,' 'upon which' he asked a dismissal; having, since the change in singing, himself experienced a change in his views relative to the subject of baptism. The church, in a truly liberal spirit, granted his request.... [repeated calls for Rev. Mr. Humphrey to ask a dismissal eventually result in his being "dismissed from his pastoral relation to the church and people in this town" on 13 February 1782 (p. 36)] [p. 36:] Probably this town never has experienced an excitement more intense, more universally felt, or more threatening to the interests of the town, than that which agitated its citizens during the more than five years' controversy relative to the dismissal of Rev. Mr. Humphrey. It came well near dismembering the territory, so as to leave but a small part of the original grant, and that 'so weak and in such form that its inhabitants would be no longer able to carry on as a Town.' In the [p. 37] warrant for the very town meeting at which the final arrangements for the dismissal of Mr. Humphrey were agreed to, there was an article to see if the town would vote off all the land, and inhabitants thereon, lying north and west of Miller's River, with the exception of 'Deacon Kendall's land,' a part 'to be incorporated into a separate district or join with any other town as they think fit after being set off'; the other part, namely, that west of Tully Brook, with the above exception, 'to be erected into a town with part of Warwick, part of Royalston, part of Eruensha'; and although a majority of the meeting voted against the design of this article, still, so strong was the feeling in its favor, that a petition was soon after sent to the General Court, praying that the territory above described, or some portion of it, might be set off and incorporated into a separate town; and notwithstanding that this town remonstrated with the court against the act, nevertheless the town of Orange, a part of which was set off from Athol, was incorporated the next year. [new paragraph] There can be little doubt, judging from the letter and spirit of the records, that this division of the territory of the town was effected in consequence of the controversy relative to the dismissal of Mr. Humphrey [which itself seems to have arisen out of the singing dispute]." [MA/Athol; Clarke 1851, pp. 27-30, 36-37]

1774 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1774, 16 May, 5 December: "...finally in 1774, without so much as a murmer [*sic*] of protest, we find first this entry: [indented, smaller type:] May 16, 1774 Town meeting 'voted to new seat the Meeting House but not to appropriate any part of the Meeting House to Singers' [not indented, regular type:] followed by this highly significant entry: [indented, smaller type:] Dec. 5, 1774 Voted that for ye better and more decent carrying on of public worship, Deacon Wheeler would lead in ye Singing, one half of ye Time, and ye Singers the other half, in ye Congregation. [not indented, regular type:] Thus, the old way/new way debate was resolved in Concord by a gentle compromise." [MA/Concord; Billings 1985, p. 179]

1778, 18 November + 1779, 15 July, 21 August: "...[on November 18, 1778] a town-meeting warrant reads: '& whereas an uneasiness Subsists among a number of the Inhabitants of this Town in Regard to Singing in Public Worship on Sabbath Days,

therefore: To See if the town will Enquire into the Causes of Said uneasiness, & pass such vote or votes as they in their wisdom may think most likely to unite the minds of the People in that part of Public Worship.' But 'after some debate,' it was voted not to act upon this knotty subject. The Church, however, was not deterred from acting upon the matter, and a committee was appointed which after several weeks of investigation [p. 58] brought in a report setting forth clearly the differences which had arisen between the Singers who aspired to sing 'by Rule' and conservatives of the congregation who wished to continue to make melody unto the Lord, each after his own fashion. The records of the Church for that period are lost, so that it is not known what action was taken upon this report, but its admirable spirit must have helped greatly to relieve the strained situation." [footnote, smaller type:] "REPORT OF A COMMITTEE IN REGARD TO SINGING. / To the Rev^d Joshua Paine, / To be Communicated to the Church. [new paragraph] Whereas there has been some very unhappy matters of Difficulty & uneasiness in the minds of Some in this Town, with respect to Singing in the Worship of God in our Christian Assembly, since the late Indeavours of Learning to Sing by Rule: The Church Did at a meeting on the 15th of July last, being Deeply Impres^d with a Sence of our unhappy Scituation with respect to Singing, it being more affecting considering the sore Distree & Calamity wee are under in this Land: The Church being Desierous of Removing said Difficulties, cementing Differences, Restoring Peace & Preposeing some Plan, whereby wee might Carry on that part of Public Worship in Love & Harmony according to the Rules of good Order & Edification: the Church Chose us, the Subscribers, a Committee for that Purpose:-- [new paragraph] Your Committee have taken into their Sierious Consideration what appears to them to bee the Principle matters of Complaint & uneasiness Since the late attempt of a Reformation of Singing by Rule: on the one hand made by the Singers and on the other, by those offended by the conduct of the Singers in some Respects & other matters that have attended Singing; In the first place we Look upon it Necessary & of Importance; that good & Necessary Rules for the Singing of Psalm Tunes be Learned & observed, & as a Likely means for this Purpose We Introduce the Noble Exhortation given by our Godly Forefathers, Rev^d Ministers of the Gospel, more than 58 years ago, in their Preface to Mr. Walters Singing Book as follows: And we would encourage all, more particularly our Young People, to accomplish themselves with Skill to Sing the Songs of the Lord, according to the good Rules of Psalmody: Hoping that the Consequences of it will be, that not only the Assemblies of Zion will Decently & in order, Carry on this Exercise of Piety, but allso it will be the more introduced into private Families, & become a part of our Family Sacrifice. At the same time we would, above all, exhort, That the main Concern of all may be, to make it not a meer Bodily Exercise but Sing with Grace in their Hearts, & with Minds attentive to the Truth in the Psalms which they Sing, & affected with them; so that in their Hearts they may make a Melody to the Lord. [←quoted here almost verbatim from Walter 1721] Signed by the Rev^d M^{rr} Increase Mather Cotton Mather Nehemiah Walter, & others 15 in all. [new paragraph] & now as to the Diffeculties & Discouragements the Singers have Laboured under since their vigorous Exertions of Learning to Sing by Rule often mentioned by them, as their not being Properly Encouraged, & so many being opposed to Singing by Rule some People's leaving the Meeting House &c., as to Encouraging Singing we hope

matters of Discouragement that are really such will soon be removed; if any their be who oppose Singing by Rule or Look upon it not necessary we hope they will weigh that matter in their own minds without Prejudice. Read said Mr. Walters Reasons & Directtions, on that Subject, & whither or no it is even Possible that a Congregation [p. 59] Should Join together in Singing & Carry it on in order, no one Knowing any Rule & so none could observe any; we trust this will Sattisfy them. [new paragraph] another thing mentioned by the Singers is their Persons & Characters being Injuriously Treated; as to this wee know not the Persons nor the Perticular Sircumstances that have attended their offenses: wee hope those Persons will Seriously reflect on their Conduct & See the Importance of their Paying a Sollem regard to that golden Rule (of Doing to others as they would have others do to them) [new paragraph] a nother matter of Discouragement mentioned by the Singers is their not having Liberty to Sing once a Day without Reading line by line &c as to this, the Singers as Individuals have a Right of Private Judgment. they to gather think that is best. The Church has the same Right. wee must strive to Enlighten each other, & hope we shall be lead to do right. Nothing is more common than opposition & Discouragement in a good work. [new paragraph] With respect to the matters of uneasiness in the minds of some Relative to the Proceedings of the Singers in some respects Since the late Indeavours of Learning to Sing by Rule in our Congregation in the first place the Singers Ariseing to To [sic] Set the Psalm or Strike the Tune when the Quethiser or Quethisers, who were orderly Introduced to do that Duty being Present attempting to do their Duty were Interrupted, and this of the Singers was not as wee Suppose don on a Sudden by Supprise, but by before Determination: further their proceeding to Sing without reading line by line, no previous notice being given to those whose whose [sic] Duty it was to read, & haveing no vote of the Church passed to Sing without Reading. [new paragraph] In this we Sincerely think many of the Singers are to Blame, Did not Proceed according to the Rules of Decency & good order; by which they have brought a Blemish on the good work they were engaged in, for which they have good Reason to reflect upon them selves wee hope they will do honour to them selves & the Cause of God: by makeing Sutable Confession herefor. further it is our Real oppinion that their Introduceing of Some New Tunes & especially Omitting Some Old Tunes: whereby Some who were Desirous of joining in Singing were Deprived of the Privilidge: was not for the Peace & Edifycaton of our Church & Congregation. [new paragraph] Upon the whole your Committe is Sencible there has been blame on both Sides. wee would by no means Discourage what is good & Praise worthy in our Children & young People in learning good Arts Rules &c; & in Promoting Psalmody. Wee hope none will. they observing the Rules of good order & Edification; any Conduct to the contra[r]y wee look upon it to be our Duty to appear against. wee hope that wherein any have Injured the Persons or Characters of the Singers or hendered them in Promoting any good work, will be Sencible thereof. we hope we shall all be Inabled to Look at Home in this time of Trouble & Diffeculty: to Know our own Duty & do it. to seek after the things that make for Peac[e] & wherby we may Edify one another. [new paragraph] as to futer Proceeding in Carrying on Singing in Public Worship wee are Sencible that those that Lead need wisdom to Direct them: & that they will make use of Such Tunes as will be for the Peace & Edification of our

Assembly in General.--& further that Psalms be Sung once on the Sabbath Days at the Concluding of the Divine Servis, by Reading one verse or half stave at once, for the Space of four months next. [new paragraph] Sturbridge August the 21st, 1779 / John Mprse, / Joshua Harding / Ralph Wheelock / *Committee*. [MA/Sturbridge; Haynes 1910, pp. 57-59]

1779, 15 July, 21 August – see 1778, 18 November

1779, 5 August – see 1726, March

1780: “...a far more violent and determined resistance [than to the seating together of the singers] was offered to the more serious innovation of singing without ‘lining.’ [new paragraph] This took place in 1780. The singers had applied for permission to occupy the front seat in the gallery; with a view, doubtless, of performing the service of singing as a choir, as a substitute for the general and promiscuous singing by the congregation. The permission was granted: and the choir, not stopping for the deacon to read the line, drowned his voice when he attempted it; greatly scandalizing him in his sacred office, and giving mortal offence to many by such an unholy usurpation. Many persons left the meeting-house in disgust: good Mr. K. and his wife were among the number; and they consoled themselves in the assurance, which they pretty audibly expressed in the hearing of the congregation, that, ‘when Col. W. got home from the General Court, he would put a stop to such scandalous doings.’ Unfortunately for them, the gentleman referred to had become familiar with the change in Boston, and approved it; and it was found that revolutions in psalm-singing, any more than in more worldly affairs, never go backwards.” [MA/Leicester; Washburn 1860, p. 109]

1780 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1780, 8 August and “a few sabbaths past”: [Ezra Barker to Solomon Warriner, 8 August 1780:] “Sir - / A few sabbaths past I was very early at the Meeting House. Soon after I arrived, one Informed me that it was proposed to spend part of the Intermission Season at noon in the exercise of singing of Psalms. My heart rejoiced at the tidings, provided it might be performed with a Religious design, and in a deacent manner. I was in hopes it might serve greatly to prevent a great deal of needless, (and I may venture to say wicked) conversation on Sabbath-day noons, which is too much the practice in this degenerate day, Alas!—I waited awhile after the forenoon exercise was over, and seeing no motion made toward the proposed singing, I did not know but the report I received in the morning was a mistake. But just before the time of the afternoon exercise as I sat on my seat abroad at the east side of the Meeting House, I heard the sounding of Notes within the House. I suddenly arose meaning to join in that desirable exercise of singing of Praise to our Maker and Redeemer. But as I was almost stepping into the House, my Heart sunk within me finding myself disappointed, for I soon perceived that I could have no part or lot in the matter, unless it were to be amused only with sounds of some new adopted Tune, at the same time my Understanding remained unfruitfull for want of

knowing the matter sung. I soon returned to the seat from whence I arose, thinking it more my duty to Meditate upon the sermon delivered in the forenoon, than to attend upon such a method of carrying an end on the Holy Sabbath day—But to my grief I speak it, Just so of late in the Time of our Social Worship, I, and more than three quarters of a large congregation are deprived of bearing a part in that solemn Worship viz.—that part of singing Gods praise, and all for want of having the Psalm read line by line. Perhaps the reply may be, They do so in other places, and people should bring books. Answer—We may not follow a multitude to do evil, and it is impossible for all to get Books; and if all had Books, they could not all be benefitted by them, some being old and dim-sighted, others young and not versed enough in reading to keep pace while singing, yet each and all of so competent an understanding as to be edified if they would be faithfull to attend, and could be favoured with having each line read. It is true some have not voices to sing, but it is our duty to sing in Heart with the Understanding as well as with our voices if we would find acceptance with our God. I think each one of the Assembly ought to have the Privilege of joining in such manner as they are capable. This I presume no serious person will deny. Upon the whole, the way and manner of singing in our Assembly of late, is highly inconsistant with social worship, nor do I think it agreeable to the Institution, or acceptable in the sight of God. Besides, some of the Tunes made use of are so airy and lite that one at a distance would be apt to imagine that a merry company had got together for singing and Dancing, they being in no way adapted to the gravity of the verse. This was a thing which much grieved good Dea[con Nathaniel] Warriner [who had died on 10 January of that year] and caused him to take his hat and go out several times. But to return to singing without reading, when I consider how many are deprived of bearing their part, I cannot but be of Opinion (and I am not alone in the Opinion) that it would in some good measure be as justifiable for our ministers to set up Preaching & Praying in the Latin or some unknown tongue, as to sing without reading. In that case we might be entertained with a smooth voice, but our understanding remain barren & unfruitful—Upon the whole the Practice is not Right let who will recommend it, or encourage it. We have been wont to cry out against Separates, but this I think is a new way of separating. And [p. 2] I could wish it may not too much resemble an abomination which will bring on a Desolation—And were it not that I am so exceedingly pleased and entertained with the performances from the pulpit each sabbath [sarcasm here?], I should be almost tempted to tarry at home, and read my Bible. [new paragraph] As to singing at noon betwix[t] meetings I would not be understood to disapprove of it entirely, but should be glad to have it performed differently viz—to being a little sooner and let the Psalm be read line by line while singing. If a little christian conversation were added, doubtless it might be profitable, the whole performed with seriousness, having a single eye to the glory of God, & mutual edification, the whole completed and finished before the minister comes in for the afternoon exercise. But how grating think ye it must be to a serious mind, to observe a long Intermission spent away in conversation about the world & anything that comes uppermost (and upon Gods Holy Sabbath day too) and just before afternoon service slip into God's House and go to singing and continue some time after the Minister is come; at the same time the big[g]er part only amused with a noise—I dont say what

this resembles. But this I will venture to say; that I wish that we all could avoid worldly conversation more than is practiced at this day— [new paragraph] But before I close, I cannot but make some remarks upon what I and some others have observed for several years past. To pass over many things which ought to be lamented, such as sabbath-breaking, extortion, profane speaking, &c &c &c The following hath been taken notice of viz—A running into new modes & novels not only in Dress, but in the performance of Divine Worship; such as singers sitting together out of their proper place according to decency—often shifting of Tunes, throwing by good old grave & solid Tunes, for new and more airy & light merry Tunes, &c. So that by little & little that part of worship is performed but by a few. These things have been remarked as a sure sign that religion was going to decay. While these things have increased, Pure Gospel Religion hath abundantly decreased. It not only happens in this town, but in towns all around us, and unless a speedy and universal Reformation takes place, we may not expect that Gods Publick Judgments will be taken away[.] If war should cease, God hath other Judgments in store to punish a wicked & backsliding people. According to what we read we have great reason to fear that unless we are Reformed we shall be destroyed. [new paragraph] The reason of my directing this to you S[i]r, is because I understand you at present give the lead to the singing—and as I think I sincerely desire that our Publick Worship might be performed to the Honour and Glory of God, and our mutual edification, so I hope you will accept it as wrote with that design. You are at Liberty in a prudent way to communicate it to any whom it may more immediately concern. Perhaps some may make lite of it, and misimprove it; they must answer for that and not I. [new paragraph] Inasmuch as I have for a number of years had the care of youth & children under my instruction I write the more freely. And yourself being one of the number, you may remember as well as all others whom I have instructed can testify, that I have not only industriously endeavoured to learn you the art of Reading, but also have endeavoured to instil[l] good Principles as your abilities would admit, and to teach each one his duty both toward God & man. And I cannot but have a peculiar regard for every one I have had the charge of. And I think my heart would rejoyce to have a general Reformation take place in this Town and especially among our young men and women and children. If we could be bles[s]ed with the outpourings of God's Spirit [p. 3] in such abundance as I have been [*recte* seen?] evidence to in some Towns since my remembrance, I say if this could be our happy case, the cry among us would not be, how did you like the new tune to-day, but the cry would be, Men & Brethren, what must I do to be saved. [new paragraph] My Friend, What if you should endeavour to promote & set up a meeting for Prayer among those of your age about once a week or once a Fortnight—Who knows but God might hear & pour out of his Spirit and cause a stirring among the dry bones. I am persuaded that we should in that case be less carried away with modes & outward ceremonies in Worship, and be more concerned to be Born again, to become new creatures, to get our peace made with God, to get an Interest in the merits of Jesus Christ, to be made holy & heart & life, and be made meet for an inheritance with the saints in light, where we may ever sing praise to Him who sitteth on the Throne, and shall stand in no need of these modes & ceremonies for our assistance, and where Jargon & Discord will never be permitted to enter—

Amen. I have run out to a greater length than I designed when I began—if it shall prove beneficial I shall not repent—this I must leave to Him who alonce [*sic*] can give a blessing.—I subscribe your real Friend / Ezra Barker / Wilbraham, Aug^t 8th 1780 / Religion governed by fashion, is not true Religion. / When the Tune chiefly is aimed at, and the matter sung disregarded, we become guilty of Idolatry. / In Prov. 24, 21 I read, My son fear thou the Lord and meddle not with them that are given to change.” [MA/Wilbraham; Barker 1780, entire]

1780, 31 August – see ca. 1770

1780 or soon after – see n.d. (before 1764)

“At a precinct meeting, held December 24, 1781, it was ‘voted to continue congregational singing; also voted to choose a committee to propose some way in which singing should be performed in this congregation.’” [MA/Boylston; Ainsworth 1887, p. 8]

1785, 24 August + 1786, 12 March, 4 September + 1787, 17 October + 1788, 25 September: “One difficult matter, which required all the abundant tact of Mr. [Rev. Joseph] Avery to manage, was the change which came in the latter part of the eighteenth century in respect to church music, and other elements of public worship. To place the following records in order will show with sufficient distinctness the gradual modification of sentiment. [indented] ‘1785 Augst 24th At a Chh meeting appointed to consult what is proper to be done relative to singing in the publick worship of God— Voted 1 / that Dea. Haven set such tunes as he shall think fit & proper—omitting for the present those tunes which are found particularly disagreeable to a number of the Chh—& to sing by reading of two Lines of y^e psalm. 2 / The Question was put whether the reading of the psalm be omitted at the last time of singing on every Sabbath 11 Votes for & 11 against it.—’ ‘1786 March 12. Voted that the Singers be desired to sing such tunes as may be sung with reading two Lines only, at those times of singing which immediately precede the sermons & the Chh will acquiesce in their singing without reading at the beginning of the exercises, & the last time in the afternoon—& further that this be continued till tis otherwise signified to them by the Chh. or Town, or each of them.’ [p. 95] ‘1786 Sept.^r 4th at a Chh. meeting—Voted 1 / to signify to the Singers that the Chh desire that all such of them, as are able to lead in the Singing, would do it as occasion may require— 2 / that ’tis the earnest request of the Chh that the Singers would omit the singing of Milford & Hart[ford] [←square brackets in source] & in Tunes that are repeated, that, if it may be, they would omit the Repeats till the last time of going over the tune.’ ‘1787 Oct.^r 17. The Chh met. 1 / put to vote whether the Chh will make any alterations as to the present mode of singing. [new line] eight votes for, & eight against it—’ ‘1788 Sept.^r 25 at a Chh meeting Voted 1 / that the Chh acquiesce in having the Singing carried on in the publick worship, without having the psalm read by the Deacons any part of the day.— 2 / that if a bible, with explanations of the scriptures, shall be procur’d,—that a portion out of the same may be read in lieu of the singing at the beginning of the exercises that part of the

year when 'tis usual to sing five times in a day.— ” [MA/Holden; Estes 1894, pp. 94-95] [These church votes should be considered in tandem with Rev. Avery's later correspondence with parishioners Rice + Smith; see RS/OW 1791 + 1794; also note that on 13 October 1787, four days before one of these votes, Rev. Avery wrote to Rice asking him to attend the next Church meeting, “that they may hear from you the reasons of your absenting yourself from special ordinances” (photocopy of this letter with copies of later letters).]

“In the year 1786 the town voted to allow the people in the east end of the township to ‘regulate the way of singing in Divine Service in the east end as they shall think proper.’” [ME/Brunswick; Wheeler 1878, p. 363]

1786, 12 March, 4 September – see 1785, 24 August

1786, 17 April, 5 July: “At a meeting held April 17, ...the church [of the First Parish, Brunswick]...considered in regard to the new mode of singing adopted at the east end of the town, and it was voted that the psalms and hymns should be read by the deacons, *i.e.*, line by line, until all had had time to furnish themselves with books. Charles Thomas was chosen chorister at the east end, and John Dunning at the west end of the town, with liberty to appoint their own assistants. [new paragraph] At a meeting held July 5, there was a pretty warm discussion in regard to the mode of singing. After a while the discussion turned upon the question whether the church was Congregational or Presbyterian. The meeting closed without settling the point.” [ME/Brunswick; Wheeler 1878, p. 370]

1787, 17 October – see 1785, 24 August

1788, 25 September – see 1785, 24 August

1791, 2, 11, 15 January + 1794, 3 November: “Holden Jan^y 2.^d 1790 [*recte* 1791] / Dear Sirs [i.e., Jonathan Rice + _____ Smith] ... True it is, that they [the Holden Church] have voted one thing as to the mode of Singing in the Congregation at one time, & Something different at another.... Let us suppose then now for [a] moment, that in the true Spirit of Candor you were return'd , & statedly & cheerfully attended [public worship] with us that when the mere musick [next p.] of the voice was not So pleasing as you could wish, that then your minds were deeply fix'd on the great, & interesting truths contain'd in the Sacred psalm, or hymn, & your Souls were rising in Secret harmony to God on the wings of faith, & love. Would you not reflect on Such opportunities afterwards with the Sincerest pleasure, & regard them as far from being lost? ... [Rev. Joseph Avery]” [new letter:] “Holden Jan^y 11:th 1791 / Rev.^d Sir [i.e., Joseph Avery]the mode of Singing which is So much offensive to me that I Cannot Glorify God nor Edifye myself: & further the Church have Gon Conterary to the Covenant owned be [*recte* by] Every Brother of the Church: in the Covenant are these words [“]promising Carefully to avoid all Sinful Stumbleing Blocks & Contentions[”] to me[n]tion no more: [written above this line at this point: “on the covenant”] the mere musick as you Call it Is the block in my way as your Self

& the Church are Sensable of: this mere Musick has No melody at all in it.... [Jonathan Rice]" [new letter:] "Holden Jan.^y 15.1791 / Dear Sir [i.e., Jonathan Rice] ... Supposing the greater part of the Church had thought with you as to the Singing, chosen the tunes that you like best, & to have the psalm read as is most agreeable to you, that some of the Church had complain'd & Said that they [c?]ould not be edify'd by Such Singing, & that it was laying a Stumbling block before them to Sing after that sort; would you believe it was, & in order to please them would you be willing to lay aside the Singing that was agreeable to you. I presume that you would not; & still that you would think that they ought not, on this account to forsake the communion of the Church. If the musick was as disagreeable to me as to you, I persuade myself that I could, notwithstanding, find edification in the house of God. I could resolve to have my mind raised above the mere Sound of the voice, & let the great truths of the psalm or hymn engross my attention. ["&"] If the musick is ever So agreeable to my ear, yet if I pay no regard to the truths that are Sung, I am not edify'd as I ought. The main thing is to have the heart in tune, rightly impressed & influenc'd. why Should we let the mere voice, if not agreeable, destroy our devotion, & prevent our edification. ... I am with all Sincerity, & freindship / Yours &c / Joseph Avery" [new letter:] "Holden Nov.^r 3. 1794 / Dear Sir [i.e., ____ Smith, with P. S. requesting Smith to show the letter to Jonathan Rice] ... But shall it be here Said that the Church did vote that the Singing Should be carried on without reading, tho' they knew this would be grievous to you. The Church I believe tho't at that time [1786] that if they did not do this there would take place that which would be a general grief to them, & that all things consider'd, it was wisdom so to do. Not that they were indifferent to your happiness, but this they apprehended was on the whole expedient, & most for the edification for the body of the Church, & people. & tho' their Judgment, in this instance, differ'd from yours, why should we divide in affections? The Church no doubt hoped that by the help of your psalm book you might be improv'd, & [next p.] edified tho' the Several lines of the psalm were not repeated by the Deacons. Can you not then find it in your heart to meet with those who if they have done wrong in your judgment, have done that which they themselves believ'd to be wisest, & best upon the whole? ... I add no more but that I am your Sincere Friend & well-wisher / Joseph Avery" [MA/Holden; Avery/Holden MSS. 1791, 1794]

1794, 3 November – see 1791, 2, 11, 15 January

ca. 1795-1796: "It was during Mr. [Ebenezer] Bradford's [p. 28] ministry, in 1795 and 1796, that considerable repairs were made upon the meeting-house, and a porch built at the south end of it, through which were stairs leading to the gallery. About the same time it was, that the old practice of repeating the reading of the psalm, or hymn, line by line by the deacon, previous to singing, after a severe struggle between the adherents of the ancient and modern mode, was entirely abandoned." [This is the First Church in Rowley.] [MA/Rowley; Gage 1840, pp. 27-28]

"In 1800, the Town voted not to hier [*sic*] a singing school-master. An article was read to see if the Town will give any encouragement to those persons that are

disposed to learn the art of singing, that the singing may be carried on in good order in the meeting house. At the next meeting \$40 was appropriated: the Baptists to draw their equal proportion. At that period the singing was congregational, and was often very poor and tended not to edification." [MA/Chelmsford; Waters 1917, p. 681]

1826, 20 April: "...a time when English was beginning to take its place beside German in the church service [of the Lutheran church in Waldoboro]. The first mention of such a change in the singing is indicated in the records under date of April 20, 1826, in the following comment: 'To have a committee to regulate the singing in both the German and English languages.'" [ME/Waldoboro; Stahl 1956, vol. II, p. 22]