# Some Other Note

## The Lost Songs of English Renaissance Comedy

Ross W. Duffin

FOREWORD BY TIFFANY STERN

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ROSS W. DUFFIN

*With a Foreword by Tiffany Stern*

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*For my daughter,*
*Selena Simmons-Duffin*

to the tune of Dowlands Cock, which may do well and best in this Place, else with some other note to this our ditty

—William Percy, *Necromantes* (2.1)

# CONTENTS

# GLOSSARY

| | |
|---|---|
| **ballad** | typically a narrative poem with several stanzas, often in ballad-meter, usually sung to a tune |
| **ballad-meter** | a quatrain stanza versification consisting of a tetrameter line followed by a trimeter line, then another couplet of the same (4343). Also called fourteeners |
| **basse danse** | a courtly late-medieval dance in triple meter, typically improvised over a slow-moving melody |
| **broadside** | single sheet of paper, printed on one side, often used for ballads |
| **commonplace book** | a personal manuscript repository of favorite poems and sayings, sometimes of songs |
| **compound duple** | a musical meter with two large beats per measure, each triply subdivided, like 6/8 or 6/4 |
| **continuo song** | a composed song, with a bass line used to create an accompaniment by adding specified or implied harmonies |
| **couplet** | a pair of lines in a lyric |
| **fourteeners** | a quatrain stanza versification of a tetrameter line followed by a trimeter line, then another couplet of the same (4343). So called because 4+3+4+3 = 14 |
| **ground** | a melodic bass pattern with associated harmonies that repeats throughout a piece |
| **jig** | in a theatrical context, a short entertainment, often farcical, where the entire script is sung to one or more ballad tunes |
| **lutesong** | a composed song, typically for solo voice, with accompaniment in tablature notation for lute or related instrument |
| **lyric** | a group of words, sometimes in the form of a poem, that were possibly or definitely sung |
| **lyrics** | words that were possibly or definitely sung |
| **mensural music** | as opposed to plainsong, music with specific durations for the notes, normally in a regular meter or time signature |
| **partsong** | a song for two or more voices in harmony |
| **plainsong** | chant, or vocal music without specified rhythmic values, as used in the liturgy |

| | |
|---|---|
| **play song** | in a play, a lyric that was clearly meant to be sung, identified by label (e.g., SONG), by italic text, or by association with known songs |
| **polyphony** | two or more voice parts singing together, but on independent musical lines |
| **poulter's measure** | a quatrain stanza versification of two trimeters, a tetrameter, and a concluding trimeter (3343). So called because 3+3+4+3 = 13, referring to the extra egg given by a poulter, like the modern "baker's dozen" |
| **quatrain** | a group of four lines in a lyric |
| **refrain** | portion of a lyric that recurs, typically to the same music |
| **rhyme scheme** | pattern of rhymes in a lyric, with each newly introduced rhyme receiving a new letter (e.g., abab, aabb) |
| **round** | a song with two or more voice parts that enter successively with the same words and music |
| **setting** | in music, a song created by matching a lyric to a tune, or by composition. Also refers to an arrangement of a popular tune for solo instrument, such as lute or keyboard |
| **solmization** | forerunner of the modern solfeggio system, applying syllables like "Mi Fa Sol" to notes according to the pattern of intervals in a melody or scale |
| **song** | a lyric with music, either set to a popular tune or existing as a composed piece |
| **song lyric** | words, usually in the form of a poem, that were definitely sung |
| **stanza** | a unit of a lyric, consisting of a group of lines, tyically with a repeating versification |
| **Stationers' Register** | established in 1557, an early form of copyright, where printers made claim to a planned publication and received authorization to proceed |
| **strain** | a section of a melody, discrete unto itself, which may sometimes be repeated, and which typically sets a poetic couplet |
| **strophic** | having multiple stanzas |
| **tablature** | a specialized form of music notation for instruments |
| **tercet** | a group of three lines in a lyric |
| **through-composed** | with neither multiple stanzas nor repetition of musical strains |
| **tune** | a melody to which a lyric was set, or may be set |

**versification** the metrical structure of a lyric, expressed as the number of poetic feet (stresses) in each line: dimeter line = 2 feet, trimeter = 3, tetrameter = 4, pentameter = 5, hexameter = 6, and heptameter = 7. Often combined with rhyme scheme to give a technical characterization of a poem or stanza

# FOREWORD

EWITCHING HARMONY!" EXCLAIMS ARNOLDO IN Fletcher and Massinger's *Custom of the Country* (perf. ca. 1619) having heard what, in the stage direction, is described as "*Music Song.*" Songs were relished because of their melodies; people in plays are "bewitched," "delighted," and "ravished" by a song's music. Sometimes, too, characters are drawn by the words. For Autolycus in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (perf. ca. 1609), it is the interweaving of "tune and words" that engrosses the clown and the other listeners, so that "all their other senses stuck in ears." But even here the focus remains the "ears": it is the acoustic pleasure of the song that captivates and ultimately subsumes the other four senses. Yet though early modern plays in performance might owe their popularity to music—Gamaliel Ratsey, in the anonymous *Ratsies Ghost* (1605), confesses, "I have often gone to plays more for the music sake, than for action"—playbooks of the period were printed without scores. Every playbook is, for that reason, defective, lacking one of its performance's main draws.

Enter Ross Duffin. *Some Other Note*, which considers major comedies from the fifteenth century to 1625, provides tunes for nearly six hundred extant lyrics. These settings, some of which are established through extraordinary acts of recovery, some of which are suggested using historically informed conjecture, indicate what plays were actually like in performance. The project, which supplies hundreds of insights into the sound of early modern performance, refocuses our ideas of the pace, structure, and focus of the comedies of the era.

It is through analyzing surviving lyrics that Duffin comes up with some of the "lost" tunes. One of his methods is to plot the meter of a play's song-lyrics and match it with rhythmically equivalent music, calling upon his extraordinary knowledge of popular tunes of the period to suggest plausible links. In doing so, he back-creates the way early modern playwrights often wrote songs in the first place: they regularly employed "old" tunes to structure their "new" words. In George Peele's *Edward the First* (perf. ca. 1591), for instance, Harper is directed to enter singing a song "to the tune of *Who List to Lead a Soldier's*

*Life*"; in Anthony Rudd's (or Laurence Johnson's) manuscript *Misogonus* (perf. ca. 1577), Cacurgus is to sing "A song to the tune of *Heart's Ease*." In both cases, the playwrights have picked extant ballad tunes to organize the new words they write. Duffin's methodology, then, simply reverses that of the playwrights: he reads a ditty—the words to a song—and finds the "old" tune that may have brought it about in the first place.

Another of Duffin's methods is to link songs through verbal parallels, singling out lyrics that acknowledge or parody extant tunes. So he shows how, in John Fletcher's *The Wild-Goose Chase* (perf. ca. 1621), Mirabell's song, "my Savoy Lord, why dost thou frown on me? / And will that favour never sweeter be?" structurally demands the ballad tune *Fortune my Foe*, the first words of which are "Fortune my foe, why dost thou frown on me? / And will thy favours never better be." That choice is fascinating interpretatively. The mournful tune *Fortune my Foe* (named for the first words of the ballad, obviously), is found on at least 105 broadsheet ballads of the period; it was so often employed for songs at executions that one of its alternative names was "the hanging tune." So Mirabell's taunting exploitation of *Fortune my Foe* will have spoken beyond the play, recalling adversity and comeuppance in a range of other sung "misfortunes." Hence the importance of suggestions for the tunes playwrights were tapping: play songs are often in dialogue with other iterations of that same tune and are part of a performance's broader meaning as well as its soundscape.

Here it should be pointed out that a playgoer's experience of theatre was, anyway, informed by ballad music. Robert Greene in *The Third . . . Part of Coney-Catching* (1592) complains about the salespeople who trade "ballets [ballads], and songs at the doors of such houses where plays are used": ballad mongers apparently clustered at the doors of playhouses, selling, through singing, their single sheet broadside ballads, which contained words, pictures, and a strapline naming the tune. Spectators, then, will have gone into the theatre with ballads in their heads and perhaps also their hands. Playgoers are likely, too, to have left the theatre humming ballad tunes, for as Duffin explores, the jigs sung and danced after plays were generally song medleys made up of ballads. "Ballads" thus framed performances both outside and inside the theatrical space itself; it is no surprise that wily playwrights placed inside their dramas the very tunes that were being sung and marketed around them.

Duffin also explores drama's exploitation of more sophisticated, but equally popular, tunes, taken from song and instrumental settings by famous composers of the period. This was a world before copyright for music, and established "art" songs were ripe for theatrical picking: the start of John Dowland's "Sleep wayward thoughts," for instance, is directed to be sung in the anonymous *Every Woman in her Humour* (perf. ca. 1607); the chorus to the same song, "I sorrow for her sake," is in Chapman et al.'s *Eastward Ho* (perf. 1605). Duffin suggests that various play-songs of the era were sung to tunes by the best-known composers. Indeed, as plays for court and private theatre production tended to be interspersed with act break music consisting of the consort songs and dances of the day, such melodies were probably in the theatre's preserve already.

The ramifications for a playwright's use of known tunes in plays, however, are great. When playwrights adopted extant melodies, their method of writing was "collaborative" even if they did not know the composer; their song-texts will have been shaped by and to the rhythm, tone, and aura of the melodies they had to hand. Depending on the way that collaboration was exploited, such songs might employ music not just to relay meaning but to sophisticate and perhaps redirect it. Music can make happy words poignant and fill sad words with hope: playwrights will have been able to apply the melodies of their day to interpret, and reinterpret, their lyrics. Having a sense of which tune might have ushered in which set of lyrics is crucial: it affects our understanding of what the words actually mean.

That makes it surprising, of course, that early modern playbooks did not preserve musical notation. But the reasons why can be easily traced to the way plays were written, rehearsed, and printed. In the moment of composition, playwrights would seldom inscribe music into a text for obvious reasons—they usually had not written, and did not always have access to, that music. Instead, they would pen the words to their songs (if they chose to author them at all) often on a separate paper, to be supplied with music from another source. The other source was, on special occasions, a composer; more often, however, an already extant tune would be used, as above. As songsheets containing both words and music made ideal rehearsal texts, too, the only documents in the playhouse likely to contain musical notation—and not all well-known songs needed such notation—were separate papers. Melody, crucial to performance, was hardly ever a feature of a playwright's text.

"Melody" was not supplied for printed plays either. Partly that is because printed plays reflect the manuscripts from which they are set. But even when publishers had acquired the playhouse's separate songsheets, only words were extracted from them. That was because there was a monopoly on printing music for much of the early modern period, and generally only one printer had the right (plus the musical type, and the trained musical compositors) to publish notes on staves: meaning that printing a musical play would have been difficult, demanding, and expensive. Instead, printed plays focused on words, so even playbooks that claim to include "songs" (Heywood's 1608 *Rape of Lucrece* boasts on its title page that it includes "the several songs" by the character who played Valerius) actually only have *lyrics*, stripped of the sounds that affirmed or ironized—and so, interpreted—them in performance.

By writing a book that confirms and, when that is not possible, conjectures the music that will have been part of early modern comedies on stage, Duffin does a crucial service. He returns popular music of the era to its place within the drama, suggesting the way in which tune will have complicated the meaning of plays and, likewise, the way in which plays will have complicated the meaning of tunes. But he also performs a practical service. No one hitherto has attempted to provide theatrical music for this number of early modern texts; Duffin's careful settings, which give musical suggestions for anyone keen to stage drama in "original practice" form, will reshape not just future analyses but future productions too.

For the last four hundred years, comedies of the early modern period have been, at the very moment when they should be most sonorous, at their most deficient, lacking the music that completed them. Duffin's extraordinary project of recovery and reimagining brings drama closer to "original" form than ever before and places music at its very heart.

Tiffany Stern
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# PROLOGUE

"Mere guesswork." That is a phrase I kept encountering in books and articles while researching this book—not just "guesswork," but "mere guesswork," as if no good could ever come of such a disdainful, disreputable, and unscholarly practice. Often, the phrase was used regarding the birthdate of a playwright, or the date of a play, or the relative contributions of different purported collaborators. Typically, it was intended to cast serious doubt on the conclusions of some scholar's published attempt to make sense of a situation where very few hard facts were known. It says, "You are guessing; you have little or no evidence to support your contention. Readers are entitled or even obliged to disregard what you say."

I suppose the reason the phrase caught my eye every time it appeared is because I am painfully aware that there is a certain amount of guesswork in what I am doing in this book. As with my earlier *Shakespeare's Songbook* (W. W. Norton, 2004), I have supplied tunes for songs and song fragments in an enormous repertory of plays, mostly where no original music has survived. From a scholarly standpoint, it is certainly safer to leave them as lyrics, and indeed, centuries of play editions have been published where the acknowledged songs—often even labeled as songs—are mere lyrics, if I can appropriate that disparaging adjective here. No one has seemed much bothered by this. They are songs, yes, but no music has survived, so really, they are just lyrics, and it is mostly taken for granted that a play edition is complete without anything concerning the musical world that the play creates and inhabits on the stage. A literary historian's point of view might be that no period song settings survive, but the plays are complete as literature without them, and guessing what might have been is unnecessary. The songs are simply lost.

From a musical point of view, such positivism has left English Renaissance drama in a sorry state. Of course, theater professionals know very well that if there is a song lyric, it needs to be sung, and the absence of period settings has been a great boon to composers all over the English-speaking world. Getting a composer to write new music for lyrics is so much of a tradition in modern

times that even when we know a period melody, directors often choose to have new music composed so that it fits better with their overall conception of the drama. That was brought home to me in 2015 when a prominent theater company performed a play with a song whose original melody I had definitively identified in *Shakespeare's Songbook*. They hired a composer to set the song and I realized that the new setting shared many features with the original tune. Of course, in order to fit the lyric, it had to. There is also the example of Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* at the Sam Wanamaker Theatre at Shakespeare's Globe in London in 2014. There are over forty musical items in that play, and some of them have long been connected to their original music, but a composer was commissioned to write all new music for the production. That, of course, is the prerogative of the director.

It is wrong, however, to assume that no period music exists that could have been used then, and that might be used today. In some cases, I would even say that I have definitively found the original tune.[1] In others, it is less certain, though I trust that the conjectural settings I propose would not have surprised a theater professional from the period. That may seem like a modest claim, but I view it as enormously significant. Fundamentally, I think there has been a huge misunderstanding concerning Renaissance playwrights and their relationship to the songs in their plays.

My basic argument is that, generally, Renaissance playwrights were not composers,[2] and unlike Oscar Hammerstein, did not have a Richard Rodgers waiting in the wings to compose on-demand settings for the lyrics they were writing. What I have come to believe is that the playwrights, no doubt more attuned than most to their acoustical environment, wrote lyrics to tunes that they were humming to themselves, appropriated from music they were hearing, and that therefore shaped the lyrics as they were written.

1 Such certain identifications confirm the general point that borrowed tunes were sometimes used for play lyrics, and support that process even where a connection may be less secure.

2 There are some notable exceptions to this in the sixteenth-century interludes, where the playwrights were often choirmasters as well. See below, chapters 2–4. This does not guarantee, however, that they always composed new music for the lyrics they were writing. It is also intriguing that composers like Robert Jones and Philip Rosseter were involved in the theater as impresarios in the early seventeenth century. They may or may not have been composing settings for plays they were producing (we have no direct evidence that they were), but their extant lutesongs do sometimes provide plausible settings for play lyrics.

Some would argue that, at a certain point, that situation changes, and professional composers like Alfonso Ferrabosco, Jr., Robert Johnson, and John Wilson were contributing settings of play songs for use in the London theaters. That may be true,[3] but most of the sources for such songs are decades later than the plays, so even if the songs were composed for the theater, they still may shed no light on how the songs sounded in the original productions. Even when surviving song settings are roughly contemporary with the plays, their relationship to the theater is still a question. For example, it is true that Ben Jonson and Ferrabosco knew each other, and Ferrabosco set songs in Jonson's masques, but those things do not guarantee that Ferrabosco was writing settings for Jonson's plays.[4] Masques were court entertainments, and both creative artists were paid handsomely for their contributions to those special events, as meticulous court records attest.[5] No such accounts record payments to composers for setting the songs in any play. The reason, I propose, is that the tunes for play songs were mostly being appropriated from music that was known or available at the time the plays were produced.

This is an idea that I first developed in *Shakespeare's Songbook*, and my work on plays before and surrounding Shakespeare over the last dozen years has only deepened my conviction that it is true. After all, these same playwrights were often quoting songs from the existing repertoire, in addition to writing new lyrics for those tunes. So, according to this model, when a playwright creates a new lyric, it is often with some recognizable song in mind, and there is almost a compulsion to use some of the same key words, or rhyming words, that are in the original song. Such a match is a certain indication that an existing song was in the playwright's mind and, therefore, that the tune of the model is also the tune of the new lyric.

3 As I argue below, it may also be that surviving settings of play lyrics were made as "art songs," independent of play productions. The one composer whose work may suggest direct involvement is Robert Johnson, since at least some of the lyrics he sets have such irregular and unusual versification that they almost have to be composed expressly. Most of his settings survive in very late sources, however, and there is often a question as to whether such lyrics were in the early versions of the plays. For further on this issue, see my article, "Thomas Morley, Robert Johnson, and Songs for the Shakespearean Stage," in *Research Companion to Shakespeare Music*, ed. Christopher R. Wilson (Oxford, forthcoming).

4 See chapter 7, below.

5 See Peter Walls, *Music in the English Courtly Masque, 1604–1640* (Oxford, 1996), 36–40.

In other cases, the connection is more subtle, but versification patterns, including the number of lines in a stanza, the number of feet in a line, and the rhyme scheme, may sometimes be very unusual and match only a handful or, perhaps, only one existing song. In a case like that, there may be less certainty of a specific connection than when there are verbal parallels, but there is still no question that the setting thus created has an affinity with the model and would be recognized by contemporaries as a plausible setting of the lyric. That is the process that I have used throughout this book.

So, where do the tunes come from? Many are preserved as instrumental arrangements, including variation sets, with titles suggesting the melodies may originally have been songs. Sometimes these tunes are actually named for singing ballads, and keyword or versification matches between such ballads and play lyrics can lead to plausible period settings. By the end of the sixteenth century, composers like John Dowland were publishing collections of lutesongs, and that repertoire is a recognized source for song quotations in the plays and, I believe, also for tunes for complete lyrics. Just as the popular song repertoire supplied models up to that point, from around 1600, published song settings became another genre to be mined by playwrights for their play songs. The title of this book, in fact, comes from the tune direction for a play song in *Necromantes*, by William Percy, where he calls for the lyric to be sung to a certain tune by Dowland, "which may do well and best in this Place, els with *some other note* to this our ditty" [italics mine].[6] In other words, Percy has written a lyric that he thinks will work well when sung to a certain Dowland tune, but if others disagree, perhaps, or if that particular music is not available, then some alternative tune can be used to set the lyric. The idea that a play song might work to one tune or another, or even a further alternative, provided they fit the lyric, basically encapsulates what I have done in this book.[7] Since period tunes survive that fit song lyrics in plays throughout the Renaissance—tunes from the same artistic milieu as the plays—what more justification is needed that appropriate period music to these songs is not lost after all?

6 Huntington Library, MS HM4, fol. 160v.

7 The other felicitous thing about Percy is that the one other tune he specifically calls for to set a lyric in his plays is *Greensleeves* (see below concerning Example 15.64), which illustrates how both popular and composed repertoires could be tune sources for play songs.

My database of English song lyrics includes over a thousand entries, so, if I search for a certain versification and only one or two choices come up as a match, then I have a pretty good idea of what existing tune or tunes might have been used to set the lyric. If the precise tune originally used to set the lyric has not survived, and is therefore not in my database, I still have a good idea of what it was like, and can be confident that it resembled other tunes for the same versification. Is that guesswork? I suppose so, but informed guesswork, and I believe the fact that so many play songs can now be supplied with period music makes the conjecture worthwhile. The concept of "some other note," stated so clearly and serendipitously by William Percy, is a key to this approach, and one I only surmised while writing *Shakespeare's Songbook*. And I think readers might be surprised to find that there are not unlimited tunes for each versification—quite the opposite, in fact. If a lyric from the Shakespearean era has rhyming pentameter couplets in four-line stanzas, I can be pretty sure that it was set to *Fortune my foe* since that is virtually the only tune to set that versification. Often, there are keywords in the lyrics or surrounding dialogue to confirm that choice. If a lyric resembles a limerick, with a versification of 33223,[8] it was almost certainly meant to be sung to *Go from my window.* If a stanza consists of eight trimeter lines, chances are good that it was sung to *Rowland.* There simply are not many tunes that fit such versifications, and those three happen to be among the most popular tunes of the age. That is no help if original tunes have been lost, but so many tunes survive as instrumental variations that I believe most have been preserved in one form or another.

During the course of writing that earlier book, I became curious about what was going on before Shakespeare, particularly in plays in the comic tradition. It is certainly not the case that tragedies have no music—*King Lear* and *Hamlet*, for example, are chock full of song references—but the English comedy tradition is long and musical, and that is where I decided to focus my research. *Shakespeare's Songbook* had already revealed a web of allusions and quotations

8 Throughout this book, I use this notation to show the number of poetic feet in a stanza (see "versification" in the Glossary). The longer the line, the rarer it is to find it as a play song lyric, perhaps because phrases become too long to be comfortably sung. Trimeter and tetrameter lines are by far the most common for songs. Even Shakespeare typically switches from iambic pentameter to something shorter when writing a song lyric, though there are occasional lutesong lyrics after 1600 that contain hexameter and even heptameter lines.

from popular song in his plays, but it was my discovery that his more formal songs, for which no music had apparently survived, could be set very well to known tunes that made me wonder how this process might have worked for other playwrights. In this book, I have tried to cover the central canon of English Renaissance comedy by major playwrights, and some lesser playwrights as well. Not all plays are represented in their respective chapters because not all plays have recoverable songs. Still, the result is an examination of about one hundred plays with nearly six hundred songs (including song fragments). The cutoff date is roughly 1625, the end of the Jacobean era, and also a time when many of the most important Renaissance playwrights had either died or were no longer active. Not covered here are lost songs in English tragedy, and in plays from 1625 to the closing of the theaters at the beginning of the Civil War, in 1642.

There is also a chapter (chapter 6) on foreign influences, nestled between the chapters on interludes in the mid-sixteenth century and the rise of adult companies (and the second flowering of children's companies) at the end of the century. As I worked on Part I of the book, it just seemed that, by the time of Shakespeare and his followers, there were myriad foreign influences that ultimately melded with the native English tradition to create a more perfect union. I am not aware that anyone has previously looked at English comedy from that point of view, but new and interesting insights seem to be revealed through that lens.

The work of literary scholars on the history and writings of English Renaissance theater, particularly in the last few decades, is simply awe-inspiring. Writings about playwrights, about theater companies, and about the plays themselves, have all furnished critical background for my musical work. Two in particular laid the groundwork: for the early period, Peter Happé's *Song in Morality Plays and Interludes*,[9] and for the later period, William R. Bowden's *The English Dramatic Lyric, 1603–42*.[10] These are essentially catalogues of the play song repertoire, and though I spent months searching playscripts to identify lyrics, that task was significantly shortened by their work. I also need to single out the literary historian Tiffany Stern, who has contributed the Foreword

9 (Lancaster, 1991).

10 Subtitled *A Study in Stuart Dramatic Technique* (New Haven, 1951).

to this book, and whose knowledge and analysis of original production documents continues to reveal new insights about how songs worked in plays. In particular, she has documented the apparent isolation of song lyrics from the rest of the playscripts, which is a powerful reminder that sung words were special, treated differently within the text of a play, and distinctive—often magically so—in delivery onstage.

Another book I need to mention is *Singing Simpkin and Other Bawdy Jigs: Musical Comedy on the Shakespearean Stage: Scripts, Music and Context*, by Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping.[11] For some years, when I was working on this book, my plan was to update the work of Charles Read Baskervill on the stage jig,[12] the farcical song-and-dance playlets that were often inserted at the end or between the acts of more serious drama. These jigs were the ultimate expression of English musical comedy in some ways, since the entire dialogue was sung to one or more ballad tunes. Baskervill did a masterful job of defining the repertoire and giving the background, but a more seriously musical treatment was clearly possible today, as well as necessary, and that has now been provided by Clegg and Skeaping. I do have a few things to say about jigs, however, including adding to the repertoire of jigs and jig-related ballads, but my planned treatment has been much reduced by their excellent new book.

Whether readers are interested in the arc of the comic repertoire, from mystery plays to Massinger, or want to find out about the songs in one particular play, they should find what they are looking for here. The hundreds of song settings include solutions to many long-standing mysteries, as well many others that were not even recognized as mysteries. As with *Shakespeare's Songbook*, I have given just the tunes, rather than accompaniments, both because I am convinced that characters often sang spontaneously, without accompaniment, but also because the accompaniments can be simple and chordal in a way that is easily devised by experienced musicians.[13] The underlaid lyrics have been

11 (Exeter, 2014).

12 *The Elizabethan Jig and Related Song Drama* (Chicago, 1929).

13 The more elaborate accompaniments to the lutesong repertoire are available in series like *The English School of Lutenist Song Writers*, and in facsimile editions. To include them all here would have taken too much space, so I have concentrated on the underlay of play lyrics to the tunes.

modernized, though when I quote from the playscripts, I retain the original spellings.[14]

The ultimate goal has been to bring musical life to this largely tuneless repertory of plays, both for the new insights that might accrue from hearing and understanding the songs, and for the hope that a consequence of their "completion" may be more performances of the plays. Tudor and Jacobean comedy was often clever, hilarious, and human in a way that can resonate resoundingly with modern audiences, but it was also often very musical, and now, for the first time in centuries, it can be again.

14 I should also note that my goal has been to document the original source for quotations and song lyrics, so while I have sometimes used modern act and scene divisions, I have mostly avoided editorial line numbers in favor of a reference to original folios and signatures. This is especially true for the later plays which are now widely available through EEBO, *Early English Books Online.*

## *Folio and Signature Citations*

I have cited placements for song lyrics and references in the original sources. In order to avoid copious duplication, once the source has been cited in the text, these are given in footnotes without further annotation. Unless otherwise specified, the source is the earliest one extant for the play.

## *Clefs and Ranges*

It has been difficult to decide on the vocal range for the singing parts, considering that the characters are sometimes adults played by boys, or perhaps by boys at first and later by men (and probably by men and women in modern times). I have tried to use a medium vocal range for all of the singing parts, but they can be taken in whatever octave is comfortable for the singer, or in transposition as necessary. Also, later composed settings tend to be written in soprano range, so those are presented as preserved, even where the singing character is a man.

## *Tune Versions*

Just as tunes appear with flexible ornamentation in instrumental variations, it is clear that some flexibility is needed in the tunes in order to best accommodate the lyrics. Thus, melodies with the same title may vary slightly from setting to setting.

## *Melody and Text Divisions*

Poetic lines sometimes have different numbers of syllables in different stanzas, although the number of feet remains the same. Thus, a note of music that works for one stanza sometimes needs to be divided in other stanzas. Especially where there is a dominant version, I have tried to present a clear melody, leaving

the division to the singer *ad libitum*. But if all parts agree about divisions, then I divide the notes. Where notes are needed for one or more stanzas but not all, they are sometimes given in the score with smaller noteheads. In some songs, the final section of both text and music may be repeated, and this is indicated through the use of a sign of congruence.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Any book that has taken more than ten years in the research and writing is bound to have left a legion of helpers in its wake. For their various expertises, and crucial specialized advice, I thank Paul Schleuse, Denis Collins, Jeanice Brooks, David Skinner, Nicholas Temperley, Beth Quitslund, David Lasocki, Anne MacNeil, Leofranc Holford-Strevens, Lawrence Rosenwald, Jeremy L. Smith, Martin Morell, Caroline Carpenter, Stephen Orgel, Ellen Hargis, Robert Eisenstein, Warwick Edwards, and Jane Bernstein. David Klausner read large parts of the completed draft and offered many useful comments, along with welcome encouragement. Tiffany Stern agreed to write the Foreword even before reading the book. I remain ever grateful for her research and insights on the performance of early modern drama, and for her substantial notes once she had read this book!

Librarians have also been helpful in numerous ways, and I want to express my gratitude to those at the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Huntington Library, Cambridge University Library, the British Library, the Bodleian Library, and the Beinecke Library at Yale University. Special thanks also with a tinge of sadness to Stephen Toombs, long-time and now late music librarian at Case Western Reserve. For a scholar, a superb librarian "at home" is an advantage and a luxury that cannot be overstated.

Another posthumous thank you must go to John M. Ward, whose work on lute music, on dances, and in refining Claude Simpson's work on broadside ballad tunes was so crucial. I was touched by his interest and encouragement during the years after my Shakespeare book came out, and especially by his referring to me as a "fellow tune detective."

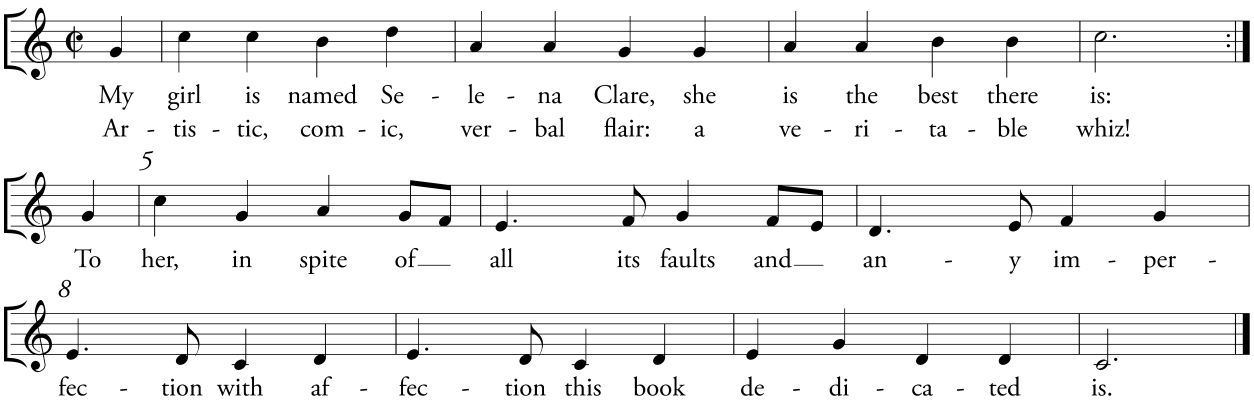
Case Western Reserve University is also due many thanks for supporting my work during two sabbaticals (another indication of how long it has taken to complete this book). Thanks also to Clare Hall at the University of Cambridge for providing an exceptionally congenial and convenient base for my work there in 2013–14. That time was crucial as the most extended and concentrated

period of work on this project, allowing me to see exactly where my research was headed, and what the final shape of the book would be.

Ultimately, that final shape owes a debt to Suzanne Ryan and her colleagues at Oxford University Press, including Victoria Kouznetsov, Joellyn Ausanka, and Jacqueline Norton. I am grateful for their enthusiasm for a book on early modern English theater that was both long and not focused on Shakespeare. The readers commissioned by the Press, Jessie Ann Owens and Christopher R. Wilson, who kindly consented to be identified, also offered many valuable comments, and having Bonnie Blackburn as copyeditor was a dream come true. Thanks also to Celine Aenlle-Rocha for her work on the web aspects of the book, and especially for embracing the idea of a recording wiki.

A huge debt is also owed to my wife, Beverly Simmons, who read each chapter as I finished a draft and offered her usual expert mix of copyediting, musical criticism, philosophical musing, and cheerleading.

Lastly, the dedication to my daughter, Selena Simmons-Duffin. She has always been my funny girl, my artist, my popular songstress—her rendition of *Blackbird* is her ringtone on my phone—and she is a consummate professional wordsmith. Aside from that professional skill, however, when she was a new mother, she could be overheard improvising lyrics to a melody she made up, but that struck me as remarkably similar to the early tune *The Cobler.* That play with words and the spirit of improvising lyrics to a tune are so integral to my work here. So, the obvious thing—perhaps more obvious after you have read the book—is for me to offer a little dedication, set to that tune:



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Oxford University Press has created a website to accompany *Some Other Note* that contains an extended bibliography, complete lists of all cited manuscript and printed source materials, and a chronological list of cited Broadsides with their English Broadside Ballad Archive links. The reader is encouraged to take advantage of these additional resources.

# SOME OTHER NOTE

PART I

# BACKGROUND OF THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

# 1. *Mystery and Morality*

Now I prey all ye yemandry that is here
To synge wyth ws wyth a mery chere.
—*Mankind*

## *Shepherds Plays*

THE ENGLISH WERE LAUGHING AND singing and clowning long before we have any record of it, but the roots of musical comedy in late Renaissance England can be traced back at least into the fifteenth century.[1] The two main streams of stage productions at that time may be categorized as mystery plays and morality plays. It is intriguing, in a way, that plays on religious or moral themes would be purveyors of comedy, much less comedy with a musical aspect, but there is a streak of realism, of laughing at the world, that characterizes some of these early theatrical pieces, and music naturally seems to take root in such a garden.

One of the things that caused the rise of the mystery play was the emergence of a bourgeois and tradesman class of literate consumers, creating a growing

1 There are earlier fragments of comedies, at least, such as the *Interlude of the Student and the Maiden (Interludium de Clerico et Puella)* from ca. 1300, in British Library, Add. MS 23986. See Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages 1300 to 1600*, vol. 3: *Plays and their Makers to 1576* (London, 1981), 189–90. This story finds a later echo in *The Miller's Tale* from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* There is also the *Mumming at Hertford*, an interlude given for Henry VI, ca. 1425, which includes a line about how a married man "with his rebecke may sing ful oft ellas!"—an anticipation of the henpecked husband tradition still finding expression in the ballad beginning "When I was a bachelor, I liv'd a merry life," first registered, apparently, in 1586. See Ross W. Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook* (New York, 2004), 304–6.

market between the aristocracy and the peasantry. Mystery plays were produced annually at religious festivals, and they dramatized the stories of the relevant feasts. The *Shearmen & Tailors Pageant*, for example, given by guildsmen at Coventry, presented the Christmas story and, like other mystery plays, was probably produced on a "pageant float" that traveled throughout the city, stopping regularly to present the play. Often, these productions included music, such as the famous "Coventry Carol" from that pageant, though there is little enough music that survives and what exists is sometimes poorly preserved.[2]

As tradesmen, the actors in mystery plays were obviously amateurs, though there is evidence that professional musicians were sometimes hired to take part in the productions as well.[3] And even those performing artists who did not make their living acting, singing, or playing could sometimes be very accomplished. Still, there is often a remarkable level of sophistication in evidence, as in the *First Shepherds Play* from the Townley Cycle, one of six plays attributed to the Wakefield Master,[4] where after hearing the angel sing *Gloria in excelsis*,[5] one shepherd comments:

2nd shepherd It was a mery song.
I dar say that he broght
foure & twenty to a long…
1st shepherd So many he throng
on a heppe; [heap]

2 The Coventry Carol, "Lully lullay," for example, is attributed to one Robert Croo, from around 1534, but it survived only in a manuscript of 1591 that was burned in 1879, leaving us only with a questionable 1825 transcription by Thomas Sharp. For a discussion, see Richard Rastall, *The Heaven Singing: Music in Early English Religious Drama* 1 (Cambridge, 1996), 137–52. I am less optimistic that Sharp's transcription is faithful to the original.

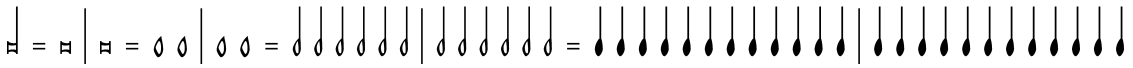
3 See Rastall, *The Heaven Singing*, 137–52.

4 Huntington Library, MS HM1, fols. 32v–38r. See *The Towneley Cycle: A Facsimile of Huntington MS HM1*, ed. A. C. Cawley and Martin Stevens (Leeds, 1976). See also Peter Happé, *The Townley Cycle: Unity and Diversity* (Cardiff, 2007). On the musical elements of these and other mystery plays, see also Richard Rastall, *Minstrels Playing: Music in Early English Religious Drama* 2 (Cambridge, 2001); and JoAnna Dutka, *Music in the English Mystery Plays* (Kalamazoo, 1980), an expansion of her earlier article "Music and the English Mystery Plays," *Comparative Drama* 7 (1973): 135–49.

5 The words *Gloria in excelsis* are never uttered by the angel in the *First Shepherds Play*, although that is known to be the angel's text. In the *Second Shepherds Play*, a stage direction specifically says that the *Gloria in excelsis* is sung, with the rest of the annunication being spoken.

| | |
|---|---|
| Thay were gentyll and small | [noble and fast] |
| and well tonyd withall.[6] | [tuned] |
| | ll. 596–605 |

The shepherds were commenting on the quality of the performance, and particularly on the level of fast notes sung by the angel in the *Gloria*, where a longa (a long note) appeared to be divided into twenty-four short notes, as follows by way of example:



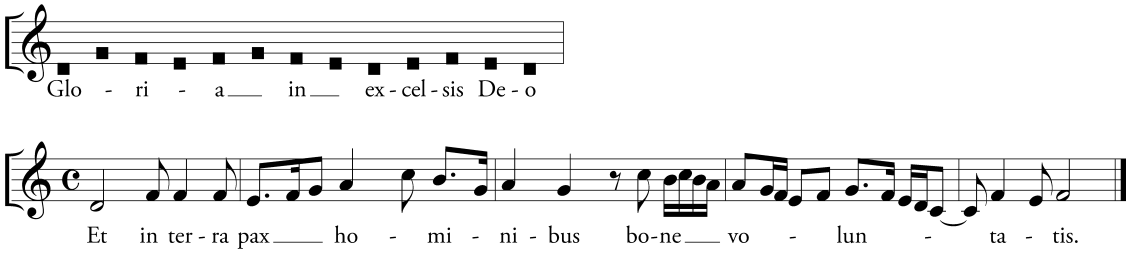
Here, a longa (a note of long duration) on the left is divided into two breves, four semibreves, twelve minims, and twenty-four semiminims (or crotchets). Other divisions of each of those note values is possible, but the mere fact of the discussion shows a remarkably sophisticated awareness of the details of music notation, especially for a bunch of shepherds, and raises questions about the musical literacy of the audience as well. It would be one thing for professional musicians, hired to take part in a mystery play, to think to themselves about the high level of division exhibited in a musical rendition, and another thing entirely for them to think that the audience would be interested or comprehending of such an analysis. It may be the Wakefield Master's particular obsession (see the *Second Shepherds Play* below), or it may be a bit of improvised dialogue that was inserted into the script after performances with a cast of notation enthusiasts.

For a monophonic performance, which seems likely, one would expect to hear Gregorian or, more likely, Sarum chant for the *Gloria*, but the discussion of note values makes it clear that this was mensural music, presumably aside from the chant intonation. Unfortunately, it is difficult to identify any existing music that might represent what the angel sang as a *Gloria in excelsis*—there are just so many fifteenth-century English settings extant, and none designed to work as an unaccompanied solo, which is how the rendition seems to be given. In fact, however, one candidate emerges because of its more florid character, including some crotchets (most *Gloria* settings do not begin with much activity)

6 Fol. 37r.

and because it happens to survive without any other voice part through the angel's pronouncement (see Fig. 1.1).[7] The fast notes here are equivalent to the fast notes discussed by the shepherds.

**Example 1.1.** *Gloria*. Hertfordshire Archives and Local Records, MS 57553.




There is a piece sung earlier in the play that has an existing plausible candidate for use as well: a trio, sung by the shepherds as a drinking song. The shepherds together finish a bottle, and one of their number suggests what seems clearly to be a three-voice song, the best singer of which will get the first swig of the new bottle:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| [2nd shepherd] | Be thou wyne, be thou ayll, | |
| | bot if my brethe fayll, | |
| | I shall sett the on sayll; | |
| | God send the good gayte. | |
| 3rd shepherd | Be my dam saull, alyce, | [soul, alas] |
| | it was sadly dronken | |
| 1st shepherd | Now, as euer haue I blys; | |
| | to the bothom it is sonken | |
| 2nd shepherd | Yit a botell here is… | |
| | that had I forgoten. But hark! | |
| | Who so can best syng | |
| | Shall have the begynnyng. | |
| 1st shepherd | Now prays at the partyng; | |
| | I shall sett you on warke. | [work] |

7 The liturgical *Gloria* movement of the mass diverges from the angel's pronouncement after "bone voluntatis," so only that much is given here.

[they sing]

We have done oure parte
and songyn right weyll,
I drynk for my parte.[8]
ll. 256–71

In the end, the first shepherd takes the first drink anyway for having sung his part, and without waiting for a judgment on the singing, and the third shepherd eventually complains that he didn't get anything from the second bottle—an example of the kind of entertaining side-story that has nothing to do with the shepherds attending the stable in Bethlehem. It happens that there is a three-voice drinking song, *Tappster drynker*, that appears at the end of a mid-fifteenth-century English manuscript containing mostly Latin sacred music, and this could be the kind of piece sung by the shepherds.[9] It begins with one part alone, which would fit nicely with the line "I shall set you on warke" and even echoes the earlier lines "I shall sett the on sayll / God send the good gayte." (See Example 1.2.) The ability to sing polyphony in three voices is a sophisticated musical skill (though the lyrics are not elevated by any means), and reinforces the use of trained musicians as actors.

The three shepherds sing twice more in the play, once as an attempt to echo the angel's song, and once as a song of praise to the Christ Child at the end.

1st shepherd Amen to that worde!
Syng we therto on hight;
To joy all sam
With myrth and gam,
To the lawde of this lam
Syng we in syght.[10]
ll. 718–24

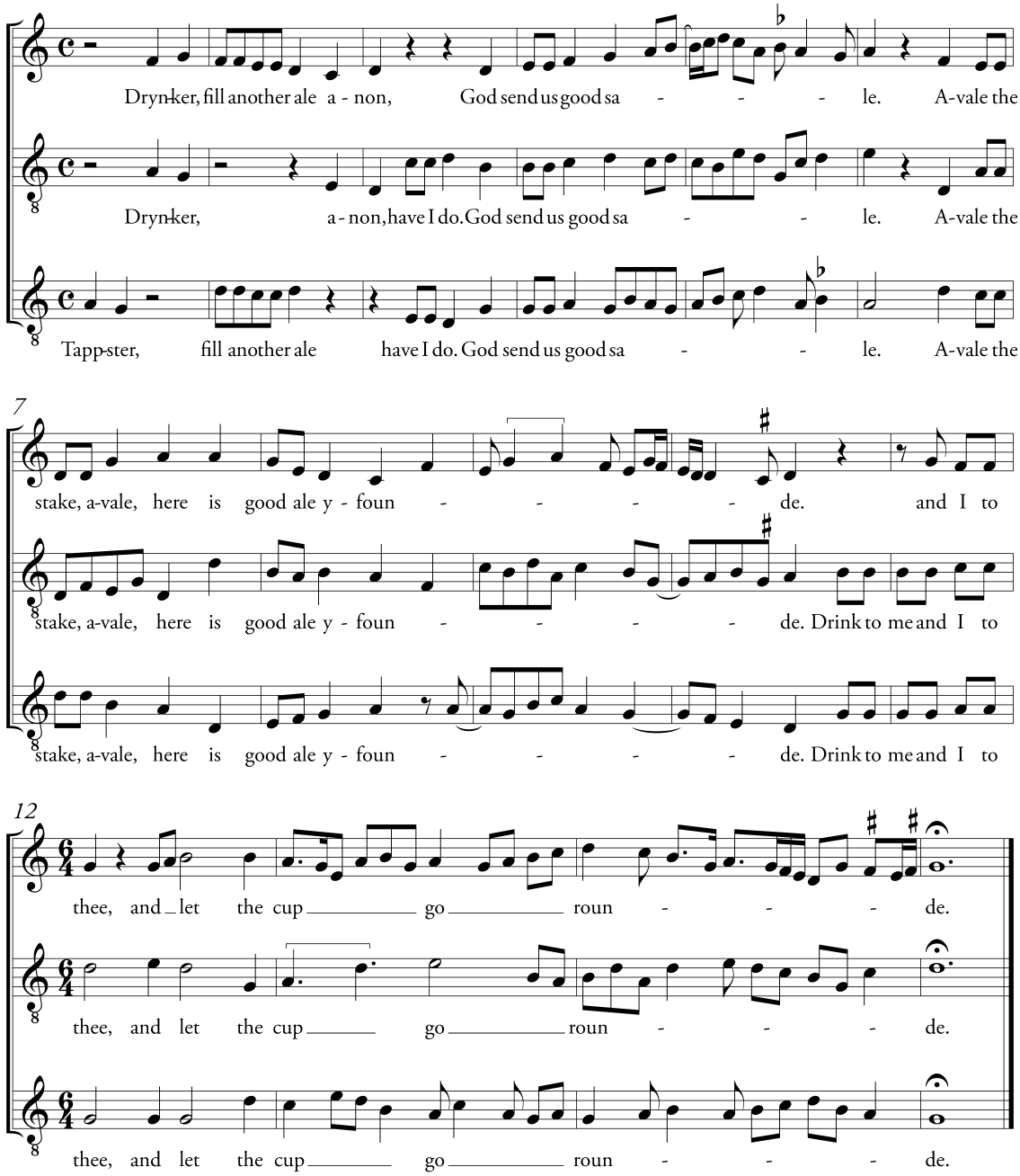
There is some dispute as to whether this should be unison or part-singing, with the critical issue being the interpretation of the final line. Richard Rastall

8 Fol. 35v.

9 Rastall finds "no evidence of part-singing in this play." See *Minstrels*, 175. Yet the incontrovertible evidence for it in the *Second Shepherds Play* makes it seem all the more likely here. See below.

10 Fol. 38r.

**Example 1.2.** *Tappster drynker*. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden B 26 (ca. 1450), fol. 32v.



thinks "it probably means only 'in the sight of this company'," and therefore in unison.[11] In this he is refuting Nan Cooke Carpenter and others who interpreted "in sight" to mean the use of polyphony, improvised against a single melodic line.[12] But if polyphony is plausible for the shepherds first song, then there seems no reason to exclude it here. This is especially true since "in sight" is a term with a very specific meaning in mid- to late-fifteenth-century English music theory, where a singer imagines his part by calculating intervals against an existing musical line.[13] Thus, any number of fifteenth-century carols of praise (lawde) that make use of improvised parallel techniques would qualify for this final trio. And since the shepherds apparently heard and understood the angel's song in Latin, this could include works in Latin, or with mixed Latin and English lyrics, such as *Nowell, nowell*, shown in Example 1.3, which comes from the same manuscript as *Tappster, Drynker*. The middle line is improvised by "sighting" a third above the given melody in the bottom line (the tenor),[14] and the top line (the discant) is written out but is basically an ornamented version of a line sighted a sixth above the tenor melody, with phrase-openings and phrase-endings on pure intervals, as instructed in the treatises. In fact, it would be a straightforward procedure to improvise such a discant, which would lie a fourth above the middle line, for the most part.[15]

Just to show how a monophonic piece with two additional voices improvised "at syght" might have turned out, Example 1.4 shows the carol *Nova, nova*—another suitable piece for the shepherds at the end of the play—with the written voice in the tenor on the bottom, and the mean and treble above created using improvised procedures.

The singing shepherds of the *First Shepherds Play* thus display a remarkable level of musical sophistication, but it is the *Second Shepherds Play* from the

11 See Rastall, *Minstrels*, 155. See also his discussion of the passage in *Heaven Singing*, 356.

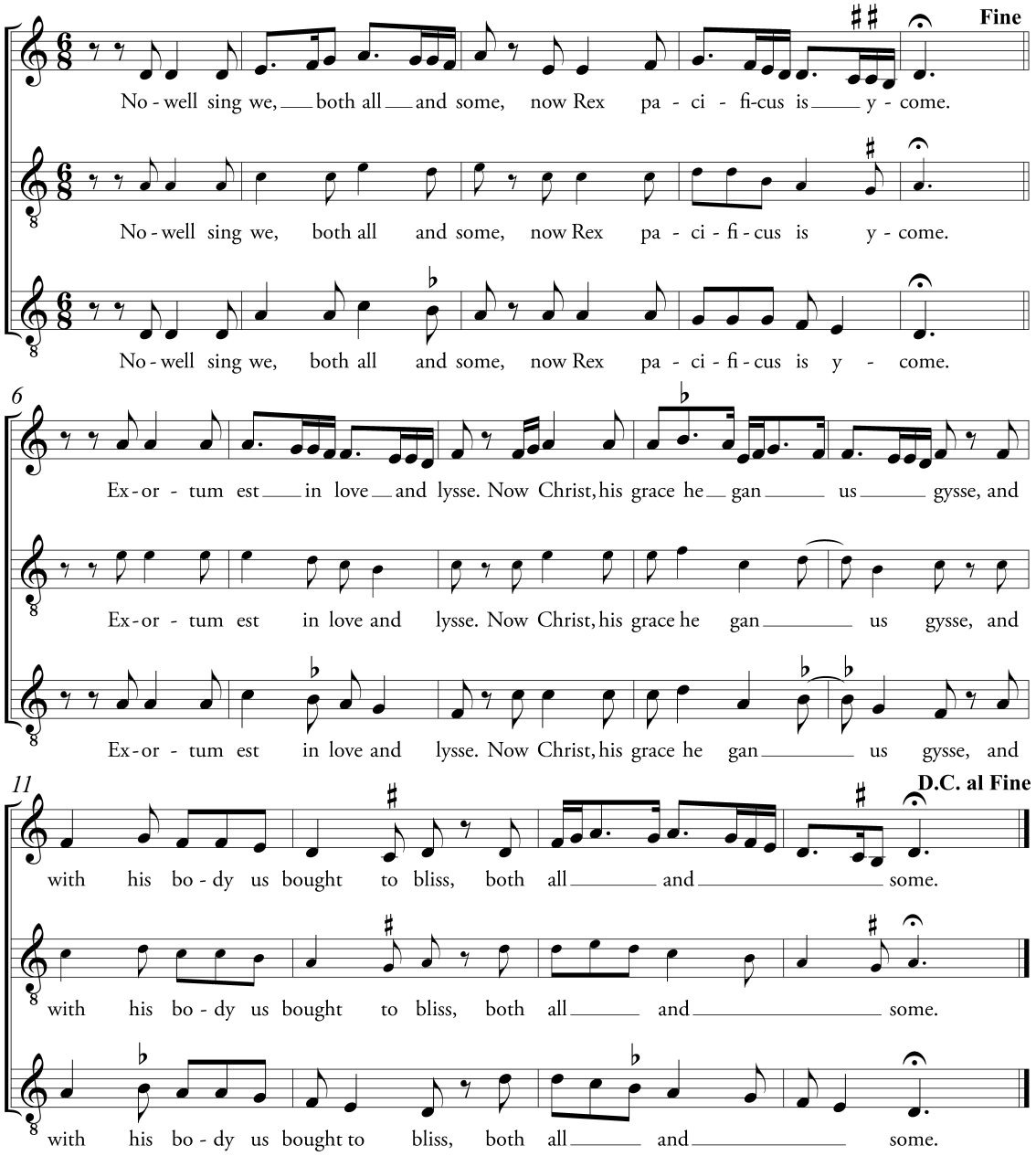
12 See Nan Cooke Carpenter, "Music in the Secunda Pastorum," *Speculum* 26 (1951): 696–700, at 699; her idea was endorsed in John Stevens, "Music in Medieval Drama," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 84 (1958): 81–95, at 90.

13 See, for example, "A schorte tretys of the reule of discant," Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library, MS 410 (late 15th century), fols. 49v–51v, where the term "in syght" is used dozens of times in this way. Thus, Rastall's characterization of "no evidence" seems overstated.

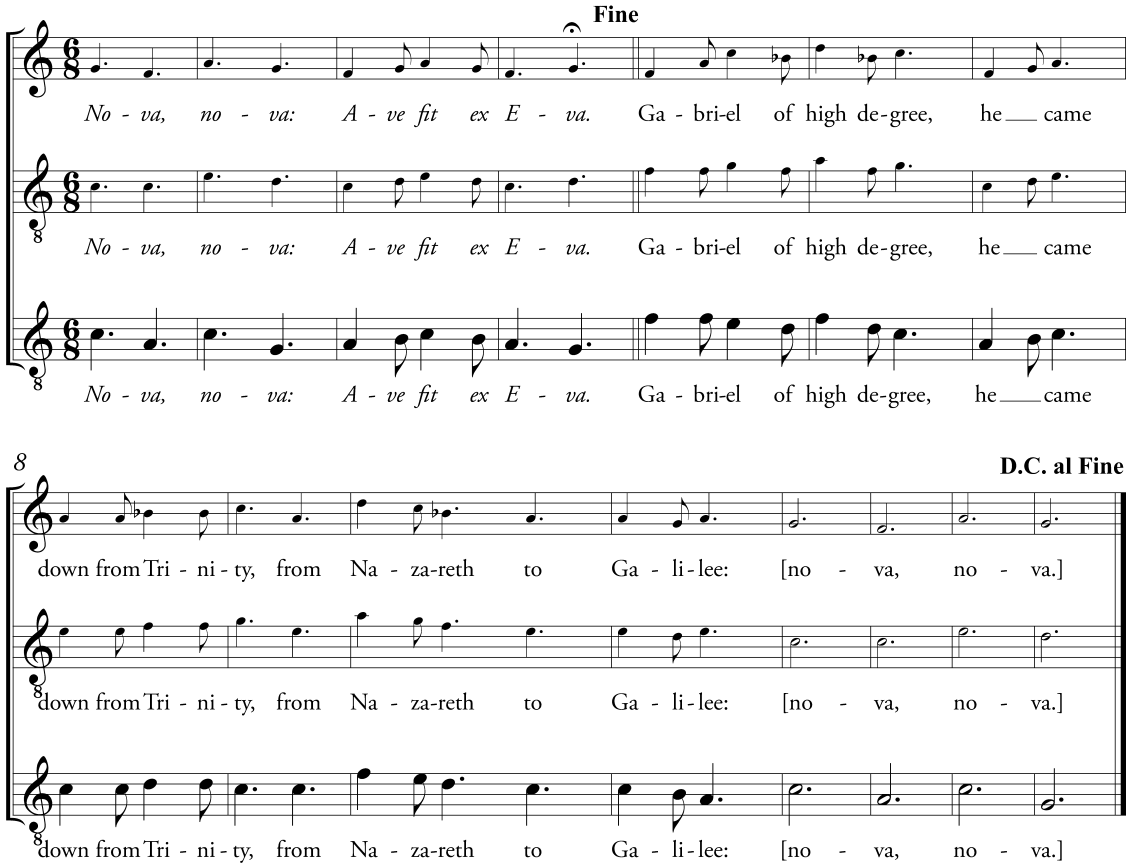
14 With pure intervals (unisons, fifths, and octaves) at phrase beginnings and endings.

15 The written discant does not follow in strict parallel and this has necessitated some adjustments to the middle line, especially where the tenor leaps up some distance. It would be possible to improvise something that is more strictly parallel, although it is quite likely that large tenor leaps made interval adjustments necessary in improvised versions too.

Example 1.3. *Nowell, nowell*. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden B 26 (ca. 1450), fol. 7r.



**Example 1.4.** *Nova, nova.* Glasgow, Hunterian MS 83 (ca.1450), fol. iii (flyleaf).




Townley Cycle that is usually regarded as foreshadowing the musical comedy of the Renaissance, and that sophistication is found there as well.[16] Again, the shepherds comment on the division of the longa in the angel's *Gloria*, and their ability, as stars of the play, to sing polyphony is made explicit:

> 1st shepherd Lett me syng the tenory.
> 2nd shepherd And I the tryble so hye.
> 3rd shepherd Then the meyne fallys to me.
> Lett se how ye chauntt.[17]
>
> ll. 270–73

16 Huntington HM1, fols. 38r–46v.
17 Fol. 40r.

The first shepherd volunteers for the tenor part, the second for the treble, and the mean part (the part in the middle) is left to the third shepherd. This is the same texture exhibited in the examples above,[18] and although there is nothing further to characterize their selection, it could have been something like the drinking song *Tappster Drynker*. The last line above occurs, in fact, directly before the entrance of Mak, a sheep rustler, who provides a good deal of the comic interest in the play. He steals a sheep from the three shepherds while they are sleeping, and then, when they come to his cottage, puts the sheep in a cradle and sings a lullaby to it as if his wife had just given birth. Mak's wife Gyll, his accomplice, groans as if in post-partum distress, and their "duet" is panned by the shepherds in spite of their attempts to use ornamental divisions (hak).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3rd shepherd | Will ye hear how they hak? | |
| | Oure syre, lyst croyne. | [croon] |
| 1st shepherd | Heard I neuer none crak | |
| | So clere out of toyne.[19] | [tune] |
| | | ll. 686–89 |

Eventually, the shepherds discover, in a foreshadowing of the Red Riding Hood story, what a "long snout" the baby has.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3rd shepherd | Gyf me lefe hym to kys | |
| | and lyft vp the clowtt. | [cloth] |
| | What the dewill is this? | |
| | He has a long snowte.[20] | |
| | | ll. 842–45 |

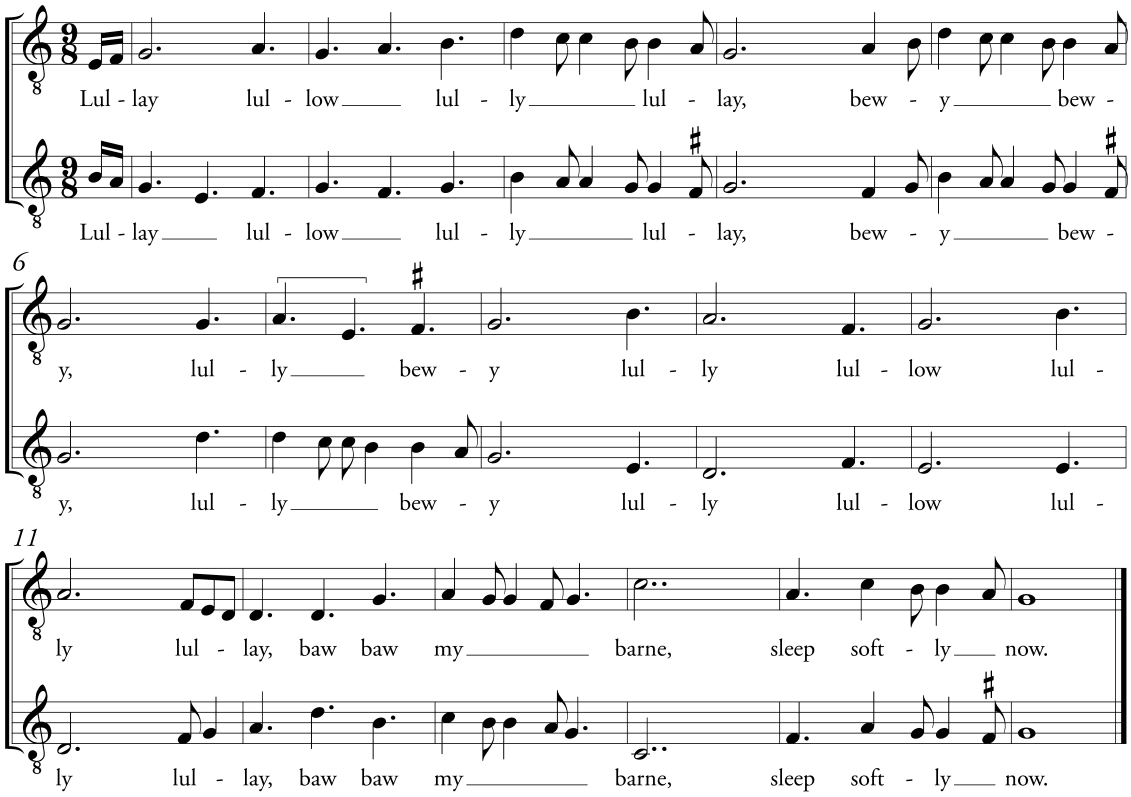
18 The same texture, moreover, is called for in the morality play *Wisdom* (ll. 612–18), where the characters Mind, Understanding, and Will each volunteer for one of those voice parts on some unidentified trio. See Folger Library, MS V.a.354, fol. 110v. This is the same manuscript that preserves *Mankind*, discussed below. See *Two Moral Interludes: The Pride of Life, and Wisdom*, ed. David N. Klausner (Kalamazoo, 2009), 44–45. As a possible song for insertion here, Klausner proposes *I have a gentle cock*, from British Library, MS Sloane 2593, fol. 10v (ca. 1440), which he sets to a faburden-style setting by Garry Crighton of the tune *And I were a maiden*, given in Example 2.13, below.

19 Fol. 43v.

20 Fol. 44v.

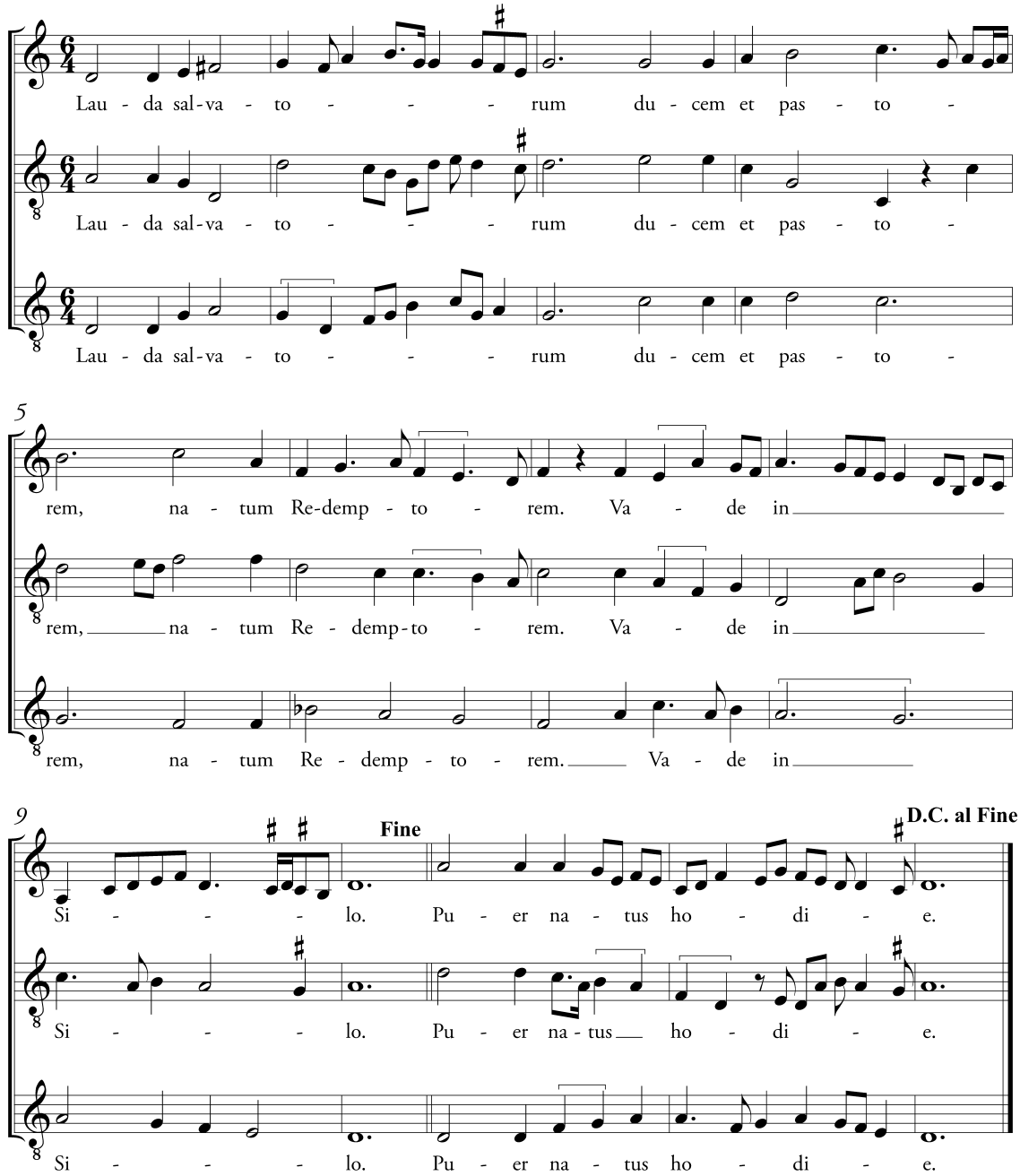
The image of the couple in humble surroundings, singing a lullaby to a child in a cradle, is, of course, a parody of the stable scene that will eventually be viewed by the shepherds, and shows how cleverly the otherwise extraneous comedy is woven into the fabric of the play. Unfortunately, there is nothing to indicate what Mak sang accompanied by the groans of his wife, though it seems likely that a lullaby, such as the carol refrain shown in Example 1.5, would have resembled it. The *Lully lullay* lyric, of course, is famous from the "Coventry Carol" from the *Shearmen & Tailors Pageant*, mentioned above, but there are several similar examples from the fifteenth century as well. The one given here has a further connection with the use of the word "barne" for "bairn" or "baby," found several times throughout the *Second Shepherds Play.*

**Example 1.5.** *Lullay, lullow* (refrain). London, British Library, MS Add. 5666 (ca. 1410) fol. 4v.




Which part might have been sung (badly) by Mak and which "groaned" by Gyll is not clear, but both parts are in the same range and would therefore be interchangeable for the actors.

Example 1.6. *Lauda salvatorum*. British Library, MS Egerton 3307 (ca. 1440), fol. 79r.



The three shepherds prepare to sing once more at the very end of the play, although, again, there is nothing explicit in the dialogue to say what they sang.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1st shepherd | What grace we haue fun | [found] |
| 2nd shepherd | com furth: now are we won! | [redeemed] |
| 3rd shepherd | To syng ar we bun | [bound] |
| | Let take on loft![21] | |
| | | ll. 1085–88 |

Still, the imagery of coming forth to spread the news of the child's birth is clear enough, and a carol such as *Lauda salvatorum* (Example 1.6) fits the situation very well with its shepherd and redeemer imagery. The "Vade in Silo" text probably refers to spreading the news in the "city," an apt task for the evangelizing shepherds: Silo, or Shiloh, was the capital of Israel before the Temple was built at Jerusalem.[22]

## *Mankind*

The two shepherds plays are unique among mystery plays in using, or at least specifically mentioning, non-liturgical music. It is also clear that they must have demanded the use of trained professional musicians in the roles of the shepherds and the angel, and in these things they pointed the way towards musical comedy in later decades. The parallel fifteenth-century tradition that also contributed to this was the morality play. As David Bevington says, "The genre was characterized primarily by the use of allegory to convey a moral lesson about religious or civil conduct, presented through the medium of abstractions or representative social characters."[23] One of the main distinguishing features of the morality play, as opposed to the mystery play, is that it was the domain of professional acting companies, rather than amateur tradesmen. Roughly speaking,

21 Fol. 46v.

22 This piece is imperfectly preserved but performable as it stands. The word *salvatorum* should more properly be *salvatorem* but is transcribed as in the source, BL Egerton MS 3307, fol. 79r. "Vade in Silo" is faded or erased in the original source and seems not to have been deciphered by previous editors. The phrase occurs in 3 Kings 14: 2.

23 See David Bevington, *From* Mankind *to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge, MA, 1962), 9.

medieval minstrels were instrumentalists, tumblers, and purveyors of various sorts of entertainment, including almost certainly recitation and farce. As the musical and dramatic functions of their entertainments became more distinct and specialized, minstrels separated into companies of musicians and players.[24] It is these professional acting companies that seem to have been responsible for producing morality plays, and their background in general entertainment no doubt allowed them to incorporate musical effects into their performances.

Of course, the intent of any morality play is serious, and yet a play like *Everyman*, although without song cues per se,[25] still has plenty of opportunity for musical insertions. It is the play *Mankind* (ca. 1470), however, that is often referred to as the first comedy in English because of the comical elements woven into its plot. Basically, the character of Mankind is portrayed as an innocent, tempted into a fall from grace by the characters Tityvillus, Now-a-days, New Gyse, and Nought, and finally achieving a state of grace once again at the end of the play. Certainly, the vanity of the modern day is evoked in such characters, and they may be morally evil, but the antics of these tempters provide the comedy in the play. Nowhere is the comic effect more shocking than in the one song whose text is given in the play: The comic characters trick the audience into joining in what they say will be a Christmas song, but that turns out to be one of the most scatalogical song texts to survive anywhere:

| | |
|---|---|
| Nowadays | Make rom, sers, for we haue be longe!<br>We wyll cum gyf now a Crystemes songe. |
| Nought | Now I prey all ye yemandry that is here [yeomanry]<br>To synge wyth ws wyth a mery chere: Yt is wretyn<br>wyth a coll, yt ys wretyn with a cole [charcoal] |
| New Gyse & Nowadays | Yt is wretyn wyth a colle, yt ys wretyn with a colle, |
| Nought | He that schytyth with hys hoyll, he that schytyth<br>with hys hoyll, |
| New Gyse & Nowadays | He that schytyth with hys hoyll, he that schytyth<br>with hys hoyll, |

24 See ibid., 11–12.

25 Aside from a reference to real or imagined angels singing offstage (l. 891).

| | |
|---|---|
| Nought | But he wyppe hys ars clen, but he wyppe hys ars clen, |
| New Gyse & Nowadays | But he wyppe hys ars clen, but he wyppe hys ars clen, |
| Nought | On hys breche yt xall be sen, on hys breche yt xall be sen, [breeches] |
| New Gyse & Nowadays | On hys breche yt xall be sen, on hys breche yt xall be sen. |
| *Cantant Omnes* | Hoylyke, holyke, holyke! holyke, holoke, holyke![26] ll. 331–43 |

Not surprisingly, no music survives for this and, in fact, it is somewhat difficult to understand the shape of any musical setting with so many repetitions of the lines of the lyric. Given that he has just invited them to join in, it is possible that Nought is "lining" for the audience—giving each line and expecting the audience to sing it back to him.[27] But the repetition of each line so many times by all the characters suggests, rather, that this may be an attempt to render the lyrics of a round, where earlier lines are repeated and heard simultaneously with new lines.[28] Imagine, for example, trying to render the lyric of "Sumer is icumen in" in a script that tries to capture for readers what is being heard in the round. It might look something like the song above from *Mankind*.

The other complication with the song is figuring out how the *Cantant Omnes* line works. Is it part of the song, or a new and separate refrain of some sort?[29] Of course, it seems to be a parody of the Sanctus text (Holy, holy, holy); at the same time it plays on the lyric just heard in making a further scatalogical reference (hole-lick = arse-lick). Indeed, "holyke" is an early version of the word "wholly," and Tyndale, for example, uses "wholy" for "holy,"[30] so there is little question that the word would have been recognizable as having possible scriptural connotations. Given the lyric of the song, however, the other meaning is

26 Folger Library, MS V.a.354, fol. 126r.

27 For the most thorough explanation and defense of lining as a technique for teaching music to a musically illiterate audience and its use in this instance, see Rastall, *Heaven Singing*, 377, and Rastall, *Minstrels Playing*, 469.

28 The use of a round is suggested also in Wickham, *Early English Stages 1300 to 1600*, 152–53.

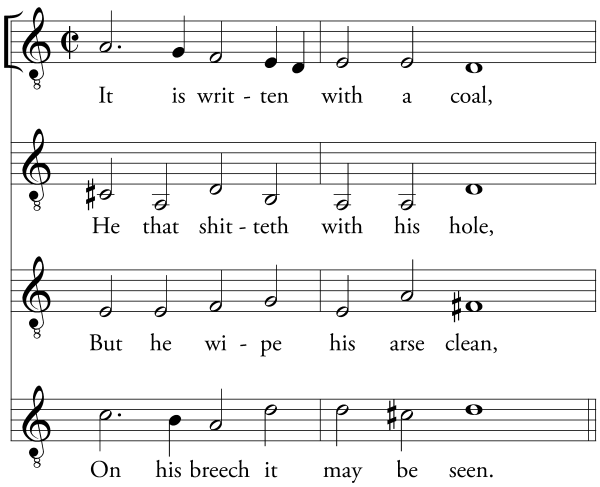
29 Rastall discusses the independence of the "Holyke" lyric in *Heaven Singing*, 60.

30 See *A Compendious Introduccion, Prologe or Preface* (Worms, 1526), sig. A5v.

equally if not more obvious. Perhaps that was the point, and the parody was meant to be shockingly wicked. This certainly takes us beyond the realm of sophisticated polyphonic carol settings in the shepherds plays, however, and more toward secular musical comedy.

Once again, it is difficult to identify music that might be used to set the lyric, but there are some rounds that seem as if they could accommodate it. Because the contrapuntal choices are somewhat limited, rounds had remarkable longevity. *Ah Robyn*, from a court manuscript of the early sixteenth century, is cited in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* a century later. And, of course, we still sing *Three Blind Mice*, more than four centuries after its earliest version appeared in Thomas Ravenscroft's *Deuteromelia* in 1609. One possibility might be a setting to the four-voice round *Come kiss me Kate*, which accommodates the four lines of the poem (Example 1.7).[31]

**Example 1.7.** *It is written with a coal*, set to the round *Come kiss me Kate*.

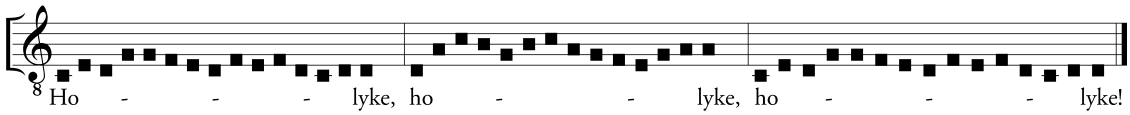



This works, with the singers continuing *ad libitum*, but it does not account for the "holyke, holyke" lyric. It is possible that if a four-voice round of this sort was used, the actors could have set "holyke, holyke" to a Sarum chant for the Sanctus, especially one that maintained the mode of the round (see Example 1.8).

31 Folger Library, MS V.a.409 (ca. 1625–30), fol. 18r. For an edition, see Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook*, 101–2.

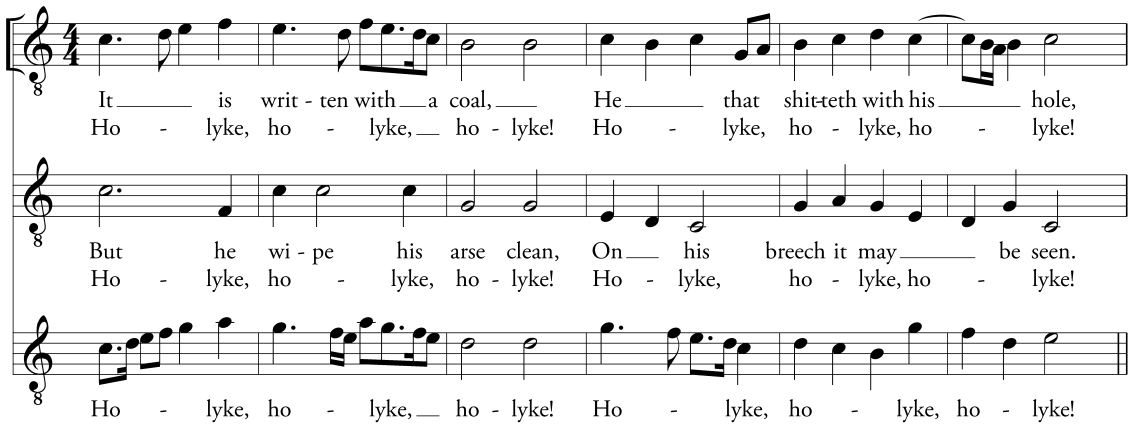
Such a chant would certainly have been recognizable to everyone and highlighted the sacrilegious nature of the parody. It would need to be sung twice through to accommodate all six of the "holyke" statements in the playscript, unless the actors were not scrupulous about matching the syllables of the original Latin chant.

**Example 1.8.** "Holyke," after British Library, Lansdowne MS 462 (mid-15th-century), Sanctus I.




An alternative is a round that can itself accommodate the "holyke" text. Example 1.9 is an untexted round from the so-called Henry VIII's Book (ca. 1511–13),[32] which fits the lyric in two lines, with the "holyke" repetitions given in the final line of music. Round singers can return to the beginning, of course, and if the two leading singers do so but use the "holyke" text, by the time the third singer sings the last line, they will be singing the same text. That is, they will all be singing (*Cantant Omnes*) "Holyke, holyke."

**Example 1.9.** *It is written with a coal*, set to an untexted round in Henry VIII's Book.

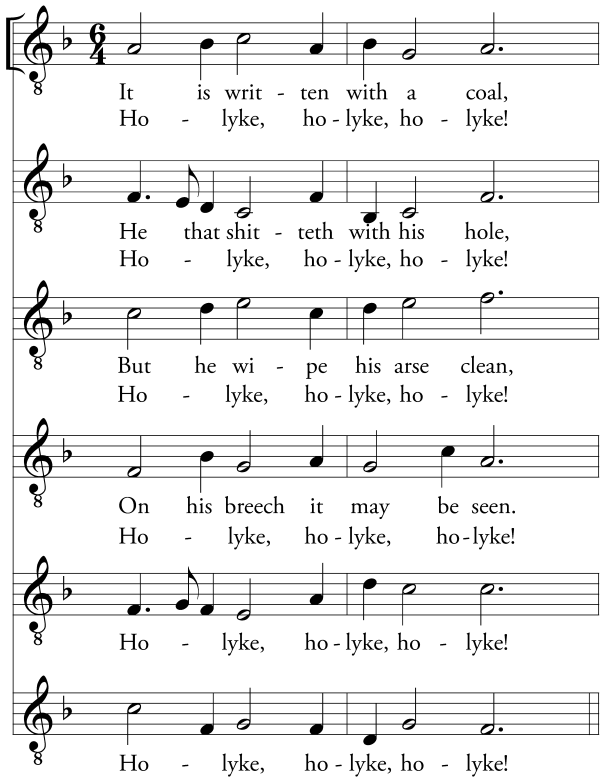



32 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fol. 90v. On this manuscript, see chapter 2 below, concerning the music of William Cornysh.

An origin closer in time to the play is a positive feature, but the use of two-line statements of the lyric before another part enters seems less well to represent the presentation of the text in the playscript.

Another version (Example 1.10), is a setting to the round *Now thanked be the great God Pan*, from Thomas Ravenscroft's *Pammelia* (1609).[33] It incorporates all of the text into the round, including "Holyke, holyke," and provides entries that seem closer to those indicated in the playscript. This round can accommodate up to six different parts, which means there is an opportunity for the audience to take part independently, if that is what is intended. In that case, the repetitions can continue with "holyke" until all voices have completed the round. Players and participating audience members alike would all be singing "holyke" by the end of such a rendition. If only the three actors are singing,

**Example 1.10.** *It is written with a coal*, set to *Now thanked be the great God Pan*, from Thomas Ravenscroft's *Pammelia* (1609).




33 No. 95, sig. G3v.

it still seems to work best to have the first two singers return to the beginning with the "holyke" text until the third singer is finished. Performed in that way, the complete six-voice texture is never heard, but the piece could still be effective.

By some means or other, then, the *Mankind* song text can be provided with a setting that plausibly fits the lyrics as given, rendering the play once again musical as well as comic.

# 2. Court Interludes

Sing on sirs, for my frends sake.

—Nicholas Udall,
*Ralph Roister Doister*, 5.6

LTHOUGH MORALITY PLAYS CONTINUED WELL into the sixteenth century, by the end of the fifteenth century a new type of entertainment was emerging. The early ones were often referred to as "disguisings" or "pageants," and then later as an "enterludes" or "interludes." And while the morality play belonged mostly to companies of itinerant players, these new forms depended on noble or even royal patronage.

One of the most remarkable things about the playwrights associated with the interlude, from its beginnings through the middle of the sixteenth century, is how many of them were known primarily as musicians. In other words, writers whose names fill literary and theatrical histories as the elite and pioneering playwrights of the early English Renaissance were often professional musicians—chorus-masters, composers, and instrumentalists—and yet the music in their plays is often ignored and assumed to be irretrievably lost. In the rare cases where it does get mentioned, music is seldom or never given, so it is imporssible to achieve a sense of what it sounds like. Recovering plausible music to songs in comic interludes is more possible than people may think, however, and a clearer picture of the shape of musical comedy in the early Tudor period begins to emerge.

## William Cornysh

No dearth of gentlemen named Cornysh worked at Westminster in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and one of them played a major role in

devising entertainments for Henry VII and then Henry VIII. Some confusion exists whether he also composed several fine Latin sacred works in the famous Eton Choirbook, but it seems most likely that the motet composer was an elder William Cornysh who died in 1502, and who may have been the father of "William Cornyssh Junior," as he is termed in the Fayrfax Manuscript.[1] That manuscript was copied ca. 1500, when the elder William was still alive, and it may be that the qualifier was no longer needed once the confusion of two living composers of the same name no longer existed, and later sources refer only to William Cornysh. The use of "junior" rather than "the younger" may also support the hypothesis that the two were father and son, though we have no documentary proof that they were related.

Certainly, the younger Cornysh was having an impact on music and "disguisings" at court for nearly a decade before the elder man died. And his leadership in this effort exhibits the beginnings of "authorship" for his devising, though we have not a single playscript surviving under his name, and he is one of several men who get paid for their work in organizing the entertainments. One of the first mentions of Cornysh is as an actor and singer, who strikingly interrupted a "goodly interlude" that was being presented to the King and court after dinner at Westminster during Twelfth Night festivities in 1494:

> Came in riding one of the King's Chapel named Cornysh, appareled after the figure of Saint George, and after followed a fair virgin attired like unto a king's daughter, and leading by a silken lace a Terrible and huge Red dragon, the which in Sundry places of the hall, as he passed, spit fire at his mouth. And when the said Cornysh was come before the King, he uttered a certain speech made in ballad Royal, after finishing whereof he began this anthem of Saint George, *O Georgi deo care*, whereunto the King's Chapel, which stood fast by answered *Salvatorum Deprecare, ut Gubernet Angliam*. And so sang out all the whole anthem with lusty courage, in pastime whereof the said Cornysh avoided [i.e., exited] with the dragon, and the virgin was led unto the Queen's standing.[2]

1 Most biographers attribute all of the musical works to the younger man. A persuasive case for the elder as the motet composer was made in David Skinner, "William Cornysh: Clerk or Courtier?" *Musical Times* 138 (1997): 5–12.

2 From *The Great Chronicle of London (Guildhall MS 3313)*, ed. A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley, (London, 1938), 251–52. The manuscript is now London, Metropolitan Archives, CLC/270/MS03313.

This scene was followed by twelve masked gentlemen and an equal number of ladies who entered to "a small tabret and a subtle fiddle" and danced for an hour. The allegorical characters, the masks, the supernatural elements, and the extended dancing all make the entertainment resemble the court masque of the late Renaissance.[3] It is also interesting to find Cornysh, as a member of the Chapel Royal, involving his singing colleagues in this secular entertainment. By 1505, the "Players of the Chapel" began to be paid as a company for performances at court.[4] Cornysh did not officially become master of the choirboys at the Chapel Royal until 1509, but he was already involving them in performances for which he was paid handsomely. The festivities surrounding the marriage of Prince Arthur and Catherine of Aragon involved four pageants in November 1501, the first one of which involved four children disguised as maidens in turrets of a castle, "singing sweetly and harmoniously."[5] The fourth pageant included a chapel surrounded at its base by mermen and mermaids, and in "every of the mermaids a Child of the Chapel, singing right sweetly."[6] Clearly, Cornysh's position in the Chapel Royal meant that he had the resources to present entertainments with excellent singers, and there can be little doubt that this was a prominent feature of his work.

Cornysh got paid for organizing a tremendous number of entertainments for the court,[7] and we know that he wrote a comedy, *Troylous and Pandor*, for presentation at court on Twelfth Night in 1516, but nothing of it survives. We do have several songs by Cornysh, most of them surviving in a manuscript that bears the modern epithet "Henry VIII's Book" (British Library, Add. MS 31922). This manuscript contains several pieces attributed to Henry VIII himself, but the evidence suggests that it may have been prepared around 1511–13

I have modernized the spelling. The passage is quoted in Sydney Anglo, "William Cornysh in a Play, Pageants, Prison, and Politics," *Review of English Studies* 10 (1959): 347–60, at 349. There is, apparently, only one surviving setting of the lyric, which is found as the contratenor part of a polytextual motet in the Old Hall Manuscript (British Library, MS Add. 57950, fol. 90r). The piece was decades old by the time of Cornysh's pageant, and if it was the piece in question, why the 1494 performance would feature the contra part is a mystery. It is possible that there was a more recent setting that is not extant. For the Old Hall setting, see *The Old Hall Manuscript*, ed. Margaret Bent and Andrew Hughes, Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 46 (1969), 2:108.

3 This comparison is made also in Sydney Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy* (Oxford, 1969), 118.

4 See W. R. Streitberger, *Court Revels, 1485–1559* (Toronto, 1994), 423.

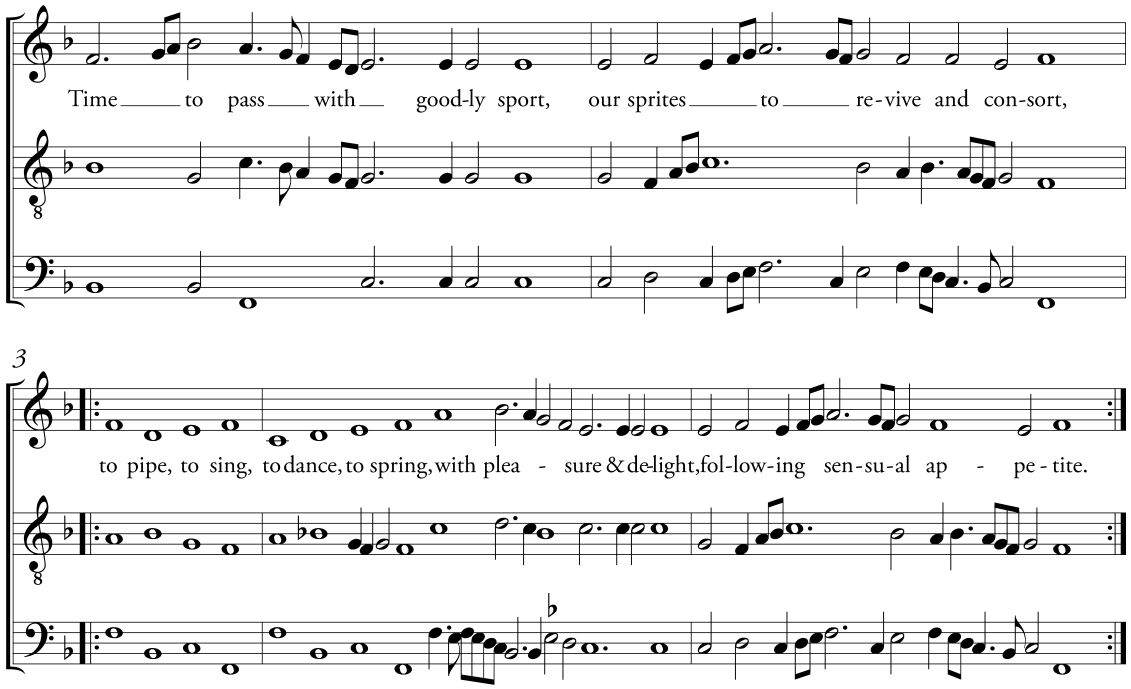
5 See ibid., 35.

6 See ibid., 38.

7 See the "Calendar of Court Revels," up to Cornysh's retirement and death in 1523, ibid., 236–71.

for someone close to the court, possibly a member of the Guildford family.[8] Members of that family were active in the presentation of entertainments for the court from the beginning of the reign of Henry VII, and Sir Henry Guildford became Master of the Revels to Henry VIII, so he was directly involved in theatrical performances, though he relied heavily on William Cornysh to devise them. It would not be surprising, therefore, to find that some of the songs in his manuscript had associations with staged performances at court, and in fact, we know that was the case with the song *Time to pass with goodly sport* (Example 2.1). It was printed in the midst of John Rastell's 1517 play *The Nature of the Four Elements*,[9] but survives with an alternative text in Henry VIII's Book.[10]

**Example 2.1.** *Time to pass with Goodly Sport*, from John Rastell, *The Nature of the Four Elements* (1517).




8 See *The Henry VIII Book*, ed. David Fallows (Oxford, 2014), 24–26. Dietrich Helms, who has done much work on the manuscript, speculated that the book "was not intended to leave the king's inner circle." Helms had proposed that Cornysh's song *You and I and Amyas* (fols. 45v–46r), came from the entertainment of the *Schatew [Château] Vert*, presented at court by Cornysh in March of 1522, but Fallows argues convincingly against that hypothesis. See Helms, "Henry VIII's Book: Teaching Music to Royal Children," *Musical Quarterly* 92 (2009): 118–35.

9 Sig. E5r–E6r. Printed ca. 1520, this seems to be the earliest non-chant music printing in England and perhaps the earliest single-impression music printing extant anywhere.

10 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fols. 17v–18r. This version, with a lyric beginning *Adieu madam*, is attributed to Henry VIII and has four texted voices, as opposed to the three voices (one texted) of the

Guildford himself made a rare appearance as part of the festivities surrounding the birth of Henry's first (and short-lived) heir in February 1511. This entertainment, as usual, involved a lot of martial exercises—jousting—over several days, and among its pageant scenes was one with "a forest with rocks, hills and dales, with divers sundry trees, flowers, hawthorns, fern and grass, with six foresters, standing within the same forest, garnished in coats and hoods of green Velvet, by whom lay a great number of spears. . . . When the pageant rested before the Queen, the forenamed foresters blew their horns . . ." The pageantry continued into the next day when, "after supper, his grace with the Queen, lords and ladies came into the White Hall, within the said palace . . . There was an interlude of the gentlemen of his chapel before his grace, and divers fresh songs, . . . then the minstrels began to play, the lords and ladies began to dance."[11]

The imagery of the hunter or forester (also "forster" or "foster") out hunting deer is one that seems to have carried a double entendre at Henry's court, with the forester representing a man looking for a woman, and the deer representing the female quarry-stand-in for a woman. There is, for example, an anonymous song, *I am a jolly foster*,[12] which defensively makes the case that his hunting skills are still as good as ever ("I can blow the death of a deer"), and Robert Cooper's *I have been a foster*,[13] which plaintively laments "My arrow nigh worn is." As John Stevens said, "The erotic undercurrent can hardly be missed."[14] Songs like Cornysh's *Blow thy horn, hunter* (Example 2.2) may well have been composed for an entertainment in this metaphorical tradition,[15] and the prominence of the foresters in the pageantry of 1516, along with the opportunity for the Chapel Royal gentlemen to sing as part of that, provides a good candidate for a likely occasion. The lively character and the simple part-writing also seem well adapted to theatrical use.

print. David Fallows argues that the Rastell version is missing text from its original version. See Fallows, *Henry VIII Book*, 39. On Rastell's early music printing, see John Milsom, "Songs and Society in Early Tudor London," *Early Music History* 16 (1997): 235–93.

11 Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (1548), sig. BBb3–BBb4v.

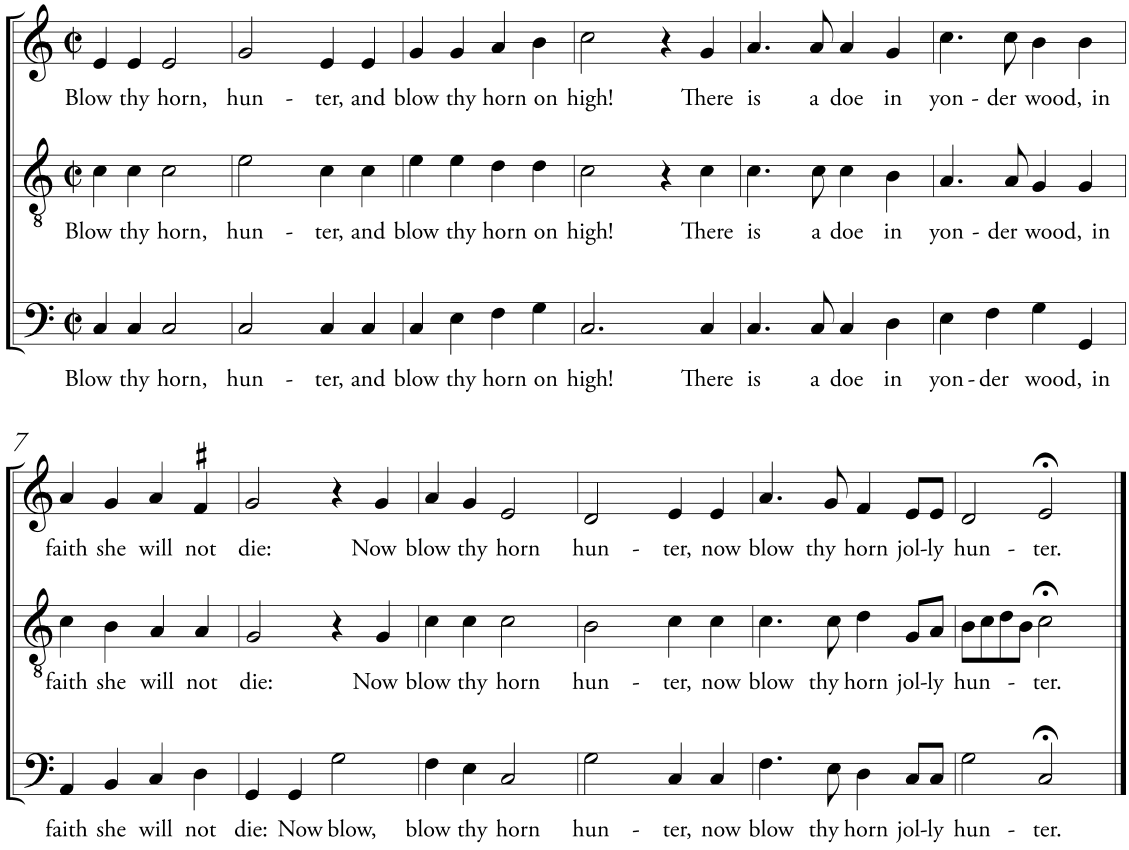
12 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fols. 69v–71r.

13 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fols. 65v–66r.

14 John Stevens, *Music and Poetry at the Early Tudor Court* (London, 1961), 223.

15 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fols. 39v–40r.

**Example 2.2.** *Blow thy horn, hunter*, by William Cornysh, from Henry VIII's Book.




The middle voice (the tenor) of this setting occurs by itself in British Library, MS Royal App. 58,[16] and there is some question as to whether it is simply missing the other voices or if it was actually intended to be a single-voice setting. In fact, either the middle voice or the top voice could work alone for a single singer, though I believe the piece was intended to be sung in parts.

16 Fol. 7v. The tenor may have been a popular melody since a version of *Blow thy horn, hunter* is used for part of a setting of Psalm 8, *Domine Dominus noster (O Lord, our Lord, how marvellous)*, in the Lumley partbooks (British Library, MS Royal App. 74–6: RA74, fols. 15v–17r, RA75, fols. 12r–14v, RA76, fols. 20v–22v). See Judith Blezzard, "The Lumley Books: A Collection of Tudor Church Music," *Musical Times* 112 (1971): 129. Blezzard edited the piece in *The Tudor Church Music of the Lumley Books*, Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance 65 (Madison, WI, 1985), no. 17, pp. 65–68.

## John Skelton

Considering that Cornysh was so ubiquitous in entertainments up to his death in 1523, it is not surprising to find a reference to his music in a play by the self-styled poet laureate John Skelton. Skelton was honored by both Oxford and Cambridge for his poetic and oratorical prowess, and seems to have become tutor to the young Prince Henry from around 1494.[17] He apparently fell out of favor in the early sixteenth century, but remained active in writing satires directed at court life and politics. Skelton's only surviving play, *Magnyfycence*, was probably written about 1519, although it was not published until after his death in 1529. It portrays a prince (the character Magnyfycence) and four sycophants who may have had parallels among Henry VIII's actual courtiers in the first decade of his reign: Counterfeit Countenance, Crafty Conveyance, Cloaked Collusion, and Courtly Abusion. Comedy is provided mostly through the introduction of two fools, Fancy and Folly, but the first musical reference comes from a conversation among the courtiers:

*Hic ingrediatur Courtly Abusion cantando.*

Courtly Abusion — Huffa huffa, taunderum taunderum tayne huffa huffa.

Cloaked Collusion — This was properly prated, syrs, what sayda?

Courtly Abusion — Rutty bully Joly rutterkyn heyda …

Cloaked Collusion — Say vous chaunter venter tre dawce?

Courtly Abusion — wyda wyda

How sayst thou, man, am not I a Joly rutter?[18]

ll. 744–45

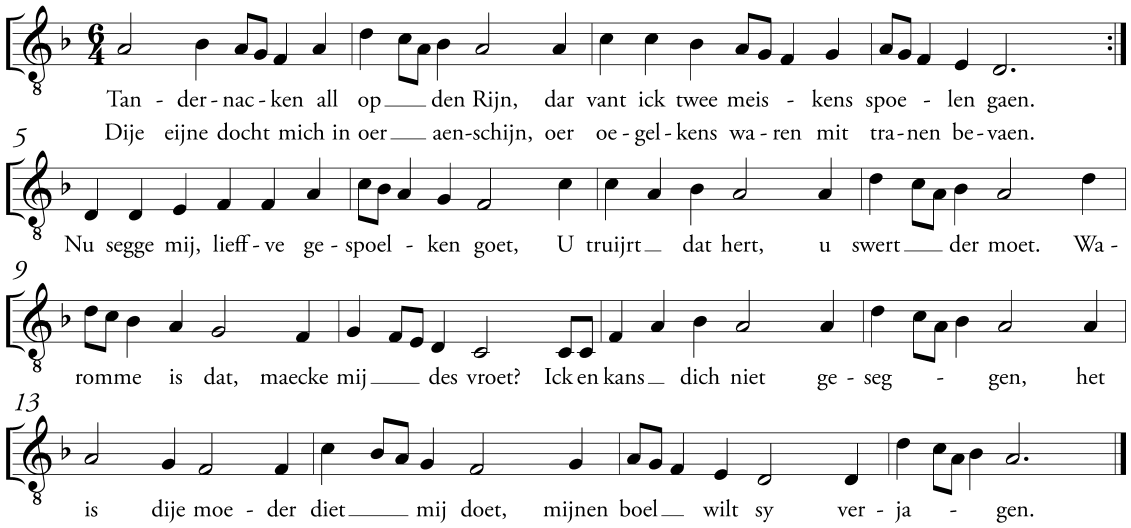
This passage contains a tangle of musical references that would have been clear enough to a musically literate audience. "Huffa huffa," first of all, seems to be a blustering exclamation that first appears in early Tudor literature and lasts into *Bugbears* (ca. 1565), and even to *Histrio-mastix* (1610). The musical reference in that first line seems to be to the untexted piece *Taunder naken*, a work in the improvisatory style of basse danse realizations that appears in Henry VIII's

17 See Peter Happé, *English Drama before Shakespeare* (London, 1999), 112.

18 John Skelton, *Magnyfycence* (1530), fols. 9v–10r, sig. C1v–C2r.

Book attributed to the King himself.[19] In the context of a basse danse-style setting, the melody itself seems too extended to be singable, but it is possible that Courtly Abusion sang a version of the original Dutch song (Example 2.3), or perhaps even just the opening of it.[20]

**Example 2.3.** *Tandernacken*, Dutch folk song based on tune in the Henry VIII's Book setting.




Courtly Abusion's next line, "Rutty bully Joly rutterkyn heyda" conflates two musical works: the basse danse *Rôti bouilli joyeux* and William Cornysh's carol *Hoyda, Jolly Rutterkin*. In fact, Skelton had earlier lampooned a Flemish music teacher at court around 1495 in his satirical poem *Against a Comely Coistrum*, which includes the couplet:

19 British Library, Add. MS 31922 (hereafter BL), fols. 82v–84r. It may be that Henry claimed credit for it as a piece his minstrels "worked out" for him, though both Helms and Fallows are convinced that the King himself was the composer. See Helms, "Henry VIII's Book," 127–28, and Fallows, *Henry VIII Book*, 57. In any case, its inclusion in the manuscript makes clear that it was known at court. Note also that Fallows reads the title in BL 31922 as *Tannder naken*, which comes closer to the title as given in settings by Flemish composers.

20 The question of what version of the song is singable is considered in Jan Willem Bonda, "Tandernaken, between Bruges and Ferrara," in *From Ciconia to Sweelinck: Donum natalicium Willem Elders*, ed. Albert Clement and Eric Jas (Amsterdam, 1994), 49–74. Bonda concludes that a version of the top part with the lyrics set to it is desirable, but it would take a very long time to perform a six-stanza song that way, so I believe a faster version of the tenor melody is what constituted the actual song for singing purposes. The lyrics are taken from Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS II.144, fol. 90r, with reference to *Het Antwerps Liedboek* (Antwerp, 1544), no. 149, fol. 82r. On Flemish musicians in the English court, see chapter 6, below.

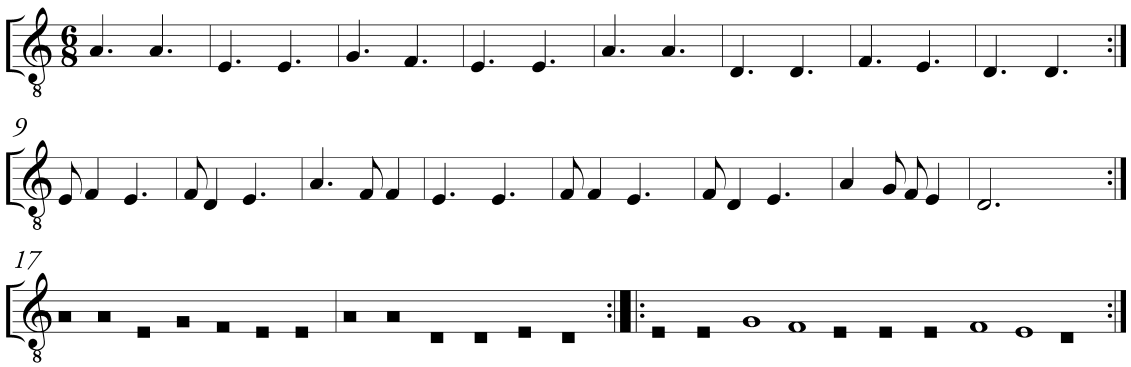
> He lumbreth on a lewde lewte *Roty bully joyse*
> Rumbyll downe, tumbyll downe, hey go, now now!
> ll. 29–30

References to this "roasted, boiled" basse dance date back to the middle of the fifteenth century in France and Italy (*Rostibuli gioioso*),[21] and even Scotland, in the dialect poem *The Tale of the Colkelbie Sow*:

> At leser drest to daunce
> Sum *Orfute*, sum *Orliance*
> Sum *Rusty Bully* with a bek.[22]

In the 1990s, an early sixteenth-century English choreography for *Roty loly joy* came to light in the Derbyshire County Record Office in Matlock.[23] So in spite of its French or Flemish origin it had a remarkably wide circulation, and Skelton seems to have liked the dance or, at least, liked the name of the dance, to have mentioned it twice in his works over a period of a quarter-century. But again, the rather slow-moving melody of the basse danse does not seem like a work to be sung in the midst of a quick-witted passage of dialogue, and in this

Example 2.4. *Rôti bouilli joyeux*, basse danse from Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 9085, fol. 21r.




21 On the dance and its various early references, see Nan Cooke Carpenter, "Skelton and Music: Roty bully joys," *Review of English Studies* 6 (1955): 279–84; and Daniel Heartz, "A 15th-century Ballo: *Rôti boulli joyeux*," in *Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. J. LaRue (New York, 1966), 359–75. Unusually, though not uniquely, this dance combines the isometric melody of a typical basse danse (in the final section) with mensural sections at the beginning.

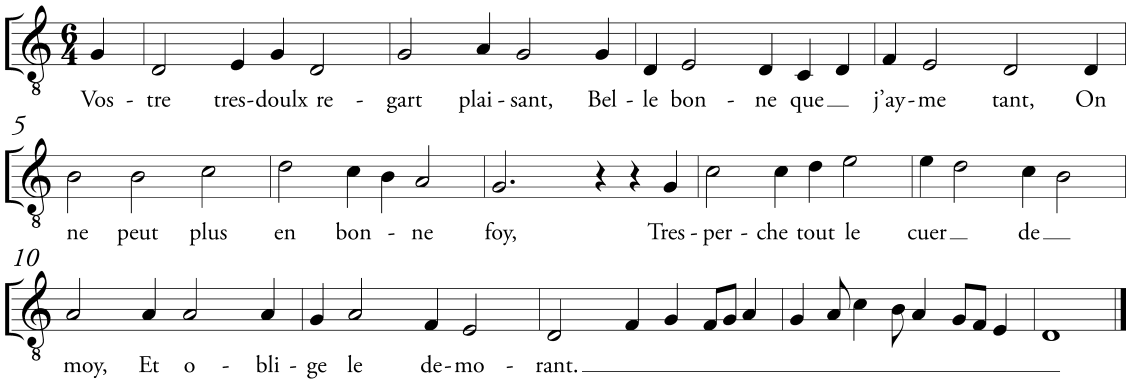
22 A "bek" is probably a recorder, or "beaked flute," as in the French "flûte à bec."

23 See David Fallows, "The Gresley Dance Collection, c.1500," *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 29 (1996): 1–20. For further on the choreographies, see Jennifer Nevile, "Dance in Early Tudor England: An Italian Connection?," *Early Music* 26 (1998): 231–44.

case, there is no extant original song on which the dance is based. In any case, the basse danse to which Skelton refers is shown in Example 2.4.

Collusion's line "Say vous chaunter venter tre dawce?" is almost certainly "Sçay vous chanter 'Votre tres douce'?,"[24] which mixes verb and pronoun incorrectly but is clear enough. It has been noted that the use of "venter" (stomach) as a substitute for "votre" may play on the "roasted, boiled" image of the previous dance, but the musical reference seems to be to yet another basse dance-style setting that was current in England, *Votre trey dowce regaunt plesaunt*, which is found in the late fifteenth-century Ritson Manuscript (BL Add. MS 5665).[25] It is apparently based on the tenor of a chanson by the early fifteenth-century composer Gilles Binchois, which is given here with the lyrics of the original (see Example 2.5).[26]

**Example 2.5.** *Votre trey dowce regaunt plesaunt*, Binchois chanson tenor based on setting in the Ritson Manuscript.




Thus, all three of these references are to dances, rather than to songs per se, though two of the dances, at least, were originally songs that may have been known in England at that time. That is not the case with Cornysh's *Hoyda, Jolly Rutterkin*, which survives as a four-stanza, through-composed carol in the Fayrfax Manuscript. "Hoyda" (also "heyda," and probably "wyda") is an exclamation meaning something like "Hey there!" and a "rutter" (probably from the

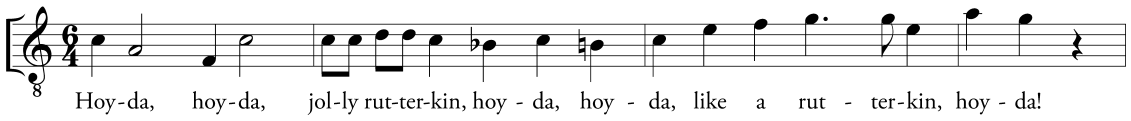
24 Skelton may have referred to this piece also in the phrase "Quater trey dews" from his 1499 poem *The Bowge of Courte* (l. 347), though it may rather have been counting ("four, three, deuce") in the context of gambling. See David Fallows, "English Song Repertories of the Mid-Fifteenth Century," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 103 (1976): 61–79, at 75.

25 Fols. 144v–145r.

26 The three-voice chanson, pitched a fifth lower, occurs in Escorial MS IV.a.24, fol. 6v. An additional version of the basse danse tenor is found in British Library, MS Harley 1512, fol. 2r.

Dutch "ruyter") is apparently a swashbuckling Flemish gallant. The song pokes merciless fun at such visitors, portraying them as uncouth *nouveaux riches*. The entire carol is much too long for inclusion in the play at this point, but the opening phrase of the texted upper voice is entirely singable and could have furnished what Abusion used in the scene (see Example 2.6).[27]

**Example 2.6.** *Hoyda, Jolly Rutterkyn*, by William Cornysh (cantus opening), from the Fayrfax Manuscript.




The next musical reference in *Magnyfycence* occurs when Folly says:

> He daunsys so long hey troly loly
> That every man lawghyth at his foly.[28]
> ll. 1250–51

It is possible that the fool just needed some nonsense to rhyme with "folly," but there are three musical works in Henry VIII's Book that use that text imagery; with increasing length, they are: *Trolly lolly*,[29] *Hey trolly lolly*,[30] and *Hey trolly lolly lo.*[31] The last of these is a long anonymous *pastourelle*—the attempted seduction of a milkmaid—and the first is a three-voice partsong by Cornysh. It is the second piece that matches most closely the line of dialogue from Skelton's play, however, and being a round, seems all the more suitable for use in a play (see Example 2.7), although Folly may have quoted only the opening phrase.[32]

The last apparent song reference in Skelton's *Magnyfycence* is a two-stanza lyric delivered by the character Liberty. Its versification is extremely unusual, with seven lines per stanza and four metrical feet per line.

27 British Library, Add. MS 5465, fol. 104v. John Stevens proposes that there must have been a related popular song, of which Abusion sang a "snatch." See *Music and Poetry*, 380, note.

28 Fol. 15r, sig. D3r.

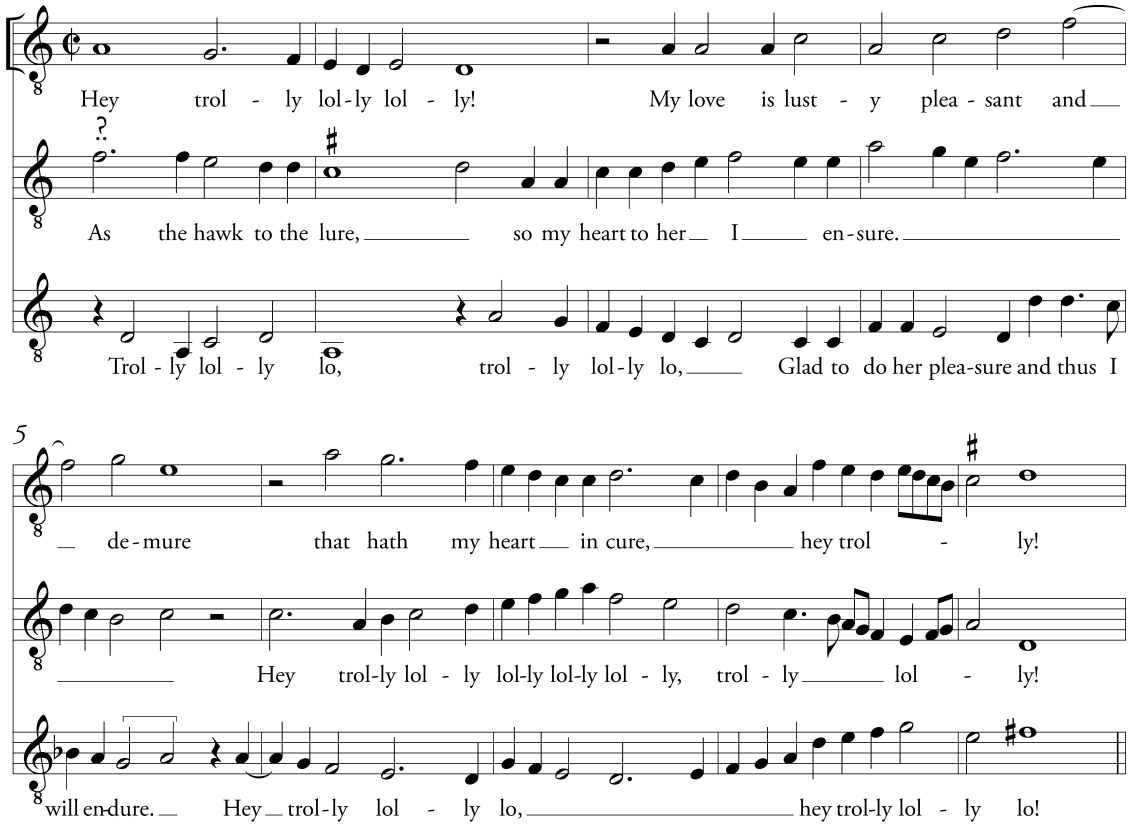
29 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fols. 43v–44r.

30 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fol. 80r.

31 British Library, Add. MS 31922, fols. 124v–128r. This is the last piece in the manuscript.

32 *Hey trolly lolly* makes it into earlier plays as well. Sensual Appetite in Rastell's *Four Elements* comes in singing "Sing frisky jolly, with hey trolly lolly" (l. 419); and in the anonymous *Hickscorner* (1515), Frewyll says "but now hey trolly lolly, Lets see who can descant on this same" (sig. C1r.).

**Example 2.7.** *Hey trolly lolly*, anonymous round from Henry VIII's Book.

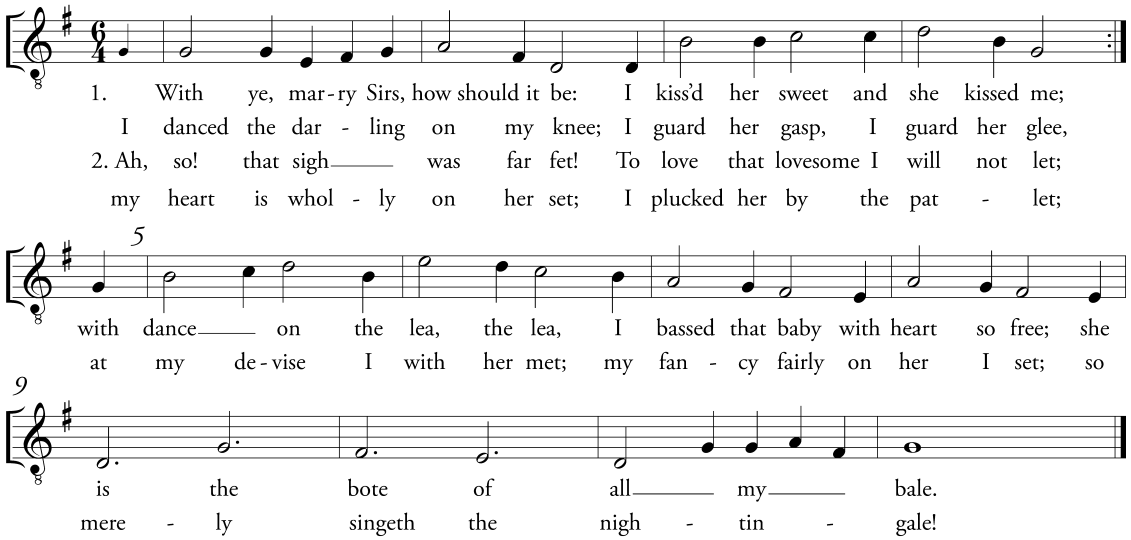



Lyberte with ye, mary, syrs, thus sholde it be:
I kyst her swete, and she kyssyd me;
I daunsed the darlynge on my kne;
I garde her gaspe, I garde her gle,
with daunce on the le, the le;
I bassed that baby with harte so free;
She is the bote of all my bale. [remedy for my pain]
A, so! that syghe was farre fet! [fetched]
To love that lovesome I wyll not let;
My harte is holly on her set;
I plucked her by the patlet; [collar or ruff]
at my devyse I with her met;

my fansy fayrly on her I set;
so merely syngeth the nyghtyngale![33]
ll. 2064–77

The reference to singing in the last line reinforces the sense that it was probably sung. While there are no song settings from the early sixteenth century that survive with that sort of versification, the lyric does work remarkably well with the later tune used for the ballad *Sir Eglamore*. The tale of Sir Eglamore was known in England from at least the fourteenth century and various versions of it appeared in the sixteenth century.[34] Although the tune survives only in seventeenth-century sources, something like it must have been used to set Skelton's lyric because the versification is so unusual (see Example 2.8).

**Example 2.8.** *With ye, marry sirs*, set to the tune *Sir Eglamore*.




## *John Heywood*

John Heywood had a long and tortuous career and a fascinating family life, but perhaps his most lasting contribution to English culture is in the epigrams or proverbs he published. In modernized form, these include "Haste makes waste," "Out of sight, out of mind," "Look before you leap," "Out of the frying

33 Fol. 24r–v, sig. F4r–v.
34 For an edition, see Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook*, 132–34.

pan into the fire," "Love me, love my dog," "Beggars can't be choosers," "All's well that ends well," "A penny for your thoughts," "Rome wasn't built in a day," "Better late than never," "You can't see the wood for the trees," "You've hit the nail on the head," and "Never look a gift horse in the mouth." It is remarkable that all of those commonplaces of modern speech—and many more besides—come from this early printed source.[35]

Heywood first appears in the Royal Treasurer's account for Michaelmas 1519, when he receives a quarterly payment on his annual salary of £20.[36] A year later, he is described as a "synger," and by 1525 he is listed as a "player of the virginals" (harpsichord). Archival details are sparse but he may have transferred to the household of the Princess Mary, since he seems to have had a close relationship with her until her death in 1558. He may have become a steward (or *sewer*) of the royal chamber sometime around 1527, since he seems to have maintained a connection with the court under that title through the reigns of Edward and Mary and even into the reign of Elizabeth. Sometime in the 1520s, he married Joan Rastell, daughter of the playwright and printer John Rastell. Heywood's mother-in-law thereby was the sister of Sir Thomas More, and Heywood clearly profited from the connection with the More family. More replaced Wolsey as Lord Chancellor in 1529, but by 1532 he had resigned over his refusal to accept King Henry as supreme head of the Church of England, and was beheaded in 1535. Heywood himself also remained a devout Catholic, and was condemned to death in 1543 for accusing Archbishop Cranmer of heresy. One of his colleagues was executed, but Heywood recanted in 1544 and was spared, having also his lands and pension restored. In 1545, he took as secretary Thomas Whythorne, who was later to mention the connection in his autobiography:

> I left and forsook Oxford and went from thence to London, where by the means of a friend of mine I was placed with Mr. John Heywood, to be both his servant and scholar, for he was not only very well skilled in Music, and playing on the virginals, but also such an English poet as

35 John Heywood, *A Dialogue conteyning the nomber in effect of all the proverbes in the English tongue* (London: Berthelet, 1546).

36 For a good summary of the documents relating to Heywood's royal service, see Andrew Ashbee and David Lasocki, *A Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians* (Aldershot, 1998), 1:568–71.

> the like, for his wit and invention, with the quantity that he wrote, was not as then in England, nor before his time since Chaucer's time. With Mr Heywood, I remained three years and more, in the which time I learned to play on the virginals, the lute, and to make English verses. While I was with him, he made diverse ditties to be sung unto musical instruments; also he caused to be printed a book made upon our English proverbs. And also at the request of Doctor Thomas Cranmer, late Archbishop of Canterbury, he made a certain enterlude or play, the which was devised upon the parts of Man . . .[37]

Obviously, Cranmer did not take offence at having earlier been challenged by the playwright. It is a shame that we know so little about what Heywood was actually doing theatrically. In 1559, Bishop John Bale, himself a sometime playwright,[38] described Heywood as excellent in music and poetry, and as a producer of "dances, after-dinner spectacles, comic plays, and other merry entertainments."[39] And we have a few archival references to Heywood's activity. In March of 1538 he received 40 shillings for "playeng an enterlude wt his Children bifore my lades [Princess Mary's] grace." Who "his" children were is not clear, since he had no official association with the Chapel Royal. And in February 1539, 16s 8d was paid to a "Bargeman that carried Heywoode's mask to the Court and home again." In early 1552, he was among those rewarded for a play performed by children under Mr Sebastian [Westcott], the master of the Children of St. Paul's. This association was repeated at Nonesuch in August 1559, when Queen Elizabeth witnessed "a play of the Chylderyn of Powlles and ther Master Se[bastian], Master Phelypes, and Master Haywood."[40]

This shows Heywood's involvement in theater at court into the reign of Elizabeth, and yet, by 1564, Heywood felt oppressed by religious non-conformity

37 See *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1961), 13–14.

38 See the discussion in chapter 6, below.

39 "Joannes Heywood, civis Londinensis, musices ac rhythmicae artis in sua lingua studiosus, & sine doctrina ingeniosus, pro choreis post comestationes & epulas hilariter ducendis, spectaculis, ludis, aut personatis ludicris exhibendis, aliisquem vanitatibus sovendis, multum laborate." See John Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium majoris Brytanniæ* (Basel, 1559), 2:110.

40 For these payment records, see Ashbee and Lasocki, *Biographical Dictionary*, 1:568–70. The St. Paul's association documented in these two payment records suggests that "his" boys in the earlier reference may also have been from St. Paul's, but we have nothing to confirm that, and Heywood held no appointments with any church establishment.

and left for the Continent, deprived of his income and pension, never to return.[41] He and most of his family died there, except his daughter Elizabeth, who stayed in England and became the mother of John Donne, the poet and Dean of St. Paul's.

In spite of Heywood's long involvement with theater at court,[42] it is remarkable that so few of his plays survive, and what does is all quite early. It is possible that some of the plays were written and produced in the 1520s, but we have no way of knowing for sure, since there are no records of performances and the first publication was not until 1533. Four plays then appeared in a flurry, all published by Heywood's brother-in-law, William Rastell, son of the music-printing pioneer, John. The printed plays are: *Johan, Johan* (1533), *The Pardoner and the Frere* (1533), *The Play of the Wether* (1533), and *The Play of Love* (1534). *The Four PP* was printed ca. 1544 by William Middleton, but is thought to date as early as 1530.

The really ironic thing about Heywood's plays is that the music—which one might think for a professional musician must have been prominent in his plays—is never described in detail.[43] In *The Four PP*, we have the stage direction "Here they synge" (l. 372); in the *The Play of Love* a character "entreth with a songe" (l. 250); in *The Play of the Wether*, we again have the stage direction "Here they synge" (l. 854),[44] along with a character's call for a song at the end: "And now here to synge most joyfully" (l. 1252). It is extremely frustrating to have nothing more than these few allusions to songs in the plays, but *The Play of the Wether* does at least have a lyric that *may* be a song:

41 Heywood could not resist using one of his own sayings, "Beggars should not be choosers," as he pleaded with Lord Burghley in 1575, in vain as it turned out, to help him recover some of what was owed to him. See Ashbee and Lasocki, *Biographical Dictionary*, 1:570.

42 There is a good chance that some of Heywood's plays also received public performance since his father-in-law, John Rastell, built the first public theater in England around 1524 at Finsbury Fields, near the future site of the Fortune Theatre. We have no record of Heywood performances there, however. See A. W. Reed, *Early Tudor Drama* (London, 1926), 230–33.

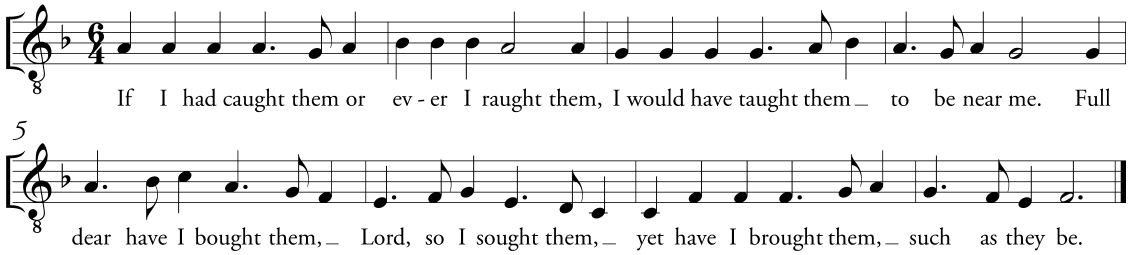
43 The only complete musical setting of a Heywood poem that survives is a clumsy lutesong version of *What harte can thynke or tonge express*, in British Library, Add. MS 4900. It is edited in John M. Ward, *Music for Elizabethan Lutes* (Oxford, 1992), 2, no. 40.

44 The production of *The Play of the Wether* as part of the Oxford Brookes symposium *Staging the Henrician Court*, in August 2009, used Heywood's song *What harte can thynke or tonge express* at this point in the play, when Merry Report sings "lustily" to the Gentlewoman. In spite of the connection to the author, the song does not seem well suited to the dramatic situation. For a discussion of performance decisions for that production, see Eleanor Rycroft, "*The Play of The Weather* in Performance in the Great Hall at Hampton Court," *Medieval English Theatre* 31 (2009): 13–27. For another reference to that play, see chapter 5 below, concerning *Like Will to Like*.

Mery Report If I had caught them
Or ever I raught them
I wolde have taught them
To be nere me
Full dere have I bought them,
Lorde, so I sought them,
Yet have I brought them,
Suche as they be.[45]
ll. 1140–47

The singer, Merry Report, is the first character identified as a "Vice" on the title page of a play. The Vice was the comic character from the morality play, typically evil to a certain extent (by "leading into temptation"), but providing comic relief just the same. Heywood's Merry Report is not a typical Vice and may not even be a Vice at all, his role being to solicit opinions for Jupiter on how to reform the weather. Some have seen him as the first Fool in English drama, establishing the tradition of characters played by Tarlton, Kemp, and Armin, and thus entirely apt to sing a lyric like this, which seems singable. The aaabaaab rhyme scheme with short lines is very atypical but it seems to work well to the tune *Callino Casturame*, a song cited by Shakespeare in *Henry V* (4.4) and perhaps dating back at least to the middle of the sixteenth century (Example 2.9).[46]

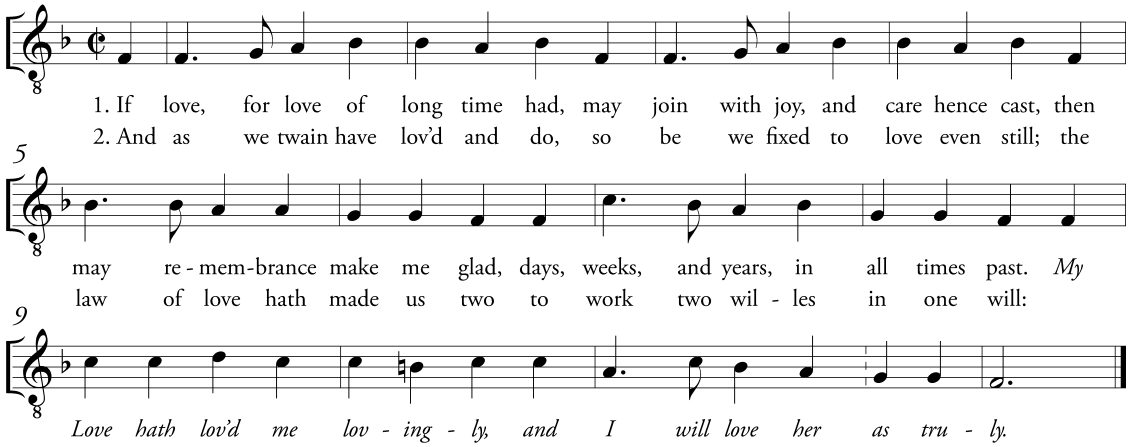
**Example 2.9.** *If I had caught them*, set to the tune *Callino Casturame*.




45 Sig D4v.
46 See the entry for the song in Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook*, 86–87. A similar rhyme scheme, aaabcccb, occurs in a fragmentary song, *Saunce remedy*, printed by William Rastell, but not enough of it survives to extract a melody. See Milsom, "Songs and Society," 269–71 *et passim*.

There is another Heywood lyric that may fit the song cue in *The Play of Love*, which reads: "the lover belovyd entreth with a songe."[47] John Milsom speculates that the poem *Yf love for love of long tyme had*, attributed to Heywood in BL Add. MS 15233, may have been sung at this cue, though he thinks the single lower voice part that survives in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O.1.30 is "likely to have been for a revival rather than an early production of the play."[48] That multi-voice setting is in duple time and it happens that there is another duple tune that fits that lyric quite well and that may have a connection to Heywood. Thomas Mulliner, compiler of the keyboard miscellany "the Mulliner Book," may have copied that manuscript from around 1559 to 1563 while apprenticing with Heywood, in the same way as had Thomas Whythorne.[49] A version of the Mulliner Book tune *The Wretched Wandering Prince of Troy*, seems to match the versification of *Yf love for love* fairly closely (Example 2.10).

**Example 2.10.** *If love for love*, set to the tune of *The Wretched Wandering Prince of Troy*, from the Mulliner Book.




47 Sig. B1r.

48 See Milsom, "Songs and Society," 291–93.

49 British Library, Add. MS 30513, fol. 87v. The flyleaf to the manuscript bears the inscription "Sum liber thomae Mullineri / iohanne heywoode teste." See Jane Flynn, "Thomas Mulliner: An Apprentice of John Heywood?," in *Young Choristers, 650–1700*, ed. Susan Boynton and Eric Rice (Woodbridge, 2008), 173–94. See also *The Mulliner Book*, ed. John Caldwell, Second Edition, Musica Britannica 1 (London, 2011).

There is one other song from Heywood's circle that deserves to be given here as well. A single sheet survives from a playscript,[50] certainly printed by William Rastell around the same time as Heywood's plays, and it happens that the sheet preserves the lyrics to a song:

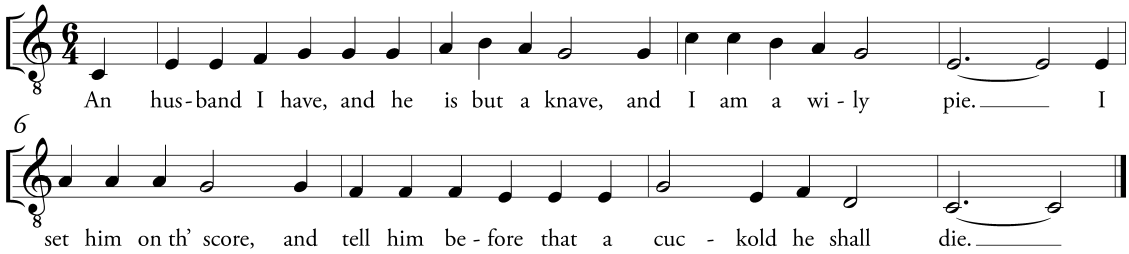
*Here she must sytte downe and sowe,*
*and let her*
*synge this songe folowynge.*

Uxor An housbande I haue
And he is but a knaue
And I am a wyly pye [magpie, i.e., sly person][51]
I set hym on the score [tell him how it is]
And tell hym before
That a cokold he shall dye.

ll. 13–20

This is intriguing because the sentiment of the song matches well the situation in Heywood's play *Johan Johan*, where Johan's wife, Tyb, humiliates her husband by flagrantly carrying on an affair with the local priest. Thus, although there are no song references in *Johan Johan*, this lyric seems like it would fit extremely well as sung by Tyb in the play, perhaps as she awaits the return of her husband and her lover (after l. 415).[52] The versification matches later lyrics set to tunes like *The*

**Example 2.11.** *An Husband I have*, set to the tune of *Thys vyrgyn clere*.




50 *Pater, Filius, et Uxor* or *The Prodigal Son* [London: W. Rastell, ?1530]. The unique copy is in Cambridge University Library with the classmark Syn.5.53.4.

51 This same term appears in Nicholas Udall's translation of the *Apophthegmes* of Erasmus (London: Grafton, 1542), 321: "a wylie pye & a feloe full of shiftes."

52 The fact that a "pie" of the eating sort is the focus of much of *Johan Johan* makes a felicitous connection as well.