

DISCORD AT MEETING (D)

n.d.: "If space permitted, it might be amusing to refer to some of the matters upon which the public mind was agitated at different times in the Colony and Province: such as, whether one person alone should sing,--the congregation joining in spirit, as in prayer; whether women should be allowed to sing in public; whether 'carnal men' and pagans, or only Christians, should be allowed to sing; and whether singing should be practised 'in tunes invented;' [punctuation *sic*] and whether it might be done by reading from a book, and the like." [Are most of these matters the brain-children of the present author? No evidence of these (other than the last, singing from books) being issues in anything I've read.] [MA/Leicester; Washburn 1860, p. 107]

n.d.: "Another subject which caused a great deal of trouble in the church was the introduction of instrumental music. After a struggle, the bass viol was admitted as help for the voices. So great was the opposition of a prominent member, that he threatened to absent himself if this instrument should be seen in the church. It is said that a neighbor accused this man of trespassing upon his land, and he proposed to hang a bass viol upon one of his trees, saying that the sight of it was so offensive that it would keep his trespassing neighbor far away from his premises. [new paragraph] The violin was admitted on the condition that it should be played upside down, for then it would be a viol, and by no means a fiddle. [new paragraph] Then followed a great number of instruments of music, the [p. 85] double bass viol, the bassoon, the serpent, the flute, clarinet, and French horn, forming an orchestra or brass band. [new paragraph] It is said that some of the ancients, after the performance of the choir under these new conditions, left the church in tears, feeling that the worshipers in God's house had become servants of Nebuchadnezzar, whose herald proclaimed, 'At what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship.'" [MA/Middleborough; Middleborough First Congregational Church 1895, pp. 84-85]

n.d.: "Owing to the want of psalm or hymn-books, it was the practice, in the early days of Dublin church, as in other churches, for the minister to read the whole hymn; and, after that, one of the deacons read one line, which the choir sang, and then he read another, which was also sung; and so on, reading and singing alternating till the hymn was finished. Even after the choir were supplied with books, the practice was not wholly discontinued. The deacon, however, in such a case, would read two lines or a stanza, which the choir sang after him, using their books at the same time. When the practice was changed in Dublin is not known; but it has been said, that one of the deacons was disturbed by the change, and expressed much dissatisfaction." [NH/Dublin; Dublin 1855, p. 196]

n.d.: "In some towns the advent of such musical viols was a source of displeasure among the clergy, as well as congregations. One minister is said to have shouted, 'Sing the 112th Psalm and fiddle it to your hearts' content.'" [NH/Hampstead; Noyes 1903, p. 168]

n.d.: "Singing by choirs was a great innovation, and was not brought about without much opposition. In some instances the deacons objected to the innovation, and left the churches upon its introduction, and in others the ministers were opposed to it, and would not read

psalms when on exchange, where the practice of lining had been done away.”
[NH/Manchester; Potter 1856, p. 523]

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]

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 Reg- [p. 489] ularly; 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 + 1723, 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 [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, vol. I, pp. 411-412]

1724, February – see 1723, March

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, 7 April, 9 May + 1727, March: "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.” [CT/Farmington; Camp 1889, p. 87]

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]

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 feb^{ry} Last for breach of Sabbath, and so yo^r poor petition^r is Layed under a very heaveie 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 partyes 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 petioner [*sic* in original?] prayes 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]

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]

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]

n.d. (ca. 1733-1735) + n.d.: "This town [incorporated 1735] was named after Bishop [George] Berkeley who resided at Newport, R. I., in 1729-31.... When he heard that this town had taken his name he donated a church organ to it and sent it to Newport. But certain of the inhabitants were opposed to instrumental music in churches, and money could not be raised to pay the freight, and there it remained till some persons [presumably of Newport] claimed it in payment of storage. Many years afterwards there were some who would [p. 5] not tolerate musical instruments in the choir. When the bass viol first began to be played only in the last singing, Mr. Abner Burt, a prominent man, would rise and, slamming the pew door after him, leave the church, and when asked why he did so, said he would not hear that bull roar. There is no record as alleged that the town voted not to receive Bishop Berkeley's gift for the reason that it was an invention of the devil to catch men's souls." [MA/Berkley; Sanford 1872, pp. 4-5]

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]

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."]

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[ly] 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, 13 July: "I visited Mr. Samuel Fay as the Committee had desir'd on the 13th. He deny'd that he had Said any Thing as if he desir'd any visit from me. His chief objections and offence against me were what arose from my bringing in new Singing and my wearing a Wigg. I reply'd that I was not aware that I had at any time given him just Reason of Offence but if he judg'd I had and we could not succeed in Reconciling the matter our Selves it was our Wisdom to get the Assistance of Some prudent, Serious, Christian Brethren about us; and I desir'd him to choose who he pleas'd that were such and I would be advis'd and guided by them. N.B. I inform'd him of not only what notice I took of his Conduct when my Brother Parkman was with me at his House to make him a Visit and he would not So much as come down from the Chamber to Speak with us, and of what I have divers times heard of him having for Several Years kept himself from seeing me in the pulpit, etc.—Which he own'd with a Laugh. He was urg'd to choose some Christian men to hear his Grievances—but he gave no reply to any of these Proposals, He did vouchsafe to thank my visit when I withdrew." [MA/Westborough; Parkman/Walett 1974, p. 49]

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

1739, 18 February, 8 March + 1751, September + 1752, 12 January, 14 February: "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." [MA/Franklin; Blake 1879, pp. 31-32]

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, 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]

1743 – see 1740, 3 September

1745, 6 March – see 1740, 3 September

1749, 27 January, 30 March, 22 June: [original church records, p. 314, from Church proceedings of 27 January 1749:] "The Rev^d. M^r. McClenachan [William McClanachan, minister of the Rumney Marsh (Revere) church from 1748 to 1754] proposed to the Church's Consideration whether they would relinquish the use of the present Version of the Psalms [Bay Psalm Book?], in Divine Service and for the future Sing Doctor Watts's version of the Psalms; after considerable debate it was agreed this matter shou'd subside for the span of a month, and in the mean time, the members wou'd examin[e] said version; and the Elder's [punctuation *sic*] converse with any of the Congregation that shou'd be dissatisfied, and indeavour their Satisfaction. ... [p. 316] ...March 30. 1749 / The Church met by appointment; After Prayer, The Rev^d. M^r. McClenachan propos'd to the Church whether they wou'd alter the Version of Psalms in com[m]on use & for the future sing D^r. Watts's version at Divine service. [new paragraph] Elder Hasey desired the consideration thereof might be continued a further time. Whereupon, [p. 317; new paragraph] Voted, to postpone that matter for the space of two months, and if no material objection to the use of said Version shou'd be of[f]ered in that term, agreed to the use thereof. ... June 22 / At a Church meeting duely notified last Sabbath, after prayer M^r. McClenachan acquainted the Church he had received no objection from any members of the town or Church against the use of D^r. Watts's Psalms in publick worship but what he thôt were obviated, Upon which, Nem^e. Cont^e. [new paragraph] Voted, This Church will for the future, use said Version at Divine Services. [back to p. 33, editors writing:] "...McClanachan proposed, and the church accepted, the use of Isaac Watts's hymns in worship to supplement or replace traditional psalm-singing [←not exactly "traditional psalm-singing"—see above]. These innovations alienated several prominent members of the church, including Nathan Cheever, son of the

former pastor, and two of the deacons, who removed to another church.” [MA/Revere; Cooper and Minkema 2006, pp. 33, 314, 316-317]

1750, 29-30 April: “N.B. Mr. David Batherick fell upon me as I was coming out of the Door with bitter Resentments of Abuse, because when I yesterday, for the last singing in Publick appointed Mean [*recte* MEAR—surely transcriber Walett’s error] Tune to be sung, and he instead of Mean, Set Canterbury (as I thought through either Mistake, or because he could not strike upon Mean at that Time) I set the Tune mention’d [i. e., MEAR] myself. Nor did I know that this or the other Triple Time Tunes were displeasing to any, till he now makes it one aggravation of the Offence that I knew that people did not like it and yet I would Sett it. N.B. Mr. Batherick Said there was one who said he would go out if that Tune was Sung. I answer’d that (who ever he was) he was (or would be if he Should do so) a Blockhead for his Pains. N.B. Lieutenant Thomas Forbush [an old opponent of Parkman’s in matters relating to singing; see RS/OW 1730, 7 September + 1731, February] sat by and heard his Bitterness. N.B. I was very much mov’d, and gave him [likely Batherick] Some deserv’d Correction. But the Lord forgive what was [i. e., whatever may have been] amiss in me at this Critical Juncture.” [MA/Westborough; Parkman/Walett, p. 215]

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 studdy 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]

n.d. (probably between 1750 and 1800): “In many places the bringing in of instrumental music caused divisions and unseemly demonstrations even in the house of worship. But it is stated that the most violent form of dissent in Lancaster was the shaking of one Mr. Wheelock’s head when the pitch pipe was sounded, and the departure of a Mr. [Thomas*] Holt at the sound of the same harmless instrument, or when ‘funeral thought’ [probably FUNERAL THOUGHT by Englishman Isaac Smith, setting “Hark! from the tombs a doleful sound”] was sung.” [MA/Lancaster; Marvin 1879, p. 382] [*“Thomas Holt” in Joseph Willard, *Topographical and Historical Sketches of the Town of Lancaster* (Worcester, Mass., 1826), p. 68n]

1751, September – see 1739, 18 February

1752, 12 January, 14 February – see 1739, 18 February

1752, late November: “The question of church music, which the pastor had taken so vigorously in hand twenty years before [see 1731, 18 February, above], began to break out with its chronic disorder again in 1752. This time it seems that there were those who desired to improve on the minister’s improvement, which would not do; so the church came to the rescue, and voted that they ‘were satisfied in the pastor’s having desired Bro. Ed^d Whipple to set the Tune, and in the Tunes which we have been wont to sing in this congregation.” [MA/Westborough; Deforest 1891, p. 142] [see below, 1752, 16, 19, 30 November, for a fleshing-out of this]

1752, 16, 19, 30 November: “16. Publick Thanksgiving. I preach’d on Ps. 50, 22. ... N.B. Mr. Edwards Whipple who has been wont to set the Tune, having set 100 new [a triple-time tune] at the first singing, Mr. David Batherick [a demonstrated foe of triple-time tunes; see 1750, 29-30 April above] was so displeas’d that at the Next Singing he rose up and Set a Tune that would please himself better, and thus likewise at the last Singing, to the great Disturbance of many. At Evening comes [*sic?*] Messers. Williams, Francis and Edwards Whipple, Nathan Maynard and Mr. Jonathan Ward, the Schoolmaster to visit me. ... 19. On Ps. 11, 7, a.m., and when I nam’d that Psalm to be Sung [I] expressly desir’d Mr. Edwards

Whipple would Set the Tune, and added that considering how awful those Words are, may no one [as, for instance, David Batherick] presume, on what Pretence So ever to interrupt the Sacred Worship. ... [p. 264] ... 30. N.B. I ask'd the Church[']s Minds respecting my appointing or desiring a Person to sett the Psalm, and they voted that they were Satisfy'd with what I had done in it, particularly with my having desir'd Brother Edwards Whipple to Sett the Psalm. I moreover requested that they would Shew their Minds respecting the Tunes which we had usually Sung—Triple-time Tunes were especially intended, viz. Mear Ps. 100 new etc. They voted Satisfaction thereupon. At least I conceiv'd there was a Vote, because nobody objected against it: but otherwise, I am not altogether clear in it, that there was a Majority of Hands." [MA/Westborough; Parkman/Walett 1974, pp. 263, 264]

1755, 25 August: "Before Meeting, Mr. [David] Batheric[k] gave me fresh Trouble about Singing (in the assembly) triple Time tunes; and would have Me lay this before the Church, but I told him we had so much Business today, it was not likely there would be Time for it." [MA/Westborough; Parkman/Walett 1974, p. 294]

ca. 1763 + 1765 + 1780, May: "I do not find that the introduction of instrumental music as a part of public worship, or the change in the mode of singing, gave rise to any uneasiness in the parish. Not so however with the intro- [p. 64] duction of the 'New Version.' Many were grieved because of the change, and two individuals proceeded further. The version of Sternhold and Hopkins, the first metrical version of the Psalms, in English, was never used in this town. This was not in high repute; Eliot, Welde, and Richard Mather, in 1639, attempted a translation, but their labors were not valued; and President Dunster, the following year, was called upon to revise the collection. His improved version was the one in use in most of the New England Churches for many years—and, in Lancaster, till the time of Mr. Harrington [Rev. Timothy Harrington, pastor from 1748 to 1795]. Probably about the year 1763, the collection by Tate and Brady was introduced. Early in 1665 [*sic; recte* 1765], a complaint was made that one of the members of the church, Moses Osgood, with his wife, Martha, had been absent from the communion service more than a year. On being inquired of by the church, why they absented themselves from the Supper, they sent a written reply, in which they say that the reason is, 'the bringing in of the New Version, as we think, not in a prudent and regular way. Also we find, in said Version, such words and expressions as are unknown by us, so that we cannot sing with the understanding also. The composers of the said version, we find, have taken too great a liberty to themselves, as we think, to depart from the scriptures. And as for the hymns taken from the other parts of the bible, we know of no warrant in the bible for them, and shall humbly wait on such as are the maintainers of them to produce and demonstrate the warrantableness for them from the word of God. We are therefore waiting the removing or in some way or other the satisfying the above said doubts; for they are a matter of grievance to us, and we think we are wronged in our highest interest, &c.' Further complaint was made against them, that they had declared 'the church had broken their covenant with them, in bringing in the New Version of the Psalms, which they affirmed to be made for *Papists and Arminians, to be full of heresy, and in an unknown tongue.*' Also, that 'Mr. Harrington asserted at the conference meeting, that he was one half the church, and that he would disannul the meeting.' [new paragraph] For this second charge, the offenders made satisfaction; but on the first, the evidence that was adduced to exculpate, being consid- [p. 70] ered insufficient, and no

excuse being offered, the church voted on admonition and 'suspension.' The wife afterwards (1780, May,) came forward, made explanations that were deemed satisfactory, and was restored [to communion]. The husband probably continued steadfast in adhering to the old version by President Dunster. I do not find that he forsook his first love, or that his suspension was broken off." [footnote, p. 70: "... Watt's [sic] superseded Tate and Brady, and Belknap, Watts in Lancaster."] [MA/Lancaster; Willard 1826, pp. 68-70] [compare this account with that under 1764 + 1765, 27 January, May, 11 July, 4 September, 25 October + 1780, 3 May below]

1764 + 1765, 27 January, May, 11 July, 4 September, 25 October + 1780, 3 May: "In Willard's History [Joseph Willard, *Topographical and Historical Sketches of the Town of Lancaster* (Worcester, Mass., 1826), pp. 68-70] there is a condensed statement [see ca. 1763 + 1765 + 1780, May above] of the case of Moses Osgood and his wife, which lingered through fifteen years before reaching a final settlement. The chief feature of interest in the whole transaction was the infinite patience of all the parties concerned, so far as can be judged at this late day. The matter came before the church 'after the afternoon service on Lord's day, January 27, 1765.' The parties had 'absented themselves from communion in the holy supper more than twelve months.' By vote of the church brother and sister Osgood were required to give the 'reasons of their absenting themselves' in writing, to be communicated on the first Sunday in March. The pastor sent a copy [p. 382] of the votes by Br. Benjamin Ballard; but for a 'special reason he delivered the said copy to Br. Joseph Abbot, who, in the presence of Br. John Sargeant, delivered it to the said Br. Moses Osgood in his own house.' [new paragraph] **The occasion of the trouble was the introduction of a new version of the Psalms.** ... Many [in Lancaster]...were grieved by the use of the new version [Brady and Tate]. Dunster, president of Harvard College, had made an improvement on the translations of earlier New England writers, as John Eliot, Welde and Richard Mather, and his work was used in Lancaster till after the death of Mr. Prentice [Rev. John Prentice, died 1748]. ... Mr. Osgood was asked if he did not esteem it his duty to have made a regular application for redress of any grievance, instead of withdrawing from the Lord's table, and replied in the affirmative. Being called upon for their reasons for withdrawing, Mr. and Mrs. Osgood joined in the following statement to the church. [new paragraph] 'We being called upon by you to give the reasons of our withdrawing from the Lord's Supper, they are as followeth, viz. The bringing in the New Version, (that of Tate and Brady,) as we think, not in a prudent and regular way. – Also we find in said version, such words and expressions as are unknown by us, so that we cannot sing with the understanding also. – The composers of the said version we find have taken too great a liberty to themselves, as we think, to depart from the Scriptures. – And as for the Hymns taken from other parts of the Bible, we know of no warrant in the Bible for them, and shall humbly wait on such as are the maintainers of them to produce and demonstrate the warrantable- [p. 383] ness for them from the Word of God. – We are therefore waiting the removing, or in some way or other the satisfying the abovesaid doubts; for they are a matter of grievance to us, and we think we are wronged in our highest interest. – But if peace and love should again reign among you as formerly, we should rejoice thereat; and should be glad to rejoice again with you as heretofore in all things. – These are reasons, why in conscience, we cannot join with you in special ordinances. From yours in sincerity. MOSES, MARTHA OSGOOD. May, 1765.' [new paragraph] These reasons were voted

unsatisfactory, and then Judge Wilder, jr., one of the deacons brought forward other grounds of complaint. One was that they had said, 'the Church had broken covenant with them in bringing in the New Version of the Psalms, which they affirmed to be made for Papists and Arminians, to be full of heresy, and in an unknown tongue.' Another was 'their affirming that Mr. Harrington [Timothy Harrington, pastor 1748-1795] asserted at the conference meeting that he was half the church, and that he would disannul the meeting.' And lastly 'their positively denying that they had affirmed that the New Version was full of heresy.' [new paragraph] The third point was not insisted upon, and the brother and sister 'made such satisfaction as was accepted' in relation to the second. Dea. Wilder and his witnesses were then heard; and the accused offered what they had to say, under the first article of complaint, when the church adjourned to the close of the next public lecture, which was July 11, 1765. At that meeting the action of the church was modified to read as follows: 'that they esteemed the said reasons insufficient to justify their said brother and sister in the *manner* of their late withdraw.' [new paragraph] The trial was prolonged from meeting to meeting, until the church voted that the Pastor should send a letter of admonition to the erring parties. In the meantime they were suspended from communion. The letter was a solemn and faithful remonstrance, sustaining the action of the church and urging the brother and sister to perform their duty. The following entry shows how such business was done formerly. 'October 25, 1765. Agreeable to the vote of the church on September 4, 1765, the Pastor proceeded to the house of the said Moses Osgood, and in the presence of Daniel Rugg and Joseph Abbot, brethren of the church, read the above letter of admonition and suspension to him. And as the wife of the said Moses was not at home, left a copy of it.' [new paragraph] The case was before the church again, next year, but with no satisfactory result. ... [new paragraph] ...nothing appears to show that Moses Osgood ever acknowledged the error of his ways, or that he was restored [to communion]. Neither does it appear that he was excommunicated. His death occurred in the year 1776, and we may charitably hope [p. 385] that he went where the 'service of song' is more agreeable than any human performance. [new paragraph] Not so with Mrs. Osgood, who made a statement to the church, May 3, 1780, fifteen years after the trouble began, and four years after her husband's decease, that she had not concurred in any of the words used by her husband in his list of reasons, but that in withdrawing from the Lord's table she had acted irregularly through ignorance of the constitution, and contrary to her covenant engagements with the church, for which she asked forgiveness. She was restored to full communion." [MA/Lancaster; Marvin 1879, pp. 381-385]

1765 – see ca. 1763

1765, 27 January, May, 11 July, 4 September, 25 October – see 1764

1765, 10 November: "Was the first that we sang tate & brady's spalms [*sic*] in Dorchester meeting. Som[e] people much offended at the same. [square brackets following are original, enclosing commentary on this diary entry] [What volumes are contained in the last line of the above extract, 'Some people much offended at the same.' A large part of the real improvements and advances of every age have passed through the same ordeal, whether in religion, law, social life or the mechanical arts; and the progress that is really made, is effected after encountering strong opposition. When the custom was changed

from deaconing out the hymn, [p. 361] as it was called, in public worship, that is, reading line by line before singing, some of the worshippers in different parts of the country were so offended that they left their meetings, never to return, apparently unconscious that the custom was originally adopted because it was difficult to obtain books for all.]” [MA/Dorchester; Pierce/Dorchester 1859, p. 360]

n.d. (between 1766 and 1782): “After Mr. John Kimball [1739-1817], subsequently deacon, came into town [which was probably in late 1765 or 1766; see Morrison + Sharples, Kimball genealogy, 1897, p. 159], some innovations were introduced. Being one of the singers, Mr. Kimball proposed to Rev. Mr. Walker [Timothy Walker, pastor of the Concord church from 1730 to his death in 1782] to dispense with the *lining* of the hymns, as it was called, on the Sabbath; but as Mr. Walker thought it not prudent to attempt it first on the Sabbath, it was arranged between them to make the change on Thanksgiving day. Accordingly, after a hymn had been given out, the leader, as usual, read two lines; the singers struck in, but, instead of stopping at the end of the two lines, kept on, drowning the voice of the leader, who persisted in his vocation of *lining* the hymn! This was the *first* change.” [NH/Concord; Bouton 1856, p. 531]

n.d. (probably late 18th c.): “...I once heard Deacon Moses Richardson [1718-1806], who was one of the [singing] innovators, relate an anecdote upon the subject. Captain Amos Emerson [1738-1823] was the chorister, and named the [p. 324] tune to be sung loud enough to be heard all over the house, so that the congregation knew what to sing. There was one tune which Jethro Colby [1733-1803] would not hear, but when he heard it named would leave the house. On one occasion Captain Emerson agreed with the choir to name some other tune and then sing the bad one. So he gave out an agreeable tune in a loud, clear voice, and sung the disagreeable one, Mr. Colby, meanwhile, keeping his seat. Upon returning from meeting, Mr. Colby was inquired of why he did not leave, and replied that that tune was not sung; but was finally convinced by Captain Emerson that it was. He was cured of leaving the house.” [NH/Chester; Chase 1869, pp. 323-324]

n.d. (likely late 18th c. or early 19th c.): “As to music in this old church [in the second precinct of Rochester, now Mattapoisett], ‘W’ commented as follows in the *Enterprise*: [new paragraph, indented, smaller type:] ‘No instruments of music were tolerated in church service. Some were opposed to singing except by the saints. Total depravity couldn’t sing praises. Seth Barlow, senior [the Seth Barlow married 1767 in Rochester?], was very pious at that time, having been converted as he said by Elder Hix [Elder John Hix (1712-1799) of nearby Rehoboth, Mass.?]. (The Elder said it looked like his work.) He, Seth, could bear no instrument of music, not even a pitch pipe to pitch the tune. On hearing the sound of the pipe, which was something like a graduation between a squeak and a schream [*sic*], Seth left the church in high dudgeon. The next day Seth asked Noah Hammond [the Noah Hammond married 1778 + 1786 in Rochester?] how he thought they cast out devils in the old times. “With a pitch pipe,” says Noah.” [MA/Mattapoisett; Rochester 1907, p. 219]

n.d. (probably late 18th c. and 1800-1803) + 1804, 20 March: “Efforts at various times had been made to introduce the bass-viol into the church service, but serious objections were urged against it. One called it ‘the Lord’s fiddle,’ and another said he should get up and

dance if it came into church. At one meeting it was 'voted to suspend the introduction of the Bass Viol for the present on account of an objection made by Lieut. [p. 161] Simeon Cummings'; but on the 20th of March, 1804, the innocent instrument triumphed over all opposition, the church voting that the bass-viol be introduced into the meeting-house on days of public worship, and that those who have skill to use it, bring it and perform on Sabbath days." [MA/Dunstable; Nason 1877, pp. 160-161]

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 futing 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]

soon after 1768?: "Soon after the formation of the choir [in 1768, if their petition of that year to the town was successful], stringed instruments were introduced, to set the tune, and lead the voices. But it gave great offence to older people. On one occasion, when the violin was disabled, an old man, in terms more forcible than polite, gave thanks aloud *that the Lord's fiddle was broken!*" [MA/Framingham; Temple 1887, p. 337]

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 sincere, 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 lys 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 Chapr. 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.]

n.d. (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]

1770, 11 February: “Some tunes were not relished. On the striking up of ‘Ailesbury’ on Feb. 11, 1770, old William Wheeler got up and went out of meeting.” [MA/Canton; Huntoon 1893, p. 312]

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.] Mr [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." [footnote: "While I would not willingly return to the old method of alternate reading and singing of hymns, 'line by line,' yet I confess my deep sympathy with these old saints in what many will regard as their unreasonable prejudice as to the manner of conducting public worship. I have often been sorely tempted to leave the sanctuary during an exhibition of vocal gymnastics, when fashionable opera-music, dramatically rendered by professional artists, was substituted for the unostentatious singing of 'psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,' by a voluntary choir or by a Christian congregation."] [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

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

1773 – see 1726, March

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

"1773. April. 'Voted to sing on the Lord's days in the afternoon according to the rules taught in the Singing Schools in this and the neighboring societies.' [new paragraph] Soon after this, a teacher of music was employed. After practising some time, he appeared with his scholars in church on a Sunday, and the minister having announced the psalm, the choir, under the instructor's lead, started off with a tune much more lively than the congregation had been accustomed to hear. Upon which, one of the Deacons, Brewster Higley, took his hat and left the house,--exclaiming, as he passed down the aisle,--"*popery! popery!*" [CT/Simsbury; Phelps 1845, p. 167]

1773, 21 April – see 1768, 17 January

1773, April + 1774, December + 1811 + 1825 + 1841 + 1846 + 1851 + 1852: "In April, 1773, the spring after this [meeting] house was first occupied[,] a choir was allowed by the following vote. 'Voted that the [p. 49] people who have learned the rule of singing, have liberty to sit near together in the same position as they sat this day at their singing meeting and they have liberty to assist in carrying on that part of divine worship.' What this 'position' was will occur at once to those 'old inhabitants' who remember the long line of singers around the front of the gallery which was marshaled and controlled by the chorister opposite the pulpit, assisted by a few leading singers. At times this line would be greatly abbreviated and demoralized. Again after a fresh impulse given by 'a singing school,' its well-filled ranks would stretch all along the front, composed of 'young men and maidens, old men and children.' [new paragraph] ... But alas! very soon, in December, 1774, a large committee was required to compromise 'the difference among the singers.' At the same time it was voted to sing at the close of the second service in the winter as well as in the summer. ... In 1811 a large permanent committee was appointed to regulate the singing in every particular. ... [p. 50; new paragraph] ... In 1825 liberty was given to the choir to choose its own leader during the pleasure of the society. In this way came into being what was known as the Associated Choir, the existence of which is manifest on the records of the society in 1841. This society received liberal appropriations for several years, but some differences having arisen which could not be adjusted, its services as an association were dispensed with by vote of the society in 1846. Unhappy controversies having followed this event, the society in 1851 passed some conciliatory resolutions expressive of their high estimate of the value of the service of this body, inviting its members to unite with the existing choir. In 1852 resolutions of a more positive and earnest character for conciliation and adjustment indicate a serious disturbance of feeling among the singers in the society." [CT/Farmington; Porter 1873, pp. 48-50]

n.d. (probably 1774 through end of 18th c.): "In earlier times, no instrumental music was allowed in the churches. Its ultimate admission was not without deep-seated opposition. It is recorded of Jesse Burditt: 'He was so much disturbed by the use of musical instruments by the choir, that for a long time, he absented himself from public worship. Being called to account by the church, the protracted controversy was settled by his consenting to withdraw his opposition to the use of the bass viol, provided no other instrument should be used, and the choir should take no part in singing at the communion service.'" [First Church of Christ in Hubbardston organized 1770; meetinghouse built 1773-1774; worship services in meetinghouse probably as early as August 1774] [MA/Hubbardston; Stowe 1881, p. 83]

n.d. (probably late 1770s or 1780s): "...when Billings'[s] Collection [*The Singing Master's Assistant*] was introduced, and the choir for the first time sang the tune of 'David the King,' [DAVID'S LAMENTATION] an aged man cried out, 'hold, hold!' and seizing his hat left the meeting-house." [MA/Framingham; Temple 1887, p. 337]

after 1775: "'At a subsequent period fuguing tunes were introduced and they produced a literally fuguing effect upon the elder people, the greater part of whom went out of church

as soon as the first verse was sung.” [quoted from the reminiscences of Ebenezer Fox (1763-1843), “a Roxbury lad”] [MA/Roxbury; Thwing 1908, p. 339]

n.d. (after 1775): “At a subsequent period, a kind of music, called [p. 20] *Fugueing tunes*, was introduced; and they had a literally *fugueing* effect upon the elder people, the greater part of whom went out of church as soon as the first verse was sung.” [MA/Roxbury; [Fox] 1838, pp. 19-20]

“April 3, 1778, it is recorded ‘to see if the chh. will consult anything about the singing in the house of God on Lords day, as there are several persons *uneasy* about the same.’ [new paragraph] As a result of this consultation Daniel Cram was chosen assistant chorister; and it may be added that that *uneasy* feeling has pervaded the church more or less to this present day.” [NH/Lyndeborough; Donovan 1906, p. 289]

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 also 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 Difficulties & 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 Satisfy them. [new paragraph] another thing mentioned by the Singers is their Persons & Characters being Injuriouly Treated; as to this wee know not the Persons nor the Particular Circumstances 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 hindered 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 Morse, / 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]

“In 1780, many persons objected to new tunes being sung in the churches and were offended at the innovation and absented themselves from church service.” [MA/Oxford; Freeland 1894, p. 300]

1780, May – see ca. 1763

1780, 3 May – see 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 decent 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 Priviledge 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 rejoice 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

1782 + n.d. (possibly 1783-1785): “As has been mentioned, the singers originally sat promiscuously in all parts of the house. Many efforts were made to effect a reform in this matter, and have them sit together, as manifestly more convenient for the singers and more edifying to the audience. But this too, was considered an innovation, not to be peaceably acquiesced with. Even as late as 1782, an article was inserted in the warrant at the annual meeting ‘to see if the town will grant seats in the gallery in the meeting house to the singers that they may sit together.’ But it passed in the *negative*. The town having been favored with the services of Mr. Solomon Howe, a celebrated instructor in sacred music, who substituting some of the sweet and pleasing airs of Billings, for the slow movements of Williams and Tanner [corrected to “Tansur” on p. iv], effected such a reform in church music, that the singers were allowed to sit together, and the front part of the gallery was appropriated for their use.” [footnote: “One old gentleman felt himself so much outraged, with what he considered such an improper manner of performing public worship, that he told the minister if he gave his encouragement to such improprieties he would *serve them a trick that the devil would’nt* [punctuation *sic*], *he would leave them.*”] [Solomon Howe had children born in Brookfield, MA—6.7 miles west of Spencer—in 1779, 1781, + 1783; his next child was born in Swansea, MA in May 1785] [MA/Spencer; Draper 1841, p. 100]

n.d. (possibly 1783-1785) – see 1782

n.d. (probably early 1783) + 1783, 18 March + 1789, March + n.d. (“not long afterward”): “...these innovations [new text version, new tunes, new tuners of psalm] were followed by another, that met with open opposition. A town meeting was held, March 18, 1783, to see if the town would pass a vote to sing a new tune the last time on every Sunday, without reading line by line, as recommended by the late Dr. Watts: But this was voted in the negative. About this time, however, the experiment was actually made. The exact date is not known—whether it was after this town meeting and in disregard of the vote passed, or, which is more probable, before the meeting, and that called in consequence. [new paragraph] During the Sabbath on which the innovation was attempted, the exercises in the house of worship appear to have been performed as usual, till the last psalm or hymn was

read by the pastor. Then, instead of waiting for the deacons to read it again, line by line, the leader named the tune and the singing was immediately commenced. This was too much to be borne with patience. One venerable man, who had several years before passed the age of three score and ten, and who had for many years been a consistent member of the church, rose from his seat and turning towards the minister, said, 'Reverend sir, [p. 414] do you allow of all this?' Another man, a few years younger, with less reverence, called out to the singers: 'You make a worse noise than the wolves did forty years ago.' A third speaker, also aged, in grief at what he regarded as a desecration of the place, gave vent to his feelings thus: 'I deont waint to hear sich a neoise in the heouse of Gad.' A fourth man was affected still more unpleasantly. He had before this sometimes shown signs of partial derangement. Excitement on this occasion produced such a state, that he called out with earnestness: 'Toll the bell, ye devils! *toll the bell!*' The experiment in singing failed, and the meeting closed in disorder. The most aged of the men mentioned, on reflection, regretted the part he had acted, and the next day, went voluntarily to a magistrate and complained of himself for breaking the peace. [new paragraph] The old order of things was continued a few years longer; but a change was again proposed in March, 1789, when it was voted 'to have some new tune sung in the Meeting-house in time of publick worship, once every Sabbath, without reading line by line.' The change was then made without producing any disturbance in the community. Not long afterward, the lining of the psalm ceased entirely, and it is now known only as a relic of the past." [NH/Hampton; Dow 1893, vol. I, pp. 413-414]

1783, 18 March – see n.d. (probably early 1783)

ca. 1785: "The custom of 'lining the psalm' continued for a long time after the organization of a choir; but it was very annoying to them. It ceased about 1785, and on [*sic*] this wise: Old Deacon Brown, who as senior deacon had the right to perform the service, was rather slow in his movements, and had the habit of adjusting his glasses and clearing his throat before beginning to read. At the date in question, [p. 338] Col. David Brewer was chosen chorister. Taking advantage of the Deacon's well known habit, on the first Sabbath of his leadership, the Colonel (acting no doubt on a previous understanding with his choir) struck in singing so quick after [Rev.] Mr. [David] Kellogg had finished reading, that the Deacon had no chance to begin his work. He looked up in amazement—and so did a great many others in the congregation. After that, there was no more attempt to 'deacon the hymn.'" [MA/Framingham; Temple 1887, pp. 337-338]

1785, March + 1795, 4 June: "A church record of March, 1785 reads as follows: 'The mode and manner of singing was considered and talked upon.' Parker Hall, the clerk, acquainted the meeting that under present circumstances it appeared to him to be his duty to exclude himself from fellowship. Evidently he deferred his decision for it is not until June 4, 1795, that Parker Hall, one of the ablest and most intelligent clerks of the early period, withdrew from the church, it is supposed because he disapproved [p. 11] of the music used in the worship." [RI/Newport; Franklin 1936, pp. 10-11]

1788, 27 July or 3 August (both Sundays): "After a while the bass viol was introduced, much to the scandal of the elders, who dubbed it the 'devil's fiddle,' while the choir called it the

'Lord's fiddle.' [Ebenezer] Fox [on p. 20n of his memoir titled *The Revolutionary Adventures of Ebenezer Fox, of Roxbury, Massachusetts* (Boston: Munroe and Francis, 1838)] continues, 'I well remember the first Sabbath that the bass viol was used, as an accompaniment to the singing. The [p. 340] old pious people were horror struck at what they considered a sacrilegious innovation, and went out of meeting in high dudgeon. One old church member stood at the church door and showed his contempt for the music by making a sort of caterwauling noise, which he called "mocking the banjo."['] A meeting of the 'pillars of the church' took place, but into it managed to creep some young and frisky laymen, and for a time things were rather lively, and Dr. Emmons [probably Nathanael Emmons, 1745-1840, then minister in Franklin, Mass.], who was then temporarily filling the pulpit, had hard work to preserve order. He finally succeeded in making himself heard. 'Show me,' he said, 'a single instance in the Bible where they use the obnoxious instrument and I am content.' 'But they used other stringed instruments,' said a layman. 'That has nothing to do with it. My question is, do they ever speak of the bass viol in the book? Answer me.' Silence reigned. 'No,' continued the doctor, 'they do not. And do you think the Almighty and his angels would put up with such squeaky noises? Do you think that they cannot tell good and pious music, that you try to inflict them with discord and inharmonious tunes? Mark me, those of you who continue to sing to the "devil's fiddle" will never have a chance to sing to the sublime sounds of the harp and the lute. But I have said that the Almighty abominated such noises, and so do I, and I will never read God's Word in a meeting house where the choir sing in unison with an invention of the devil.' And he never did." [MA/Roxbury; Thwing 1908, pp. 339-340]

1788, 27 July or 3 August (both Sundays): "I very well remember the first sabbath that the first bass-viol was used, as an accompaniment to the singing. The old pious people were horror-struck at what they considered a sacrilegious innovation, and went out of meeting in high dudgeon. One old church member, I recollect, stood at the church-door, and showed his contempt for the music by making a sort of caterwauling noise, which he called '*mocking the Banjo*.'" [MA/Roxbury; [Fox] 1838, p. 20]

"From between 1788 and 1792 the congregational singing of the Psalms led by a precentor was changed and at Town Meeting it was voted to introduce Watts's hymns. Then a choir of the young people were given seats in the gallery of the church. This innovation, a great offense to the conservatives, was the beginning of a division in the established church of Peterborough." [NH/Peterborough; Morison 1954, p. 160]

1789, March – see n.d. (probably early 1783)

n.d. ("not long afterward"—i.e., not long after 1789, March) – see n.d. (probably early 1783)

1789-1797: "Under the ministry of Rev. Mr. Evans [Israel Evans, minister 1789-1797], who was himself very fond of music, some instruments were introduced, which was the *second* great innovation [after dispensing with lining out], and attended with so much excitement and opposition, that, according to tradition, some persons left the meeting-house rather than hear the profane sounds of 'the fiddle and flute.'" [NH/Concord; Bouton 1856, p. 531]

ca. 1790: "About the same time [ca. 1790] a Bass Viol was introduced into the Meeting-house, which caused much dissatisfaction to many of the congregation. Some [p. 201] were so much disaffected in consequence of such proceedings as to leave the house; ere long, however, such feelings were dispelled, and the innocent Bass Viol remained to cheer and assist such as were performing an important part in public worship." [NH/Bedford; Bedford 1851, pp. 200-201]

n.d. (ca. 1790s): "An unpleasant controversy relating to church music, disturbed the peace of the society in town, near the close of the eighteenth century. Some of the regular attendants upon public worship refused to occupy their seats in the meeting-house unless the psalms and hymns could be sung without the aid of the unconsecrated viol and the unhallowed pitch-pipe. The venerable pastor exerted most strenuously his peace-making talents. ... A reconciliation between the parties was effected by the council [*recte* counsel?] and advice of so wise a mediator." [MA/Holden; Estes 1894, p. 39]

n.d. (ca. 1790s): "The emphasis in the music agitations before the beginning of the nineteenth century had shifted to the question of musical instruments in the churches. Pitch pipes were first introduced, then the bass viol, after that the violin, and various other instruments. Among the churches in this vicinity, that of Wareham seems to have been most strongly agitated by the bass viol question; and here a compromise was for a time arranged, giving leave to the bass viol to be 'played every other Sunday, and not to Pitch the Tunes on the Sabbath that it don't play.'" [MA/Wareham; Rochester 1907, p. 121]

n.d. (ca. 1790s): "A great change had taken place in the style of church music, and in the use of instruments in public worship. The citations already made from the records [see below: 1794, 21 November + 1796, May 5], show that [in 1794] the town had favored a change from the [p. 190] ancient hymns, and the old version of the psalms, to those of Watts. By a vote of the town [1796], the church had been desired to introduce a bass viol into the choir. New singing books came into vogue, and the town sometimes paid the expense of supporting singing-schools. These changes were not made without a struggle. Old usages were not lightly abandoned for new-fangled notions. In many places, scenes similar to that which occurred in Peterborough, N. H., were enacted. Though no such disturbance took place here, the anecdote may be given as illustrative of the times towards the close of the last century. On one occasion, when Dr. [Seth] Payson, of Rindge, was preaching at Peterborough, the chorister, John Smith [1754-1821], brother of Gov. [Jeremiah] Smith, gave the key-note on the pitch-pipe; the choir began to sing, but soon became confused, and stopped; when one of the Scotch-Irish settlers [Matthew Templeton; see entry below], who called the bass-viol *da-gon*, and the pitch-pipe the *whistle*, sitting in the ancient body seats near the desk, slowly turned his head toward the choir, and exclaimed aloud in the church, in his broad Scotch accent, 'Mr. Johnny Smith, ye must *blaw* your *whastle* again.'" [MA/Winchendon + NH/Peterborough; Marvin 1868, pp. 189-190]

n.d. (ca. 1790s): "Matthew Templeton [ca. 1736-1809] was one of the striking characters among our early settlers. ... His eccentricities and peculiarities have come down to us, marking a strong-minded, wil[l]ful, and obstinate man. He was most notorious for his hostility to any—the least—innovation in the mode of public worship. He was eminently a

religious man, but stern and austere, reminding one of the old Scotch Covenanters, who feared neither man, flesh, nor the devil. Many of the old Presbyterians of that day were as fixed in their religious notions as the Medes and Persians,--they knew no change. ... [new paragraph] They had no idea that there could be any true worship but what was similar to theirs.... It is very little we know of the domestic character of Mr. Templeton; his family government must have been patriarchal and after the model of the old testament; kind in his way, but little amenable to the teachings of the new dispensation, in which love, forbearance, kindness, and forgiveness are so prominent. He was esteemed a pious man, and no doubt that family and daily worship was set up in his house, the Scripture read and explained, his children catechised, and all with great sincerity and propriety; and if music was ever introduced, it was only of the voice that was tolerated; for though David played on the harp, and stringed instruments were used in the worship of the Jews, yet Mr. Templeton considered all instrumental music as coming from the devil. It was a great trial and abomination to him when a bass-viol was carried into the meeting-house, and he is said to have gone out, with great indignation against those who would bring in Dagon [ancient Mesopotamian + Canaanite deity; national god of Philistines] for the worship of God. The following anecdote, has been furnished me by Deacon Samuel Weston: He was displeased with their using musical instruments in the church, so that on one Sabbath he thought he would go to Greenfield [next door to Peterborough in N. H.] to meeting, where he should not be annoyed with Dagon; but to use [p. 309] his own words, he says: 'When I got in sight of the meeting-house, there was a man with a goon (bassoon), and Dagon was there too, and I jist got on to mee ould meer and cum home.' He even indulged in a spite against so innocent and necessary an instrument as the pitch-pipe; and it is related that on one occasion, when the singers did not get the right pitch on the tune, the old gentleman, who had a seat just back of the singers, cried out audibly, so as to be heard all over the house, 'Try the whostle agen.'" [NH/Peterborough; Smith 1876, pp. 308-309]

n.d. (ca. 1790s): "If Dr. Payson [Rev. Seth Payson, minister in Rindge 1782-1820] was little annoyed by contention and opposition to innovations in church music in his own parish, he saw one exhibition of this spirit in another place. He was preaching one Sabbath in exchange at Peterborough. In the congregation sat Matthew Templeton [ca. 1736-1809], stern and austere, and opposing with much bitterness all innovations. He called the bass viol 'dagon,' and the pitch-pipe with equal contempt he denominated 'the whistle.' On this occasion the hymn had been read by Dr. Payson, the chorister, Mr. Smith, had sounded the pitch-pipe, and the choir began to sing, but soon became confused and stopped, when Mr. Templeton, who occupied a conspicuous seat among the congregation, cried out, in his broad Scotch accent, with much derision: 'Mr. Johnny Smith, ye must blaw your whostle agaien.'" [NH/Rindge; Stearns 1875, pp. 266-267]

1791, 2 January, 11 January, 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]

n.d. (after 1791, 21 December) + 1793, 2 March + 1797: "After the pastorate had been vacant for four years, and numerous candidates had been heard, December 21, 1791, the church unanimously invited William Emerson, who had been preaching upon probation, to become their minister, and the town joined in the call.... [p. 213, new paragraph] ... We learn from his [Emerson's] diary that he played upon the bass-viol, and practiced singing with some of the music-lovers in his parish.... [p. 215, new paragraph] Mr. Emerson's liking

for the bass-viol seems not to have been shared by the majority of his parishioners. The choir aided him in its introduction to the meeting-house, but there was much scowling and shrugging of shoulders among the elders. They had become reconciled to the fuguing tunes, and perhaps recognized useful exhilaration to devotion when treble, bass and alto, in more or less harmonious iteration, shouted: 'Stir up this stew—stir up this stew—stir up this stupid heart to pray;' [punctuation *sic*] but this 'fiddling the psalms' was too much. March 2, 1795, the church 'voted that the use of instrumental music, which has for some time past been tolerated, be for a time suspended in our public worship on the Lord's day.' A village choir is not prone to undervalue its share in the Sunday exercises, and the Harvard minstrels seem to have resented this interference with their melody. For some time the congregation had to 'do their own singing.' ... The choir continued to stand upon its dignity and the elders were obstinate, but the voices of the experts in anthem and fugue were sadly missed by the people. Finally, in 1797, a town-meeting took the matter in hand, and appointed a committee to conciliate the aggrieved sing- [p. 216] ers by offering them, among other concessions, the privilege of choosing their own leader. After some deliberation the choir 'agreed to *carry on* as usual, provided they could have the liberty of bringing in the Bass Viol at the next annual Thanksgiving.' The battle was won, and flute and clarionet and violin soon joined in, adding to 'the witchcraft of harmonic sound,' but scandalizing many church-goers to whom any novelty brought into the house of God was deemed one of Satan's snares." [MA/Harvard; Nourse 1894, pp. 212, 213, 215-216]

1792 + 1795, 15 November + 1797 + after 1797: "In 1792 a bass viol was brought into the church to accompany the choir in their singing. When the player started his accompaniment, 'there was a great murmur and hissing and stamping, and Mr. [Rev. Noah] Niles could only stop it by asking the player to refrain from such "ungodly music."' It was voted that year that 'it was a sin to take the big bass viol in the church.' Apparently Mr. Miles's attitude toward the instrument altered in the ensuing years, and it may be that some 'experimental worship' was engaged, using the viol on such special days as Thanksgiving (which was a proper Congregational celebration). On November 15, 1795, Nathaniel Ball wrote Mr. Miles reprimanding him for allowing this experimentation. [new line, smaller type:] I am sorry that you give me cause to think you was out of the true way wherein we ought to go, in that you at least consented that the bass viol should be played in divine service. The reasons why I think you was out of the true way are, it appears to me it cannot be proved by Scripture to be right. Secondly, supposing you thought it to be wrong, I think it was necessary that you took the advice of the church, and not attempted to bring it in so arbitrary a way. It is true David had instruments wherewith to praise the Lord, and he praised the Lord before the ark, but I think Christ and the Apostles have left no example or precept for it, and if we cannot prove it to be right by the new testament, we ask, as in your text, who has required it? You may say young people required it, and one deacon or two, and some others could say they had nothing against it, but I think it must be for want of studying the scriptures. Some may think it well enough to play on the viol Thanksgiving day in divine service; but it is required of us to worship God in spirit and in truth, Thanksgiving days as well as on the Sabbath. We are forbid to worship God by idols or any other way not appointed in his word. You would not, dear sir, be willing to do anything displeasing to Christ or his disciples, but to [p. 304] worship God in a way not appointed by his word must displease him, and it ought to displease his followers; but peradventure it

was an oversight. Please try to convince me if I am wrong. I hope and pray, and sometimes think I am persuaded, that you and I shall praise God together in heaven to all eternity, where we shall not need any wooden instruments to help us. [new line] Your affectionate friend and unworthy Brother in Christ. [new line] Nath'l Ball [new paragraph, regular type:] The forces favoring music won out. In 1797 it was voted 'that ye bass viol be brought into ye meeting-house for ye space of one year.' Esquire Daniel Searle was given the (in some eyes dubious) distinction of executing 'the first music upon this instrument, in the church, and on this memorable occasion.' [quoted from Blood 1860; see below] One man was so incensed that he took his wife upon his arm and stalked out of the meetinghouse. General [Francis] Blood had to call loudly to restore order in the church. Notwithstanding the furor and the controversy, the viol was to remain as a part of the Sabbath worship for many years to come." [NH/Temple; Temple 1976, pp. 303-304]

1793, 2 March – see n.d. (after 1791, 21 December)

1793 or 1794: "My informant further relates that among them [the singers, being wooed to remove from the floor of the meetinghouse to the gallery] at the feast, was...Mr. Hezekiah Bass who played the bass-viol. This instrument was first used in the church [p. 121] when the singers changed their seats. Some of the congregation were much offended at the introduction of stringed instruments. One old man rose up and left, saying that 'he did not want to go to God's House to hear a great fiddle.'" [MA/Quincy; Whitney/NEHGR 1864, pp. 120-121]

n.d. (between 1793 and 1811): "At one time, the choir did what choirs are apt to do,--went off in a huff. *Discord* ran riot the next Sunday. The scene was at the same time ludicrous and painful. Four of the congregation, with the leader already referred to [Yeomans], volunteered as a *quintette* to 'carry the singing.' There were two bass voices, one tenor, and two treble. If they had started, and kept together to the end of each verse, the music might have been pleasing. But no: they had been in the habit of singing Lenox, Worcester, Bridgewater, and a hundred other *fugue* tunes, in which one part runs a race after another, fearful of not winding up together on the last syllable. But the most disagreeable feature of the performance was the thinness of the tones, owing to the singers sitting in their separate pews, which happened to be at the cardinal points of the compass." [RI/Newport; Channing 1868, p. 73]

"In 1794 musical instruments were introduced,--the bass viol and flute,--which to some gave great offence, for as soon as the tuning began, Mr. Adam Blackman would take his hat and walk out of meeting." [MA/Canton; Huntoon 1893, p. 312]

1794 + 1796 + 1802, April, September + 1803, October + 1804, February + 1807, 13 December + 1826 + 1828 + 1829: (from chapter XV, titled "The Town's Bass-Viol") "To this congregation the propriety of using a bass-viol in the services of worship was an ever-present question. When new ideas about church music reached Wareham, in 1794, the question was considered by the church, and after the town meeting had been consulted, it was decided, 'Notwithstanding [p. 219] the opposition of some, to have the Bass viol used.' This decision aroused that Puritan prejudice which classed the use of musical instruments

in worship as an abomination; and therefore the church called a meeting to reconsider the question, when it was voted 'that it is expedient that a Bass vial [sic] should not be used.' [new paragraph] Nevertheless the instrument held its place in the choir until 1796, when, by an order of town meeting, it was put out of the meeting-house. It remained outside, making various attempts to get in, until 1802; then a request for its readmission was considered, and the church was induced to vote, in April, 'that we are willing that the singers should make use of the Bass vial on trial till next sacrament lecture.' On a second request the church refused to grant any further indulgence. The singers then went to the September town meeting, and obtained 'Leave for the Bass Vial to be brought into ye meeting-house to be Played On every other Sabbath to begin the next Sabbath & to Play if chosen every Sabbath in the Intermission between meetings and Not to Pitch the Tunes on the Sabbaths that it don't Play.' [p. 220, new paragraph] The town's bass-viol, like the song of the sirens, lured many pilgrims to forget the country to which they were going; and they so far renounced their loyalty as to turn away from the meeting-house on those Sundays when the instrument was to be heard therein. The most obstinate of these pilgrims was Captain Joshua Gibbs. From the outset he would neither listen to it nor make a compromise with it. 'The thing is an abomination,' he said. [really?] 'Can't we sing in meeting without sich a screeching and groaning? My father and grandfather worshiped God in Wareham without a bars vile. I won't abide it!' [new paragraph] The church asked the town to stop it; and in October, 1803, the town meeting ordered 'Ye use of the Bass Vial in Publick Worship to be stopped.' Then the singers and their allies stayed at home on Sundays, leaving nothing for the town to do but to turn around again; which it did in February, 1804, when, as the records say,-- [new paragraph, smaller type:] 'The Town met & 1^{ly} Voted to have Singing in the time of Publick worship. [new paragraph] '2^{ly} Voted that ye Singers Shall appoint their head Singer. [p. 221, new paragraph] '3^{ly} voted to make use of the Bass Viol the one half of the Time & to begin with ye Viol next Sabbath day.' [new paragraph, regular type:] Years passed, and through them all the bass-viol held its place in the meeting-house, and its enemies kept themselves safely beyond the sound of its strings. [footnote: "'Decem. 13. 1807. The church tarried and Voted that the singers be requested not to make use of the Bass viol in public worship in the meeting house unless they give Cap. Joshua Gibbs, or his family in case of his absence, previous notice.' – Wareham Church Records."'] In 1826 a church meeting was called to consider the case of some members who for a long time had neglected to attend public worship. 'Three of those brethren,' say the church records, 'being present, stated that the reason of their withdrawing themselves from public worship with the church, was the use of instrumental music in singing.' It was proposed to submit their case to an ecclesiastical council, [footnote: "'The Council advised 'the Church in behalf of their aggrieved brethren, respectfully to request the Society to discontinue the use of instrumental music, particularly on days of communion.'"'] when Joshua Gibbs, who had become a deacon of the church, refused to submit his grievances to the decision of [p. 222] any council, and abruptly left the meeting; and such was the power of his obstinacy that this disloyalty was allowed to pass without further notice. [new paragraph] When the church was reorganized, in 1828, and was taking possession of a new meeting-house, the bass-viol appeared at the threshold like a ghost from colonial times. A new generation had inherited the prejudice against it, and William Mackie, Nathaniel Crocker, and Abisha Barrows were sent to the singers with an offer to give fifty dollars a year for the support of a choir, if the choir would sing without musical instruments. Their errand was

unsuccessful. Again the controversy was renewed in 1829, but the church had become weary of it. The spirit which for thirty-five years had kept up the revolt was broken; and the venerable Deacon Gibbs went to his grave leaving the town's bass-viol triumphant in the meeting-house." [MA/Wareham; Bliss 1889, pp. [218]-222]

1794, 3 November – see 1791, 2 January

1794, 21 November + 1796, 5 May: "There was a natural desire for a new and better collection of devotional poetry, to be used in public worship. The matter was brought up in a meeting held on the 3d of September; but it was passed over. But on the 21st of November, the subject came up again, when it was 'voted to desire the church to introduce Dr. Watts'[s] version of the Psalms and Hymns, to be sung in the congregation.' [new paragraph] In 1796, May 5. 'Voted to have a bass-viol used in the meeting-house on Sundays, in aid to the performance of music in the time of divine service.' [new paragraph] These last two votes denoted a revolution in the public taste. The old Hymns were forced to give way to the more elegant and poetic verse of the sainted Watts, and the pitch-pipe was superseded by viols where an organ could not be obtained. Each change cost a struggle, and left hard feelings in the breasts of many. The violent agitation in regard to the location of the new meeting-house, the excitement attendant upon the introduction of the new Psalm and Hymn Book, and the bass-viol, followed by the long and bitter contention which led to the dismissal of Mr. Brown [Joseph Brown, ordained 1769, dismissed 1799], doubtless alienated many, some of whom thereafter neglected public worship, while others were prepared to enter into new religious societies which, in a few years, came into existence." [MA/Winchendon; Marvin 1868, p. 163]

n.d. (probably no earlier than late 1790s-no later than 1818): "David S. Eaton [b. probably late 1770s, d. 1818], who married one of [Rev.] Mr. Barnard's daughters, was chorister for some time. During his administration it is said that the choir had been making preparations for a grand display on Independence day. Something had taken place during the rehearsals which offended many of the members, and one Sunday morning, just before the fourth of July, the chorister found himself alone in the singing pew. Not caring to furnish the music alone, he too left his seat, and placed himself in one of the gallery pews, near by. Mr. Barnard [Rev. Jeremiah Barnard (1750-1835), pastor in Amherst from 1780 to his death (and sole pastor 1784-1816)] took his place in the pulpit, and was not long in discovering the state of the singing pew. He conducted the opening exercises, and read the hymn as usual; but, getting no response from the choir, laid down the book with some force, and called up the audience to join in the long prayer, which lacked on that occasion neither length nor pungency. One after another, the singers returned to their accustomed places, and, when the inevitable fusil[l]ade of falling seats [p. 316] was over, the singing seats were filled, and Jeremiah's heart was gladdened by a hearty response to the next hymn he read." [NH/Amherst; Secomb 1883, pp. 315-316]

1795, 2 March + 1808, 7 March: "The introduction of a musical instrument as an aid to singing was a matter of serious concern, requiring the consideration and consent of the whole body of the people, and the question of such an introduction came before the town at a meeting held March 2, 1795. After due deliberation, it was 'voted and admitted that a

Bassviol be brought into the meeting-house on Sundays for the purpose of assisting in the music on Said Day till the adjournment of this meeting,' that is, for one month, presumably to test the feeling of the community upon the matter. As no further action was taken for some years in regard to it, or until the town voted March 7, 1808, 'to purchase a Bass Viol to be used in publick worship,' it is to be assumed that the instrument found favor with the majority and was permitted to remain as a help to the musical exercises of the Sabbath. Tradition, however, reports that there was much opposition to the innovation in certain quarters, provoking some ill-feeling which fortunately was not of long continuance and was accompanied by no serious results. It is said, for instance, that two of the daughters of Mr. Nathan Darby, excellent singers and general favorites in town, were so shocked at what they deemed the profanation of the place by the presence of the innocent instrument, that for several Sundays they refused to go into the house until after the singing exercises preceding the sermon were over, and retired when the last hymn was announced, in order to manifest their proper disapproval of the innovation and to free themselves of all responsibility in regard to it. After a time, having satisfied their consciences in the matter, their prejudices gave way and their opposition also, and they yielded graciously to the inevitable, as did others sym- [p. 284] pathizing with them, and all things went on quietly as before. The bass viol had come into the meetinghouse 'to stay.'" [MA/Westminster; Heywood 1893, pp. 283-284]

1795, 4 June – see 1785, March

1795, 15 November – see 1792

1796 – see 1794

1796, 5 May – see 1794, 21 November

"1797. 'V. that y^e Bass-viol be bro't into ye^e [sic] meeting house for y^e space of one year.' _____ left the meeting-house with his wife upon his arm, the first time the viol was played. A man in Peterboro [Matthew Templeton] used to call the instrument '*Dagon*,' in honor of [or at least reference to] the heathen god of that name, -- '*he* would n't hear *Dagon* played!' [several references to Templeton + *Dagon* in DISCORD file] Esq. Daniel Searle [1763-1849; a leading citizen of Temple] executed the first music upon this instrument, in church, and on this memorable occasion." [NH/Temple; Blood 1860, p. 154]

1797 – see n.d. (after 1791, 21 December)

1797 – see 1792

after 1797 – see 1792

n.d. (very early 19th c.): "Very near the beginning of the present century, a bass viol was for the first time admitted into the [Baptist] meeting house and used in the public service on the Lord's day. When its notes were heard preparing to lead the people in their songs of praise, one good brother jumped from his seat, looked around him in astonishment, and

then deliberately taking his hat marched out. For a long time afterward this brother would absent himself during the singing, resuming his place, however, in season for the sermon. It is said that one of the deacons had charge of the service of song, and that all those who were opposed to the new instrument were allowed to withdraw." [RI/Newport; Barrows 1876, p. 44]

n.d. (probably early 19th c.): "[']At last the younger singers wished to improve, and a Mr. [Joseph?] Herrick was hired to teach. He had three sessions a day, the tunes were lively and they [the young people] had a great interest in them. After a while they had a desire for instrumental music with the singing. This was most bitterly opposed by a number of men advanced in years. They would leave the church every time singing commenced. Their [p. 66] prejudice was so strong against it they would not stop to hear it. One said he did not wish to hear the devil's fiddle (bass-viol) played on at any place. He could not bear to hear it in church. Another did not like the devil's baboon (bassoon). At last one of these men joined the Baptist church in Mason [N. H.]....[']" [late-in-life reminiscences of Mrs. Achsah (Sawyer) Allan (1800-1886)] [NH/Wilton; Livermore 1888, pp. 65-66]

n.d. (probably early 19th c.): "'At the time it was first proposed to install a church organ in the house of worship, the congregation immediately became divided. Some of the members wanted it and some did not. The first time the new organ was used, a celebrated musician, a blind man, then well known in New England, was engaged to play. [This could have been John Latham Berkenhead (1765-after 1809), who emigrated to the USA from England about 1794 and was the organist at Trinity Church, Newport, R. I., from 1796 to 1804 or 1809; or Berkenhead's pupil Oliver Shaw (1779-1848).] At the first note, one of the prominent men of the church, who sat near the pulpit, the organ being at the rear of the church, arose and turning around shook his fist in anger at the organ, at the same time crying out, "Stop that noise!" Then he left the church in disgust. Others who never before heard anything of the kind, commented, "It is heaven!"'" [source of quoted passage not given] [RI/Bristol; Thompson 1942, p. 195]

"Sept. 28, 1801 – G. Potter [likely *recte* Theophilus Potter, b. 26 January 1725, last 8 children born in North Brookfield 1757-1776, d. 13 September 1814; see below for "T. Potter" + confirming death date, + note photocopy from Temple's *History of North Brookfield*, appended to Fiske notes] appeared before the Church and said he was not attending services because he found the 'mode of singing in the congregation is offensive and in his view a profanation of sacred things.' The Church did not censure him but ["recommended" or "stated" or "advised" omitted from transcription?] that one and all should embrace opportunities to persuade him to return to public worship. ... From an address by Charles Adams – Sept. 1881 where he spoke at length about the choir at the church from his coming in 1832 – Makes reference to T. Potter who left the church when new singing was introduced to replace lining the psalms. One [*sic; recte* "On"] his way home a member of the choir overtook Mr. Potter who was on foot. Potter seeing him asked sarcastically [*sic; recte* "sarcastically"], 'And did you raise the devil?' The answer by the choir member reportedly was, 'No, but we made him run.' Potter is mentioned in church records as keeping away from church because of the new music. Potter died Sept. 13, 1814, at the age of ninety." [MA/North Brookfield; Fiske notes]

1802, April, September – see 1794

1803, October – see 1794

1804, February – see 1794

1804, 20 March – see n.d. (probably late 18th c. and 1800-1803)

“At the March meeting 1805, as new ideas were creeping into this ambitious community, the Town [break; smaller type:] ‘Voted to admit Instrumental Music into the Meetinghouse on the Sabbath Day.’ [break; regular type:] Hitherto there had been only the human voice and a ‘pitching-fork.’ But there was determined opposition to this vote; and before the day was over it was reconsidered and ‘rescinded,’ and the Article in the warrant dismissed. And thus for a while longer the ‘Instruments’ were kept out. Some of the oldest settlers objected even to the ‘pitching-fork,’ or ‘pitch-pipe,’ as some called it, and it did not lack the charge of being an ‘ungodly whistle’ and a ‘wark of the Devil!’” [NH/Francestown; Cochrane 1895, p. 160]

ca. 1806 + 1809-ca. 1822: “About 1806 Samuel Graham carried his bass-viol into the meeting-house thanksgiving day, but no sooner did he begin to sound it, than Dea. William Wilson took his hat and left in hot haste, and Moody Chase followed, who came into my grandfather’s after meeting, being nearly ready to burst, and gave vent to the bile. [new paragraph] ... Dea. Wilson moved to Henniker in 1809, and lived there until perhaps 1822; and meanwhile not only a bass-viol, but a clarionet was used [in Henniker or in Chester?], which he had to bear, enquiring ‘who blowed that *whistle* up there.’” [NH/Chester; Chase 1869, p. 325]

1807, 13 December – see 1794

n.d. (between 1807 and at least 1823): “When the choir fell into some difficulty, as singers are apt to, and took their seats below, and thus proclaimed their disagreement to the whole congregation, Mr. Andros [Rev. Thomas Andros, minister in Berkley 1788-ca. 1836] made them blush by reading the account of Paul and Silas singing at midnight, and applied the subject in this manner: ‘Thus Paul and Silas could sing at midnight in prison, though we can have no singing at midday, while enjoying our liberty.’ Then Deacon [George] Sanford [appointed Deacon 1807, still Deacon in 1823] rose, and in his clear voice set the tune, and the house echoed to the song.” [MA/Berkley; Sanford 1872, p. 15]

1808, 7 March – see 1795, 2 March

1809-ca. 1822 – see ca. 1806

1819 + 1820, April: “For the support of singing-schools, the town made occasional appropriations of money. In 1819, fifty dollars were voted for that purpose, to be laid out at the discretion of the selectmen. **Mr. [James] Robbins [of Templeton, Mass.] was**

employed as the teacher. A portion of the singers in town were dissatisfied. Another teacher was engaged by the opposing party, and two singing-schools were kept. The controversy was ostensibly about the style of singing; Mr. Robbins, it was alleged, teaching his pupils to sing with undue loudness, and without suitable expression. The result was that two choirs of singers were formed, each claiming the [singers'] seats in the church, and each having its leader. On the first sabbath in April, 1820, a candidate for the ministry began to preach, and both choirs assembled in the church; one occupying the seats designed for the singers, and the other the free seats in the side gallery. The service began with the reading of a hymn. The leaders named different tunes; the pitch for each tune was given, and the hymn was sung by each choir, making, at times, no small discord. The preacher supposing, or hoping, that singing once in this way would prove satisfactory to both parties, and that they would not attempt to sing different tunes together a second time, read another hymn; but different tunes were again named and sung; the opposing party, however, having selected a tune with a slow movement, had the advantage, or privilege, of singing the last stanza alone. Before the minister proceeded in the service, Mr. Alexander Emes [1761-1845; school-teacher in Dublin; see photocopies from Leonard + Seward 1920 + *Annual Reports* 1893 for more on Emes] arose from a pew in the northwest corner of the gallery, and addressed both choirs, reproving them for suffering any circumstances to lead to such an exhibition in the house of God, reminding them of the encouragement which the town had given for their instruction in sacred music, and of the obligation that rested upon them of engaging in the performance of that part of divine worship in a decent and orderly manner. No more hymns were read on that day, nor on the day of public fast, which occurred in that week; because it was perceived that both choirs were present, and would probably sing as before, in case a hymn should be read. As the town had reserved the [p. 198] control of the singers' seats, a meeting was called for the purpose of deciding who should have the right to occupy them as leaders of the choir. In the meantime, however, both choirs agreed to sing together, provided Mr. Henry Whitcomb, then a resident, would take the lead. He did so, and continued to lead till the decision of the town was obtained. The article in reference to this subject, inserted in the warrant for town-meeting, was, "To see what method the town will take to ensure and establish regularity and harmony in our public religious services, particularly in the department of sacred music, or act any thing in relation to measures to restore and perpetuate order in the musical department." The action taken by the town in reference to the above article was as follows: "Voted to choose leaders, to take the lead of the singing in this town for one year, and that they be chosen by ballot. Chose Joshua Flint, Abijah Richardson, jun., and Jeremiah Greenwood, leaders on the tenor; chose Zadock Chapman, Luke Richardson, and Cyrus Mason, on the bass. Voted to give up the front seats in the gallery of the new meeting-house for one year, for the use of the singers, or leaders above named, and all those who may sing peaceably under them." [NH/Dublin; Dublin 1855, pp. 197-198]

n.d. (probably early 1820s): "A few years ago, the first parish voted in the *great bass viol*, to help the singing. That innovation grieved several old men who opposed it, one of whom determined once more in his life time to hear his Maker praised without such a profane accompaniment, and to accomplish that purpose he secretly rubbed tallow on the strings of the instrument. This was the first and probably the last effort that will be made to resist

innovation, for very soon was added the flute and the fiddle, and then came a fine toned organ." [MA/Dedham; Worthington 1827, p. 145]

1820, April – see 1819

n.d. (probably between 1825 and 1828): "Near the close of Dr. Lord's ministry [Nathan Lord was pastor at Amherst 1816-1828], there was trouble in the choir, and the singers, with the exception of Ambrose Seaton, the leader, left the seats. The minister read the morning hymn, but there was no response. Presently, the senior deacon [probably John Hartshorn, 1759-1842] rose from his seat in front of the pulpit, and called upon the congregation to unite in singing [William Tans'ur's] St. Martin's [first printed 1748, first American printing 1759], himself leading off in a voice tremulous with age. For some time he sung alone, but before the hymn was finished he had a respectable following. During the performance the chorister [Ambrose Seaton] was heard going down the stairs in the west porch, at least two steps at once, and after landing upon the common it was noticed that his steps toward his boarding-house were of remarkable length." [NH/Amherst; Secomb 1883, pp. 317]

1826 – see 1794

1828 – see 1794

1829 – see 1794

n.d. (between 1837 and 1841): "[Reverend Samuel Washburn, pastor of Greenfield's Second Church from August 1837 to November 1841]...was fearless, independent, and decided, as the following incident will show: 'On one occasion [p. 486] while pastor at Greenfield, the choir of his congregation declined to sing after he had read the hymn. After waiting a short time he arose and remarked that sacred music was an important part of public worship, and, as that part was not to be performed, he should at that time dispense with performing the other parts, and left the house, and the congregation followed.'" [MA/Greenfield; Thompson 1904, vol. I, pp. 485-486]