

SINGING LEADERS: CHORISTERS, CHOIR DIRECTORS (SL)

n.d.: "Before the introduction of Watts' [sic] Hymns [well before 1825], I understand that the versified psalms were bound in the St. James' version of the Bible and were in vogue generally among the churches. These were sung by the congregation, led by a single precentor." [CT/Meriden; Meriden [ca. 1904], pp. 88-89]

n.d.: "...in the earlier history of the church special privileges as to seats in church were granted to men for 'pitching the psalms.'" [CT/New London; Blake 1900, p. 229]

n.d.: "...from an early date the singers were accustomed to select a chorister and to accept the support of any musical instrument that was available."
[MA/Ashburnham; Stearns 1887, p. 327]

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

n.d.: "A chorister regularly appointed, named the tune after the psalm was read, sounded his pitch pipe, and uttered two or three notes immediately after. When he rose, the singers, forty or fifty sometimes in number, rose on the three sides of the house [in the gallery], and sang generally with great animation." [CT/Durham; Fowler 1866, p. 101]

n.d. (17th c.): "The psalms were sung in regular order, from the first to the last, four on each sabbath. The precentors sat in the pews near the deacons' seat in front of the public." [MA/Newbury; Coffin 1845, p. 367]

n.d. (probably late 17th c.): "...the leader of the singing [in the Congregational church completed in 1681] started the tune from a seat near the middle of the house."
[CT/Old Saybrook; Old Saybrook 1896, p. 24]

n.d. (likely late 17th c., early 18th c.) + 1723: "The old time chorister was a feature in New England life. 'His first care was,' as John Tufts says, 'to set the tune at such a pitch that the people could sing it without *squeaking above* or *grumbling below*.'" [Tufts, *An Introduction to the Art of Singing Psalm-Tunes*, 3rd ed. (1723): "One great Beauty in singing is, when the Tune is set in such a Key, that the highest Notes in the *Treble* may be sung without squeaking, or straining one[']s Voice, and the lowest Notes of the *Bass* nobly move with a full Sound, and without grumbling."; Bay Psalm

Book, 9th ed. (1698): "...begin the *Tune* of your first *Note* as the rest may be sung in the compass of your and the peoples voices, without *Squeaking* above or *Grumbling* below." Then he was to beat the time, so that the songsters could keep *reasonably together*. They put it on a tomb-stone of an ancient tune setter: [indented, smaller type:] Stephen beat time / And time beat Stephen." [MA/Bradford; Kingsbury 1883, p. 78]

n.d. (early 18th c.): "Mr. Samuel Tenney was both elder and deacon [in the ?Bradford church], and was a man long remembered for his sanctity of life and the peculiar sweetness and grace of christian character. He wrote shorthand, took down the sermons, spent the interval on sabbath days between morning and afternoon services at the 'warming-house,' sometimes reading from these sermons to the people and giving kind counsel. He was a delightful singer, led the 'Service of Song' for twenty-five years. The younger [Thomas] Symmes speaks of him tenderly as 'of beloved memory.'" [MA/Bradford; Kingsbury 1883, p. 96]

n.d. (probably starting in 1750s, 1760s): "The first leader of the choir in Abington was Ephraim Ingalls. Since, the first choristers have been Mr. Huntington, Capt. Elisha Lord, who led the choir occasionally till the Sabbath previous to his death [note: "Died at the age of 66."], Abisha Sharpe, George Sharpe, [p. 16] Thomas Grosvenor, Wm. Osgood, Jr., Francis B. Pellet, and Charles I. Grosvenor." [CT/Abington (part of Pomfret); Smith 1853, pp. 15-16]

1705, 5 February: "nathaniel horton is chosen to set ye salm tunes on ye publick, & Isack pese when he is absent" [CT/Enfield; Allen 1900, I/296]

1715, 7 March: "Att ye same Meeting voted That William Booth & John Warner or Either of y^m shall sett ye Psalm at Meeting on ye Sabbath Day." [CT/Enfield; Allen 1900, I/322]

"On the 3rd of November, 1720, and Ecclesiastical Council was held here to found the church, and to ordain and instal[l] its pastor. The Council was made up entirely of Massachusetts.... Even the tune was set by a musical deacon from Boston." [RI/Newport; Wallace 1896, p. 9]

1721, 16 June + 1740: "Soon after the precinct was formed, on the 16th of June, 1721, it was voted that Peter Lyon set the psalm. It was not a difficult matter for the congregation to follow him; for it is asserted that for nearly a hundred years after the arrival of the Pilgrims, not more than five or six different tunes were used or known. [new paragraph] The Rev. Samuel Dunbar [father of Elijah Dunbar] was a good singer, and as early as 1740 had the matter [presumably of limited tune repertory] brought up in church meeting. Some of the brethren desired that new tunes be introduced, and on the next Lord's Day, in the evening, it was to be decided; but so intense was the excitement that when the time for taking the vote arrived, it was deemed in the interest of harmony [p. 312] to postpone the balloting for another week, and when that time arrived, it was voted that some 'new tunes be

added to y^e old ones,' and that Mr. Dunbar set them." [MA/Canton; Huntoon 1893, pp. 311-312]

1721, 29 November: "Nath^l Horton Ju^r John Meacham John Booth & Joseph Sexton Ju^r wer[e] chosen to sett y^e Psalm in ye meetinghouse on y^e Sabath Day & other Dayes of Solemnity" [CT/Enfield; Allen 1900, I/339]

1722, up to 8 November: "An extract from first church record:-- [new paragraph, smaller type:] 'Anno 1722. – There having been sad confusions, which I have often observed for several years past (and did often in the Public mention which trouble and pray might be reformed), in our singing; some were above others, some before others, and all was, as I apprehended, for want of going more together, which I urged to no purpose. [p. 141] And understanding that there was a Rule, I looked on it, and conceiving ye knowledge and keeping of the Rule, would prevent this confusion in that part of our public worship, I promoted learning to sing to that end; several public lectures were had to promote it; then I preached by myself, and 2d by Mr. Wm. Symes and 3d by Mr. Fiske, where much was said to encourage it and in each of which they sang four times exact by the Rule, no man opposing; a school was set up; many, both men and women, learnt; some indeed were not so clear in it, (as by mistake) conceiving it popery; but at length having been incouraged by several, as by all the Deacons, Capt. Poole, Capt. Burnap, Ensign Bancroft, Sergt. Tho. Poole, Lt. Bryant and Lt. Kendall Parker, (most of whom came to the school), that learnt, the first night they begun, (they?) [parentheses + question mark in source] sung with the wisht success, (4 of his family) (Kendall Parker's [no—Lieutenant Bryant's]) attended the school, he learnt himself; sang by Rule in his family diverse months together; and, as I observed, after sung by Rule in the Public, and as I hear set the tune by Rule 3 times in the public, one day when I was sick [←all this is Lt. Bryant, not Kendall Parker]; and (being) urged by some to bring it into the assembly, and especially by Deacon Boutwell, the eldest Deacon several times; on Nov. 8, being thanksgiving day, after the public worship was over, I proposed it to the church and congregation to sing by Rule; and by what I had heard not expecting any opposition, I said that if they were all willing, I would take their silence for consent, and no man answered one word, but all were silent and went away.' / RICHARD BROWN." [Brown, 1675-1732, Harvard '97, was 5th minister in Reading] [MA/Reading (*recte* Wakefield); Eaton 1874, pp. 140-141]

1723 – see n.d. (likely late 17th c., early 18th c.)

"Weston: Octobr: 22 1723. At a meeting of y^e Brethren of y^e Church in this Town. ... [new paragraph] ...Serg^t Joseph Allen was desir'd by the Breⁿ. to proceed to Set the Psalms publickly according to y^e best of his skill & understanding." [MA/Weston; Peirce 1901, p. 528]

1723, 11 December: "Mr. Thomas Fitch, Jr., is by major vote of ye town seated in ye pue with the Justices, and the town desires that he would read ye psalme, and set ye tune in ye time of publique service." [CT/Norwalk; Hall 1847, p. 113]

1724, 24 October: "A record of Mr. Dexter's [Samuel Dexter, minister in Dedham from 1724 to 1755], denotes that until the commencement of his ministry, the deacons read the psalm and tuned it. October 24, 1724. Voted that Mr. Jabez Pond shall for the future read the psalm, and tune it, deacon Wight not being able." [MA/Dedham; Worthington 1827, p. 107]

"December 2, 1724. The town by major vote desires Ensigne Thomas Bennedick, Jr., to sett ye tune to ye Psalme, at such times as that part of service is to be performed in ye publik worship of God; and to read ye Psalms needed, ye town also seats ye said Bennedick in ye 3d long seat at ye end of ye middle alley." [CT/Norwalk; Hall 1847, p. 113]

n.d. (any length of time between 1724 and 1793; most likely between 1730s and 1760s): " ... Mr. Timothy Burbank, who died in Plymouth Oct. 13, 1793, aged 90..." [footnote: "Mr. B. was a chorister many years at Plymouth..."] [if born 1703, then in his late 20s to his early/mid-60s in the decades 1730-1770] [MA/Plymouth; Sacred/MHS 1816/1846, p. 301]

n.d. (likely late 1720s-1760s) + 1762: "Deacon Aaron Kimball—born in 1705—'set the Psalms' in the church service for many years. His son David was chosen in 1762 at the age of 19 to assist his father. He was later a soldier in the Revolutionary War. Samuel Holyoke, the composer, said of David: 'When he led off with the tenor, my blood would thrill from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet,' and 'If I had such a voice I would go to Europe and make an independent fortune in a few years.' Our leading Topsfield composer, Jacob Kimball, said: 'I thought that I was quite a smart singer, but when I heard David Kimball sing at Boxford, I found he was far ahead of me.'" [MA/Boxford; Manny 1930, unpagd]

n.d. (possibly starting as early as late 1720s) + 1778-1786 + n.d. (1790s?) + 1800-1820: "In regard to the leaders of the singing the account is imperfect. We read concerning Dea. Joseph Abbot, who removed to Wilton in 1776, at that time in his seventy-second year [so, born ca. 1705], that 'he for many years tuned the Psalm, and Dea. Isaac Abbot, his cousin, read it line by line.' This would carry us back quite early. [Joseph Abbot in his early 20s in late 1720s] At the time of Mr. Quincy's residence, 1778-86, the leader's name was Ames. Somewhat later, Mr. Ballard was the leader. In 1800 the Parish 'dismissed the persons who lead the singing, and chose Henry Dane, with Benjamin Abbot as his assistant.' Between this date and 1820 the following persons are remembered as leaders of the singing: Asa Abbot, Ezra Ingalls (?), Enoch Frye and Ralph H. Chandler." [MA/Andover; Andover 1859, p. 57]

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]

1727, 6 December-1728, 6 June: "...During this half year wh[ile?] we Sang In y^e old way y^e Singing was verry broken and Confused [new line] Bro: [B?] Bodfish Setting y^e Psalm..." [MA/Barnstable; Barnstable 1924, original p. 63]

between 1730s and 1760s – see n.d. (any length of time between 1724 and 1793; most likely between 1730s and 1760s)

1730, 7 January, 4 February + 1765, 22 May + 1770, 12 March + 1795 + 1798 + 1819 + 1822 (all spelling, capitalization, italicization, + punctuation *sic*): "*Jan: 7. 1729, 30.* At a Chh. Meeting at y.^e House of B.^r *Joseph Boyden*. After Prayer, *Voted*, that it is agreeable to the mind of y.^e Chh that M.^r *John Smith* tune the Psalm, if he pleases, when he is present, & able to do it (And read it to[o] [I suppose] if he chooses to do both. *Voted*, That Deacon *Kingsbury* shall read & tune y.^e Psalm in M.^r *Smith's* absence till *May* next; *Voted*. That *Canterbury, S.^t David's, York, Brunswick, Southwel, Psal: 100* tune, and *Litchfield or London* be sung regularly in the Congregation till next *May*'. *'Feb : 4. 1729. 30.* *Voted*, That the Psalm be sung regularly at y.^e time of the Administration of y.^e Sacrament of the Supper, and that Brother *Samuel Parker* be desired to Tune the Psalm in and for the Congregation in the absence of M.^r *John Smith*'. [new paragraph] The foregoing is from the Church records, and the following from those of the town:-- [new paragraph] On May 22, 1765, the town voted 'no' on the article 'To See if the Town will lay aSide [yes!] the Psalms that were Composed to be Sung in the Desenting Churches and Congregations in New=England', and also on that 'to approve of the Old England Church Psalms (Otherwise Called Brady and Tate)'. It was voted 'to Sing Doc^t Watts Hymes in the Publick Worship' and 'to Agree Upon a Certain Number of Tunes to be Sung'. Ensign Eliakim Cook, Michael Metcalf and Lieut. Jonathan Day were chosen a committee 'to pitch Upon the Tunes that are most proper', and Ensign Cook, Ebenezer Huntting and Ebenezer Fisher were the

'Two or three proper Persons to Tune the Psalms in the Publick Worship'. On March 12, 1770, Thomas Alden and Michael Metcalf were chosen 'to add to Li^d Fisher to Tune the Psalm on the Sabbath Days'. [new paragraph] At its annual meeting in 1795 the First Parish declined to have a 'Chorester or Choresters to lead y^e Tune in Public [p. 309] Worship', but in 1798 chose Enoch Mills, Major Moses Man, Capt. Ebenezer M^cIntosh and Nathaniel Wilson, Jr., as choristers, and the Church selected Timothy Smith and Dea. Isaac Shepard as 'Choristers for Sacramental occasions', and requested 'the singers of the Congregation' to join 'with the singers of the Chh' at the Communion. In 1819 Israel Whitney and Dr. Samuel Gould were chosen choristers by the Church, and in 1822 Samuel M^cIntosh took the place of Mr. Whitney. The Church choristers 'to regulate' the singing at the Communion were then William W. Mann, Israel Whitney and the Rev. Daniel Kimball." [MA/Needham; Clarke 1912, pp. 308-309]

n.d. (probably late 1730 or 1731) + n.d.: "Voted likewise at the same meeting [subsequent to meeting of 16 April 1730], That Mr. Joseph Cresey be desired to set the tune, or lead the song, at all such times as the church has agreed to sing regularly by note. ... A relative of Mr. Cresey above mentioned, was for many years an efficient leader of the choir." [MA/Beverly (2nd Parish); Stone 1843, pp. 265, 266]

1731: "*March 22d.* William Ilsley and Joseph Morse junior were chosen and appointed to tune the psalm in ye meeting house in time of publick worship and take their turn in that work that it may be done with ye more ease and cheerfulness. And the said Morse is appointed to sit in the fore seat of ye south body with ye said Ilsley for ye managing said work." [MA/Newbury; Coffin 1845, p. 201]

1732, 18 September: "It appears from the records of the parish and of the church, that the choristers were chosen by the church, and that their choice was usually concurred in by the parish. Here is one of their votes:--'The easterly precinct of Middleborough, Sept. 18, 1732, voted, in reference to the singing of psalms in the congregation, that the precinct concur with the church so far as to appoint their pastor, Mr. Thacher [Peter Thatcher, Jr. was minister of First Church of Christ in Middleborough from 1709 to 1744], to set the tunes of the psalms in the time of public worship, so long as he shall find it for the peace and satisfaction of the church and congregation.' Since in our day the singers, as a choir, have managed the singing themselves and chosen their own choristers." [MA/Middleborough; Middleborough First Church [1854], p. 27]

n.d. (ca. 1732-"before the days of the Revolution"): "The singing of the psalms was without instrumental accompaniment, and books being few, one of the deacons or a chorister pitched the tune and read the hymn, line by line, before singing. ... As neither deacon nor congregation knew any other tunes, York, Hackney, Windsor and St. Mary's did duty in regular rotation. ... Lining or 'deaconing' the hymns was very generally discontinued before the days of the Revolution, though in spite of strenuous opposition, and a chorister with a long, wooden pitch-pipe became the official 'psalm-setter.'" [MA/Harvard; Nourse 1894, p. 107]

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

1737, 25 January + 1773, 3 June + 1788: "The first society early took measures to cultivate good singing. John Paul was appointed chorister and tuner of psalms Jan. 25, 1737. ... June 3, 1773, the church voted that Nathaniel Haskins and Simeon Burt should assist Shadrach Burt in leading the psalm. [new paragraph] Dr. Isaac Watt's [*sic*] psalms and hymns began to be used in 1788, and Azael Hathaway and James Babbit were chosen choristers." [MA/Berkley; Sanford 1872, p. 47]

1737, 17 March: "At the third meeting of the Church of Christ in New Medfield [later named Sturbridge] (March 17, 1737), it was voted that Moses Allen 'Set the Psalm in the Congregation upon the Sabbath day.'" [MA/Sturbridge; Haynes 1910, p. 57]

1738, 8 March + 1739, 18 May + 1745, 30 January + 1749, 5 April: "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. ... [p. 32] [new paragraph] But those longings for singing the old way were not confined to one sturdy pro-advocate. The battlefield was staked out at once (May 18, 1739) by a vote of the church, 'that the man that tunes the Psalm in the congregation be limited till further direction to some particular tunes, and the tunes limited are Canterbury, London, Windsor, St. David's, Cambridge, Short 100th and 148th Psalm tunes

[comma should be between Short + 100th, not between Cambridge + Short], and Benjamin Rockwood, Jr., to tune the Psalm.' A movement, 30th of January, 1745, to enlarge this musical area was promptly repelled. They will have only a moderate new way, even though when Benjamin Rockwood cannot sing for the failure of his voice, and they choose Jabez Fisher in his place, he declines because the catalogue of tunes is too short for him to enter among them. But this refusal begets thought; [p. 33] and four years' practice has so worn out the eight permitted notes that (April 5, 1749) the church takes off the limitation. They also dismiss Joseph Whiting as chorister and put his pitch-pipe into the mouth of Barnabas Metcalf." [MA/Franklin; Blake 1879, pp. 31, 32-33]

1739, 18 May – see 1738, 8 March

1739, 10 September: "Deacon Parker made a Motion, that some more su[i]table Person might be desired to set y^e Psalm, it was referred to y^e Pastors & standing Committee to advise on it." [MA/Boston; Brattle Square Church 1902, p. 27]

n.d. (1739-1805): "The singing was congregational, the minister reading the whole hymn, and then reading two lines for the congregation to sing, and so on through the hymn. The minister or some one of the congregation acted as chorister, to pitch the tune and lead in the singing." [this is during the period between the completion of the old meetinghouse in 1739 + the building of the next meetinghouse in 1805] [RI/Barrington; Bicknell 1898, p. 436]

n.d. (between early 1740s and 1805): "Jacob Allen [1721-1805], probably great-grandson of William Allen, and grandfather of John Perry Allen, 'pitched the tune in the old meeting-house on the Landing [in use 1720-1809], for forty years, without pay.'" [MA/Manchester; Lamson ?1895, p. 258n]

n.d. (probably 1740s and 1750s and later, well into 19th c.): "The music in the Sunday services at the meeting-house in the early part of Mr. Wilkins's ministry [Daniel Wilkins was pastor 1741-1784] was doubtless of the most primitive kind. After the announcement of [p. 315] the hymn, one of the deacons would read a line or two, and the congregation would respond by singing it, the reading and singing being continued alternately through the hymn. As the gift of music seems to have been hereditary in the Shepard family, we may suppose that Col. John Shepard [ca. 1706-1785; lived in Souhegan West/Amherst from ca. 1741 on] and his son, Col. John, jr. [1732-1802], each in their time took a leading part in these services. After the arrival of the Seatons [surely including John Seaton, Jr. (1756-1836) + eventually Ambrose Seaton (b. ca. 1805)], they probably assisted, or led, in the singing." [NH/Amherst; Secomb 1883, pp. 314-315]

1740 – see 1721, 16 June

1740, 4 December + 1742: "'Dec'r 4th 1740. At a chh meeting the vote was called whither this chh [p. 196] would cho[o]se their Deacons or Persons to stand in the

Room of such & persons to set the Psalm by the major part of the present voters. Passed in ye affirmative. Accordingly Mr. George Barlow & Mr. Constant Dexter were chosen to set the Psalm & Mr. Joseph Barlow and Mr. Jabez Hammond chosen to stand in the place of Deacons & perform the work of such.... Also voted at the sd meeting that the persons chosen to sustain the place of deacons should read the Psalm.' [I'm assuming here that the deacons and those filling in for them read the Psalms, and those chosen to "set" or "tune" the Psalms led the singing; so, for example, George Barlow will appear in my index, and not Joseph Barlow.] [new paragraph] These continued on trial until, in 1742, the church met and 'concluded to bring in their Votes for four persons whom they looked upon best qualified to be invested with sd office [probably the reading of the Psalms]....' It was also voted that 'Deacon Barlow should read the Psalm still, and Deacon Tupper should tune it to the Congregation.' Brother Tupper tried it six weeks and made request to be relieved, and the 'Chh made choice of Mr. George Barlow as Tuner.'" [MA/Mattapoissett; Rochester 1907, pp. 195-196]

1742 – see 1740, 4 December

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

n.d. (mid-1740s?): "Elisha Phillips was selected to 'be the man to set the psalm and in case he be not at meeting house that Ebenezer Rogers set it.'" [MA/Marshfield; Marshfield 1940, p. 94]

1745, 30 January – see 1738, 8 March

1746, 1 April: "...it was agreed 'yt Capt. Harrison Tune ye Psalm on ye Sabbath & other Times of Divine worship' and also 'yt Jno. Russell Jun^r sit in ye 3rd seat in ye Squair Body of ye meeting House to be helpful in Singing.'" [CT/Branford; Simonds [1919], p. 78]

n.d. (probably ca. 1746-1760): "[Rev. John] Whiting's insobriety eventually caused his dismissal in 1737, and his successor, Daniel Bliss, was so controversial...that a group of brethren withdrew from the church and started meeting in the Black Horse Tavern...as no other [p. 175] place would have them. In the description of the splinter group [which formed the West Church on 12 December 1745; it existed ca. 14 years, holding services for most of that period], [town historians Lemuel] Shattuck and [Ruth] Wheeler list 'Josiah Hosmer and Ezekiel Miles, choristers to set the tune for the congregation.'" [MA/Concord; Billings 1985, pp. 174-175]

"In 1748 the First Parish voted that 'Whereas sometimes deacon Elisha Freeman is absent who is appointed to set the Psalm, it is voted in his absence that Josephus [p. 121] Hammond do it, and in his absence Mr. Joseph Lovel, and in his Mr. Seth Dexter do it.'" [MA/Rochester; Rochester 1907, pp. 120-121]

n.d. (ca. 1748) + 1765: "The first singing was purely congregational, led by one of the deacons, or by a person specially chosen for this purpose, and was without instrumental accompaniment. The first innovation upon this general custom was made in 1765, when William Bond and others petitioned the town to grant to them 'a convenient seat or seats in the Meeting House to set together to sing in time of divine service;' [←punctuation *sic*] and the town granted them 'the hind seat below in the Meeting House in the men's side.'" [MA/Lincoln; Lincoln 1899, p. 26]

1749, 5 April – see 1738, 8 March

1749, 25 August: "Decon Benjⁿ Pease was chosen to set y^e Psalm upon y^e Sabbaths & at other times" [CT/Enfield; Allen 1900, I/411]

n.d. (probably second half of 18th c.): "The early church had no instrumental music beyond the pitch pipe, which was supposed to set the opening note of music. Ebenezer Briggs often led the singing and totally ignored the pitch pipe. The singers' untrained voices, joining with Briggs' rasping voice, often set off the parson's dog, followed by the many dogs waiting outside for their families to go home. The resulting cacophony persisted to the end of the song." ["Ebenezer Briggs" or William Blackmer? cf. Bliss 1889, pp. 131-132; M 1771] [MA/Wareham; Rider 1989, p. 77]

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 nbow 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]

1750, 3 October: "Voted that Ephraim Terry Jun^r be Desired to Set the psalm on Sabbath Days and at other Times" [CT/Enfield; Allen 1900, I/413]

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 Worshiping assembly and to sing as well as they can; and lastly,' say they, 'we cannot but recommend to ourselves & others to study the Things which make for peace, and the things whereby we may Edify one another.'

[new paragraph] The town voted what the committee recommended. But it is evident that the flames were not to be quenched by any such appliances. 'Three months' grace and 'no longer' is given to 'Beating with the hand' and occupying 'exchanged seats' if they can agree to exchange, which is very doubtful. The congregation are all to 'sing, as well as they can,' it is true, but to 'Join in Singing' at any rate. The Stickneyites in the 'Gallery' would hardly be satisfied. The compromise is like Nebuchadnezzar's image, gold in the head, but 'clay and iron' in the legs and feet. So it turns out, as the 'three months' are expiring, that an article is inserted in the warrant, January 7, 1771, 'to pass any votes in further addition' to those before passed 'as the Town Shall think proper by further lengthening the Time of the Present Mode of Singing.' This article came from the 'Gallery' party evidently. It is followed by another which came from the 'dea- [p. 89] con's seat,' as evidently. Hear it: 'to make Inquiry into the conduct of *those who call themselves the singers in this Town*, and see wheather they have conducted or proceeded agreeable to the report of the Town's Com^{tee}, and the Town's vote thereupon at our last Meeting and pass such Vote or Votes as shall be thought Necessary in Consequence thereof.' Greek has now met Greek [i.e., the two sides seem equal in strength]. At the meeting it is voted, **'that Deaⁿ Nath'l Warriner Shall continue to Set the Psalm as Usual During the Town's Pleasure; also that Moses Warriner and Jonathan Bliss do the same.'** The 'young men' are voted down; the 'Galleries' are in a minority; so it would seem. But there is abundant life in young blood, and, rallying their strength, 'a motion was made whether the singing should be performed in the congregation according to the late mode by Beating with the hand, &c.; it being put, and the House being Divided it passed in the affirmative, 25 against about 19.' The 'Deacon's Seat' now loses, but does not yield; for 'a motion was made' [\leftarrow close quote erroneous?] to Deside it by the Town List or by Lawful Voters, and after some Debate it was thrown by and the following vote passed, namely, Voted that the Rev. Mr. Mirick [Noah Merrick, pastor from 1741 to his death in 1776] be Desired to call a Society meeting in order to come into some method of Reconciliation with regard to Singing in the Publick worship.' They adjourn; and no more is recorded or known of the result.

Poor Mr. Merrick had cares enough of another kind, as we shall soon see, without being dragged into this controversy about the singing. Thus ended [p. 90] the great struggle of the town respecting the method of 'Carrying on the Singing in the Public Worship of God.'" [MA/Wilbraham; Stebbins 1864, pp. 85-90]

1752: "As early as 1752 it was 'Voted that we have a Chorister or Choristers,' and Benoni Hills was elected at a town meeting the first Chorister." [CT/Goshen; Hibbard 1897, p. 85]

1752, 30 January + 1799, 6 March: "At the first meeting of the church, January 30, 1752, it was voted that 'during the time that the church is without Deacons, Benjamin Adams and Jason Bigelow, tune the psalm in public. ... March 6, 1799 – Voted Mr. Silas Haskell, Jabez Ayres, Rufus Dodge, and Abel Harwood to take the lead in singing." [MA/North Brookfield; Fiske notes]

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]

1752, late November: "The question of church music, which the pastor had taken so vigorously in hand twenty years before [see D 1731, 18 February], 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]

"July 1754, a vote was passed by the church, 'desiring seven brethren, viz., John Cloyes, Benjamin Pepper, John Farrar, Bezaleel and David Rice, Samuel Dedman, and

Daniel Adams, together with Mr. Ebenezer Marshall to **take immediate care to qualify themselves to set the psalm in public**; and **as soon as they are properly qualified**, to lead the assembly in that part of Divine Worship.” [MA/Framingham; Temple 1887, p. 337]

ca. 1755 and years following: “Choristers seem to have been employed to set the tune and lead the singing before the choir was formed. ... About 1755, Daniel Pomeroy was chorister, and he was followed in the office by Joseph Root, Joseph Parsons, and Timothy Dwight. Dea. Ebenezer Pomeroy was an excellent reader [note: not necessarily a singer], celebrated for the manner in which he ‘Deaconed the Psalm,’ line by line.” [MA/Northampton; Trumbull 1902, p. 531]

n.d. (between ca. 1755 and 1800): “This second Elijah Hart [1735-1800] was deacon of the First Church for more than twenty years. He had a good voice and led the singing for several years.” [CT/New Britain; Camp 1889, p. 425]

1757: “In 1757, Mr. George Pitkin was chosen to set the psalm, with Lieft. [*sic*] Olmsted, Mr. Aaron Benton and Mr. Russell Woodbridge as assistants. Colonel John Pitkin was desired to read the psalm...” [CT/East Hartford; East Hartford 1902, p. 45]

1757 + 1762 + 1773, April + 1803 + 1818 + 1822: “In 1757, [p. 48] the society voted and agreed that they would introduce Mr. Watts’ Version of the Psalms to be sung on the Sabbath and other solemn meetings.... At the same meeting Elijah Cowles was requested to tune the Psalm, and that he shall sit in the fifth pew. In 1762 Mr. Fisher Gay was chosen to assist Elijah Cowles in setting the psalm, and he should sit in the ninth pew on the north side of the alley, and Stephen Dorchester was chosen to assist the choristers in reading the psalm. In April, 1773, the spring after this house was first occupied[,] a choir was allowed.... [p. 49; new paragraph] Mr. Martin Bull was appointed to lead, and John Treadwell and Asahel Wadsworth to assist as there should be occasion. ... In 1803 eight choristers were appointed, Luther Seymour at the head. ... In 1818 the Handel Society was organized, under the leadership of the eminent Dr. Eli Todd, and was invited by the society to conduct the service of song, which it did with great acceptance. [note: “This society was very numerous, and the members occupied all the seats in front of the pulpit; Dr. Todd having drawn the long and straggling line into a compact mass in the center of which he stood, animating and swaying all by his eye and his instrument [a violin]. Dr. Todd was reported to be an infidel at that time and had rarely attended church although he was the beloved and trusted friend of the pastor. It was a matter of great rejoicing in this sensitive community when he pledged himself to conduct the singing, and the zeal for the Handel Society was in part inspired by the interest felt in this eminent and greatly beloved physician.”] Dr. Todd did not sing himself but led the choir by his violin, the use of which was then a novelty in a Puritan meeting house. [p. 50; new paragraph] ... In 1822 the Handel Society gave notice that it would no longer sustain the singing, when four choristers were appointed, Horace Cowles at the head.” [CT/Farmington; Porter 1873, pp. 47-50]

1758, 30 August + 1770, 22 August + 1771, 22 November: "Aug^t 30. 1758...voted that Elijah Houghton [s?]ho[u]ld be y^e Chorister, or Psalm Setter for y^e present. ... Aug^t 22, 1770 ... Chose De[a?]: Moor[e?]s Chorister in addition to y^e former.a request of several Brethren dated Nov^r 22. 1771, "To call a Chh-meeting...to see if said Chh will choose one or more Choristers to set the Psalm in public worship....[']" [MA/Sterling; Lancaster Second Church Records, pp. 13, 16, 32]

1760, 11 March: "In the warning of a meeting of the Presbyterian parish, March 11, 1760, was an article 'to see if the parish will raise any money for hiring a man to Rais[e] the Salms in the meeting house.'" [NH/Chester; Chase 1869, p. 322]

n.d. (between ca. 1760 and 1785) + late 18th c./early 19th c. : "The earliest chorister, of whom there is any certain information, was William Benjamin [born 1737/38]. He was a resident here at the settlement of Mr. Winchester [in 1760] and remained until 1785 when he removed to Vermont. He led the choir several years and was succeeded by Joseph Jewett, Esq., and Lieutenant John Adams." [MA/Ashburnham; Stearns 1887, p. 326]

n.d. (between 1760 and 1831) + ca. 1815: "Russell Hastings (if I remember the name) led the singing for a long time. [footnote: "About 1815, a Mr. Allen, called 'bushel face[,] was the chorister."] He had a pitch pipe to give the tune the right pitch." [MA/Greenfield; Thompson 1904, p. 538; recollections of Rev. Charles C. Corse, written in a letter to the author]

1761: "[the church in the second precinct of Rochester, now Mattapoisett]...chose Aaron Barlow 'Quorister.'" [MA/Mattapoisett; Rochester 1907, p. 197]

1761, 6 April: "[']At a uestre holdeein St Jemeses Church at Waterbury on the 6 day of aprel 1761...voted in sd vestry that Ebenezar Warner should assist in tuning the psalm—voted in sd uestry that Sam^{ll} Brown should a sist in tuning The psalm—voted in sd uestry that hezekiah Brown Should a Sist in tuning the psalm...[']" [CT/Waterbury; Bronson 1858, p. 300]

1762 – see n.d. (likely late 1720s-1760s)

1762 – see 1757

1762, November: "...[Johannes Martin Schaeffer, first pastor of Broad Bay (later Waldoboro)'s German Protestant church] probably took up his residence [on a particular site]...in November 1762, the month the first service was held in the church and the structure dedicated. [new paragraph] Mr. Groton has happily made a brief description of this service a matter of record, and from this source the following account is taken: [new paragraph, indented, smaller type:] The small house was crowded. The choir was organized by Frank Miller, Senior, and was composed of male and female singers. Among the youngest was Conrad Heyer then

about fifteen years old [or 13? –see before 1770-1850, October and 1800 + 1803 in this folder]. The service was all in the German language. Dr. Schaeffer read from the 137th psalm and preached from the 5th and 6th verses of the same. These pious people, many of whom in their own country, had worshipped in gorgeous churches, rejoiced that after so many years they were permitted to assemble in their rudely built meetinghouse and worship the same God under the same form of religion they did in Germany.” [ME/Waldoboro; Stahl 1956, vol. I, p. 334]

1762 + ca. 1839 (or 1850?): “[Conrad Heyer]...had participated as chorister in the first service held in the new Lutheran Church at Meetinghouse Cove [Heyer, then ca. 13, was more likely just a singer at that service; see 1762, November in this folder]; and in the last Lutheran service ever held [p. 298] in Waldoboro, he had at the age of ninety led the singing, taking the high notes of the hymn without a single tremor or quaver of voice.” [Wasn’t the last Lutheran service in Waldoboro ca. 1850, and Heyer 101? –see vol. II, p. 41 in this source: Henry Pohlmann writing in 1850 that the Waldoboro Lutheran congregation “came to the unanimous conclusion to disband their organization” during his visit there that year.] [ME/Waldoboro; Stahl 1956, pp. 297-298]

1763, 7-8 August and after: “Very little information has come down to us respecting the singing in the First Church, in the early times. A brief note written by Mr. Jackson lets a ray of light on the forgotten history of those days. It is addressed to Mr. Isaac Gardner, who was afterwards killed at Lexington. [new line, smaller type:] ‘BROOKLIN Aug. 8, 1763 / ‘Sir, / ‘I perceived it was not agreeable to you to lead in the singing yesterday – If Mr. Aspinwall does not return before ye Thanksgiving I will speak to Mr. Bowles, / Yrs. / J. JACKSON.’ [new paragraph, regular type:] What Mr. Aspinwall this was, we have no means of knowing, but it is certain that Mr. Isaac Gardner was a fine singer, and did ‘lead in the singing,’ as did his son Isaac S. Gardner, after him.” [MA/Brookline; Woods 1874, p. 255]

n.d. (before 1764) + 1764 + 1773 + 1778 + 1786: “The parish regularly appointed ‘tuners’ to raise the tune and direct the time and pitch, which was given by a wooden pitch-pipe, to which the singers answered by sounding forth the key, and going up and down the octave, by sounding the third, fifth, and eighth notes. [new paragraph] The deacons were the ‘tuners’ as well as the liners-off till [p. 94] 1764; but as Deacon Bass and Deacon Wild were not singers, the precinct appointed Captain Thomas Penniman and Elijah French ‘tuners.’ Elijah French had a powerful tenor voice, and usually acted as chief ‘tuner.’ Captain Penniman led off the base voices. [new paragraph] In 1773...Simeon Thayer and Ephraim Thayer were appointed additional ‘tuners.’ [new paragraph] In 1778,...Elisha Wales and Lieutenant Isaac Thayer were added to the choristers. From this time Captain Elisha Wales became and continued chief chorister for twenty years. [new paragraph] In 1786...Silas Paine was appointed chorister. Henceforth the singing was chiefly by the choir, though not to the exclusion of the congregation.” [MA/Randolph; Randolph 1881, pp. 93-94 (from “History of the Psalms and Hymns and Music of the First Church of Randolph” by Rev. Asa Mann)]

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

1764 – see n.d. (before 1764) (different from below)

1764 – see n.d. (before 1764) (different from above)

1764, 23 February: "Joseph Fletcher was chosen a deacon of the church, Feb. 23, 1764, and at the same meeting it was voted that 'Brother Abraham Kendall, Brother Josiah Blodgett and Brother Sam^l Cumings be Queresters in y^e Congregation.' These men probably were expected 'to set the tunes,'—for assistance in which a queer sort of a wooden instrument, called a pitch-pipe, was used,—and also to lead the voices of the people in the singing. The 'lining out of the psalm' was generally done by the pastor or one of the deacons." [MA/Dunstable; Nason 1877, p. 103]

1765 – see n.d. (ca. 1748)

1765, 22 May – see 1730, 7 January, 4 February

1766: "...it was voted that Mr. Ebenezer Richards 'who usual[l]y led in singing be desired to sit on the Lord's day, in the seat under the pulpit, commonly called the Elder's seat, and that he have the liberty to nominate a number to sit with him to assist in carrying on the singing.' He proceeded to nominate eight persons whose names are given." [seems like an interim step between chorister + choir]
[MA/Dedham; Lamson 1839, p. 63]

1766, 2 October: "'Voted also to elect some person to set the Psalm or tune, and lead in the singing for six Sabbaths next ensuing upon trial or liking, as a further attempt

for regular and religious improvement in that part of divine worship.’ [new paragraph] ‘The brethren then brought in their votes, from which it appeared that Robert Harrington, Jr., was unanimously chosen to this service.’” [MA/Lexington; Hudson 1868, p. 331]

n.d. (late 18th c.): “The first meeting-house was abandoned in the beginning of 1793. In the latter part of its occupancy, says Dr. [John Milton] Whiton, ‘the choristers were Ebenezer Sherwin and Daniel Farrar, the tunes most in vogue, were the old fugues of Billings and other American composers, which had almost driven out of use the more ancient and simple melodies sung by our Pilgrim Fathers. These fugues were sung here with *not* a superabundance of taste; he that could make the most noise, and get along the fastest, bearing off the palm as the best performer. The key-note was sounded by a pitch-pipe which in boyhood I used to behold with a sort of awe as a very mysterious contrivance.’ But in time the musical instruments made their way into the sanctuary, and before the century came in, they were considered almost indispensable in choirs which made any pretensions to taste and correctness in rendering the musical productions of that day.” [MA/Winchendon; Marvin 1868, p. 190]

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. (late 18th c., early 19th c.): “[Lemuel Smith, 1759-1839]...was for many years the chorister of the First Church.” [CT/New Britain; Camp 1889, p. 443]

n.d. (probably late 18th c., early 19th c.) + 1789, 19 October: “At the same time [19 October 1789], Abner Morgan, Esq., Capt. David Morgan, and James Bacon, were chosen Quoristers, and it was voted to hire a singing master for three months. For a number of years singing schools were maintained with more or less regularity. For a few years the town voted an appropriation of \$25.00 or \$30.00. Individuals became prominent as singers and leaders—Thomas Hubbard, Deacon Tarbell, Eaton Hitchcock. Captain Salisbury, a famous music teacher for this whole region, was leader of the choir. The people showed their appreciation of his services, and perhaps paid him some small [p. 129] compensation, by purchasing tickets to his annual ‘Singing Lecture.’” [MA/Brimfield; Hyde 1879, pp. 128-129]

n.d. (late 18th c. and/or early 19th c.) + 1805-1809: "At times the singing tended to be something of a family affair. Many of the Towers were musical and active in the choir over many years. When Laban Tower [1751-1824] was chorister, as the choir leader was called, his daughters Grace and Lucy sang. And Bela Tower [probably the Bela Tower, 1760-1836, who played fife in a Revolutionary War regiment] and Isaiah Tower [Laban's brother; 1731-1811] both served as choristers. From 1805 to 1809 Charles Gardner, a set-work cooper who lived on Gardner Street, was chorister; and during that time the singers included Stephen, Reuben, Warren, and Josiah Gardner, his brothers, and their sister Hannah. Another well-represented family was that of the Revolutionary Captain Zachariah Whiton, whose daughter Polly was for a while the 'principal treble,' with her sisters Sybil and Priscilla in the choir." [MA/South Hingham; Robinson 1980, p. 76]

late 18th c./early 19th c. – see n.d. (between ca. 1760 and 1785)

n.d. ("several years" in late 18th c. and/or 19th c. as late as 1810) – see n.d. (1778-1802)

n.d. ("many years" in late 18th c. and/or 19th c. as late as 1816) – see n.d. (1778-1802)

1768 + 1774 + 1785 + "not long after" 1785: "1785. The singers begin to sit in the gallery facing the minister. Until 1768 'congregational singing' was the usage—one of the deacons 'lining the hymn.' From that date the singers sat together in pews assigned them on the floor of the house, the congregation still uniting with them in the service, and the deacons continuing to line the hymn. In 1774 the church voted 'to choose some of the brethren skilled in singing, to lead the church and congregation in the service of singing praise to God.' The first choristers chosen were Joseph Perkins, John Choate and Abraham Perkins. When the singers took their seats in the gallery this year, Watts'[s] Psalms and Hymns were introduced as a substitute for Prince's Bay Psalm-Book which had been in use before. Not long after [p. 235] this, Daniel Sanford taught a singing-school, and at the close of it, introduced his pupils to the singers' seats. They were so numerous that they filled all the seats of the front gallery." [MA/Essex; Crowell 1868, pp. 234-235]

1769, May – see 1726, March

before 1770-1850, October: [quoting from the "Reverend Dr. [Henry L.] Pohlmann of Albany," sent to Waldoboro by the Lutheran Synod in October 1850 to survey the situation in the declining Lutheran church there:] "On the following afternoon I addressed the congregation again at the house of Conrad Beyer, the first born among the settlers at Broad Bay, who, although one hundred and one years old, was as brisk and active as a man of fifty; and who according to his wont for more than eighty years, acted as chorister, and led us in a hymn of praise, reading without spectacles the small print of Watt's [*sic*] duodecimo Hymn Book, and singing even

the highest notes with scarcely any of the tremulousness of age." [ME/Waldoboro; Stahl 1956, vol. II, p. 40]

ca. 1770: "It was about the same time that the church relinquished to selected choristers the authority to appoint the tunes which should be sung in church; though not without a reservation, which required all but the tune after the last prayer to be 'such tunes as have been usual of late, and such old tunes as upon tryal may be thought proper for the public worship.' The first persons chosen choristers were Jonathan Stow and Moses Harrington." [MA/Grafton; Pierce 1879, p. 185]

n.d. (probably 1770s): "At the east meeting-house [in Harpswell], Deacon Snow [Isaac Snow chosen deacon of Harpswell church at meeting of 2 August 1770 (p. 438)], who wore a white wig, sat under or in front of the pulpit, and 'lined out' the hymn, so that every man present might have an opportunity to sing. This was the common practice." [ME/Harpswell; Wheeler 1878, p. 213]

n.d. (probably 1770s): "Another innovation, made at the same time [as the adoption of Watts, early 1772], was regarded with little favor by some of the older people. The town voted 'to introduce some new tunes to be sung here on the Lord's day,' and Mr. Joseph Philbrick and Dr. Samuel Page were appointed to tune the psalm in the New Version [meaning Watts, not Brady + Tate] for the afternoon. The town, however, had some regard for the feelings of the aged, and did not make an entire change in the arrangements for singing. As has already been related, the old version of the Psalms was not wholly discarded at once. So also with the former leader of their singing, for it was voted that 'Dea. Samuel Dow shall tune the psalm in the forenoon,' 'Dea. Jon^a Tuck & Dea. Sam^l Dow, to read the psalms.'" [NH/Hampton; Dow 1893, vol. I, p. 413]

n.d. (probably 1770s-1780s): A few of the leaders of the choir that successively held the office were Nathaniel Perley, Moses Peabody, and David and Samuel Kimball." [MA/Boxford; Perley 1880, p. 248]

n.d. (probably 1770s and/or 1780s) + n.d. (after 1770s and/or 1780s): "Joseph Greenwood, Esq., is said to have been the first leader of the singers in the Dublin church [probably in the 1770s and/or 1780s]. Among those who were leaders after him, we find the following names, but the list may not be complete: Ebenezer Twitchell, Benjamin Mason, Kimball Ames, John Perry, Joseph Twitchell, jun., Joshua Flint, Samuel Fisher, Nahum Warren, Moses Adams, jun., Abraham Mead, Reuben W. Twitchell, Benjamin F. Morse, Corydon Jones, and Joseph Morse." [NH/Dublin; Dublin 1855, p. 196]

n.d. (1770s-1820s?): "...Joel Read was best known as a musician. He took the lead of the choir in the church at West Attleborough from early life till age disqualified him for the duties." [MA/West Attleborough; Daggett 1894, p. 490]

n.d. (possibly 1770s and 1780s) (Davis) + n.d. (likely 1800s) (Harveys) + n.d. (1810s-1850s?) (Dea. Josiah Nichols) + n.d. (late 1820s, 1830s?) (Whitcomb): "Of those who have led the singing in meeting in Sutton, old Mr. Jacob Davis [probably the one b. 1714, d. 1819 (*sic*); his son is listed as Jacob Davis, Jr.] was long remember[ed] as a very excellent leader, with a beautiful voice for singing. Jonathan Harvey [1780-1859] was an excellent leader, and his brother Philip [1783-1855] also: the latter used to play the bass viol. Dea. Josiah Nichols [1786-1868] was also a superior choir leader. Daniel Whitcomb [1807-1843] used to lead the singing for the Universalists and on other occasions, being competent, and always ready when needed, owing to his fondness for music. ... [p. 540] At a later period [than when Matthew Buell taught in Sutton, which appears to have been in the years around 1800] Dea. Josiah Nichols for many years led the singing in church, and taught several terms of singing-school. [new paragraph] Daniel Whitcomb, a resident in Sutton, was gifted with a splendid voice, and was for some years a teacher of singing-schools in Sutton and elsewhere. ... [p. 844] The Nichols family [father: Josiah Nichols, b. 1755; mother, Abigail Long; married 1785] were all fond of music. Enoch [b. 1789] was a fine performer on the violin, and was the owner of an instrument noted, far and near, for its superior quality. Abigail [b. 1791] was skilled on the bass-viol. Dea. Josiah Nichols [Josiah Jr., b. 1786] taught many terms of singing-school, and always led the singing in meeting till extreme old age disqualified him. ... [p. 1007] [Daniel Whitcomb]...had a fine taste in music and a superior voice for singing, and was a favorite and successful teacher of singing-schools." [NH/Sutton; Worthen 1890, pp. 343, 540, 844, 1007]

"In 1770 it was voted that 'Singers sit in front gallery and that Quirester should tell singers what tune he is agoing to sing—so that all may strike the tune together.'" [MA/Marshfield; Marshfield 1940, p. 94]

"At the March meeting in 1770 Lemuel Richards, Joseph Fisher, and Asa Richards were chosen to tune the psalms for the year ensuing. A little later the singers were seated in the front gallery in the meeting-house, and only one person was appointed to tune the psalms. We can easily imagine Joseph Fisher standing, perhaps on the pulpit stairs, with a pitch-pipe in hand, 'tuning the psalms.' He reads two lines, adjusts his voice, and then the congregation 'joins in the arduous pursuit.' In this way the whole psalm is sung." [MA/Dover; Smith 1897, p. 180]

1770, March – see 1726, March

1770, 7 March + 1836 + 1840 + 1851: "Probably from this time [March 7, 1770, when a parish vote first mentions "the singers"] until 1850, there was a volunteer choir in the church with a leader appointed. Some of this time it was called a 'singing school' and appropriations were made from time to time to be expended by the leader. Thus in 1836, Solon Whiting was the leader, and in 1840, Fordyce Nourse was his successor. [new paragraph] Beginning in 1851, however, Charles Safford was appointed Chorister, or leader of the choir." [MA/Lancaster; Weic 1940, vol. [2], p. 592]

1770, 12 March – see 1730, 7 January, 4 February

1770, 22 March + 1775, 2 March + 1782, 25 December: “Anciently, the chorister was chosen by the united votes of the church and congregation, and not as now, and ever ought to be, by the singers. Accordingly, we find it recorded, in the church records, ‘March 22, 1770, The church and congregation voted for a chorister. Doct. Ormes had 23 votes, Mr. Mason had 18 votes. March 2, 1775. The church chose John Muzzy, Jun. for chorister. December 25, 1782. The church and congregation chose Lieut. Jonas Muzzy for chorister, and Mr. Oliver Watson, Jun. as assistant.’” [MA/Spencer; Draper 1841, p. 100]

1770, 22 August + 1771, ca. March: “In the Second Church in Lancaster (now Sterling) as late as August 22, 1770, the use of a pitch pipe was frowned upon, for the records of that church state: ‘The Chh met & **voted that ye use of ye pitch pipe & taking ye pitches, & keeping time by swinging ye hand in public worship was not acceptable to them.**’ ... [p. 587] ... Seven months later the church met again and ‘**Voted they were still of ye same mind about ye Pitch pipe & taking up ye Pitches, and that they were not willing ye Chorister sh’d beat time according to Discretion.**’ It is apparent that innovations were not welcome in the church service at that time.” [MA/Lancaster; Weis 1940, vol. [2], pp. 586-587] [So, they appear not to want either set pitches or a beat!]

1770, 22 August – see 1758, 30 August

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

“Nov. 6, 1770, Samuel Woodward and Deacon [David] Stone were appointed choristers. It was also voted ‘that a medium be observed between the old and new tunes. If any uneasiness arise with regard to that medium, they may consider of it hereafter, if they judge proper,--the chorister to be judge for the present.’” [MA/Newton; Smith 1880, p. 231]

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 lyes the pinch. – [p. 788, new paragraph] Please to turn your Eye to the following Texts, viz. Romans; 15 Chap. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, vers. – Chap. 16th, 17th and 18[th] verses. I Corinthians 3rd Chap. 10, 11, 12, and 13 vers. II Corinthians 6th Chap.

14th verse to the end. Perhaps you will not be able to judge what Inferences I Draw from those Texts, I leave you to Infer for your Self. If you can without clashing with these Scriptures reconcile me to the present mode of Singing, I will endeavor to have a better Opinion of it. At present I am very uneasy, and I Should be accountable to God and my own Conscience if I did not bear Testimony against it. I View these as not Circumstantial Things, but essential Errors which ought to be rectified. – [new paragraph] I grow weary of Writing and must conclude....” [MA/Wilbraham;

Smith/Barker 1931, pp. 783-788] [*This letter, dated 31 August 1780, was written in the middle of a period between settled minsters in Wilbraham (Noah Merrick, 1741-1776, and Joseph Willard, 1787-1794); right in the middle of the

Revolutionary War; in the same year when “New Light” disturbances occurred in Newton, Mass. and in rural Maine (and likely elsewhere); about eight months after original Wilbraham settler and long-serving Deacon Nathaniel Warriner had died (on 10 January, 1780); in the year after the first non-Congregational church (Baptist) was built in Wilbraham; and two years before the town would divide into North and South parishes.]

1770 + 1771-1775 + 1783 + 1785-1790 + 1788: “From the organization of St. John’s parish in 1760, great effort was made in the succeeding ten years to [p. 144] build up church music, and with considerable success. In 1770 more systematic work was agreed upon, and three men, Joel Blakeslee, Simon Tuttle and Samuel Mix, were chosen ‘choristers.’ The following year, among others, Oliver Blakeslee, teacher, clerk, surveyor and accountant, was placed upon this committee, and who really, up to 1775, was the director of the musical service. [new paragraph] In the latter year another man was added to these ‘choristers,’ who was destined to be called ‘The father of music in St. John’s Church,[’] Titus Frost. He was a chairmaker.... Although assisted heartily by his associates, who were noted singers in their day, yet he was unquestionably the man whose influence most brought about the musical results seen in this church to-day.... In 1783 [p. 145] all the music was put into his hands. He was chosen ‘to manage and order the singing.’ ... [new paragraph] To such an extent did Mr. Frost’s enthusiasm and labor carry his brethren, that the choir gallery had [p. 146] to be greatly lengthened to accommodate those who would join in this branch of worship. Fortunately the names of the ‘old choir’ of 1788 have been preserved. [indented text:] Titus Frost, Manager. / MALE CHORISTERS. / ... [12 names, including Joel + Oliver Blakeslee] / SINGERS ON THE TREBLE. / ... [12 women’s names] [5 family names account for 21 of the 24 singers] [new paragraph] Mr. Frost builded better than he knew..... [In 1785-1790, when the parish had no clergyman,] ...only faithfulness in keeping up ‘lay services’ saved this little ark from destruction. [new paragraph] It was just here that Titus Frost and his choir assisted to bridge over what was really the most trying period in the whole history of the church.” [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, pp. 143-146]

1771: “The next election was in 1771, at the time when the second meeting-house was nearly completed, and Ensign Elisha Blin was elected First Chorister, Fisk Beach the second, and Miles Norton the third.” [CT/Goshen; Hibbard 1897, p. 85]

1771: “Noah Eaton and nine others were chosen Quiristers, by First Parish, or persons to tune the psalm, and to sit, part of them in the Elders’ seat, so called, and part of them in the short seats in the men’s side gallery.” [MA/Reading; Eaton 1874, p. 171]

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

1771, ca. March – see 1770, 22 August

1771, 27 June + 1778: "On the 27th of June [a few months after voting to use Brady + Tate, with Watts supplement] the church, 'that we might have peace and harmony, . . . condescended that the Congregation, males of ye age of 21 years [+ older, surely], might have liberty' to vote [likely along with the Church] in the choice of [singing] leaders; and accordingly they proceeded to the radical step of electing four leaders to conduct the singing. [new paragraph] This is the second step, and an important one, in the history of the musical contest. The first was taken forty years before, and has been already mentioned [Rev. Parkman vs. Thomas Forbush + much of the town, 1730-31; see RS/OW 1730, 7 September + 1731, February]. That was the adoption of the use of a greater variety of tunes, and of written music; since that time the psalm had been read, or 'lined out,' one line at a time, and the people had sung as best they could, but without much regard to time or melody. The present change was the entering wedge of the much greater innovation which in due time introduced the choir. The adoption of the Tate and Brady version of the psalms...was an improvement in the quality of the psalmody; and the introduction of some of Watts's hymns was a much greater step in advance. But the most radical innovation of all was the appointment of four 'leaders.' It led in time to the disuse of the old custom of lining out, dear to the soul of many a deacon and clerk, and gallantly fought for in many a meeting-house in those days. The same step had been taken in Worcester the year before, and was part of a very general movement growing out of the increasing instruction and intelligence on the subject. [p. 157] These four men were to sit together and lead off in the singing. It was not long before they and some others grew extremely tired of waiting after the singing of every line for the clerk to read the next; so it came to pass that the next thing desired by the party of progress was the dispensing with the function of reader. It was achieved, however, as so many things are, by indirection. It was seven years afterward that the first choir appeared in the Westborough meeting-house..." [MA/Westborough; Deforest 1891, pp. 156-157]

1771, 16 October + 1821: "SINGING.—*Choristers*, 'to set the psalm in meeting,' were chosen by the church till 1821, when they were elected by the choir. The persons first chosen by the church, Oct. 16, 1771, were John Wait, Jr., John Graves, and Elihu Graves: those chosen by the choir in 1821, were R. B. Harwood, and ----- Warner." [MA/Whately; Temple 1872, p. 116]

1771, 22 November – see 1758, 30 August

n.d. (probably late 18th c., after 1771): "During the early days of the society of the First Parish of Topsham [first church in Topsham organized 1771 (p. 407)], when it used the old meeting-house at the east end of the town, the choir was large, and for a time was led by a Mr. Nichols, a shoemaker in Brunswick, who was a very fine singer. It was afterwards led by a Mr. Ripley, and still later by a Mr. Blanchard." [ME/Topsham; Wheeler 1878, p. 214]

1771-1775 – see 1770

ca. 1772: "Selah Norton, James Olmsted, and Jonathan Roberts, all staunch and prominent citizens, were appointed to be choristers to assist Captain Pitkin in setting the psalms." [CT/East Hartford; Goodwin 1879, p. 132]

1772: "Among the Stoughton papers, quoted by Mr. John A. Stoughton, in his *Windsor Farmes* (p. 97), is the following petition: [smaller type:] EAST WINDSOR, / Sep^r. y^e 9, 1772. / To y^e Jentlemen Society Comm^{tt}. For y^e North Society [Scantic] in said East Windsor, this from us the subscribers are to Desier you as soon as may be to warne a society meeting to do y^e following Business, viz.: [new paragraph] 1st. To see what y^e Society will do Respecting Singing whether they will ap[p]rove of Beeting y^e time with y^e hand in divine worship. [new paragraph] 2d. Whether y^e society will approve of Sounding or Pitching y^e notes with y^e voice or Pitchpipe before they begin to sing. [new paragraph] 3d **to see whether they shall appoint y^e Rev. Mr. Potwine to tell the tuner what tune they shall sing.** [new paragraph] 4. To see if the Society will agree upon a Serteine number of tunes that shall be sung upon y^e Lord's Day in divine worship in this Society, and what tune they will have sung. [new paragraph] 5 **to see whether they will chuse any person or persons to tune the Psalm for us in this Society.** [new paragraph] 6. To see whether the society will agree to Seet the Meeting house againe, or approve of y^e disorderly Sitting in y^e Gallerys among y^e young people. [new paragraph] 7. To see if the society will agree to sing without having the Psalm read upon the Sabbath in divine worship. [signed by 24 people]" [CT/Windsor; Stiles 1891, vol. I, p. 605]

1772, 12 May + 1773, 1 July + 1778, March: "May 12, 1772. The Chh. choose Jonathan Severance and Eleaz^r Wells to Tune y^e Psalm when Amos Allen shall be absent. ... [p. 718] ... [new paragraph] July 1, 1773. The Chh. made Choice of Agrippa Wells, Ezekiel Bascome, Uriel Hinsdale & Reuben Wells to tune y^e Psalm. ... [new paragraph] M'ch, 1778. Edward Billings, John Newton, John Wells & Simeon Nash were made Choice of to tune y^e Psalm." [MA/Greenfield; Thompson 1904, vol. II, pp. 717, 718; quoted from Rev. Roger Newton's diary]

1772, 8 December: "...voted Joseph Cornish Zacheus gillit Juny [= Jr.?] Coristurs Decon Asahel Holcomb Richard gay to read y^e Salme..." [CT/East Granby; quoted in Turkey Hills 1901, p. 37]

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

mode and form which they have lately practised and instructed, as aforesaid.”
[CT/Hartford; Parker 1892, p. 143]

1773: “[The Farmington society]...also voted to allow Mr. Bull ‘to lead the singing in the Assembly.’ The person in question was probably Amos Bull, a singing master, who had written to Samuel Smith the previous year [note: “Amos Bull to Samuel Smith, Jan. 12, 1772[,] in Gay Mss., Folio D, 95, CHS.”] informing Smith of his intended arrival in a month’s time to establish a school in Farmington.”
[CT/Farmington; Bickford 1982, p. 117]

1773 – see 1726, March

1773 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1773, 1 March + 1778, 2 March, ca. 23 March + 1779 + “later date”: “At what date a special class or choir of singers was formed to carry on this part of the service, it has been found impossible to ascertain. The first action of the town upon the subject of sacred music was taken March 1, 1773, when it [new paragraph, smaller type:] ‘*Voted* and chose Thomas Brigden Esq. and messirs Lemuel Houghton, Stephen Holden, Abraham Stone, Moses Thirsten, John Hoar[,] Joseph Holden, Jr.[] Reuben Miles, Nathaniel Brown[,] Samuel Cooke[,] Sebez Jackson as Modelators [modulators? --one meaning of “modulate” is “to tune to a key or pitch”] of the Tune on Lords Days in times of Divine Service.’ [new paragraph, regular type:] The article in the warrant under which these [11] men were appointed provided for the assignment of ‘a place for them to set in,’ and the selectmen were instructed ‘to make an alteration in the Front gallery on the wimmen’s side,’ in order to meet the implied necessity. [new paragraph] Again, on the 2d of March, 1778, the town [new paragraph, smaller type:] ‘*Voted* that Thanks be Returned to Mr.[] Houghton for his Service Tuning the psalm on Lords Days and Voted To Chuse a number of persons to Tune the psalm on Lords Days Then Voted and Chose messirs Sebez Jackson, Lieut. John Hoar, Joseph Holden, John Fosket, David Nichols, Isaac Williams, Paul Walker, David Foster, Nathan Darby.’ [new paragraph, regular type:] In the warrant for a town meeting, three weeks later, was an article [new paragraph, smaller type:] ‘To see whether they [the voters] [←square brackets in original] will give the two hind Seats in the meetinghouse on the frunt side in the men’s and wimen’s side To accomidate the Singers.’ [new paragraph, regular type:] Whereupon it was [new paragraph, smaller type:] ‘*Voted* to give the Seats mentioned in this article to accomidate the Singers and Voted to build them on the Town’s Cost, and Voted to chuse three as a Committee to build said pews, and Voted that Said Committee make an Equail Division in the Pews for men and wimen and that those who are already appointed Singers [are] to take Said Seates when finished [p. 283] and that they [are] to Invite any into said Seates who are Singers till Said pews are filled and to continue their till the further order of the Town.’ [new paragraph, regular type:] Some change in the location of the choir seems to have been desired the following year, 1779, since it was [new paragraph, smaller type:] ‘*Voted* that the Singers have the Benefitt of the four hind seats in the front Gallery on the Men’s & Women’s side

instead of the Seats they now Sit in, etc.’ [new paragraph, regular type:] At a later date, of which no record has been found, these servants of the sanctuary were given the occupancy of the front seats in the front gallery, opposite the pulpit, a position they retained while the house was used as a place of public worship.” [MA/Westminster; Heywood 1893, pp. 282-283]

“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, 3 June – see 1737, 25 January

1773, 1 July – see 1772, 12 May

“At a regular Meeting of November 5, 1773, the townspeople passed two votes which are very significant. ... [new paragraph] *Article 5. To know if the Town will appoint one or more seats in the Meeting House for the use of the Singers. Voted to have Mess. Jeremiah Fitch and James Wright to sett in the fore seats in the front Gallery as they are appoined (appointed) to Before the Psalm or Tune.*” [MA/Bedford; Brown 1975, p. 99]

1773 + 1781: “In 1773 the church [in the second precinct of Rochester, today Mattapoisett] had ‘desired Benjamin Hatch, Saml[.] Jenney, Timothy West, Elihu Shearman, Saml. Eldredge & Gideon Hammond to sit in fourth seat in the meeting-house and lead the Church and Congregation in singing God[']s praises.’ In 1781 the precinct voted ‘For the accommodation of those that lead in singing the use of the two hind seats in the body seats, on the lower flower [floor], both on the mens and Womans Sides, **So long as the present method of Singing by Select numbers shall continue.** And the said singers may erect doors at the entrances of Said Seats [*sic*] at their own Cost, if they think proper, but not to raise the lower flower higher than it now is.” [MA/Mattapoisett; Rochester 1907, p. 219]

n.d. (no earlier than 1774-at least 1816, probably later): “Dea. Ephraim Barker [1732-1800; moved to Amherst in 1774] was prominent among the musicians in the second meeting-house [dedicated 19 January 1774]. Dea. John Seaton, jr. [1756-1836], was afterward leader. 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 fusilade 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. Jonathan Hildreth [b. 1767], a grandson of the first Col. Shepard, was a noted musician in his day ["a noted music-teacher"—p. 628], and leader of the choir [for "many years"—p. 628] until his death, 5 July, 1816. ... Benjamin Kendrick [b. 1779], another grandson of Col. Shepard, was chorister some years. ... [p. 317] ... [new paragraph] 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. 315-316, 317]

"In 1774 the church by vote consented to the use of the pitch-pipe 'if the chorister please to pitch the tune' [MA/Ashburnham; Stearns 1887, p. 325]

1774 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1774 – see 1768

1774, 7 February + 1777, 8 March + 1783, 3 February + 1786, 26 December: "...Feb[.] 7 1774 voted that choristers shall sit in next pew north of pulpit'; on March 8, 1777, 'voted that Jonathan Yale and Caleb Merriman Jr[.] assist the choristers.' Feb. 3, 1783, 'voted that Joel Rice assist in singing,' and on Dec. 26, 1786, 'Barnabas Meky was chosen assistant chorister.'" [CT/Meriden; Gillespie 1906, p. 146, 1st numbering]

1774, 16 May, 5 December: "...finally in 1774, without so much as a murmur [*sic*] of protest, we find first this entry: [indented, smaller type:] May 16, 1774 Town meeting 'voted to new seat the Meeting House but not to appropriate any part of the Meeting House to Singers' [not indented, regular type:] followed by this highly significant entry: [indented, smaller type:] Dec. 5, 1774 Voted that for ye better and

more decent carrying on of public worship, Deacon Wheeler would lead in ye Singing, one half of ye Time, and ye Singers the other half, in ye Congregation. [not indented, regular type:] Thus, the old way/new way debate was resolved in Concord by a gentle compromise.” [MA/Concord; Billings 1985, p. 179]

1774, 15 July: “...also Voted That Sam^l [sic] Forward & Pelatiah Addams be Quoristors...” [CT/East Granby; quoted in Turkey Hills 1901, p. 39]

ca. 1774 + 1779: “The singers were first ‘seated’ about 1774, when the custom of lining ceased and the church voted that Deacon Wheeler should lead the singing one half the time and the singers in the gallery the other. [new paragraph] In 1779, the church took into consideration the ‘melancholy decay of singing in public worship, and chose 20 persons who should sit together in the body pews below and take the lead in singing, the women to sit separate from the men.” [MA/Concord; Hudson 1904, vol. I, p. 250]

1774-1790: “This method [of lining out by a deacon] appears to have been in use until 1774, when we find the choristers were annually appointed in regular town meetings.... The town continued to superintend the singing until 1790, the last notice on record of the appointment of choristers by the town.” [CT/Norfolk; Roys 1847, p. 31]

n.d. (between 1774 and 1881): “Much attention has always been given to church music; there have been one or two singing schools nearly every winter, and we usually have good singing in all our places of worship. The service of song has been a voluntary one; rarely has any one received remuneration, though invaluable aid has been rendered by individuals connected with the different choirs, as choristers, or otherwise, for long periods of time; in one case for thirty-seven years; in another, forty-eight years.” [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]

between 1774 and ca. 1791 (Powers) + ca. 1791 to ca. 1806 (West) + 1794, 17 December (West) + n.d. (ca. 1806) (Dutton) + 1806, ca. 1 November to late 1807 (Durkee) + 1811 (possibly late 1807-1811) (Cutler) + at least 1814, June (possibly 1811-1814) (Holton) + ca. 1814-late 1816 (Steele) + ca. late 1816-1831 (Williams) + 1821, March (no name) + ca. 1821 (Duren) + 1824, May, September (concerts) + 1828, 21 October (Simmons) + 1831 (Duren again) + ca. 1831-summer 1841 (Swan) + 1836 (Partridge) + ca. 1836 (Twitchell) + ca. 1836 (Bingham) + 1839-1840 (Brown) + 1840-ca. 1844 (Hartwell, others) + ca. 1841-at least 1861 (Dana): “For a long period of years after the establishment of church worship in this town, one of the most important personages in the conduct of religious exercises was the leader of the choir. The first man to fill this post in Woodstock was Dr. Stephen Powers [1735 or 6-1809; married in Middleborough, Mass. in 1760; apparently came to Woodstock in 1774]. The doctor had enjoyed quite a musical reputation in Old Middleborough, of which he was extremely jealous, and indeed left that town, one of

his grandsons used to say, because another man had come there to live who excelled him in singing. In Woodstock the doctor held undisputed sway for a long time in the musical as well as in the medical world, and being regular in his attendance at church service, it always devolved upon him to take charge of the singing. [new paragraph] About the year 1791 Elisha West came from 'below' and settled in Woodstock. ... [new paragraph] Immediately after his coming to this town, West became the leader, head, and chief of the musical world in the vicinity. Wherever West appeared all other musical dignitaries gave way before him. He was not only a fine singer, having a natural gift that way, but also a teacher of the divine art, and he likewise com- [p. 221] posed tunes possessing, to say the least, the average degree of merit. Our people had the sense to employ him as a teacher forthwith; for good singing they esteemed as a main source of enjoyment, and furthermore an indispensable part of church worship. Indeed, the chief idea with them in all musical instruction was to secure for their religious services the highest degree of excellence possible in psalm-singing. As to what that excellence consisted in, and how it was to be attained, they had their own notions. Therefore the following paper was circulated in these parts, once upon a time, in behalf of Elisha West. [new paragraph] 'To regulate harmony in the religious societies in this town—And to encourage youth and others who wish to gain knowledge in the pleasing Art of Psalm singing—We, the subscribers, voluntarily agree to pay the sums we hereunto annex with our names, to Mr. Elisha West, for his services in the instruction of said art and the intervening charges,—At a price as shall be agreed on betwixt a Committee of the Subscribers and said West. --Said parties are to agree on the place where said services are to be performed—and the time when to begin them. Dated Woodstock, Dec. 17th, 1794. [2-column list of names + sums; "B. Swan" (probably Timothy Swan's brother Benjamin, who came to Woodstock ca. 1791) contributed 3 dollars] ... [new paragraph] For about twelve years [so, to ca. 1806] West continued the leading music teacher in this vicinity, opening singing-schools at different points through the winter seasons, but making it a principle always to have at command a well-drilled choir for any emergency. His younger pupils met in the afternoon; in the evening the older ones came in; and everybody went to the singing-school in those days. For the people thought their children should all be taught to sing, just as much as they should be taught the arithmetic. The tunes then sung were mostly of the fugue style; for by that time had been fully established, through the persevering efforts of Billings, of Boston, the revolution in church music by which the fugue tunes came to supersede the old English tunes. [p. 222, new paragraph] As a teacher West was a careful drill-master. He gave most patient attention to the rudiments, and those who still remember his instructions [footnote: "Written September 29, 1870."] speak of him in this particular with high respect. Above all things there was in his school the most rigid observance of the laws of time, and even certain bad habits of his [i.e., "an exceeding fondness for drink"] were not allowed to interfere with the order and discipline he considered needful to have the school a success. ... [new paragraph] ... the influence of his drill and discipline in the 'divine art,' of his musical taste, and his devotion to psalmody, were not lost on this community for the next generation. [new paragraph] After the departure of Elisha West, Captain David Dutton became the musical leader in the North Parish of Woodstock. Dutton was a

man of good manners and appearance, and besides taking an active part as a teacher and leader in singing, figured for a while in the military line. However, after the Congregational Church was erected on the Green, Dutton sung in the choir only when called on. [new paragraph] About 1807 there flourished, under the charge of Captain [p. 223] Stephen Durkee, one of the greatest and best singing-schools ever known in these parts. The origin of this school was as follows: In the summer of 1806 the Congregational Church was raised and partly built. Those interested in the building of the church were desirous of having a good choir for the exercises in the church when it was completed. They united therefore to engage the services of Captain Durkee, and hired him for a year, agreeing to pay him wages and board him at Taylor's Hotel, and to find a hall to sing in, besides wood and lights. The lights used were mould candles brought from Boston. The hall was in Mrs. Molly Richardson's tavern. The captain remained rather more than a year. He began his school about the 1st of November, 1806. Charles Marsh interested himself very much in this school, and one day brought from Windsor a number of small pamphlets containing rules for learning to sing [*Gamuts?*], and distributed them among the scholars. [footnote: "Miss Mary Harvey, May 19, 1871."] It was Durkee's habit to call his choir together in the court-house at the third service on the Sabbath, and the singers filled the entire circular seat within the bar of the house, numbering forty or fifty. These were mostly treble and bass singers; but the leader himself sat in the chief judge's seat with one tenor, Cephas Ransom, on his right hand, and on the left three or four counter singers. Over this large and efficient choir Durkee presided in the most spirited manner. The Legislature sat here in the fall of 1807, and the members, some of them, frequently attended the exercises of the school. They all affirmed that nothing like the performances of this choir ever had been heard in this State. [footnote: "N. Williams."] It may be added here that about this time the tune 'China,' composed by Timothy Swan, came into vogue, and as sung by members of his family [such as his brother Benjamin, then living in Woodstock] attracted universal attention. [new paragraph] After Captain Durkee was through, by general consent James Cutler, a law-student in this village, succeeded as instructor in music and leader of the choir. Cutler kept a singing-school in the old Union Hall in 1811. It was his practice while conducting his school to mark the time by a downward motion of both his arms and by stamping with his left foot. As he was thus zealously occupied on evening, a mischievous boy named Curtis came behind him and caught his foot while suspended in the air, causing him to fall forward on the floor. The joke, though a [p. 224] rough one, only produced general merriment in the school, in which Cutler himself heartily joined. [footnote: "Job Richmond."] Cutler presided over the choir in grand style, beating time with a lofty and sweeping wave of the hand in the air. He ruled also with the rod of a tyrant. Like many other musical chiefs, he had his pet tunes which must be sung on every possible occasion, and this constant repetition came at length to be very wearisome to the choir. Among the number was a tune by the name of 'Confidence' [by Oliver Holden?], a special favorite with Cutler, so often brought forward that the singers became exceedingly restive under the infliction, and showed positive signs of rebellion. The young ladies in the choir went so far as to declare 'they should keep their seats the next time that thing was trotted out.' The Sunday after these marks

of an outbreak were exhibited, the musical chief was observed to take his seat in the singers' gallery with a look of awful determination. After the morning services began and the first hymn was read, he rose, opened his singing-book and with compressed lips, yet with dreadful distinctness, called out, 'Confidence,' at the same time casting a terrific look along the sides of the choir. There were some nudgings and scowlings and poutings, but all obeyed the imperial mandate and sung the hymn through. In the afternoon the operation was repeated, and the hated 'Confidence' called out once more, with grim satisfaction to the chief that he thus could hold in check these turbulent spirits. [footnote: "Mrs. N. Williams."] ... [new paragraph] Alexander Holton, a lawyer, succeeded to the post occupied by Cutler. Among the members of the choir at this time were...[names] [p. 225].... In June, 1814, Jason Steele and Norman Williams [see 2 "N. Williams" footnotes above] were added to the number. The change in the style of church music, which wrought the banishment of the fugue, had become fixed and complete by this time, and the new style was growing in favor throughout the country. In the course of the year [1814?] Holton went away and his place was taken by Mr. [Jason] Steele [1789-1878]. Towards the close of the year 1816 Mr. Steele left Woodstock and settled in the practice of the law at East Randolph. The leadership of the music now devolved on Norman Williams [1791-1868], who held the place till he went to Montreal in 1831. To him our community owes more than to any other man for the encouragement and support of church music in this town. After he went to Montreal, Benjamin Swan, Jr. [nephew of Timothy Swan; 1805-1852], became the leader, and remained so till the summer of 1841. He was then succeeded by Charles Dana, Jr., who held the place for more than twenty years. ... [p. 226] ... [new paragraph] The first singing-school started in Woodstock, so far as any record has been discovered, was the one already mentioned as begun by Elisha West in 1794. With the establishment of Mr. West here as a music master may be reckoned the commencement of any scientific effort at teaching church music and singing in general, although singing in some shape, and good singing too for the times, our people had kept up from the first organizing of churches in the town. Then opened a grand era for music and singing-schools in Woodstock, during which West, Dutton, Durkee, and James Cutler successively appeared on the stage, and the pleasing art of singing was cultivated by all classes as an indispensable acquirement. After this period followed a season of comparative dearth in the musical world, and singing does not seem to have been cultivated with much zeal for several years. In March, 1821, a school for instruction in sacred music was opened in what is now recollected as Union Hall. The teaching was to be done by some members of the Congregational choir, and as the school was intended for the benefit of that choir, no charges were made for instruction. This school could have lasted but a short time, and probably proved abortive, as such attempts generally do. But about this time Mr. Duren, the very prince of all singing-masters, set up a singing-school in Woodstock [this is probably Elnathan Duren, who was living in Charleston, N. H., about 35 miles south of Woodstock, in the 1820s]. He had, indeed, made his appearance here before this date, and served in some capacity in the good cause of pushing forward the science of music, and perhaps had taught a school; but now he showed himself in full strength. He was, indeed, a sort of root and branch man, and

swept away all that was left of the old order of things, introducing new measures, new rules, new ideas in the art of teaching and performing [p. 227] sacred music, and banishing from the schools forever any remnant of the spirit of '76 that might be found still lingering around them. [new paragraph] Quite a new spirit seems to have been infused into the musical circles by these efforts of Mr. Duren, and the quality of the singing was elevated, and with increased experience came a desire among the singers to undertake something greater and more important than hitherto had been accomplished by any choir in this town. It so came to pass, therefore, that in 1824 the Congregational choir, then in good running order for numbers and discipline, gave two public concerts, one in May and one in September. These concerts, especially the first one, were a great success, and the performances of the choir were spoken of highly at the time. [new paragraph] In the 'Woodstock Observer' for October 21, 1828, appeared the following notice:-- [new line, centered:] 'MUSIC SCHOOL [new paragraph] 'The subscriber respectfully informs the young Gentlemen of Woodstock and its vicinity, that he will open a school for their instruction at Mr. Barker's Hotel, on Wednesday, the 21st at 6 o'clock in the evening. [new paragraph] 'A subscription paper will be left at the Bar. Terms, \$3.00 for 24 lessons. [new line] 'WOODSTOCK, Oct. 21, 1828 S. G. SIMMONS' [new paragraph] Concerning the results of this notice no information has been obtained. [new paragraph] In 1831 Mr. Duren renewed his musical instruction in Woodstock, conducting his teachings in the spirit and style of his previous efforts in the same field. His school was held in the old court-house, the singers filling the body of the house full, and was continued several terms. Then in the year 1836 Mr. Partridge, a student of music, and by some reckoned the best tenor singer ever in Woodstock, opened a singing-school in Union Hall, which was held part of the time in the room back of Union Hall, on the same floor. He was a little man, but a great hand at drill, and not inferior to West or Duren in securing from his pupils attention to the laws of time. He introduced the Boston Academy Collection, Lowell Mason's best compilation of sacred music, which soon superseded the Handel and Haydn, as that [p. 228] had driven out the old Bridgewater Collection. He also introduced the Mendelssohn method of instruction, as it was called. About this time Elder Twitchell, of Barnard [Vt.], likewise opened a school in Union Hall, which took in quite another class of pupils. Here indeed old and young met together, and among the scholars might be seen many a venerable lady with spectacles on nose, beating time with all the energy of youth. High over all other objects in the room towered the elder's huge form, as he moved from side to side and marked time for his pupils; and whenever he joined in the singing, loud rose his tones above the combined efforts of the whole school. Especially, when 'Old Tolland' [probably TOLLAND by Reginald Spofforth, setting a hymn by Isaac Watts beginning "I sing th'almighty pow'r of God," in *Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language for the Use of Children*, 1st published 1715] was on the track, in singing the line, "The moon shines full," his voice swelled like a trumpet and he sang with amazing energy. Rich, too, and original, were his occasional criticisms on the performances of his pupils. One evening they were singing with more than ordinary looseness, and the elder stood still as they made their disorderly walk through the tune before them. After the *pitter-patter* was over he paused a moment and then dryly remarked: 'That sounds

like dragging a wet dishcloth down-stairs.' [new paragraph] While Elder Twitchell's school was having its course and doing its appointed good, on other evenings of the week Mr. Bingham, of Claremont [N. H.], was keeping what may be safely called the most popular singing-school ever held in Woodstock. Bingham had not the finish of Mr. Partridge, nor his skill and readiness in executing difficult passages in singing; for there was nothing in church psalmody or in the ordinary secular music of the day which Partridge could not read at sight with perfect ease. But Bingham had a swift, off-hand way, which was calculated to get a great deal of work of some sort out of his pupils; he wasted no time while in the school-room, but kept the machinery all in motion, and at as high a rate of speed as was consistent with securing in the work that degree of excellence he thought might justly be looked for in singing-schools. He was always good-tempered, too, and bore with the slowness of his pupils, even when, after the fiftieth time of asking, no one among the number could tell the use of a *signature*. These and other qualities in the man made him an excellent hand to get along with the promiscuous gathering of men, women, and children, that commonly attended singing-schools in those days. [p. 229, new paragraph] Mr. Bingham wished his pupils, when they sung, to open their mouths wide. They need not be afraid, he would say, of making up faces in the process. If they, any of them, made worse faces than he did while singing, they would do well. But, especially, he wished the singing to go off with a snap. So long as we sing, let us be moving, he might say, and therefore while he attended, as a teacher should, to the more delicate parts and the softer touches that happened to occur in a piece of music, to make sure that his pupils executed them with proper attention to the sentiment, it was delightful to see him straighten up, when there was a change from slow to swift and from soft to loud, as with a sharp scrape of his viol he sounded the onward note to the school. If he could get the scholars to cut that last note short, then his satisfaction was complete. To have the thunder of a hundred voices roll through the closing passages of an anthem like 'Great is the Lord,' and then all strike the last note together quick and sharp, so that the mighty noise should be followed instantly by the stillness of death,—this was a perfect realization of the Bingham ideal. [new paragraph] This school was continued through two terms, and helped the cause of singing in our community in a high degree. Some people would call it nearly the last efficient school we have had in the village; the last one that produced any enduring effects upon the musical training and habits of the people. [new paragraph] After Bingham's school closed nothing worth notice was done in the line of singing till 1840, when the Tippecanoe campaign opened. Then, indeed, the whole country was ablaze with excitement, while city, village, and hamlet rang with campaign songs. The impetus given to the singing faculty at this time among all classes lasted beyond the exigencies of the campaign, and showed itself in the renewed interest that attended the culture of church and secular music the year following. In the winter of 1839-40 Mr. Brown settled in Woodstock, and became the musical leader in the village. But Brown, though an effective tenor singer in a chorus, where power was required, was not a very good teacher, nor was his influence what it ought to have been in sustaining and elevating the art of music in this town. Still at no period in the history of the town has singing been cultivated more widely or with more zeal than it was during the three or four years following

directly on the great political cam- [p. 230] paign. Schools were kept up and associations formed to give wholesome discipline to the young and to improve the popular taste. Large and well-trained choirs were found in our churches; at the Flats was an excellent band of singers under the leadership of I. B. Hartwell; and in all the rural districts good singers were numerous, even where singing-schools did not exist. ... [new paragraph] But the times have changed since those days [i.e., between ca. 1844 + 1889], and the musical world has changed with them. Singing-schools have lost their hold on the popular mind, and finally have gone out of fashion, like huskings, and apple-parings, and spelling-schools." [VT/Woodstock; Dana 1889, pp. [220]-225, 226-230]

"In 1775 the precinct voted to choose one person to lead in singing. Samuel Frost was chosen, but was excused, and William Cutter was chosen to lead in singing and to nominate such persons as he shall think proper to assist him." [MA/Arlington; Cutter 1880, p. 49]

1775, 2 March – see 1770, 22 March

1775, 22 March + n.d. (probably mid- and late 1780s): ""1775, March 22. The parish voted to sing Watts's Psalms and Hymns for the future." I shall never forget, when a child, the solemn tone of the Rev. (then a Deacon of my father's church,) Jacob Emerson, with his large white wig, who read the hymn, line by line; for although "the Parish voted," it would appear that the singers, with Mr. Brown, who officiated as Chorister some forty years, I believe, had no copies.[']" [John Prentiss, b. 1778, quoting from the diary of his father Rev. Caleb Prentiss (minister at Reading 1769-1803), then commenting further] [MA/Reading; Reading 1844, p. 120]

ca. 1776: "Erastus Wolcott, Jr., chosen chorister [in the East Windsor church], 'to set the psalm and lead in singing.'" [CT/Windsor; Stiles 1891, vol. I, p. 730]

"1776. The Town voted for 'Queresters' or 'Persons to Tune the Salm on Lords Days:' [spelling + punctuation *sic*] Deacon Ebenezer Goold, Mr. Joseph Emerson, Reuben Goold, John Freeland, Jonas Pierce, Thomas Davis, John Robbins, William Fletcher, Jr." [MA/Chelmsford; Waters 1917, p. 679]

1776, 24 May + 1780, 8 June: "May 24, 1776, Lieut. Abijah Harris, Richard Coburn and Amasa Kingsbury were chosen Choristers. 'June 8, 1780, It was proposed to choose some one to assist Mr. Richard Coburn, in setting or tuning the Psalm on ye Sabbath, and chose Levi Davis, John Pratt, and Allen Hancock for this purpose.'" [MA/Oxford; Daniels 1892, p. 56]

1777: "In 1777, a town meeting was held in Sept., at which the only business transacted was to locate a Sabbath-day house on the Green, and to enact as follows, viz.: 'Voted, that Fisk Beach be Chorister, to tune the psalm, and be head Chorister.' / 'Voted that Wait Hinman be an assistant Chorister.' / 'Voted that those persons men and women in the galleries who are skilled in singing psalms; to carry on the divine

service of singing psalms.' / It would seem from this that the voices below were not in harmony with those above, and the services of praise were to be confined to the skilled ones in the galleries." [CT/Goshen; Hibbard 1897, p. 86]

1777, 8 March – see 1774, 7 February

1777, [7?] April: "At a meeting of y.^e Ch^h April [7?] th 1777 Voted as follows 1. That y.^e Deacons be and hereby are discharged from Setting the Psalm or giving a Pitch to y.^e Tune to be Sung in the Congregation till the further order of this Ch.^h ----- 2^{ly} To Choose two persons to do that Service during the pleasure of y.^e Ch^h or till further order of y.^e Ch^h ----- 3^{ly} That our Brother[r?] Sam^l Hoar be one of them And 4^{ly} That our Brother Sam^l Farrar be the other[r?]." [MA/Lincoln; church records, transcription by NC, probably 1992]

1777 + 1788, possibly into 19th c.: "Samuel Hoar was the chorister early in the [19th] century [actually chosen 1777, again in 1788], as well as a delegate at church councils." [MA/Lincoln; Lincoln 1899, p. 95]

1778 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1778 – see 1771, 27 June

1778, March – see 1772, 12 May

1778, 2 March, ca. 23 March – see 1773, 1 March

"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]

"On April 16, 1778 it was 'Voted that Mr. Nathan Blake, Jr. lead in the singing at our Sacraments. That Mr. Daniel Kingsbury read the Psalm when the Deacons are absent. That Mr. Abijah Wilder lead in singing upon the Lord's Day.'" [NH/Keene; Proper 1973, p. 41]

1778 and "a few years later": "In 1778 it was voted that the tunes should be named by the chorister before they were set, and that the chorister pitch the tune by a pitch-pipe. This vote was said by the wicked ones to have been passed, because there was one tune with which the chorister was familiar, but with which Mr. Dunbar was note, and the chorister always struck up that tune; pitching was done by the old-fashioned implement. A few years later one of our townsmen, Mr. James Bazin, invented a pitch-pipe that could be carried in the vest-pocket." [MA/Canton; Huntoon 1893, p. 312]

1778-1786 – see n.d. (possibly starting as early as late 1720s)

1778 + 1787: “In 1778, before the incorporation of the church, or the settlement of a minister, the town chose William Smiley and David Stanley to read the psalm, and Jonathan Priest, Abraham Bailey, and Daniel Stanley to tune the psalm. [new paragraph] In 1787 the manner of singing was changed. The singers were seated in one place by themselves instead of being mixed with the congregation. The town at that time ... [new paragraph, smaller type:] Voted that Jacob Baldwin assist Eleazer Spofford to tune the Psalm, and in his absence or inability to set it.” [NH/Jaffrey; Cutter 1881, p. 154]

n.d. (1778-1802) + n.d. (“many years” in late 18th c. and/or 19th c. as late as 1816) + n.d. (“several years” in late 18th c. and/or 19th c. as late as 1810): “[...]In the ministry of Mr. [Abel] Fisk [1778-1802] they had what is termed congregational singing. They sang from David’s Psalms. The Deacon would read a line, commence the tune, all the people would follow him, the another line, and they would finish the psalm in that way.[...] [←written by Mrs. Achsah (Sawyer) Allan (1800-1886), a resident of Wilton from her birth to 1820] ... [p. 120] ... [new paragraph] He [John Burton, ca. 1738-1816] was one of the first deacons of the church in Wilton, and sat in the deacons’ seat, and, for many years, took the lead of the singing. He had a clear, strong tenor voice.... ... [p. 320] ... He [Joshua Blanchard, 1771-1810] held military offices to the rank of captain, was deacon of the church and led in the singing for several years; was universally respected. ... [p. 333] [new paragraph] ...He [John Burton again] was a deacon of the First Cong. Ch. for about fifty years;...[and had] a clear, strong tenor voice that did not fail him until his last illness [so he could have kept leading the singing until late in his life].” [NH/Wilton; Livermore 1888, pp. 65, 120, 320, 333]

1779 – see 1773, 1 March

1779 – see ca. 1774

1779, 5 August – see 1726, March

1779, 1 November: “at an anual [sic] Society meeting held at y^e meeting house in Turkey hills....also Voted That Thomas Spring Zophar Bates Isaac Owen & Roswel Skinner are desired to tune The Psalm in S^d Society...” [CT/East Granby; quoted in Turkey Hills 1901, p. 45]

1779(-1799): “In 1779, the Society voted: ‘That Jonathan Yale and Caleb Merriman, Jr., be desired to assist ye Choristers in singing.’ The records of the following twenty years show that at different times the Society voted that Ephriam [sic] Merriam, Aaron Foster and Avery Hall be appointed choristers, and that Joel Rice, Barnebas Meky and Nathan Merriman be assistant choristers.” [CT/Meriden; Meriden [ca. 1904], p. 84]

n.d. (after 1770s and/or 1780s) – see n.d. (probably 1770s and/or 1780s)

n.d. (1780s): “In 1780 the First Society voted to raise money to provide a singing master to encourage public singing and the learning of psalm tunes. About this time one Oliver Brownson, a distinguished composer and teacher of sacred music, settled in town. He lived in the old house still standing opposite the High School from 1786 to 1805, and his celebrated book of hymns called ‘Select Harmony’ was composed there and printed in Simsbury. He was very active in organizing the church music and choir.” [CT/Simsbury; Ellsworth 1935, p. 146]

“1780. The parish requested Jonathan Chaplin, Jr. and Lieutenant Moody Spofford, to assist Deacon Daniel Spofford in *Raising the Tune* in the meeting-house.” [This is the Second Church in Rowley.] [MA/Rowley; Gage 1840, p. 93]

1780 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1780, 8 June – see 1776, 24 May

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 faithful to attend, and could be favoured with having each line read. It is true some have not voices to sing, but it is our duty to sing in Heart with the Understanding as well as with our voices if we would find acceptance with our God. I think each one of the Assembly ought to have the Privilege of joining in such manner as they are capable. This I presume no serious person will deny. Upon the whole, the way and manner of singing in our Assembly of late, is highly inconsistent 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 light 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

1780, 23 October: "...also Voted that m^r Solomon Chandler be Choirester for the Society [First Ecclesiastical Society] During the Pleasure of s^d Society" [CT/Enfield; Allen 1900, III/2537]

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

"In 1781, Capt. Samuel Heald and Phinehas Blood were to read the Psalms in times of public worship; and John Robbins, Timothy Wilkins and Joseph Munroe Jr. were chosen to set or tune the Psalms at such times." [MA/Carlisle; Wilkins 1976, p. 99]

"1781. 'Voted that the Society desire Mess^{rs} Theodore Hillyer, Elisha Cornish Jun. and Job Case Jun. to assist in tuning the Psalms on Lords days &c.'" [CT/Simsbury; Phelps 1845, p. 167]

1781 – see 1773

"In November, 1781, the church voted to dispense with reading the hymns by line in public worship, and chose Captain Daniel Harrington to lead the singing." [MA/Lexington; Hudson 1868, p. 333]

"In...December, 1781, a petition was presented to the precinct by Dea. Cyprian Keyes and eleven others, praying for some help by which the singing should be improved. A precinct meeting was called, and 'Voted, to continue Congregational singing; also, voted to choose a committee to propose some way in which singing should be performed in this congregation.' The result of this petition was that the precinct 'chose seven choristers to tune the Psalms.'" [MA/Boylston; Sanford 1853, pp. 29-30]

n.d. (1781, 24 December?): "The precinct 'chose seven choristers to tune the psalms.'" [MA/Boylston; Ainsworth 1887, p. 8]

1782, 13 May: "...also voted That those that Lead in Singing in Said Society Sit in y^e meeting house where They think most Convenient to Sing[;] also voted that y^e Choeristers Set Such tunes as they think Proper according to y^e meetors Propounded[;] also voted not to Read y^e Psalm Line by Line[;] also voted to finish y^e front Seat in y^e Gallery[;] also voted a farthing on y^e Pound to Defray y^e Charges[;] also voted to Chuse m^r Isaac Owen J^r Sam^l [sic] Forward Thomas Stevens J^r Roswel Skinner and Jesse Forward To be Choiristers..." [CT/East Granby; quoted in Turkey Hills 1901, p. 48]

1782, 25 December – see 1770, 22 March

1782 + 1789: "Also in 1782 [along with the granting of specific seats for the singers] the [p. 265] town chose 'Nathaniel Ingalls, David Adams, and David Sherwin to assist Deacon Towne in setting the Psalm,' and seven years later the church requested

'William Gardner, Eliphalet Wood, Joseph Crumbie, and William Sherwin to officiate as choristers.'" [NH/Rindge; Stearns 1875, pp. [264]-265]

n.d. (ca. 1782-1889, i.e. from the possible beginning of Oliver Dutton's leadership to the end of Benjamin Burr's): "[heading:] LEADERS OF THE SINGING IN THE FIRST CHURCH [new paragraph] To the worthy line of choristers and singers, who without compensation have contributed so much to the public worship of God, great gratitude is due. The history shows that the changes in choristers have been less frequent than in the ministers, and there are more than one of these leaders of the singing whose term of service has outlasted by several years the longest pastorate of the church. [new paragraph] Probably Gad Lyon [1769-1815] was one of the first leaders of the choir in Ludlow. ... David L. Fuller has a pitchpipe which Gad Lyon used. [new paragraph] One of the early leaders was Gates Willey [see p. 473 here: came to Ludlow from Haddam, Conn.; married in 1814, died aged 84]. ... [new paragraph] David Lyon [1795-1853], son of Gad Lyon..., was also a leader. [new paragraph] The next leader that we can get any trace of was Hubbard Dutton [1806-1883], son of Dea. Oliver Dutton [ca. 1761-before 1847].... Deacon Dutton was a leader for many years and also taught singing school several times in town. [Oliver Dutton turned 21 ca. 1782, could have started serving as singing leader around then—hence the starting date for this entry] [new paragraph] It is thought that Lyman Fuller was a leader. ... [new paragraph] Dr. Washington B. Alden is believed to have been a leader. [new paragraph] Davenport L. Fuller [1823-1897] was a leader of the First Church choir for about twenty-five years. He also led the choir in the Methodist Church in Ludlow and taught singing school in town. [new paragraph] Jeremiah Dutton, nephew of Hubbard Dutton, is believed to have been a leader. [new paragraph] James S. Sikes, son of Chester Sykes, led for a time. [new paragraph] Benjamin F. Burr [1831-1915] was leader of the choir for thirty years almost continuously. The church desiring to recognize his faithful services, adopted the following testimonial at their annual meeting, held January 3, 1889: 'Whereas Brother Benjamin F. Burr has decided, much to the regret of the people, to retire from the office of chorister, it has seemed fitting that some recognition of his long service in the public worship of this church be expressed. Therefore it is [p. 169] resolved: that this church extends to Brother Benjamin F. Burr its warm appreciation of his more than twenty years' leading of the singing in our public worship; for his conscientious fidelity in attendance, his fine sense of fitness in suiting the music to the various occasions of sorrow and joy; for maintaining such continuous harmony not only among the members of his choir, but with the congregation and the pastor. And also we would gratefully remember the many years that he served under other leaders before his services as chorister. ...'" [MA/Ludlow; Noon 1912, pp. 168-169]

1783 – see 1770

1783, 3 February – see 1774, 7 February

1783, November: "Voted, Mr. Abraham Canfield, Nehemiah Candee, Daniel Canfield, Benjamin Bassett, Joseph Bassett, Isaac Bassett, choristers of said Society [Great Hill Congregational church in Derby].... The choristers thus appointed began a system of vocal cultivation that made the place celebrated in this respect for many years, the fame of which is still spoken of [in 1880] with great delight, although the singers are all passed on to the new life." [CT/Derby; Orcutt 1880, p. 219]

n.d. (probably mid- and late 1780s) – see 1775, 22 March

1784: "To assist the singers, who sat in the front gallery next to the men's side seats, they [the townsmen, voting at town meeting] named two new music leaders." [MA/Bedford; Mansur 1974, p. 114]

n.d. (1784 and after) + 1859, 27 October + n.d. (1859 and after) + 1868: "The paneled pulpit [in the Congregational Church, 4th meetinghouse, built 1784] was built on a long side, the north, with a steep little winding flight of red-carpeted stairs, and a most impressive sounding-board. It was so high that in the cosy niche beneath, back of the communion table, sat or stood, the two men—tenor and bass—who led the congregational singing, with only the adventitious aid of a tuning fork. Afterwards a choir was formed, and established in the middle of the long gallery opposite; and there a bass-viol came into play, afterwards a violin, and lastly a melodeon. ... [p. 421] A glance at the interior of the church [Congregational Church, 5th meetinghouse] as it appeared at the time of its dedication [27 October 1859] would show many features not seen now. The large chorus choir occupied the gallery at the opposite end of the church from the pulpit. ... The music of that day as on other days was inspiring. The accompaniment was a bass viol played with much skill by Abijah McEwen. Later a melodeon with two banks of keys came into use. But an organ was much to be desired and an Organ Fund Society was formed by the women of the church.... Nine years after the dedication [i. e., in 1868] an organ was purchased at a cost of about \$2500." [note that sequence of instruments in 4th meetinghouse—bass viol, then melodeon—is then apparently repeated in 5th meetinghouse; might there be some confusion here?] [CT/Stratford; Wilcoxson 1939, pp. 411, 421]

1785 – see 1768

1785-1790 – see 1770

n.d. (ca. 1785-1795?): "Mr. Lemuel Brackett, who was born in 1780, and is of the best authority on these matters of and near his time, informs me that when he was a boy, Mr. Babcock [probably Lemuel Babcock], who afterwards removed to Milton, led the singing, using a pitch-pipe." [MA/Quincy; Whitney/NEHGR 1864, p. 120]

"not long after" 1785 – see 1768

“1786 To see if the town will choose one or more persons to assist Capt. Russell in pitching the tune. Also to see if the town will vote that singing shall be performed a part or all of the time without reading the psalm. Voted that Capt. Stephen Russell be assisted by Joseph B. Varnum, Moses Nowel and Joshua Bradley in setting the psalm. Also that singing be performed in the afternoon without reading the psalm.” [MA/Dracut; Coburn 1922, p. 192]

1786 – see n.d. (before 1764)

1786, 25 January: “The Second Parish...’voted & chose Mr. John Chaney Jun^r to lead in Singing in Publick Worship.’ [new paragraph] This is the only reference to music on the records of the Second Parish; but it would seem from those of the church, that the practice of ‘lining out’ the hymns had not yet been abandoned.” [MA/Dunstable; Nason 1877, p. 145]

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

“On 24 May, 1786,...Choristers were chosen [for the one-year-old Universalist Society in Oxford], viz.: Abijah Harris, Samuel Davis, Jr., and Jonathan Davis.” [MA/Oxford; Daniels 1892, p. 74]

1786, September: “At the same time..., it was voted that ‘Ensign Beach set the Psalm,’ and that [’]Noah Fowler, Set Munson and Remembrance North be appointed to assist Ensign Beach in setting the Psalm.’ [CT/Torrington; Orcutt 1878, p. 32]

1786, 26 December – see 1774, 7 February

1787 – see 1778

1787: “*Sunday, July 8.* Attended public worship this morning at the new brick Presbyterian Church [in New York City, where Cutler was visiting]. ... I was particularly pleased with the singing. Around the large pillar which supports the pulpit is a very large circular pew, appropriated to the Wardens of the church and the Chorister. In the front of this pew is a little desk, considerably elevated. When the Psalm is read, the Chorister steps up into this desk and sings the first line. He is then joined in the second line by the whole congregation—men, women, and children seemed all to sing, almost [p. 233] without exception. The airs of the tunes

were sprightly, though not very quick; the singing, notwithstanding it was performed by such a mixed multitude, was soft, musical, and solemn, and the time well preserved. There is an Orchestra, but no Organ. The public service was introduced by a short prayer, reading the Scriptures, and then singing; but instead of singing before sermon, they sing in the morning, as well as afternoon, after the last prayer." [NY/New York City; Cutler 1888, vol. I, pp. 232-233]

n.d. (1787 or later): "In 1787 the town [of Fryeburg] voted to build a meeting-house.... For many years worship was held in the small edifice.... Some of the early forms of worship were peculiar; that is, they had a precentor, same as in the Scottish kirk. When the hymn was announced Joshua Gamage rose near the pulpit, and immediately those who engaged in 'singin' tewnes' moved from various parts of the congregation and assembled around the leader; then they made a 'joyful noise unto the Lord.'" [ME/Fryeburg; Ridlon 1895, p. 242]

"In 1788 two choristers, Samuel and Leonard Hoar, were chosen to assist in leading the singing in connection with Deacon Farrar." [MA/Lincoln; Lincoln 1899, p. 26]

1788 – see 1737, 25 January

1788 – see 1770

1788, 10 April: Deacon Samuel Farrar desires to be dismissed from the office of chorister; withdraws his petition; "1:^s Voted, That the Church will chuse a Quirester or Quiristers, in connection with Deacon Samuel Farrar, to assist in tuning the Psalm; in public Worship in the Meeting=House. 2:^d Voted, to choose Brother Samuel Hoar, and Brother Leonard Hoar Choristers in Connection with Deacon Farrar..." [MA/Lincoln; church records, transcription by NC, probably 1992]

1788, possibly into 19th c. – see 1777

"1789—Dr. Herrington, Benja. Goold[,] Benja. Osgood, and Nehemiah Parker, were chosen choristers." [MA/Chelmsford; Allen 1820, p. 69]

1789 – see 1782

1789, 19 October – see n.d. (probably late 18th c., early 19th c.)

n.d. (1789-possibly as late as 1820) + n.d. (possibly late 1820s-1840s): "The choir has generally been large in numbers, and at all times has contained considerable musical talent.... William Sherwin [1768-1834] was chorister much of the time during the ministry [1782-1820] of Dr. [Seth] Payson [see 1782 + 1789 above: William Sherwin appointed chorister in 1789], and later his son, Stephen B. Sherwin, Esq. [1805-1861], efficiently conducted this part of the service for many years." [NH/Rindge; Stearns 1875, p. 269]

1789-1797 + 1799, 10 September, 7 October + 1800-1845: "During this period [the ministry of Israel Evans, 1789-1797] Dea. John Kimball and Capt. [p. 532] David Davis are remembered as being leading singers. ... [new paragraph] ...The society [Concord Musical Society] was duly organized September 10, 1799,...and the following officers chosen:...Jacob Abbot, Jr., chorister; Thomas Stickney, Jr., assistant chorister. [new paragraph] At an adjourned meeting, October 7, 1799, Nathan Ballard, Jr., was elected 2d assistant chorister.... [new paragraph] ... The following persons have [p. 533] been appointed choristers by the [Concord Musical] Society, who were also leaders of the choir in the old North meeting-house, viz: [2-column list:] 1799—Jacob Abbot, Jr. / 1800—Timothy Chandler. / 1801—George Hough [compiler of *Modern Harmony*, 1808, whose 31 compositions are probably all by Hough; music printed in original letter-notation]. / 1802—Thomas Stickney, Jr. / 1803 " " " / 1804—Timothy Chandler. / 1805—Dyer Abbot. / 1806-9—James Ayer. / 1810—George Hough. / 1811-15—James Ayer. / 1816-19—Samuel Fletcher. / 1820-1—George Stickney. / 1822-41—Samuel Fletcher. / 1842-45—James Ayer." [NH/Concord; Bouton 1856, pp. 531-533]

n.d. (after 1770s and/or 1780s) – see n.d. (probably 1770s and/or 1780s)

ca. 1790: "Dea. James Wallace, up to about 1790, *Deaconed* or *lined* the Psalm and set the tune, the congregation joining in the exercise. About 1790, the singers took their station in the gallery, and the Deacon's services were dispensed with in that part of the exercise." [NH/Bedford; Bedford 1851, p. 200]

n.d. (1790s): "The leader of this choir [Episcopal Society in Canaan Parish] was Mr. Reuben Allen who was also a leader of singing in social circles." [CT/New Canaan; Canaan 1935, p. 233]

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. 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, who called the bass-viol *dagon*, 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): "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]

n.d. (1790s?) – see n.d. (possibly starting as early as late 1720s)

n.d. (probably 1790s and 1800s): "In the Eben Weston papers we are told that the first singers were Joseph Emery, Mr. Noyes, and Joshua Jewett. There was also Solomon Steward, son of Solomon, who led the singing in the old meeting-house, and afterward in the Baptist Church for several years. His two daughters, Mary, who was Mrs. Ben Hartwell, and Zilpha, who never married, were for a number of years leading singers in the old church [built 1788]. [new paragraph] That the excellence of these early performances was recognized is proved by the quaint comment of Eben Weston, who says: [smaller type] I well remember when I was a boy (he was born in 1802) seeing Mr. Emery who was the leader, Mr. Noyes, who sang counter, and Mr. Jewett, bass, standing up to sing in the broad aisle near our pew, and making the house ring with Sherbourne or Complaint, or some of these old fugue tunes. I thought it was very fine music indeed, and if anyone should affirm that it was not, I should not deny it [i.e., I wouldn't desert its support]. [p. 325; new paragraph] Somewhat later at church services which in my mother's early years were held in the little red school-house on the River Road, John Wheeler was leader of the singing. He struck a tuning fork, from which they all took the pitch, do, re, mi, before beginning the hymn." [ME/Skowhegan; Coburn 1941, vol. I, pp. 324-325]

"January 18, 1790, it was voted ... [new paragraph, smaller type:] Voted and chose Capt. David Cummings Clerk to set the psalm at the North meeting house." [NH/Hudson; Webster 1913, p. 211]

1790-1800/1805 + 1805 + 1820s: "From 1790 to the beginning of the present century the music of St. John's church continued under the direction of Titus Frost, assisted by John G. Tuttle, Abraham Sieley, Isaac C. Stiles, Isaac Sackett and Ebenezer Pierpont.... Frost died in 1828. He was succeeded in 1805 by Zophar Jacobs.... [p. 154] [Ezra Stiles] was the first to introduce a 'tenor viol' into the choir gallery, in 1820. He succeeded Mr. Jacobs in the care of the music, bringing to the work ability

and enthusiasm, and gradually introducing all the musical instruments used up to the present time.” [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, pp. 153-154]

ca. 1790 + ca. 1800 + ca. 1808 or 1810 + ca. 1820-1835 or 1836 + 1835 or 1836-1848 + 1849: “At the time above alluded to [ca. 1790], Ezekiel Gardner [who had taught singing in Bedford ca. 1782] was chosen leader of the singers by the town, joined by...[10 names, 6 male + 4 female]. ... [p. 201] ... [new paragraph] ... About the year 1800, John Pratt [who had “occasionally instructed” in singing in Bedford] was chosen leader by the town, and some other persons joined the choir. ... [7 names listed, including 3 Doles + 3 Moors] ... [new paragraph] About 1808 or 10, Samuel Chandler and Richard Dole were chosen leaders by the town. The following persons were among the singers of that day,...[16 names, 9 male + 7 female] ... [new paragraph] About 1820, Mr. Richardson, from Lyndeborough [N. H.], we think, taught one Winter at Isaac Riddle’s Hall, soon after the close of which, Daniel L. French was chosen leader by the Choir, and continued as such to 1835 or 6. ... [new paragraph] Mr. French, as leader, saw the necessity of keeping up and improving, as far as practicable, the singing in town, consequently he devoted much time in the Winter to further its [p. 202] advancement, the result of which was an increase in numbers, with some distinguished singers. ... [new paragraph] When Mr. French left town for the purpose of preparing himself for the ministry, he was succeeded by David Stevens, 2d, as leader of the Choir, which place he held till 1848, when he too left town. During Mr. Stevens’ lead, quite a number were added, to wit:--... [33 names of added singers, 21 female + 12 male] [new paragraph] At a meeting of the singers, in 1849, James McFerson was chosen Leader. The Winter following a constitution was framed and presented, when most of the Choir become members by subscribing thereto.” [NH/Bedford; Bedford 1851, pp. 200, 201-202]

before 1791 + 1791-?1810 + 1829 and probably years before and after 1829: “The history of the choir [in Newbury’s First Congregational Church] would fill a small volume. Jacob Bayley and Simeon Stevens first ‘took the lead of the singing’: then came Jeremiah Ingalls, who trained what was then considered a wonderful choir [between 1791 + likely ca. 1810, when Ingalls left Newbury]. It is said that travelers would plan to stop in their journeys over Sunday, in Newbury, to hear the fine singing. It is not certain who succeeded Mr. Ingalls. Jacob Kent 3d, was leader in 1829, and probably for some years before and after....” [VT/Newbury; Wells 1902, p. 178]

n.d. (1791 or later): “Squire [Supply] Belcher was the first choir-leader in town, and for many years led the music in the old church.” [ME/Farmington; Butler 1885, p. 379]

“July 10, 1791, it was voted that Mr. Daniel Kingsbury, Mr. William Stone and Mr. Ambrose Stone be desired to assist as choristers.” [MA/Oxford; Daniels 1892, p. 61]

ca. 1791 to ca. 1806 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1791-?1810 – see before 1791

ca. 1792: “At about the same time [1792] there is an entry [in an old account book preserving records of church matters] that suggests the possibility that Benjamin Upson (who was chorister, and who at a later date received the public thanks of the church for his efficient services), was assisted in his songs of praise by the timbrel or small drum, as two ‘taboreans’ are among the articles furnished to the society by him.” [CT/Waterbury; Anderson 1896, vol. I, p. 612]

1792, 10 April: “It appears that Watts’[s] Hymns were introduced by a vote [p. 90] of the town at a meeting, April 10, 1792. The following vote was passed: ‘Voted, That Dr. Watts’[s] version of Psalms be used in the congregation of Peterborough for the future’; also, ‘Voted, To choose a committee to procure seats in the breast and front of the gallery, decent and comfortable, to accommodate a sufficient number of singers to carry on the singing in as good order as the circumstances of the congregation will admit of’; also, ‘Voted, That Robert Smith, John Moore, and Thomas Steele be said committee to buy or hire said seats or pews as they shall think best’; also, **“Voted, That Jonathan Smith, John Gray, Oliver Felt, and Samuel Smith are to set the tune, and to invite such persons to assist them as they think proper.”**” [NH/Peterborough; Smith 1876, pp. 89-90; compare with between 1788 and 1792 + after 1792, 10 April—above]

1792 + 1796 + 1797 + 1798: “In 1792 appears for the first time the names of the Congregational church ‘choristers.’ [new paragraph] ‘Caleb Blaksly, Thomas Cooper, Justus Bishop, Titus Todd, Jairus Sanford, Thomas Pierpont, Ezekiel Jacobs.’ [new paragraph] These men were authorized to ‘take the lead in singing’.... [new paragraph] In 1796...Thomas Ray was added to the list of choristers. In 1797 ‘the rates of the leading singers were abated’ and David Ray was added. In 1798 Theophilus Todd was added and the ‘rates’ were cancelled again.” [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 288]

1793, 4 March: “In the warrant, calling the annual meeting for 1793, there was the following article; [new paragraph] ‘6thly, To see what method the town will take to provide singing the present year.’ [new paragraph] At the meeting March, 4, upon this article it was [new paragraph] ‘Voted, That Capt. Perham set the Psalm.’ [new paragraph] ‘Voted, That John Goffe [at one point, Town Clerk of Derryfield/Manchester], read the Psalm.’ [new paragraph] These votes were that Capt. Perham, should name the tune in which the psalm was to be sung, or that he should act as chorister, while John Goffe was to read or line the psalm, as it was called.” [all punctuation here *sic*] [NH/Manchester; Potter 1856, p. 523]

n.d. (between 1793 and 1811): “The windows [of the meetinghouse], which clattered violently when there was any wind, and which a few coppers’ worth of wood would have choked into silence, constituted the bassoon accompaniment to Mr. Yeoman’s [*sic*; this is John Yeomans] pitch-pipe in the choir. ... [p. 73] ... [new paragraph] The singing, notwithstanding the pains taken to instruct in the art, was

execrable, although I took part in it! 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. ... [p. 84] ... [new paragraph] Before taking leave of our meeting-house and its worthy pastor [William Patten (1763-1839), minister from 1786 to 1833], I will give you an account of my last visit to it [ca. 1840], a few years before it was remodelled, almost rebuilt, for the use of a Baptist society. I found it in a most dilapidated state. ... Being once more in the church of my childhood, I began gazing above and below, and proceeded to look in at each pew. ... [p. 85] ... In our *once* well-filled [family] pew I sat down, and looked up at the most forlorn pulpit imaginable, and as it were at the man to whom I did not listen very carefully from the age of three and one-half to twenty-one years [i.e., 1793 to 1811]. I felt bewildered by the ghosts of the men and women which started up in every pew and in the galleries.... I know not how long I sat musing: but **at last the fire [of imagination] burned, and from the front gal- [p. 86] lery the thunder-and-lightning music broke forth, and the before-dead worshippers (many with silver-headed canes in hand), uprose and wheeled to face, as well as to hear, the sweet music; and there I once more beheld the chorister, Mr. Yeomans, my earliest musical teacher and well-tried friend; and oh, when the frisky tune of 'Ocean' burst forth, how I felt myself choking with delight, and straining every nerve, mental and physical, to join in the closing refrain!"** [RI/Newport; Channing 1868, pp. 72, 73, 84-86]

n.d. (between 1793 and 1811): "[At Trinity Church in Newport,]...the services of the church were responded to by a burly, pompous clerk; and when he named the psalm or hymn, as the minister retired to the vestry to part with the surplice,--prefacing it with 'Let us sing to the praise and glory of God,'—I felt in no way inclined to mingle my thin and tiny voice [the writer was between 3 and 21 at this time] with the rough and loud intonations of the chorister, being aware of his bad habit [drinking?], only too common at that day, but by no means pleasant, when connected with church matters." [RI/Newport; Channing 1868, p. 97]

1794, March: "For the March meeting in 1794, Article 7 in the warning reads: 'To see if the town will appoint a Chorister or Choristers to lead the singing, also what encouragement they will give Masters to teach the art of singing in the town, and give directions how often to meet for that purpose.' Jeremiah Ingalls, Jacob Bayley and Simeon Stevens were chosen. ... [p. 175] ... [new paragraph] Just what led the town to vote in 1794, 'that Jacob Bayley, Esq., Simeon Stevens and Jeremiah Ingalls should be choristers to lead in singing,' we may never know. It is possible that there

was a want of harmony in the choir, in more than one form." [VT/Newbury; Wells 1902, pp. 136, 175]

1794, 17 December – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1795 – see 1730, 7 January, 4 February

n.d. (between 1795 and 1834): "There was no part of the worship in which Mr. Stearns [Rev. Samuel Stearns, pastor of the Church and Society in Bedford from 1795 to his death in 1834] took greater pleasure than in the music, in which he often bore his part. He had a fine tenor voice, and in his college days had led the singing in the college chapel. If it chanced, as it sometimes did, that the choir was missing, the minister would set the tune and carry his own part; and Uncle Solomon Lane [probably Isaac Lane's brother], who had a voice, as they used to say, heavy enough to 'make the summers start' in the old oaken ceilings, would put in his bass; and the ladies, with their sweet, gentle voices, would supply the treble, and the people generally liked it so well that the choir soon got reconciled and came back." [MA/Bedford; Stearns 1879, p. 37]

1796 – see 1792

1797: "The earliest reference to 'the singing' in the records of the First church and society is under date of December 29, 1797, at which time 'Messrs. Sylvester Higby and Elijah Nettleton were chosen [by the church] [←brackets original] choristers or leaders in church music.'" [CT/Waterbury; Anderson 1896, vol. III, p. 1063n]

1797 – see 1792

1797, 5 December + 1799, 29 October + 1820, 20 March: from diary of Deacon Joshua Jewett (1768-1862), schoolmaster + [p. 273:] "chorister and a teacher in the Sabbath school for many years": [p. 275:] "December 5 [1797] – Began Singing School tonight for the first time. ... [p. 276:] Oct. 29, 1799. Very Pleasant, Singing School in ye house. ... [p. 287:] [March] 20 [1820], . . . Form an Ed[ucational?] Society at Eve. & go to Singing School." [MA/Rowley; Jewett 1946, pp. 273, 275, 276, 287]

1797-1807: "Later on one Lyman Peck was singing master. To this office he seems to have added his duties of chorister. Probably the other singing masters [George Harris, John Woodward, Asa Dutton, possibly S. Huntington] combined the two offices." [CT/New London; Blake 1900, p. 231]

"In 1798, on the festival of St. John the Baptist, the [Masonic] fraternity...marched in procession to the First Society meeting-house, where a discourse was delivered by the Rev. John Tyler, and odes and psalms were sung under the direction of Mr. Roberts, a noted chorister of that era." [CT/Norwich; Caulkins 1866, p. 524]

1798 – see 1730, 7 January, 4 February

1798 – see 1792

“April 1, 1798. Lord’s day the chh. tarried...and made choice of Jeremiah Bump Junr., Prince Burgess & Lot Bump to lead in singing on communion days.”
[MA/Wareham; Smith 1974, p. 42]

1798-1817: “The chorister always gave the key-note by a little instrument called the pitch-pipe. Then, the whole choir sitting would ‘sound the pitch;’ [punctuation *sic*] each distinct part sounding the first note with which said part was to start off in the exercise. The chorister made himself prominent by a large flourish of the hand in beating time, often eying [*sic*] the singers earnestly, significantly, and sometimes by a sudden and loud slap of his book, as if he would say, ‘You drag; wake up and sing with more spirit.’” [CT/Derby; letter from Rev. Charles Nichols (b. 1798 in Derby; lived there until 1817) “To My Dear Christian Brother, Rev. Mr. [J. Howe] Vorce,” written at CT/New Britain, 24 June 1876; quoted in Orcutt 1880, p. 294]

n.d. (between 1798 and 1846): “Mr. Bates [Rev. James Bates, pastor in Newton 1828-1840] had for helpers two such deacons as any minister might be thankful for,--Elijah F. Woodward [ca. 1787-1846] and William Jackson. Deacon Woodward came of a godly stock. Four generations of his ancestors had lived and prayed and died in the house in which he was born. His father and grandfather were deacons. He was made deacon at the age of twenty-eight, and held the office as long as he lived. He was twenty-nine years superintendent of the Sunday-school. He entered the choir at the age of eleven, and remained there forty-eight years. Half of this period he was the leader, with voice and viol, of thirty or forty [p. 60] singers and players, among whom were five of his own children. His amiability, calmness, and wisdom kept the choir harmonious in feeling, as well as in song. He lived two miles from the meeting-house, and yet no one was more constant or more punctual than he in attendance upon all the meetings of the church and of the choir, both in the daytime and in the evening. Often he took a shovel in his sleigh to make a path through snowdrifts. He was farmer, teacher, surveyor, town clerk, and treasurer, and yet his duties to the church were never neglected. His horse had heard the doxology in Old Hundred sung so many times that he learned to recognize the singing of it as the closing exercise of an evening meeting, and when he heard it he backed out of the shed and walked up to the chapel door, where he waited till his master came out.” [MA/Newton; Newton 1890, pp. 59-60]

1799, 6 March – see 1752, 30 January

1799, 10 September, 7 October – see 1789-1797

1799, 29 October – see 1797, 5 December

ca. 1800 – see ca. 1790

n.d. (likely 1800s*) – see n.d. (possibly 1770s and 1780s) *(i.e., 1800-1809)

early 19th c.: “There were in those days no accompanying instruments, and the key note was given by the ‘pitch pipe.’ The leader or chorister in a loud voice named the tune to be sung, and with dignified mein [*sic*] drew the slide of his pipe to the proper letter and gave a somewhat prolonged whistle. All followed the leader in the ‘fa-sol-la-fa,’ each part backing to its own proper chord, and the choir arose and the [p. 1069] music began. The chorister threw his soul into the performance, and the way he beat time was simply majestic. Four-four time especially gave opportunity for the ‘tallest’ kind of arm work; the two-down brought the hand upon the ‘breastwork,’ and the two-up culminated above the head. There was very little of what is now termed accent, but a steady dragging movement, one measure rolling, as it were, into the next, and so on to the end of the tune. But after all, there was good music in those days, and if some of those old choirs could be recalled, with [Lewis] Stebbins in his prime to lead, the quartette of the present day with all its fine culture would be thrown into the shade in presence of the majestic rendering of ‘Majesty,’ ‘Thanksgiving Anthem,’ Bull’s ‘Alleluia,’ ‘Judgment Anthem,’ ‘Denmark,’ and other popular pieces of the period.... [new paragraph] There are a few now living among us [1878] [←brackets original] who were active members of the old choirs. Sherman Bronson was in his day a very good singer and a great admirer of Stebbins as a musician. I presume he could even now give a good example of his style, modulation of voice, beating of time and all. Mr. Bronson never fell in with the new style, so-called, but was very generous in his ridicule of it. Philo Brown, I remember as one who occupied the ‘fore seat’ on the bass side. (The old choirs did not sit as now, compact, but were spread out in the form of a parallelogram; hence, the necessity of the conspicuous position of the leader in the centre, and hence the reverberating or rolling movement of the music.) Besides those named, I now recall none living who date so far back. Of those who have died may be named Samuel Cooke, for many years a faithful member and leader of St. John’s choir, Captain Anson Sperry, a good bass singer, and a member of the old Congregational choir in his early manhood, Aaron Benedict, always at his post for many years, and David Hayden, an excellent tenor.” [CT/Waterbury; Anderson 1896, vol. III, pp. 1068-1069]

n.d. (early 19th c.): “The wealth of musical talent naturally found its first public expression in church music; and the choirs of Hallowell were famous for excellent singing. The Old South was, of course, [p. 260] the first to make a name for itself in this respect. Under the successive leadership of John Merrick, Paul Stickney, and Samuel Tenney, the choirs of this church attained a degree of proficiency and culture comparable with that of any leading New England church. A little later, the choir of the Universalist church attained celebrity under the leadership of Franklin A. Day, and Allen Drew.” [ME/Hallowell; Nason 1909, pp. [259]-260]

n.d. (probably early 19th c.): “...it is likewise true that most of the leaders of the choir, Nathaniel Hunt, Lieut. Samuel Thayer, and Ansel Hudson, taught [singing schools] at different times. ... [Nathaniel Shaw]...was teaching when Rev. Mr.

[Thaddeus] Pomeroy was installed [13 November 1815], and sang on that occasion under the leading of Lieut. Samuel Thayer." [MA/Randolph; Randolph 1881, pp. 100, 101 (from "History of the Psalms and Hymns and Music of the First Church of Randolph" by Rev. Asa Mann)]

n.d. (probably early 19th c.): "We find then, at the beginning of the second century of the existence of the church, the service of praise was sustained by a large choir, accompanied by wind and string instruments, usually a violin, flute, clarinet, bass viol and double bass, the two latter being the property of the society. ... [new paragraph] The choir consisted of thirty persons of both sexes, under the direction of a chorister, who was usually a tenor singer. This leader was the only individual who received compensation, and **it was stipulated in his engagement that he should teach a singing-school, which any person in the society could attend for improvement in singing.** The singing-school was usually held in the court-house, sometimes in the bank building, was promptly attended, and its weekly meeting an occasion which was eagerly looked forward to by the young people, especially for its social as well as musical advantages. Frequently the rehearsals of the choir were held at the various houses of the singers, and were most enjoyable occasions. Concerts, or musical entertainments, were of rare occurrence, consequently, the weekly rehearsal, combining so much of recreation with musical instruction, was attended with an interest and promptness unknown to the 'volunteer choir' of the present day. On the Sabbath, they promptly appeared, bringing with them their music-books, many of them their luncheon, and in cold weather, their foot-stoves, making themselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. Doubtless the singers and players here to-night can appreciate the difficulty of keeping the pitch, and handling the bow, and fingering the strings and keys, at a temperature frequently below freezing." [NH/Concord; Carter 1881, p. 321]

n.d. (probably early 19th c.): "Among the young women of those days the leadership of the 'treble singers' was accounted the post of honor. During the use of the 'Bridgewater Collection' [1st ed. 1802], under the leadership of Justin Holden, maternal great uncle of the writer, one of the most successful teachers and leaders ever employed in the old meeting-house, the tenor parts were sung by female voices, selected for their special adaptation to those parts, which were in that collection generally intended and arranged for female voices; a notable example of such adaptation existing in the per- [p. 22] son of the writer's mother." [NH/Hillsborough; Densmore 1890, pp. 21-22]

n.d. (probably early and mid-19th c.): "Lemuel Kingsbury, 2d, was the leader of this [which?] choir, and his wife, who played several musical instruments, also rendered valuable service. Mr. Lemuel Kingsbury was followed by Lyman Edward Kingsbury, a tenor singer, who led the choir for thirty years. ... The elder Mr. Kingsbury at times led the music with his violin." [MA/Needham; Clarke 1912, p. 310]

n.d. (early and mid-19th c.): "Solomon Warriner is a conspicuous figure in the history of music in Western Massachusetts. He was born at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, in

1778, and died at Springfield [MA], where most of the years of his long life were passed, in June, 1860. He was known as Colonel Warriner, for he drilled militiamen as well as choirs. For more than forty years he was the leader of the large choir of the First Church, Springfield. He was president of its musical society and head of the musical life of Springfield. On all public occasions when music graced the program, Colonel Warriner was in demand, with his trained singers. As teacher, leader and publisher, he had a wide influence. He also composed music. Two pieces ascribed to S. Warriner appear in 'The Apollo Harmony' [by Jonathan Huntington, 1807]. [Nathaniel D.] Gould mentions him as one of those 'who taught with success and *deserve* and will have a place in the memory of the lovers of sacred music.' An editorial notice at the time of his death says: 'Colonel Warriner was the great authority and standard in all musical matters in all this region and did more than any other to elevate the style of sacred music in Western Massachusetts.'" [MA/Springfield; Burnham 1901, p. 23]

1800, 3 March: "The town voted to concur with the singers in the choice of choristers, viz. Xenophon Janes, Phinehas Field, Elihu Phelps and Josiah Fisher." [MA/Northfield; Temple & Sheldon 1875, p. 354]

"In April, 1800, the church chose Deacon Zebedee Kendall, Capt. J. Fletcher, and Capt. S. Stevens a committee to attend the meetings of the singing school, for the purpose of choosing leaders, and it also invited all 'who are skilled in sacred harmony to come forward and assist the church in that part of public worship.'" [MA/Dunstable; Nason 1877, p. 158]

"April 7, 1800. Voted... [new paragraph] 'To give Mr. Obed Wells twenty Dollars for his taking the lead in singing the last year.'" [MA/Greenfield; Thompson 1904, vol. I, p. 294]

1800 + 1803: "As a people the Germans have loved music perhaps as do no other people, and singing has always played a large part in their social and religious life. With the Waldoboro Germans this was the case from their first religious service in the first Broad Bay church [see 1762, November, above]. In all the history of the parish, however, there never was an organ or any other kind of instrument in the church. Its role was taken by a head singer whose function it was with his pitch pipe to set the pitch and then start the hymn. In this period this essential service was performed by Frank Miller, Jr. In the meeting of April 21, 1800, it was voted 'to agree with some man to be the head singer or set the tune.' At the next meeting on May 20th, it was recorded that 'Mr. Frank Miller, Jr., will not serve as head singer under eight dollars per year.' His terms were apparently met, and in 1803 an assistant singer was appointed who was none other than Conrad Heyer in his fifty-fourth year. At this time Mr. Heyer had been singing in the church choir for forty years, and he was destined to lead the singing at the last service ever to be held by the old Germans in Waldoboro." [ME/Waldoboro; Stahl 1956, vol. II, p. 21]

1800-1820 – see n.d. (possibly starting as early as late 1720s)

1800 + 1814 + 1815 + 1825: "In the records of St. Michael's Parish the first mention of it [music] is found in the minutes of the annual meeting of the First Episcopal Society on November 20, 1800, when \$30 was appropriated for the support of music for the ensuing year. A second vote immediately following provided 'that the Society's Committee employ three teachers from the chosen Quaristers to teach Music in the three Churches in said Society, viz. one third or ten dollars at St. Michael's Church, one D^o at the West Church & one Ditto at Milton.' From the wording of the vote it is evident that there were choristers already functioning, and perhaps had been for some time, and it also seems reasonable to assume that this was not the first time money was appropriated for music. ... [p. 153] In 1814 at the annual meeting of the Society, among other officers the following—Levi Stoddard, John Palmer, Solomon Marsh, Gad Guild, Noah Beach, and Benjamin Johnson—were appointed choristers. In 1815 the same men were reappointed, with the addition of Eli Gibbs. A question arises whether all the choristers sang in all three churches, or, what seems more probable, two were appointed from each church to be responsible for the singing there.... / The same choristers were appointed year after year, with now and then an addition, and again one omitted. One of those whose [p. 154] name appeared every year was Solomon Marsh. In 1825 a newcomer was Elihu Harrison, whose name appeared regularly thereafter [he served as first organist]. [CT/Litchfield (Milton is part of Litchfield); Brewster 1954, pp. [152]-154]

1800-1845 – see 1789-1797

ca. 1800-1850 or later: "In the first quarter of the present century Captain Anson Sperry was among those who led the singing [in the First church]. Lewis Stebbins of Longmeadow, Mass., had charge of the choir for a time, and also taught a singing school.... In 1820 Elisha Steele joined it [the choir], and was appointed chorister the next year. He held the position for thirty years, and with his control of the music a new era in the choir's history began.... D. F. Maltby and Charles Dickinson were at different times in charge of the music." [CT/Waterbury; Anderson 1896, vol. III, p. 1063]

1803: "The following year [1803] the Church requested the singers to nominate such persons or persons [*sic*] as they 'think most suitable for the service of conducting the singing in public worship' and at a later meeting proceeded to elect the four persons so named 'to stand as choristers in the order as they are nominated, and also that the Chh. signify to the singing Society their respects for their past services, and wishes for the further continuance of said services in that important branch of social worship.'" [MA/Sturbridge; Haynes 1910, p. 60]

1803 – see 1800

1804: "The record book of the Northwest Parish of Cambridge Singing Society contains the Constitution of the Society, with this preamble; 'As music constitutes one very essential part of public devotion, and as its spirit is become something

languid, and its genius seems about to withdraw; we, the subscribers, being fully inspired with these ideas, do form ourselves into a Society for the purpose of reviving the spirit, and improving ourselves in the art of music. Justice our principle, Reason our guide and Honor our law.' [new paragraph] The first article of the Constitution provides for an annual meeting of the Society on the first Monday in December. The second, for a president, secretary and treasurer; and to be chosen every six months, one chorister and four assistants, one for the tenor, two for the bass, and one for the treble, whose duty was to instruct in their respective parts of music, also to select the music, appoint meetings for practice, and purchase requisite materials. Article fifth imposes a fine for non-attendance of members, &c., and every member shall sit in the singing seat on Sundays when he is at meeting. The articles number eleven, and are dated June, 1804, when the names of the members were,-- [33 names, all males].... On Dec. 5, 1804, Artemas Kennedy was chosen president, Isaac Locke secretary, A. Kennedy chorister, Daniel Locke and John Perry bass assistants, Isaac Locke tenor assistant, Jason Kennedy treble assistant, James Hill treasurer." [MA/Arlington; Cutter 1880, p. 111]

1805: "Christopher Atwater was appointed assistant chorister in 1805..." [CT/Meriden; Meriden [ca. 1904], p. 84]

1805: "The officers of the Northwest Parish of Cambridge Singing Society, on June 7, 1805, were Artemas Kennedy president, David Hill secretary, A. Kennedy chorister, Walter Russell and John Perry bass assistants, Isaac Lane tenor assistant, Jason Kennedy treble assistant, Ichabod Fessenden treasurer. At the meeting of the society in Dec. 1805, Artemas Kennedy was chosen president, Jason Kennedy secretary, A. Kennedy chorister, Walter Russell, John Perry, Isaac Locke and Jason Kennedy were re-chosen assistants, and Ichabod Fessenden treasurer." [MA/Arlington; Cutter 1880, p. 113]

1805 – see 1790-1800/1805

"December 15, 1805. [new paragraph] At a meeting of the first Church or Old brick Society at their meetinghouse after divine service in the afternoon at the request of Mr Mann, to know if the Society would raise his Sallery as Choirester and singing master from the sum of One hundred and fifty dollars per Year to the sum of two hundred and twenty dollars per Year. [new paragraph] On motion whether we would give Mr Mann two hundred and twenty per Year Sallery. [new paragraph] Voted in the negative. [new paragraph] On Motion whether we would give Mr Mann any more than One Hundred and fifty dollars per year Sallery for the above mentioned services. [new paragraph] Voted in the negative. [new paragraph] Voted to dis[s]olve the meeting." [MA/Boston; Pierce 1961, vol. 40, p. 611]

1805-1809 – see n.d. (late 18th c. and/or early 19th c.)

n.d. (ca. 1806) – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1806, 2 June: "The officers of the Northwest Parish of Cambridge Singing Society on June 2, 1806, were Artemas Kennedy, president; Isaac Locke, secretary; Artemas Kennedy, chorister; Isaac Locke, tenor assistant, [*← comma sic*] John Perry, first bass assistant; Walter Russell, second bass assistant; Amos Davis, treble assistant; Ichabod Fessenden, treasurer; Messrs. James and William Hill, bass assistants *pro tem*." [MA/Arlington; Cutter 1880, p. 113]

1806, ca. 1 November to late 1807 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

"Nov. 17, 1806, voted unanimously the following:-- [new paragraph, smaller type:] 'The First Church in Medway, being sensible that singing is a part of Public Worship and that it ought to be performed by every worshipping assembly, but as it has been too much neglected, we, the Church in this place, earnestly request Mr. Joseph Abbe and Mr. Joseph Partridge to lead in singing, or any other person so disposed; also, request all the singers to join with them, that we may have singing in the congregation at all times when needed, and you shall receive the thanks of the Church.'" [MA/Medway; Jameson 1877, p. 74]

1807: "At a meeting of the West Cambridge Musical Society, Oct. 13, 1807, James Hill was chosen moderator and Isaac Locke secretary. The fourth vote of the meeting appropriated unanimously a certain sum of money for the use of a new singing-school. Three persons were selected to take charge of said school, viz.: Artemas Kennedy to instruct the tenor and to be considered as chorister, Isaac Locke to instruct the treble, and Walter Russell for the bass." [MA/Arlington; Cutter 1880, p. 114]

late 1807-1811 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1807-1816: "The following officers of the West Cambridge Musical Society—instituted 1807—are mentioned in this book of records: [new paragraph] *Presidents*.—Artemas Kennedy, 1807; James Hill, 1808, '9, '10, '14; Amos Locke, 1816. ... *Choristers*.—Artemas Kennedy, 1807; Isaac Locke, 1808, '9, '10; William B. King, 1814; Amos Locke, 1816. *Assistants*.—Isaac Locke, 1807; Walter Russell, bass, 1807, '8, '9, '10, '14, '16; James Hill, bass, 1807, '8, '9, '10, '14; Amos Locke, tenor, 1807, '8, '9, '10, '14; Samuel Wilson, treble, 1808, '9; George Swan, treble, 1810; Samuel Ames, treble, 1814; William Frost, 1816; Ebenezer Hall, Jr., 1816; Philip B. Fessenden, treble, 1816." [MA/Arlington; Cutter 1880, p. 115]

n.d. (between 1807 and 1829): "[Rev. Samuel Willard's]...zeal for a reform of church music led him to train his singers and sometimes to act as their leader in the service of song." [MA/Deerfield; Burnham 1901, p. 25]

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]

ca. 1808 or 1810 – see ca. 1790

1808 + 1818: "Clearly the congregations of those days were accustomed to join in the worship of song in the house of God. The people were led in this service, usually by a large choir, directed by a trained and competent leader. Thus April 18, 1808, it was 'Voted that this society, feeling grateful to Majr. John P. Trott, for his readiness in leading the singing in this society, they render him their public thanks and vote him the use of pew No. 38 for the ensuing year.' Ten years later it was 'voted that the thanks of this society be given to Col. William Belcher for his past services as chorister to the choir of singers, and that the amount paid by him for his Pew the last year be returned him.'" [CT/New London; Blake 1900, p. 312]

ca. 1808 or later + 1819: "...the Second [Congregational] Church about the beginning of this century gave much attention to the improvement of its psalmody, organized a voluntary choir which met for practice twice a week under the leadership of John Yeomans at the Newport Academy, and afterwards had a most successful [p. 53] singing-school, at which Joel Read's 'New England Selections' [*The New-England Selection; or Plain Psalmist*; eds. in 1808 + 1812] was the anthem book. A bass viol was introduced in the year 1819. This plan greatly improved the service of song in the house of God." [RI/Newport; Wallace 1896, pp. 52-53]

1809, 28 March, 11 April + 1817 + 1822, August: "Apparently in the course of years considerable confusion developed among the singers. On the twenty-eighth of March, 1809, at a meeting at the ancestral home of Captain Washington Cushing..., the singers decided to overcome this confusion by forming themselves into an organized Singing Society with officers and by-laws. A committee of seven—[names listed, including Laban Tower (1751-1824), chorister for a time in the South Hingham church; see SL n.d. (late 1700s and/or early 1800s) + 1805-1809]...—was entrusted with the task of organization. [new paragraph] On the eleventh of April the committee presented the results of their efforts, a document which their fellow singers accepted. After pointing out that order was an indispensable necessity for a well-regulated society, the document continued, 'We, the members of the Singing Society of the south parish of Hingham, do mutually agree to the following articles as our standing laws or regulations.' The regulations were eight in number. They called for the election by ballot of a chorister, an assistant chorister, two directors, and a clerk, chosen annually 'on Fast Day after divine service.' A treasurer was added in 1817, and not one but three librarians a number of years later. [p. 77, new paragraph] The chorister was 'to name the tune to be sung as soon as is convenient, to pitch said tune and beat the time.' The first director, and in his absence the second, was to act as moderator to keep order at meetings, and to act as chorister in

the absence of both the chorister and his assistant. The clerk was to keep a record of all votes of the society. The seventh article reads: 'The chorister, assistant director, and clerk shall be a standing committee for the time being, whose duty it shall be to select and present to the society from time to time such tunes as they shall judge proper to be sung, for the acceptance or rejection of said society, that each member may have an opportunity of providing and acquainting him or her self with the notes of said tunes.' And Article Eight: 'No attempt shall be made to sing any tune in the time of public worship until it shall have first been well learnt and consented to by the society.' [new paragraph] The officers elected at this meeting were: Bela Tower [probably the Bela Tower (1760-1836) who had been a fifer in the Revolutionary War, and who for a time served as chorister in the South Hingham church; see SL n.d. (late 1700s and/or early 1800s) + 1805-1809], chorister; Laban Wilder, assistant chorister;.... The names of forty-eight men are listed as members in 1809. It was not until August 1822, when the regulations were revised to provide for the expulsion of uncooperative persons and a fine of six cents for non-attendance at rehearsals, that the ladies were listed. At that time the roster was thirty-five men and nine women." [MA/South Hingham; Robinson 1980, pp. 76-77]

1809 + 1811: "Miles Simeon Price (?) and Noah Yale were appointed in 1809 'to assist in taking the lead of singing,' and Joel Merriman and Orrin Merriman in 1811, 'to assist as "corristers."'" [CT/Meriden; Meriden [ca. 1904], p. 84]

1809 + 1811 + 1820, 16 October: "A Society called the South Parish Musical Society, was in existence in 1809. A committee of this society petitioned the [p. 57] Parish for aid. Aid was promised, but, after adjourning five times, the Parish left the subject to a committee to make a report. What that report was, perhaps was never known. Another request was made for assistance in 1811: the Parish 'regret their inability at the present time to assist.' ... [p. 58, new paragraph] The singers' seats were at this time [early 1800s] filled with many persons who were not considered suitable members of a choir. As a remedy of this evil, the Andover South Parish union Singing Society was formed, Oct. 16, 1820. This society, receiving its members by vote, soon became the only occupants of the seats, and has continued to be the choir to the present time. Its President for the time is the chorister. The following persons have been Presidents, from 1820 to 1859. [smaller type:] 1820-1825 A. J. Gould. / 1826 John Derby. / 1827 A. J. Gould. / 1828-1829 Hermon Griffin. / 1830-1831 Sylvester Abbott. / 1832-1839 A. J. Gould. / 1840-1842 Sylvester Abbot. / 1843-1859 Albert Abbott." [MA/Andover; Andover 1859, pp. 56-58]

n.d. (probably 1810s, if not before and after as well): "At the west end [of town], under the energetic leadership of Dea. Enoch Little [1763-1848], followed by [p. 298] Joseph Kimball and Samuel Little, musical culture had a rapid advance. ... The choir under Dea. Little numbered about sixty. David Sweatt, still living, remembers a meeting of the choir on Corser hill, and the singing of a select piece,-- [indented, smaller type:] 'Lord, what is man,--poor feeble man, / Born of the earth at first? / His life's a dream, an empty show [*recte* His life a shadow, light and vain], / Still

hastening [hasting] to the dust.' [not indented, regular type:] It was the best singing he ever heard." [NH/Boscawen; Coffin 1878, pp. 297-298]

n.d. (1810s-1850s?) – see n.d. (possibly 1770s and 1780s)

1811 (possibly 1807-1811) – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1811 – see 1809 (2)

1811-1814 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

ca. 1811-1816 + n.d. (probably early 1821) + 1821, 14 January + n.d. (ca. 1821-1840) + 1840-1864: "...few ever sung them [the "ancient, plaintive lays" of Billings, Swan, et al.] better than Friend Crane and Deacon Tilden. Upon them devolved the [p. 72] duty of 'starting the tune' in the days of the school-house meetings [ca. 1811-1816; these dates from Canton Historical Society, *The Canton Bicentennial History Book* (text online), chapter 3, "Canton's Houses of Worship," section "The Baptists of Canton," paragraphs 3 + 7]; and though the assembly was never so small, and even if no minister was present, there was sure to be no lack of song-worship provided *they* were there. Their children inherited much of their tunefulness, and many of the voices were youthful that sung when the gallery of the old meeting-house was first opened for divine praise [14 January 1821]. [new paragraph] The first notice of a choir appears immediately after the dedication of that meeting-house, when Oliver Hayden, a singing-master of Stoughton, receives an invitation to lead the singing. ... Clifford Belcher [footnote: "Clifford Belcher was a nephew of *Supply* Belcher, author of one of the old music-books, and also of several pieces in the Stoughton Collection."] was the first chorister. He took the place at an early day (Hayden being only an occasional leader, and never residing in the place), and continued in it nearly twenty years. There was no disputing his claim to be leader. The splendid tenor of his voice rang above the rest like a trumpet. ... [p. 74] ... [new paragraph] Elias Tucker succeeded chorister Belcher in the duties and honors of the leadership. He came in at about the time of the great musical revival in the town. ... [new paragraph] ... Elias Tucker was one of his [i.e., singing master Horace Bird's] pupils. He was made leader in 1840, and has continued until now [1864], through sunshine [p. 75] and through storm, faithful to the interests of the choir, until he has grown a veteran in the service. Andrew Lopez, the assistant chorister, also a pupil of Mr. Bird, has held his office for an equal term, and assisted the singing with distinguished ability." [MA/Canton; Brown 1865, pp. 71-72, 74-75]

n.d. (no earlier than 1812): "LUDDEN, SILAS, of Braintree, came to Ox[ford] about 1812.... He was a scythe-maker, chorister in the Congregational Church,...he d. April, 1852, at Detroit, Mich." [MA/Oxford; Daniels 1892, p. 597]

n.d. (no earlier than 1812): "In the Oxford church those who could sing sat in the 'singers' seats.' The leader, Mr. Ludden, gave out the tune and the pitch, the singers sounded their parts, bass, tenor, alto and treble, fa-la-sol-fa 'singing a fuguing tune,

one part following another, till all seem to be lost in a labyrinth of melody, but coming out right at last.” [MA/Oxford; Freeland 1894, p. 300]

1814 – see 1800

at least 1814, June (possibly 1811-1814) – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

ca. 1814-late 1816 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1814-ca. 1823: “On April 17, 1814 the following note is found to be among the archives of the church, ‘Paid Stodder for singing, \$4.00.’ This was William Stodder, who also served as Sexton, and remained at least until 1818. The most important feature to this item being the fact that it is the first mention definitely made of a choirister. ... The singers noted [ca. 1815] were ‘Jack’ Woodman, who also acted as choir leader.... [new paragraph] William Knott became choirister certainly before February 1820.... [p. 5] Knott received ‘\$16.25 for thirteen Sundays’, and served for three years. ... [p. 6] ...Knott received as choirister \$65.00 per annum.” [ME/Portland; Small n. d., pp. 4-5]

1815 – see 1800

1816, 30 October: “...it will be interesting to read an observation on the choir made by Dr. Allen [Joseph Allen, Northborough pastor 1816-1873] in his twenty-fifth anniversary sermon (1841). He said: ‘On the day of my ordination (October 30, 1816), the singers’ seats were filled, the ladies being tastefully adorned with white turbans and blue ribbons. “Italy,” which was sung to the 278th hymn in Belknap, has ever since been one of my favorite tunes, and I never hear it, without a vivid recollection of the occasion when, as an ordained minister, I first listened to its sweet notes. [new paragraph] ‘Mr. Cephas Newhall, now of Sterling, then an inhabitant of this town, was the leader of our choir here referred to, of whom it is no more than justice to say, that, in the selection of appropriate tunes, in adapting the tones to the sentiments expressed, and in exercising a sort of magic influence over the whole choir, so as literally to be their *leader*, drawing them along after him insensibly and without effort, he was surpassed by few.’” [MA/Northborough; Kent 1921, p. 121]

1816, 30 October: “The leader of the choir [at the writer’s ordination in Northborough, on this date]...was Mr. Cephas Newhall, who recently died in Sterling. He was one of the best choristers I have known; and, though his voice often failed him, yet, with the aid of his violin and the inspiration of his whole manner, he had a perfect control of the large choir which for many years occupied the front gallery of our church. Many can recall, too, the silvery voice and able leadership of his successor, the late Thaddeus Mason, who never could feel at home in the church, but in his accustomed seat in the choir.The leadership [of the choir] was shared between the two persons named above for, I think, full forty years.”

[MA/Northborough; Allen 1880, p. 27 (7th numbering, from a sermon published in 1867)]

ca. late 1816-1831 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1817 – see 1809, 28 March, 11 April

1817 + ca. 1826 + 1827 + 1831-1838: “In 1817 the choir of the First Baptist church was composed of singers from various parts of Newton and vicinity, Brookline, Brighton, Watertown and Waltham. [compare with St. David’s Musical Society, discussed on pp. 756-757 of this source: “existed in Newton in 1816” (p. 756), “composed of singers belonging in Newton and neighboring towns” (p. 757)] The leader at that time was Mr. Thomas Richardson, of Oak Hill, who always sang soprano. When no instrument was present to give the key-note of the tune to be sung, the leader, taking his wooden pitch-pipe, drew out the little pipe within, on which were printed the first seven letters of the alphabet, and setting it to the letter with which the tune commenced, he sounded the tone; upon which the whole choir, repeating the sound with the syllable belonging to it, rose and sang the hymn or psalm. There was generally a bass viol, as an accompaniment, sometimes, two,--played by Messrs. Charles and Walter Richards. Two brothers Oliver often came from Waltham, one of them an excellent bass singer, the other a skil[l]ful player on the bassoon, which the choir regarded as a valuable addition. [new paragraph] ... The singing-books in use were, first, the Billings and Holden Collection; afterwards, the Bridgewater Collection. [new paragraph] About 1826 Mr. (afterwards Rev.) Jonathan Aldrich, then a student in the Theological Institution [Newton Theological Institution, a Baptist theological seminary founded 28 November 1825 in Newton Centre, Mass.], became leader of the choir, and many new members were added to it.... The instruments used in the choir at that time were two clarionets...and a trombone.... In 1827, Mr. Asa R. Trowbridge brought into the choir a double bass viol, the first instrument of the kind used in Newton. In later years, he played, in the church music, successively, the double bass viol, small bass viol, violin, bassoon, trombone and octave flute. In 1831 he was chosen leader of the choir, and served in that office seven years. The singing-book used, the latter part of the time, was the Boston Handel and Haydn Society’s Collection. [p. 504, new paragraph] After Mr. Aldrich resigned the charge of the choir (1827), Mr. (afterwards Rev.) Benjamin C. Wade, of the same class in the Institution (1829), was elected to fill the place. He reorganized the choir, bringing in some additions to it, and selecting leaders of each part. ... Under the management of Mr. Wade, the singing of this choir took a high rank in the town. At this period, frequent meetings were held at the Spring Hotel, Watertown; the Ellis Hotel, Newton Upper Falls; Mancy Thornton’s Hotel, near Newton Centre, and at the Theological Institution, for the practice of choruses and anthems from the Handel and Haydn Society’s Collection, under direction of Mr. Wade. These festivals brought together the singers of Newton and vicinity, and furnished a pastime at the same time fascinating and improving.” [MA/Newton; Smith 1880, pp. 503-504]

1817, July + 1822 + 1840s: "Dr. Eli Todd was the moving force behind the Handel Society [formed in July 1817], and although he was a good friend of Reverend Porter, Todd rarely attended church and was 'reported to be an infidel at that time.' Not only did the Handel Society accept the offer to serve as chorus, but to the delight of many, Todd took charge of the choir, which he led by means of his violin. The society continued to meet into the 1840s, though its formal role in church services ended in 1822; at that time, four choristers were named with Horace Cowles as head." [CT/Farmington; Bickford 1982, p. 285]

1818 – see 1808

1818-ca. 1856: "...Mr. Benjamin B. Davis was requested to take charge of the singing, as chorister, in the year 1818. Of the faithful devotion with which for thirty-eight years he led the choir, any attendant upon Dr. [John] Pierce's ministry [1797-1849] for that length of time will bear witness." [MA/Brookline; Woods 1874, p. 256]

1819, 6 December: "We are indebted to the *Diary* of Herman Mann, the editor, and son of the Herman Mann referred to before [this latter H. M. the tunebook publisher], for much information relating to our Tavern. He was born in Walpole, Massachusetts, in 1795 and died at Dedham in 1851. His *Diary*, preserved in the Dedham Historical Society, and written between the years 1819 and 1851, gives a valuable history of Dedham during that period. The following are some extracts from the *Diary*: [new paragraph] December 6, 1819: 'At a meeting of the singers (of the First Parish) this evening at Gragg and Alden's, Edmund M. Richards was chosen Clerk, Capt. J. Fales, J. Chickering Esq., Wm. Fairbanks, Capt. P. Bingham and I. Whiting were chosen choristers for the ensuing year. ...'" [MA/Dedham; Austin 1912, p. 30]

1819 – see 1730, 7 January, 4 February

1819 – see ca. 1808 or later

1820s – see 1790-1800/1805

n.d. (probably 1820s, 1830s, 1840s): "Mr. James Pierce, who also played the bass-viol, as well as sung, took his little daughters into 'the singers' seats,' when they were so small that they were obliged to stand on crickets to bring their heads above the balustrade. One of them, who was afterwards the wife of Charles Stearns, Jr. [son of "Capt. Charles Stearns," listed just previously as a member of the choir?], was for years the leader of the female voices." [MA/Brookline; Woods 1874, p. 256]

1820: "There is now a large number of persons well acquainted with the rules of this [musical] science, and several who, if occasion called, could with great credit, take the lead in the choir. For this we are in a great measure indebted to the exertions and skill of the one who has, for many years, had the conduct of singing in this place. To whom this society is under great obligations for the part he has taken in this

business, and I apprehend the public acknowledgment of this sentiment is nothing more than what is his just due.* [footnote: “*Captain Phineas Hardy.”]” [MA/Bradford; Perry 1821 (discourse delivered 1820), p. 51]

1820, 20 March – see 1797, 5 December

1820, 16 October – see 1809

1820-1830: “My recollection is that Lucas Hotchkiss was the leader [of the singing] on Sundays during this period or a part of it...” [CT/Meriden; Meriden [ca. 1904], p. 90]

ca. 1820-1835 or 1836 – see ca. 1790

ca. 1821 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1821 – see 1771, 16 October

1821, March – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1821, 14 November + year/s before and/or after: “Mr. [Marshall P.] Wilder for a season was the chorister, and officiated in that capacity on the occasion of the ordination [on 14 November 1821] of Rev. Dr. [Amos Wood] Burnham.” [NH/Rindge; Stearns 1875, p. 266]

1822 – see 1730, 7 January, 4 February

1822, August – see 1809, 28 March, 11 April

n.d. (after 1822) – see n.d. (pre-1823)

n.d. (pre-1823) + n.d. (after 1822): “‘The singers’ seats, two rows in each gallery, extended from the north to the south galleries. Mr. Samuel Tenney, before the days of the organ [installed 1823], was leader of the choir, and he, in his grey coat, wielded a large bow over the strings of a mammoth bass viol. With what a clear musical voice he gives the pitch, while a well-trained choir gives with fine effect [p. 200] one of Watts’ hymns. ... Later, Mr. Paul Stickney, a leader among leaders, was choir-director for many years. The female singers, were modestly partitioned off in a compartment of their own. ...’ [new paragraph] There was at this time no organ in the church, but, in 1823, a fine instrument, made in England, at a cost of nine hundred dollars, was purchased. ... This fine old organ with its Gothic front, its gilded pipes, and sweet-toned, harmonious keys held a revered place in the sanctuary until, in the lamentable fire of 1878, it mingled its dust and ashes with those of the old South meeting-house. [new paragraph] A beautiful tribute to the Old South, and to the music of its choir, once came floating back to Hallowell from the far-off seas of the Orient. It was from the pen of the *Kennebecker* whom we all know

as that loyal son of Hallowell, Captain John F. Drew. This tribute should be enshrined among the archives of the church. [new paragraph] ‘Paul Stickney led the choir,--Barnekoy presided at the organ. They sang: [indented, smaller type:] “Oh, when thou city of my God, shall I thy courts ascend, / Where congregations ne’er break up and Sabbaths have no end-- / In joy! in joy!—and peace! and peace!—” [new paragraph, regular type:] [‘]A soft soprano sang, “In joy and peace,” alone; then the full choir in mighty chorus,--“In joy and peace in thee!”—John Odlin Page, the basso, going way down among the notes where but few men could go. How I remember this. There was the great congregation on their feet facing the singers; it was late in the afternoon, and the sun, getting ready to decline over the hills behind the church, sent glories in through the back windows on many of the best men and women in Hallowell. Young men, men in their prime, men with silvery locks; fair maidens, beautiful women, true matrons with silver [p. 201] threads among the gold, women grown old and gray in sorrow and trouble. [people mentioned by (mostly last) name] ... Most of that assembled congregation have gone “Where congregations ne’er break up and Sabbaths have no end.” Somehow to my young mind the ascending of the Heavenly courts, the streets of shining gold, the gates of pearl, got fixed, as though Paul Stickney, the sweet soprano voice, John Odlin Page, and the other singers would have much to do with them and the Heavenly choir; there would be sweet-toned organs with gilded pipes, wonderful to behold and hear, as well as heavenly harps and angels, and silvery-haired men and golden-haired women, in that beautiful abode; and my father would be there holding me by the hand lest I should lose my way and stray off to some bad place, and Pastor Thurston would raise his arms over the waiting congregation who would turn round and face him for their benediction in the last rays of the glorious sun, with a circle over his head, saying: *Holiness becometh thy House, oh God!* [new paragraph] ‘I have witnessed impressive religious ceremonies in the great cathedrals and churches in the seaports and other cities I have visited. [description of these impressive services] ... [p. 202] ...and what else, what beside the swelling censers, the perfumes, and lulling, soothing influences of precious burning gums? Why, my mind was far away to that Old South Cathedral Church in Hallowell; and it was Paul Stickney again and his choir, and the soft sunset, and the congregation, and angels, and “Jerusalem, my heavenly Home,” and myself a little boy holding on to my father’s hand....” [ME/Hallowell; Nason 1909, pp. 199-202]

n.d. (probably not before mid-1820s): “He [Enoch Little, 2nd, born 1804] gave attention to music, and for a long period was leader of the choir connected with the Webster [NH] Congregational church; taught singing-school In Webster and Salisbury [NH]; had a high sense of the value of sacred music as a means of public worship, and sung, not for the enjoyment that came from singing merely, but as an act of devotion and a religious duty.” [NH/Boscawen; Coffin 1878, p. 408]

ca. 1823 + 1825-1835: “Josiah Todd then appeared as ‘singing master’ and ‘leader of the Congregational Church choir.’ This was not far from 1823.... [new paragraph] Josiah Todd’s choir came to be one of the most popular organizations. From 1825 to 1835 it was at flood tide.” [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 289]

"In 1824 the parish voted that twenty men who were specified by name be a permanent choir with power to elect their leader; but it was added, 'you[r] com[mittee]^s however cannot forbear remarking that so far as has come to their knowledge Capt. Ira Stickney has the year past given the most pleasing satisfaction as a leader of the singing in publick.' So Captain, afterwards Major, Stickney who was then only twenty-seven was already at the head of military and musical matters in the parish, and had that warm place in the hearts of his fellow-parishioners which he never lost. The vote continued that the choir have power to enlarge their number, but should use no instrument but a bass-viol—was a violin thought too frivolous? It was also voted 'that those ladies who have of late sat in the singers Pew are [p. 185] respectfully invited to continue in the seats.' If it had as many women as men the choir would be forty strong. Under its efficient chorister it must have led the service of public praise with noble effect." [MA/Byfield; Ewell 1904, pp. 184-185]

1824, May, September – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1824 or 1825: "Alling Brown of New Haven...for many years led the Centre church choir in that city with great success." [CT/Waterbury; Anderson 1896, vol. III, p. 1070]

n.d. (late 1820s at earliest): "Dr. Edward Peabody [1806-1874] came to West Buxton when a young man and established there a permanent home. He was a man of superior natural parts, was well educated, and became a skillful medical practitioner, whose field of professional service was extensive. Like others of the Peabody family, he inherited remarkable vocal powers and early gave much attention to the study of music. He could make music on any instrument, from a pumpkin vine and corn-stalk fiddle to the bass-viol and organ. Well, he organized and instructed one of the best old-time chorus choirs [as opposed to "solo choir" or "quartet choir"?] that ever furnished music for a church in the Saco valley; and for the long term of twenty-five years, with scarcely any break, he 'led the singing' in the Freewill Baptist choir." [ME/West Buxton; Ridlon 1895, p. 386]

n.d. (late 1820s, 1830s?) – see n.d. (possibly 1770s and 1780s)

n.d. (possibly late 1820s-1840s) – see n.d. (1789-possibly as late as 1820)

before 1825: "Prior to the introduction of the bass-viol, the date of which I would fix at about 1825, the leader of the choir made use of a pitch-pipe for obtaining the key note of the tune. It is my impression that Levi Yale was the last leader under the pitch-pipe regime." [CT/Meriden; Meriden [ca. 1904], p. 88]

1825 – see 1800

1825-1835 – see ca. 1823

ca. 1826 – see 1817

1827 – see 1817

“In January, 1827, Aaron Benedict, Anson Sperry and Elias Cook were appointed ‘choristers’ for the ensuing year. A year afterward the society at its annual meeting ‘gave leave to have the pews in the steeply altered into slips for singing (to be done by subscription),’ and the following week appointed as additional ‘choristers’ Elisha Steele, Hiram J. White, Willard Spencer and Edward Nettleton. These were men who were likely to infuse serious purpose and real vigor into the service of song, and the impression which one of them made upon an auditor a few years afterward has been put on record. The reminiscence is given in ‘Recollections of a Watertown Man,’ published in the *Waterbury American* of January 11, 1876. Speaking of the funeral of the Holmes children, who perished in the fire that destroyed the Judd house..., he says: [new paragraph] [‘]It was held in the old Congregational church, which was filled to overflowing. When the funeral hymn was given out from the pulpit the congregation arose. Turning around with the rest, as was customary in those days, I saw for the first time in my life the manly form and benevolent countenance of your late lamented townsman, Deacon Aaron Benedict, who was standing in the centre of the front gallery with his daughter, now Mrs. S. M. Buckingham, at his right hand. Mr. Benedict was the chorister. The singing was most solemnly and admirably performed. My mind was vividly impressed with his first appearance, and it will be among the last which time will obliterate.[’]” [CT/Waterbury; Anderson 1896, vol. III, p. 583]

1828, 21 October – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1829 and probably years before and after 1829 – see before 1791

1829, 4 March: “The ordination services [this is the ordination of Silas Aiken, 4 March 1829] were interesting an impressive, and were listened to with profound attention by the large audience in attendance. The music, by a select choir, under the direction of Dr. Ambrose Seaton [b. ca. 1805], was excellent.” [NH/Amherst; Secomb 1883, p. 299]

1829 + 1840s: “The singing seats, which had been moved as part of the rearrangement of the interior of the meetinghouse in 1829, were now in the gallery at the back of the church, over the vestibule. Edwin B. Whitcomb, who joined the choir in 1842 at the age of fifteen, has left a description of the choir of that period. [new paragraph, indented] *It was then under the leadership of Mr. John Cushing; he sometimes played a clarinet but usually a violin. The violin in many instances was all we had, but a double bass viol was procured, and when we had both to give us the chord or pitch, we thought ourselves nicely fixed, as the two together could saw out the last line of the verse, and then we could come in on the next after a little rest. The singing seats were then on the easterly side of the church, and the congregation would*

rise up and turning their backs to the pulpit, would face the singers. The conductor perched up on a high box situated in the center of the singing seats and back one row from the front, and with his bow on the strings and after looking right and left to see that everyone was ready, would draw his bow vigorously several times across the strings. . . . [p. 106] *Later on, as funds grew more plenty, a flute was purchased. [punctuation sic] and I do not remember that anyone played it except Mr. Seth Dunbar. I remember that he always blew a smooth flowing tone and never brought the flute into prominence.* [new paragraph, not indented] Mr. Whitcomb writes with great respect of several South Hingham musicians of this period. One was Joshua Jacob, ‘celebrated in this and all the neighboring towns as being “immense” on the clarinet.’ He could also play the violin and the bass viol, and ‘had a perfect ear and detected the least “out of tune” in instrument or voice; and when pianos were introduced, he was the only one employed to keep them in tune.’” [MA/South Hingham; Robinson 1980, pp. 105-106]

n.d. (1830s?): “Many recall the gaunt form of David Clinton, who with his ‘pitch pipe’ stood a familiar figure in the choir [of the Congregational church] for a number of years.’ [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 291]

n.d. (1830s-1850s?): “The director of the choir at one time was Cephas Newhall, who has been described as having a ‘miracle of [a] voice as a singer and leader.’” [MA/Sterling; Sterling 1931a, p. 35] [Cephas Newhall in Sterling by 1835 (“Mr. Cephas Newhall, of Sterling” sang at “musical entertainment” after dedication of Sterling’s new town hall in November, 1835; see D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Worcester County, Massachusetts* [1889], p. 491), possibly a good deal earlier; died in 1865, buried in Sterling]

n.d. (probably ca. 1830s-1860s): “Mr. Henry R. Hall [probably Henry Rundlett Hall, 1812-1885], a man of fine presence, and a magnificent voice, [p. 109] was long a leader [of singing in church?]. ... There was good singing in those days, but space and memory would fail me if I were to add to Messrs. L. M. Dow and Joseph S. Robinson, the latter almost a son of thunder in vocal strength, the succession of those who made melody, and to whom all the congregation turned their faces before the last afternoon hymn.” [NH/Exeter; Perry 1898, pp. 108-109]

n.d. (ca. 1831): “The choir, at first, was a small one. [5 women’s names]...belonged to it; also Messrs. Joel Davis, leader,...[and] Daniel Woodward, who taught the first singing-school of the society, and succeeded Mr. Davis as leader.” [MA/Lowell; Greene 1881, p. 241]

1831 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1831-1838 – see 1817

ca. 1831-summer 1841 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

n.d. (probably mid-19th c.): "In 1840 the practice was begun of raising \$50 by subscription to com- [p. 61] pensate 'the leader of the Singers'; later, appropriations were made for this purpose among the regular parish expenses. For many years this service was rendered by Charles Fuller." [MA/Sturbridge; Haynes 1910, pp. 60-61]

"Dec. 5, 1834, is entered in the Church Records this minute: 'At regular Church Meeting, after Lecture, Brother Oliver Phillips was chosen Chorister of the Church.' [new paragraph] This position Mr. Phillips, who is still living, and with us to-day at the advanced age of ninety, continued to hold for many years." [MA/Medway; Jameson 1877, p. 74]

late 1830s-late 1880s: "...The Town shone by its Musick! If, however, old Samuel Partridge and his son Sylvester had not come early to The Town [no evidence that Samuel (1741-1776), Sylvester's dad, ever came to Alstead; he died fighting in the Revolutionary War; Sylvester came to Alstead, apparently from Londonderry, NH, in 1783, aged 17], the earthy-celestial practicing might have passed away like the varmint and the b'ars and left little influence behind it; but the Pa'tri[d]ges did wing their way in, to start a line of singsongers who could not be quenched for more than a century. Sylvester [1766-1850] had three sons, Willard, Alfred [1817-1901] and James [1819-?] [*recte* grandsons; at least, Alfred and James were sons of Sylvester's son Theron; I haven't located Willard], and all of them led The Town's religious choirs and 'kept' singing- [p. 258] school, the two younger ones each for more than fifty years, beginning around the 1830s." [NH/Alstead; Rawson 1942, pp. 257-258]

1835 or 1836-1848 – see ca. 1790

ca. 1836 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

"In 1836 William Hartley was leader [of the singing in the Congregational church]." [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 291]

1836 – see 1770, 7 March

1836 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1837, 5 August-1877, 9 October: "I allude to the case of Mr. Edward Landers, who was elected chorister August 5, 1837, and who served continuously until October 9, 1877, a period of forty full years. An extended and highly appreciative minute appears on the church record alluding to 'the perseverance and fidelity with which **the onerous, delicate, and perplexing duties of this service** have been discharged.' The free use of a pew was tendered him, and an annuity of \$50, as a testimonial of esteem." [RI/Newport; Wallace 1896, p. 84]

ca. 1839 (or 1850?) – see 1762

1839-1840 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1840s – see 1829

n.d. (1840s-1860s?): “A member of this choir mentioned the other day that their choir did not escape the troubles to which choirs are peculiarly subject; for as a result of the rivalry of two aspirants for leadership, the entire choir refused to sing for some time, and the tunes were started by some of the deacons from among the congregation with the aid of the tuning fork; imagine such a calamity today. St. James could hardly have imagined the conditions surrounding the modern church choir, or he would not have asked: ‘Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?’ for chorus choirs always do just that; sing chords, act discords.” [CT/Norwalk; [Weed] [1902], p. 45]

1840: “The church choir about this time (1840) was said by the ministers who exchanged with Dr. [Joseph] Allen, to be the best choir in the county. It was composed as follows: Thaddeus Mason (who from all accounts had a magnificent tenor voice), was leader. Martin Stowe played the clarionet; H. R. Phelps, the trombone; Anson Rice, the violoncello; and Munroe Mason and Joseph Addison Allen, the violins.” [MA/Northborough; Kent 1921, p. 122]

1840 – see 1770, 7 March

1840-ca. 1844 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

at least 1841-1861, very possibly as early as 1810: “Another person who was important to the music program in 1841 was Deacon Elijah Wood, whose name appears on the Farrar organ entry and the bill of sale [see I 1838 + 1841 + 1852-1855 + 1863], and often thereafter as the deacon handling the money which by now was coming into the music program from [p. 187] interest on the Abigail Dudley Fund [see \$ 1814 + 1832 + 1839 + 1925]. We are fortunate that [Edward] Jarvis [undoubtedly in his *Traditions and Reminiscences of Concord, Massachusetts, 1779-1878*] was moved to tell us something about Wood: [indented, smaller type:] He died in 1861, at the age of 71. All the Woods were musical. He was the leader of the singers in the church and felt the responsibility for the success of this service for many years. He was a deacon in the church. [not indented, regular type:] Under Wood’s capable leadership, the choir begun with such enthusiasm in [Rev. Ezra] Ripley’s time endured with vigor through the middle of the 19th century.” [MA/Concord; Billings 1985, pp. 186-187]

ca. 1841-at least 1861 – see between 1774 and ca. 1791

1841-1871: “Fragmentary as this article necessarily has been, it would be still more incomplete were no reference made to one, than whom no more devoted musician has been named: Sherlock A. Mansfield. Mr. Mansfield began his labors in 1841 and was untiring in the interests of church music until his death in 1871. He was the last

of the noted chorus leaders and by his genial manner and enthusiasm rallied a choir which for years maintained with remarkable steadiness this branch of religious worship. Every 'exchange' preacher in the Consociation knew him, and knew too the music would always go right when his sunshiny face was seen in the choir gallery." [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 293]

"In 1844-5 James Linsley was employed to 'take charge of the singing [in the Congregational church] and have a singing school on Sabbath evenings.' For this service he received \$25." [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 291]

1849 – see ca. 1790

1850? – see 1762 + ca. 1839 (or 1850?)

1851 – see 1770, 7 March

1853 + 1855: "In 1853 William Howd was employed to lead the singing [in the Congregational church] at \$75 per year.... In 1855 Mr. Howd's salary was raised to \$100 per year." [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, p. 291]

1855 – see 1853

1856 and before: "The chorister for many years [at the Center Church] was Alling Brown, and under the guidance of his enrapturing fiddle, the achievements of his devoted followers were often grand and moving in the extreme." [CT/New Haven; Blake 1898, p. 111]

n.d. (1860s): "In 1864 a new organ was purchased of the Messrs. Hook of Boston at an expense of \$1,000, one half of which was contributed by Mr. [Aaron] Lawrence. During this time Mr. Elbridge Hardy acted as chorister, assisted a portion of the time by Mr. Benjamin Kendrick and his family." [NH/Amherst; Secomb 1883, p. 317]

1861-1862 + 1873 + 1874-1876 + 1882: "In 1861-2 Uri W. Hart was employed as organist and leader of music [in the Congregational church] at \$100 per year.... [p. 292, new paragraph] In 1873 Uri W. Hart was again employed as organist and leader, this time at a salary of \$380. In 1874-5-6 he was paid \$400 yearly. This was the highest figure ever expended for music. Mr. Hart remained until 1882, though at a reduced compensation in the last years of his term." [CT/North Haven; Thorpe 1892, pp. 291-292]

1873 – see 1861-1862

1874-1876 – see 1861-1862

1882 – see 1861-1862

n.d. (up to 1887): "The present choir, under the efficient direction of Colonel George H. Barrett, with Miss Augusta Ames organist, is well sustained by the leading voices of... [4 names]." [MA/Ashburnham; Stearns 1887, p. 329]