

**FOLK SONG IN CUMBRIA:
A DISTINCTIVE REGIONAL REPERTOIRE?**

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of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

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ABSTRACT

One of the lacunae of traditional music scholarship in England has been the lack of systematic study of folk song and its performance in discrete geographical areas. This thesis endeavours to address this gap in knowledge for one region through a study of Cumbrian folk song and its performance over the past two hundred years. Although primarily a social history of popular culture, with some elements of ethnography and a little musicology, it is also a participant-observer study from the personal perspective of one who has performed and collected Cumbrian folk songs for some forty years.

The principal task has been to research and present the folk songs known to have been published or performed in Cumbria since circa 1900, designated as the Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus: a body of 515 songs from 1010 different sources, including manuscripts, print, recordings and broadcasts. The thesis begins with the history of the best-known Cumbrian folk song, 'D'Ye Ken John Peel' from its date of composition around 1830 through to the late twentieth century. From this narrative the main themes of the thesis are drawn out: the problem of defining 'folk song', given its eclectic nature; the role of the various collectors, mediators and performers of folk songs over the years, including myself; the range of different contexts in which the songs have been performed, and by whom; the vexed questions of 'authenticity' and 'invented tradition', and the extent to which this repertoire is a distinctive regional one. Analysis of the corpus reveals a heterogeneous collection of songs on a wide range of themes, but with certain genres predominating, notably hunting songs and songs in dialect - songs which, like 'D'Ye Ken John Peel', have been mobilised to reinforce ideas of regional identity and pride over many years.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CASCAC	Cumbria Archive Service: Carlisle Archive Centre
CASKAC	Cumbria Archive Service: Kendal Archive Centre
EFDSS	English Folk Dance and Song Society
VWML	Vaughan Williams Memorial Library

Chapter 1: JOHN PEEL, FOLK SONG AND CUMBRIA

(a) D'Ye Ken John Peel?

Few people today regard Cumbria and the Lake District as a repository of traditional music, the landscape and Romantic heritage of the Lakes Poets having historically outshone any musical heritage.¹ Writing shortly after the county of Cumbria came into being in 1974, folk music record producer Paul Adams of Fellside Recordings in Workington bemoaned the fact that, in contrast with the rich musical traditions of Lancashire, the Borders and Northumberland, Cumbrian traditional music seemed to have been 'virtually extinguished', leaving just some hunting songs and 'scraps' of other local songs.² As a singer and musician recently returned to my native county and looking for Cumbrian material to perform, I took this as a call to arms and set about researching the county's folk songs for myself. I was one of a number of singers at folk music sessions in the Sun Inn, Ireby, at that time who were keen to find local repertoire which, we felt, had to be more wide-ranging than the single song so long lodged in local and national consciousness as Cumbrian: 'D'Ye Ken John Peel' (sometimes just 'John Peel'). Despite having family connections to John Peel himself I had never considered singing the song myself, believing the song a community and school one, much reproduced in print and having a known composer - and therefore not a 'folk song'. My view today could not be more different: not only do I now believe 'John Peel' to be a folk song, but I think that an examination of the

¹ The county of Cumbria came into existence in 1974, following the Local Government Act of 1972, taking in the former counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, the Furness district of Lancashire and a small corner of the Yorkshire Dales. It encompasses not only the fells and dales of the central Lake District, but also the northern Pennines, the agricultural plains of the north of the county, the fertile pastures of the Eden Valley, industrial areas on the west coast and many market towns. Despite such heterogeneity, the area has always had a great degree of cultural coherence, as explored in *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, Third Series, 11 (2011), which devotes a whole section to regional identity from the medieval period until 1960 (pp. 11-111).

² Paul Adams, 'The Neglected Corner', *Folk Review* 4 (1975), pp. 6-7.

song's journey over time, since its composition around 1830, serves well to illustrate some of the themes explored in this thesis: folk song definitions, the origins of such songs and how they change over time, who sings them and in what contexts, who 'collects' and disseminates the songs, and how certain ones become a focus of regional identity.

The subject of the eponymous song, John Peel, was born near Caldbeck in the northern fells of Cumberland in 1777 and eloped to Gretna Green with his sweetheart Mary White, on horseback; the marriage subsequently blessed at Caldbeck Church. The couple settled in the northern fells on a small farm at Ruthwaite, near Ireby, belonging to Mary's family, and went on to have thirteen children. A farmer and horse-dealer as well as a huntsman, for fifty-five years maintaining a pack of hounds and two horses and reputedly had 'a faultless knowledge of the country and of hunting', as well as a reputation as a 'coarse, heavy-drinking, rather selfish man'.³ My own great-grandmother always spoke of him in disparaging terms: 'Ah divvent know why ivverybody meks sek a fuss about John Peel: he was nobbut an owld drunkard!'⁴ By the time he died in 1854, aged 79, Peel and his legendary hunts were widely known and celebrated, almost entirely because of the song written about him by his hunting crony, John Woodcock Graves, which also helped to create and diffuse an image of Cumberland which caught both the local and national imagination.⁵

It should be noted here that Lakeland fox hunting was, and remains, a very different style of hunting from the popular image of the quintessential English 'sport'

³ Albert Nicholson and S. R. J. Baudry, 'John Peel 1776-1854', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21759> [accessed 25 Oct 2009].

⁴ This was said to me by my grandmother Maggie Williamson, née Peel, in the 1960s, when I was beginning to show an interest in family history. Maggie's mother Mary Jane Wilson (1884-1952) married Thomas Peel (1880-1935), a clogger and great-nephew of John Peel the huntsman, in 1901.

⁵ James Walter Brown, 'John Peel: The Man and the Song' in James Walter Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross* (Carlisle, 1950), pp. 199-205. For detailed biographies of both Peel and Graves, see Hugh Machell, *John Peel - Famous in Sport and Song* (London, 1926).

featuring aristocrats in hunting pink mounted on handsome horses.⁶ Developing out of the need to control foxes preying on sheep on the upper fells, particularly at lambing time, the fox hunting of the fell packs of the Lake District is done on foot and not on horseback, although at the time of Peel much wider tracts of countryside were covered compared with today, so horses were in fact used at times. Hunting in Cumbria became more of a sport from the late eighteenth century onwards, its followers comprising an eclectic mix of farmers, rural workers and middle class professionals.⁷

John Woodcock Graves, the writer of the song, came originally from Wigton, some eight miles from Caldbeck, and although apprenticed to a sign painter in his youth, with aspirations to train as a painter, in 1815 he ‘acquired interests’ in a woollen mill in Caldbeck, living and working there for the following seventeen to eighteen years, before emigrating to Tasmania, where he spent the rest of his life.⁸ ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’ appeared, along with Graves’s autobiography and five other songs, ‘here first printed’, in the 1865 and 1866 editions of Sidney Gilpin’s *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland and the Lake Country* (‘Sidney Gilpin’ was the pen-name of Carlisle publisher George Coward) as well as *The Wigton Advertiser* in 1865. Graves says that ‘nearly forty years have passed away’ since he wrote the song at his house in Caldbeck:

We sat in a snug parlour at Caldbeck, hunting over again many a good run,
when a flaxen-haired daughter of mine came in saying, ‘Father, what do they
say to what Granny sings?’ Granny was singing to sleep my eldest son with a

⁶ R.W. Hoyle, *Our Hunting Fathers: Field Sports in England after 1850*, (Lancaster, 2007). Nowhere in the book, however, do Hoyle or his contributors make any reference to the completely different style of hunting carried on in upland areas like the Lake District.

⁷ C.N. de Courcy Parry, ‘The Cry of his Hounds: The huntsman, his hounds and where they went’, in *John Peel: The Man, the Myth and the Song* (No editor given, Carlisle: 1977), pp. 40-53, (p. 40).

⁸ A.W. Campbell, ‘Graves, John Woodcock (1795–1886)’, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, (1972). Graves himself simply says he ‘was connected’ with the woollen mills at Caldbeck in his autobiographical note in Sidney Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland, to which are added Dialect and other Poems, with Biographical Sketches, Notes, and Glossary* (Carlisle: 1866), p. 412.

very old rant called *Bonnie (or Cannie) Annie*. The pen and ink for hunting appointments being on the table, the idea of writing a song to this old air forced itself on me, and thus was produced, impromptu, *D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gray*. Immediately after I sung it to poor Peel, who smiled through a stream of tears which fell down his cheeks, and I well remember saying to him in a joking style, 'By Jove, Peel, you'll be sung when we're both run to earth.'⁹

His prediction came true, as the song attained some local fame during and after Peel's lifetime and went on to become widely known nationally and even internationally. The actual date of composition is not clear: Graves's 'almost forty years' indicates the period 1826-1828, but Canon H.D. Rawnsley, writing about Graves in 1902, claims that while proofreading a copy of his song in April 1882 Graves added the note 'first written at Caldbeck fifty years ago', which puts the date as being some time during the hunting season autumn/winter 1832/33 - his last winter in Cumberland before sailing for Tasmania.¹⁰ Certainly by the later 1830s the song seems to have acquired sufficient local popularity to be taken up by the cheap print trade, published by W. & T. Fordyce of Newcastle in both broadside and chapbook form between 1837 and 1841, which explains Gilpin's remark that: 'Thirty years since, no person could walk through the streets of Carlisle, without hearing someone or other whistling the air, or singing the song.'¹¹ As to the tune, 'John Peel' turns up in more or less in the same form as that sung today in the manuscript tune book of 1840 of one John Rook of Waverton, near Wigton, with the note 'from memory', but it is in fact a tune with a much longer history, as versions of it appear as 'Red House' in John

⁹ Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, pp. 413-414; 'John Woodcock Graves', *Wigton Advertiser* (2 December 1865), p. 2. The text of the song is given in Appendix 3 of this thesis, p. 292.

¹⁰ Hardwicke Drummond Rawnsley, *A Rambler's Note-Book at the English Lakes* (Glasgow, 1902), p. 176.

¹¹ Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, p. 416.

Playford's *Dancing Master* 1695 and 'Whaur would our guidman lie?' in Scottish poet cum playwright Allan Ramsay's popular *Tea-Table Miscellany* in 1734.¹²

In 1868 a new phase in the song's life began, when 'John Peel' was sung by William Lattimer Carlisle Choral Society dinner and caught the ear of the Society's conductor William Metcalfe (1830–1909), a lay-clerk at Carlisle Cathedral, prolific composer and arranger of songs and piano works, who sought out Lattimer the next day in order to transcribe both words and music.¹³ After researching the tune, Metcalfe dismissed 'the original Border rant' to which it was set as not sufficiently interesting, adapting and extending it into an arrangement more suitable for performance with piano accompaniment on the concert platform.¹⁴ In January the following year he performed his new version of 'John Peel' in Carlisle at a fund-raising dinner for the Cumberland Benevolent Institution. It went down so well he was invited to sing it at the Institution's annual dinner in London on 22 May that year, where the song 'got the fillip, the send-off, which ensured its popularity'.¹⁵

The Cumberland Benevolent Institution was one of a long tradition of regionally patriotic societies which met in London to help expatriate Cumbrians and Westmerians who had fallen on hard times by, for example, providing schooling for the children of poorer people and small annuities for the widows of Cumbrian businessmen. Its dinners and balls became an important part of the social scene for middle-class, self-made businessmen and minor Cumbrian gentry in the capital. The

¹² *Multum in Parvo, or a Collection of old English, Scotch, Irish and Welsh Airs*, Private collection, manuscript dated 1840. Digitised version at http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~rja14/musicfiles/rook/rook_pages/index.htm (Rook Manuscript) accessed 19 July 2014; Anne Geddes Gilchrist, 'The Evolution of a Tune: "Red House" and "John Peel"', *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, 4 (1941), pp. 80-84.

¹³ Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross*, pp. 206-211. Chapter 21 - William Metcalfe.

¹⁴ Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross*, pp. 199 & 201.

¹⁵ J.D. Marshall, 'Cumberland and Westmorland Societies in London 1734-1914', *Transactions of Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, 84 (1984), p. 246; Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross*, p. 213; *Cumberland Benevolent Institution Minute Books*, Guildhall Library, L 61.9, 03322, Vol. 4.

fact that the Lake District had become a fashionable destination, thanks to the publication of popular guidebooks like Thomas West's *A Guide to the Lakes* (editions published 1778-1821) and Wordsworth's *A Guide through the District of the Lakes* (1810 & 1820) no doubt fed into the enhanced regional awareness and local patriotism which the Institution fostered.¹⁶ These expatriate Cumbrians in the capital were a ready market for a song that fed nostalgic regional patriotism, and Metcalfe's performances there in 1869 and 1870, were so well received that he managed to take orders for over a hundred copies of 'John Peel'. By the time it was performed again at the 1875 dinner, the song was sufficiently well known for the whole company to join in the chorus.¹⁷ Within a few years the tune of 'John Peel' had been adopted by the 34th Cumberland Regiment as its regimental quick march and retained when the regiment amalgamated with the 55th Westmorland Regiment to become the Border Regiment in 1881, its soldiers apparently singing 'John Peel' wherever the regiment was stationed, as far afield as India, Burma, Malta, Aden and South Africa.¹⁸ This explains the sweeping statement published in 1890 that: 'The capital song 'John Peel' is known, if not wherever the English language is spoken, at all events wherever Englishmen are settled, whether at home or in the colonies'.¹⁹

¹⁶ J. D. Marshall and John Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change* (Manchester, 1981), pp. 178-179. Two of the earliest societies were The Cumberland Society founded in 1734 and The Westmorland Society, 1746.

¹⁷ Guildhall Library, *Cumberland Benevolent Institution Minute Books*, vol. 4; *D'Ye Ken John Peel: Hunting Song, the words by John Woodcock Graves, set to music by William Metcalfe* (London, 1869). Published by John Blockley, a London composer-publisher well known for his settings of popular songs, the cover states that *D'Ye Ken John Peel* is No. 1 in a series of 'Songs and Ballads of Cumberland', comprising hunting songs and songs in Cumberland dialect. Most of the series, however, were published by Metcalfe himself, with J.B. Cramer & Co of London listed as distributor/wholesaler, apart from the last song in the series, No 9, which was published by Thurnam's of Carlisle. Metcalfe also produced arrangements of 'John Peel' for four vocal parts as well as versions for piano, including a 'John Peel March'. Copies are held in the collection of Metcalfe's music bequeathed to James Walter Brown and now at Carlisle Library, Jackson Collection, D42 & D52. See also Marshall and Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century*, p. 155..

¹⁸ Col. Ralph K. May, 'T'was the Sound of his Horn: The Border Regiment and how it took the Song to every Corner of the Earth', in *John Peel: The Man, the Myth and the Song* (Carlisle, 1977), pp. 35-39.

¹⁹ Jonathan Boucher, 'D'Ye Ken John Peel', *Notes and Queries*, 7th series, no. 10 (1890), p. 281.

It is worth noting at this point that at this stage ‘John Peel’ appears to be a man’s song as, so far as we are aware, women did not take part in Lakeland fell hunting, which involved trekking miles across the high fells on foot and riding over rough ground before adjourning to a local hostelry for supper and singing. The song’s more general popularity beyond the region and across gender boundaries came later, after it appeared in national publications in the early years of the twentieth century and became, as we shall see, a staple of both school and community singing repertoires.²⁰ By the time it was published, with music, in John Stokoe’s *Songs and Ballads of Northern England* in 1899, Peel already seemed to have become a Cumbrian folk-figure, and the song a signifier of all things Cumbrian. By 1910, when Cumberland-born musician John Graham included it in his *Dialect Songs of the North*, ‘John Peel’ was sufficiently well-known and embedded geographically to be given the soubriquet ‘The anthem of Cumbria’.²¹

In the process of becoming a national song, ‘John Peel’ underwent a number of changes to both its music and text, and even acquired its own entry in *Grove’s Dictionary of Music* in 1904, written by music critic and folk-music collector Frank Kidson, who noted: ‘The song, sung to a version of ‘Bonnie Annie’, seems to have had a long traditional popularity before it got into print, and there are two distinct versions of the tune of ‘John Peel’, the one being a corruption from the other’, presumably meaning that Metcalfe’s tune was the ‘corruption’.²² In fact the more elaborate tune seems never to have gained much general currency, and when Charles

²⁰ Dave Russell, ‘Abiding memories: the community singing movement and English social life in the 1920s’, *Popular Music*, volume 27 (2008), p. 123.

²¹ John Stokoe and Samuel Reay, *Songs and Ballads of Northern England* (London and Newcastle upon Tyne, 1893), pp. 108-109.; John Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North* (London, 1910), p. 22. It is interesting to note the use of the term ‘Cumbria’ some 64 years before the county name actually came into being, perhaps giving further credence to Marshall and Walton’s argument that the broader Cumbrian region, including Furness, was recognised as having a degree of ‘cultural coherence’.

²² Frank Kidson, ‘John Peel’, in *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1910).

Villiers Stanford selected the song for inclusion in *The National Song Book* in 1906 he used a simpler version of the melody, much closer to the versions published by Stokoe and Graham and that noted by Rook in 1840.²³

‘John Peel’ seems to have been included in Stanford’s seminal collection less for its popularity than for its rurality, being redolent of the sort of ‘Merrie England’ Stanford was keen to promote as national music. The song’s words were also ‘improved’ by his collaborator on the book, Irish poet, songwriter and Inspector of Schools A.P. Graves, who erroneously substituted ‘gay’ for ‘gray’ (an older alternative spelling of ‘grey’) as the colour of Peel’s coat. Woodcock Graves’s second verse beginning ‘Do you ken that bitch whose tongue is death’ was also omitted and a new verse added at the end giving John Peel’s home as Troutbeck, instead of Caldbeck. As *The National Song Book* went into widespread use in schools and homes, with further editions published as *The New National Song Book* in 1938 and 1958, Stanford’s version became the standard version of ‘John Peel’, by then a symbol of an idealised Englishness, although still a hunting song in Cumberland.

Cumbrian attachment to ‘John Peel’ as a hunting song, a community song and even a tune for country dances continued throughout the twentieth century.²⁴ It always took pride of place at the ‘Cummerlan’ Neets’ which became an annual fixture in the Carlisle social calendar from 1933 to the mid 1950s, following the hugely successful centenary celebration of ‘The Cumberland Bard’ - dialect poet Robert Anderson – in 1933. The ‘Cummerlan’ Neets’ were organised by the group of men who went on to found the Lakeland Dialect Society in 1939: Carlisle singer and entertainer Harold

²³Charles Villiers Stanford and Geoffrey Shaw, *The National Song Book* (London, 1906), p. 22. The text as it appears in the book is given in Appendix 3, p. 293.

²⁴ It became the signature tune of the Billy Bowman Band, which played for dances throughout rural Cumberland from the 1920s to the late 1960s, including many hunt balls (author’s interview with Billy Bowman, January 2002). The Millom Folk Dance band, led by Wesley Park, also used the tune for the dance ‘Cumberland Square Eight’ from 1966 to 1978: *Wesley Park Archive*, Carlisle Archive Centre, DX2206.

Forsyth, insurance agent and dialect writer Lance Porter of Eskdale, Carlisle archivist Tom Gray and writer E.R. Denwood from Cockermouth.²⁵ Some of these early members of the Dialect Society were also keen song collectors, notably the Denwood family, Lance Porter and Frank Warriner from Millom, as well as Norman Alford and Robert Forrester of Carlisle - who became key figures in the collecting and performing of Cumbrian folk music, broadcasting songs and tunes from Cumberland on the BBC's Northern Service and producing the 1953 field recordings which are looked at in more detail in subsequent chapters.²⁶

'D'ye Ken John Peel' was, inevitably, one of the songs featured in the 1953 recordings, sung by Micky Moscrop at The Plough Inn in Wreay, and is still popular in hunting circles today along with 'The Horn of the Hunter', written by Jackson Gillbanks of Whitefield near Uldale. Micky Moscrop's son Tom remembered him taking part in a 'John Peel' singing competition at Eskdale Show where, 'They were still singing when it was dark: hours and hours just of 'John Peel' ... my dad didn't get home until half past two in the morning.' Micky also won the singing competition at the John Peel Day at Caldbeck in 1954, getting his winner's cup filled with whisky at a pub on the way home.²⁷ A number of 'John Peel Days' have been held in Caldbeck over the years: the 150th anniversary of his birth in 1927, centenary of his death in 1954, bi-centenary of his birth in 1977 and 150th anniversary of his death on 21 November 2004. The Hunting Act 2004, which banned hunting with dogs, came into force in February 2005, leading to the last John Peel Day being a sombre affair with representatives of Blencathra Foxhounds (the so-called 'The John

²⁵ Harold Forsyth and Ted Relph (Ed.), *Hoo's ta gaan on? A Book of Cumberland Tales, in the Dialect of Carlisle and District* (Carlisle, 2002), pp. 96-97.

²⁶ Caversham, *BBC Artist File: Robert (Bob) Forrester*, BBC Written Archives Centre, N18/1215/1; *Voice of the North*, BBC Written Archives Centre, 959-002-024, N25/39/1; *Long playing records*, Carlisle: Cumbria Archive Service, Carlisle Archive Centre, 1953.

²⁷ Sue Allan, iInterviews with Moscrop family, March 2004.

Peel Pack’) at Peel’s grave in Caldbeck churchyard receiving and laying wreaths sent by other hunts: as much as a memorial to the demise of fox hunting as to Peel himself.²⁸

Although the song ‘John Peel’ was included in the 1958 edition of *The New National Song Book* and I have personal memories of singing it in primary school in the 1950s, it has not since then retained a hold on the popular imagination. In part, this may be because community singing has largely died out, but it was also never really taken up by singers in folk clubs in the 1960s and 1970s, probably because it was thought of then as a ‘school’ song. In addition, popular opinion has since then turned against fox hunting, further accelerating the demise of hunting songs as folk song repertoire. ‘John Peel’ did though have a late flowering, brought to national attention once again through its use by the Countryside Alliance in the late 1990s, as part of their campaign against the proposed bill to ban fox-hunting, sung at rallies in Hyde Park and declared the ‘national anthem of field sports’.²⁹ In 2000 The Central Committee of Fell Packs, representing the Cumbrian packs hunting in the Lakeland fells on foot, also tried to make a case for the retention of fell fox hunting, quoting Melvyn Bragg: ‘The foot hunting aspect always caught my imagination. A man on foot against nature – that is a fine image. Moreover, as it was on foot, anybody could join in. You did not need to be able to keep a horse. That democratic quality plays an important part in the potency of the John Peel legend.’³⁰ Despite the efforts of the hunts and their supporters, however, the hunting ban came into force on 16 February 2005, and ‘hunting’ in Cumbria today would scarcely be recognised by John Peel: the stated aim of the Blencathra Foxhounds being now to provide ‘a day’s activity on the

²⁸ ‘John Peel Tribute’, *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald* (20 November 2004), p. 11.

²⁹ Ian Russell, ‘The Hunt’s Up? Rural community, song and politics’, *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* (2002), p. 138.

³⁰ Melvyn Bragg, introduction to ‘John Peel - the man, the myth and the song’, (Carlisle, 1977).

falls for all our supporters [...] a combination of Exercise and Drag, depending upon conditions and terrain'.³¹

The song has also changed: long out-of-print, it is rarely sung or heard today as a 'national', community or school song with fewer people outside Cumbria aware of either the man or the song, unless they are involved with hunting. Within the county, the song can still be heard at Cumbrian hunt suppers or at an occasional village 'Cumberland Merry Neet' celebration, reverting to its status as a Cumbrian anthem enjoyed in rural communities and by hunt followers within the original context and environs for which it was written.

Today it would be accepted that 'D'Ye Ken John Peel' is a folk song, and indeed it is listed as Number 1239 in the Roud Folk Song Index, which notes 24 different versions from both printed and oral sources.³² Most versions come from the north of England, although three hail from the south of the country and two from the USA: a reflection of the popularity of a song which had found its way into popular print as early as 1840, published numerous times over the next 150 years. As the history of the song outlined above reveals, 'John Peel' has proved an important signifier of Cumbrian-ness, figuring strongly in constructions of regional identity, reflected and refracted through the medium of song: a re-presenting the past to and for an 'imagined community' of Cumbrians past and present - as well as presenting the real communities of farmers and fox hunters with a shared cultural history.³³ Whilst

³¹ <http://www.blencathrafoxhounds.com> (Blencathra Foxhounds) accessed on 21 October 2012.

³² The Roud Folk Song Index, a searchable database of over 230,000 references to around 25,000 folk songs compiled by folklore scholar Steve Roud, is the generally standard index of folk songs, and along with the associated Broadside Ballad Index is hosted by the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library at the English Folk Dance & Song Society: <http://library.efdss.org/cgi-bin/home.cgi>, accessed on 24 May 2016.

³³ A. M. Alonso, 'The Effects of Truth: Re-Presentations of the Past and the Imagining of Community', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1 (1988), p. 35. The concept of an 'imagined community', coined by Benedict Anderson, envisages a nation as a socially constructed community imagined by people who perceive themselves as part of that group, and as such is a useful device to examine other social

acting as an expression of regional patriotism to expatriate Cumbrians, the military, the Lakeland Dialect Society and many older Cumbrians, it has also served as a national song suggestive of a certain bucolic image of Englishness, before finally being transformed into a song of political protest by and for The Countryside Alliance at the turn of the twenty-first century.³⁴ ‘John Peel’ seems to have offered just the right combination of sentiment and melody to give it a long and varied life, ensuring its place in the northern English folk music canon because, as Richard Hoggart puts it, ‘tune and sentiment triumph over differences of social class’: a robust and catchy tune coupled with a strong sense of place have proved a winning combination.³⁵

I believe, like folk song scholar Michael Pickering, that much of value can be gained from a folk song study which is localised and considered in its own milieu - primarily an understanding of the songs from singers’ point of view within a specific social and cultural context – and thus in this thesis consider key songs, singers and performance contexts in Cumbria.³⁶

(b) Emerging themes

The history of ‘John Peel’ detailed above highlights the themes I wish to explore in this thesis, in order to interrogate the Cumbrian corpus of folk song which lies at the heart of it:

- (i) First of all, in order to justify the inclusion of songs in the Cumbrian folk song corpus a working definition of ‘folk song’ needs to be formulated, one which can encompass printed and published songs and

communities. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 2006).

³⁴ Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music'* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 156.

³⁵ Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of working-class life with special reference to publications and entertainments* (London, 1957), p. 159.

³⁶ Michael Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England: A Critique', *Folk Music Journal*, 6 (1990), p. 38.

songs with a known author/composer as well as those learned orally, and addressing the vexed questions of ‘authenticity’ and ‘invented tradition’ in relation to folk songs.³⁷

- (ii) Given that a number of the songs in the corpus, like ‘John Peel’, seem to have been mobilised to reinforce ideas of regional identity and pride, one of the principal aims of this thesis is to explore to what extent the Cumbrian folk song corpus is a regionally distinctive one.
- (iii) As well as involving extensive research into print, manuscript and recorded versions of folk songs found in Cumbria, it is important to highlight that this thesis is also a participant-observation study: a personal exploration by someone immersed in the genre both as folk song performer and collector.
- (iv) Who were those who collected and published these local songs – the folk song collectors? The activities of the nationally known collectors of the Victorian and Edwardian ‘first folk revival’ are well documented, but the work of local collectors in Cumbria far less so. Their endeavours are explored in Chapter 2 to see how their work mirrored the national picture.
- (v) The Cumbrian folk song corpus that lies at the heart of this thesis is then analysed in Chapters 3 and 4: a heterogeneous collection overall, but with certain genres of song predominating.

³⁷ The invention of tradition is the concept, highlighted in the eponymous 1983 book in which editors Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger argue that many so-called ‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes completely invented. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 1.

- (vi) Finally, a range of performance contexts within different communities in Cumbria are examined in Chapter 5, to see how singing and audience reception have varied over time.

(i) Defining ‘folk song’

The term ‘folk song’ was coined in the eighteenth century by German philosopher and writer Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), as ‘*Volkslied*’, but did not come into English until the mid-nineteenth century, first used in a book title by W.A. Barrett in his *English Folk-Songs* in 1891, and by 1898, when The Folk-Song Society was founded, it was in common use.³⁸ As folk song collector and educationalist Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) noted, ‘the word folk-song was added to the language when we had a use for it, and not before’, the context being the Victorian and Edwardian folk revival of around 1900, a revival which was in part prompted by the desire to identify an English national music, after the country was mocked by the Germans as ‘das Land ohne Musik’ (the land without music).³⁹

There is very little agreement amongst performers, collectors or scholars on the definition of the term ‘folk song’, which was initially an extension and refinement of the earlier usage, ‘national music’.⁴⁰ Defining ‘folk song’ has been described as a ‘tempting and dangerous undertaking for the scholars of the field’, its dynamic nature and the heterogeneity of the repertoire belying ‘the stasis of definition’.⁴¹ Various definitions used over the past 150 years will be considered briefly here along with

³⁸ William Alexander Barrett, *English Folk-Songs* (London, 1891). Cecil J Sharp, *English Folk Song, Some Conclusions* (London, 1907), p. 2.

³⁹ The title of an anti-English polemic published in 1904 before the First World War by a scholar named Oskar Adolf Hermann Schmitz, picking up on ideas propounded by music critic Carl Engel in the nineteenth century.

⁴⁰ Alan Dundes uses the term ‘folk’ to refer to any group of people who share at least one common factor and have a common core tradition. Alan Dundes, *The Study of Folklore* (1965), pp. 8-9. Folk song is variously expressed as two words, as one word – folksong – and in the earlier twentieth-century it was generally hyphenated as ‘folk-song’. I will retain the two-word usage throughout, except when quoting other sources.

⁴¹ Philip Bohlman, *The study of folk music in the modern world* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1988), p. xviii.

versions now current among folk music scholars in order to arrive at a definition suitable for the purpose of this thesis: one which can encompass songs from oral tradition alongside those printed in broadside and chapbook form, and which can include songs with a known composer, such as dialect songs and hunting songs like ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’.

Although most performers and audiences today use the term ‘folk song’ as a convenient shorthand for the genre, it is sometimes replaced with the more fashionable ‘roots’ or ‘world music’ labels, which are presumably felt to be more inclusive, while the use of the term ‘traditional music’ implies a long history. ‘Vernacular song’, defined as amateur music performed in informal local settings, is though the favoured usage of many late twentieth century folk music scholars like Dave Harker, Michael Pickering and Georgina Boyes, in order to avoid the ideological baggage the word ‘folk’ has picked up through its associations with the Victorian and Edwardian collectors these scholars critique. The label ‘popular music’ is also used on occasion, but has far less currency because of its association with Victorian music hall songs, American ballads and ‘pop’ music.⁴²

Cecil Sharp’s definition, with its criteria of communal creation, continuity via the oral tradition, variation by singers and selection by the community, was enormously influential and remained so for most of the twentieth century.⁴³ It was further refined by the International Folk Music Council in 1954 into a form still often quoted today:

⁴² Roger Elbourne, ‘The Question of Definition’, *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, 7 (1975), p. 29; Michael Pickering and Tony Green, ‘Everyday Culture: Popular Song and the Vernacular Milieu’, in Dave Harker and Richard Middleton, *Popular Music in Britain* (Milton Keynes and Philadelphia, 1987). Harker’s views are propounded most coherently in Dave Harker, *Fakesong: The Manufacture of British "Folksong" 1700 to the present day* (Milton Keynes, 1985). He accuses the Victorian and Edwardian ‘mediators’ who collected, edited and published folk songs of falsifying the record of workers’ culture expressed in popular songs.

⁴³ Sharp, *English Folk Song, Some Conclusions*, 1954, p. xx.

‘Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: (i) continuity which links the present with the past; (ii) variation which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (iii) selection by the community, which determines the form or forms in which the music survives. The term can be applied to music that has been evolved from rudimentary beginnings by a community uninfluenced by popular and art music and it can likewise be applied to music which has originated with an individual composer and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten living tradition of a community. The term does not cover composed popular music that has been taken over ready-made by a community and remains unchanged, for it is the re-fashioning and re-creation of the music by the community that gives it its folk character.’⁴⁴

Sharp’s friend and biographer Maud Karpeles (1885-1976) added to this the observation that ‘in communities in which there is a strong folk music tradition, a composed song which hits the popular imagination will very quickly be absorbed into the tradition...’ This certainly seems to have been the case with ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’ as well as the numerous broadside ballads in circulation in the nineteenth century, as will become clear in Chapter 3. It is perplexing, therefore, to find Sharp holding that hunting songs are ‘...apparently, not held in high estimation by the folk’, and similarly dismissive of drinking songs, leading to a suspicion that either Sharp’s informants did not represent a wide cross-section of the rural working classes, or that singers ‘edited’ what they presented to him.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ ‘Definition of Folk Music: Resolution from the Annual Conference of the International Folk Music Council, Sao Paulo, Brazil 1954’, *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, 7 (1955), p. 23.

⁴⁵ Maud Karpeles, ‘Definition of Folk Music’, *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, VII (1955), pp. 6-7; Sharp, *English Folk Song, Some Conclusions*, 1954, p. 98.

There appear to have been two main approaches in defining folk songs over the years: one concerned with the internal properties of the songs, particularly their tunes, and the other with cultural background and context. The former approach was taken by Sharp and the Edwardian collectors, most of whom were trained musicians, whilst the latter has been taken by more recent scholars in the field. Matthew Gelbart puts forward an alternative thesis, that folk music as a category was essentially invented in the eighteenth century in binary opposition to art music, while David Gregory believes all definitions are ‘doomed to inconsistency, tautology and ultimately self-contradiction’ as the term covers such a ‘bundle of different usages, folk music and art music being human constructions rather than timeless, objective truths’.⁴⁶ Gregory acknowledges that a singer’s repertoire might incorporate anything from older narrative ballads, folk lyrics with a wide range of themes, occupational songs and popular songs which have ‘won the hearts and minds of successive generations of ordinary people’ - ‘national’ songs like ‘Hearts of Oak’, sentimental ballads such as ‘Sally in our Alley’ and songs connoting ‘Merrie England’ like ‘Greensleeves’ and ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’ – but also maintains that it remains possible to differentiate ‘folk music’ within this wider category of ‘vernacular music’. He likens it to a photograph of an extended family in which you can see the family resemblances even though the features of individuals are different: a core repertoire of songs which everyone can agree upon, but always with some element of disagreement regarding those which hint of other genres.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music'*, pp. 5-6; E. David Gregory, *Victorian Songhunters: The recovery and Editing of English Vernacular Ballads and Folk Lyrics 1820-1883* (Lanham, Maryland, 2006), p. 7.

⁴⁷ Gregory, *Victorian Songhunters: The recovery and Editing of English Vernacular Ballads and Folk Lyrics 1820-1883*, p. 5. Gregory’s ‘family resemblance’ theory, highlighting the lack of boundaries and the distance from exactness which characterise different uses of the same concept derives directly from that put forward by philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1881-1959) in his posthumously published *Philosophical Investigations*. Wittgenstein rejected definitions based on sufficient and necessary conditions, pointing to ‘family resemblance’ as a more suitable analogy connecting particular uses of

It is difficult therefore, if not impossible, to pin down what an ‘authentic’ folk song might actually be, for what one person calls a folk song another would not. ‘Authenticity’ for the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century collectors highlighted a certain aesthetic, notable for its use of musical modes, as the defining feature of folk song, whereas today we would foreground process, performance and social context over form.⁴⁸ Might Hobsbawm’s concept of ‘invention of tradition’, with its consciously constructed continuity with a suitable historic past, then be applicable to folk song? One could make a case for it, except that rather than being invented, folk songs - as we have seen with ‘John Peel’ – draw on what is actually there (a real person, the activity of hunting, for example) but go on to incorporate innovation and evolve over time.⁴⁹ My personal preference with regard to terminology, like folk song scholars David Atkinson and Steve Roud, is to retain the use of the term ‘folk song’, however ambiguous or imprecise, rather than any of the other variants outlined above.⁵⁰ As Roud points out in his introduction to *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, many a song’s significance is fixed only in the context of its use in performance, and his elegantly simple working definition of ‘folk song’ is the one used in this thesis:

Folk songs are learnt and performed by non-professionals in informal, non-commercial settings. They are ‘traditional’ in that they are passed on from person to person, and down the generations, in face-to-face performance. It is not the origin of a song which makes it a ‘folk song’, but the process by which

words. Such words, like ‘folk’ in this instance were seen to have a multiplicity of uses, unfixed outside their inclusion as part of an activity, a concept Wittgenstein called a ‘language-game’. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: 2009), p. 66.

⁴⁸ Pickering, ‘Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England: A Critique’, p. 57.

⁴⁹ Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* p. 2.

⁵⁰ David Atkinson, ‘English Folk Song Bibliography: An Introductory Bibliography Based on the Holdings of the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library’ (London, 2006); David Atkinson and Steve Roud, *Street Ballads in Nineteenth-century Britain, Ireland, and North America* (Farnham, Surrey, 2014), p. 15.

ordinary people learn it, perform it and pass it on. It is therefore not really the song with is 'folk', but the process of learning and performance.⁵¹

(ii) Regional distinctiveness

A major consideration of this thesis is to understand the relationship between folk music and place, and whether the folk songs making up the Cumbrian corpus represent a distinct and distinctive local tradition, evocative of what might be termed a 'sense of place'.⁵² As Pickering notes, 'vernacular cultural practices' such as folk music draw not only on tangible things such as hunts and dialect but also intangibles like nostalgia and pride which, as we have seen, were important in the history of the song 'John Peel'.⁵³

A number of academic studies have maintained that there is something particular and special about a northern place, both in reality and in the conceptualisation of the north in the national imagination.⁵⁴ The north, however, is not uni-dimensional, and despite the pre-eminent image being of an industrialised landscape, the Lake District has always stood out as something of an anomaly, an area with a strong regional identity, much colonised by the middle classes since late 19th century.⁵⁵ The twentieth-century Cumbrian poet and topographical writer Norman Nicholson believed the creation of the county of Cumbria in 1974 made good geographical, social and economic sense, linking the valleys of the central dome with the towns of the surrounding collar, but also felt it helped that 'Cumbria' was an

⁵¹ Steve Roud and Julia Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* (London, 2012), p. xii. This is not of course to say that folk songs have never been performed by professional musicians, as of course they have at times, but rather that their history has involved transmission by non-professionals.

⁵² I will use of the modern county name of Cumbria throughout as a convenient shorthand for the whole area, regardless of date, but retain the old county names of Cumberland, Westmorland and areas of Furness and Yorkshire taken in by Cumbria in 1974 if needing to refer to those as discrete areas.

⁵³ Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England: A Critique', p. 48.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Dellheim, 'Imagining England: Victorian Views of the North.' *Northern History*, no. 22 (1986), pp. 216-30, and Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the National Imagination* (2004), p.37.

⁵⁵ Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination* (Manchester, 2004), pp. 4-5.

attractive and evocative name, redolent with historical associations.⁵⁶ As Angus Winchester points out, the ‘Lake Counties’ of Cumberland, Westmorland and that part of Lancashire lying north of Morecambe Bay, have a perceived unity which long predates the arrival of tourists, as seventeenth-century antiquarian Thomas Machell pointed out: ‘the 2 Sister-Countyes’ of Cumberland Westmorland had been ‘bound together in adversity in the face of attack from Scotland’ since medieval times.⁵⁷

The area’s image undoubtedly owes much to the Lake District becoming the pre-eminent Romantic trope: a place for appreciating the picturesque and the sublime, its image enhanced by Wordsworth and the Lake Poets and artists like Constable and Turner. The increased attention and interest of the leisured and educated classes subsequently led to the development of Lake District tourism, first of all for ‘the growing professional and commercial middle classes’, from the first half of the nineteenth century, and then to railway day-trip excursions for working people from the mill towns of neighbouring Lancashire. Such keen nationwide interest must have been a major factor in stimulating regional pride amongst many living and working in the Lake Counties, as well natives who had migrated out of the area, with all classes of people exhibiting a strong awareness of place, as exemplified in the prevalence of topographic referencing in hunting songs - despite the ‘dilution’ of traditional rural society brought about by in- and out-migration.⁵⁸

Whilst it may be said in that popular imagination an ‘over-simplified and stereotypical place-myth of the Lake District’ prevails, which does not take into account the diverse nature of the life and work of people in a region with a varied topography which includes towns and plains as well as mountains and lakes, the

⁵⁶ Ian Thompson, *The English Lakes: A History* (London, 2010), pp. 11-12.

⁵⁷ A.J.L. Winchester, 'Regional Identity in the Lake Counties: Land Tenure and the Cumbrian Landscape', *Northern History*, XLII (2005), p. 29.

⁵⁸ Marshall and Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century*, pp. 178, 184. Lyn Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties* (Manchester and New York: 1990), p. 100.

stereotype has fed into some locally composed songs, particularly hunting songs and some of those in dialect, as we shall see in Chapter 3.⁵⁹ The geographer Doreen Massey characterises what she calls ‘space’ as a ‘throwntogetherness of multiple meanings and interrelations, of ever-shifting ‘trajectories’ of histories and stories always under construction and in the process of becoming, and this for me certainly typifies the geographic space of the county of Cumbria, but also is a good analogy for folk song performance, especially her concept of the ‘event of place’ - an accumulation of ‘weavings and encounters’ which build up a narrative and a history militating against some ‘romance of a pre-given collective identity or the eternity of the hills’.⁶⁰ Cumbria thus encompasses a multiplicity of experiences, attachments, meanings and associations – mine, yours or those, for example, of fox-hunters and folk singers: all of us attaching our own significances and meanings to it.⁶¹ A major element of this attachment to place is nostalgia for home, much like that felt by the members of the Cumberland Benevolent Society in London described earlier, a requirement of which may be a sense of estrangement, both historically and geographically. Going away to London to study undoubtedly enhanced ‘place attachment’ for me, resulting in my being drawn back by both childhood memories and newer personal – and musical – connections.⁶² Nostalgia can then be seen as a

⁵⁹ Rob Shields, *Places on the margin: alternative geographies of modernity* (London, 1992). pp. 61& 46.

⁶⁰ Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London, 2005), pp. 9, 89, 140-141.

⁶¹ Doreen Massey, 'Power Geometry and a Progressive Sense of Place', in John Bird, *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Exchanges* (London, 1993), p. 62; Jane Howarth, 'In Praise of Backyards: Towards a Phenomenology of Place', *The Thingmount Working Paper Series on the Philosophy of Conservation*, 96-06 (1996), p. 5.

⁶² The term ‘nostalgia’, from the Greek for return home and sorrow or pain, was coined by Swiss doctor Johannes Hofer in 1688, in order to describe the sickness of Swiss mercenaries away from their homes for protracted periods and in the mid-nineteenth century was also applied to country folk newly settled in towns: David Lowenthal, 'Past time, present place: landscape and memory', *Geographical Review*, 65 (1975).. pp.2-4.

driver of personal, family and community narratives, that of ‘John Peel’ being one example, which serve to enhance regional awareness and a deep place attachment.⁶³

(iii) The place of self: the researcher as participant-observer

Home is the place which gives us a ‘point of departure from which we orient ourselves and take possession of the world’, and when we feel at home we experience empathy with that place, an empathy which involves a degree of interrelatedness when we can characterise ourselves as being an ‘individual-in-context.’ In this thesis I am myself situated in context, as a performer and collector who has journeyed from an early fascination with listening to and performing folk music in general, to seeking a repertoire of purely local songs and then going on to study Cumbrian folk music from a more critical, academic perspective. This study of Cumbrian folk song is therefore undertaken as a participant-observer, bringing personal experience of involvement in this ‘life-world’ as an interpretive tool, an approach which I believe offers the possibility of deeper interpretation of the material than the subject-object dualism demanded by the positivist approach adopted in most historical research.⁶⁴

Born and bred in Cumbria, I had from an early age a keen awareness of my family’s historic connections with the county, especially after being told I was related to the iconic Cumbrian figure John Peel, and conscious too of a strong attachment to north Cumbria from my early teens. After learning to play guitar at school, aged fourteen, and inspired by the singing of Joan Baez, I began to explore songs to sing with guitar and became fascinated with Baez’s repertoire of traditional American folk songs which actually had their roots in England and Scotland, which drew me into a

⁶³ H. Proshansky, Fabian, I., & Kaminoff, R., 'Place-identity: Physical world socialization of the self', *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 3 (1983); I.T. Convery and T. Dutton, 'Sense of Place and Community Development in the Northern English Uplands', *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 1 (2006).

⁶⁴ Shields, *Places on the margin: alternative geographies of modernity*, p. 15.

new and compelling world of text and melody.⁶⁵ By the age of seventeen I was performing in local folk clubs, and away at college between 1970 and 1974 at clubs around London. I also joined the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), in whose library (the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library) I first came across songs noted by folk song collectors in Kendal and Carlisle in the early twentieth century. It was a revelation and an inspiration and set me off on a mission to learn these songs and make them better known to folk audiences.

Back home in college holidays I became involved with the folk music ‘sessions’ (informal song and tune sharing evenings) at the Sun Inn at Ireby, a village nestling amongst the northern fells of the Lake District. Here I met other singers with an interest in local music, including the late Angie Marchant and Paul and Linda Adams, who went on to found Fellside Recordings and record many local songs. Here too I was introduced to local hunting songs, ballads set in the Cumbrian-Scottish border lands and songs in dialect, and in addition forged many lifelong musical and personal relationships. The warmth of the musical and social scene and sense of belonging I experienced there made the old pub, the village of Ireby and by extension the landscape and heritage of Cumbria in general, hugely influential in my decision to return to Cumbria after completing my studies in London in 1974. Coming back inevitably felt like a homecoming and precipitated a flurry of activity not only for me as a performer but also as a researcher of Cumbrian folk music. My involvement in the ‘life-world’ of Cumbrian folk music now spans over forty years, during which time I have built up a substantial archive of songs, tunes, dances and folk plays, and with the more concentrated focus on folk song required by this thesis I have been able

⁶⁵ *The Joan Baez Song Book*, (New York, 1964).

to build up and interrogate the most complete collection of Cumbrian song to be found anywhere.

(iv) Folk song collectors and folk revivals

This study of Cumbrian folk songs needs to be placed within the wider context of folk music in England, from the first stirrings of interest following the publication of Percy's *Reliques* in 1765, which captured the imagination of the public and inspiring literary and antiquarian interest in ballads by Wordsworth and the Lake poets, and later Sir Walter Scott and the American scholar Francis James Child.⁶⁶ The main thrust of folk song collection and revival, however, came in the 1890s and lasted until around 1920, prompted by the desire on the part of the English musical establishment to seek out an authentically English national music. Most of the well-known folk song collectors and leading lights of the Folk-Song Society (founded 1898) were also professional musicians, notable amongst them Cecil Sharp, Lucy Broadwood, Percy Grainger and Ralph Vaughan Williams, many of whom went on to publish and arrange the songs for wider audiences. In recent years scholars like Michael Pickering and Georgina Boyes have criticised the ways that our English folk song heritage has come down to us through the mediation - and, they argue, appropriation - of middle- and upper-class outsiders, with even the so-called 'second folk revival' of the 1940s and 1950s which allowed for a much wider range of songs, doing little to redress the balance.⁶⁷ More recently, the early twenty-first century has seen a resurgence of interest in English folk music by young professional performers who, like the early revivalists, are seeking to establish a clear English musical identity

⁶⁶ "I do not think there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the *Reliques*," Wordsworth notes in his 'Essay Supplementary to the Preface' in Ernest de Selincourt, *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* Vol 2 (Oxford, 1944), p.245. Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* was published in 1798, Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802 and Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* 1882-1898.

⁶⁷ Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England'. pp.54; Georgina Boyes, *The Imagined Village* (Manchester, 1993).

within global, European and British contexts, while folk song scholarship is revealing the extent to which cheap print has proved influential in the transmission of songs as well as challenging previous definitions of folk music, as we have seen.⁶⁸

Chapter 2 will briefly review the national picture outlined above and then go on to study the interest in folk songs and their collection in Cumbria from the early nineteenth century, when dialect poet Robert Anderson documented the popular contexts in which folk music was performed and also composed songs which were later absorbed into the Cumbrian canon. At the beginning of the twentieth century middle-class musicians like Mary Wakefield, Anne Gilchrist and Sidney Nicholson - all enthusiastic members of the Folk-Song Society - were inspired by the national revival to seek out any folk songs remaining in the Cumbrian countryside, while renewed interest in local dialect in the mid-twentieth century produced another clutch of local song collectors, many also performers, who did much to add to and shape the Cumbrian corpus. These issues are considered in more detail in Chapter 2,

(v) The Cumbrian corpus

There is, as noted earlier, a dearth of regional and local studies of nineteenth-century amateur music-making across ‘culturally distinct’ geographical areas and communities incorporating in-depth considerations of repertoire within a chronological framework.⁶⁹ This thesis will hopefully go some way to redress the balance, exploring songs which seem to constitute a distinct corpus which has at times, as with the example of ‘John Peel’, been mobilised and re-constructed to evoke and develop a strong sense of regional identity since the late eighteenth century. A detailed description and analysis of the Cumbrian corpus (Appendix 1) makes up

⁶⁸ Trish Winter and Simon Keegan-Phipps, 'Performing Englishness in New English Folk Music and Dance' (Sunderland, 2010).

⁶⁹ Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England', pp. 38, 50, 55; Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, p. 214-215 - although the examples given are the usual ones of Northumberland and Lancashire.

Chapter 3, revealing both the heterogeneity of the regional repertoire and also the extent to which certain types of local song predominate, leading on to Chapter 4's consideration of the unique repertoire of Cumbrian dialect songs.

(vi) Performance contexts: singers and audiences

Because folk music is inevitably a performed genre, it is essential to look at its social basis, at who performs it to whom within different Cumbrian communities, and how folk songs has been perpetuated by individuals in a variety of different communities.⁷⁰ Such detailed studies of specific singing occasions of the past, and indeed the present, have been relatively few and far between, and it may be that only in analysing and focusing on song performances as context-specific events can we come to understand the variety of songs performed within the singing tradition of the region, the uses to which songs are put and their reception 'within the specific lived cultures' of which they were an integral part.⁷¹ These questions are considered in detail in Chapter 5, exploring how performances occur in different contexts, some informal, some formal, and some falling somewhere in between.

(c) Methodology

The methodological approach to this study is two-fold, one quantitative and the other qualitative. The first has comprised compiling a searchable database of folk songs which have been recorded as being sung in Cumbria over the past 250 years, mainly from manuscript and print sources, including 'street literature' (a generic term used for cheaply printed broadsides, small chapbooks and more substantial 'songsters') held in national and local archives and libraries as well as private collections - including my own - as well as some from audio recordings. Songs are

⁷⁰ Bohlman, *The study of folk music in the modern world*, p. 54.

⁷¹ Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England', pp. 41, 48, 50.

listed alphabetically by title, classified by type and subject matter (hunting songs, dialect songs, broadside ballads etc), dated where possible and potential origins noted where these can be ascertained. The database includes 1010 references to some 515 songs, representing a repertoire of great variety, albeit with hunting songs and dialect songs making up at least a third of the corpus.⁷² The songs included are those regarded as folk songs by singers themselves, collectors and commentators and includes hunting songs (sometimes with known composers), dialect songs (almost all with known composers) and a few songs written in the past thirty years which fit the fairly fluid definition of folk song outlined above.

A substantial proportion of the songs have been sourced from manuscript collections such as those at the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library in London as well as from the personal archives of local performers such as Bruce Wilson of Swarthmoor, the late Stuart Lawrence of Dalton-in-Furness and the late Wesley Park of Whitehaven, which have only recently come to light. However, by far the greatest number come from printed collections dating from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth century and the many broadside and chapbook ballad collections printed in and/or circulating in the county throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many of these songs have their origins in the London stage or pleasure gardens, brought to the county by touring theatres, which penetrated even quite remote areas, and by the ballad singers and sellers who travelled to markets and fairs in the county.⁷³ Other sources include both archive and commercial audio recordings

⁷² Appendix 1.

⁷³ The Roud Broadside Index lists 488 songs from broadsides published in Cumberland and Westmorland, including 140 songs in the Bodleian Ballad Collection at Oxford University printed and distributed by printers in Carlisle, Keswick, Penrith and Kendal and over 40 songs from the Madden Collection at Cambridge University by printers in Wigton and Whitehaven, <http://www.vwml.org/search/search-roud-indexes?roudredirect=1&ts=1470083953804&collectionfilter=RoudBS#>, accessed on 23 May 2015. The extensive broadside and chapbook collections in the Jackson Library, within Carlisle Library (M174 and M1087) feature some songs from

of Cumbrian singers and regional and local radio broadcasts, from 1940 to circa 1978, and also those songs collected through my own personal contact with singers in the 1970s.

Contextualisation is presented both in Chapter 2, with its brief review of folk song collection, revivals and scholarship, and in Chapter 5 on performance contexts, drawn from a wide range of sources including contemporary reports in books and newspapers, concert programmes, correspondence, dialect poetry, recordings and personal interviews with singers and collectors. However, this thesis is also a personal and community narrative and as such requires a more ethnographical approach: a participant-observation or phenomenological study from the standpoint of my own involvement in the 'life-world' of Cumbrian folk music. In his essay *The Origin of the Work of Art* Heidegger says: 'Upon the earth and in it, historical man grounds his dwelling in the world. In setting up a world, the work sets forth the earth.' 'World' for Heidegger means the whole of the significant relationships we experience - with things, with places and with other people: we are then 'being-in-the-world'.⁷⁴ Acknowledging the inter-relatedness of person and environment as both a collector and performer of folk songs, living in my own community, in a place I call home, I am in the world, one which I am now also studying. A key part of the phenomenological method involves putting aside the subject/object positivist position

Carlisle and Newcastle printers, but most are song texts found all over the country with very few featuring local content. Ballad sellers crop up in contemporary newspaper reports, including itinerant fiddler and ballad seller Jimmy Dyer of Carlisle (1841–1903), well-known for his appearances at hiring fairs and markets according to *The Carlisle Journal*, 27 January 1895, which says he travelled most days to the villages around Carlisle and was well-known by all the farmers: 'They ask for the news and Jimmy gives it them like the old Scotch town pipers, and thus the frequent visits of our virtuoso means the city and the country are kept in touch.' Dialect poems like *Rosley Fair* by John Stagg (1805) and *Idylls of a North Country Fair* by Jonathan Denwood (1916) also reveal ballad singers and sellers at work, while Charlotte Deans' *Memoirs* of 1837 vividly depict the travels of a small theatre company touring towns and villages in northern England and Scotland providing entertainment which included popular dances and songs of the day.

⁷⁴ Martin Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings* (London, 1951), pp. 139-212, pp. 141, 172.

in favour of a careful and reflective description of personal experience, alongside personal interviews with key individuals involved with the same life-world, with the aim of facilitating the acquisition of a deeper understanding of songs, singers and performance contexts.⁷⁵

I have therefore adopted a position akin to that the phenomenological geographer Edward Relph calls ‘empathetic insideness’ for my research: a close identification with place allied with an awareness of the richness of its meanings and significances for the people and communities within it. This does not, however, imply less academic rigour, but rather the analytic ideal of ‘getting close to the lived realities of popular song in vernacular milieux’ in order to explore its significances and contexts on its own home ground.⁷⁶ There are precedents for this type of approach within folk music scholarship, notably the work of Professor Ian Russell, who has studied and been involved with Pennine singing groups – hunt singers and Sheffield village carol singers - for almost forty years. Reflecting on his research role, Russell observes that it is not possible to take a neutral stance ‘as it is in the nature of pub-based traditions that everyone present participates’. But while a self-conscious reflexive stance is inevitable, this also requires ‘constructing the narrative, via stringent analysis, categorising, recognising relationships, building meaning and hopefully providing insights.’ He also notes that ‘a degree of “reciprocity” is fundamental to the relationship’ between the fieldworker and singer/subject, whereby a ‘common interest in musical traditions becomes a shared interest, as the distinctions between insider and outsider become transcended or tend to disappear altogether.’ This reciprocity is something I have found invaluable in my own research when

⁷⁵ Shields, *Places on the margin*, p. 15; David Seamon, 'Phenomenologies of Environment and Place', *Phenomenology and Pedagogy* 2 (2002), <http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/articles/seamon.html>, accessed on 23 September 2009..

⁷⁶ Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London, 1976), p. 54; Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England', pp. 37-38.

talking - and singing - with older singers and informants, particularly hunt followers as the sharing of stories, family history, songs and tunes often opens doors which might otherwise remain closed to an 'outsider'.⁷⁷ This stance has, however, posed some problems in terms of writing a thesis, particularly in deciding when the use of the personal pronouns 'I', 'me', 'we' and 'us' is appropriate, and when it is not. As Fay Hield notes in her 2010 thesis on folk singing communities, also written from a participant-observation standpoint, it is necessary to write in different registers according to what aspects of the music are being considered.⁷⁸ To a great extent it depends on whether or not one is/I am discussing the quantitative elements of the research such as descriptions of the songs and their collection and performance - Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 in contrast to this first chapter and the conclusions in Chapter 6, which relate more to my own experience of performances, and so contain more in the way of personal pronouns. I hope that slipping in and out of different registers, depending what is being discussed, does not prove too confusing for the reader.

⁷⁷ Ian Russell, 'Working with Tradition: Towards a Partnership Model of Fieldwork', *Folklore*, 117 (2006), pp. 15-16, 23.

⁷⁸ Fay Hield, 'English Folk Singing And The Construction Of Community' (Sheffield University, 2010). Unpublished PhD thesis.

Chapter 2: FOLK SONG COLLECTORS, REVIVALS AND SCHOLARSHIP

In order to underpin my research into folk songs found in Cumbria and the creation of a Cumbrian folk song corpus, it will first be necessary to place folk song as a separate musical genre in its historical context. Accordingly, this chapter looks first at the history of folk song collection, revival and scholarship in England from the nineteenth century through to the late twentieth century, and moves then on to a study of folk song collection in Cumbria in order to see to what extent the regional picture mirrors the national picture. The chapter closes with a brief commentary on the evolving nature of folk song scholarship, including recent re-evaluations of folk music revivals in England.

(a) Context and history

(i) Early antiquarian and literary interest

The study of ‘folklore’, a term first used in 1846 by antiquarian William Thoms, formally began with the founding of The Folklore Society in 1878, some twenty years before the formation of The Folk-Song Society in 1898.¹ The methods and concepts of both societies were dominated by the widely accepted theory of ‘cultural evolution’ propounded by the anthropologist Edward Tylor (1832-1917), which saw Darwinian theories of evolution applied to culture and folklore, with folk songs then seen as ‘survivals’ from earlier, simpler cultures, superseded by more complex human societies.² By the end of the nineteenth century this evolutionary model of folk culture, ‘rooted in ideas of community, stability and ethnic purity’,

¹ Thoms wrote an article entitled ‘Folklore’ in *The Athenaeum* magazine 26 August 1846, in which he wrote that ‘Popular Antiquities, or Popular Literature’ would be ‘most aptly described by a good Saxon compound, Folk-Lore—the Lore of the People’.

² Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London, 1871).

became the foundational concept of the Victorian folk music revival, reflecting also something of the Romantic idea of the ‘noble savage’ and perhaps too a quest for a mythical lost Golden Age which, as Raymond Williams has observed, is actually a myth which dates beyond Virgil to the Greek bucolic poets, and probably many centuries before that.³ A folk culture which emphasised tradition as ‘treasured antiquity’ lent an air of authenticity to a particular construction of Englishness which was eagerly seized upon by the late Victorian collectors of folk songs.⁴

Although folk song collection as a movement began to take shape in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, its intellectual roots go back into the eighteenth century and the publication in 1765 of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* by Thomas Percy (1729-1811), compiled from a folio of ballads dating from the seventeenth century.⁵ Very different from the standard poetry of the time, the *Reliques* captured the Zeitgeist of Romanticism and ‘famously galvanized the British antiquarian frenzy’, to quote Matthew Gelbart. The antiquarians and ballad scholars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, inspired by a combination of literary and nationalist motives, were primarily interested in the texts of ballads, not in their tunes nor the contexts in which singers were learning and performing them, in contrast to the musicological approaches of the Edwardian collectors and the ethnomusicological and sociological approaches more common today.

Gelbart holds that Scotland was at the heart of early Romanticism and the first discussions in English of ‘national music’, noting that Scottish editors were already moving in this direction, publishing numerous collections of Scottish music before the

³ George Revill, ‘Vernacular culture and the place of folk music’, *Social and Cultural Geography*, 6 (2005), p. 694; Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London, 1973), pp. 13-14.

⁴ T. Winter and S. Keegan-Phipps, *Performing Englishness: Identity and Politics in a Contemporary Folk Resurgence* (2013), p. 14.

⁵ Steve Roud, ‘General Introduction’, in Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* (London, 2012) p. xiv.

nineteenth century whereas little seems to have been published in England, with the notable exceptions of John Playford's *The English Dancing Master* and *Musick and Mirth* (1651), and Thomas d'Urfey's popular *Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1698-1720).⁶ This latter mainly comprised a collection of broadside ballads, including 'The Cumberland Lass' along with songs from other regions as well as 'Scotch' songs, published with tunes, many of which were quarried by John Gay for his *Beggar's Opera* in 1728.⁷ Meanwhile, in Scotland, the eighteenth century was a real heyday in the publication of song collections, with Allan Ramsay's *Scots Songs* (1719), *Tea-Table Miscellany: A collection of choice Songs Scots and English* (1724-27) and his pastoral play *The Gentle Shepherd* (1725) proving popular on both sides of the border, along with David Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs* (1776) and James Johnson's *The Scots Musical Museum* (1787-1803), to which Robert Burns (1759-1796) was an enthusiastic contributor, and which included Border Ballads such as 'Johnnie Armstrong', with tunes as well as words.

Percy's *Reliques*, however, remains the seminal work of English Romanticism, establishing the ballad as a valid literary form, setting the stage for Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* and the work of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832). Other collections soon appeared, including those of Stockton-born Joseph Ritson (1752-1803), a critic of Percy who aimed for a more scientific approach to the recovery and publication of old songs and ballads. His *Select Collection of English Songs in Three Volumes* of 1783 was unusual in including tunes for some of the songs, and he went on to publish a number of collections of ballads from the north east England,

⁶ Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music'* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 32; G.A. Macfarren, 'The national music of our native land (concluded)', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 14 (1870).

⁷ Thomas D'Urfey, *Pills to Purge Melancholy* (London, 1719-20), p. 133. Songs of rustic life in general were frequently styled 'Northern' or 'Scotch', whether or not they did hail from those parts, from at least the 1650s.

including *The Bishopric Garland or Durham Minstrel* (1784) and *The Northumbrian Garland, or Newcastle Nightingale* (1793), which included popular narrative ballads such as 'Chevy Chase' and 'Geordie'. No collection, however, proved as popular and influential as the *Reliques*, that is until the publication of Sir Walter Scott's three volume *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802.⁸

An Edinburgh lawyer and keen antiquarian as well as an author and poet, Scott shared Ritson's contempt for 'penny pamphlets' and 'printed sheets', because of their 'great corruption', being purely commercial, non-literary publications.⁹ His *Minstrelsy* comprised historical ballads, romantic ballads and more recent ballad imitations drawing on many sources, including his own early collecting from people in the Borders area, as well as songs and ballads offered to him by friends and acquaintances, those sent by his correspondent Mrs Brown of Aberdeen and unpublished items from Herd's collection. Ballads were also sourced from the so-called Glenriddell manuscript compiled by Robert Riddell, an antiquarian friend of Burns, which Scott borrowed from its then owner, the Carlisle antiquarian and publisher Francis Jollie.¹⁰ Like Percy and Burns before him, Scott's editing included a strong element of his own creative imagination as a writer, a practice disapproved of by Robert Southey (1774-1843), who followed Sir Walter Scott as Poet Laureate and criticised Scott for mixing 'polished steel and rusty iron', that is, words both antique and modern.¹¹

In the north of England, Newcastle-based bookseller and collector John Bell (1783-1864) published his *Rhymes of Northern Bards* in 1812, including a number of

⁸ Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music'*, pp. 10-11,82.

⁹ Dave Harker, *Fakesong: The Manufacture of British "Folksong" 1700 to the present day* (Milton Keynes, 1985)p. 60.

¹⁰ David Hewitt, 'Scott, Sir Walter (1771-1832)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004). James A. Mackay, 'Robert Riddell of Glenriddell (bap. 1755, d. 1794)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004).

¹¹ Richard M. Dorson, *The British Folklorists - A History* (London, 1968), p. 92.

popular dialect and work songs like ‘Weel May the Keel Row’, ‘Bobby Shaftoe’ and ‘The Colliers Rant’. Another important early nineteenth century collection was the three volume set of *The Universal Songster, or Museum of Mirth*, published 1825-1826. The books were in part modelled on D’Urfey’s *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, publishing popular song lyrics of the time alongside a number of eighteenth century songs and a few from earlier centuries. The songs were organised by themes like ‘Ancient’, ‘Irish’, ‘Sentimental’, ‘Military’, ‘Scotch’ and ‘Yorkshire and Provincial’, and a number had named authors, including the theatre impresario Charles Dibdin, Robert Burns and the Cumberland poet Robert Anderson.

The first stirrings of interest in collecting songs directly from singers themselves began around this time, initially confined to isolated individuals including the northern collector/publisher John Bell, referred to above, and the working class poet John Clare (1793-1864). However, the great majority of scholars and publishers of ballads, inspired by a combination of literary and nationalist motives, were still primarily interested in the texts of songs rather than the tunes, the singers nor the contexts in which the songs were learned and performed, in marked contrast to the musicological approaches of the Edwardian collectors and the ethnomusicological and sociological approaches more common today.¹² And indeed texts were still the main area of interest when we come to the most influential ballad collector-editors of the late nineteenth century, the American scholar, Harvard Professor of English Literature Francis James Child (1825–1896), whose magnum opus *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, published in five volumes between 1882 and 1898, set the scene for folk song scholarship for many years to come, with his numbering system for ballads

¹² Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. xvi.

still used as a reference tool today.¹³ Child aimed to select only ‘authentic’ copies of ballads - meaning no overtly edited texts or ballads from broadside collections, which he famously referred to as ‘veritable dung-hills, in which, only after a great deal of sickening grubbing, one finds a very moderate jewel’.¹⁴ Child did, however, reprint ballads from Percy’s *Reliques* and Scott’s *Minstrelsy*, which were very much edited by their compilers, and his sixth volume also incorporated a number of Border ballads including ‘Johnnie Armstrong’, ‘Hughie the Graeme’ and ‘Hobie Noble’. Few tunes were included in his collections, making Bertrand Bronson’s monumental *Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads*, published in four volumes between 1959 and 1972, a necessary companion to Child.¹⁵

(ii) The Victorian and Edwardian folk revival

Notwithstanding the publication of John Broadwood’s *Old English Songs* in 1847, albeit for private circulation, the beginning of the ‘methodical collection of folk-songs’ is usually dated to 1889, when Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould published his *Songs and Ballads of the West*, followed soon after by Lucy Broadwood and J.A. Fuller Maitland’s *English County Songs* in 1893 although in fact very few of the songs in these collections were collected direct from singers, most being contributed by friends and informants of the compilers.¹⁶ The publication of Child’s *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* must have provided further impetus to what became in the last decade of the nineteenth century a distinct movement dedicated to finding a truly national English music. In part, this was motivated as a response to the derision of

¹³ Francis James Child, *The English and Scottish Ballads* (Boston, 1882-1898). It is only in recent years that Child’s classification system has been largely superseded by Steve Roud’s Folk Song Index and Broadside Index, which incorporate a far wider range of song types,:

<http://www.vwml.org/search?ts=1467978709786&collectionfilter=RoudFS;RoudBS> (Roud Folk Song and Broadside Indexes) Revill, ‘Vernacular culture and the place of folk music’, p. 694.

¹⁴ From a letter sent by Child to Svend Grundtvig in Copenhagen, 25 August 1872, quoted by Sigurd Bernhard Hustvedt in *Ballad Books and Ballad Men* (Boston, 1930), p. 254.

¹⁵ Bertrand Bronson, *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads, with Their Texts, According to the Extant Records of Great Britain and North America* (Princeton and Berkeley, 1959-1972).

¹⁶ Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London, 1964), p. 23.

England as ‘das Land ohne Musik’ by the Germans.¹⁷ There also seems to have been general unease that music in England was dominated by foreigners, with a concomitant awareness that there ought to be an English music, so in 1898 The Folk-Song Society emerged as ‘one of a range of remedial measures intended to resolve what had taken on the aspect of a serious national deficiency.’¹⁸

Antiquarians, educationalists and musicians were all attracted to the ranks of the Society, whose primary purpose was stated as ‘the collection and preservation of Folk-songs, Ballads, and Tunes, and preservation of such of these as may be deemed advisable.’¹⁹ The musical establishment positively embraced the new society – the composers Hubert Parry, Charles Villiers Stanford, John Stainer and Edward Elgar were all founding members – and it was a key characteristic of this new wave of folk song collectors, in marked contrast to the earlier antiquarian collectors, that they were first and foremost musicians, enamoured with the tunes of traditional folk songs and with little or no interest in the words, or indeed the singers.

Their vision of the English countryside as the heart of national identity and fount of a pure, traditional form of song with its roots in antiquity was clearly articulated by Parry in his inaugural speech to the Folk Song Society in 1898:

I think I may premise that this Society is engaged upon a wholesome and seasonable enterprise. For, in these days of high pressure and commercialism [...] there is an enemy at the door of folk-music which is driving it out –

¹⁷ The title of an anti-English polemic published in 1904 before the First World War by a scholar named Oskar Adolf Hermann Schmitz, picking up on ideas propounded by music critic Carl Engel in the nineteenth century. Carl Engel, 'The Literature of National Music (continued)', *The Musical Times*, 19 (1878). pp. 484-487.

¹⁸ John Francmanis, 'The Folk-Song Competition: An Aspect of the Search for an English National Music', *Rural history* 11 (2000), p. 181, quoting from Robert Stradling and Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance 1860-1940: Construction and deconstruction* (London & New York, 1993), p. 12.

¹⁹ 'A Folk-Song Function', *The Musical Times*, 40 (1899). pp. 168-169.

namely, the popular songs of the day – and if we compare the genuine old folk-music with the songs that are driving it out, what an awful abyss appears! [...] The old folk-music is among the purest products of the human mind. It grew in the hearts of the people before they devoted themselves assiduously to the making of quick returns. In the old days they produced music because it pleased them to make it, and because what they made pleased them mightily, and that is the only way in which good music is ever made [...] Moreover it is worth remembering that the great composers of other countries have concentrated themselves upon their folk-music. The true test of style must lie in folk-music, for style is national.²⁰

The Folk Song Society's leaflet *Hints to Collectors of Folk Music* laid down the recommended methods for collecting folk songs, noting that: 'although folk music may be preserved in different strata of society, the classes from which the most interesting specimens are most readily to be obtained are gardeners, artisans, gamekeepers, shepherds, rustic labourers, gipsies, sailors, fishermen, workers at old-fashioned trades, such as weaving, lace-making, and the like, as well as domestic servants of the old school, especially nurses.' Its journals, published from 1899 to 1931 - before amalgamation with the English Folk Dance Society to become the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) in 1932 - reveal a rich store of songs and scholarship, with contributions from Lucy Broadwood, Frank Kidson, Anne Gilchrist, Cecil Sharp and composers Ralph Vaughan Williams and Percy Grainger – all of whom went on to collect songs in Cumbria in the first decade of the twentieth century.²¹

²⁰ 'A Folk-Song Function', p. 168.

²¹ Kate Lee, *The Folk Song Society: Hints to collectors of folk music* (London, 1898).

The Society aimed only to publish songs whose music had never previously appeared in print as members of the society, particularly Cecil Sharp (1859-1924), regarded printed broadside and chapbook ballads as debased commercial urban intrusions, despite the fact that they had existed almost since the beginning of printing and formed a sizeable part of the repertoire of country singers.²² Lucy Broadwood (1858-1929), a founder member of the Folk Song Society who later became Secretary as well as editor of its journal, aimed to include in her folk song books only unpublished songs which her correspondents sent to her.²³ For Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) too, arguably England's greatest composer, a friend of both Broadwood and Sharp and President of the EFDSS from 1932 until his death, it was the tunes which had primacy, particularly those showing traces of some antiquity. Vaughan Williams went to collect over 800 folk songs from 1903 to 1909, using folk tunes in many of his most famous works.²⁴ Meanwhile, antiquarian and collector Frank Kidson (1855-1926) of Leeds was almost alone in being happy to publish songs from printed broadsides, whilst also noting that the melodies were 'always traditional, wherever the words came from,' and Australian composer and pianist Percy Grainger (1882-1961) also departed from orthodoxy in 1906 by using an Edison cylinder phonograph when collecting folk songs from country singers, enabling him to make audio recordings of the songs whilst also noting the style of a singer's performance.²⁵

²² Frank Howes, 'Cecil Sharp', in Stanley Sadie, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* (London, New York, Hong Kong, 1980), pp. 231-232; Neil V. Rosenberg, *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined* (Urbana and Chicago, 1993); Michael Heaney, 'Sharp, Cecil James (1859-1924)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online edition, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36040>, accessed on 22 May 2011.

²³ Dorothy de Val, 'Broadwood, Lucy Etheldred (1858-1929)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004); Lucy E. Broadwood and J. A. Fuller Maitland, *English County Songs* (London, 1893); Lucy E. Broadwood, *English Traditional Songs and Carols* (London, 1908).

²⁴ Alain Frogley, 'Williams, Ralph Vaughan (1872-1958)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004).

²⁵ Frank Kidson and Mary Neal, *English Folk-Song and Dance* (Cambridge, 1915), p.10; Roy Palmer, 'Frank Kidson (1855-1926)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004). Frank

Cecil Sharp was undoubtedly the most prolific and influential collector of the first quarter of the twentieth century, noting down close to 5,000 tunes in a twenty-year period, in both England and the Appalachian Mountains in the USA.²⁶ Primarily an educationalist, he joined the Society in 1901 and was keen to have folk music taught in schools. Often a controversial figure, he became embroiled in a very public argument with Charles Villiers Stanford and Arthur Somervell, Director of the Board of Education, over their recommended list of ‘national or folk-songs’ for school use, believing that ‘national’ songs should not be conflated with pure folk songs. Stanford went on to edit and publish the songs as *The National Song Book* in 1906, making clear his view that ‘the tradition had to be shaped and controlled to present a particular set of political and social values’ - a travesty to Sharp.²⁷

Sharp set out his credo in *Folk Song: Some Conclusions* in 1907, holding to the view that folk song was the result of ‘communal creation’ through a process of evolution by rural communities, and idea taken on by his followers, including his assistant, biographer and executor Maud Karpeles (1885-1976) who continued his work after his death in 1924, becoming the first Honorary Secretary of the EFDSS in 1932. Karpeles was also secretary of the International Folk Music Council (IFMC) - later the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) - which in 1954 debated and published the definition of ‘folk music’ discussed in the previous chapter.²⁸

In recent years, the Edwardian collectors, in particular Sharp, have been subject to a number of revisionist critiques which will be considered later in this chapter. It remains the case, however, that whatever the shortcomings of the collectors

Kidson, *Traditional Tunes* (Oxford, 1891); Malcolm Gillies, 'Grainger, Percy Aldridge (1882–1961)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

²⁶ Michael Heaney, 'Sharp, Cecil James (1859–1924)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004, online at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/36040>, accessed 9 Dec 2010.

²⁷ C. J. Bearman, 'The English Folk Music Movement', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Hull, 2001), p. 178.

²⁸ Sharp, *English Folk Song, Some Conclusions*, 1954, p. xx.

of the so-called ‘first revival’, their great achievement was to raise public awareness of a previously neglected musical heritage.²⁹

(iii) The second folk revival: continuity and change

The Folk Song Society and its successor the English Folk Dance and Song Society had broad support from members of the musical establishment, particularly those of the English pastoral school such as Vaughan Williams, and the Society regularly organised dances, displays, competitions, festivals and teaching during the first half of the twentieth century. However, in the post-war years the cultural landscape changed, the classical musical establishment lost interest in folk song, it was generally assumed that few traditional singers and songs were still to be found in the countryside, and by 1930 the main protagonists like Sharp, Kidson and Broadwood had died. In addition, American popular music - ragtime, jazz, swing - became ubiquitous via commercial recordings, the radio and the cinema. Visiting Blackpool in 1934, the writer J.B. Priestley had opined that post-First World War England did not seem to fit in with the other two Englands he had identified in his travels - an older pastoral England and a nineteenth-century industrial one. It belonged instead simply to ‘the age itself rather than this particular island. America, I supposed was its real birth-place.’³⁰ It is ironic, therefore, to note that it was the arrival in London of American folk singer, collector and broadcaster Alan Lomax (1915-2002) in 1950 which was to a great degree responsible igniting renewed interest in folk music: Steve Roud goes so far as to say that it was Lomax who suggested ‘the deliberate founding of a Folk Revival in Britain, and the idea spread very quickly.’³¹

²⁹ Bearman, *The English Folk Music Movement*, p. 209.

³⁰ J.B. Priestley, *English Journey* (Ilkley., 1934), p. 321.

³¹ Roud, ‘General Introduction’, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. xxiv.

Another major factor in the revival was the skiffle music boom which swept the country 1954 - 1958, enhancing interest in American folk music and, crucially, also creating a new and youthful audience for a music 'sufficiently home-made to offer opportunities for participation for those precluded from the domain of mass market popular music movement' – a counter-culture further reinforced after 1958 with the rise of the left-wing peace movement, when English as well as American singer-songwriters wrote protest songs, famously singing them on the marches to the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Research Establishment from 1958.³² This folk revival with its youth-based and counter-cultural do-it-yourself ethos, although extremely diverse in its manifestations – American music, skiffle, the use of guitars to accompany folk songs, political protest songs and left-wing singer-songwriters - did however retain some continuities with the early twentieth century interest in folk music.³³ The construction of a canon of English folk songs for performance by the main protagonists of this second folk revival, for example, was actually 'quite close in content' to that of the first - with the addition of industrial song, promoted assiduously by A.L. Lloyd and Ewan MacColl.³⁴

A.L. (Bert) Lloyd (1908–1982) was an ethnomusicologist, journalist and broadcaster, who first came across traditional songs whilst working in Australia.³⁵ On his return to England in the early 1930s he joined the Communist Party, and in 1944 under the aegis of the Workers' Music Association published *The Singing Englishman*, later expanded into *Folk Song in England*, in which he defined the sub-

³² David Gregory, "'The songs of the people for me": The Victorian Rediscovery of Lancashire Vernacular Song', *Canadian Folk Music/Musique Folklorique Canadienne*, 40 (2006).

³³ Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. xxiv.

³⁴ David Atkinson, 'Revival: genuine or spurious?', in Ian Russell and David Atkinson, *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation* (Aberdeen, 2004), pp. 153).

³⁵ Vic Gammon, 'Lloyd, Albert Lancaster (1908–1982)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50988>, accessed 9 Dec 2010.

genre he identified as ‘industrial folk song’, to some extent already mapped out in his book of colliers’ songs, *Come All Ye Bold Miners*.³⁶ In some ways a bridge between the first and second folk song revivals, Lloyd also collaborated with Vaughan Williams in 1959 on *The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* and was influential in the creation of the ‘folk scene’ in the 1950s and 1960s as a folk song scholar and mentor to a number of revival singers, as well as ‘quite a showman and something of a tinkerer and fabricator.’³⁷

Ewan MacColl (1915–1989), a trades union activist, actor, playwright and songwriter as well as folk-singer, worked from 1952 onwards to establish a folk song movement in Britain, not as a quaint historical curiosity but as an expression of working-class culture. His *Radio Ballads*, broadcast on the BBC Home Service 1958-1964 to great critical acclaim, dealt with the everyday lives of British workers, from railwaymen to fishermen. MacColl and his third wife Peggy Seeger went on to record many albums together and from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s ran The Critics Group in London, critiquing folk singers using performance techniques, and participating in left-wing political activities.³⁸ The influence of Lloyd and MacColl brought with it a new emphasis on ‘authenticity’ of performance and repertoire, which led to the EFDSS’s previously favoured style of performance - songs performed on the concert platform, accompanied by piano - being derided and ultimately fading away. New challenges and opportunities arose as folk music reached out to a mass audience via radio and recordings, especially those of Alan Lomax, which played an

³⁶ A. L. Lloyd, *Folk Song in England* (London, 1967). Lloyd defined ‘industrial folk song’ in this book as ‘the kind of vernacular songs made by workers themselves directly out of their own experiences, expressing their own interest and aspirations, and incidentally passed on among themselves by oral means.’ (p.323) A. L. Lloyd, *Come All ye Bold Miners: Ballads and Songs of the Coalfields* (London, 1952).

³⁷ Vic Gammon, ‘One hundred years of the Folk-Song Society’, in Russell and Atkinson, *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation*, p. 22.

³⁸ Robin Denselow, ‘MacColl, Ewan (1915-1989)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004, rev. 2007).

important role in ‘making people aware of the depth and richness of folk cultures’ and stirring up interest in the traditional songs and music of Britain.³⁹

One of those keen to take advantage of the new media was **Peter Kennedy** (1922-2006), son of EFDSS Director Douglas Kennedy, who was himself a keen performer and collector.⁴⁰ Kennedy was seconded from the EFDSS to the BBC in 1952 in order to record songs, music and interviews around Britain as part of the Corporation’s innovative *Folk Music and Dialect Recording Scheme*. The scheme’s aim, according to Head of Programme Recorded Library Marie Slocombe, was to collect in recorded form as much surviving folk music and local forms of speech as possible, for the purposes of broadcasting: ‘The collectors, in judging whether material merited their attention, were advised to ask themselves two questions. First, is it authentic from the folklore point of view? Second, is the sound produced likely to be acceptable for broadcasting?’⁴¹ A collection of some 3,300 items was ultimately garnered from over 700 informants, some of the material then featured in five series of the radio programme *As I Roved Out*, broadcast between 1953 and 1958, with Peter Kennedy a frequent performer and presenter.⁴² Although the scheme has been described as ‘sweeping rather than systematic’ with relatively few field trips to the north of England, although Kennedy did visit Cumberland, Westmorland and Yorkshire to record a few singers and musicians in 1958, after the official end of the

³⁹ E. David Gregory, 'Lomax in London: Alan Lomax, the BBC and the Folk-Song Revival in England, 1950-1958', *Folk Music Journal*, 8 (2002), p. 160.

⁴⁰ Gwilym Davies, 'Peter Kennedy (1922-2006)', *Folk Music Journal*, 9 (2008), pp. 583-484.; Roy Palmer, 'Peter Kennedy: A Personal Memoir', *Folk Music Journal*, 9 (2008), pp. 487-488.

⁴¹ Marie Slocombe, 'The BBC Folk Music Collection', *The Folklore and Folk Music Archivist*, 7 (1964), p. 5; Craig Fees, 'Appreciation of Marie Slocombe, 1912-1995', *Folk Music Journal*, 7 (1996). Pp.272-273

⁴² David Gregory, 'Roving Out: Peter Kennedy and the BBC Folk Music and Dialect Recording Scheme, 1952-1957', in *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival and Re-Creation* (Aberdeen, 2004), pp. 218-240. In addition, three recordings were made in 1940: ‘The Crack of the Whip’ (‘Joe Bowman’), ‘The Ploughing Song’ and ‘Sally Gray’, recorded from unnamed singers at Ambleside. This version of ‘Sally Gray’ is the only recorded instance of the tune noted by Mary Wakefield which Lucy Broadwood published in *English County Songs* (London, 1893), p. 52.

Recording Scheme.⁴³ However, his relationship with the BBC was an uneasy one, as a letter of 1964 reveals, saying he was; ‘becoming somewhat of an embarrassment to Marie Slocombe ...’. Similarly, it seems, with the EFDSS as his obituarist notes that ‘his relationship with the EFDSS was never easy and he left that organisation in 1967’, with much of this disquiet aparently revolving around issues of ownership of the copyright on his field recordings after he set up a commercial company Folk Trax to distribute them.⁴⁴

By the mid 1960s the surge of popular interest in folk music saw folk clubs spring up in towns and cities the length and breadth of the UK, with folk performers like Martin Carthy, Dave Burland, Peter Bellamy figureheads of an increasingly professionalised folk scene. Two divergent trends gradually became evident: one favouring traditional music and the other ‘contemporary folk’ - generally meaning singer-songwriters performing acoustic music in a simple folk style. Folk song, it seems, had become a genre - a style of material and performance, neatly pigeon-holed as such by and for the commercial record industry. By 1966 some clubs had closed but many new ones opened, featuring ‘almost as many kinds of music as there are clubs’, but showing some growth of interest in traditional singing styles and, by way of contrast, a renewed enthusiasm for ‘instrumental music in traditional style.’⁴⁵ In employing folk professionals who made their living from folk singing the clubs functioned as a cash economy, but still reflecting their participatory roots by foregrounding conviviality and accessibility over formal concert style.⁴⁶ By the early 1970s the increased upsurge of interest in instrumental folk music saw a drift away

⁴³ Tony Black, 'Auntie's Hidden Treasures', *English Dance and Song*, Autumn 2002, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁴ *Letter to Frank Gillard re. Peter Kennedy*, BBC Written Records Archive, Peter Kennedy files; Derek Schofield, 'Obituary: Peter Kennedy', *The Guardian* (2006), p. 35.

⁴⁵ *The Folk Directory* (London, 1966).

⁴⁶ Niall MacKinnon, *The British Folk Scene: Musical Performance and Social Identity* (Buckingham and Philadelphia, 1993), p. 67.

from weekly folk song clubs and renewed interest in folk dance, with many ‘folkies’ joining ceildh bands and morris, sword and clog dance teams, and informal folk music ‘sessions’ in pubs and weekend folk festivals became more popular.

From the 1960s onwards the new wave of folk singers of the second revival were able to learn their songs from a multiplicity of sources, including published or recorded collections, although a few still went back to the few ‘source’ singers who were still alive, as well as the early twentieth century recordings preserved in the EFDSS sound archives at Cecil Sharp House in London. Meanwhile the record label Topic, with A.L. Lloyd as its artistic director and a stated mission to ‘present to the people their rich musical inheritance’, provided material for the new professional singers as well as facilities for them to make recordings, further spreading interest in the folk songs of Britain.⁴⁷

(b) Folk song revivals and collectors in Cumbria

The Edwardian collectors Cecil Sharp, Frank Kidson, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Percy Grainger all made brief visits to Cumberland and Westmorland, in pursuit of their rescue mission: to secure from the pressures of industrialisation and urbanisation folk songs and dances which they felt were already to be found only at the social and geographical margins. The folk song aficionados and collectors Mary Wakefield in Kendal, Anne Gilchrist from north Lancashire and Sydney Nicholson in Carlisle were critical local contacts and correspondents.

The late eighteenth century had already aroused interest in all things northern, the Romantic movement driving keen antiquarian interest in ballads, particularly as some of the best-known early collectors and publishers of ballads were northerners

⁴⁷ David Suff and Tony Engle, *Three Score and Ten: Topic Records - A Voice to the People* (London, 2009).

Joseph Ritson, Thomas Percy and Francis Jollie of Carlisle, with the birth of Lake District tourism also promoting interest in the north. From 1780 to 1850, there was also a flowering of pastoral dialect poetry from Cumbrian writers Josiah Relph, Ewan Clark, Susannah Blamire, Robert Anderson, Mark Lonsdale and John Stagg, which drew an enthusiastic local following. By 1830 the fells, lakes, whitewashed farmhouses and sheep of Cumberland and Westmorland had become well-known nationally through Lake District tourism, although as Marshall and Walton note, the society of the Lake Counties was in reality made up of a much wider range of landscapes, communities and distinctive spheres of activity from the shepherds of the fells to the miners and mill hands of the towns of the coastal areas and plains.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, it was primarily the rural, pastoral communities of Cumberland and Westmorland the antiquarians, folklorists and musicians sought to quarry for folk music. Engel's suggestion in 1878 that 'a really musical collector' would have some success in the country's more isolated districts had evidently been taken to heart.⁴⁹

The region was not actually as isolated as one might think, and although many of the working classes would not have moved around to any great extent, there is no reason to suspect that localism precluded the growth of wider awareness.⁵⁰ Music certainly did travel around: the Lake Counties of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a strong tradition of itinerant fiddlers and dancing masters who brought the latest dances and tunes to even the remotest of communities, while hawkers of broadside ballads like the notorious Jimmy Dyer of Carlisle took songs and news from far and wide to markets and fairs, and travelling theatre companies toured the villages

⁴⁸ Marshall and Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change*, p. 21; C.M. L. Bouch, G.P. Jones and R.W. Brunskill, *A Short Economic and Social History of the Lake Counties, 1500-1830* (Manchester, 1961), p.1.

⁴⁹ Engel, 'The Literature of National Music (continued)', p. 33.

⁵⁰ Marshall and Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change*, p. 14.

bringing songs, tunes and dances often quite recently performed on London stages.⁵¹ Later in the nineteenth century the printed song collections of ‘Sidney Gilpin’ (publisher George Coward) in Carlisle and Stokoe and Reay in the north east found good local audiences, and major national collections began to include folk songs from Cumbria – the first being Lucy Broadwood’s *English County Songs*, which contained ‘Sally Gray’ from Cumberland and ‘A North-Country Maid’ from Westmorland’.⁵² Unlike Sharp, Kidson, Grainger and Vaughan Williams, Broadwood never ventured north herself, relying instead on correspondents like Mary Wakefield in Kendal and Carlisle Cathedral organist Sydney Nicholson to provide her with material. Various other local collectors were active in the period up to the 1920s, including Anne Gilchrist in Westmorland and William Metcalfe, John Graham and Jeffrey Mark in Cumberland, while from 1930 onwards folk song collecting and performing was largely the preserve of members of the Lakeland Dialect Society, including Jonathan Mawson Denwood, Frank Warriner, Robert Forrester and Joe Wallace – the latter two coming to the fore particularly through their audio recordings and broadcasts in the 1950s and 1960s, and inspiring later folk music performers and collectors, including Geoff Wood from Leeds and, in Cumbria, Paul and Linda Adams, Angie Marchant and myself.

(i) Early twentieth century: Westmorland

The two principal figures responsible for collecting, promoting and publishing folk songs from Westmorland are musicologist and singer Anne Gilchrist and singer

⁵¹ The best study of Lakeland dancing masters is J.F. Flett and T.M. Flett, *Traditional Step Dancing in the Lake District* (London, 1979). For Lakeland fiddlers see A. G. Gilchrist, 'Some Old Lake-Country Fiddlers and their Tune Books', *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society*, 1 (1939), p.16. Invaluable information on travelling theatres can be found in Frances Marshall, *A Travelling Actress in the North and Scotland: Charlotte Deans (1768-1859) a Commentary on the Story of a Travelling Player* (Kendal, 1984).

⁵² Sidney Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland, to which are added Dialect and other Poems, with Biographical Sketches, Notes, and Glossary* (Carlisle, 1866); John Stokoe and Samuel Reay, *Songs and Ballads of Northern England* (London and Newcastle, 1893); Broadwood and Fuller Maitland, (*English County Songs*

Mary Wakefield, founder of the Westmorland Music Festival. This festival featured an annual Folk-Song Competition from 1902 to 1906 at which Cecil Sharp and Frank Kidson acted as judges, while Percy Grainger followed up one of the competition singers, John Collinson of Kirkby Lonsdale, collecting songs from him in 1909.

Mary Augusta Wakefield (1853-1910) of Sedgwick near Kendal was a trained musician from a middle-class local family and a friend of John Ruskin, for whom she often sang at Brantwood. She is best known for inspiring the competitive music festival movement, with the overall aim of improving the musicality of the population, and founded the Kendal Musical Competition (later The Westmorland Festival) in 1885.⁵³ Typically for the time, hers was a life combining privilege and restriction - 'the opposites of the Victorian coin for a middle class lady' - so although she had studied music in London under Grieg, a career as a professional musician was not open to her, so she concentrated her energies instead on working in the cause of regenerating national music through her Westmorland Festival.⁵⁴ When she retired from running the festival single-handedly in 1900, passing on the responsibility to a committee, the music press of the time praised her work, noting that: 'A district reputed to be unmusical has, in this way, gained an almost national reputation for its enthusiasm for musical study and ability in execution.'⁵⁵

⁵³ 'Wakefield, Mary', in *Oxford Music Online*, ed. Michael Kennedy (2016), <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.lancs.ac.uk/view/article/36040>, accessed on 21 June 2016. The festival is still a feature of the musical life of Cumbria, held at Kendal bi-annually, now called The Mary Wakefield Festival. See also Rosa Newmarch, *Mary Wakefield, A Memoir* (Kendal, 1912). Although brass band competitions can be dated back to 1845 they are largely, like brass bands themselves, a phenomenon of the industrialised areas of the North and Midlands. They also had quite a different ethos, outside the classical music establishment and with an emphasis on entertainment: see Dave Russell, *Popular music in England 1840-1914: A Social History* (Manchester, 1987), pp. 206-207.

⁵⁴ Christine Cathrow, *Mary Wakefield, Westmorland Centenary Festival, History 1885 - 1985* (Kendal, 1985).

⁵⁵ W. G. McN., 'Miss Wakefield', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 41 (1900), p. 529.

Hers was not the first competitive music festival, but was certainly the first to include a folk song competition in its programme, in 1902.⁵⁶ Other music festivals which took up the baton and ran their own folk song competitions include those at Frome (1904), Brigg (1905-6, 1908), Retford (1907) and Stratford-on-Avon (1911) as well as, very briefly, one at Carlisle in 1906.⁵⁷ Wakefield's obituary in *The Folk-Song Journal* of 1910 describes her as 'the greatest force in the musical competition festival movement in this country', adding that while she may not have been an important collector of folk-songs, she was nonetheless one 'who took an active part in making them known.' On the face of it at least Mary Wakefield's folk song competition was an inspired method of gathering 'raw material': no need to go out collecting songs if you could get the singer to come to you.⁵⁸

The declared aim of the competition was to discover the best unpublished 'Country Dialect Song' handed down traditionally and orally in any one of the six northern counties or as Frank Kidson, the first judge of the competition, put it: 'to elicit and rescue some of the unpublished Folk Songs, most of which are held only in that fragile keeping – the memories of old people fast passing away ... It is well known that many of these ditties still linger in the Northern Dales.'⁵⁹ It was important to appoint a judge who had a thorough knowledge of printed sources and the committee chose well in Frank Kidson, who had a wide knowledge of printed sources as well as folk songs collected orally.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ The first competitive musical festival was that instigated by composer and conductor Henry Leslie, a friend of the Wakefields, who founded the Oswestry Festival of Village Choirs in 1879 and with whom Mary Wakefield stayed in 1884. Newmarch, *Mary Wakefield, A Memoir*, (Kendal, 1912), p.79.

⁵⁷ Roy Palmer, 'An Era of Song, Ninety Years Ago', *English Dance and Song*, 56 (1994), p. 14.

⁵⁸ Dr W.G. McNaught, 'Mary Augusta Wakefield', *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* Vol. 4 (1910); Francmanis, 'The Folk-Song Competition: An Aspect of the Search for an English National Music', p. 186.

⁵⁹ A. M. and Kidson Wakefield, Frank, *Westmorland Musical Festival Folk Song Book* (Kendal, 1903).

⁶⁰ Wakefield, *Westmorland Musical Festival Folk Song Book*.

At the first competition Kidson gave a long introduction about the nature of folk songs, which he believed were different from other national lyrics in belonging to no known composer, having ‘sprung to the lips of some person almost unconsciously’. He did accept though that the words were more fixed than the melodies, having ‘almost always’ been printed on ballad sheets. Outlining his judging criteria, he said the song must be old enough to have been sung in the northern counties for at least two generations and possess an old tune, unpublished to the present. The most interesting song to fulfil these criteria would win first prize, especially if the words as well as the tune had not been published before, even if the words might be found on ‘an early ballad sheet’.⁶¹

Of the ten entries that first year only three fitted his criteria, the others being disqualified on account of prior publication, including Mr Henderson’s ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’ and Mr Turnbull’s ‘Canny Auld Cummerlan’, both written by Cumberland dialect poet Robert Anderson. The winner was Miss Hayhurst of Milnthorpe with ‘Sledburn Fair’, second was Miss Germain’s ‘Holm-Bank Hunting Song’ and third Mr C.J. Cropper’s ‘A Hunting Song’ (although this was not, as Kidson remarked, a specifically local song).⁶²

The Competition was held again the following year, with Kidson again judging. Nine competitors entered but only six turned up, and once again a song was disqualified because it had been published before. *The Musical Times* reported that: ‘The folk-song competition, begun last year, was resumed with good results, Mr. F. Kidson, of Leeds ... disqualifying some excellent songs as having been published, but finding three excellent ones well worthy of prizes – ‘Poor Old Horse’, ‘Swarth Fell

⁶¹ Francmanis, 'The Folk-Song Competition: An Aspect of the Search for an English National Music ', p. 189.

⁶² Kidson's report quoted in Wakefield, *Westmorland Musical Festival Folk Song Book*, p. 3.

Rocks' and 'The Cartmel Hunting Song.'⁶³ All the songs later featured in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, and Kidson commented in a letter to Anne Gilchrist in May 1903 that, 'The Folk Song thing passed off very nicely but unfortunately some who were put down for songs didn't turn up. I gave the first prize to a very nice set of 'Poor Old Horse' with a very marked "flattened seventh".⁶⁴ A *Folk Song Book*, price 3d, was also published that year published with words and music of the three winning songs from 1902, and the words of the 1903 entries, which in addition to the three winners were 'Tarrie Wou', 'Farewell to Longsleddal', 'The Ploughing Match', 'Axes to Grind', 'It's Nobbut Me' and 'Ground for the Floor' – these last three having remained unsung, as their singers withdrew. In a foreword to the book, Mary Wakefield exhorted readers to 'ransack their country surroundings' in an attempt to collect more old tunes and verses.⁶⁵

In 1904 *The Musical Times* reported that: 'The speculative and highly interesting folk-song competition produced six competitors. None of their 'finds' were of exceptional interest, but Mr Frank Kidson of Leeds, ... had no difficulty in awarding the prize to the Rev. T. Heelis, Vicar of Crosthwaite.'⁶⁶ The winning song was 'The Old Dun Cow', and John Collinson of Casterton, who entered three songs, won second prize with 'In Yon Land'. As one of the competitors had withdrawn through illness, there were just five competitors, and *The Westmorland Gazette* reported that Mr. Kidson 'would like to have heard a little better selection, because he was sure in Kendal they had a lot of good songs if they could only get the right people to come forth and sing them ... Of course in these old folk songs the main thing they

⁶³ 'Competitions', *The Musical Times*, 44 (1 June, 1903).

⁶⁴ Letter from Kidson with report on Kendal Folksong Competition, VWML, Gilchrist Collection AGG/2/671.

⁶⁵ Wakefield, *Westmorland Musical Festival Folk Song Book*, p. 2.

⁶⁶ 'our special correspondent', 'Musical Festival', *The Musical Times*, 45 (1 May, 1904).

had to look at was the melody. The words generally were not very good, but some of the melodies of the real old folk songs were very nice.⁶⁷

In 1905 the Westmorland Festival Committee offered a cash prize in the Folk Song Competition, in an attempt to attract more songs and singers after the disappointing showing of the previous year and the incentive worked to some extent, as the number of entries rose to eleven songs sung by eight singers. The Committee appointed Cecil Sharp as judge, whether this was because Kidson was unavailable or because Sharp's national profile as a collector, publisher and educationalist was high in 1905 is unclear. *The Westmorland Gazette* reported that Sharp found the entries a 'most interesting' lot of songs, far better than the printed words had led him to expect (once again proving it was primarily the tunes which were of interest). His comments on the entries show him either damning with faint praise – 'a popular theme, but there was nothing much about the tune' – or damning entirely: 'this is not a folk song' or was 'not of the type that the folk really cared about.'⁶⁸ As Francmanis remarks, Kidson's level of clarity and knowledge was hardly emulated by Sharp, whose comments show that he had far less knowledge on printed sources than Kidson, and made derogatory comments about published songs, or songs he perceived as being 'popular' (in the sense of 'common'). The two men also differed in their notions of what 'folk song' represented: to Kidson it was, like dialect and folk-lore, valuable for its own sake whilst for an educationalist like Sharp it had instead become 'an ideologically charged instrument for shaping the national future.'⁶⁹ The first prize was awarded to John Collinson of Casterton for the 'Walney Cockfighting Song', whose tune Sharp thought 'a very fine one indeed'.

⁶⁷ 'Westmorland Musical Festival', *The Westmorland Gazette* (16 April, 1904).

⁶⁸ 'The Westmorland Festival', *Westmorland Gazette* (6 May, 1905).

⁶⁹ Francmanis, 'The Folk-Song Competition: An Aspect of the Search for an English National Music', pp. 196-197.

In 1906 Sharp was once again invited to be judge with, the Committee Minutes reveal, Mary Wakefield's friend Lucy Broadwood as second choice.⁷⁰ However there were only six entrants for the competition, three of whom scratched on the day, with the remaining four people singing nine songs between them: Miss Cookson's song 'Early Early' was sung instead by Rev T Heelis, who also sang 'Sweet Primeroses' and 'The Seeds of Love' (none particularly local songs, although Sharp remarked that the tune for the latter was very fine and interesting). The other entrants were once again Mr Collinson of Casterton plus Mr Sisson of Leasgill and Mr Barrow of Brathay. Rev. T. Heelis won once again, with Mr Sisson's 'The Squire's Daughter' second.

After 1906 the Westmorland Festival became a biennial event, and the Folk Song Competition was discontinued, the organisers presumably believing that the pool of unpublished folk-songs awaiting recovery was almost exhausted. In an article in the *Leeds Mercury* in 1907 Kidson wrote an appreciation of Mary Wakefield and the competition, where for several years 'quaint songs from the dales were rendered by the people who had learned them traditionally.'⁷¹ Although it ran for just five years the folk song competition did yield some 36 songs, five of which went on to be published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, from nineteen different singers - albeit many if not most of them far from 'peasant' or working class: the Reverend T. Heelis, for example, was a member of the Folk Song Society and vicar of Crosthwaite, near Kendal, while some of the lady entrants were middle-class musical friends of Miss Wakefield.⁷² The festival did however bequeath a lasting legacy, inspiring a

⁷⁰ Westmorland Musical Festival: Letter Books, CASKAC, WDSO, 11/1/2.

⁷¹ Francmanis, 'The Folk-Song Competition: An Aspect of the Search for an English National Music', p. 186.

⁷² Frank Kidson and Lucy E. Broadwood, 'Songs Sung in the Folk-Song Competitions at the Kendal and Frome Festivals, 1904', *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, 1 (1904), pp. 258-263.

similar competition at Carlisle and also bringing the Kirkby Lonsdale singer John Collinson to the notice of folk song collectors Anne Gilchrist and Percy Grainger.⁷³

Anne Geddes Gilchrist (1863–1954) of Southport, a trained singer and a musicologist, was persuaded by Frank Kidson in 1905 to join the Folk-Song Society and in 1906 she was invited to join the Editorial Board of the Society's journal, to which she contributed 40 articles, the last in 1950. The bulk of her collecting was done in the short period between about 1890 and 1910, and it is only in recent years that her scholarship and erudition have been recognised as she never published a book of her own research or collecting, and her journal contributions were mostly identified simply with the initials A.G.G.⁷⁴ The Gilchrist Collection at the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML), now digitised as part of *The Full English* project, contains hundreds of items, including correspondence with people in Cumberland and Westmorland, including would-be collectors Elsie W. Brunskill of Crosthwaite and J.E. Christopher of Maryport, and those seeking information on local songs like Catherine Crosland, who thanks Gilchrist for sending a copy of the 'Cock Hagg' tune as 'Anything that concerns Westmorland is of great interest to me ...'. There is also a copy of a letter to music critic Frank Howes from Mary Spence of Patterdale, enclosing the song 'Benjamin Bowmaneer', noted by her aunt in Sedbergh around 1790, as well as a long correspondence about the Elterwater fiddler William Irwin and transcriptions from tune books belonging to Irwin and other Lakeland fiddlers.⁷⁵

⁷³ Kidson and Broadwood, 'Songs Sung in the Folk-Song Competitions at the Kendal and Frome Festivals, 1904'; Cecil J. Sharp and others, '[Various Songs]', *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, 2 (1905); Frank Kidson and others, 'Yorkshire Tunes', *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, 2 (1906).

⁷⁴ Catherine A. Shoupe, 'Anne Geddes Gilchrist: an assessment of her contributions to folk song scholarship', in Ian Russell and David Atkinson, *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival and Re-creation* (Aberdeen, 2004), pp. 253 - 265.

⁷⁵ Letter with clog steps and song, VWML, Gilchrist Collection, AGG/7/10; letter from J. E. Christopher of Maryport re. collecting songs, AGG/2/127; letter from Mary E. Spence to Frank Howes re. Benjamin Bowmaneer, AGG/10/34; letter from Catherine Crosland about Cock Hagg tune, AGG/7/13B; letters about fiddler William Irwin AGG/7/5, AGG/7/61, AGG/7/3, AGG/7/7.

In June 1909 Gilchrist visited the Kirkby Lonsdale area, where she noted twenty songs, some of which later appeared in Folk-Song Society journals, from three singers: Mrs Carlisle, aged 88 and carpenter James Bayliff, aged 70, of Barbon, and the Kirkby Lonsdale blacksmith John Collinson, then aged 47, from whom she collected seven songs.⁷⁶ A well-known local character, Collinson was a farmer and dealer as well as a blacksmith, a singer and a poet who, according to his grandson John, sent his poems regularly to both local and national newspapers and also wrote some verses ‘inscribed to the 21st Westmorland Musical Festival’.⁷⁷ Gilchrist simply says that Collinson had a fine ear for a song, ‘some education’ and a keen interest in singing, having entered three songs in the Folk-Song Competition in 1904, gaining second place with ‘In Yon Land’, and performing two songs in 1906. His greatest triumph though came in 1905 with ‘The Wa’ney Cockfeightin’ Song’ or ‘Walney Cockfighting Song’ - a localised version of the widespread broadside ballad known as ‘The Charcoal Black and the Bonnie Grey’ - with which he won first prize. Collinson told Gilchrist he had learned his winning song especially for the competition from his wife’s father as he thought it had a good chance of winning a prize. Setting off on foot to Hutton Roof, but ‘alas, when he arrive the old cocker had forgotten the song. It was three days before his son-in-law’s patience was rewarded by the return of the old man’s memory. Then, secure with it in his own, the blacksmith brought the song home. But, as he remarked, it cost him more than the value of his prize in loss of work through absence.’⁷⁸

Composer and folk song collector **Percy Grainger** (1882-1961) also took an interest in John Collinson, visiting him in October 1905 - the year of his triumph in

⁷⁶ Tunes to songs collected in Westmorland, VWML, Gilchrist Collection, AGG/3/59; notebook ‘Words to Songs’, AGG/8/5 Vol III,

⁷⁷ Sue Allan interview with John Collinson’s grandson John at Kirkby Lonsdale, 1 October 2013.

⁷⁸ Anne Geddes Gilchrist, ‘Some Old Westmorland Folk-Singers’, *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society*, (1942), p. 8.

the folk song competition - and noting down a total of twelve songs. Grainger is well-known for his pioneering work in recording singers with an Edison cylinder recording machine, but sadly did not take it to Kirkby Lonsdale, instead transcribing into his notebooks Collinson's songs: 'Ah Teks Efter me Feyther', 'Apron Strings', 'The Beadle of the Parish', 'Ga Wi' Me T'Farleton', 'Hoo Happy We Lived Then', 'I Wonder What's Keepin' My Love', 'In Yon Land', 'Middleton Ha' Clipping', 'Billy Taylor', 'Peace Eggin' Song', 'Up Step'd Jack' and 'Wa'ney Cockfeightin' Song'.⁷⁹

(ii) Early twentieth century: Cumberland

In the north of the region, **William Metcalfe** (1830-1909), although born and brought up in Norwich, became a figure central to the musical life of Carlisle in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in many different spheres: as cathedral lay-clerk, organist, conductor of Carlisle Choral Society and of course as the composer who arranged and popularised 'D'Ye Ken John Peel'. In many respects he laid the groundwork for the collectors of the early twentieth century, arranging a number of Cumberland dialect songs and ballads which the Choral Society performed in their concerts. He was also friend and mentor of **James Walter Brown** (1851 -1930), to whom he bequeathed his music, which included sacred pieces, 'parlour' songs and his published series *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, which included 'John Peel', Anderson's 'Sally Gray' and 'Reed Robin', Alexander Craig Gibson's 'Lal Dinah Grayson' and 'Jwohnnny Git Oot', Susannah Blamire's 'The Waefu' Heart' and Rev T. Ellwood's 'Welcome into Cumberland', as well as arrangements of 'John Peel' for

⁷⁹ Percy Grainger Manuscript Collection in *The Full English Collection*, online at VWML, <http://www.vwml.org>; Ruairidh Greig, 'Joseph Taylor from Lincolnshire', in *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation* (Aberdeen: 2004), pp. 386-392, (p. 389). The North Lincolnshire Musical Festival introduced a folk song competition in 1905, which ran for two years. The 1905 winner was Joseph Taylor who seems to have been, like Collinson, a well-thought-of performer in his local area. His 'Brigg Fair', noted down and recorded by Grainger, led to some local celebrity and national interest in Taylor.

four voices and for the piano.⁸⁰ In a chapter about Metcalfe in his book *Round Carlisle Cross*, Brown describes him as ‘almost the last survivor of the group of men who did so much for the entertainment and musical education of Carlisle, a group which included Robert Lattimer, whose younger brother William was the person from whom Metcalfe famously collected ‘John Peel’.’⁸¹ Brown’s papers reveal his own keen interest in Border ballads with a Carlisle connection, drawing on Percy’s *Reliques* and Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in his notes on ‘Hughie the Graeme’, ‘Hobbie Noble’, ‘Graeme and Bewick’, ‘The Sun Shines Fair on Carlisle Wall’ (based on the traditional ballad ‘The Cruel Mother’, but written by Scott) and ‘Kinmont Willie’. Brown also produced a booklet, in manuscript, of *Traditional Ballad Tunes*, including ‘Adam Bell’, ‘Hughie the Graeme’, ‘Hobbie Noble’, ‘Dick o’ the Cow’, ‘Graeme and Bewick’, ‘Kinmont Willie’ and ‘The Lochmaben Harper’ most apparently copied from Stokoe and Reay’s *Songs and Ballads of Northern England*.⁸²

Robert Lattimer (1825-1901) and other members of his family seem to be key ‘tradition bearers’, in carrying forward into the twentieth century folk songs current in Carlisle in the nineteenth century. The son of a building contractor, Robert became, like Brown, a white-collar worker, employed in the accounts department of Ferguson’s textile printing works in Carlisle alongside his younger brother William. A founder member of Carlisle Choral Society in 1854, he was its secretary when Metcalfe was appointed conductor later that year. His singing of Cumberland dialect songs apparently never failed to delight audiences, with particular favourites being ‘Canny oald Cummerlan’, ‘Lal Dinah Grayson’ and ‘Jwohnnny Git Oot’.⁸³ The ‘Miss

⁸⁰ William Metcalfe, *The works of William Metcalfe Vol.II* (Carlisle and London, 1870 - c.1900).

⁸¹ Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross*, (Carlisle, 1950), pp. 206-211.

⁸² *Papers of James Walter Brown*, Jackson Library, Carlisle, D23.

⁸³ James Walter Brown, 'Robert Lattimer', *Round Carlisle Cross*, pp. 107-112.

Lattimer' mentioned in reports of the 1906 Folk Song Competition in Carlisle was Robert's daughter, while the T. Lattimer who corresponded with Lucy Broadwood, sending her the tune of 'King Roger' in 1909, was her brother.⁸⁴

The first notable collector of folk songs in Cumberland in the twentieth century however was **Sydney Nicholson** (1875–1947), Acting Organist at Carlisle Cathedral.⁸⁵ Nicholson became interested in folk songs in 1905, corresponding with Lucy Broadwood about the Folk-Song Society, which he joined that year, and sending her the tunes of some Cumberland songs sung for him by James Walter Brown.⁸⁶ Of the ten tunes he sent, it is interesting to note that eight of them are by Cumberland dialect poet Robert Anderson (1770-1833), whose songs remained popular in Cumberland throughout the nineteenth century and beyond. These are: 'Elizabeth's Birthday', 'Sally Grey' (Gray), 'The Worton Wedding', 'Barbary Bell', 'Bleckel Murry Neet', 'Geordie Gill', 'Canny Cumberland' and 'Rob Lowry', and the remaining two being 'King Henry my Son' and a version of 'The Pace Egging Song'. In his covering note, Nicholson promises to send over 'Anderson's book' for the words, as he had noted only the tunes, claiming the old words had become irretrievably lost 'like practically all those up here' after Anderson became the favourite Cumberland poet, and wrote for the local old airs.'⁸⁷ This is something of a misunderstanding on Nicholson's part, however, as there were no 'old words' lost: Anderson simply designated well-known Scottish airs for his ballads, much in the

⁸⁴ *Tune for King Roger noted by T. Lattimer*, VWML, Lucy Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/357.

⁸⁵ Nicholson was also conductor of Carlisle Choral Society, and went on to become Organist of Manchester Cathedral in 1908 and Westminster Abbey in 1919. In 1929 he founded the Royal School of Church Music and was knighted in 1938 for services to church music; 'Sydney Nicholson', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/101035231/Sydney-Nicholson>, accessed on 23 October 2010.

⁸⁶ Letter from Sydney Nicholson to Lucy Broadwood re. joining Folk Song Society 11 October 1905, VWML, Lucy Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/359.

⁸⁷ Note with songs sent by Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle, VWML, Lucy Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/351. Robert Anderson (1770-1833) was the most popular and prolific of Cumberland dialect poets and a number of his songs went into the tradition, and still performed as late as the 1960s.

manner of Burns.⁸⁸ Three of the Anderson songs transcribed by Nicholson - 'Bleckell Murry Neet', 'Sally Gray' and 'Canny Cumberlan'' along with 'King Henry My Son', taken down by Miss Lattimer from the singing of Mr Lattimer and communicated by Nicholson - went on to be published in *The Journal of the Folk-Song Society* in 1907.⁸⁹ It is interesting to note the difference in the attitude to Anderson's songs, disqualified by Kidson from the Kendal Folk-Song Competition in 1902, but now seemingly regarded as folk songs worthy of inclusion in the Folk-Song Society's journal. His songs and influence on the Cumbrian corpus are examined in detail in Chapter 4.

In 1906, inspired either by the positive reception to the songs he sent or by the success of Mary Wakefield's folk song competition, Nicholson was encouraged to start a folk song competition of his own as part of the Carlisle and District Musical Festival, offering a prize of £1 (donated by Nicholson himself) for 'the best genuine folk-song from the six northern counties.'⁹⁰ *The Carlisle Patriot* reported that the adjudicator Mr A. Foxton Ferguson opened the event with a talk on 'Songs of the People', and the competition attracted seven singers, singing between them nine songs – of which no fewer than seven were by the popular early nineteenth century dialect poet Robert Anderson (1777-1933). Mr J.W. Brown sang Anderson's 'The Worton Wedding' while Mr J. Carruthers contributed 'Barbary Bell' and 'Gwordie Gill', but the first prize went to 'King Henry, My Son', sung by young chorister Master T. Grierson. *The Patriot* went on to say that 'there must be many other fine examples of folk songs still surviving in the remoter districts within the county, which had been recorded... and their value to the archaeologist and to musicians striving towards a

⁸⁸ Robert Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect, with Notes and a Glossary* (Carlisle and London, 1805). Many subsequent editions were published throughout the nineteenth century.

⁸⁹ *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, Vol 3, No.10 (1907), pp. 282-299.

⁹⁰ 'Carlisle and District Musical Festival', *Carlisle Patriot* (19 January, 1906).

form of national music must be incalculable.’ There followed a plea from Sydney Nicholson, who was ‘especially interested in saving from oblivion such examples of music as were known to our forefathers’. He said he would be pleased to arrange to meet any singers to ‘take down the airs’ if they would kindly get in touch: ‘None need hesitate to come forward because they are uncultured singers, as by far the greatest number and the finest examples of folk songs have been obtained from people who knew nothing of the art of the music.’⁹¹ It is somewhat ironic then to note that the songs Nicholson collected were not from ‘uncultured’ singers, but almost entirely from Carlisle Choral Society members Metcalfe, Brown and the Lattimer brothers – plus one young Cathedral chorister.

In 1907 *The Carlisle Patriot* reported with regret that Sydney Nicholson’s efforts in collecting folk songs had ‘scarcely met with the success they merited’, and although the prizes he offered at the previous year’s Festival had drawn several competitors, the competition was abandoned because there were so few entries. The article ends with another plea from Nicholson who was ‘especially interested in saving from oblivion such examples of music as were known to our forefathers’, and that ability to sing should bar no one from coming forward as ‘by far the greatest number and finest examples of folk songs have been obtained from people who knew nothing of the art of the music.’⁹² Thus the Carlisle Folk Song Competition sank with barely a trace, although Lucy Broadwood did publish ‘King Henry, My Son’ - as sung at the festival, its air sent to her by Miss M.B. Lattimer - in her *English Traditional Songs and Carols* in 1908.⁹³

Lucy Broadwood largely relied on correspondents sending her material, but the composer **Ralph Vaughan Williams** on the other hand most certainly went into

⁹¹ 'Folk Song Competition', *Carlisle Patriot* (23 February, 1906).

⁹² 'Folk Songs in Cumberland', *Carlisle Patriot* (28 June, 1907).

⁹³ Broadwood, *English Traditional Songs and Carols* (London, 1908), pp. 96-99.

the field collecting: a total of 810 songs over a period of seven years from 1903 to 1913 in fact, from all over the country. In the summer of 1904 while in Yorkshire to work on his choral symphony, he fitted in some folk song collecting, travelling over to the village of Dent in the Yorkshire Dales (now Cumbria) noting down some reels, a hornpipe and the song ‘Tarry Woo’ (‘Tarry Wool’) from a Mr John Mason. Two years later, in summer 1906 whilst staying with friends in Newcastle he collected songs in Northumberland and is also recorded as noting seven songs from a Mr Carruthers in Carlisle on 9 August.⁹⁴ Sydney Nicholson was organist at Carlisle Cathedral at the time, so it seems likely that it was he who alerted Vaughan Williams to the singer and the songs - some of the same Anderson ballads Nicholson himself transcribed.⁹⁵ No biography of Vaughan Williams mentions his travelling to Carlisle but the visit is recorded in a letter he wrote to his cousin Ralph Wedgwood, dated 20 August 1906: ‘I felt restless after you had left Newcastle and I got up to catch the 8.15 train to Carlisle - spent the morning there and got back to find the Amoses just finishing breakfast (this is poetical exaggeration)...’⁹⁶ Given that the journey would have taken over an hour in each direction, Vaughan Williams can have spent little more than two hours in Carlisle, but evidently it was long enough to transcribe ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’, ‘Rob Lowry’, ‘King Roger’, ‘Barberry Bell’, ‘A Wife of Willy Miller’, ‘Rossler Fair’ (‘Rosley Fair’) and ‘Geordie Gair’ (‘Geordie Gill’), noting that the words of all ‘are in Anderson’s book’.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ *Music collected at Dent*, VWML, Vol. III, 33-37. Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London, 1964), p. 264.

⁹⁵ *Letter from Vaughan Williams to Ralph Wedgwood*, British Library, Add. MS 71700 f.0. A copy of the letter was kindly supplied by Hugh Cobbe. The seven songs Vaughan Williams transcribed were: ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’, ‘Rob Lowry’, ‘King Roger’, ‘Barberry Bell’, ‘A Wife of Willy Miller’, ‘Rossler Fair’ (Rosley Fair: although actually the song is ‘Betty Brown’, which opens ‘Come Gwordie lad! unyoke the yad, Let’s gow to Rosley Fair;’) and ‘Geordie Gair’ (‘Geordie Gill’).

⁹⁶ Letter from Vaughan Williams to Ralph Wedgwood, British Library, Add. MS 71700 f.0.

⁹⁷ *Songs collected at Carlisle*, VWML, Ralph Vaughan Williams Collection, Vol. 3, Book 11.

The next landmark in the revival of interest in Cumberland folk songs came in 1910 with the publication of *Dialect Songs of the North* by Carlisle-born musician **John Graham** (1860-1932), doyen of the music festival scene, friend of Mary Wakefield, Anne Gilchrist and James Walter Brown, and ‘one of many collectors of folk-song before Cecil Sharp’.⁹⁸ Seven of the fifteen songs in the book are Cumbrian in origin, three by Robert Anderson – ‘Sally Gray’, ‘The Bashful Wooer’ and ‘King Roger’ – along with ‘Sing Ho! For Our Lads’ by J. M. Denwood, Graham’s own ‘Carlisle Statute Fair’, ‘The Rushbearing’ by Mary Wakefield, with words by Miss D.F. Blomfield, and almost inevitably, ‘John Peel’.⁹⁹ Graham notes of ‘Sally Gray’ that ‘another tune, taken down by Miss Wakefield, has been published with these words, but it has not the old modal ring to it’, claiming some antiquity for his own version, which came from the singing of his mother-in-law, a farmer’s daughter from Dalston, who learned it from an old man.¹⁰⁰ The tunes of ‘The Bashful Wooer’, ‘King Roger’ and ‘Sing Ho! For Our Lads’ he says come from an old manuscript tune book belonging to one Moses Hale, ‘who died in 1875, aged 101 years ... the airs used are therefore those which were current in the latter part of the eighteenth century.’ He adds that Hale was a violinist from Bath, so we can infer that the tunes are unlikely to be particularly northern ones. Although the recently composed songs in the book were not the type of material the Folk-Song Society was gathering, among the reviews on the back cover there is an endorsement from Anne Gilchrist, who generously comments of the songs in the collection: ‘If some of them are not wild-flowers, they are the blossoms of the cottage garden, and why not make a posy of them?’ In his preface Graham explains his inclusion of dialect songs: ‘the dialect unlocks the key to

⁹⁸ ‘Obituary: John Graham’, *The Musical Times*, 73 (1932), p. 80.

⁹⁹ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*.

¹⁰⁰ Broadwood and Fuller Maitland, *English County Songs*, pp. 8-9. ‘Sally Gray’: ‘Words by Robert Anderson, 1802; the tune taken down by Miss Wakefield from an old man in Cumberland,’ p. 9.

the heart of the native. In these days of travel there are exiles from home everywhere. I have sung one or two of these songs in wood and camp in America, and have watched Cumbrian eyes glistening as youthful days were recalled.’¹⁰¹

Five years later, in 1915, *Three Cumberland Folk Songs* was published by musician **Lyell Johnston**: ‘Maybe I Will’ and ‘A Barrel of Beer’, their words ‘anonymous’ - although all bear similarities to dialect works by Alexander Craig Gibson and John Richardson - and ‘A Cumberland Courtship’, a version of the broadside ballad ‘Cumberland Nelly’. All have tunes arranged by Johnston, and inside the back cover are extracts of four other songs advertise the availability of ‘Sally Gray’ (not credited to Anderson, although the music is credited ‘L.E.B’, i.e. Lucy Broadwood), ‘Because I were shy’, ‘A traditional Cumberland Song’ (tune arranged by Johnston), and ‘Roger’s Courtship’ or ‘An Old North Lancashire (Furness) Ballad’, (also set by Johnston).¹⁰² The volume of three songs has turned up in the county from Carlisle to Barrow, but as yet it has proved impossible to find any further information about the singer and entertainer Lyell Johnston himself.

The next to publish his own arrangements of Cumbrian dialect songs, in 1927, was Carlisle-born musician **Jeffrey Mark** (1898-1965). Mark studied music at Oxford and the Royal College of Music, where he later became Professor of Composition after service in World War One. His oeuvre includes a piano concerto, *Scottish Suite* for strings and piano, choral works and a ballad opera, *Mossgiel*, based on works by Robert Burns. He also worked as a music journalist, as an assistant editor of Grove’s *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, and for a while was head of the Music Division

¹⁰¹ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*. Preface.

¹⁰² Lyell Johnston, *Three Cumberland Folk Songs* (London, 1920). It has proved impossible to find further information about Mr Johnston.

of the New York Public Library.¹⁰³ Whilst in the States he made a study of Child's ballad books and manuscripts and on his return to England set about collecting, editing and arranging folk songs from Cumberland, with piano accompaniment, as was the fashion at the time. His published arrangements of dialect songs - Anderson's 'Sally Gray', 'L'al Dinah Grayson' by Alexander Craig Gibson, 'Barley Broth' by Susanna Blamire and 'Auld Jobby Dixon' by John Richardson acquired great local popularity through their performance by Carlisle Musical Society and members of the Society sang them at 'Cummerlan' Neets' in Carlisle in the 1930s and 1940s.

In an article 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians' in *Music Quarterly* in 1930, Mark sets out what he believes to be his authentic credentials as a folk musician:

'... in my case, contact with popular music and traditional musicians began as soon as I was in a position to hear and comprehend them. At that time, and indeed almost ever since, I have seen and heard traditional singers, players and dancers at first hand, and it has never been necessary for me to make deliberate excursions for material, although I have often done so. Nor has it been an effort for me to come down to the psychological level of the performers, since I happen to have been born amongst them. Most musicians interested in folk-music are not so fortunate, and set to work to bridge the difference in level by approaching the performer, note-book in hand, in a spirit of determined condescension. I can sing songs of my own district as well, I feel sure, as some of the graybeards who have mumbled for Sharp and Vaughan Williams. This is no matter for congratulation, nor is it an attempt to deprecate the efforts of any folk-singer, but is merely an aggressive statement of the fact that I have acquired certain things in my "repertoire" in the ordinary traditional way. At

¹⁰³ P L Scowcroft, 'Music and the Lake District', *Musicweb international* (2001), <http://www.musicweb-international.com/classrev/2001/sept01/lakes.htm>, accessed on 9 May 2008.

the same time, it has not prevented me, during the last six years or so, from thinking about and observing similar phenomena from the outside as any ordinary cultivated musician might do.’¹⁰⁴

He goes on to relate how as a boy he became an informal member of a band playing for barn-dances around the Cumberland villages near Welton, often staying at the blacksmith's shop there with his grandmother and uncles. Later in life he visited the Royal Oak pub in the village to listen to the singing: ‘...a few songs, mostly very badly sung; but one man of about sixty presently got up and gave us a version of a once very popular Cumberland song called "Sally Gray," which I have known and sung since boyhood.’¹⁰⁵

(iii) Mid-twentieth century: Cumberland and Westmorland

The founding members of **The Lakeland Dialect Society**, formed in 1939, also had an interest in local folk songs. All were from Cumberland, most middle-class educated men from working class families: the Denwood family of Cockermouth - a number of whom had published works in dialect, Lance Porter of Eskdale, Frank Warriner of Millom and Harold Forsyth and Robert Forrester of Carlisle. The Society's annual journals published three articles on music: two excellent articles by Anne Gilchrist - one on Lakeland fiddlers and another on ‘Some Old Westmorland Folk-Singers’ in 1942 - and in 1961 an article by Frank Warriner on the folk songs in the collection of the late Jonathan Mawson Denwood.¹⁰⁶ Interested parties had already been involved in dialect activities through the annual ‘Cummerlan’ Neets’ in Carlisle, the first held in 1933 to mark the anniversary of the death of ‘Cumberland Bard’ Robert Anderson and they then became an annual fixture until the late 1950s. The

¹⁰⁴ Jeffrey Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', *Music Quarterly*, 16 (1930), p. 170.

¹⁰⁵ Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', pp. 180-181.

¹⁰⁶ Gilchrist, 'Some Old Westmorland Folk-Singers', *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society*, pp. 5-14. Frank Warriner, 'Some Lakeland Folk Songs', *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society* (1961), pp. 16-22.

programme for these 'Neets' generally included a dinner of local dishes like Netherby Hare Soup and Herdwick Tatie Pot, followed by toasts to Canny Auld Cumberlan', The Poets of Cumberlan and the Bonny Lasses, and all interspersed with songs, poems, plays and musical items, many performed by Harold Forsyth, with the evening invariably ending with a rousing chorus of 'John Peel'.¹⁰⁷

Harold Forsyth (1907–2001) joined the Lakeland Dialect Society in 1946, becoming President in 1989. A musician and singer, he was conductor of the Carlisle Male Voice Choir and a popular entertainer with a repertoire which included a number of Cumbrian dialect songs. Fellow Society member **Bruce Wilson** (b.1935) of Swarthmoor, near Ulverston, inherited Forsyth's manuscripts of dialect songs, some set to his own tunes. The collection includes five Anderson songs - 'Reed Robin', 'A young wife for me', 'Rob Lowrie', 'The Peck of Punch' and 'Canny Cumberlan' - as well as 'Jwohunny Git Oot!' by Alexander Craig Gibson, 'A Cumberland Carol' (elsewhere known as 'The Rich Farmer of Cheshire'), 'John Peel's Lament', perhaps better known as 'The Horn of the Hunter' (words by Jackson Gillbanks, tune traditional), 'Tatie Pot!' (by Jos. Burlington of West Cumberland), 'Tammy Green' (a poem by Elizabeth Denwood to the tune of 'The Copshaw Butcher'), 'Sale of a Wife', 'Yon Flowery Garden' (words and tune Robert Forrester), 'Copshawholme Fair' and 'Mary Lived at Corby Castle'. Fellow Dialect Society member Ted Relph, in his book about Forsyth, notes that 'Jwohunny Git Oot!' was a particular favourite at the 'Cumberlan' Neets' and suggests that some of the songs may also have been used in Harold's popular wartime concerts.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Reported by Ted Relph, *Hoo's ta gaan on? Harold Forsyth's Cumberland Tales* (Carlisle, 2002), pp. 96-97.

¹⁰⁸ *Cumberland songs sung by Harold Forsyth*, personal collection of Bruce Wilson of Swarthmoor. Relph, *Hoo's ta gaan on? Harold Forsyth's Cumberland Tales*, p. 103.

Frank Warriner (d.1964) was another member with an interest in local songs, writing that around 1930 he asked J.M. Denwood if he had gathered any local folk songs. Denwood then handed him ‘a pile of tattered bills, advertising underwear and the like, on the backs of which he had noted many songs, some of which he later worked into the scheme of his *Rosley Hill Fair*’.¹⁰⁹ He notes his pleasure at ‘finding so many well-known folk songs were to be found in Lakeland’, noting that most collectors of folk songs seem to have gathered material in the south and north-east, as a result of which the north-west had always been regarded as poor in song.¹¹⁰ Warriner later transcribed all the songs he got from Denwood and although the original manuscript of these is lost, folk song and dance enthusiast **Stuart Lawrence** of Dalton-in-Furness borrowed and copied the original in the late 1960s, depositing it in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, and noting in an introduction to the collection that the songs were collected prior to 1937.¹¹¹ The 45 songs in the collection include well-known ballads such as ‘The Keach in the Creel’, ‘The Crabfish’, ‘Fair Phoebe and her Dark Eyed Sailor’, ‘The Bonnie Black Hare’ and ‘King Henry, My Son’ alongside local songs such as ‘Carlisle Gaol’, ‘The Yellow Yorling’ (allegedly sung regularly by Jimmy Dyer at Cockermouth Fair), ‘Sandy Slee’, ‘My Cwortin’ Cwoat on’, ‘Oald Robin Ritson’, ‘William Graham’ and ‘Young Henry the Poacher’. A letter from Warriner to Frank Howes of the Folk-Song Society also survives, in which he asks whether Howes thinks it would be worthwhile to collect and publish a book of erotic folk songs, although no such book appears to have been compiled.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ J. M. Denwood, *Rosley Hill Fair* (London: 1933).

¹¹⁰ Warriner, ‘Some Lakeland Folk Songs’, *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society*, pp. 16-22.

¹¹¹ Lawrence died in 2000. Most of his collecting had been in the field of folk plays, and although he was a prolific song writer himself he noted down very few local songs, apart from the transcript of Warriner’s collection, a typescript of ‘Young Henry the Poacher’ and ‘William Graham’ from Lance Salkeld Porter, and a typescript by Tim Dishworth containing a handful of well-known hunting songs from John L. Skene of Windermere Harriers.

¹¹² *Letter from Frank Warriner to Frank Howes re. collection of erotic folk songs*, VWML, Gilchrist Collection, AGG/10/32.

Other early members of the Lakeland Dialect Society with a keen interest in Cumbrian song were **Robert Forrester, Norman Alford and Tom Gray**, all of Carlisle, who went on to produce recordings of singers in country pubs in 1954. Gray was a librarian and archivist, while Forrester and Alford were graphic artists, friends and colleagues who worked together in the design studio of Carlisle's Metal Box Company. In their leisure time they would go off cycling the lanes of north Cumberland, sketching, fishing and visiting local inns, where they met and made friends with 'some grand old lads' who they encouraged to sing, by singing and playing themselves, as Robert Forrester describes:

Norman was the driving force behind this venture, and I myself happened to have fallen heir to some songs and tunes from my father, and his father before that. In those days, flagstone floors, oil lamps and oak settles were still very much in evidence in the pubs. Countless gallons of beer swilled down everyone's throats during these song-collecting expeditions, though it was a bit of a struggle at first to get the old singers going. [...] Tom Gray, late librarian at Tullie House Library and Museum in Carlisle, somehow got to hear of our song-collecting and contacted the BBC in Newcastle, which resulted in my broadcasting some of these songs and tunes on regional radio. Norman, in the meantime, after a long illness, died - and his death shattered my ambitions for any further research.¹¹³

The year before Alford's untimely death Tom Gray enlisted the help of Jack Little, a local electrician and sound recording enthusiast, to record the music for posterity. The resulting acetate discs were then lodged in the county archives for safekeeping and largely forgotten until I unearthed them around 1979, by which time

¹¹³ Letter to Sue Allan about the 1953 recordings. 9 July 1980, Sue Allan personal collection..

most of the protagonists had died, apart from Robert Forrester and Jack Little. I wanted to bring this music to a wider audience, so in 1982 the Ellen Valley Band, with whom I played at the time, agreed to underwrite production costs for an LP recording from the original 78rpm acetates, which was then released as *Pass the Jug Round*. Forrester was very supportive of the project and wrote the above lines for the cover of the album, which sold well and was re-issued on CD in 2002.¹¹⁴

Pass the Jug Round offers a fascinating snapshot of rural north Cumbria at that time with each performer introducing themselves and their songs, which include five hunting songs - ‘Pass the Jug Round’, ‘Horn of the Hunter’, ‘Welton Hunt’, ‘Joe Bowman’ and ‘John Peel’ – along with variants of well-known ballads ‘The Keach in the Creel’, ‘The Copshawholme Butcher’ and ‘The Lish Young Buy-a-Broom’, popular music hall songs ‘The Birds upon the Tree’ and ‘My Uncle Pete’ and locally composed ballads ‘Copshawholme Fair’ and ‘Corby Castle’, along with two instrumental tracks, ‘The Cumberland Waltz’ and ‘Cumberland Reel’. Surprisingly, and in marked contrast to song collections of fifty years earlier, there are no Robert Anderson songs, nor any other specifically dialect songs although some element of stage managing is evident (considered in more detail in Chapter 5), as each singer introduces themselves in quite strong dialect before going on to sing in more-or-less standard English.

So, contrary to the fears of the collectors working in the early years of the twentieth century, there were still folk songs and singers being found in the countryside half a century later. In fact this period was a particularly fruitful time for collecting due to the increased availability and affordability of portable recording equipment, which enabled audio recordings anywhere, and soon the BBC became an

¹¹⁴ *Pass the Jug Round*, LP Record RR-002(Wigton, 1982) and *Pass the Jug Round*, CD recording VT142CD (Suffolk, 2002).

important vehicle for folk song collection and dissemination via broadcasting. The Corporation's recordings and broadcasts of folk music, customs and dialect began in earnest in 1952 with the advent of the five-year Folk Music and Dialect Recording Scheme, which employed Peter Kennedy and others to undertake field recordings for inclusion in the *As I Roved Out* series of radio programmes, as noted earlier. When the last series finished Kennedy went back to the EFDSS, but continued to be employed by the BBC on an ad hoc basis and in 1959 was contracted to undertake a field trip to Yorkshire, Westmorland and Cumberland, 'for the purpose of collecting recordings of folk music for inclusion in the Corporation's Recorded Programme Permanent Library'.¹¹⁵ Kennedy travelled first to Sedbergh, then to Kendal, Ambleside and Langdale and on to Keswick, Cockermouth, Lorton, Whitehaven, Bootle and Penrith. One assumes he had some local contacts before coming, rather than pursuing singers 'cold', and he did have a small budget for singers' fees - although there is no mention of them in his expenses claim.¹¹⁶ A small number of the songs subsequently appeared on Kennedy's *Folk Trax* recordings, including hunting songs, dialect speech and dances.¹¹⁷

The *As I Roved Out* programmes on the national airwaves in the 1950s meanwhile were mirrored at the regional level when the BBC Northern Service, broadcast from Newcastle between 1953 and 1963, featured some distinctive regional programmes which included folk music. A number of these were recorded in Cumberland, with performers including Robert Forrester, Carlisle singer Joe Wallace

¹¹⁵ *Contract for Peter Kennedy to undertake tour of North of England to collect recordings of folk music*, BBC Written Records Archive, Peter Kennedy Files, 01/PC/JWCR.

¹¹⁶ *Expenses Claim for Collecting Trip August 1959*, BBC Written Records Archive.

¹¹⁷ Folk Trax recordings include FTX-117 *Lakeland Dances*, FTX-120 *Lakeland Songs*, FTX-307 *A-Roving Britain and Ireland* (six tracks of hunting songs and talking about them), FTX-410 *Dialect/Lake District selection*, FTX-451 *Lakeland Songs and dialect*, and songs include 'Drink, Puppy, Drink', 'Ullswater Pack', 'John Peel', 'Joe Bowman', 'We'll All Go A-Hunting Today', 'It's Nobbut Me' and 'Nay not a bit on't'.

and fiddler Alf Adamson's Border Square Dance Band with caller Bill Cain. The earliest of these programmes was *Barn Dance*, followed by *Tally Ho!*, *Let the People Dance* and *Honour Your Partners* – reflecting the post-war national interest in folk dancing – as well as *The Northcountryman*, but the longest running by far was *Merry Neet*, which started in 1956 and ran through to 1963, and then finally came *Voice of Cumberland*, a mix of speech and music produced by Richard Kelly and aired as a series of Home Service opt-outs from 1961-1965.¹¹⁸

Robert Forrester took part in seven programmes in all, recorded in village halls at Low Hesket, Caldbeck, Great Orton and Carlisle City Hall, and was usually employed to play harmonica while Joe Wallace performed songs like 'Barley Broth', 'Father's Old Cwoat' and 'Canny Cumberland' in concert hall style, either solo or with St James Male Voice Quartet. Forrester was discouraged from singing however as, just like the folk songs re-packaged for the Light Programme's *As I Roved Out*, it was felt that unaccompanied traditional singing was quite alien to modern audiences and songs more acceptable if arranged with piano accompaniment. After the *Merry Neet* programmes finished in 1963 Wallace, who also sang with Carlisle Music Society and was a popular solo performer locally, went on in the later 1960s to record an LP of Cumbrian songs, all apparently from published sources, including five popular hunting songs - 'The Beagle Inn', 'Horn of the Hunter', 'Dido Bendigo', 'Joe Bowman' and 'John Peel', the dialect songs 'Sally Gray' and 'L'al Dinah Grayson', and what are described as 'well-known traditional Cumbrian songs': 'The Border Marching Song', 'Cumberland Way', 'Father's Old Coat', 'Upsiaridi' and 'Candy Man'.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ BBC Artist File: Robert (Bob) Forrester, Caversham, BBC Written Records Archive, N18/1215/1.

¹¹⁹ Joe Wallace, *Lakeland and Border Songs* (Newcastle upon Tyne, n.d.), Mawson & Wareham LP recording.

As discussed earlier, the 1950s and 1960s brought a radical change in folk music perception, reception and performance, and one of the principal figures of the second revival, the Marxist writer and performer **A.L. Lloyd**, who was committed to revealing the ‘industrial folk song’ heritage of Britain, in 1951 set about trying to find examples of miners’ songs, under the auspices of the National Coal Board ran a contest for examples of miners' industrial songs. The culmination of the project was the book *Come All Ye Bold Miners: Ballads and Songs of the Coalfields*, which included a song from the West Cumberland coalfield that Lloyd claimed had been sent to him by a former miner, J.T. Huxtable from Workington. The song was ‘The Recruited Collier’, a lovely ballad to a haunting tune which went on to become a much-loved staple in the folk clubs.¹²⁰ However, later researchers, including Paul Adams of Workington and myself, never managed to locate Huxtable, and it now seems clear that Lloyd created the song himself, adapting Robert Anderson dialect poem ‘Jenny's Complaint’ - originally pastoral in nature, but altered to reflect the coalfield setting, with Lloyd’s own adaptation of an Irish tune.¹²¹

(iv) Later twentieth century: Cumbria

The next wave of folk song collectors in Cumbria were also themselves performers, the first being Leeds singer and folk club organiser **Geoff Wood** (1924-2013), who, after hearing ‘The Lish Young Buy a Broom’ sung in a Keswick pub in the 1950s was prompted to return in the 1960s to record the song, as well as hunting songs performed at Blencathra hunt suppers and Egremont Crab Fair. Then in 1965 **Stephen Sedley** (b. 1939), later Lord Justice Sedley and best known in folk song circles for editing the popular folk song collection *The Seeds of Love* in 1967, made

¹²⁰ Lloyd, *Come All ye Bold Miners: Ballads and Songs of the Coalfields*, p.133.

¹²¹ Steven D. Winick, 'A. L. Lloyd and Reynardine: Authenticity and Authorship in the Afterlife of a British Broadside Ballad.', *Folklore*, 115 (2004). The article explores Lloyd's sources for both 'Reynardine' and 'The Recruited Collier'.

some recordings of the singing of Frank and Margaret Birkett of Elterwater in Langdale: 21 songs in all including two popular early nineteenth century ballads, 'Plains of Waterloo' and 'Bonny Bunch of Roses', the hunting songs 'Dido, Bendigo', 'Tally Ho!' and 'The Place where the Old Horse Died' and a miscellany of other broadside ballads, children's rhymes and popular songs – although no dialect songs.¹²²

In 1968, **John Gall** (b. 1947) of County Durham transcribed songs from a few singers in the north Pennines, at Alston and Nenthead, recording Martha Armstrong of Alston singing 'The Dark Eyed Sailor', a Mr Richardson singing 'The Shy Young Widow'. He also recorded a Mr Todd, originally from Silloth on the Solway coast, performing a number of songs and fragments including 'Carlisle Fair', 'The Blacksmith's Daughter' (usually known as 'I yance went to Lorton to Sweetheart a Lass') and a hiring recitation allegedly from Jimmy Dyer, the Carlisle fiddler and ballad seller, beginning 'Now me young lads stick up for your wages, to the hiring you must go ...'. Gall, who worked at Beamish Museum at the time, was also given a songbook dating from around 1900 which had belonged to a shepherd and gamekeeper in the Garrigill/Tyne Head area. The last visiting singer and collector of the 1960s seems to be **Steve Gardham** (b. 1947) from East Yorkshire, who in 1969 recorded hunting songs from members of the Ullswater Foxhounds at Patterdale, including 'Drink, Puppy, Drink', 'Joe Bowman', 'Down in the Fields where the Buttercups All Grow', 'A Fine Hunting Morn' and 'Horn of the Hunter'.¹²³

However, the most important collector in Cumbria during this period was a local man, **Wesley Park** (1938-1989). Brought up in Carlisle he had become a keen

¹²² 'Cumbrian Music': *Ms Book of Words and Tunes to Songs Collected by Wesley Park*, CASCAC, Wesley Park Archive, DX22076.

¹²³ Geoff Wood, telephone interview with Sue Allan, 2008; *Stephen Sedley Sound Collection*, London, VWML, 1965; letter from John Gall detailing songs he collected at Nenthead, Cumberland, September 1968.; recordings of William Scott singing at Martindale, British Library Sound Archive, Steve Gardham English Music Collection, 1969.

folk dancer in his teens, taking part in the BBC TV series *Barn Dance* recorded in Manchester 1963 -1964, with the 'John Peel Dancers' from Carlisle, under the leadership of Bill Cain. Following teacher training he returned to the county and settled in Millom in 1966 where, as Further Education Tutor, he formed a local branch of the EFDSS, played accordion and called dances with the Millom Folk Dance Band and founded Millom Folk Museum. Park left teaching in 1974 to become Recreation and Amenities Officer for Copeland Borough Council, in which capacity and in order to help boost local tourism, he founded the Biggest Liar of the World Competition at Wasdale (where a legendary storyteller had once lived) and also produced the LP *Lakeland Pilgrimage: An impression of the English Lake District in words, sounds, music and song*.¹²⁴ In 2008 his archive of tape recordings, notes, music in manuscript and print, dialect books and other printed matter came into my possession and has since been deposited at the Cumbria Archive Service Carlisle Archive Centre.¹²⁵

The dance tunes in Wesley Park's collection give a good picture of the repertoire of folk dance bands in the sixties and seventies, and the set of programmes of 'Cummerlan' Neet Parties' held at Workington and Wetheral, and another broadcast on local radio, show that such 'neets' were still popular in the 1960s. There are also many songs, their words laboriously copied out or typed from the tape recordings Park made at Glenridding and Mardale in 1963 and Egremont Crab Fair in 1964. Most of these are well-known local hunting songs such as 'Horn of the Hunter' and 'Joe Bowman', alongside the lesser-known songs like 'Brimmer Head' and 'Hare Hunting Song'. Park's Millom Folk Dance Band tunes were carefully filed separately with a note saying: 'This is a valuable collection of Cumbrian music, some (very likely) unpublished', although in fact the tunes are mainly those of popular hunting songs,

¹²⁴ Wesley Park et al, *Lakeland Pilgrimage*, London, Pilgrimage Record Sales, c.1972.

¹²⁵ Wesley Park Archive, CASCAC

which Park arranged as medleys of dance tunes, just as the Billy Bowman band did in Peter Kennedy's 1959 recordings. So 'Song Contest at Patterdale' becomes the tune for the Cumberland Square Eight dance, while 'Laal Melbreak' and 'Pass the Jug Round' are waltzes and 'Dido, Bendigo' and 'Lunesdale Pack' are used as reels.¹²⁶

The wider popularity of folk music during this period, the 1960s, saw a proliferation of folk clubs around the country, along with with the promotion of folk song as an important source of northern imagery and self-expression, judging by the number of professional and semi-professional folk acts touring the country, including Liverpool's Spinners, Lancashire's Oldham Tinkers, Fivepenny Piece, Houghton Weavers and Mike Harding, and the High Level Ranters, Vin Garbutt and Mike Elliot from Tyneside.¹²⁷ Although there were well established folk clubs in Cumbria, such as those at Carlisle, Workington, Kendal and Egremont, the county did not produce any major professional folk singers and musicians at this time. In early to mid-1970s things began to change: there was a renewed interest in folk tunes and dances, and alongside this informal folk music 'sessions' in pubs - at which anyone was welcome to come and perform - became more popular. The sessions at the Sun Inn at Ireby - a few miles from Wigton in the fells 'back o' Skiddaw' - were particularly notable, not just for the quality of the singing and playing by regulars and many visitors, but also because there was a small coterie of people who were keenly interested in local Cumbrian songs, by way of contrast to the 'contemporary folk' and commercial recordings of Scottish and Irish music which were very much in vogue at the time. The Ireby sessions were led by **Angie Marchant**, a Cumbrian woman keen on dialect and local history, who revived a number of dialect songs and hunting songs and

¹²⁶ *Tunes for Cumbrian Dances (Mostly Hunting Song Tunes)*, CASCAC, Wesley Park Archive, DX2206; *The Sound of his Horn - Lakeland Songs and Customs* (Gloucester, Folktrax Recordings, 1959).

¹²⁷ Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination* (Manchester, 2004), pp. 222-223.

reinterpreted into a 'folk style' Joe Wallace's songs from his recording *Songs of Lakeland and the Border*. It was these sessions which first set me off in search of a new repertoire for my own performances, reinforcing my desire to find and sing songs from my native county. Like Wesley Park, many of these singers were teachers and almost all worked in 'white-collar' occupations ranging from the Church of England to the nuclear industry, with the honourable exception of shepherd and labourer Rob Brown, who lived in Ireby but was originally from the North-East. A few of the Ireby performers, including Angie, Neil Bettinson of St Bees, Tom Thompson of Thursby, Paul and Linda Adams of Workington - and myself - were also interested in collecting local songs, whether from printed sources or from older people we met at hunt sing-songs and similar gatherings.

In 1973 the publication of Melbreak Foxhounds's *Songs of the Fell Packs* brought together for the first time hunting songs sung by members of the local foxhound packs which hunt the Lakeland fells on foot - making them available to a much wider public, including young singers like myself looking for local repertoire. The mid-1970s also proved to be a very fruitful period for audio recordings of Cumbrian material after **Paul and Linda Adams**, regular performers at Workington Folk Club, set up their Fellside Recordings studio in 1976. The couple released three albums of local songs, including recently composed ones about the West Cumbrian coalfield such as 'Farewell to the Miners' (Paul Adams) and 'The Wellington Disaster' (Mike Lyddiard).¹²⁸

In the later 1970s however, in common with the rest of the country, the Cumbrian folk scene changed: there were fewer folk clubs but new folk festivals like

¹²⁸ Paul & Linda Adams, *Far over the Fell - Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, Sweet Folk & Country SFA027 (Erith, , 1975); Paul & Linda Adams, *Country Hirings*, Sweet Folk & Country SFA053 (Erith, 1976); Paul & Linda Adams, *Among the Old Familiar Mountains*, Fellside Recordings FE006 (Workington, 1978).

that at the Brewery Arts Centre in Kendal had sprung up, and local radio began to feature folk music programmes with Cumbrian singers performing songs both old and new - by, for example, Robbie Ellis of Penrith and the bands Tethera from west Cumbria and Skinch from South Lakes.¹²⁹ Meanwhile the renewed interest in folk dancing saw morris, sword and clog dance teams like Furness and Kendal Morris teams, Carlisle Sword and Morris, Throstles Nest Women's Morris and Westmorland Step and Garland Dancers springing up all over the county, while country dance bands were re-invented as ceilidh bands, like the Ellen Valley Band with which I performed, many keen to find local dances and tunes so they could brand themselves as uniquely Cumbrian. The emphasis in terms of folk music collection in Cumbria thus moved on to tracking down local dance tunes from the nineteenth century fiddlers' manuscripts, while folk songs took something of a back seat - at least until one of the new ceilidh bands, Striding Edge, rediscovered Robert Anderson, and began reinterpreting some familiar old songs in new ways for the twenty-first century.

(c) Late twentieth century re-appraisals

Over the past thirty years a number of academics, most notable amongst them Dave Harker with *Fakesong* (1985) and Georgina Boyes in *The Imagined Village* (1993), have begun to counter the uncritical acceptance of the work of the folk song collectors active before the First World War prevalent amongst both scholars and performers for much of the twentieth century, arguing that the Victorian and Edwardian collectors systematically misrepresented the culture of the working people, while pretending to champion it.¹³⁰ Revisionist critiques include Harker's charge that

¹²⁹ Various, *The Best of BBC Radio Carlisle's Folk Workshop*, Fellside Recordings FE002 (Workington, 1976).

¹³⁰ Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. xvii, referencing Harker, *Fakesong* and Boyes, *The Imagined Village*

Cecil Sharp not only edited the songs he collected to make them acceptable to middle-class bourgeois audiences and the music establishment, but also effectively erased the identity of the working-class people who gave him their songs, while Boyes accuses Sharp and Grainger of gaining financially from copyrighting folk music by producing their own arrangements. The middle-class collectors of the 'first revival' were thus viewed as 'ideologically inspired mediators', appropriating the cultural artefacts belonging to another class, and in addition, the values underpinning their work were then reflected in the mid-twentieth century folk revival, particularly in the way singers were treated as musical sources - as conduits through whom folk song flowed but who could otherwise be ignored.¹³¹

These critiques did highlight a number of issues which did need to be addressed, for example pointing out that the emotional appeal of the English folk music revival encompassed the familiar themes of Romanticism: the cultural and spiritual superiority of rural as opposed to urban life, the peasant over the factory worker and the 'spontaneous simplicity' of the folk song as opposed to the sophistication of art music.¹³² Boyes also argues that there was greater continuity between the first and second folk revivals than has sometimes been admitted, with Lloyd representing one of the last links to the old paradigm of folksong scholarship, particularly with the emphasis on 'authentic performance', as the idea of 'authenticity' was essentially a hangover from the Sharp era.¹³³ These issues will be re-considered in Chapter 6.

Recent re-appraisals of some of these claims include Chris Bearman's trenchant refutation of many of Harker's claims, which appear to allege deceit or forgery on the part of Sharp in particular, and the claim that Harker's book actually

¹³¹ Atkinson, *Revival: genuine or spurious?*

¹³² Boyes, *The Imagined Village*, p. 7.

¹³³ Simon Frith, 'Essay Review', *Popular Music*, 13 (1994), p. 349.

incorporates many factual errors and misrepresentations. Francmanis and Gammon, however, urge a more judicious approach to Sharp's role, while Roud goes further and suggests that the polemic of Harker and Boyes has 'warped' the debate and should now be 'relegated to a brief historiographical footnote' and replaced with 'a more balanced, accurate and nuanced perspective.'¹³⁴ The accusation of expropriation by the early collectors does not stand up in every instance, as a number of singers actually occupied - and retained - an almost semi-professional role as singers within their communities, rewarded with money, drink or status for their performance in pubs and local celebrations. This certainly pertained in Cumbria where, for example, we find John Collinson and Micky Moscrop well-regarded performers in their own localities. In any case, whatever the shortcomings of the early collectors, we must not lose sight of their achievement in raising public awareness of a musical heritage which might otherwise have been neglected.¹³⁵

What is clear is that folk revivals are not innocent of ideology, with folk music used to serve a range of ideological purposes, whether that be the nationalism of the first revival, the socialism and populism of the second or the regional patriotism we see in areas like Cumbria. Other values underpinning folk music from the 1970s onwards include an increased integration with pop culture, with a concomitant rise in the use of professional production values, as well as acknowledgement that British folk is but one strand of a multi-cultural, global 'roots music'. There also seems to have been a perceptible increase of interest amongst younger people nationally, no doubt springing in part from the enhanced media profile of folk 'artistes' but also,

¹³⁴ Bearman, *The English Folk Music Movement*, p. 159; Vic Gammon, "Two for the show": David Harker, Politics and Popular Song', *History Workshop Journal*, 21 (1986), pp. 152-154; John Francmanis, 'National music to national redeemer: the consolidation of a 'folk-song' construct in Edwardian England', *Popular Music*, 21 (2002), p. 18; Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. xviii.

¹³⁵ Bearman, *The English Folk Music Movement*, p. 209.

according to a recent study, from a perceived need to assert English identity within the wider UK as well as to protest the British National Party's attempts to co-opt traditional music for its own purposes, expressed most forcefully by the 'Folk Against Fascism' movement.¹³⁶

The work of Harker and Boyes did, however, herald a re-configuration in the way scholars think about folk music scholarship, which is now much more contextual in nature, using the methodologies of both social history and ethnography. Roud's call for a more nuanced approach seems largely to have been heeded. Most commentators today would agree that the Victorian and Edwardian collectors - 'mediators' in Harker's terminology - privileged oral transmission and the song itself (more often, just the tune) at the expense of the activity and context, i.e. the performance and the social milieu of the singer, 'authenticity' being decided by the musicologist and the actual performer of the song largely an irrelevance. The turn to contextualisation with its renewed emphasis on singers, context and process has led to new studies of printed texts and their relation to oral tradition, by Vic Gammon, David Atkinson, Steve Roud and Roy Palmer among others, which has led to new insights into the cheap print trade and the ways in which people learnt songs from street literature, while scholars like Richard Baumann, Michael Pickering and Ian Russell have enriched our understanding of performance and the importance of performance contexts.¹³⁷

The Romantic concepts underpinning the first folk revival, with its quest for 'authenticity' and vision of a rural peasantry heir to ancient songs, gives rise to

¹³⁶ Winter and Keegan-Phipps, *Performing Englishness*, pp. 19-20.

¹³⁷ Vic Gammon, 'Not Appreciated in Worthing?' Class Expression and Popular Song Texts in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Popular Music*, 4 (1984); Vic Gammon, 'Song, Sex and Society in England 1600-1850', *Folk Music Journal*, 4 (1982); David Atkinson, 'Folk Songs in Print: Text and Tradition', *Folk Music Journal*, 8 (2004), which includes chapters by Roud and Palmer. See also Richard Baumann (Ed.), *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments: A Communications-centered Handbook* (New York, 1992); Pickering and Green, 'Everyday Culture: Popular Song and the Vernacular Milieu'.

suspicions that what we have here is an ‘invented tradition’. As articulated by Eric Hobsbawm, this is seen as something which offers a vision of continuity with a ‘suitable’ historic past, treated with due reverence. Hobsbawm makes a distinction between ‘tradition’ and ‘custom’ - the one characteristically unchanging and imposing fixed, formalised practices while the other in traditional societies never precludes innovation and change up to a point. This latter, for me, seems far more akin to the ‘folk process’, where change and evolution are constant and artistic innovation usually encouraged.¹³⁸ This issue will be returned to in Chapter 6.

The turn to contextualisation has also brought with it an increased focus and on the local and particular, bringing new insights into both repertoire as well as performance. Elbourne’s studies of industrial Lancashire, for example, reveal a musical life in both pre-industrial weaving communities and the industrial towns of the region ‘far more rich, varied and complex than has been generally assumed’, where pre-industrial, rural forms of folk song persisted in industrial areas, enabling the emergence of a ‘hybrid musical activity’ that owed much to rural models. In north Cumberland likewise the life and songs of dialect poet Robert Anderson appear to incorporate the seemingly contradictory elements of town and country, urban and pastoral, the commercial printing market and traditional village life.¹³⁹ It has been said that one of A.L. Lloyd’s pioneering achievements was his attempt to reintegrate urban with what he calls ‘rural vernacular song’ – albeit with some reservations about Lloyd’s lack of acknowledgement of his own creative interventions.¹⁴⁰ These are the sorts of insights which will hopefully come out of a very localised study, as songs and singers are studied in their own milieu and the heterogeneity of a local folk song

¹³⁸ Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 2.

¹³⁹ Roger Elbourne, *Music and Tradition in Early Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840* (Woodbridge, Suffolk and Totowa, 1980), p. 3.

¹⁴⁰ Pickering and Green, ‘Vernacular Culture’, p. 40.

repertoire positively embraced.¹⁴¹ The first task, undertaken in the next chapter, is to look in some detail at the range of folk songs performed and collected in our defined geographical area, Cumbria, from the late eighteenth century to the late twentieth century - from the perspective of a participant-observer involved in the performance of some of these songs since the 1970s.

¹⁴¹ Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England: A Critique', pp. 38-39.

Chapter 3: THE CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

This chapter outlines the corpus of regional folk music central to this thesis through the interrogation of a database created to include folk songs sung in Cumbria from the seventeenth to the twenty-first centuries: the Allan Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus. The database has been created by drawing on many different sources, from manuscripts and printed works to recordings and broadcasts and songs collected directly from singers. Despite the fears expressed by Paul Adams in 1975 about the dearth of Cumbrian folk songs, research undertaken for this thesis reveals evidence of a corpus of some 515 songs performed and collected in Cumbria.¹

(a) Construction and terms of reference of the folk song database

The 515 folk songs from 1010 different sources in the database feature a broad range of content from occupational songs about ordinary people's working lives to songs celebrating local people and places and popular songs of the eighteenth, nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries - many of them variants of songs which would have been widely known throughout the British Isles. 230 of the songs are listed in the Roud Folksong Index, and their Roud number is listed alongside the number assigned to them as part of the Allan Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus.²

A substantial number of songs have been identified which are specific to Cumbria, including songs in Cumbrian dialect by writers such as Susanna Blamire (1747–1794), Robert Anderson (1777-1833) and Alexander Craig Gibson (1813–

¹ Paul Adams, 'The Neglected Corner', *Folk Review* 4 (1975), pp. 6-7.

² The Roud Index, a text-based index, comprises 300,000 references to over 21,600 songs collected from oral tradition in the English language from all over the world. The related Roud Broadside Index comprises over 200,000 references to 40,000 songs appearing on broadsides and other cheap print publications up to about 1920 (as at September 2013). Both indices are accessible on the VWML web pages at <http://www.vwml.org.uk/search/search-roud-indexes>.

1874), and hunting songs, as well as more recent songs about the region written in a 'folk' style. Songs from literary sources from Cumbria, including printed poetry collections by the above writers, have been included only where there is evidence of their performance as a song. Of the remaining songs, a large number have their origins in 'street literature': the cheaply printed broadsides and chapbooks often sold at fairs and markets and containing the texts of popular songs of the day. The Jackson Library, the local history collection at Carlisle Library, has three collections of chapbooks and one of broadsides, all dating from the nineteenth century. However, a decision was made to include in the database from these collections only songs known to originate in Cumbria, those with Cumbrian connections, or for which there was evidence of performance locally, although a list of the Carlisle broadsides is given in Appendix 2.³ A wider study of songs from the many broadsides and chapbooks printed and/or sold in Cumberland and Westmorland could certainly prove very fruitful and yield invaluable information about the pool of songs available to Cumbrian singers in the nineteenth century, as well as the nature of the local print trade, but is well beyond the scope of this thesis given the large numbers of publications extant: the Roud Broadside Index lists over 600 broadside ballads printed in the region and well over 200 chapbook 'garlands' (collections of songs), each containing between four and twelve songs, survive in local and national collections.⁴

³ Five specifically local broadside ballads are included in the database: two 'New Songs', one on Cumberland and Westmorland wrestlers and one on Carlisle Races, printed on a single sheet, plus 'William Graham, The Poacher' (Carlisle, Jackson Library, M.174) and two songs sung, and possibly written, by Carlisle ballad singer/seller Jimmy Dyer: 'Lines of the Awful Murder near Annan' and 'A New Song on the volunteer Review on the Banks of the Eden' (Carlisle, Jackson Library, 3H DY).

⁴ The index of chapbooks printed in Cumbria compiled by antiquarian bookseller and scholar Barry McKay of Appleby includes over 100 chapbook garlands (information from personal communication), while the collection at the Jackson Library in Carlisle holds a further 114 garlands, many printed in Newcastle: 'Two Volumes of Chap-Books' (M.176), includes 180 chapbooks, of which 112 are garlands, and 'The McMechan Collection of Chapbooks' (M.1087) which has 44 chapbooks, of which just two are songsters, *The Song Book* with 24 songs and *The National Songster: Comic and Sentimental Songs* with 21 songs.

The details of all the songs, from a wide range of manuscript, print and audio sources, were entered into a searchable database, its fields designed to include those properties of the songs which could usefully inform this study: song title, tune (where known), geographical distribution, source of transmission, subject or theme, author or composer (where known), date and an indication whether the song is in standard English or dialect. There is also a heading labelled 'style', in order to provide information on whether a song is a comic one or not.⁵ Roud Numbers of songs are indicated where applicable, with each song also assigned a unique Allan Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus number. The field headings are listed in the key to the database, Figure 1, on the next page. (also with the database in Appendix 1.), followed by an analysis of geographical locations, sources, subjects and types of song, along with a note on the singers and contexts.

⁵ A classification added after it became clear that so many songs in dialect were comic songs.

Figure 1: Key to database fields in the Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus

ACFC no.	Allan Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus number
ROUD no.	Roud Folk Song Index number
PLACE	Song's origins or where collected, within the modern county of Cumbria: C Cumberland W Westmorland Y Yorkshire L Lancashire A few songs have been included from just over the county borders where these have a strong Cumbrian connection: N Northumberland S Scotland
TITLE	Titles listed alphabetically, with alternative titles in brackets
TEXT ONLY OR WITH TUNE	Indication of tune, if known, from text-only source.
No. SOURCES	Number of sources from which songs have been identified
METHOD OF TRANSMISSION	The medium through which a song has been transmitted, indicative of how it has been transmitted: M manuscript P print R audio recording Tx broadcast (transmission) S direct from singer Secondarily, to evaluate the number of street literature sources: B indicates broadside, chapbook or songster
LANGUAGE	D song in local dialect, otherwise Standard English is assumed. A song by Robert Anderson, the most prolific and popular of the Cumbrian dialect poets
AUTHOR	KA indicates there is a known author
SUBJECT	Main themes of songs are divided into subject areas as follows: A&S Amatory and sentimental BB Border Ballad - relating to tales of Scottish Borders C Children's Dr Drinking F Farming H Hunting Hist Historical I Industrial Mar Maritime

	Non Nonsense
	Pl Place-centred song, listing and/or celebrating places in Cumbria
	R&M Religious and moral
	Misc Unclassified subject matter
Style	Co Comic song
DATE	Versions/sources of songs are listed in date order, with date of composition, if known, in brackets

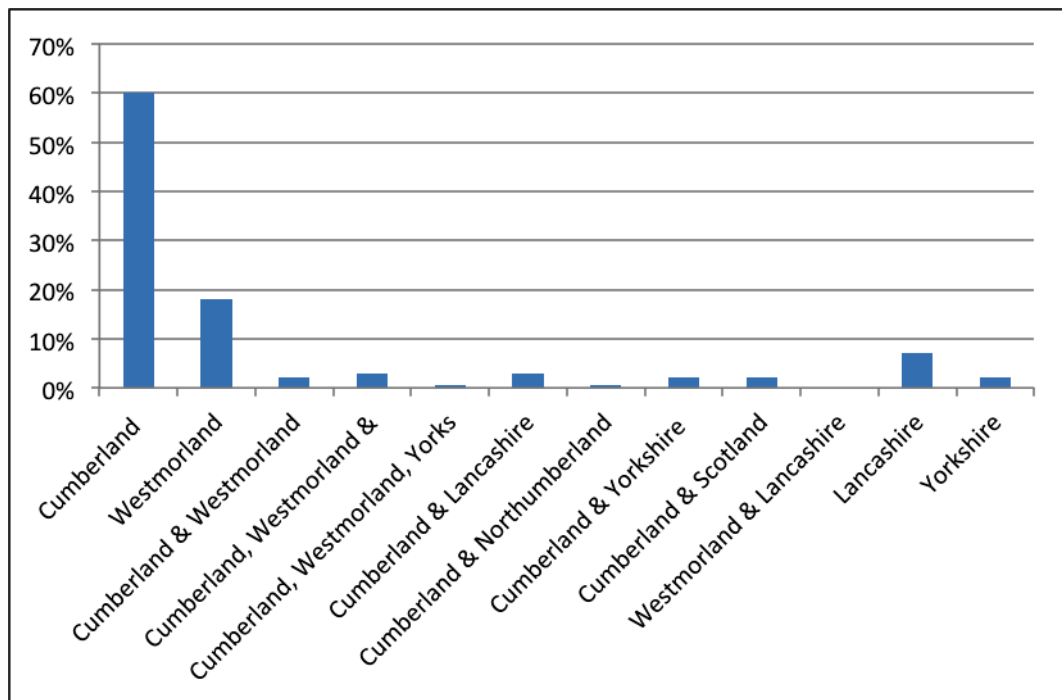
(b) Analysis of the corpus

(i) Geographical distribution

Of the 515 songs in the corpus by far the greatest number, 315, come from the former county of Cumberland, with just 91 from Westmorland. This may seem rather disproportionate, but actually reflects the former counties' respective geographical size and population as well as highlighting where the collectors of folk songs have lived or worked.⁶ In addition, there are songs which sources indicate have been performed and/or published in both Cumberland and Westmorland, as well as those parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire which now comprise the county of Cumbria, and these are separated out in Figure 2 on the following page, which indicates the number of songs from the different areas as percentages.

⁶ Cumberland: area 973,146 acres (1519.543 miles²), population in 2012 294,303 and Westmorland: area 497,100 acres (776,772 miles²), population in 2012 63,575. Full details at: <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/17486> (GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, History of Cumberland | Map and description for the county, *A Vision of Britain through Time*) and <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/place/17480> (GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, History of Westmorland | Map and description for the county, *A Vision of Britain through Time*), both accessed on 18 September 2013.

Figure 2. Geographical distribution



Until as late as 1891, Westmorland was the most sparsely populated county in England, and that is reflected in the distribution of songs, as well as the fact that during the eighteenth century the main focus of the region was industrial Carlisle and the relatively wealthy agricultural Solway plain, both far more populous than the central Lake District.⁷ In the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Carlisle declined as an industrial centre for textile production whilst the southern part of the Lake District became more prosperous through an influx of wealthy North West industrialists along with a burgeoning tourism industry.

There is also a relationship between the geographical distribution of songs and the increased profile given to Cumberland's folk song heritage by the various editions of Sidney Gilpin's popular *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland and Lake Counties*, published in Carlisle from 1866 onwards. Songs in dialect also tend to concentrate in Cumberland, where Robert Anderson's songs particularly gained sufficient popularity

⁷ John Marshall and John Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change* (Manchester, 1981), p. 18.

to see them collected, arranged and performed in Carlisle in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by professional musicians William Metcalfe, John Graham and Jeffrey Mark.⁸

The Westmorland songs, meanwhile, are largely those which have come down to us from the small group of folk song enthusiasts associated with the Folk Song Competition at the Westmorland Festival in Kendal 1902 to 1906: festival founder Mary Wakefield and judges Frank Kidson and Cecil Sharp, who were responsible for some of the 40 songs being published.⁹ A further eleven songs were noted in the Kirkby Lonsdale area from the singing of John Collinson, James Bayliff and Mrs Carlisle by Anne Gilchrist, who noted words and music for ‘The Green Bed’, ‘Brave Nelson’, ‘Admiral Hosier’s Ghost’, ‘The Brisk Young Sailor’, ‘The Thresherman’ and ‘The Pace Egging Song’, the texts of ‘Hoo Happy we lived then’ and ‘The Fall of the Leaf’, with notes on ‘The Walney Cockfighting Song’, ‘Sally Gray’ and ‘Barbary Bell’.¹⁰

West Cumberland seems to have yielded few songs, despite the fact that one might have expected some collectors to have unearthed ‘industrial ballads’ from its numerous mining communities. In fact those songs in the database which do appear to be ‘industrial’ may well have their origins elsewhere, as discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to mining songs and A.L. Lloyd. The collection of dialect writer and local lore enthusiast J.M. Denwood of Cockermouth yields 45 songs, surviving because they were noted down by Frank Warriner of Millom circa 1930, most of which seem

⁸ William Metcalfe, *The Works of William Metcalfe Vol.II.* c.1890, Carlisle, Jackson Library, D42.

⁹ Grainger collected a total of seven songs from Collinson in 1905; ‘Songs from John Collinson’, Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne, Blue Book MG/13/1/7, Nos.32-42 and Word Book, MG/13/1/9, Nos. 32-39,

¹⁰ *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* (1915), pp. 181 -201, 214 & 225 and ‘Notebook of words to songs’, London, VWML, Gilchrist Collection, AGG/8/5 Vol III; ‘Tunes to songs collected in Westmorland’, AGG/3/59.

to be sentimental songs deriving from broadside ballads, a handful transcribed in Cumbrian dialect.

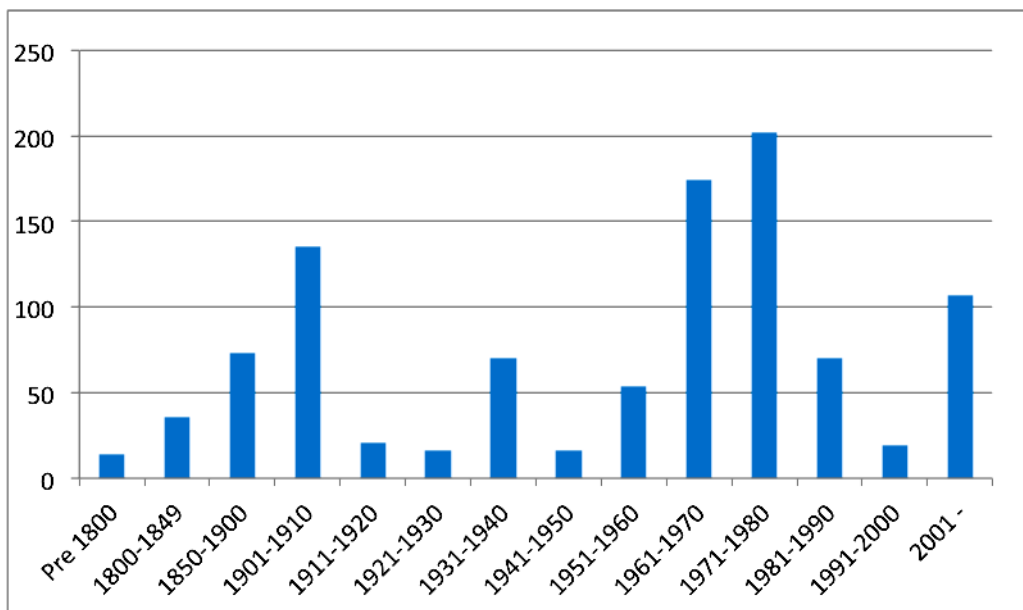
The similarities rather than the differences between the former counties of Cumberland, Westmorland and the Furness district of Lancashire are emphasised in the large number of hunting songs, many of them found right across the region. Deriving communities involved with a style of hunting common to the whole of Cumbria the songs had a wide currency, in celebration of hunting, hounds, fells and valleys and the prowess of legendary huntsmen such as John Peel, Joe Bowman and Tommy Dobson.

(ii) Chronology

The dates given of the 1010 sources of songs in the corpus are those of collection or publication of the songs, as far as I have been able to ascertain, and over the course of time two principal peaks or ‘spikes’ are evident in the chart, Figure 3 below. The first of these reflects the time of the ‘first folk revival’ in the early twentieth century, when a large number of songs were collected, and the second is the ‘second folk revival’ of the 1960s when folk clubs proliferated across the country. In the 1970s there then comes the revival of interest in local repertoire by Cumbrian folk singers, and then a slight peak in the twenty-first century, which arises largely from the release of local folk song recordings by two individuals: Denis Westmorland, whose CDs of hunting songs in country and western style have wide popularity, and Bruce Wilson of Swarthmoor’s CD of songs from the manuscripts of the late Harold Forsyth of Carlisle. In addition, a number of compilations of hunting songs from earlier collections, published and promoted by Lancastrian hunt supporter Ron Black

via his *Lakeland Hunting Memories* website have put these songs out to the wider hunting community.¹¹

Figure 3: Sources of songs by date of collection or publication



The earliest songs in the corpus all come from printed sources: street literature including broadsides, chapbooks and songsters and the ballad collections published by Thomas D'Urfey - *Wit & Humours, or Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719) - and Thomas Percy - *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), both of which draw heavily on broadside ballads.¹² The earliest dateable individual song is that variously known as 'Cumberland Laddy', 'Willy and Nelly of the North', 'There was a Lad in Cumberland', 'A Lass in Cumberland' and 'Cumberland Nelly', set to the tune 'The Lass that Comes to Bed with Me', which first appears in the 1670s as a broadside ballad published by Coles and Vere of London.¹³ The next date we can positively ascertain is 1780, when 'Johnie Cock' was collected from a Miss Fisher of Carlisle,

¹¹ <http://www.lakelandhuntingmemories.com>, accessed on 25.01.2016.

¹² Thomas D'Urfey, *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, Vol. 4 (London 1719): 'Lass from Cumberland' p. 133; Thomas Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, 1765).

¹³ 'Cumberland Laddy', Cambridge, Bodleian Library, Douce Ballads 1(43b), 1674-1679.

according to Sir Walter Scott and Francis James Child, and also when three songs by north Cumbrian poet Susanna Blamire were published in the *Scots Musical Museum*.¹⁴

The majority of the 121 songs in Cumbrian dialect were written and published in the period 1805 to 1890, 37 of the earliest written by Carlisle poet and song-writer Robert Anderson (1770-1833), although his first collection of 1798, *Poems on Various Subjects*, had comprised poems written in Standard English, including songs for performance at the Vauxhall Gardens in London of which the best known is ‘Lucy Grey of Allendale’.¹⁵ It was Anderson’s dialect poetry though which found a ready market in Cumberland and *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect*, first published in 1805, went into numerous editions throughout the nineteenth century, particular local favourites from it being ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’, ‘Sally Gray’, ‘Geordie Gill’, ‘Young Roger’ and ‘Canny Cumberland’.

The border ballads included in the corpus all have as their source Sir Walter Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, while ‘The Sun Shines Fair on Carlisle Wall’ (‘It was an English Ladye Bright’) was actually written by Scott for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. All the border ballads featuring Carlisle and places close by went on to be included by ‘Sidney Gilpin’ in his *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland* in 1866, an important milestone as it represents the first attempt to publish a collection of songs and ballads purely from Cumberland and the Lake District.¹⁶ It was not until 1893, however, that a collection was published which contained tunes as well as texts: John

¹⁴ James Johnson and Robert Burns, *The Scots Musical Museum in Six Volumes: Consisting of Six Hundred Scots Songs with Proper Bases for the Piano Forte &c. Humbly Dedicated to the Society of Anti-Quaries of Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1787). The volume includes ‘The Siller Croun’, ‘Barley Broth’, ‘The Wae’fu’ Heart’ and ‘What Ails this Heart of Mine’, all of which were subsequently set to music by Joseph Haydn.

¹⁵ Robert Anderson, *Poems on Various Subjects* (Carlisle, 1798), ‘Lucy Grey’, p.149.

¹⁶ Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (Edinburgh, 1802-3); Walter Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel: A Poem*, Canto 6, XI (Edinburgh, 1805); Sidney Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland, to which are added Dialect and other Poems, with Biographical Sketches, Notes, and Glossary* (Carlisle, 1866).

Stokoe's *Songs and Ballads of Northern England*, which included four songs from or associated with Cumberland.¹⁷

From 1900 to 1940 we find a mix of print and manuscript sources, the most notable of which are John Graham and Jeffrey Mark's publications, which both feature music as well as text, and Frank Warriner's transcriptions of the texts of the songs collected by J.M. Denwood.¹⁸ No further printed collections of Cumbrian songs then appear until 1971, when *Songs of the Fell Packs* was published by Melbreak Foxhounds as a fundraising venture for the hunt: a collection of the words only of 93 hunting songs, a few recording dates of composition - from 1890 through to 1930 - although most of the songs in the book do not include such information.¹⁹ With regard to the best known hunting song of all, 'D'Ye Ken John Peel', the database lists 39 different sources/versions with a date range from its composition c.1828/1830 through to the middle of the twentieth century. The only other published print collection to appear in the twentieth century, with music, is Keith Gregson's 1981 book *Cumbrian Songs and Ballads*, almost entirely devoted to songs composed by Anderson with just a few songs by other dialect poets.²⁰

When it comes to audio recordings of Cumbrian songs, these are naturally later in date than print sources and do not start to appear until well into the twentieth century, with the earliest being non-commercial archive recordings (1940, 1954, 1958 and 1962). Commercial recordings are produced from 1970, with BBC regional and

¹⁷ John Stokoe and Samuel Reay, *Songs and Ballads of Northern England* (London and Newcastle, 1893). The songs are 'Hughie the Graeme' p.98, 'The Bewicke and the Graeme' p.100, 'D'Ye Ken John Peel?' p.108, 'Geordie Gill' p.110.

¹⁸ John Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North* (London, 1910), *Four North Country Songs*, (Oxford, 1928); 'Frank Warriner Folk Song Collection, with biographical note by S. Lawrence', London, VWML, Stuart Lawrence Collection, Box MPS 50 (31), 8822.

¹⁹ Melbreak Foxhounds, *Songs of the Fell Packs* (Cleator Moor, 1971).

²⁰ Keith Gregson, *Cumbrian Songs and Ballads* (Clapham, 1980).

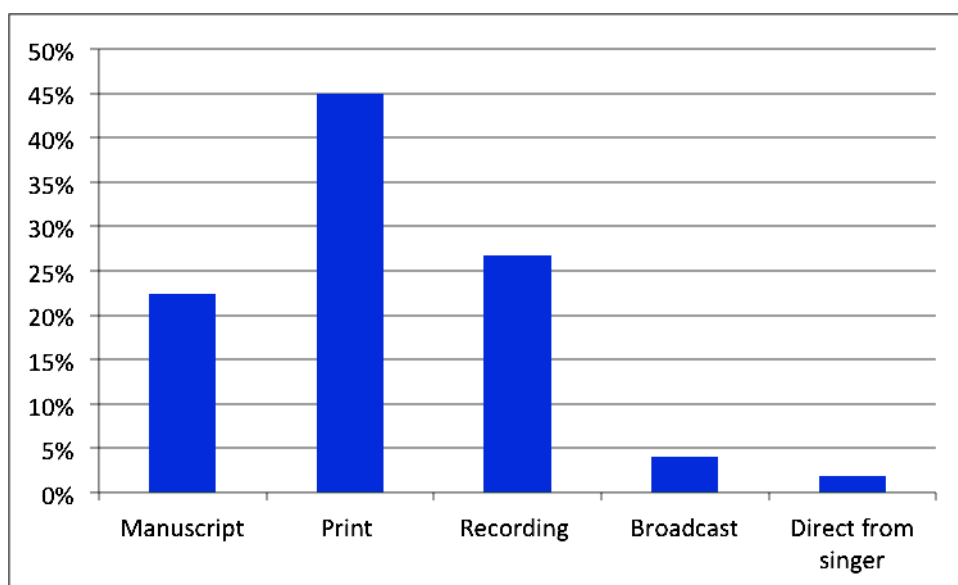
local radio programmes incorporating local songs broadcast from the mid 1950s to the mid 1970s.

Songs listed as having been collected directly from singers provide some of the most recent records in the database as all post-date my own personal involvement in the performance and collection of Cumbrian folk songs, which began around 1971 but was concentrated in the period from 1974, when I returned to live in Cumbria, up to around 1985, when family commitments became more pressing.

(iii) Sources of songs and methods of transmission

Five methods of song transmission are represented in the database: manuscripts, print - street literature (broadsides, chapbooks and songsters) as well as published song collections, audio recordings, radio broadcasts and direct oral transmission.

Figure 4: Sources of songs / methods of transmission



As Figure 4 makes clear, 70% of the songs come from written sources if one includes both manuscript and print, the earliest sources being print as outlined above, and printed forms continue to be the most important source of songs throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, audio recording being a much later

development, a few BBC archive recordings of 1940 being the earliest and only a tiny percentage of the total number of songs have been collected, by me, direct from singers.²¹ The process of transmission is never as simple as it appears as, however, as although one might instinctively think that manuscripts precede printed sources, many actually were transcribed from printed sources as in the case of Frank Warriner's transcriptions of the 45 ballads in J.M. Denwood's collection, some of which appear to have been broadside ballads.²² One should also remember that songs collected direct from a singer at a hunt meet might well have been learned by that singer from a printed source such as *Songs of the Fell Packs*.²³ Each method of transmission is considered in more detail below.

Manuscripts

Manuscript sources for Cumbrian folk songs fall into two main categories. The first comprises the text and music transcriptions of the major Edwardian song collectors, such as Sharp and Kidson, whose notebooks detail 40 songs taken down from singers at the Westmorland Festival folk song competitions from 1902 to 1906. Then there are the notebooks and correspondence of Lucy Broadwood and Anne Gilchrist, who collected songs in Westmorland, the transcriptions done by Ralph Vaughan Williams on his collecting trips to Dent and Carlisle, and the notebooks of Percy Grainger who collected songs from John Collinson of Kirkby Lonsdale. The second category is that of local collectors, and incorporates the transcriptions and correspondence of James Walter Brown and Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle in the first decade of the twentieth century, the manuscripts of Stuart Lawrence of Dalton-in-Furness who noted down 52 hunting songs between 1968 and 1973 and copied Frank Warriner's Denwood transcriptions, Wesley Park of Millom's archive of the tunes and

²¹ British Library Sound Archive, BBC Archive 2519, 2520 & 2522, recordings made 28/03/1940.

²² 'Frank Warriner Folk Song Collection', . 8822

²³ Melbreak Foxhounds, *Songs of the Fell Packs*.

words of around 20 mainly hunting songs from his tapes of hunt meets and Egremont Crab Fair in the early 1960s, and the texts of songs written by singer-songwriter Tom Thompson of Thursby, who sang regularly at the Sun Inn in Ireby in the early 1970s.²⁴

Print

As already noted, the earliest Cumbrian folk songs are all from printed sources, deriving from broadsides and chapbooks dating back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and printed collections of ballads such as Bishop Thomas Percy's *Reliques* published from the eighteenth century onwards.²⁵ Broadside and chapbook ballads are closely intertwined with what might be regarded as the English folk song canon, and are considered in more detail, under the heading of 'street literature', after a brief review of song collections.

Published song collections

Many of the earliest printed collections of popular songs were Scottish. Examples include Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany* of 1723-37, William Thomson's *Orpheus Caledonius* of 1725, David Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs* of 1776 and James Johnston's *Scots Musical Museum*, which included three songs in Scots dialect by Cumbrian poet Susanna Blamire, although without attribution to the writer.²⁶ The earliest appearance of a Cumbrian song in print however, as previously noted, is 'The Cumberland Lad/Lass,' or 'Cumberland Nelly', first published as a broadside in the seventeenth century, later appearing in Thomas D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy* in 1719 and over a hundred years later in volume two of William Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time* in 1859.²⁷

²⁴ Sue Allan personal collection, from Tom Thompson.

²⁵ Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

²⁶ 'The Siller Crown' and 'The Waefu' Heart' appear in Volume III on p. 249 and p. 252 respectively and 'O Mary turn awa'' in Volume VI, p. 560.

²⁷ Cambridge, Bodleian Library Ballad Collection: Douce Ballads 1(42a); D'Urfey, *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, pp. 133-134. Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, pp. 133-135.

The next major publication to include folk songs from Cumbria was *The Universal Songster or Museum of Mirth*, illustrated by George Cruikshank and published in three volumes between 1825 and 1827. Partly modelled on D'Urfey and partly on James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* it was another cheaply printed anthology aimed at the mass market and as such, following the example of the Roud Index, is classified as 'street literature' in the Cumbrian Folk Song Database but considered here under printed collections because of it was such a substantial publication including several thousand songs in various categories such as 'Ancient', 'Bacchanalian', 'Comic' and 'Yorkshire and Provincial, over 70 per cent of them by named authors, the most prolific - or popular - of whom appears to be Charles Dibdin, well-known as a singer, theatre composer, and theatre manager at the time.²⁸ Two songs by Robert Anderson are included, 'Jwonny and Mary' and 'The Thursby Witch', as well as 'The Peck o' Punch (A Cumberland Ballad)' and 'The Red Herring'.²⁹

The most important printed collection of Cumbrian songs in the nineteenth century that edited by 'Sidney Gilpin' (Carlisle publisher and bookseller George Coward) and published in 1866 as *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*.³⁰ Coward had taken over the long-established printing business previously owned by the Jollie family in the mid-1840s and over the next seventy years his company went on to publish a number of collections by Cumberland dialect poets, including Alexander Craig Gibson (1866 and 1873), John Richardson (1871), John Pagen White (1873)

²⁸ *The Universal Songster or Museum of Mirth*, Vol. 3 (London, 1825 -1826), pp. 271-272 and p. 380

²⁹ Mr J.E. Christopher of Maryport writes to Anne Gilchrist that 'The Red Herring' was sung around the town by a Mr Joseph Watson and James Frostrick. Letter dated 20 March 1922, London, VWML, Anne Gilchrist Collection, AGG/2/127A.

³⁰ Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*. This volume of 1866 is the complete collection, although smaller volumes containing selections of poems and songs had been published from 1864.

and John Denwood (1910) as well as the 1881 and 1893 editions of Robert Anderson's *Cumberland Ballads*.³¹

For his 1866 book Coward drew heavily on songs and ballads from Percy, Scott and Chappell as well as the works of dialect poets Josiah Relph, Susanna Blamire, Mark Lonsdale, Robert Anderson and of course John Woodcock Graves's 'D'Ye Ken John Peel'. Coward's editing style follows the example of Percy and Scott in collating print and manuscript versions of songs, and where different readings existed he made a personal choice which to include. The collection opens with 'Ancient Ballads' including, from Percy, 'A Fragment of Child Rowland and Burd Ellen', 'The Boy and the Mantle' - set in King Arthur's court at Carlisle - and the long Cumbrian Robin Hood-style ballad 'Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough and William of Cloudelee'. Border Ballads included are 'Armstrong and Musgrave', sourced from a ballad collection published in 1723, 'Dick o' the Cow' from the Glenriddell MSS, via Scott, 'The Bewicke and the Graeme' (as 'Graeme and Bewick'), also from Scott, and 'Hughie the Graeme' from *The Scots Musical Museum*.³²

In his introduction Coward/Gilpin was keen to emphasise the comprehensive nature of the volume: 'all known sources have been ransacked, some of which have yielded considerable results'.³³ Such a collection, he believed, had long been needed: 'It is not too much to say that a full collection of Cumberland songs presents such a picture of the actual life lived by our sturdy forefathers as cannot be found elsewhere. No single county within the British Isles has produced a volume of ballad literature so

³¹ Richard S. Ferguson, 'On the Collection of Chap-Books in the Bibliotheca Jacksoniana, in Tullie House, Carlisle, with some remarks on the History of Printing in Carlisle, Whitehaven, Penrith, and other north country towns', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, XIV (1896), pp. 117-118.

³² 'Armstrong and Musgrave' published in Ambrose Phillips, *A Collection of old ballads. Corrected from the best and most ancient copies extant. With introductions historical, critical, or humorous. Illustrated with copper plates* (London, 1723), pp. 175-180. Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, pp. 79-101.

³³ Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, p. iii.

peculiarly its own.’ Coward’s use of the term ‘literature’ here is revealing, as his aim evidently was to publish works with a strong regional focus, including old ballads as well as more recent poetical works, regardless of whether these any had any currency as songs to be sung rather than as poems simply to be read.

The first published collection of local songs and ballads to include music notation, Tyneside historian John Stokoe’s *Songs and Ballads of Northern England* of 1893, featured Samuel Reay’s arrangements of the tunes arranged for voice and piano, including the four songs associated with Cumbria mentioned earlier: the Border Ballads ‘Hughie the Graeme’ and ‘The Bewicke and the Graeme’, Robert Anderson’s ‘Geordie Gill’ and ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’.³⁴ 1893 also saw the publication of Lucy Broadwood’s *English County Songs*, again in arrangements for voice and piano, including from Westmorland a version of ‘A North-Country Maid’ and from Cumberland Anderson’s ‘Sally Gray’, both provided by her friend Mary Wakefield in Kendal. Broadwood’s *English Traditional Songs and Carols* of 1908 also included a song from Cumberland: ‘King Henry My Son’, a version of the early ballad ‘Lord Randal’ (Child 12, Roud 10).³⁵

The Carlisle-based composer William Metcalfe, who had so successfully arranged and popularised ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’ in 1869, was also busy publishing his settings of songs in dialect in the latter part of the nineteenth century. These included Susanna Blamire’s ‘The Waefu’ Heart’ (in Border Scottish dialect), Robert Anderson’s ‘Reed Robin’ and ‘Sweet Sally Gray’ and Alexander Craig Gibson’s ‘Lal Dinah Grayson’.³⁶ The songs proved popular, and Metcalfe often included them in

³⁴ Stokoe and Reay, *Songs and Ballads of Northern England*, pp. 98, 100, 108 & 110.

³⁵ Broadwood and Fuller Maitland, *English County Songs*; Sydney Nicholson note with songs sent to Lucy Broadwood 1905, London, VWML, Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/351; Broadwood, *English Traditional Songs and Carols*.

³⁶ ‘The works of William Metcalfe’, Vol. I & II Carlisle, Jackson Library, D42 and D52

concert programmes in which he and members of the Carlisle Choral Society performed in the 1880s and 1890s.³⁷

A number of Cumbrian songs were published in the early twentieth century, between 1904 and 1915, in *The Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, including some of those noted by Sharp and Kidson at the Westmorland Festival Folk-Song Competition 1902 to 1906, songs collected by Anne Gilchrist in the Kirkby Lonsdale area and songs noted by Sydney Nicholson and Vaughan Williams from singers in Carlisle 1904-1906.³⁸ Then, in 1910, Carlisle-born musician John Graham ‘one of many collectors of folk-song before Cecil Sharp’ according to the *Musical Times*, published his *Dialect Songs of the North*.³⁹ Four of the fifteen songs in the collection were in Cumberland dialect - Anderson’s ‘Sally Gray’ (its tune from the singing of Graham’s mother-in-law, a farmer’s daughter from Dalston), ‘The Bashful Wooer’ and ‘King Roger’ as well as J. M. Denwood’s ‘Sing Ho! For Our Lads’ and naturally ‘John Peel’ (‘The Anthem of Cumbria’) as well as a song of his own composition, ‘Carlisle Statute Fair’ and one by Mary Wakefield: ‘The Rushbearing’. On the back cover we find an endorsement by Anne Gilchrist who, rather tellingly, writes of the songs in the collection: ‘If some of them are not wild-flowers, they are the blossoms of the cottage garden, and why not make a posy of them?’ - the ‘wild-flowers’ presumably being what she regarded as ‘genuine’ folk songs.⁴⁰

Three further collections of Cumbrian folk songs with music were published in the following two decades, two of them by professional singer and composer Lyell Johnston: a 1915 collection of three dialect songs - ‘Roger’s Courtship’ (‘a song from

³⁷ ‘The works of William Metcalfe’, Vol.II: Old Programmes of Concerts, Carlisle, Jackson Library, M1047.

³⁸ *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, no. 5 (1904), no.7 (1905) and no.9 (1906); *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, no.10 ‘Songs from Cumberland and Northumberland’ (1907) and no. 19 (1915)

³⁹ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*; ‘Obituary: John Graham’ in *The Musical Times*, 73 (1932).

⁴⁰ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*.

the Furness area'), 'Because I was Shy' (a 'traditional Cumberland song') and 'Ould John Braddleum' and a second collection in 1920 comprising 'A Cumberland Courtship', 'A Barrel of Beer' and 'Maybe I Will'.⁴¹ Then, in 1927, Cumberland-born musician Jeffrey Mark, a Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music with an interest in and wide knowledge of folk songs and ballads, edited, arranged and published separately four Cumberland folk songs: Anderson's 'Sally Gray', Gibson's 'L'al Dinah Grayson', Blamire's 'Barley Broth' and John Richardson's 'Auld Jobby Dixon'.⁴² Mark is also credited with leading something of a revival of interest in local music after organising a concert in March 1927 at which local soloists and members of Carlisle Male Voice Choir sang his arrangements.⁴³

Over the next four decades no further Cumbrian song collections were published, perhaps because, as Steve Roud has noted of about the period, 'the prevailing opinion was that there were no more folk songs to collect'.⁴⁴ Mark's and Johnston's arrangements did however continue to be sung in Carlisle Male Voice Choir concerts, at the annual Carlisle 'Cummerlan' Neets' which ran from 1933 until the 1950s, and in the broadcasts and recordings of singer Joe Wallace from the mid 1950s to 1970.⁴⁵ It was not until 1971 that the next publishing milestone is reached: Melbreak Foxhounds' publication of *Songs of the Fell Packs*, the most important source of published hunting songs, 92 in all.⁴⁶ Keith Gregson's *Cumbrian Songs and*

⁴¹ Lyell Johnston, *Three Cumberland Folk Songs* (London, 1915); Lyell Johnston, *Three Northern County Folk Songs* (London, 1915). It has, however, proved impossible to find out anything further about Lyell Johnston, even via the British Music Hall Society.

⁴² Jeffrey Mark, *Four North Country Songs*.

⁴³ Norman Nicholson, 'City concert launched a folk music revival', *Cumberland News*, 12 June, 1987; Norman Nicholson, 'Interesting career of city-born composer', *Cumberland News*, 10 July, 1987.

⁴⁴ Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. xxi.

⁴⁵ Forsyth and Relph (Ed.), *Hoo's ta gaan on? A Book of Cumberland Tales, in the Dialect of Carlisle and District*, pp. 96-97; Joe Wallace recording, *Lakeland and Border Songs*.

⁴⁶ Melbreak Foxhounds, *Songs of the Fell Packs*.

Ballads, which included 38 Cumbrian songs by dialect poets, 21 of them by Robert Anderson, was the last book of Cumbrian songs to be published, in 1980.⁴⁷

Street Literature

The terms ‘broadside’ or ‘broadside ballads’ as used here, are terms generally used by folk singers and scholars as shorthand for songs whose origins lie in cheap popular print, commonly known as ‘street literature’, a term which also includes chapbooks - small cheaply produced pamphlets of between eight and 24 pages many of them books of song texts known as ‘garlands’ - and can include ‘songsters’, more extensive collections of song texts, although still cheaply produced.

Songs from street literature represent 30% of the total corpus, with 157 songs identified as having appeared in cheap popular print publications at some point, and a further seven songs quite likely to have been. Of these, 11 can be identified as local songs through their use of Cumbrian place-names, for example ‘Allen Brooke of Windermere’, or by being in Cumbrian dialect such as ‘The Thursby Witch’ (an Anderson song) or obviously being a local hunting song like ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’.

It is widely recognised today that there is a close and sometimes quite complicated relationship between broadsides and the oral tradition, with constant interplay between the two.⁴⁸ As Gammon puts it: ‘... the ballad press was influential in stabilising, reinforcing and providing material for the popular song repertory even though singers may be several degrees of separation from the ballad sheet.’⁴⁹ Some scholars suggest that broadside printers may have employed people to go out into the countryside and collect songs, so we have a scenario of print to oral and back again,

⁴⁷ Gregson, *Cumbrian Songs and Ballads*.

⁴⁸ Atkinson, ‘Folk Songs in Print; Text and Tradition’, p.457. Broadside scholars Steve Roud, Steve Gardham and Roy Palmer all put forward similar views at the Traditional Song Forum & EFDSS Broadside Study Day, ‘Where did the Oral Tradition get its Songs?’, London, Cecil Sharp House, 10 October 2009.

⁴⁹ Vic Gammon, *Desire, Drink and Death in English Folk and Vernacular Song* (Aldershot, 2008), p. 5.

and vice versa.⁵⁰ Many of the songs published as street literature had filtered down from the London pleasure gardens and theatres. In the north, Newcastle was a notable regional centre for printing chapbooks, many of them garlands and songsters comprising at least 800 songs.⁵¹ In Cumbria, broadsides and chapbooks were distributed for the Newcastle publishers by Stewart of Carlisle and others, although local printers were also cashing in on the popularity of ballads: the Roud Broadside Index lists 590 printed in Cumbria, with the majority of these (458) from Carlisle printers, one of the whom was Francis Jollie, lent the Glenriddell Ms. to Sir Walter Scott.⁵² Jollie also published Hutchinson's *History of Cumberland, A Sketch of Cumberland Manners and Customs* and founded the *Carlisle Journal* newspaper.⁵³ The large numbers of ballads extant today in broadside collections attests to the scale of ballad publishing around the country: 26,817 songs in the Madden collection at the University of Cambridge library, over 1,800 in the Pepys collection at Magdalene College, Cambridge, over 30,000 ballads in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and around 1,500 ballads in the Roxburghe Collection at the British Museum.

Cheaply printed broadsides were aimed at the working classes and were sold on street corners, pinned up in pubs and village shops and sung and sold at fairs and markets. In an article written in 1896 about the Carlisle chapbooks, Richard Ferguson suggests that the printing of single ballad sheets superseded the practice of printing chapbooks of songs: 'the "Garlands" were run out of the market by the competition of the "Pinner-up" and Long-song-sellers. The Pinner-up used to take possession of dead walls, or the fronts of unoccupied houses, on which to affix their wares,

⁵⁰ Steve Gardham, paper given at Broadside Study Day, London, February 2011.

⁵¹ Pete Wood, paper 'Newcastle Broadsides and Chapbooks' given at Broadside Study Day, February 2011.

⁵² Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (Edinburgh, 1802), pp. cxxiii-cxiv.

⁵³ Ferguson, 'On the Collection of Chap-Books in the Bibliotheca Jacksoniana, in Tullie House, Carlisle'. The article also includes information on Cumbrian printers: for Jollie see p. 19.

consisting of yard long slips of new and popular songs, three slips a penny, while inside a huge open gingham umbrella they displayed a lot of cheap engravings.’ He remembers that, in his youth, the railings opposite the Lonsdale monument, outside the courts were a favourite place to pin up broadsides at Carlisle fairs: ‘The Long-song sellers who pasted three yards of songs together, carrying their wares suspended from the top of a tall pole, crying “Three yards a penny, songs, beautiful songs, nooest songs.”’⁵⁴

Ballad singers were employed by printers to travel around selling ballad sheets, which were roughly the price of a loaf of bread, singing their wares to attract people to buy and of course to give some indication of the tunes, as none were printed on the sheets. The ballad sellers and singers were often socially peripheral people, ballad selling often being, to quote Gammon again, a last resort for the destitute ‘seeking a legitimate or legal way to beg’ as in the case of discharged soldier John Tarrbrook and his wife Ann from Appleby who, unable to find work, went to Carlisle ‘and got some books of songs printed there which his wife and he sung about the streets and sold.’⁵⁵

The Carlisle ballad seller and fiddler Jimmy Dyer (1841-1903) made the singing and selling of ballads and playing his fiddle a complete way of life, infinitely preferable than working for a living, saying ‘There are one hundred and fifty thousand ways of getting a living without descending to earn it by the sweat of the brow... I was early in life struck with the idea that none but mere fools tried to get rich by hard

⁵⁴ Ferguson, 'On the Collection of Chap-Books in the Bibliotheca Jacksoniana, in Tullie House, Carlisle, p. 5. The seller's cry seems to be a direct quote from Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of those that will work, those that cannot work, and those that will not work* (London, 1861), p. 221.

⁵⁵ Traditional Song Forum/efdss Broadside Ballad Study Day, London Feb 2011: Vic Gammon paper ‘Ballad Singers and Sellers’; ‘Report on examination of John Tarrbrook and his wife Ann’, CASKAC, Westmorland Quarter Sessions, WQ/SR/319/8-9.

manual labour...'⁵⁶ A well-known figure in Carlisle's streets and a fixture at every festive occasion, market day and hiring fair, Jimmy Dyer also apparently wrote and had printed up his own ballads, including 'A New Song on the Volunteer Review on the Banks of Eden', 'Lines on the Awful Murder near Annan' and 'Favourite Song: Aw wish your Muther wad Cum'.⁵⁷ In the opinion of a contributor to *The Carlisle Journal* in 1913 however '... some of them displayed ability and humour, but others, it must be confessed, were coarse and vulgar ditties, unfit for publication.'⁵⁸ According to Frank Warriner other songs he is associated with, although it is unclear whether he means writing, singing or selling, include 'Carlisle Fair' and 'The Yellow Yorling', which he apparently sang regularly at Cockermouth hiring fair.⁵⁹

Carlisle Library's collection of broadsides and chapbooks is important, although modest in comparison to national collections, comprising two volumes (one of which belonged to publisher George Coward) and containing a total of 180 chapbooks printed and/or distributed in Cumbria, 112 of them are song 'garlands' of between two and eight songs, with two 'songsters' containing a further 45 songs and 63 broadsides with 124 songs, just five of which are local, plus the Jimmy Dyer ballads mentioned above.⁶⁰

A further collection of broadsides must once have been in the possession of the Cumbrian dialect poet, J.M. Denwood, used them as source material for his poem 'Rosley Hill Fair', which quotes from many such ballads including 'Sweet Primeroses' and 'Seventeen Come Sunday' as well as local or localised ballads such

⁵⁶ Jimmy Dyer, *The Life and Times of Jimmy Dyer, Narrated by Himself* (Carlisle, 1870), p.5

⁵⁷ Keith Gregson, 'The Ballads of Jimmy Dyer', *English Dance and Song*, 51 (1989), pp. 19-20.

⁵⁸ 'Letters', *Carlisle Journal*, 27 May, 1913.

⁵⁹ 'Frank Warriner Folk Song Collection', p. 13.

⁶⁰ 'Two volumes of Chap-Books', Carlisle, Jackson Library, M.176; 'McMechan collection of Chapbooks', Carlisle, Jackson Library, M.1087, 'Collection of broadside ballads and playbills', Carlisle, Jackson Library, M.174; 'Collection of miscellaneous material relating to Carlisle, Cumbrian dialect, Jimmy Dyer etc', Carlisle, Jackson Library, M.1304.

as ‘Sandy Slee’ and ‘My Cwortin’ Cwot’, some of which were subsequently transcribed by his friend and fellow dialect aficionado Frank Warriner.⁶¹

Recordings

The corpus includes 269 instances of songs from archive and commercial recordings. The earliest extant are three BBC archive recordings of singers in Ambleside in 1940, but most of the BBC archive recordings date from the 1950s when, as part of the BBC’s Folk Music and Dialect Recording Scheme, Peter Kennedy recorded singers and musicians in Keswick, Lorton and Cockermouth.⁶²

The Wesley Park collection, dating from 1962, includes 25 reel-to-reel tapes and 18 cassette tapes of songs, tunes and recordings of the ‘Biggest Liar of the World Competition’ at Santon Bridge (founded by Park in 197). Four of the tapes comprise almost entirely hunting songs: two recorded at Mardale Shepherds’ Meets in 1962 and 1963, one of entries in the Hunting Song Competition at Egremont Crab Fair 1964 and one dating from 1969 of a BBC radio programme on hunting songs, presented by Frank Mellor. In 1975 Park also produced, with his band, an LP compilation of songs and dialect: *Lakeland Pilgrimage - an impression of the English Lake District in words, sound, music and song*.

Other archive recordings made in the 1960s include Stephen Sedley’s recordings of Frank and Mary Birkett at Elterwater in 1965 (17 songs), recordings made by John Gall at Nenthead in 1968 (4 songs), 6 hunting songs recorded at Howtown, Ullswater by Steve Gardham in 1969 and my own recording of ten songs sung at the Blencathra Foxhounds joint hunt supper and shepherds’ meet at The Sun Inn, Bassenthwaite in 1985.

⁶¹ Frank Warriner Folk Song Collection, VWML

⁶² The songs are ‘Sally Gray’, ‘The Crack of the Whip’ (‘Joe Bowman’) and ‘The Ploughing Song’, but their singers are un-named. British Library Sound, BBC Archive 2519, 2519 and 2522, ‘North Country Songs’; British Library Sounds: World and Traditional Music, Peter Kennedy Collection, C608/108-110.

Commercial recordings of Cumbrian folk songs represent a later development, none being produced prior to around 1970, when Joe Wallace's LP record *Lakeland and Border Songs* was released, marking the beginning of something of a golden age for recordings of Cumbrian songs. Wallace was an experienced concert singer, who had performed local songs for over 20 years, solo and with groups like Carlisle Choral Society and his own St James Quartet, and broadcasting many on BBC regional radio.⁶³ It was *Lakeland and Border Songs* which brought many local songs, particularly those in dialect, to a new audience and to young 'folk' performers in Cumbria keen to learn and perform songs like 'Lal Dinah Grayson', 'Upsiaridi' and 'Sally Gray'. Meanwhile Paul and Linda Adams, a folk duo from Workington, recorded their own arrangements of local songs on two albums: *Far over the Fell - Songs and Ballads of Cumberland* (1975) and *Country Hirings* (1976) for the Sweet Folk and Country label before going on to found their own company, Fellside Recordings, and releasing a further album of Cumbrian songs, *Among the Old Familiar Mountains*, in 1978 as well as two compilation albums of local singers: *The Best of BBC Radio Carlisle's Folk Workshop* (1976) and *Canny Cumberland* (1979). Very few recordings of Cumbrian songs have been released since that time, the main one of interest being of elderly singer Bruce Wilson of Swarthmoor, near Ulverston, who performs twelve songs from the collection of manuscript music left to him by fellow Lakeland Dialect Society member Harold Forsyth of Carlisle.⁶⁴

It should be noted, however, that there is a degree of overlap between archival and commercial recordings as Peter Kennedy's BBC recordings from Cumbria – intended for archive and broadcasting purposes, were subsequently issued commercially on his Folktracks (later Folktrax) label: *The Sound of his Horn:*

⁶³ BBC Artist File: 'Joe Wallace', Caversham, BBC Written Records Archive, N18/3899. Wallace, *Lakeland and Border Songs*, recording, n.d.

⁶⁴ Bruce Wilson, *M'Appen I May*, Haystacks Records CD recording HAYCD001 (Manchester, 2009).

Lakeland Songs and Customs (FTX-120), which included 10 hunting songs, and ‘Billy Bowman’s Band’, sung and played by the eponymous band, whilst the *Pass the Jug Round* (LP 1982, CD 2002) had their origins in the archive recordings made at the instigation of singer Robert Forrester and archivist Tom Gray at pubs in Wreay and Rockcliffe, near Carlisle, in 1954.⁶⁵

BBC broadcasts

17 songs in the Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus have been performed by local singers in BBC radio broadcasts, the earliest of which were the popular weekly programme *As I Roved Out* presented by Peter Kennedy on the BBC Home Service, transmitted 1953–1958.⁶⁶ In the north, the BBC Northern Service’s *Barn Dance*, *Voice of Cumberland* and *Merry Neet* programmes all featured folk tunes and songs from Cumberland and Westmorland from time to time, in programmes broadcast from 1953 to 1961, from performers including Joe Wallace and Robert Forrester.⁶⁷

Oral transmission: songs directly from singers

Although the early collectors characterised ‘the oral tradition’ - the passing on of songs by word of mouth - as a defining element of folk song, scholars today generally agree that this is not exclusively so and recommend a more nuanced interpretation, as was discussed in chapters 1 and 2. Cumbrian music professional Jeffrey Mark throws an interesting light on his own personal contact with the music and songs of traditional musicians in the Carlisle area when he was a child, in the first years of the twentieth century.⁶⁸ Robert Forrester also makes much of the fact that he learned songs from his grandfather from whom he ‘caught the final echoes of some

⁶⁵ Long playing records 1953, CASCAC,DX938/1.

⁶⁶ Rob Young, *Electric Eden; Unearthing Britain's Visionary Music* (London, 2010), pp. 131-132.

⁶⁷ ‘North Region Classified Files’ Voice of Cumberland 1961-65, N25/40/1, Voice of the North N25/39/1 1964-5 and ‘Artist Files’, N18/1215/1, Caversham, BBC Written Records Archive, : 959-002-024.

⁶⁸ Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', p. 172.

fine old songs and tunes' in the 1940s and 1950s.⁶⁹ However, Mark went on to publish vocal and piano arrangements of the songs he knew, while Forrester recorded his, so we do not have their songs directly from the oral tradition.

The songs listed in the database as being collected by oral transmission, direct from singers, account for only a small proportion of the whole corpus: just 20 songs, all collected personally by myself. These were collected from singers at The Sun Inn at Ireby in the early 1970s, from members of Cumberland Farmers Foxhounds 1978-1979 at other pubs, and from Blencathra Foxhounds' social evenings after the annual December hunt and shepherd's meets 1979-1985 at The Sun Inn, Bassenthwaite and The Mill Inn, Mungrisdale.

As was highlighted in chapter 1, it is no longer acceptable to suggest that to be a classified as 'folk' a song must be anonymous, so the Corpus database does include a field for known authorship of songs ('KA'). Of the 515 songs in the database 189 (37%) have known composers, including 53 hunting songs and 58 songs in dialect, many of them derived from poets by nineteenth-century Cumbrian dialect writers Robert Anderson, Alexander Craig Gibson and Stanley Martin, as well as songs written for the commercial stage such as 'My Uncle Pete', 'To be a Farmer's Boy' and 'Jim the Carter's Lad'. Since the 1970s we also find singer-songwriters like Norman Bell, Archie Fisher, Mike Donald, Robbie Ellis, Stuart Lawrence, Tom Thompson and Denis Westmorland writing songs on Cumbrian themes. Very few of these are the sentimental, nostalgic ballads extolling the beauties of Lakeland one might expect. Tom Thompson's comic songs with lively choruses, regular features of the packed folk music sessions at the Sun Inn, Ireby in the early 1970s, included titles like 'Song of the County Council Roadman', 'Ballad of the North West Water

⁶⁹ Private correspondence from Robert Forrester, 9 April 1980.

Authority' and 'Cumberland's Troubles'. This last, written in 1969 and sung to the tune of 'The Mardale Hunt', was popularly known as 'The Cumberland Protest Song' and with its pro-Cumbrian/anti-everyone else sentiments, was requested every time Tom put in an appearance at the pub.

(iv) Themes and subjects of songs

In order to identify material which might represent a distinctively local repertoire, an attempt has been made to classify the principal subject matter or themes of the songs. This is a notoriously difficult exercise, and one which the Roud Folk Song Index does not attempt at present although the Traditional Ballad Index, another internet resource, hosted by California State University at Fresno, does do this via a 'keyword' search.⁷⁰

Part of the problem is that songs often range across a variety of themes, although it is usually possible to identify a principal subject. The most common relates to love and relationships, characterised here as 'Amatory and Sentimental', with eleven other categories identified as main themes along with an 'unclassified' category for the few songs impossible to pigeonhole. The twelve classes or categories of subject are listed in Figures 5 and 6 below, followed by a more detailed exploration of the themes, beginning with the most frequently found subjects.

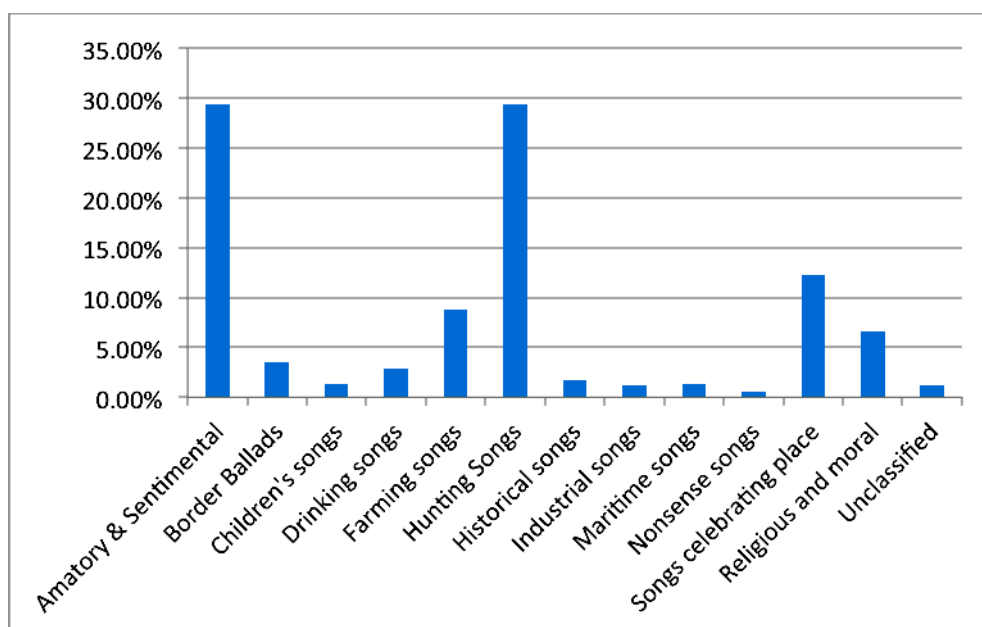
⁷⁰ <http://www.fresnostate.edu/folklore/BalladSearch.html>, accessed on 28 November 2013.

Fig 5: Primary subject matter – by number of songs

Key	Song themes and subjects	No. in corpus
A&S	Amatory & Sentimental	151
BB	Border Ballads	18
C	Children's songs	7
Dr	Drinking songs	15
F	Farming songs	45
H	Hunting Songs	151
Hist	Historical songs	9
I	Industrial songs	6
Mar	Maritime songs	7
Non	Nonsense songs	3
PI	Songs celebrating place	63
R&M	Religious and moral	34
Misc	Unclassified	6

The relative popularity of the different types of song is made clear in Figure 6 below, which shows these as percentages of the whole corpus, with love songs and hunting songs by far the most popular: each around a third of the total.

Figure 6: Primary subject matter – by percentage



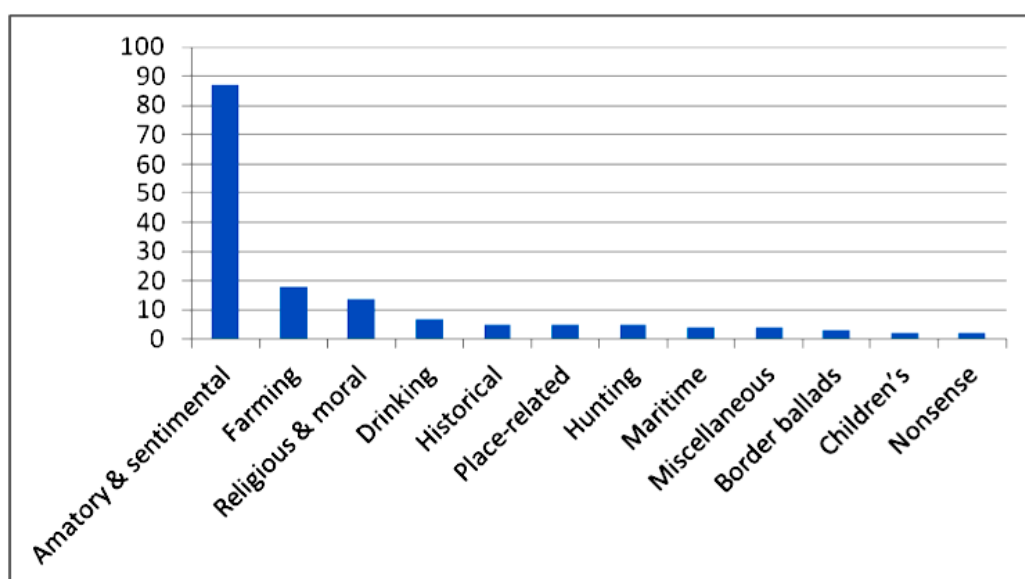
Amatory and Sentimental

151 songs in the corpus are identified as having amatory and sentimental subject matter, making up some 30% of the total. At least 86 of these derive from

street literature sources, typically opening with ‘As I walked out...’ and featuring flowery descriptions of love in rural idylls, involving shepherdesses or milkmaids pining for loved ones who have gone away to war or to sea, only to return in disguise to test their hapless sweethearts. Broadside scholars like Steve Gardham believe that most of these formulaic songs, which often been regarded by singers as archetypal folk material, started out as songs performed by professional singers in London theatres like Sadler’s Wells and Covent Garden and the pleasure gardens of Raneleigh and Vauxhall in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. And as Roud points out, whereas while perhaps 300 people might hear a song sung in London, once that song is printed and distributed it can reach thousands of people across the country.⁷¹ Examples of such songs include ‘The Bonnie Rose of July’ and ‘Fair Phoebe and her Dark Eyed Sailor’ from the Warriner transcriptions, ‘Caroline and her Sailor Bold’ sung by Paul and Linda Adams from a broadside printed at Wigton, ‘Dark Eyed Sailor’ recorded by John Gall at Nenthead and ‘Oh William I Miss You’ recorded by Stephen Sedley in Langdale. Figure 7 below reveals the dominance of amatory and sentimental subject matter, mainly from street literature, in the Cumbrian corpus.

⁷¹ Steve Gardham and Steve Roud, presentations to Traditional Song Forum/EFDSS Broadside Study Day, February 2009.

Figure 7: Subject matter of songs from street literature sources



In addition, the amatory and sentimental category also includes 73 songs in dialect, including four by Cumbrian poet Susanna Blamire – although these are written in Border Scots dialect not Cumbrian. These songs represent over half of the total number of those in dialect, an indication no doubt of the eternal popularity of songs about love and courting. Examples include ‘Roger’s Courtship: a Furness song’, and Robert Anderson’s ‘Sally Gray’, as well as some comic songs like, for example, Alexander Craig Gibson’s ‘Lal Dinah Grayson’, ‘Gwordie Greenup’ and ‘Ah Yance Went ta Lorton’.

Hunting Songs

Fox hunting has been a feature of rural England since at least Elizabethan times, although the earliest references to hunting in the Lake District appear to date from the seventeenth century, when 1678 a bounty was paid in the Bampton/Mardale area of Westmorland: ‘they that takes up the Fox shall have but six pence for their paines and the remaineinge part to goe to the Huntsman and them that keeps the doggs

within the manor of Thornethwaite'.⁷² Meanwhile in the Newlands valley near Keswick in 1690 there appears to have been a 'customary obligation to take part in fox-hunting', according to a manor court record deplores the fact that: 'several within that neighbourhood has been very negligent when desired to goe to hunte the fox'⁷³ The history of hunting songs seems to be almost as long as the documented history of hunting, as Russell notes: 'By 1537 the practice of singing such songs was so well established in English society as to have become proverbial and be the vehicle of political (and later religious) parody. Thus 'Hunt's Up', the title of a favourite song of King Henry, became used as a general term for any song or tune designed to serve as a reveille.'⁷⁴

In the eighteenth century it is known that the Lake District hunts operated a system of what is known as 'trencher-fed packs': foxhounds kept individually by farmers and only brought together as a pack for a hunt.⁷⁵ This system went on to be developed, possibly by John Peel, into the 'semi-trencher-fed system' which still operates today, whereby hounds are kept together in kennels during the winter hunting season but put out to individual 'walkers' amongst the hunt supporters, who house and exercise them over the summer.⁷⁶ Hunts are expensive to run - costs include employing a full or part-time huntsman, kennel maintenance and feeding of hounds - but since the late nineteenth century have been supported by subscription, from hunt followers and others in the local community.

⁷² John Rylands Library, Manchester, English MS 1155. F.[iiv].

⁷³ Angus J.L. Winchester, *The Harvest of the Hills: Rural Life in Northern England and the Scottish Borders 1400-1700* (Edinburgh, 2000), p. 105.

⁷⁴ William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time, a collection of Ancient Songs, Ballads and Dance Tunes, illustrative of the National Music of England* (London, 1858-1859), p. 50; Ian Russell, 'The Hunt's Up? Rural community, song and politics', *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*, 47, 1-2, 2002, p. 133.

⁷⁵ <http://www.lakelandhuntingmemories.com/FoxHunting.htm> accessed on 27 October 2012.

⁷⁶ <http://www.lakelandhuntingmemories.com/FoxHunting.htm>, accessed on 7 November 2011; Sean Frain, *Hunting in the Lake District* (Ludlow, 2010).

The strength of the Cumbrian hunting community and its enjoyment of hunting songs is reflected in the number of these in the Cumbrian folk song corpus: 151 examples, or a third of the total. Of these, 147 are identifiably Cumbrian songs, 54 of them with named authors. The most important source of songs has proved to be the 92 included in *The Songs of the Fell Packs*, sung and written by members of the six ‘fell packs’ which hunt the high fells on foot rather than on horseback.⁷⁷ The collection also includes songs from other Cumbrian hunts as well as a few well-known hunting songs adopted from elsewhere like ‘Dido, Bendigo’, which appeared in numerous chapbooks, and the popular ‘Fine Hunting Day’, written in 1860 by William Williams of the North Warkwickshire Hunt and has been collected as far afield as Cornwall.⁷⁸

Most hunting songs catalogue the places, people and events of particular hunts, for example ‘The Gatesgarth Hunt’, ‘Cartmel Hunting Song, 1924’, ‘Sharp Yeat, or Five Foxes in One Day’ and ‘Brimmer Head’, while others praise particularly famous huntsmen like Joe Bowman, Tommy Dobson, Anthony Chapman and of course John Peel or eulogise special hounds and terriers - ‘Old Snowball’ and ‘The Terrier Song’ - with a few even honouring the quarry - ‘Old Grandee’ and ‘Red Rover’. Such localisation and personalisation tends to mean that local hunting songs do not necessarily travel well, although a number have been taken up by the Holme Valley Beagles in Yorkshire, which had a strong singing tradition and links with the Ullswater Foxhounds in Cumbria.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Melbreak Foxhounds, *Songs of the Fell Packs*. The collection was put together and published by Melbreak Foxhounds as a fund-raiser in 1971. The six fell packs which hunt the high fells on foot are the Blencathra Foxhounds, Eskdale and Ennerdale, Lunesdale, Melbreak and Ullswater Foxhounds, and there are in addition two mounted packs in the north of the county: the Cumberland and the Cumberland Farmers Foxhounds.

⁷⁸ Roud No. 1162. Six versions appear in the Roud Index, the earliest being that collected in Cornwall in 1932.

⁷⁹ The Holme Valley singers can be heard on a number of recordings, including The Holme Valley Tradition, *Bright Rosy Morning*, Hill and Dale LP, HD841 (Denby Dale, 1985).

‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’ is one of the earliest hunting song in the corpus, composed somewhere between 1828 and 1830, around the time the foxhound packs as we know them today were being formed.⁸⁰ ‘Mellbreck Hounds December 24 1869’ is the second oldest song for which we have a record of composition, with the majority of songs recorded in print dating from the 1890s and on audio tape from the 1940s.

Singing at a social evening after a hunt meet is rarely devoted exclusively to the performance of local hunting songs, however, as the recordings of post-hunt singing at Brotherswater and Bassenthwaite in the 1980s testify: popular chorus songs like ‘The Farmer’s Boy’, ‘The Rooster Song’ and ‘The Black Velvet Band’ were also enjoyed as part of the evening’s entertainment, along with sentimental Scottish songs like ‘The Bonnie Lights of Old Aberdeen’, comic songs, jokes and tall tales.⁸¹ The hunting song competitions at Lakeland agricultural shows, and formerly in local pubs, organised by hunts as fund-raisers provide additional opportunities to sing hunting songs - although these seem to have become fewer in recent years. Egremont Crab Fair also features a hunting song competition, albeit on a smaller scale than formerly: the 2011 competition for example was billed as being for ‘Hunting and Comic Songs’, with just 15 minutes allotted to it in the programme.⁸²

Russell believes hunting songs have two particular characteristics which have helped them endure over time: first of all they are panegyrics - or songs of praise to places, hounds and people – imbued with a pervasive sense of camaraderie and enjoyment, and secondly their tunes are very appealing, with just a few firm favourites

⁸⁰ The earliest hunting song is actually ‘Dido Bendigo’, which as ‘The Fox-Chace, or, The Huntsman’s Harmony’ dates back to a late seventeenth century broadside, and as the shorter ‘Dido Spandigo’ to the early nineteenth century: see <http://www.yorkshirefolksong.net/song.cfm?songID=76>, accessed on 2 February 2017.

⁸¹ Personal recording of singing at Blencathra Foxhounds social evening at the Sun Inn, Bassenthwaite, 3 December 1985, and Ullswater Foxhounds meet at the Brotherswater Inn 1982/3.

⁸² Information which emerged during an interview about Egremont with Mrs Swinburn in 2012.

being used for a wide range of lyrics.⁸³ In Cumbria, for example, we find hunting songs the tune of ‘The Horn of the Hunter’ used for ‘Laal Melbreak’ and ‘Bonny Lakeland’, the tune of ‘John Peel’ used for one of the versions of ‘Tommy Dobson’ and the ‘Mardale Hunting Song’ tune also being that of ‘The Eskdale and Ennerdale Hunt Song’. In text-only collections like *Songs of the Fell Packs* this means it is generally possible to work out the tune from the metre of the verses and the style of the refrain, with ‘Tally-ho, tally-ho, tally ho! Hark for’ard good hounds tally-ho’ being particularly prevalent – signposting the tune for ‘The Six Fell Packs’, but also used for ‘Blencathra Foxhounds at Wythburn’, ‘Coniston Fox Hunt, September 11th 1899’, ‘The “Unicorn” Hunt, Ambleside’, ‘Hawkshead Hunt’ and ‘On the 10th Day of March’. Some tunes have also developed a life of their own as dance tunes, such as the use of ‘The Horn of the Hunter’ as a waltz, played by The Billy Bowman Band at Hunt Balls and village dances, by Wesley Park’s Millom Folk Dance Band and even by my own Ellen Valley Band.⁸⁴

Newer songs are often set to popular tunes, ‘The Puppy Song’ written in 1976-7, for instance, was set to the tune of the 1970s pop song ‘Seasons in the Sun’. It has been argued that song composition within a local tradition is a measure of its vitality, on which basis the Cumbrian hunting song tradition has certainly been a very healthy one, although whether that is still the case is possibly open to question and will be considered later.⁸⁵

Songs celebrating place

63 songs in the corpus relate to regional identity by either being set in a particular place or lauding that place or the Lake District in general. These songs

⁸³ Russell, pp. 133-134

⁸⁴ Sue Allan, interview with Billy Bowman, Great Broughton, Cockermouth, 2002. Dance band leader Wesley Park also used hunting song tunes for dances, including ‘The Horn of the Hunter’ as a waltz.

⁸⁵ Herbert Halpert, ‘Vitality of Tradition and Local Songs’, *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, 3 (1951), p. 35.

range from the sentimental like ‘Farewell to Longsleddal’, sung at the Westmorland Festival in 1902, and ‘Welcome into Cumberland’, a text by Rev. T. Ellwood set to music by William Metcalfe in the late nineteenth century, to songs written relatively recently like Mike Lyddiard’s ‘Farewell to the Fells’, sung by Paul and Linda Adams on their 1978 LP recording *Among the Old Familiar Mountains* and ‘Long Meg and her Daughters’ - about the stone circle of that name, by Stuart Lawrence of Dalton-in-Furness in 1973 - or ‘The Country Driller Man’, a comic song written by Tom Thompson of Thursby circa 1972.

12 of the songs whose primary subject is place-related are also in dialect, including Anderson’s ‘The Thursby Witch’, ‘Borrowdale Johnnie’ and ‘Canny Cumberland’: the ultimate Cumbrian panegyric, glorifying the incomparable merits of the county and its people. However I would also argue that all the 143 local hunting songs and 121 songs in dialect can be regarded as fundamentally imbued with a sense of place, having such a close engagement with specific Cumbrian places, people and language. If we add to these the other songs embedded in place – examples include ‘Corby Castle’ and ‘Tatie Pot’ - then we arrive at a total of 327 songs expressive of regional identity, some 64% of the Cumbrian folk song corpus.

Farming songs

45 songs have been included in this category, as their subject matter is directly related to farming and rural practices, such as ‘The Ploughing Match’ and ‘Threshing Day’. Hunting songs are not included in this group, being regarded as a separate category (see above). Of these 45 songs, 18 come from street literature - ‘The Bonny Green Fields of the Farmyard’ for example, while seven are in dialect - ‘T’Oald Boar’ (‘Sow’s took the Measles’) is one, and six are by known composers - Robbie Ellis’s ‘T’Milkin’’ being a particularly striking one. Unsurprisingly the largest group of

farming-related songs concern sheep: ‘A Shepherd's Life’, ‘Jobby Teasdale’s Tup’, ‘Sheep Shearing Song’, ‘Clipping Song’, ‘Middleton Ha' Clippin’ and, most notable of all, ‘Tarry Woo’ (Wool), collected from nine different sources. It is a song which has been found all around Cumbria, from Eskdale to Patterdale and Lamplugh to Dent, where it was kept alive until just a few years ago by two doughty W.I. ladies who gave costumed presentations about 'The Terrible Knitters of Dent'.⁸⁶ Despite being claimed for both Lakeland and the Yorkshire Dales, the song actually has its roots in a Scottish song published by Allan Ramsay in the early eighteenth century, and naturally enough became particularly popular in sheep-rearing areas.⁸⁷ Subjects which represent other rural occupations like cock fighting and poaching (but not hunting, which is discussed separately) are also included. Examples include ‘Wa’ney Cockfeighting Sang’, ‘Young Henry the Poacher’ and ‘William Graham, the Poacher’ and nineteenth century popular songs of the stage like ‘Jim the Carter’s Lad’ and ‘Farmer’s Boy’.

The social life of rural Cumbria in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century revolved around the farming year, with the hard physical work of daily life leavened by music-making at fairs, sheep clippings (shearings), ‘kurn’ (harvest) suppers, shepherds’ and hunt meets and of course over Christmas. The farming communities’ annual rhythm of work and play would begin at Shrovetide and Easter with cockfighting, football and pace-egging, then in April and around Whitsuntide hiring fairs would be held, June was for sheep clipping – often very sociable affairs as farmers helped each other with this - while autumn or ‘backend’ brought fairs for the sale and purchase of stock, the necessary salving and marking of

⁸⁶ Discussions and interviews with the ladies concerned, the late Betty Hartley and Elizabeth Middleton, who gave a demonstration for the TV cameras in Dent in 1992.

⁸⁷ Allan Ramsay, *The Tea-Table Miscellany; or a Collection of Choice Songs, Scots and English* (Edinburgh, 1724-37), p. 378.

sheep and then shepherds' meets, at which lost sheep were returned to their owners before tuppung time, with celebrations in the pub including supper, drinks and songs. In November the cattle went back into the byres and hunting started up, while women are often reported to spend time carding and spinning wool before the Christmas festivities which would include 'merry neets' with dancing, singing and feasting. This yearly pattern is described by William Dickinson in his poem *Memorandums of Old Times*, which reveals that when clipping was finished the workers would have a feast in the barn, the evening ending with the singing of songs like 'Here's good health to the man o' this house, For he is an honest man,' 'O Good ale thou art my Darling', 'The Rock Starlin'' – 'while the shepherds would sing 'Tarry Woo''.⁸⁸

Religious and moral themes

34 songs in the database have been classified as having religious and moral themes as principal subject matter, although the category includes not only overtly religious songs like hymns, but also morality tales and sentimental songs offering philosophical reflections on human life - many possibly originating as songs from the stage. Fourteen of these songs derive from street literature, including comic songs like 'Axes to Grind' and 'Beadle of the Parish' while dialect songs also total fourteen, three by Anderson: 'King Roger', 'The Buck o' Kingwatter' and 'Peace'. Popular hymns and carols meanwhile are represented by 'When Adam was First Created', 'Another Year' and 'As Joseph was a-Walking' whilst songs in the 'philosophical' category would include 'The Fall of the Leaf' ('Man has his seasons as well as the leaf') - noted by Cecil Sharp at the Westmorland Festival Folk-Song Competition in 1905 and collected by Anne Gilchrist from James Bayliff of Barbon around 1909, the broadside ballad 'Johnston's Escort into Better Climes' (a wrongdoer is punished) and

⁸⁸ William Dickinson, *Cumbriana, or Fragments of Cumbrian life* (Whitehaven, 1875), pp. 213-232.

‘Hoo Happy we Lived Then’, collected from John Collinson of Kirkby Lonsdale 1905-8 by both Gilchrist and Grainger.

Border ballads

Despite Ruskin’s claims that ‘the border district of Scotland was at this time, of all districts of the inhabited world, pre-eminently the singing country’, on the English side of the border just eighteen songs out of the 515 are border ballads, barely three per cent of the total and all from printed sources.⁸⁹ Border ballads are defined as those narrative ballads, often set in that traditionally lawless area known as ‘The Debatable Land’, a tract of country between the Rivers Esk and Sark whose nationality was not officially established until 1552. Here family feuds and cross-border raids were common, with the ballads telling stories of romance, revenge and bitter hatreds among clans like the Armstrongs, Elliotts and Graemes, described as a people ‘that will be Scottishe when they will, and Englishe at their pleasure.’

It was Sir Walter Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, published in three volumes between 1802 and 1803, which brought border ballads to a wider public recognition.⁹⁰ In his introduction Scott admits that although he collected ballads from shepherds and country people when young, he later went on to ‘correct the deficiencies’ of his own copies, using Glenriddell Manuscript versions compiled by the ‘sedulous border antiquary,’ the late Mr Riddell of Glenriddell.⁹¹ Being first and foremost a writer, it was inevitable that Scott would edit the ballads he published, as Percy had done before him, and so it is that the ballad texts which became best-known need to be viewed as more of a literary construct than ‘songs of the people’.⁹² Later in

⁸⁹ A.M. Wakefield, *Ruskin on Music* (London, 1894), p. 133.

⁹⁰ Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

⁹¹ Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, volume , p. cii. The Glenriddell MS is today in the National Museums of Scotland Library: ‘Robert Riddell of Glenriddell manuscript collections, 1786-1792’, Edinburgh, National Museums of Scotland Library, MS86 and MS87.

⁹² Percy, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

the nineteenth century ballad scholar Francis James Child, Professor of English at Harvard University, took a more scholarly approach when he included border ballads in his monumental *The English and Scottish Ballads*, with all 305 ballads' sources clearly listed and ballad variants noted, but retaining an emphasis on their being a literary form rather than a type of popular song.⁹³

A few of the ballads are traceable to events which took place in the sixteenth century, for example those about Johnnie Armstrong, Laird of Gilnockie, whose activities drew the attention of King James V in 1529. Most, however, first appear in print in eighteenth century Scottish collections, in chapbooks published on both sides of the border and of course in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* in 1765.⁹⁴ Most of the ballads are actually set in what is now the Scottish Borders, with just a few relating stories from the English side - 'Graeme and Bewick' and 'Kinmont Willy', for example, where the main action takes place in Carlisle and north Cumberland.⁹⁵ Very few Border Ballads have been collected in living memory, and certainly none in Cumbria, although a unique version of 'Johnnie Armstrong' was recorded by Mike Yates in 1998 from Willie Beattie of Liddesdale, who lived just two fields away from Cumbria. Scott also had a version of 'Kinmont Willie' (as 'Kinmount Willie'), the only known recording of the ballad, set to a tune he wrote himself.⁹⁶

Janes Walter Brown, the Carlisle singer who sang folk songs for Sydney Nicholson, was also a keen chronicler of local history and his archive in the Jackson

⁹³ Child, *The English and Scottish Ballads*.

⁹⁴ Border Ballads appear in Allan Ramsay's *The Evergreen*, 1724–1727 and David Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads etc collected from Memory, Tradition, and Ancient Authors* while 'John Armstrong's Last Goodnight' appears in a London broadside of 1723 and one printed in Edinburgh in 1827.

⁹⁵ James Reed, *The Border Ballads* (Stocksfield, 1991), pp. 42, 10.

⁹⁶ Mike Yates, 'Up in the North, Down in the South: Songs and Tunes from the Mike Yates Collection 1964-2000', *Musical Traditions* (2001).

Library includes a manuscript book in which he has written the tunes of the Border Ballads ‘Hughie the Graeme’, ‘Hobbie Noble’, ‘Graeme and Bewick’, ‘Kinmont Willie’, ‘Adam Bell’, ‘Dick o’ the Cow’, and ‘The Lochmaben Harper’, seemingly transcribed from Stokoe and Reay’s *Songs and Ballads of Northern England*. The texts draw on Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* as well as on Percy’s *Reliques*, with a note added that Percy had been Dean of Carlisle Cathedral 1778-1782. Brown seems well aware of the difficulty of ascertaining the ballads’ provenance, in the case of ‘Kinmont Willy’ reflecting that ‘how much of the ballad is original and how much it owes to the wizard wand of Sir Walter Scott will probably never be known.’⁹⁷ The same could be said of any of the border ballads which, could be said to represent if not an invented tradition then certainly a re-invented one.

Drinking songs

Songs about drinking have always been popular, although within the Cumbrian folk song corpus they represent only a small proportion of the whole. Fifteen songs have been identified as drinking songs, typically extolling the joys of ale and drunken revelries but on occasion also reflecting on the problems drink can bring in its wake. The genre includes some of the earliest songs in the corpus - ‘Guid Strang Yell: A Cumberland Ballad’ and ‘The Peck o’ Punch’, both published in *The Universal Songster* between 1825-1834. A total of seven drinking songs appear to have their origins as broadsides, including ‘While Jones’ Ale was New’ and ‘The Wild Rover’, while nine of the songs are in dialect, including all six comic songs within this category: ‘Auld Jobby Dixon’, Anderson’s ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’ and ‘The Worton Wedding’, ‘Raffles Merrie Nite’, ‘Satterday Neet’ and ‘The Wigton Mashers’.

Historical songs

⁹⁷ *Traditional Ballad Tunes*, Carlisle, Jackson Library, D.23.

Nine songs are designated as having historical subject matter, based on events which actually happened. Two of these are broadside ballads relating to the Napoleonic wars 1800-1815, which inspired much popular patriotism and an effusion of pamphlets, cartoons and broadsides: 87 songs about Napoleon are listed in the Bodleian ballad collection.⁹⁸ Most of these ballads focus on ‘Boney’’s defeats - in the Cumbria corpus represented by the love song ‘Plains of Waterloo’ and ‘Bonny Bunch of Roses’, which recounts the story of Napoleon’s march on Moscow in 1812.⁹⁹ Other broadsides detail events in Cumbria: ‘A New Song on the Volunteer Review on the Banks of Eden’, ‘Lines on the Awful Murder near Annan’ and ‘Paul Jones’ (John Paul Jones the historical figure, who led an assault on the port of Whitehaven in 1778).

Of the remaining four songs ‘Lord Derwentwater’ is a ballad collected in the Ulverston area in 1825 about the English Jacobite earl from Northumberland, executed for treason in 1716, and three are of more recent composition: ‘Clifton’, written by Robbie Ellis of Penrith in 1976 about the Clifton Moor Skirmish during the Jacobite retreat to Scotland in 1745, ‘Settle to Carlisle Railway’ - Mike Donald’s 1971 song about the building of the Settle to Carlisle Railway in the 1870s, and ‘Phillipson’s Curse’ by Norman Bell (1976), relating the legend of the skulls of Calgarth Hall on Windermere.

Children's songs

A large number of local children’s playground rhymes and singing games have been recorded in the county by Anne Gilchrist in the early twentieth century and by

⁹⁸ <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ballads> , ccessed on 20 January 2014. ‘Plains of Waterloo’ is a prime example of the difficulty of categorising songs, as it could just as well have been included in the ‘Amatory and Sentimental’ category, but is here listed as a ‘Historical song’ since it appears under the heading of ‘Waterloo Songs’ in Peter Wood, *The Green Linnet: Napoleonic songs from the French Wars to the present day* (Berwick-upon-Tweed, 2015), p. 67, and as a Napoleonic ballad in Oskar Cox Jensen, *Napoleonic British Song 1797-1822* (Basingstoke, 2015). See also <https://soundcloud.com/napoleonandbritishsong>.

⁹⁹ Alexander Franklin and Mark Philp, *Napoleon and the Invasion of Britain* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 126-127.

Father Damian Webb in 1960, but as they are not regarded as folk songs per se they are not included in the corpus, which includes just seven traditional children's songs.¹⁰⁰ Two of these songs, 'Arise Daughter Ellen', and 'Lumps of Plum Pudding', were collected in Keswick, the first by Anne Gilchrist and the second by Cecil Sharp.¹⁰¹ Gilchrist also noted 'Bonnie Annie' (the tune which inspired 'D'ye Ken John Peel') as a children's song, while Keith Gregson adds a tune and additional words to 'Nursery Song', 'half-remembered' by John Woodcock Graves.¹⁰² Of the remaining songs, 'Dance for thy Daddy' comes from Frank Warriner's transcriptions and 'Ould John Braddlem' was included by Lyell Johnston in his 1915 collection, while 'The Pace Egging Song' (sometimes 'The Jolly Boys Song') is one of the most commonly found songs, or noted fifteen times places as disparate as Barrow, Grasmere, Ambleside, Casterton, Kirkby Lonsdale, Kendal, Natland and Cockermouth performed as part of 'The Pace Egg Play' – the folk play performed by children as part of an Easter house-visiting custom and popular in Lancashire and West Yorkshire as well as Westmorland.¹⁰³ The song is an integral part of the play, most versions of which appear to stem from William Walker of Otley's *Peace Egg* chapbook, but it went on to become a very popular chorus song at folk clubs and festivals from the 1960s on.¹⁰⁴

Industrial songs

A. L. Lloyd's definition of industrial work songs was 'the kind of vernacular songs made by workers themselves directly out of their own experiences, expressing

¹⁰⁰ Gilchrist's notes on these are in the Gilchrist Collection in the VWML, AGG/1/18 and AGG/1/20; Damian Webb's recordings were released commercially by Folktrax on CD in the 1970s as FTX-194 *Counting Out and Ball Games* FTX-195 *Playground Singing Games* and FTX-197 *Skipping Rhymes*.

¹⁰¹ In letter from Anne Gilchrist to Lucy Broadwood, London, VWML, Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/158; London, VWML, Cecil Sharp Collection, 'Tunes', p. 2568.

¹⁰² Gregson, *Cumbrian Songs and Ballads*, p. 78.

¹⁰³ Johnston, *Three Northern County Folk Songs*. No.3; 'Frank Warriner Folk Song Collection', VWML; E.C. Cawte, Alex Helm and N. Peacock, *English Ritual Drama: A Geographical Index* (London; 1967); Marjorie Rowling, *The Folklore of the Lake District* (London; 1976).

¹⁰⁴ Eddie Cass, *The Lancashire Pace-Egg Play: A Social History* (London, 2002), p. 137.

their own interest and aspirations, and incidentally pass on among themselves by oral means'.¹⁰⁵ However, contrary to expectations, few songs relating to mining and industry seem to have come out of industrial West Cumberland, despite the assiduous researches of Paul Adams of Workington in the early 1970s and correspondence with local miners by Lloyd some twenty years earlier.¹⁰⁶ Just six songs, all related to mining, appear in the corpus: 'Bullgill's Buggered, Marra', about the closing of Bullgill pit near Maryport, its words given to me 1971-2 which I set to the tune 'The Wearing of the Green'; 'My Miner Lad', a song which seems to have had some currency in Scotland and the north generally; two songs written and recorded by Paul Adams in 1975-6, 'Farewell to the Miner' and 'The Parton Collier's Lament' and 'The Wellington Disaster', written by Lancashire songwriter Mike Lyddiard about the explosion and fire at Wellington Pit, Whitehaven in 1910 and recorded by Paul and Linda Adams in 1976 and finally, and more controversially, 'The Recruited Collier', collected - or rather concocted - by A.L. Lloyd.

Lloyd was politically committed to the idea of 'industrial folk song': his book *The Singing Englishman: an introduction to folksong* was published by the Workers' Music Association in 1944, *Come All Ye Bold Miners: Ballads and songs from the Coalfields* in 1952 sponsored by the National Coal Board, with Lloyd going on to record *The Iron Muse* in 1962 to further his campaign to 'reclaim folk song for the working classes'.¹⁰⁷ Lloyd says that when working on *Come All Ye Bold Miners* a Mr J.T. Huxtable of Workington had corresponded with him and sent two songs: 'Jimmy's Enlisted' ('The Recruited Collier') and 'The Collier's Lament', although Paul Adams' subsequent assiduous investigations in the 1970s did not manage to unearth any trace of a Mr Huxtable in the area. Recent research by Steven Winick

¹⁰⁵ Lloyd, *Folk Song in England*, pp. 327-328.

¹⁰⁶ Sue Allan, Interview with Paul and Linda Adams, Workington, 2011.

¹⁰⁷ Dave Arthur, *Bert: The Life and Times of A.L. Lloyd* (London, 2012), pp. 136-137.

reveals that Lloyd was less than honest in his attribution of sources: ‘Lloyd's desire to claim the authenticity of tradition for folksongs overcame his memory (or his honesty) on some occasions, of which the most prominent example was The ‘Recruited Collier’. ‘Jimmy’s Enlisted’ or ‘The Recruited Collier’ was in fact a clever confection of Lloyd’s own making: a re-working of Robert Anderson’s dialect poem ‘Jenny’s Complaint’, which had a pastoral setting, moved to the locale of the West Cumbrian coalfields, and set to a tune of Irish origin.¹⁰⁸

Maritime songs

Just seven songs with maritime themes appear in the corpus, a small number considering that Cumbria has a maritime history and the popularity of maritime songs in nineteenth-century England: songs inspired by events like naval battles or wrecks, appear frequently in street literature, with over 300 texts published just in the three volumes of the *Universal Songster 1825–1828*.¹⁰⁹

Four of the seven maritime songs come from broadsides: ‘The Mermaid’ in Wesley Park’s collection, ‘The Ship that Never Returned’ recorded by Stephen Sedley in Langdale in 1965¹¹⁰, ‘Admiral Hosier’s Ghost’¹¹¹, and ‘Brave Nelson’ collected by Anne Gilchrist, the former from Mrs Carlisle of Casteron in 1905 and the latter from James Bayliff, circa 1908. Of the remaining two, ‘The Trafalgar Sea Fight’ is a poem written in Cumberland dialect by Miss Gilpin, set to music by Keith Gregson in his

¹⁰⁸ Winick, ‘A. L. Lloyd and Reynardine: Authenticity and Authorship in the Afterlife of a British Broadside Ballad.’, p. 290. In a letter to Roy Palmer, Lloyd said: ‘I fitted the tune; but whether I made up the melody or took it from tradition I no longer remember. I think the latter; but if so, what was it the tune of?’ (Mudcat Café forum comment, posted by Malcolm Douglas 18 Sept 2003, <http://mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=39035>, accessed on 7 November 2009. I am grateful to the late Fred McCormick for finding and sending a copy of the original tune in 25 Sept 2012: it is the Irish air ‘Tuirne Maire’ (Mary’s Spinning Wheel). See also Arthur, *Bert: The Life and Times of A.L. Lloyd*, pp. 215–216.

¹⁰⁹ *The Universal Songster, or Museum of Mirth*.

¹¹⁰ Originally written by American composer and songwriter Henry Clay Work (1832–1884), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ship_that_Never_Returned [accessed 20 March 2017]

¹¹¹ Written by Richard Glover (1712–1785) and published by him as an illustrated broadside 1840, British Museum, print 1868,0808.3628.

Cumbrian Songs and Ballads, while 'The Edward' was written in the 1970s by Maurice Telford of Dearham, Maryport about a ship which sank off the Cumbrian coast. Some of these songs feature historical events, such as the Battle of Trafalgar, and real people, like Admiral Hosier and Lord Nelson, and could therefore have been classed as historical songs, but I have taken the decision to include these in the maritime category, feeling it was important to see how many sea songs were current in a county which had a number of active ports.

Nonsense songs

Although nonsense songs are generally thought of as being for children, the three included here are not categorised with children's songs, as they are clearly songs sung by adults for adult audiences. A common feature of such songs is that they are very repetitive, making it easier for audiences to join in, and two of the three are of this type: 'The Ram of Derbish Town', a version of an English folk tale with a history going back at least 250 years, which was recorded from the singing of gypsy Kathleen Gentle at Appleby New Fair in 1968, and 'Benjamin Bowmaneer', a song about a tailor who adapts the tools of his trade to go into battle, noted from the singing of Mrs Sarah Foster of Sedbergh, who learnt it from a travelling tailor some time at the end of the nineteenth century.¹¹² The third nonsense song is 'My Uncle Pete', a comic song composed by Charles Collette in 1875 and performed by Jim Matthews in the 1953 recordings made at the Crown & Thistle pub at Rockcliffe, near Carlisle.

Unclassified

Just six songs within the corpus remain unassigned to any subject matter category, covering a range of themes which do not appear to fit any of the designated

¹¹² 'Benjamin Bowmaneer' in R. Vaughan Williams and A.L. Lloyd, 'Penguin Book of English Folk Songs', (London, 1959). Notes add that Mrs Foster's great-niece, Mary Spence of Patterdale, sent the song to Frank Howes of the EFDSS. See also Gilchrist Collection, letter from Mary Spence to Frank Howes 16 June 1931, AGG/10/340, where Mrs Spence says the song must have been learnt by her great-aunt around 1790.

categories. Two of them comic songs: 'How did I ever Become a Corporal' and Wesley Park's 'A Lad on the Dole'. Two of the songs are broadside ballads - 'There was an Old Man', sung at the Westmorland Festival competition in 1902 but about which we know only the title, and 'Up Step't Jack', sung by John Collinson at the 1906 competition - and finally we have 'In Yon Land', also collected from Collinson, by both Gilchrist and Grainger, and a song referred to William Dickinson in his poem 'Anecdotes of the Farm' in 1876: 'The Raven and the Rock-Starling'.¹¹³

(v) Songs in dialect

Although the primary classification of songs is by theme or subject matter, in terms of regional identity it is also important to know which are in local dialect, so dialect became a secondary method of classification. Songs in dialect make up 24% of the total number of songs in the corpus: 121 songs on a range of different subjects and themes, with by far the greatest number, 73, falling into the 'Amatory and Sentimental' category. Most of the songs are in Cumberland dialect, with just five known to be from Westmorland - and so theoretically in Westmorland dialect, although the differences between the two are minimal. The five Westmorland songs are: 'Ah Teks Efter me Feyther' and 'Ga Wi' Me T'Farleton', both collected from John Collinson of Kirkby Lonsdale by Percy Grainger in 1905; 'Hoo Happy We Lived Then', sung by Collinson at the Kendal Folk-Song Competition in 1905; 'Farewell to Long Sleddal', sung by Willie Hayhurst of Milnthorpe at the 1903 festival and 'A Country Courtin'', written by Darwin Leighton, printed as broadsheet in Kendal in 1918 and sung by Bruce Wilson of Swarthmoor on his 2009 CD *M'Appen Ah May*. The song 'I Went to Kendal Market', recorded from an unknown singer at Ullswater in 1969, might appear to come from Westmorland but is actually a version of a song

¹¹³ Dickinson, *Cumbriana, or Fragments of Cumbrian life*, p. 248.

more usually known as ‘Albert Edward Spence’, popular across the whole area and twice recorded in Cumberland.

The Furness area of south Cumbria, formerly also known as Lancashire-North-of-the-Sands, yields just two dialect songs: ‘Roger’s Courtship’ (‘A Furness Song’), which has turned up in a number of printed sources, and ‘Young Bob o’ Cartmel Fell’, a comic courtship song recorded from an unknown singer in 1969, albeit in Westmorland. Yorkshire meanwhile is represented solely by ‘You’ll Never Git in Withoot’, collected from Moor Sedgwick of Sedbergh in 1954.

Further north, in Cumberland we find 37 songs from the pen of the ‘Cumberland Bard’, Carlisle poet Robert Anderson, whose life and work are studied in more detail in the next chapter. Editions of Anderson’s *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect* were in print throughout the nineteenth century and his songs - like those of Burns, on whom he modelled himself - travelled widely both within the region and beyond, with ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’, ‘Barbary Bell’ and ‘Sally Gray’ also appearing in northern chapbook songsters and ‘Jwohny and Mary’, ‘The Peck o’ Punch’ and ‘The Thursby Witch’ featuring in *The Universal Songster*.¹¹⁴

The records we have of the singing Anderson’s songs come mainly from around Carlisle, although ‘Sally Gray’ gained a wider currency, recorded from 20 different sources including mid-nineteenth century chapbooks, the notebooks of Broadwood, Vaughan Williams and Gilchrist, Broadwood’s *English County Songs* in 1893 and the *Journal of the Folk Song Society* in 1907.¹¹⁵ Arrangements for voice and piano of ‘Sally Gray’, along with other dialect songs by Anderson and others, were

¹¹⁴ *Universal Songster, or Museum of Mirth*, Vol III, 1826: pp.271-272, pp.239-240 and p.380

¹¹⁵ Broadwood and Fuller Maitland, *English County Songs*, pp. 8-9; Frank Kidson and others, ‘Songs from Cumberland & Northumberland’, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, 3 (1907), p. 41.

also published by William Metcalfe, John Graham and Jeffrey Mark, and the song is also included in a number of sound recordings from 1940 to 2009.¹¹⁶

Other dialect poets whose poems were set to music and which became popular local songs include Alexander Craig Gibson's 'L'al Dinah Grayson', John Richardson's 'It's Nobbut Me' and Geordie Greenup's 'Ah Yance Went ta Lorton': all comic songs – as many dialect songs seem to be. Songs mentioning local place names usually seem, naturally enough, to have been collected nearer to those places: for example 'The Wa'ney Cockfeightin' Song' has been found in Furness and Westmorland but 'Corby Castle' and 'Copshawholme Fair' turn up only in north Cumberland. Other aspects of dialect songs and the poets who wrote them are considered in detail in the next chapter, and details of the transcriptions and recordings of dialect songs made in the mid-twentieth by Frank Warriner (1904-1964), Harold Forsyth (1907-2001) and Robert Forrester (1913-1988), all members of the Lakeland Dialect Society, were detailed in the previous chapter.

(c) Summary of findings

Interrogating the database (Appendix 1) reveals many features of the Cumbrian song corpus that were flagged up as themes in Chapter 1. For example, it is clear that hunting songs comprise a major element of the overall corpus - almost 30 per cent - with dialect songs representing another 24 per cent, across all subject areas. In addition, the importance of print in disseminating songs is highlighted because of the large number of songs which have been identified as circulating via street literature: some 30 per cent of all sources (the figure may well be higher as only a

¹¹⁶ Metcalfe, 'The works of William Metcalfe Vol.II', *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, nos. 1-9; Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*, pp. 14-15; Mark, *Four North Country Songs*.

limited number of the flimsy broadside ballad sheets survive, so it is impossible to check all titles in extant ballad collections).

I have made an assumption, which I think is reasonable, that the number of versions of a song surviving, in whatever medium, is indicative of its relative popularity, with 27 songs from six or more sources therefore being regarded as the most popular. Of the ten most frequently found songs, six are hunting songs, three are dialect songs by Robert Anderson and the tenth is 'The Pace Egging Song', sung well into the twentieth century by children as part of the annual Pace Egg Play, and so collected by folk play researchers as well as folk song collectors.

The fame of John Peel and widespread popularity of 'D'Ye Ken John Peel' over almost 200 years inevitably makes it the most popular song, from 37 sources, and it is followed by 'The Horn of the Hunter' – also about John Peel - from 19. The local popularity and frequent publication of the dialect songs of Robert Anderson has ensured that his 'Sally Gray' is the third most popular song, with 16 different sources listed, and his 'Bleckell Merry Neet' and 'Canny Cummerlan' also feature in the top ten along with the hunting songs 'Joe Bowman', 'A Fine Hunting Day', 'The Mardale Hunt' and 'Dido Bendigo' – all songs notable for their strong tunes and catchy choruses. However, the example of 'Brisk Young Sailor' at number thirteen in the list is a cautionary reminder that the number of sources listed for a song is not necessarily indicative of how widespread a song is within Cumbria, as the sources listed for the song - the notebooks of Cecil Sharp, Anne Gilchrist and Percy Grainger and publication in the *Folk Song Journal* - are all versions deriving from the singing of one man: James Bayliff of Casterton. The 'popularity' of the song therefore being directly linked to its status among folk song collectors. Similarly, it is evident that the sources of the songs collected in Carlisle in the early twentieth century such as

Anderson's 'Bleckell Murry Neet' and 'Sally Gray' represent the singing and collecting activities of a very small group of keen collectors and musicians. Figure 8 on the following page lists the songs from six or more sources.

Figure 8: Most commonly found songs (six or more sources)

Subject	Broadside / Dialect	Title	Number of occurrences in corpus
H	B	D'Ye Ken John Peel	37
H		Horn of the Hunter	19
A&S	D:Anderson	Sally Gray	18
H		Joe Bowman	16
C	B	Pace Egging Song	15
H		Fine Hunting Day	13
H		Mardale Hunt	10
Dr	D:Anderson	Bleckell Merry Neet	9
H	B	Dido Bendigo	9
Pl	D	Canny Cummerlan'	9
F		Tarry Woo'	9
F	B	Wa'ney Cockfeighting Song	9
A&S	B	Brisk Young Sailor	8
A&S	B	Cumberland Lass (or Nelly)	7
H		The Beagle Inn	7
Pl		Copshawholme Fair	7
A&S	D	L'al Dinah Grayson	7
H		Pass the Jug Round	7
A&S	D	Ah Yance went ta Lorton	6
A&S	D:Anderson	Barbary Bell	6
A&S		Corby Castle	6
R&M	B	The Fall of the Leaf	6
A&S	D:Anderson	Geordie Gill	6
H		Hare Hunting Song	6
R&M		King Henry My Son	6
H		The Six Fell Packs	6
H		The Terrier Song	6

The eclectic nature of the songs in Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus, many with known composers or from printed sources challenges the preconceptions of the

Edwardian collectors who were seeking an indigenous English music which could be ascribed to ‘unlettered’ common people, ‘the remnants of the peasantry’.¹¹⁷ It could be argued that the heterogeneous character of the Cumbrian folk song corpus is related to the multiplicity of forms folk songs can take and the fact that the singers represent a wide range of people from many different walks of life. But eclecticism in the repertoire of country singers is nothing new. Lancastrian poet Edwin Waugh’s lively description of an evening spent in a Lake District inn in the mid-nineteenth century features two farmers declaring ‘canny Cumberlan’ agean the world!’ but then going on to lead the company in a wide-ranging selection of songs from popular sentimental ballads and comic songs of the day, to a spinning song and ‘Hunsup through the Wood’, an experience which mirrors my own at Blencathra Foxhounds’ social evenings in the early 1980s, where country and western favourites and old standards would jostle with hunting songs and dialect recitations over the course of an evening.¹¹⁸

Detailed studies of regional repertoires of folk song are few and far between, although there has been some recent work in Gloucestershire, Yorkshire and the North East on internet-based folk music resources from those areas.¹¹⁹ So while there are no studies quite like this one from which to make any comparisons, it does seem clear that in Cumbria dialect songs and local hunting songs make up a substantial proportion of the whole corpus of folk songs from the region, creating a distinctive regional song repertoire.

¹¹⁷ Atkinson, 'Folk Songs in Print; Text and Tradition', p. 460.

¹¹⁸ Edwin Waugh, *Rambles in the Lake Country and its Borders* (London, 1861). Singing after Blencathra Foxhounds hunt meet at Sun Inn, Bassenthwaite 3 December 1985.

¹¹⁹ Gloucestershire: <http://glostrad.com>, Yorkshire <http://www.yorkshirefolksong.net>, <http://www.folknortheast.com>.

Chapter 4: DIALECT POETRY AS FOLK SONG

(a) Dialect literature and the Cumbrian dialect poets

A substantial proportion of the Cumbrian folk song corpus is made up of songs in dialect: 121 songs, almost 24% of the total. 58 of the songs are by known authors, 37 written by ‘The Cumberland Bard’: the prolific Carlisle-born dialect poet Robert Anderson. The Oxford Dictionary defines dialect as ‘a form or variety of a language which is peculiar to a specific region, especially one which differs from the standard or literary form of the language in respect of vocabulary, pronunciation, idiom, etc.; (as a mass noun) provincial or rustic speech’ as well as a mode of speech ‘peculiar to, or characteristic of, a particular person or group’, this latter what is called in linguistics a ‘sociolect’.¹ The term ‘Cumbrian dialect’ used here refers to the dialects of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire-above-the-Sands as, despite some variations in pronunciation and meaning, the dialects are sufficiently similar to have been historically regarded as one dialect by, for example, Archibald Sparkes in his 1907 bibliography of the region’s dialect as well as the Lakeland Dialect Society, formed in 1939 and still active today and more recently by William Rollinson in his 1997 dialect dictionary.²

Most dictionary definitions of dialect accept that the word describes a variety of language peculiar to a district or class, although that there does remain a popular usage which saw the term as implying ‘rustic’ and ‘uneducated’.³ The situation is,

¹ Oxford English Dictionary online:

<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.lancs.ac.uk/view/Entry/51878?rskey=rJdiCP&result=1#eid>, accessed 25 February 2015.

² Archibald Sparke, *A Bibliography of the Dialect Literature of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire North-of-the-Sands* (Kendal, 1907); Lake District Dialect Society website, <http://www.lakelanddialectsociety.org>, accessed on 1 March 2015; William Rollinson, *The Cumbrian Dictionary of Dialect, Tradition and Folklore* (Otley, 1997).

³ ‘Defining ‘Dialect’, *English Today*, 1/4 (1985), p. 15.

however, rather more nuanced as the idea of any ‘spoken standard’ form of English only emerged in the eighteenth century after a proliferation of printed materials helped fix London English as a more formal language, with orthographic deviations from the norm branded ideologically abnormal.’⁴ Dave Russell, in his book on Northern England, also makes the point that dialects are not debased or incorrect versions of Standard English but ‘valid linguistic systems derived from Old English, Norse and Norman roots’ possessing their own distinctive accent, vocabulary and grammar, with Northern dialects and accents in particular having a central role in reinforcing and constructing a range of ideas about the North.⁵

There was a strong antiquarian interest in dialect in the eighteenth century and as the century progressed also a changed cultural perception of the north and its people, as the middle and upper classes came under the influence of Romanticism. The people of the north then became manifestations of the ‘noble savage’, surrounded in their solitude by a sublime landscape, and speaking an uncorrupted language in harmony with nature. The language of north Cumberland is actually related quite closely to Lowland Scots, Scottish English and Northumbrian, and the relation of the Cumbrian dialect of the Carlisle area used by Susanna Blamire and Robert Anderson will be discussed later in this chapter.⁶ It is also, however, even more closely allied with the dialect of the dales of the central Lake District, which have been closely linked with the Scandinavian languages. The Scandinavian connection certainly exercised nineteenth century commentators on the dialect, including the Lakes poets, as pointed out in Matthew Townend’s study of the Victorian passion for the Vikings reveals. Unpicking fact from Romantic fantasy, he discusses those who did most to identify and analyse the Norse component in Lakeland dialect: Ruskin’s secretary, the

⁴ Katie Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 93, 98.

⁵ Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, p. 111.

⁶ Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History*, pp. 105, 151.

antiquarian and novelist W.G.Collingwood (1854-1932), who set some of his novels on Scandinavian themes set in the Lake District; the poet Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859) had speculated about the Danish roots of the Lake District in a series of articles in *The Westmorland Gazette* in late 1819/early 1820 (before deciding that Icelandic was a better fit); the Carlisle mill owner, MP and antiquarian Robert Ferguson (1817-1898) who in 1858 put forward the thesis that Scandinavian settlement in Cumbria comprised Norwegians coming from the west, via Ireland and the Isle of Man, and Reverend Thomas Ellwood (1838-1911) of Torver, near Coniston, who drew linguistic parallels between Lakeland dialect and Icelandic.⁷ Another study of Scandinavian influence on language, however, concluded that Ellwood was a ‘keen but incompetent’ translator of Icelandic, with neither he nor Collingwood having a detailed knowledge of philology, so failing to grasp that words that they regarded as having Old Norse roots were just as likely to have come from Old English.⁸ The more colourful ideas about Vikings have faded away over the twentieth century although, as Townend notes, ‘a connection between Viking past and local identity is something that has persisted.’⁹ Evidence in documents and place names does suggest that a distinctly Nordic dialect of a more widespread northern Anglo-Saxon had emerged by the end of the tenth century, according to Simon Elmes, and by the eighteenth century

⁷ Matthew Townend, *The Vikings and Victorian Lakeland: The Norse Medievalism of W.G.Collingwood and his Contemporaries* (Kendal, 2009), pp. 52,186; *Westmorland Gazette* 13 Nov, 4 Dec, 18 Dec 1819 and 8 Jan 1820, reprinted in Barry Symonds and Grevel Lindop, *The Works of Thomas de Quincey: Writings 1799-1820*, (London, 2000); Robert Ferguson, *The Northmen in Cumberland and Westmorland* (London & Carlisle, 1856).

⁸ Andrew Wawn, *The Vikings and the Victorians: Inventing the Old North in 19th-century Britain* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 23.

⁹ Townend, *The Vikings and Victorian Lakeland*, p. 276. Examples of this persistence include the regional histories of William Rollinson as well as the writings of poet Norman Nicholson and Melvyn Bragg, both of whom invoke place-names and local dialect to authenticate Cumbria’s Scandinavian heritage.

a keen antiquarian interest had developed into the various regional variants of northern dialect.¹⁰

The publication of works in Cumberland and Westmorland dialects dates back to the eighteenth century: John Russell Smith's 1839 bibliography of 'provincial dialects' lists 64 books, mainly of poetry, from Cumberland and eight from Westmorland, showing that the earliest is Josiah Relph's *Miscellany of Poems*, published posthumously in 1747.¹¹ An increase of interest in dialect in the nineteenth century, both locally and nationally, led to a plethora of dialect publications including glossaries like those of Cumbrian dialect by William Dickinson (1798-1882) and Alexander Craig Gibson (1813-1874) and, nationally, the six volumes of *The English Dialect Dictionary* published between 1898 and 1905. Compiled by Joseph Wright (1855–1930) for the English Dialect Society (founded 1873), it includes 75 entries for Cumberland and 38 from Westmorland along with an additional 19 from 'Lakeland' (presumably the central Lake District). It is very striking that the greatest proportion of dialect works appears to come from Cumberland, a phenomenon reflected too in the numbers of folk songs in dialect.¹² The influence of Romanticism undoubtedly enhanced this attention on dialect, notably the poetry of Robert Burns whose *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish dialect* were published in 1786. However, it was actually the pastoral writing of Scot Allan Ramsay, much earlier in the eighteenth century, which

¹⁰ Simon Elmes, *The Routes of English* (London, 1999), p. 19.

¹¹ John Russell Smith, *A biographical list of the works that have been published, towards illustrating the provincial dialects of England* (London, 1839); Josiah Relph, *A Miscellany of Poems: Consisting of Original Poems, Translations, Pastorals in the Cumberland dialect, ables, Songs, and Epigrams*. (Wigton, 1747).

¹² William Dickinson, *A Glossary of Words and Phrases pertaining to the Dialect of Cumberland* (London, 1878); Alexander Craig Gibson, *The Folk-Speech of Cumberland and Some Districts Adjacent; Being Short Stories and Rhymes in the Dialects of the West Border Counties* (London & Carlisle, 1869) - the glossary at the end of the book, interestingly, is of 'Scotch and Cumbrian words'; Joseph Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary; being the complete vocabulary of all dialect words still in use, or known to have been in use during the last two hundred years; founded on the publications of the English Dialect Society and on a large amount of material never before printed* Vol 6, Bibliography (London, 1896-1905).

broke with the neo-classical tradition, developing a more naturalistic tone and, critically, also using vernacular speech. It has been claimed that Ramsay is the essential precursor to Romanticism, and Scotland the crucible of the Romantic Movement and even the ‘engine’ of British folk and popular culture, and certainly stylised ‘Scotch’ songs became immensely popular in London and at provincial theatres and entertainments.¹³

It seems strange therefore to find Wordsworth claiming in the preface to *The Lyrical Ballads* to have adopted the language of ‘low and rustic life’, modelling his verse on the vernacular as opposed to a received ‘poetic diction’, but yet there being no marked dialect features in his ballads.¹⁴ His stated values may be ‘rusticism, authenticity, simplicity and originality’, yet is silent on the topic of actual peasant and labouring class writers, nor did he acknowledge anywhere in his writings that he was aware of the Cumberland dialect poetry of Robert Anderson (1770-1833), despite living just forty five miles away and being listed as a subscriber to the 1820 edition of Anderson’s *Cumberland Ballads*.¹⁵ Wordsworth’s *Lyrical Ballads* were published the same year as Anderson’s *Poems on Various Subjects*, but whereas Anderson followed in the footsteps of his hero Robert Burns in engaging with and writing about his fellows, Wordsworth’s first love seems to have been the grand scenery of the Lakes rather than its inhabitants. This stands in stark contrast to the style of poetry of both Burns and Anderson, according to the vivid image conjured up by Burns’s biographer Robert Crawford, who describes their writing as being in the ‘carnavalesque tradition

¹³ Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music'* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 45,p76. Katie Wales, 'Northern English in Writing', in *Varieties of English in Writing: The Written Word as Linguistic Evidence* (Amsterdam, 2010), p. 64.

¹⁴ Alex Broadhead, 'Framing Dialect in the 1800 Lyrical Ballads: Wordsworth, regionalism and footnotes', *Language and Literature*, 19 (2010), p. 250.

¹⁵ Scott McEathron, 'Wordsworth, Lyrical Ballads, and the Problem of Peasant Poetry', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 54 (1999), pp. 3-4; Thomas Sanderson, Ed., *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson ... to which is prefixed The Life of the Author ... and an essay on the character, manners and customs of the peasantry of Cumberland; and observation on the style and genius of the author by Thomas Sanderson*, Vol. 2 (Carlisle, 1820), p. 278.

of Scots poems of folk festivity' revived by Ramsay and others, with its cast of characters including 'a swirl of well-dressed farmers, barefoot country lasses, whores, and weaver lads'.¹⁶

Dialect literature publications of the eighteenth century in Cumberland begin with Josiah Relph of Sebergham (1712 – 1743), followed by Ewan Clark of Wigton (1734-1811), Charles Graham of Penrith (c.1750 - 1796), Isaac Ritson of Eamont Bridge (1761-1789), and Susanna Blamire of Thackthwaite, near Carlisle (1749 – 1794), some of whose songs appear in the Cumbria corpus. Meanwhile from Westmorland we have only Ann Wheeler (1735 - 1804), represented by one song in the corpus: 'Gossip Nan'.¹⁷ It is not until the early nineteenth century that poems and songs in dialect proliferate in print and the region began to develop its own provincial literature 'largely in the form of song and ballad, perhaps more copious than that of any other region in England', with the most prolific writing undoubtedly being Robert Anderson (1170-1833).¹⁸ The phenomenon was not, of course, unique to Cumberland and Westmorland, as other areas of the north - notably the weaving towns and villages of Lancashire - also have a strong tradition of dialect songs. However, apart from the writings of 'Tim Bobbin' (John Collier) the caricaturist and schoolmaster whose *A View of the Lancashire Dialect, or, Tummus and Mary* was published in 1746, the wider corpus dates from the second half of the nineteenth century, when dialect writers Samuel Laycock (1826–1893), Benjamin Brierley (1825–1896) and Edwin Waugh (1817–1890) became popular, published in anthologies like John Harland's *Ballads and Songs of Lancashire* (1865) and *Lancashire Lyrics* (1866), with their

¹⁶ Robert Crawford, *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography* (London, 2009), p. 195.

¹⁷ Wheeler's 'Gossip Nan' appears to be her only song, and is actually a re-writing of a song published in D'Urfey, *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, Vol. 6, p. 315 as 'The Woman's Complaint to her Neighbour', which appears as 'Gossip Joan' in John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* in 1728.

¹⁸ C.M.L.Bouch, G.P. Jones & R.W. Brunskill, *A Short Economic and Social History of the Lake Counties, 1500-1830* (Manchester, 1961) p. 212.

songs often performed at local entertainments. Interestingly, Hollingworth notes that the strongest influence on these writers was also Robert Burns, with Waugh often referred to as the Lancashire Burns.¹⁹

William Axon in his book on folk song and dialect in Lancashire drew no distinction between vernacular poetry and folk song, and David Gregory believes that there was no sharp dividing line between the two, arguing that the most successful verses of the Lancashire dialect poets were those written with popular airs in mind, which certainly appears to be case with Anderson's and Blamire's songs.²⁰ According to Elbourne, almost every country village in Lancashire would have had its stock of well-known songs and stories, created by singers in close touch with their audiences using familiar subjects and simple language, few of which would have 'risen to the dignity of being printed, even on a broadsheet.' If true, this is very different from Cumberland, where Robert Anderson's collection of *Cumberland Ballads* was published in 1805, with his songs also finding their way into chapbooks, broadsides and songsters like *The Universal Songster 1825-1828*.²¹

By 1839, as we have seen, there was sufficient interest for London bookseller and publisher John Russell Smith to publish his dialect bibliography and he went on to publish other books in dialect, including a bibliography, and the tradition of labouring-class poetry became well-established and widespread, with at least 1,420 such poets published in Britain and Ireland between 1700 and 1900.²² The rise of the

¹⁹ Brian Hollingworth, *Songs of the People: Lancashire dialect poetry of the industrial revolution* (Manchester, 1977), p. 3.

²⁰ David Gregory, "'The songs of the people for me": The Victorian Rediscovery of Lancashire Vernacular Song', *Canadian Folk Music*, 40 (2006) p. 18; William E. Axon, *Folk Song and Folk-Speech of Lancashire: On the Ballads and Songs of the County Palatine, With Notes on the Dialect in which Many of them are Written, and an Appendix on Lancashire Folk Lore* (Manchester, 1871?).

²¹ Roger Elbourne, *Music and Tradition in Early Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840* (Woodbridge, 1980), p. 26.

²² R. J. Goulden, 'Smith, John Russell (1810–1894)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 online at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25864>, accessed 10 July 2014; John Russell Smith, *Dialogues, poems, songs and ballads by various writers in the Westmoreland and*

popular press in the form of street literature and regional newspapers also provided less formal outlets for locally-based writing and by 1907 Sparke's bibliography of dialect literature was able to list 37 glossaries and general works about Cumbrian dialect and 158 books wholly or partly in dialect, including thirteen different editions of Robert Anderson's *Cumberland Ballads*.²³

Such a proliferation of dialect poetry implies that there must have been a literate audience willing and able to read the outpourings of what Marshall and Walton call a 'multiplication of Cumbria dialect versifiers'. Much of this audience was probably a middle class one, although the growth of the popular press and rise in levels of literacy dialect meant that it became increasingly available to both rural and urban workers, a literate public who 'celebrated their Cumbrian patriotism by reading, in the printed word, the speech of their forefathers'.²⁴ As discussed earlier in relation to broadside ballads, literacy levels in the north of England were generally high: Jewell estimates that in the mid eighteenth century the rates for the gentry were 100 per cent, for tradesmen and craftsmen 72 per cent and yeomen 76 per cent.²⁵ E.P. Thompson puts forward slightly different figures for literacy levels in the early nineteenth century, with perhaps two out of three working men able to read after some fashion, with rather fewer being able to write, so 'the ballad-singers still had a thriving occupation.'²⁶ Cumbria also had, in common with Scotland, an unusually high provision of schools: schoolmaster and poet Thomas Sanderson remarks in 1820 that,

Cumberland dialects, now first collected, with a copious Glossary of words peculiar to those counties (London; 1839); John Russell Smith, *A biographical list of the works that have been published, towards illustrating the provincial dialects of England* (London, 1839); John Goodridge, 'Some Rhetorical Strategies in Later Nineteenth Century Laboring-Class Poetry', *Criticism*, 47 (2005), p. 531.

²³ Joan C. Beal, 'From Geordie Ridley to Viz: Popular Literature in Tyneside English', *Language and Literature*, 9 (2000), p. 344.

²⁴ John Marshall and John Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change* (Manchester, 1981), pp. 15, 138.

²⁵ Helen Jewell, *The North-South Divide. The origins of Northern Consciousness in England* (Manchester; 1994), p. 129.

²⁶ E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1991), pp. 782-783.

‘Of late years, the education of the peasantry has become more general by the erection of new schools; some of which are endowed, and the rest supported by petitionary subscriptions among the inhabitants, or by the quarter-pence of the scholars’, going on to say that most ‘can read, write, and cast up account.’²⁷

By the late eighteenth century there was wide interest in local dialect, as highlighted in an intriguing article in *The Cumberland Pacquet* newspaper in 1788, which describes a visit to London by a group of ‘Cumberland sword dancers’ and quotes from their humorous handbill: ‘For the information of Gentlemen unacquainted with North Country Diversions, an Interpreter, who can speak a little English, attends the Dancers to answer all Questions; - an Interpretess for the Ladies. *If either Interpreter cannot be understood, Ladies and Gentlemen, for their further Satisfaction, are desired to repeat the inexplicable Words to the other.’²⁸ Seventy years later antiquarian Jeremiah Sullivan declared that Cumberland and Westmorland were ‘fortunate beyond any other district in England, in the quality and extent of their provincial productions’, and noting that ‘it is a curious fact that the vernacular publications of Cumberland are all poetical, and in imitation of the successful Burns of Scotland, while the principal literary productions of Westmorland are in prose, and have been written in rivalry of the Lancashire Tim Bobbin’, which is largely correct.²⁹ By 1907 Sparke’s bibliography of Cumbrian dialect literature was able to list 37 glossaries and general works about dialect and 158 books wholly or partly in dialect, including thirteen different editions of Robert Anderson’s *Cumberland Ballads*, but the survey of English dialects undertaken in the 1950s, although including six villages in Cumberland and five in Westmorland, revealed little of interest with regard to

²⁷ Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, p. xiv.

²⁸ ‘The Cumberland Sword Dancers’, *Cumberland Pacquet* (1788), p. 4.

²⁹ Jeremiah Sullivan, *Cumberland and Westmorland Ancient and Modern: The People, Dialect, Superstitions and Customs* (Kendal and London, 1857), p. 101. ‘Tim Bobbin’ was the pseudonym of Lancashire satirist and writer John Collier (1708–1786).

literature as its focus was on dialect features in speech.³⁰ As McCauley notes, in one of the few investigations of British dialects, although they had become an object of both scholarly and amateur study since the early nineteenth century, motives changed over time: from an antiquarian study to one that was philological in nature, with dialect speech coming to be seen as representative of a genuine or original English, a signifier of a disappearing agrarian past and symbolic of authenticity and lack of affectation: dialect, like its speaker was direct, natural and honest, in contrast to an upper class language, and people, viewed as superficial or affected.³¹ Dialect literature as a genre appears to have died out in the early twentieth century, although dialect has continued to a certain extent to live on the speech used by both working and middle classes.

The earliest dialect poetry appears to come from the pen of country parson and schoolmaster Josiah Relph (1712-1743) of Sebergham, a few miles south west of Carlisle, recently acclaimed as probably the first dialect poet in the country. There had already been some interest in vernacular speech, with usages noted and collected into glossaries by antiquaries Rev. Thomas Machell of Crackenthorpe (1647–98) and Bishop William Nicolson (1655–1727), but Relph was the first to attempt to write literature in the vernacular - although most of his oeuvre was in Standard English, in Spenserian pastoral style. He was published posthumously in 1747 and 1798, with some of his dialect pieces gaining a wide audience through their inclusion in Thomas West's *A Guide to the Lakes* (1784).³²

³⁰ Sparke, *A Bibliography of the Dialect Literature of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire North-of-the-Sands*. Harold Orton, *Survey of English Dialects Volume 1: The Six Northern Countries and the Isle of Man* (Leeds, 1951).

³¹ Larry McCauley, "'Eawr Folk": Language, Class, and English Identity in Victorian Dialect Poetry', *Victorian Poetry*, 39 (2001), pp. 290, 292-293.

³² Stephen Matthews, *Josiah Relph of Sebergham, England's First Dialect Poet* (Carlisle, 2015), p. 252; Adam Fox, 'Vernacular Culture and Popular Customs in Early Modern England', *Cultural and Social History*, 9 (2012), p. 334.

Over the next hundred years Cumberland and Westmorland developed its own popular provincial literature, largely in the form of song and ballad, 'perhaps more copious than that of any other region in England', one that 'reflected with fidelity the tastes and conditions of ordinary people'.³³ That 'fidelity' can be questioned, however, as there was undoubtedly a degree of romanticising of rural life, but that it was popular there can be no doubt, as the list of 870 subscribers to the 1820 edition of Robert Anderson's collected works testifies.

Like Relph, all the eighteenth and early nineteenth century dialect poets also wrote in Standard English, including Ewan Clark (1734-1811) of Wigton, whose 'Satirical Ballad, in the Dialect of Cumberland' appeared in Volume 2 of Hutchinson's *History of Cumberland* in 1793.³⁴ In Westmorland the best-known is Ann Wheeler (1735–1804) and in north Cumberland Susanna Blamire (1747–1794) and Catherine Gilpin (1738–1811), Mark Lonsdale (1758–1815) who became a manager at Sadler's Wells theatre in London, blind poet John Stagg (1770–1823), who ran a library in Wigton as well as a popular fiddler at country gatherings - and of course the prolific dialect poet Robert Anderson (1770–1833). Lonsdale, Stagg and Anderson all wrote lively and engaging narrative poems about country festivities and give us invaluable snapshots of rural life at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries.³⁵

In the later nineteenth century we find many more writers of dialect, notable examples being William Dickinson (1798-1882) of Workington; John Rayson (1803-

³³ Bouch, Jones & Burnskill, *A Short Economic and Social History of the Lake Counties*, p. 212.

³⁴ William Hutchinson, *A History of the County of Cumberland and Some Places Adjacent, from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* (Carlisle, 1793), p. 476.

³⁵ Lonsdale's 'Th'Upshot' was published, with explanatory notes, in Francis Jollie, *Jollie's Sketch of Cumberland Manners and Customs* (Carlisle: 1811), pp.5-23. Stagg's 'Rosley Fair' and 'The Bridewain' are published in John Stagg, *Miscellaneous Poems some of which are in the Cumberland Dialect* (Wigton, 1807), pp. 125-138; Robert Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect chiefly by R. Anderson, with Notes and a Glossary, the Remainder by Various Authors, Several of which have never been before Published* (Wigton; 1808), -Anderson's 'Worton Wedding' p.10, 'Bleckell Murry Neet' p.66 and 'Codbeck Wedding' p.169 being prime examples of lively descriptive dialect poetry.

1859) of Carlisle; Alexander Craig Gibson (1813-1874), a medical doctor from Whitehaven; John Richardson (1817-1886), the mason turned school teacher of St John's in the Vale, near Keswick; Stanley Martin (1846-1940s) from Cockermouth, aka 'Gwordie Greenup', and the Denwood family, also of Cockermouth, of whom Jonathan Mawson Denwood (1869-1933) is probably the most important for our purposes. While all wrote poetry which was often described in their books as 'songs', few of these seem to actually have been performed as songs, judging by the limited number in the Cumbria corpus, with two of Alexander Craig Gibson's compositions proving popular down the years, 'Because Ah was Shy' and 'La'al Dinah Grayson', particularly in the arrangements by William Metcalfe and Jeffrey Mark. In the preface to his book *The Folk-Speech of Cumberland and Some Districts Adjacent*, Gibson makes a sweeping claim, that his dialect is a superior 'pure Cumbrian' than the dialect of earlier writers, as 'Miss Blamire, Stagg, Anderson, Rayson and others, have all written their dialect pieces, more or less, in the Scoto-Cumbrian which prevails along the southern side of the west Border,' whilst also dismissing the dialect of the Furness area as an 'intermixture' of Lake District and Lancashire speech and asserting that his is the 'unadulterated old Norse-rooted Cumbrian vernacular'.³⁶

Other mid- to late-nineteenth century dialect poets whose poems were taken up as songs and subsequently developed a popular life of their own are John Rayson, with his love song 'Ann of Hethersgill' and John Richardson - whose 'It's Nobbut Me' relates a tale of courtship from a time when meetings with the opposite sex were few and far between, and also wrote the hunting song 'John Crozier's Tally-ho' (also set by Metcalfe) and 'Auld Jobby Dixon (set by Mark). Then there is Geordie

³⁶ Alexander Craig Gibson, *The Folk Speech of Cumberland and some districts adjacent: Being short stories and rhymes in the dialects of the West Border Counties* (London, 1869).

Greenup, whose comic courtship song ‘Ah Yance went ta Lorton’ remained popular into the late twentieth century but, remarkably, there are none from the Cockermouth Denwoods, despite four members of the family having published works. John Denwood Senior (1845-1890), a tailor by trade, was the first of the dynasty to venture into dialect writing - his *Poems on Various Subject* was published in 1869 and he also wrote fiction.³⁷ His elder sons John (1845-1890) and Jonathan Mawson Denwood (1869-1933) jointly published the long narrative poems *Canny Auld Cumberland*, *The Shepherds Meet* and *Rosley Hill Fair*, which are of interest because of the way they detail the songs sung at such gatherings (particularly *Rosley Hill Fair*), while younger brothers Ernest Russell and Marley were both founder members of The Lakeland Dialect Society.³⁸

It is in fact two poets from the earlier period who are the most important in terms of song, composing works which went on to be performed throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth: **Susanna Blamire** and **Robert Anderson**, whose work was so influential it is considered separately below. With regard to Blamire, we do however need to add the rider that she composed songs in both Cumbrian and Scots dialects, and it is her Scottish ones which are best known, set by a number of composers and sung on both sides of the border. It was not until fifty years after her death that her works were collected together and published for the first time, although Anderson had published six of her poems in his *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect* of 1808, attributing just one to her, while the others are credited simply ‘By a Lady’.³⁹

³⁷ Allerdale Borough Council’s brochure, ‘Past People of Allerdale’, downloadable from <http://www.allerdale.gov.uk/community-and-living/deaths-funerals-and-cremation/past-people-of-allerdale.aspx>, accessed on 20 November 2014.

³⁸ J. Bernard Bradbury, *A History of Cockermouth* (London & Chichester, 1981), pp. 245-246.

³⁹ Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect chiefly by R. Anderson.*

In fact Blamire's songs had appeared in print earlier, published anonymously in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* of 1790, which includes three of her best-known songs: 'The Siller Croun', 'What Ails this Heart of Mine' and 'The Waefu' Heart'.⁴⁰ These were all set to music by Joseph Haydn, although 'The Waefu' Heart' was also later set by John Parry and 'The Siller Croun' by Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. A measure of the popularity of 'The Siller Croun' is that Charles Dickens quotes the first two lines of it in 'The Old Curiosity Shop' (1841) where, at the end of chapter 66, Dick Swiveller says: 'we'll make a scholar of the poor Marchioness yet! *And she shall walk in silk attire, and siller have to spare*, or may I never rise from this bed again!' The remaining Blamire song in the Cumbria corpus is 'Peer Body', written in Cumberland dialect jointly with her friend Catherine Gilpin of Scaleby Castle, a bawdy parody of the Scots song 'Comin' Through the Rye', again revealing the powerful Scottish influence on Blamire and her work, as her biographer Christopher Maycock notes: she did for a while have a Scottish love interest, and was also a frequent visitor to Stirlingshire, where her sister lived. She was also something of a musician, playing both guitar and flute, and a singer who had 'mastered the music and phrasing of Scottish song' - a background which undoubtedly predisposed her to writing for performance, as also did Robert Anderson.⁴¹

(b) Robert Anderson

Undoubtedly the pre-eminent writer of songs in Cumbrian dialect was Robert Anderson (1770–1833), with 37 examples listed in the Cumbria folk song corpus. His songs were republished many times throughout the nineteenth century and lasted long in the public memory and imagination, still being sung into the late twentieth century.

⁴⁰ James Johnson, 'The Scots Musical Museum, Consisting of Six Hundred Scots Songs', (Edinburgh, 1787 - 1803).

⁴¹ Christopher Maycock, *A Passionate Poet: Susanna Blamire 1747-94* (Penzance, 2003), p. 47.

Word did not find any entries for your table of contents. Such was his fame by the mid-nineteenth century *The British Minstrel* in 1854 declared that: ‘There are few people in England, who, during these last forty years, have not been gratified at fireside parties, or at clubs, with some of this author's songs; and, in the north of England, there are none of any class who are strangers to their graphic familiarities.’⁴² A few years later Alexander Craig Gibson, despite his reservations on the ‘purity’ of Anderson’s language, is similarly unstinting with his praise: ‘As a portrayer of rustic manners – as a relater of homely incident – as a hander down of ancient customs, and of ways of life fast wearing or worn out – as an exponent of the feelings, tastes, habits, and language of the most interesting class in a most interesting district, and in some other respects, we hold Anderson to be unequalled, not in Cumberland only, but in England.’⁴³

In his own memoir of his life, published in the 1820 edition of his collected poems, Anderson reveals that he was born into a working class family in Carlisle to parents who ‘could not only read but delighted in reading’.⁴⁴ After receiving a basic education at a charity school he attended, very briefly, a Quaker school where he was taught by Isaac Ritson (1761–1789), who later became well known as writer of the first published piece of prose in Cumbrian dialect.⁴⁵ Leaving school at ten, he went to work in the local textile industry and having some skill in drawing, was bound apprentice as a pattern drawer for a calico printer, spending some time in London from 1794 as part of his apprenticeship, where he visited the pleasure gardens at

⁴² William Hamilton, *The British Minstrel and Musical and Literary Miscellany: A Selection of Standard Music, Songs, Duets, Glees, Choruses, Etc.: and Articles in Musical and General Literature* (Glasgow, n.d., c.1843), p. 62.

⁴³ Robert Anderson, *Cumberland Ballads, with Autobiography, Notes and Glossary* (Carlisle: 1893), p. 19. Addenda.

⁴⁴ Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson ... to which is prefixed The Life of the*.

⁴⁵ Isaac Ritson, *Copy of a letter, written by a young shepherd, to his friend in Borrowdale* (Penrith, 1788).

Vauxhall for the first time. He was, he says, so disgusted with the many songs written in mock pastoral Scottish style that he believed he could produce songs ‘considered equal, or perhaps superior’ and dashed off four the following day: ‘Lucy Gray of Allendale’, ‘I sigh for the Girl I adore’, ‘The Lovely Brown Maid’ and ‘Ellen and I’ and offered the songs ‘to my friend, Mr Hook, a composer of celebrity’. Hook set the poems to music and Anderson’s ‘first poetic effusion’ was sung by Master Phelps at Vauxhall in 1794.⁴⁶ He went on to achieve some modest success writing songs, although his only payment was free entry to Vauxhall Garden, with Hook going on to set at least eight other Anderson texts.⁴⁷ The song ‘Lucy Gray’ in particular achieved wider popularity and was later included by John Bell in his *Rhymes of Northern Bards* in 1812.⁴⁸

Returning home to Carlisle 1796, Anderson continued writing and two years later published his first volume of poems, all in standard English, which included ‘Miscellanies’, ‘Epistles’, ‘Sonnets’ and ‘Songs’ - including ‘Lucy Gray’ and others set by Hook. However, although the volume received some local acclaim, it did not make him any money, the only payment being ‘little more than dear-bought praise’.⁴⁹ His songs in the Cumberland dialect were more popular and were enthusiastically taken up by the printers of chapbooks and songsters, the first being ‘Betty Brown’ in

⁴⁶ Anderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, p.xxiv-xxv.

⁴⁷ Anderson texts set by James Hook (1746-1827) are on the ‘Lied and Art Songs Texts’ page at <http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/a/randerson>, accessed on 14 July 2011, and include: ‘A poor helpless wand’rer, the wide world before me’, ‘Orphan Bess the beggar girl’, ‘Canst thou love me, Mary?’, ‘Kate of Dover’, ‘Muirland Willy’, ‘The press gang forc’d my love to go’, ‘The cottage boy’, ‘The death of Crazy Jane’, as well as ‘Lucy Gray, of Allendale’.

⁴⁸ John Bell, ‘Rhymes of Northern Bards, being a Curious Collection of Old and New Songs and Poems Peculiar to the Counties of Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland, and Durham’, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1812); Anderson, *Poems on Various Subjects*, p.149

⁴⁹ Anderson, *Poems on Various Subjects*: the volume contains 16 miscellanies, 8 epistles, 22 sonnets and 45 songs, including ‘Lucy Gray of Allendale’ and a number in Scottish style, some of which were set by Hook.

1801.⁵⁰ Penrith printer Anthony Soulby also included a selection of Anderson's songs in *The Harmonist or Musical Olio*, an 84-page collection registered at Stationers' Hall in 1804, the first general section comprising 54 songs, five by Anderson, and from page 61 fourteen songs in Cumbrian dialect, described as 'Cumberland Ballads by Mr. Anderson, of Carlisle'. Anderson probably sent the songs direct to Soulby himself, as entries in the extant fragments of his diary for 1802 reveal him meeting up with Soulby on a number of occasions.⁵¹ The songs next appear the following year in Anderson's first edition of *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect*, published with the encouragement of his friend and fellow poet Thomas Sanderson (1759-1829).⁵²

Gregson rightly observes that Anderson's most fruitful period was at this time, between 1802 and 1805, when his best and most lasting songs first appear: 'Barbary Bell', 'Sally Gray', 'Geordie Gill', 'The Bleckell Murry-Neet' and 'Canny Aul Cumberland' - songs which went on to be collected and published by the twentieth century folk song collectors.⁵³ The first edition of *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect* contained 58 poems, a number expanded to 75 for the editions of 1808 and 1815, each of which also included an additional ten works by dialect poets Ewan Clark, Susanna Blamire, Catherine Gilpin, Mark Lonsdale and John Rayson - evidence of an

⁵⁰ Anderson states this in his memoir, but it is not clear in what form the poem was published, as there is no extant copy. It may have been published in Carlisle by Francis Jollie, either as a broadside or in *The Carlisle Journal*, which Jollie founded 1798, as there are three references to visiting Jollie in Anderson's diary for 1800, on 31 October, 5 and 14 November: *Fragments of Diary of Robert Anderson*, Carlisle, Jackson Library, 2F AND, 1A. Diary entries run from 25 Oct 1800 - 25 Oct 1803, although with gaps: 25 Oct 1800-27 Jan 1801, 2 Dec 1801, and most of 1802 to 14 Nov, and for 1803 13 Feb -26 Feb and 17 Aug - 25 Oct..

⁵¹ *The Harmonist; Or, Musical Olio, A Choice Selection of new and much-approved Songs. Also, several Cumberland Ballads by Mr Anderson* (Penrith, 1804); *Fragments of Diary of Robert Anderson*. Anderson seems to have met with Soulby on 23 January and 9 February 2003, and received a letter from him on 20 May.

⁵² Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect, with Notes and a Glossary*, 1805.

⁵³ Keith Gregson, 'The Cumberland Bard: An Anniversary Reflection', *Folk Music Journal*, 4 (1983), p. 334;

Frank Kidson, Lucy E. Broadwood, A. G. Gilchrist, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Cecil J. Sharp, 'Songs from Cumberland and Northumberland', *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, Vol. 3, No. 10 (1907), pp.39-46..

increasing local interest in dialect literature.⁵⁴ Individual Anderson ballads from these volumes like ‘The Bashfu’ Wooer’, ‘Barbary Bell’, and ‘Sally Gray’ were also taken up by other printers and published separately as broadsides and chapbooks as well as the popular *The Universal Songster*, which included five Anderson songs in its third volume in 1828: ‘The Peck o’ Punch’, ‘Jwohny and Mary’, ‘Dicky Glendinnin’, ‘The Thuirsbj Witch’ and ‘Guid Strang Yell’, and ten years later a chapbook of ballads by both Robert Burns and Anderson was published, perhaps an acknowledgement of similar repertoires of song – and something Anderson, a keen admirer of Burns, would have been proud of, had he known (he had died five years before).⁵⁵

Prior to the publication of Anderson’s 1808 edition he was persuaded to move to Belfast with the promise of a more lucrative job, travelling via Dumfries in order to ‘pay the tributary tear’ at Robert Burns’ tomb, but returned to Carlisle in 1819 because of a downturn in the Northern Ireland textile industry.⁵⁶ On his return he was greeted with a dinner in his honour and encouraged by friends to publish again, as a means of supporting himself. *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, edited by Thomas Sanderson, was published in two volumes in 1820, incorporating Anderson’s memoir of his life and an essay by Sanderson on the manners and customs of the Cumberland peasantry. Sanderson persuaded 864 subscribers to sign up in support of the publication, including local booksellers, local worthies such as Sir James Graham of

⁵⁴ Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect, with Notes and a Glossary* (1805); Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect chiefly by R. Anderson, with Notes and a Glossary, the Remainder by Various Authors, Several of which have never been before Published* (Wigton, 1815).

⁵⁵ ‘Barbary Bell’ and ‘Sally Gray’ both appear in the Soulby of Penrith chapbook ‘A Garland of New Songs’ (private collection), while ‘The Bashful Wooer’ was published in a Newcastle chapbook *Selkirk’s Songs and Ballads for the People No.1*, Newcastle University Library, Robert White Collection, 23:13. ‘Barbary Bell’ was printed as a broadside by J.K. Pollock of North Shields between 1815 and 1855, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bod 21708, and a bowdlerised version of ‘Sally Gray’ in standard English appears in another broadside of uncertain provenance, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bod 17220, Harding B25 (1874); *The Universal Songster or Museum of Mirth*, pp. 239-240, 271-272, 347, 380, 404; Robert Burns and Robert Anderson, *Burns’ songs and Anderson’s Cumberland ballads* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1838).

⁵⁶ Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, p. xxix.

Netherby, Mr Curwen of Workington Hall and literary figures like Thomas Carlyle, Robert Southey and William Wordsworth. As Anderson wrote in a later poem, ‘To Crito’ (his nickname for Sanderson): ‘Tou charms the larn’d fwok in aw quarters; I wreyte a bit Cumberlan sang.’⁵⁷ However the volumes overlooked many of Anderson’s most popular works, containing mainly poems in standard English and just eighteen ballads in Cumberland dialect; so although the intention had been to provide financial support for Anderson in his later years, its success seems to have been limited.⁵⁸ I believe this is probably because Sanderson omitted those songs like ‘Betty Brown’ and ‘Barbary Bell’, ‘Guid Strang Yell’ and ‘A Peck o’Punch’ which had proved most popular in cheap print editions, probably because they did not appeal to his rather Puritan sensibilities, or possibly those of his more aristocratic and middle-class subscribers, the people Anderson called ‘the bettermer swort.’⁵⁹ By way of contrast, the edition of *Anderson’s Cumberland Ballads* published by Robertson of Wigton includes 193 dialect poems ballads, some apparently taken from manuscript copies belonging to Philip Howard of Corby Castle, as well as 13 dialect ballads by John Rayson and one each from Ewan Clark, Susanna Blamire and Mark Lonsdale. The popularity of the local ballads is acknowledged by Robertson in his preface, although Anderson himself is perhaps over-bullish about his own popularity in ‘The Ballad Singer’, which opens ‘Come, buy ov peer Peggy a Cumberlan Ballad; Here’s aw make o’subjects, some shwort, an some lang ...’ and then proceeds to weave the titles of 97 of his own ballads into a 13 stanza poem.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *Anderson’s Cumberland Ballads, Carefully Compiled from the Author’s MS. Containing above one hundred pieces never before published. With a memoir of his life, written by himself. Notes, Glossary &c., To which is added several other songs in the Cumberland dialect, by various authors.*, (Wigton, n.d.), p. 65. Although undated, the volume’s biography of Anderson tells of his death, so evidently is later than 1833: I would suggest around 1840.

⁵⁸ Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, pp. xiv-xvi.

⁵⁹ ‘The Bleckell Murry-Neet’, in Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert*, p. 125, in

⁶⁰ *Anderson’s Cumberland Ballads, Carefully Compiled from the Author’s MS.* (n.d.), pp. 113-114.

In later life Anderson appears to have sunk into debt and alcoholism, moving out to the village of Hayton in 1823 'for want of means'. As Robertson puts it in his biography, he had become 'sour and distempered', living in poverty and with a morbid fear of the workhouse. He still had good friends, however, some of whom provided him with a house in Annetwell Street, Carlisle where he died 'in a sorry state' on 26 September 1833.⁶¹ Nonetheless, editions of his Cumberland ballads continued to be published throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. The 1866 publication of Sidney Gilpin's *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland and the Lake Counties* further enhanced his reputation, including many of his best dialect compositions: lively bucolic works 'marked by sound patterns of reduplication and alliteration for example 'flirtigiggs' and 'blether-breeks', patterns often found in dialect speech but less common in formal writings, and which have the effect of really bringing to life his descriptions of rural celebrations.⁶² The most complete edition of Anderson is that of 1904, edited by the Reverend Thomas Ellwood, who had managed to source manuscripts Anderson had given to friends in order to create a collection totalling 200 ballads, complete with a life of Anderson, notes and a 'glossarial concordance' by George Crowther.⁶³

As noted earlier, with all the dialect poets only a limited number of the poems designated 'songs' - a term used for shorter lyric poems - actually became popular and were actually sung and performed locally, all written in the very early years of the nineteenth century when Anderson was himself active as a musician as well as a poet.

⁶¹ T. H. H. Caine and David Finkelstein, 'Robert Anderson (1770-1833)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online edition <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/498>, accessed on 6 Feb 2009; *Anderson's Cumberland Ballads, Carefully Compiled from the Author's MS.* (n.d.), p. viii; Keith Gregson, 'The Cumberland Bard and Cumbrian Ballads', *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society* (1982), p. 14.

⁶² Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History*, p. 74.

⁶³ Rev T. Ellwood, *Anderson's Cumberland Songs and Ballads, Centenary Edition with Life of Anderson and Notes with Glossarial Concordance by G. Crowther* (Ulverston, 1904).

Notable amongst them are 'Betty Brown', 'Barbary Bell', 'Peggy Penn', 'Bleckell Murry Neet', 'Geordie Gill', 'Young Roger', 'Canny Cumberlan', and best-loved of all, 'Sally Gray'. His longer narrative poem 'Bleckell Murry Neet' also acquired something of a legendary status locally, re-enacted at the centenary of its composition in 1902, while 'Canny Aul Cumberlan' with its sentiments of Cumbrian patriotism became a staple at Cumberland Benevolent Society meetings in London and also at the Cumberlan' Neets held in Carlisle from 1933 (the centenary of Anderson's death) through to the 1950s. However it is the tender love song 'Sally Gray' which above all others has been loved and carried forward, arranged and published by three different Carlisle musicians - William Metcalfe, John Graham and Jeffrey Mark between 1868 and 1928 and performed throughout much of the twentieth century by local singers.

The airs to which they were to be sung was generally given below the title, in the manner of Burns, most being popular airs of the time, commonly perceived as Scottish but actually in widespread use in England as well, including 'Nancy's Tae the Greenwood Gane' (from Allan Ramsay's ballad opera 'The Gentle Shepherd') for the song 'Jenny's Complaint', the air 'I am a young fellow' for 'Borrowdale Johnny', 'Andrew wi' his Cutty Gun' for 'Gwordie Gill', 'John Anderson my Jo' for 'Betty Brown', 'The Humours of Glen' for 'Canny Cumberlan' and 'The Mucking o' Gwordie's Byre' for 'Sally Gray' (although with no recorded instances of singers using this tune), while a few songs note 'Air by the author'.⁶⁴ I suggest that it is the musicality of these particular songs which made them popular with singers. Anderson himself was very musical: in his memoir he recounts how a Scottish neighbour used to sing to him when he was a child, 'I spent many a winter evening [at her fireside]

⁶⁴ With regard to 'Sally Gray', there are in fact no recorded instances of singers using 'The Mucking of Geordie's Byre' tune. There are two distinctly different tunes under that name, one a jig and one in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, this latter the more likely for use with a song, published in McGibbon, *A Collection of Scots Tunes: some with variations for a violin, hautboy or German flute, with a bass for a violoncello or harpsichord*, Vol.1 (Edinburgh, Richard Cooper, 1742).

delighted beyond measure with the wild Scottish ballads which she taught me while labouring at her wheel. ‘Gilderoy’, ‘Johnny Armstrong’, ‘Sir James the Ross’, ‘Lord Thomas and Fair Annette’, ‘The Duke of Gordon and his Three Daughters’, ‘Barbary Allan’, and ‘Binorie’ were my greatest favourites. From this cheerful, kind-hearted, well-informed creature I imbibed the love of song, which has to the present day so particularly engaged my attention.’⁶⁵

Anderson also played the flute, the instrument given to him by his father when he was thirteen: ‘Such was my fondness for that instrument, I soon made progress sufficient to enable me to amuse my friends, neighbours, and those who enjoyed an evening’s walk on the banks of Eden or Caldew.’⁶⁶ As an adult his leisure hours were devoted to reading and music, and the extant entries we have for Anderson’s diary cast a light on his many musical activities. On Tuesday 8 November 1802, for example, he mentions seeing at a gathering at Miss Gilpin’s house, ‘Thomson’s boasted collection of Scottish songs harmonized by Haydn, Pleyel and Kogeleich’ (*An Original Collection of Select Scottish Airs for the Voice: with Introductory and Concluding Symphonies and Accompaniments for Pianoforte, Violin and Violoncello*), which included songs by Susanna Blamire, and went on that evening to attend ‘the Harmonic’ - the Carlisle Harmonic Society. Such societies, which organised small gatherings of musicians and singers, were popular in many towns from the late eighteenth century it was evidently a regular outing as in October the following year he notes: ‘Met a jovial few at the Harmonic, where the song, dance, tune and jokes went off merrily.’ Although I have been unable to find any records of the Carlisle Harmonic Society, there do exist reports from the Newcastle one, formed in 1815, its evening entertainments featuring professional and amateur musicians performing

⁶⁵ Anderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, pp. xvii-xviii.

⁶⁶ Anderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, pp. xxi-xxiii.

classical music as well as ‘glees and catches’, very much focused on entertainment and with plenty of audience participation.⁶⁷ This would appear to be echoed at the Carlisle Harmonic Society, where on 14 February 1803 Anderson reports ‘all were stupid, except when obscenity was started, then, like a pack of dogs in full cry, all gave mouth. Such are Societies in general, where instead of mental improvement, the morals of raw unthinking youth are frequently corrupted ...’⁶⁸

The diary also reveals he was a member of the Volunteer Band in Carlisle, and records some of his activities as a composer of both tunes as well as words, along with his efforts to get his work published: ‘30 January 1802 - Called on Crito and made some musical arrangements ... Wrote to Mr Howard in London requesting instruments for the Band’ and on 20 February ‘Composed a March. Called it Col. Howard. Wrote to Penrith with some songs.’ The songs would have been sent to Soulby, the printer, who on 9 March brought a song by Dibdin to show Anderson and then ‘Spent a pleasant evening with him at the Har.[Harmonic].’ However, Anderson was already struggling with debt and having to look after his sick and rather demanding father at this point – in January 1802, when he writes that he ‘read the song I have given to Jollie [Carlisle printer], published in his journal. Quite sick of myself and tired of the world.’ He seems frequently to have been suffering the after-effects of drink - on Sunday 7 November ‘Very ill from the Debauch of last night’.

He was evidently aware of his place in society and keen to better himself, although Gregson’s theory that there are two different Andersons: one a ‘rather bourgeois concert-hall Anderson’ and the other ‘a more nebulous (and sometimes anonymous) Anderson enjoyed by the lower classes’ appears to be something of an

⁶⁷ Joseph W. Pegg, 'Newcastle's Musical Heritage: An Introduction', (Newcastle, 2003), <https://newcastle.gov.uk/wwwfileroot/legacy/educationlibraries/tbp/historyofmusic.pdf>, accessed on 24 October 2014.

⁶⁸ ‘Fragments of Diary of Robert Anderson’, Jackson Library, 1A.

over-simplification as in fact he appeared to move with relative ease through various strata of society, which in any case was far from rigid in rural north Cumberland. It is far more likely that he was keenly aware of the need to appeal to as wide an audience as possible in order to sell as many books and songs as possible.⁶⁹ He was certainly known and liked by many of different classes, although as Katie Wales points out, the fact that many editions of his work include a glossary suggests their appeal they were not necessarily aimed at those for whom a strong Cumberland dialect was normal daily speech but to ‘the middle-class local clerics and farmers, and the small-holders or statesmen as they were known locally, with a long tradition of literacy and book-ownership’ - a very healthy market for publications of this kind.⁷⁰

Gregson also notes that Anderson’s songs were sung by Cumbrians in the same way that Burns’ songs were sung by Scots ‘in exile or at home’, a fact recognised in the *Carlisle Patriot* in 1901, which reported a suggestion that as there was already a Burns Club in the city ‘the admirers of the Cumberland Bard’ should get together and form an Anderson Club.⁷¹ Anderson songs sung in London at a ‘Cumberland Free and Easy’ by a not altogether sober company of Cumbrian expatriots in 1829 included ‘Barbary Bell’, ‘The Buck o’ Kingwatter’ and ‘Sweet Sally Gray’ – albeit this latter with ‘a combination of sounds most discordant.’⁷² The popularity of Anderson’s songs went on well into the twentieth century with ‘Sally Gray’ in the end proving to be the most enduringly popular.

‘Bleckell Murry Neet’ also went on to have a life of its own, after it was decided by some Carlisle Anderson enthusiasts to arrange a celebration to mark the hundredth anniversary of the original ‘Bleckell Murry-Neet’ in a barn at Blackwell

⁶⁹ Gregson, 'The Cumberland Bard: An Anniversary Reflection', p. 341.

⁷⁰ Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History*, p. 112.

⁷¹ Gregson, 'The Cumberland Bard: An Anniversary Reflection', p. 343; Geo. Crowther, *Bleckell Murry Neet: Ballad by Robert Anderson, the Cumberland Bard*, (Carlisle, 1906).

⁷² K.I., 'Cumberland Free and Easy in London', *The Citizen*, (Carlisle, 1829), pp. 289-292.

(the 'Bleckell' of the poem) on the edge of the city.⁷³ A pamphlet of the poem carries a report of the event from *The Carlisle Patriot*, 3rd January 1902, where we learn that the event included five singing competitions the 'Murry Neet' proved so popular it became an annual event, later held in the rather more salubrious environs of the Racecourse Pavilion.⁷⁴ In 1933 a much grander Anderson celebration was held to mark the 100th anniversary of his death at the Pageant Hall of the Silver Grill restaurant in Carlisle. 'A reet Murry Neet and Centenary Supper: Dialect Stwories and Sangs' ran the headline in the local paper reporting that guests included local worthies while the dinner featured a Cumbrian menu, at which Anderson's own Grace was said and glasses raised to 'Canny Aul Cumberlan'. The evening continued with speeches, recitations and songs and a talk about the bard, who was declared a real musician and singer 'who wrote songs meant to be sung'.⁷⁵

(c) Regional folk song in dialect

Of the 121 songs in dialect in the Cumbria corpus of folk song, some 37 were written by Robert Anderson, although dialect song do in fact represent only a very small proportion of the published output of a few Cumbrian dialect poets, notable amongst them, Susanna Blamire (eight songs), Alexander Craig Gibson (four songs) and John Richardson (two songs) in Cumberland, with just one song from Ann Wheeler of Westmorland staying the course, performed throughout the nineteenth century and beyond. Most of the dialect poems which developed a life of their own off the page, as songs, were written in the nineteenth century, the heyday of regional poetry, with the exception of a few of Susannah Blamire's songs published in the

⁷³ James Walter Brown, 'Omnium Gatherum', Carlisle, Jackson Collection, Vols. 1 & 2, M1046. - various cuttings.

⁷⁴ Crowther, *Bleckell Murry Neet*, pp. 22-23.

⁷⁵ *Omnium Gatherum*, Jackson Library: newspaper cutting, *Cumberland Evening News*, Monday 2 October 1933.

eighteenth century.⁷⁶ There seems to have been little distinction drawn between vernacular poetry and vernacular song, and local dialect writers' most successful verses were often those written with popular airs in mind.⁷⁷ A growing urban market, increased antiquarian interest in dialect, and the inspiration provided by Robert Burns combined to encourage dialect writers, and although one would have thought the broadside a key mode of dissemination for popular audiences, in fact only eighteen dialect songs in the Cumbrian corpus in fact circulated that way, fourteen of them by Anderson.⁷⁸

With regard to geographical distribution, 60% of the dialect songs appear to originate in Cumberland, reflecting the relative geographical sizes of the old counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, although it is also the case that more dialect works appeared in print in Cumberland, as John Russell Smith's 1839 bibliography showed: 64 items in Cumberland dialect and just nine in that of Westmorland, with similar proportions in to Archibald Sparke's 1907 bibliography.⁷⁹

The songs most commonly found, that is those collected from six or more sources - which I take to reflect their relative popularity - are: Anderson's 'Sally Gray' collected from 18 different sources and the third most popular song overall, his 'Canny Cumberlan'' and 'Bleckell Murry Neet' from nine different sources, followed by Alexander Craig Gibson's 'L'al Dinah Grayson', 'Ah Yance Went ta Lorton' by Gwordie Greenup (Stanley Martin) and then Anderson's 'Barbary Bell' and 'Geordie

⁷⁶ 'The Siller Croun', 'What Ails this Heart o' Mine' and 'The Waefu' Heart, later set to music by Haydn in George Thomson, *A Selection of Original Scottish Airs for the Voice with Introductory and Concluding Symphonies, and Accompaniments for the Piano Forte, Violin and Violoncello*, Vol. I (Edinburgh, 1803): 'Siller Crown', p. 44, 'The waefu' Heart', p. 16, and Vol IV (1805), 'What Ails this Heart o' Mine', p. 153, were all first published anonymously in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, Vol. 4, 1787-1803.

⁷⁷ Gregory, "'The songs of the people for me": The Victorian Rediscovery of Lancashire Vernacular Song', p. 18.

⁷⁸ Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, p. 117.

⁷⁹ Smith, *A biographical list of the works that have been published, towards illustrating the provincial dialects of England*; Sparke, *A Bibliography of the Dialect Literature of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire North-of-the-Sands*.

Gill'. The subject matter of the songs varies, although all by virtue of being in dialect at all I regard all as essentially celebratory of the region'. Some eleven songs actually celebrate specific places, including for example 'The Honest Young Man of Westmorland' and 'The Thuirby Witch'. Dave Russell notes that northern dialect literature as a whole incorporates universal themes such as love - requited or otherwise – as well as comic songs with stock characters such as the hen-pecked husband and his domineering wife: 'the celebration of domestic pleasure was arguably the single most powerful theme of dialect literature'.⁸⁰ In the case of the Cumbrian corpus of dialect songs the majority (72, including Susanna Blamire's four Scots songs) feature amatory and sentimental themes - examples include 'The Keach in the Kreele' and 'Sally Gray' - while fourteen are religious or moral in tone - 'Hoo Happy We Liv'd Then' and Anderson's 'King Roger' for example – with a further twelve songs celebrating specific places and the culture of Cumbria, eight songs with farming themes, including 'My Fadder Kept a Horse' and the popular 'Jobby Teasdale's Tup', along with six drinking songs, including Anderson's popular 'Bleckell Murry Neet' and just two hunting songs: 'The Harrier Hunt' and 'You'll Never Git in Without'. It is worth noting at this point though that many other hunting songs would have been sung with a strong rural Cumbrian accent, would most likely have been written down in standard English, as dialects are notoriously difficult to write down with different writers tending to choose their own individual orthography.

A large proportion of the 64 songs in the corpus classified as comic songs turn out to be dialect songs: 43, or 68%, which represents 36% of those in dialect. It is noticeable even today that poems published in the annual journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society and performed at the Society's events are comic in nature. One has to

⁸⁰ Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, p. 130.

ask if there something about the dialect which lends itself to comedy? Jane Platt points out that eighteenth century pastorals tended to render the labourer a simple fool, as in John Gay's *The Shepherd's Week*, so the rustic clown was already a staple of this kind of literature, and possibly encouraged as a deliberate ploy to lessen anxieties over the social order at a time of great agricultural change through the use of humour.⁸¹ In relation to dialect poetry, it has been said that 'it is impossible to get anything romantic out of the Cumbrian dialect' because it is a language 'for fratching and fighting rather than for loving'.⁸² This is though too sweeping a generalisation, given the presence of popular love songs like 'Sally Gray' and Richardson's 'It's Nobbut Me' as well as comic ditties about relationship problems such as 'Ah Yance West ta Lorton' and 'L'al Dinah Grayson', although certainly regional accents are often ridiculed, even today - possibly a problem of class, given that language has the power to confer social status.⁸³ Sanderson, however, is very clear about Anderson's depiction of rural characters, whether working, making love or making merry, that the poet 'holds them often up to laughter, but never to contempt': the humour being directed towards the situations, not the characters and their speech. The main aim of vernacular composition is largely entertainment in any case, so it is not surprising that there is comedy and light relief: 'Amidst all the fatiguing labours which his condition of life subjects him to, the Cumbrian peasant has his festive scenes, which throw a temporary sunshine around him; and by the gratifications which they afford *to-day*, suspend the thoughts of the hardships and toils of *to-morrow*.'⁸⁴

As for the music of the songs, in the main they used popular tunes of the day, Anderson generally giving tune under the title of each song in the manner of Burns,

⁸¹ Jane Platt, 'Thomas Watson, Peasant-Poet: The Reading, Writing and Religion of a Cumbrian Dry-Stone Waller', *Northern History*, XLIX (2012), p. 332.

⁸² F. J. Carruthers, *Lore of the Lake Country* (London, 1975), p. 148.

⁸³ Elmes, *The Routes of English*, p. 113.

⁸⁴ Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson*, pp. lxi, xlvi.

occasionally using tunes of his own composition. Susanna Blamire's songs were, as we have seen, set by a number of composers, including Haydn but with the later nineteenth century songs it is difficult to disentangle how many used a tune in common use, later arranged by a composers like Metcalf, or whether singers put their own tunes to them. Most working class people had a degree of musical education through the church, as Sanderson observes, with the music of the church and that of the people interrelated, as musicians and singers participated in both:

‘Church music generally composes a part of the education of a Cumbrian peasant. They are instructed in it by the parish clerk, or by some itinerant professor, and in the course of a few months, by the means of a good ear and a tuneable voice, acquire as much skill in it as to able to gratify the taste of a country audience, at last as far as an accurate combination of sounds extends ... When the school breaks up, they who compose the choir, and he who leads it, have generally a ball at the village ale-house, in order to experience jobs of a more terrestrial nature than those which spring from psalm singing.’⁸⁵

Anderson and Blamire were both musicians and performers themselves:

Susanna also having passion for dancing, so much so that it was said ‘if she met travelling musicians on the road she would dismount and dance a jig or a hornpipe.’⁸⁶

After her death in 1794, at the age of just 47, it was said that locals missed ‘Miss Sukey's’ lively and friendly company at ‘merry-neets’ which ‘wullent be worth gangin' till at aw, noo that she's gean’.⁸⁷ She was known to perform her songs, and they did achieve some acclaim, but it was those of Anderson which were the truly

⁸⁵ Sanderson, *The Poetical Works* (1820), Vol. 1, ‘An Essay on the Character, Manners and Customs of the Peasantry of Cumberland by Thomas Sanderson’, p. xlvi. Thomas Hardy describes a similar situation in Dorset in his well-known humorous short story ‘Absent-Mindedness in a Parish Choir’, from the short story collection *A Few Crusted Characters* (London, 1894).

⁸⁶ Henry Lonsdale, *The Poetical Works of Miss Susanna Blamire 'The Muse of Cumberland', with a Preface, Memoir and Notes by Patrick Maxwell* (Edinburgh, 1842), p. xxiii.

⁸⁷ P.J. Bullock, 'A History of Dalston Parish from Early Times', (Dalston, 1992), p. 63.

popular songs, judging by the number published in street literature and recorded as being sung locally. There is an intriguing hint about the way he composed them in the 1904 Ellwood edition of his works, where one of the ‘new’ ballads from a manuscript source not previously published is ‘The Wigton True Singer’, of which Ellwood’s notes that the singer described was a friend called William Johnston, from Wigton, who he used to consult when trying to decide on tunes to use for his verses, and that Anderson’s usual practice was, ‘to get the air well into his mind and get the rhythm to fit with it, which accounts for the words and tune going so well together.’⁸⁸

Sidney Gilpin’s *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland and the Lake Counties*, published in various editions from 1865-1875, proved to be one of the most important milestones in dialect publication, including not only the most popular songs and narrative ballads of Anderson but also verses by John Woodcock Graves, Susanna Blamire, John Rayson and Alexander Craig Gibson, - who, oddly, is not named but instead described as ‘The Author of “Joe and the Geologist”’.⁸⁹ ‘La’al Dinah Grayson’ (Alexander Craig Gibson), ‘Ah Yance went ta Lorton ta Sweetheart a Lass’ (Gwordie Greenup/Stanley Martin) and ‘It’s Nobbut Me’ (John Richardson) appeared in later nineteenth century dialect collections amongst and went on to be performed, as already noted in arrangements by William Metcalfe and others well into the twentieth century, performed in formal concert settings by local choirs and soloists as well as informally, at Merry Neets and in pubs.

In the early twentieth century the music of eight of Anderson’s songs were sent to Lucy Broadwood for publication in *The Journal of the Folk-Song Society* by Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle: ‘Sally Grey’ (sic), ‘Elizabeth’s Birthday’, ‘The Worton Wedding’, ‘Barbary Bell’, ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’, ‘Geordie Gill’, ‘Canny

⁸⁸ Ellwood, *Anderson’s Cumberland Songs and Ballads*, pp. 310-311.

⁸⁹ The most complete edition is Gilpin, *The Songs and Ballads of Cumberland, to which are added Dialect and other Poems, with Biographical Sketches, Notes, and Glossary*.

Cummerlan’’ and ‘Rob Lowry’, along with two other songs: ‘King Henry, my Son’ and ‘The Pace Egging Song’. Nicholson added a note saying that ‘The old words of the tunes were lost after Anderson became the favourite Cumberland poet, and wrote for the local old airs,’ which of course is not quite true as we know that Anderson simply followed the tradition of using airs from well-known popular, often Scottish, songs.⁹⁰ Just four songs went on to be published in the 1907 journal: ‘Sally Gray’, ‘Canny Cummerlan’’, ‘Bleckell Murry-Neet’ and ‘King Henry, my Son’.

Three years later John Graham published *Dialect Songs of the North*, which included two Anderson songs - ‘The Bashful Wooer’ (p. 16) and ‘King Roger’ (p. 20) - as well as a piece by Denwood and ‘John Peel’, and then in 1928 Jeffrey Mark published his *Four North Country Songs*, his arrangements of Anderson’s ‘Sally Gray’, Blamire’s ‘Barley Broth’ and Craig Gibson’s ‘L'al Dinah Grayson’ and ‘Auld Jobby Dixon’.⁹¹ The next important milestone is 1933, when Frank Warriner (1904-1964) of Haverigg, near Millom, transcribed songs from the collection of Jonathan Mawson Denwood. As the originals are now lost, and the whereabouts of Warriner’s transcriptions currently unknown, we are fortunate in that Stuart Lawrence (1926-2001) of Dalton-in-Furness, around 1970, copied Warriner’s manuscript, adding a note of caution that ‘...as Frank’s interests were in dialect and verse no tunes were noted, nor were there any indications as to the singers apart from one or two hints to certain songs. I also suspect that he did a little conversion of the “standard”English of the versions he received into dialect, but this may not have been so’.⁹² The last printed collection of dialect songs to be published was Keith Gregson’s *Cumbrian Songs and*

⁹⁰ Note with songs sent by Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle, London, VWML, Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/351.

⁹¹ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*; Mark, *Four North Country Songs*.

⁹² Frank Warriner Folk Song Collection.

Ballads in 1980, comprising mainly Anderson and Blamire songs he has set to the tunes originally specified by the authors.⁹³

Many dialect songs were still kept alive in performance in the twentieth century by those few Dialect Society members who were also singers - Harold Forsyth, Robert Forrester and Joe Wallace – at concerts, in regional radio broadcasts 1958 –1966, the 1954 recordings at Wreay and Rockcliffe pubs and via the BBC recordings of 1940 and 1959 and Joe Wallace’s 1970 LP, all of which became an important resource for the folk singers of the early 1970s seeking Cumbrian songs, including myself. Other significant song recordings featuring dialect include those of Wesley Park in the early 1960s, Fellside Records albums by Paul and Linda Adams and friends 1972-1978 and, most recently, the CD recorded by the elderly Bruce Wilson of Ulverston in 2009 of songs from the manuscripts of Harold Forsyth.⁹⁴

However dialect poetry does not comprise only a pool of local songs but is also a valuable source of contextual detail on their performance in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in rural Cumberland. Some of the longer narrative poems of Stagg, Lonsdale and Anderson feature rural festivities such as weddings, merry nights and fairs, following what Michael Baron believes represents a tradition of reportage in the Romantic period, for which he quotes Anderson’s ‘Nichol the Newsmonger’ and Lonsdale’s ‘Th’Upshot’ as examples.⁹⁵ However, one also needs to bear in mind that poets like Anderson and Lonsdale - the one with an eye on marketing his books, the other an ex-patriot Cumbrian, who was also a playwright and manager of Sadler’s Wells Theatre - cannot be relied upon to be simply reflecting

⁹³ Gregson, *Cumbrian Songs and Ballads*.

⁹⁴ Adams, *Far over the Fell - Songs and Ballads of Cumberland*, 1975; Adams, *Country Hirings*, 1976; Adams, *Among the Old Familiar Mountains* 1978; Wilson, *M’Appen I May*, 2009: ‘Cumberland songs sung by Harold Forsyth’, MS held by Bruce Wilson.

⁹⁵ Michael Baron, 'Dialect, Gender and the Politics of the Local: The Writing of Ann Wheeler', in *Romantic Masculinities* (Keele, 1997), p. 51.

the social life of the day: both want to create atmosphere, theatre, a good story and, like J.M. Denwood a hundred years later, they also tend to romanticise the past, their roots in the Cumbrian countryside and the idea of the Cumbrian peasant. That said, neither can what they depict be said to be pure invention, and certainly when it comes the names of tunes, dances and songs mentioned in passing in descriptions of merry neets and wedding, they are indeed genuine, lending these bucolic poems at least an air of authenticity.

Much Cumbrian folk-culture at that time revolved around the ale-house or inn, so it is not surprising that ‘merry neets’ and other rural gatherings were a popular subject for the early dialect poets.⁹⁶ Lonsdale’s ‘Th’Upshot’ relates the story of an ‘Upshot’ – a merry night held in the summer time, often in a barn - at his home village of Great Orton, near Carlisle, around 1780. It includes mention of a ‘Threesome Reel’ and the tunes ‘Shilly-my-gig’, ‘Dribbles of Brandy’ and ‘Hunting the Fox’, this latter played as a duet with voice and fiddle by fiddler Jonathan Brammery. The same fiddler crops up in John Stagg’s ‘The Bridewain’, along with Stagg himself, who actually was a country fiddler as well, and names at least one of the dances ‘Reels of Bogie’, although is Anderson’s work which sheds most light on eighteenth century popular song culture.⁹⁷ Not only does he detail tunes and dances like Lonsdale and Stagg, but many songs titles crop up: in ‘The Clay Daubin’, for example, after Bill Adams the fiddler has ‘kittled up “Chips and Shavings” (a well-known dance tune) Deavie offers to ‘sing a bit of a sang’ with the following stanza detailing the well-

⁹⁶ Terminology varied from place to place, but ‘merry neet’ is a term still understood, and sometimes used, in Cumbria today. It originally seems to have applied to a gathering in a public house or room adjoining around Christmas time, incorporating music dancing, card playing and a meal – singing does not seem to get mentioned in this context - while similar gatherings at other times of the year may be called ‘upshots’, ‘snap neets’ and ‘taffy joins’, with ‘kurn suppers’ at harvest time. (Sanderson *Anderson’s Cumberland Ballads*, , pp. liv-v).

⁹⁷ Mike Huggins, 'Popular Culture and Sporting Life in the Rural Margins of Late Eighteenth Century England: The World of Robert Anderson, "The Cumberland Bard"', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 45 (2012), p. 201.

known the songs he and others performed: ‘The King and the Tinker’, ‘Robin Hood’, ‘Hooly and Fairly’ and ‘The Babs o’ the Wood’ – most of them well-known broadside ballads. Then we have ‘Nichol the Newsmonger’, which mentions the ‘Dawston singers’, ‘The Codbeck Wedding’ includes references to the tunes ‘Coddle me Cuddy’ and ‘Sowerby Lasses’, in ‘Gwordie Gill’ the eponymous Gwordie sings ‘Skewball’, another popular broadside ballad about a racehorse, while ‘The Worton Wedding’ is worthy of mention in itself as its ‘Whurry whum, whuddle whum’ refrain does infer that the poem was intended for performance, possibly as a song. The first verse of ‘Canny Cummerlan’, meanwhile, is unusual in opening with the scene of a group of women sitting together and spinning after supper, when ‘Sib a sang lilted’ ‘twas aw about Cummerlan’ fwok and fine pleaces, And, if I can think on’t, ye’s hear how it ran.’ And so ‘Canny Cummerlan’ unfolds, Anderson framing his own work as a song within a song, a device also used in ‘Bleckell Murry-Neet’, where ‘yen sung “Tom Linton”, anudder “Dick Watters” –both of them songs Anderson himself wrote.’⁹⁸

One of the scenarios used as the focus of much energetic activity, including singing and dancing by both Stagg and Anderson and, much later by J.M. Denwood, is Rosley Fair, held a hill at Rosley near Wigton on the Solway Plain and one of the largest cattle and horse fairs in the north of England. Stagg’s poem ‘Rosley Fair’ (1807) comprises a substantial 39 verses and gives a flavour of the lively and not always reputable activities at the fair, while Anderson’s first published dialect song, ‘Betty Brown’ opens with the lines: ‘Come Gwordie lad! unyoke the yad [mare], - Let’s gow to Rosley Fair!’ The Hetherington 1808 edition of *Ballads in the Cumberland*

⁹⁸ Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland* (1808), pp. 169-176.

glosses the poem with a long description of the Rosley fairs, which commenced on Whit-Monday and were held once a fortnight until Michaelmas.⁹⁹

The tradition of descriptive, narrative poems was taken up again by the Denwood brothers Jonathan and John with *The Shepherd's Meet* and *Idylls of a North Country Fair*, about Cockermouth fair. In the preface to the former the Denwoods acknowledge a debt to the vivid language and reportage of Lonsdale, Stagg, Richardson and Gibson – which is compared, unfavourably, to the language of Wordsworth who, they say, ‘invested his country folks with something of his own dreamy, cultured, self-absorbed nature.’¹⁰⁰ Later Jonathan published his own ‘Rosley Hill Fair’, a nostalgic piece harking back to the fair’s heyday in the eighteenth century, with a knowing nod to Denwood’s dialect poet forebears Josiah Relph and Ewan Clark who are major characters within the poem.¹⁰¹ One of the first people we meet at the fair are a broadside seller (p. 179), from whom Nanny buys a song called ‘T’Middle Class’ which, like the rest of the songs included in the work, was presumably from Denwood’s own collection of songs later transcribed by Warriner. Michael Slee sings a number of songs including well known broadside ballads like ‘The Oyster Girl’ (p. 73) and ‘T’Keach in t’Creel’ (p. 77) and a number of Scottish songs feature: ‘Maggie Lauder’, ‘Ower the Moor Among the Heather’ (p. 104) and ‘The Bush aboon Traquair’ (p. 108). We also find ‘Peer Body’ (p. 112), written by Susanna Blamire and Catherine Gilpin, along with ‘O, Will ye Buy a Breum’ (p. 150) - a version of the better-known local broadside ballad ‘The Lish Young Buy a Broom’ - while dialect songs also feature: ‘My Cwortin Cwoat’ (p. 156), ‘Setterday Neet’ (p.

⁹⁹ Anderson, *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect* (1808), pp. 1, a 199-201; Stagg, *Miscellaneous Poems some of which are in the Cumberland Dialect*, pp. 133-146.

¹⁰⁰ Jonathan M. Denwood and John Denwood, *The Shepherds' Meet* (Cockermouth, 1913), p. 1; Jonathan M & Denwood Denwood, John Jr., *Idylls of a North Country Fair: Songs and Prose* (Cockermouth, 1916); Denwood, *Rosley Hill Fair*.

¹⁰¹ Denwood, *Rosley Hill Fair*.

160), 'My fadder Kept a Horse' (p. 166), 'Brisk Young Damsel who lived doon in Dent' (p. 168), 'Croglin Mill' (p. 169) and 'The Jolly Quaker' (p. 172).

(d) Dialect as signifier and performance

Dialect poetry, and dialect song as a sub-genre of it, evidently offered a focus for feelings of Cumbrian patriotism, although a note of caution needs to be heeded, given the difficulty of gauging the truth of its depiction of the social life of the region. In 1893 Sidney Gilpin (George Coward) wrote that Anderson had painted a faithful picture, '...of manners and customs now almost obsolete. In this respect Anderson has had no rival [...] for does not *Canny auld Cumberland cap them aw still?*'¹⁰² In this he is echoing Robertson, who published Anderson some sixty years earlier and claimed Anderson's descriptions of fairs, merry nights and other merry makings, 'stand unrivalled as faithful pictures of these rude and rustic amusement', whilst also opining that they are now, however, 'fast gliding down the stream of oblivion'.¹⁰³ Robertson's first statement is open to question, although the second has the ring of truth, although it is somewhat surprising to find the disappearance of traditional festivities being remarked upon so early in the nineteenth century.

As already noted, the narrative dialect poems are certainly true-to-life to the extent that the tunes, songs and dances interwoven into the texts are real and of their time, and it is also the case that some of Anderson character descriptions are accurate, as a letter of 15 Feb 1808 published in Gilpin's 1893 edition of his *Cumberland Ballads* makes clear:

SIR - I understand you are at present employing your vacant hours in
composeing [sic] a Song, respecting the assembly which was held at Mr

¹⁰² Anderson, *Cumberland Ballads, with Autobiography, Notes and Glossary* (1893), Preface.

¹⁰³ *Anderson's Cumberland Ballads* (n.d.), Preface.

Scarrow's, styled the Butterfly Ball, in hopes to ridicule the characters of those who attended. I have just sent these few lines to inform you that if it be the case you will have reason to repent the hour that ever you began it, for if you doo suffer a publication of that description to be made public I can assure you it will be the last that you will publish in C[arlisle] or any place else, for you may *depend upon it* you must not expect to walk the streets of Carlisle unprotected, therefore I shall leave it to your own judgment to doo what you think proper. - A FRIEND.¹⁰⁴

Anderson's own life, as revealed in his diary, also sheds some light on the social, and in particular musical, life of the time as well as highlighting how important it was to him to have his work accepted by polite society, as Robert Burns's verse was, 'propagated by educated Cumbrians, aided by literature and the press'. This undoubtedly helped create what can be described as a self-conscious regionalism, a culture typified by the 'romantic nostalgia of the uprooted but prosperous native', such as the members of the Cumberland and Westmorland Societies.'¹⁰⁵ There is other evidence to support the view that many different classes of Cumbrians mixed at social gatherings where dialect songs were performed, including a report in Carlisle's *The Citizen* magazine in 1829, describing in colourful prose a London dinner and 'Free and Easy' organised by some ex-pat Cumbrians at The Crown and Sugarloaf public house in Fleet Street, attended by a fabric dealer, merchant's clerk and boot-maker as well as a juvenile barrister 'quite at home in the company of a barber's clerk', a 'retailer of woollens' who was happy to join in choruses with 'the weaver of wigs' and 'an embryo physician [who] did not scruple to sit cheek-by-jowl with a journeyman farrier, an attorney on one side of the chair, on the other a tailor.'

¹⁰⁴ Anderson, *Cumberland Ballads, with Autobiography, Notes and Glossary* (1893), pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁵ Marshall and Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change*, p. 16.

Drinking, smoking, ‘exclamations in Cumbrian dialect’ and some singing ensue, although the only local song mentioned is: ‘a distinctly discordant version of ‘Sweet Sally Gray’’.¹⁰⁶ The extant parts of Anderson’s diary outlined certainly show him mixing with a whole variety of classes of people, from drinkers in a local ale-house to fellow poets, from textile workers to fine ladies and even the gentry. Ever with an eye to the market, the first edition of his Cumberland Ballads is typical of later editions in being dedicated to local worthies, in this case, ‘Colonels Henry Howard, Esquire and The Right Honourable Thomas Wallace, Major Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bart’ and the officers of The Loyal Cumberland Rangers, the volunteer regiment of which he was a member.

When it comes to the audience for dialect poetry, the readers, it is therefore a fair assumption that they came from a range of different classes, as suggested by Katie Wales with her observation about the use of glossaries, noted earlier.¹⁰⁷ Russell holds a similar view, maintaining that the while the core audience for dialect literature came from the working and lower-middle classes, it was most especially those ‘educated Northern middle-class men, characteristically teachers or booksellers, [who] took to collecting and printing local ballads and songs [...] for a voracious middle-class local reading public, fond of music, who also read and even wrote them themselves in local newspapers.’¹⁰⁸ So we can conclude that a mix of classes was involved in both production and consumption of dialect works, although most of the poets like Stagg, Lonsdale and Anderson, as well as Rayson and Richardson later, were certainly born into lower class working families and were largely auto-didacts. All later became what we might call artisan-class, like most of the local printers and booksellers who

¹⁰⁶ K.I., ‘Cumberland Free and Easy in London’, *The Citizen*, (Carlisle, 1829), pp. 289-292; K.I., ‘Cumberland Free and Easy in London’, *The Citizen*, (Carlisle, 1829), pp. 426-429.

¹⁰⁷ Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History*, p. 112.

¹⁰⁸ Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, p. 123.

published dialect poetry. Susanna Blamire and her friend Miss Gilpin, however, were undoubtedly middle class while Dr Alexander Craig Gibson was a medical professional.

Just as in the north Cumberland of the early to mid-nineteenth century the different classes at least had the appearance of being flexible and porous, so the distinction between rural and urban, country and town was also fluid: Anderson, for example, lived and worked for much of his life in the city of Carlisle but also spent a lot of time in the surrounding countryside. As Patrick Joyce points out, rural and industrial England shared more in common than is sometimes allowed, and dialect was spoken by a wide range of middle-class people, just as regional characteristics of speech might still be quite marked across all classes in the north today.¹⁰⁹ Native dialect speakers, however, also at times would have resorted to ‘code-switching’ - the term linguists use to describe the way we vary the register in which we speak according to the circumstances, and the company.¹¹⁰ Dialect has always been modified according to need, to some extent, and ‘putting on a voice’ is nothing new: ‘dialect stylisation’ involving deliberate and self-conscious code-switching was certainly used by Burns, and I would argue also by Anderson.¹¹¹ Similarly Anderson tended to use very familiar Scotticisms - words like ‘bonnie’ and ‘lass’ - along with a sprinkling of more obscure Cumbrian vocabulary, probably with a similar self-consciousness and eye to the market as Burns.¹¹²

It should also be noted that Anderson’s and Lonsdale’s experience of the London stage would have informed and influenced their writing: both knew how to

¹⁰⁹ Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 161 & 201.

¹¹⁰ Elmes, *The Routes of English*, p. 29.

¹¹¹ Nikolas Coupland, ‘Dialect Stylization in Radio Talk’, *Language in Society*, 30 (2001), pp. 31, 345-356.

¹¹² *The British Minstrel and Musical and Literary Miscellany: A Selection of Standard Music, Songs, Duets, Glees, Choruses, Etc.: and Articles in Musical and General Literature*, p. 63.

appeal to audiences as performers as well as writers. Many dialect writers were quite self-conscious users of dialect, as Stephen Matthews observes in his recent study of Josiah Relph: Clark and Blamire both wrote the majority of their poems of rural life in what he describes as ‘a mildly marked form of standard English’ and, like Stagg and Lonsdale used dialect ‘in a bravura fashion, as a way of foregrounding the social aspects of their verse’ – but never to the extent of making the language obscure and inaccessible.’¹¹³ Alex Broadhead suggests that Burns used language calculated to appeal to shared ideas of national, as well as local, identity – that is, to a wider British audience than simply Scots - by employing ‘stage Scots’: a limited repertoire of words frequently used to characterise Scots speakers. This was essentially a self-conscious and playful performance, and brought Burns a wider audience than he might have otherwise had through using the sort of linguistic stereotypes reproduced in plays of the time, as well as broadsides of the popular ‘Scotch song’ genre, utilising words such as lass, guid, bonny, mickle, gang’d, ken auld, siller, wha na, week, frae, min, lad/laddie.¹¹⁴

This self-conscious ‘performance’ and stylised use of dialect, often employing play or parody, then becomes a form of ‘strategic de-authentication: a cultural performance’, a performance that is ‘reflexive, mannered and knowing’ as well as ‘creative and performed’.¹¹⁵ As Goodridge points out, many ‘laboring-class poets’ of the nineteenth century found outlets in performance, like the successful poets and entertainers from the North East, Joe Wilson (1841–1872) and Tommy Armstrong

¹¹³ Matthews, *Josiah Relph of Sebergham, England's First Dialect Poet*, pp. 250-251.

¹¹⁴ Alex Broadhead, 'A Sprinkling of Stage Scots: Burns, Linguistic Stereotypes and Place', *Scottish Literary Review*, 3 (2011), p. 21, 24.

¹¹⁵ Coupland, 'Dialect Stylization in Radio Talk', p. 345.

(1848–1920), and Lancashire poet Samuel Laycock (1826–1893), who tapped into existing popular traditions of performance and singing.¹¹⁶

Dialect poetry is a complex sign, its power less to do with accurate re-creation of dialect speech as an ability to invoke for its audience things they associated with dialect. It can enhance a sense of identification with place and belonging: Burns' Scots songs were perceived as standing for Scotland itself, just like Anderson's 'Canny Cumberlan' for Cumbria. Dialect poetry and song also often represents a degree of nostalgia for a vanishing agrarian past, mythic or real, as well as what McAuley calls 'a set of values the working class identified with themselves: honesty, self-sufficiency, industriousness and group loyalty'. A key claim here is that of authenticity: it is a purer form of English, prioritising substance over surface and, like its speaker, is 'direct, natural, and honest'.¹¹⁷ Given the performative nature of dialect, there might be a case for saying that it may be better characterised a form of 'staged authenticity', a term coined by American sociologist Dean MacCannell to describe performances of traditional customs and dances put on by local people in tourist settings - although in the case of dialect the performance is aimed primarily at local people.¹¹⁸ Whether 'staged authenticity' is representative of invented tradition though is open to question, and will be considered in the following chapters.

Despite songs in dialect forming such a large proportion of the Cumbrian corpus, however, very few are sung today even by members of the Lakeland Dialect Society. Dave Russell claims that dialect has long lost its significance within the region's culture, becoming stylised and resorting to a 'rather nostalgic attempt to

¹¹⁶ Goodridge, 'Some Rhetorical Strategies in Later Nineteenth Century Laboring-Class Poetry', pp. 534, 538.

¹¹⁷ McCauley, "'Eawr Folk": Language, Class, and English Identity in Victorian Dialect Poetry', pp. 292-299.

¹¹⁸ Dean MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 79 (1973), pp. 589-603.

conserve a dying culture and language’, yet the most long-lasting dialect songs and many of the long narrative poems, as we have seen, also bring colour to the language of song and the stories being told.¹¹⁹ At its best the writing of Anderson and others is capable of invoking lively speech able to conjure up vivid a sense of place, despite often being viewed today as dated and idiosyncratic. The obituary of dialect may have been prematurely written, as attachment to dialect in Cumberland and Westmorland has a long history and seems to run deep even if, like the idea of Scottishness, it is at least in part a literary construction by writers like Burns.¹²⁰ Thus dialect poetry, particularly when framed as song, is still able to encapsulate an idea of ‘Cumbrian-ness’, just as it did in 1961 when Richard Kelly, producer of the BBC ‘Voice of Cumberland’, wrote in defence of keeping the Cumbrian programme on air that whilst it might be was sparsely populated and more parochial than the North East, it did though have ‘a strong cultural and linguistic tradition’ along with ‘a good deal of local music, and one or two singers and musicians worth encouraging.’¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, p. 120 & 124.

¹²⁰ Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class*, p. 196.

¹²¹ *Voice of Cumberland* BBC Written Records Archive, 959-002-024, N25/40/1: memo on a report about the ‘Voice of Cumberland’ programme on the Northern Service, from Richard Kelly, 18 July 1961.

Chapter 5: CONTEXTS OF SONG PERFORMANCE

(a) Introduction

Folk music being a performed genre, it is essential to consider its social basis: who is performing, and in what contexts?¹ Cumbrian folk songs have been sung, and are still sung, in many different contexts: in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ballad singers in the streets and at fairs sang in order to sell broadsides while entertainers at pleasure gardens and on the stage sang to earn a living, just as today's professional folk musicians perform at clubs and festivals and make commercial recordings, although most singers of what we regard as folk songs would have performed as amateurs.

In this chapter I shall look at the various contexts in which songs have been performed over time, ranging from the informal - home, pub and fairs - to the semi-formal settings of the rural 'merry meet', urban Harmonic Society and work-related settings like sheep shearings ('clippings') and harvest ('kurn') suppers, to the singing which traditionally took place at shepherds' meets and at hunt suppers. There are also a range of more formal occasions, including the theatre or concert hall and formal dinners like those organised by the Lakeland Dialect Society, as well as song competitions, performance for folk song collectors, audio recordings and broadcasts, and then later in the twentieth century are folk clubs and festivals.

In recent times folk performers have tended to adopt self-defined labels such as 'traditional' or 'contemporary' – recently composed songs in folk style, performed acoustically – although historically when it comes to choosing repertoire, quality, fashion and individual taste undoubtedly came into play. As we have already seen, in

¹ Philip Bohlman, *The study of folk music in the modern world* (Bloomington & Indianapolis, 1988)pp. 35-43,53.

sharp contrast to what the Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors believed, folk singers were in general not ‘untrained primitives with no creative agency or access to the tools of criticism’.² Cumbrian performers like Robert Forrester, Micky Moscrop, Billy Bowman and Joe Wallace were clearly conscious of both style of performance and reception, frequently choosing to sing songs to assert their Cumbrian identity, such as hunting songs or songs in dialect. In many contexts such local distinctiveness is a key factor, both for visitors and locals - examples would include Cumberland ‘merry meets’ and traditional seasonal country events like agricultural shows, shepherd’s meets, and ‘kurn’ and hunt suppers - and I shall consider the ways in which this distinctiveness is staged and performed.

A popular literary genre of the eighteenth century was the ‘itinerant’s peregrination’, with the Lake District in particular attracting writers like Daniel Defoe and Thomas Gray and even more visitors after the publication of Father Thomas West’s *Guide to the Lakes in Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire* in 1780, which made the Lake District a popular summer excursion. As well as writing about the landscape, a number of literary travellers also commented on the social life of the inhabitants of the Lakeland dales, including Joseph Palmer, John Keats and Edmund Bogg.³ Dance was certainly a hugely popular recreational pursuit, although most commentators’ remarks concern the energy of the dancers, rather than the grace. Palmer, for example, notes that ‘the men kept excellent time and rattled on the floor with a variety of steps; the women danced as easily as the men determinedly,’ while Bogg quotes a lady observing dancing in a Grasmere hayloft in 1827, ‘where the country lads and lasses tripped it merrily and heavily. They called the amusement

² Graham Freeman, ‘It wants off the creases ironing out’: Percy Grainger, The Folk Song Society, and the ideology of the archive’, *Music & Letters*, 92 (2011), p. 426.

³ Many of these are discussed in Ian Thompson, *The English Lakes: A History* (London: 2010) and referred to in Katie Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 106, 110.

dancing, but I called it thumping.’⁴ The dancers in Ireby astonished and amused Keats in 1818 with their energy: ‘they kickit and jumpit with mettle extraordinary, and whiskit and friskit and toed it and to’ed it, and twirl’d it, and whirl’d it, and stamped it, and sweated it, tattooing the floor like mad. The difference between our country dances and these Scottish (sic) figures is about the same as leisurely stirring a cup of tea and beating up a batter pudding ...’⁵ It seems then to have been the sound of the fiddle and the style of dancing which captured these ‘itinerant’s’ imagination, rather than the singing.

Local dialect writers also wrote about music at country festivities, as noted in the previous chapter, with Stagg’s ‘The Bridewain’, Lonsdale’s ‘Th’Upshot’ and Anderson’s ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’ and ‘Worton Wedding’ all containing lively descriptions of fiddlers and dancing. Thomas Sanderson, in his ‘Essay on the Character, Manners and Customs of the Peasantry of Cumberland’ observes, in his schoolmasterly and disapproving way, that: ‘Most of the Cumbrian peasantry are instructed in their early years in dancing by some itinerant professor, who commonly carries more merit in his heels than in his head. His pupils are taught country dances, hornpipes, jigs, and reels; and if they have any springyness in them, generally attain, after a few months instruction, sufficient skill and agility in the art, as to be able to amuse the spectators in a rustic assembly room,’ where ‘fiddling, dancing and drinking’ would continue late into the night.⁶ One can only speculate why none of these writers mention singing: perhaps it played no part in seasonal community

⁴ Joseph Palmer, ‘A Re-visit to Buttermere 1798’, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LXX (1800), p. 18; Edmund Bogg, *A Thousand Miles of Wandering Along the Roman Wall, the Old Border Region, Lakeland, and Ribblesdale* (Leeds; 1898), p. 176.

⁵ Hyder Edward Rollins, ‘The Letters of John Keats: Volume 1, 1814-1818: 1814-1821’, (Cambridge, 2012), July 1818, to Tom Keats. No.93, p. 307.

⁶ ‘An essay on the character, manners and customs of the peasantry of Cumberland’, in Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson ... to which is prefixed The Life of the Author ... and an essay on the character, manners and customs of the peasantry of Cumberland; and observation on the style and genius of the author by Thomas Sanderson* (Carlisle, 1820), p. xivi.

festivities but was seen more as an activity taking place in the more intimate setting of fireside and local inn or perhaps it tended to be contained within certain groups - huntsmen or shepherds, for example. Although Anderson certainly mentions songs in some of his poems, it is really only when we come to the two Carlisle-born musicians Jeffrey Mark and John Graham in the early twentieth century that we find descriptions of the singers themselves.

Lyn Murfin, in her study of popular leisure in the Lake Counties, observes that Cumbrians exercised their musical talents – singing as well as dance and instrumental music - in a range of different places: at home, at concerts, at soirées linked to churches, schools and sports clubs as well as in the public house, where ‘those who were known to be performers would be called upon to entertain and, where appropriate, lend their support to the cause.’ A nineteenth century working class communal event without music was ‘inconceivable’, according to Russell, with the songs sung being those suited to performance in a particular context.⁷

(b) Performance Contexts

Professional musician Jeffrey Mark had played in informal village bands from the age of ten, ever since a band’s fiddler realised he ‘cud play owt’ on the piano, and he retained his early contact with popular music and traditional musicians in the Carlisle area, as noted in Chapter 2.⁸ But while he evidently felt able to move freely in different musical genres and circles of performers, most traditional singers and musicians kept within their familiar milieux, whether a shepherd’s meet, a hunt supper or, in later years, a folk club. I have identified a wide range of performance contexts

⁷ Lyn Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties* (Manchester, 1990), p. 175; Dave Russell, 'Abiding memories: the community singing movement and English social life in the 1920s', *Popular Music*, Vol. 27 (2008), p. 17.

⁸ Jeffrey Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', *Music Quarterly*, 16 (1930), p.170

for Cumbrian folk songs, from informal settings like home and the pub, to the formal concert stage and a number of semi-formal contexts in between. These are considered in more detail below.

(i) Informal

Home

Until the advent of the Folk Song Competitions at Kendal and Carlisle music festivals 1902-1906, in which middle class women took part, commentators rarely make any mention of women singers. It is though reasonable to speculate that they would have sung in the more intimate setting of the home, and there is a little evidence for this in Cumbria. In 'Canny Cumberlan', for example, Anderson opens the song with the scene of women sitting together spinning, when 'Sib a sang lilted' (Sib sang a song). The song is one from Carlisle, Sib says, brought to her by 'her sarvant man'. The fact that she refers to a servant may be indicative that Sib is not rural working class, but this is not necessarily so, as any small farm at that time would have had workers who could have been referred to in that way.⁹ The same song was noted down in the 1920s by Claudine L. Murray of the Lakeland Dialect Society from the singing of Mrs Layborne Popham (née Howard) of Johnby Hall, then over sixty, who remembered it being sung to her by her 'old Nannie.'¹⁰ Lucy Broadwood's notes on the song 'King Henry, My Son' reveal another interested folklorist, Miss M.B. Lattimer of Carlisle, collecting a song from a servant: 'a 'fine air, which she learned in childhood some

⁹ *Anderson's Cumberland Ballads, carefully compiled from the author's MS. containing over one hundred pieces never before published, with a Memoir of his Life, written by himself. Notes, Glossary, &c., to which is added several other songs in the Cumberland dialect by various authors.* (Wigton, n.d. probably c.1840), pp. 27, 17,113.

¹⁰ Claudine L. Murray, 'Canny Cumberlan': words and music', *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society*, 20 (1958), p. 36.

time before 1868 from Margaret Scott (now Mrs Thorburn), a young servant in her home.’¹¹

‘Canny Cumberlan’ also features in ‘An Evening Spent with an Old Friend’, one of *Betty Wilson's Cumberland Teals* published by Thomas Farrall in 1892, when Joe is asked to sing ‘Canny oald Cumberlan’ – ‘for thoo can duah't seah weel, an' Ah haven't hard the sing't for menny a lang 'ear'.¹² He agrees to sing if Betty will sing afterwards, saying: ‘Ye uset ta be a gud singer o' yer yunger days, owder hymns or sangs.’ Betty duly performs ‘a lal sang she mead hersel’ about her brudder Joe, when he was just a bit of a yung lad’, set to the same tune as ‘Canny oald Cumberlan’. According to Farrall, the style of the song was more enthusiastic than sweet, with Betty making comments on it as she went along and delivering the last line of each verse ‘wid aw her might’: ‘She did punish her tung, an' her body as weel. T'furst nivver laid still, an' t'latter was sweyin' back an' forth like a poplar tree in a Jannewerry wind.’ However, one must bear in mind that this is a work of fiction, and the description is written largely for comic effect.¹³

A very different domestic context features in Anderson’s ‘The Clay Daubin’, in which a single storey thatched house of clay and straw is built by neighbours for a newly married couple.¹⁴ After the walls are raised to full height, there is a party with food and drink, music, dancing and singing. Fiddler Bill Adams ‘kittelt up ‘Chips an

¹¹ Lucy Broadwood, *English Traditional Songs and Carols* (London, 1908), p. 124.

¹² Translates as: ‘For you can do it so well, and I haven’t heard you sing it for many a long year.’ Betty had been a good singer in her younger days, of either hymns or songs, and she duly performs a little song she made herself about her brother Joe, when he was just a bit of a young lad, set to the same tune as ‘Canny Old Cumberlan’. In her performance she delivered the last line of each verse with all her might, and she did punish her tongue, and her body as well. The first never laid still and the latter was swaying back and forth like a poplar tree in a January wind.’

¹³ Thomas Farrall, *Betty Wilson's Cumberland Teals* (Carlisle, 1892), pp. 13-15.

¹⁴ Thomas Ellwood, *Anderson's Cumberland Songs and Ballads, Centenary Edition with Life of Anderson and Notes with Glossarial Concordance by G Crowther* (Ulverston, 1904), p. 86.

Shavings' for the dancing, and later the singing gets going, when Deavie offers to 'lilt ye a bit ov a sang', singing a few broadside ballads, as noted in the previous chapter.¹⁵

By the early to mid-twentieth century many middle-class and working-class people owned a piano, which became the focus of domestic entertainment, along with the gramophone, and singing around the piano was a popular pursuit.¹⁶ Micky Moscrop's daughter Mary remembered how their home in the 1940s and 1950s was full of music: 'We would gather around the piano when I was quite young: mother was a wonderful pianist, and I was the one who came out with a voice so I used to sing with Dad and we did duets together.'¹⁷

Public house

Public houses, particularly country inns, were central to popular recreation: a gathering place and a venue for events, including family celebrations.¹⁸ Some of the earliest references to pub musical life are found in the extant fragments of Robert Anderson's diary 1800-1802, which include twenty visits to inns like The Bowling Green and The Grapes in Carlisle, as well as to 'Jossie's' and 'Foster's' – which we can only guess are drinking establishments, judging by the frequently reported hangovers the following day. For example, on 10 January 1801: 'Music, singing and dancing were the amusement of the night', although 'every man had to make himself more ridiculous than his neighbour'; and 1 September 1802: 'spent the evening at Jossie's, where singing, dancing and the flute kept all alive.'¹⁹

We know little of what happened in Cumbria later in the century, although Lancashire dialect poet Edwin Waugh (1817–1890) recorded an episode on a tour of

¹⁵ *Anderson's Cumberland Ballads (n.d.)*, pp. 29-30 and Notes p.126. The songs sung are mostly well-known broadside ballads.

¹⁶ Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties*, p. 20.

¹⁷ Sue Allan, interviews with members of the Moscrop family, 2002.

¹⁸ Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties*, pp. 64-65.

¹⁹ 'Fragments of Diary of Robert Anderson, Carlisle, Jackson Library, 1A.

the Lake District when he became 'weather bound' during a storm at The Huntsman Inn in Wasdale, along with the Borrowdale guide, a few farmers and the landlord - legendary storyteller Will Ritson. By nightfall the farmers were drunk and the singing started, one of the farmers calling out: 'Canny Cumberlan' for ivver, agean the world', before going on to sing 'Deuce Tek The Clock' (a reference to another Anderson song, 'The Impatient Lassie').²⁰

Then, in the early twentieth century Jeffrey Mark reminisces about the singers and musicians of his youth, admitting though that his recollection of singers 'is not quite so vivid as in the case of instrumentalists.' He admits to knowing Burns's songs, having 'heard them sung (in the oral tradition, that is to say) ever since I can remember' and when he revisits the village of Welton, where he began his musical career as a member of Bill Brown's band, he is reminded of singing in the Royal Oak and offers a very interesting description of it:

'... we had a few songs, mostly very badly sung, but one man of about sixty presently got up and gave us a version of a once very popular Cumberland song called "Sally Gray," which I have known and sung since boyhood. The actual difference in notes from my own version was quite subtle, but I was chiefly interested in the method and poise of his delivery. His was a voice which came to me directly out of the past. His singing was quite impersonal and unimpassioned, and it was obvious that he obliged us with his song from some strange sense of duty ("duty," that is to say, in a sociological and non-moral sense). He had been taught his part and here was an occasion on which he was expected to perform. His way was not that of your modern tavern brawler, who harps on the "emotions" like any prima donna, expects a furore

²⁰ Edwin Waugh, *Rambles in the Lake Country and its Borders* (London, 1861), pp. 186-188.

at the end of his song—and usually gets it! But it was soon apparent that "Sally Gray" did not suit the company, and was only tolerated as an old man's quaverings, stale, old-fashioned and unexciting. And this although they were all the genuine article: honest rustics honestly quaffing their honest ale in the manner which a romantically interested society expects of them: According to common report, they should have automatically joined in the chorus and improvised a few verses on the spot. But the next item was a cheap music-hall song of about forty years ago (as I reckoned), with a refrain, "I didn't stop to say good-bye"—which pleased tremendously, and soon put everyone in a good humour again after the tedium of "Sally Gray."²¹

The variety of songs sung in a pub in the late nineteenth century is beautifully described by Flora Thompson in her semi-autobiographical book of rural Oxfordshire, *Lark Rise to Candleford*, and one can infer things were very similar elsewhere. The repertoire was 'a curious mix of old and new' with songs ranging from old country ballads to the latest music hall successes. The younger men would sing 'such songs of the day that had percolated so far,' but eventually the company would revert to old favourites like 'The Barleymow', although space was always made for the oldest inhabitants of the hamlet to also perform even older ballads, like 'The Outlandish Knight'.²² Note that while both old and young men share the same performance space, women were not included as the pub, certainly from Victorian times through to the early twentieth century, was predominantly a male province, with strong disapproval for women visiting pubs on a regular basis.²³ In rural Cumbria, however, certain events like 'Auld Wife Hakes', a form of public dance, were held in inns and attended

²¹ Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', p. 181.

²² Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Oxford, 1945), pp. 67-73.

²³ Steve Roud and Julia Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* (London, 2012), Steve Roud, 'General Introduction', p. xxix.

by both sexes, so evidently some establishments were used by women on particular occasions, but to what extent they used them in general is not known.²⁴

The singers on the *Pass the Jug* recordings of 1953 all seem to have been pub regulars, Micky Moscrop in particular being well-known as a singer in country inns throughout the area. According to his daughter Mary, he only had to spend a few minutes in a pub before someone would ask ‘Are you going to give us a song Micky?’ He always obliged, often with his wife Ruth accompanying him on the piano, which she also played for anyone else who wanted to get up and sing. Mary relates how, in later years, Micky used to call round at her house in Carlisle and say ‘What are you doing tonight? I’ll tell you what, we’ll have a run out... we’ll go to the Blacksmiths Arms at Talkin, or the Boot & Shoe at Greystoke or the Plough at Wreay: we were all over the place!’ Micky’s son Tom also remembers his father going out to places like Hesket Newmarket for singing evenings with a group of friends, including Robert Forrester.²⁵

Later in the twentieth century informal folk music ‘sessions’ in pubs began to become popular in around 1970, possibly because they offered more opportunities for participation than folk clubs, particularly for instrumentalists, who were encouraged to join in with a common repertoire of mainly Irish tunes. Some ‘sessions’ though were more song-orientated, and for local songs in particular there was no better place than Friday evenings at The Sun Inn at Ireby, in the northern fells, where Angie Marchant (1945-2006) played genial host to an array of singers attracted there from all around the county, and beyond, including myself. Angie herself sang many of the local songs, learned from Joe Wallace’s recordings, from old books, and from the hunt and shepherds’ meets she attended. Hunt singers came along occasionally too, including

²⁴ William Rollinson, *The Cumbrian Dictionary of Dialect, Tradition and Folklore* (Otley, 1997) p. 5; Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties*, p. 64.

²⁵ Sue Allan, Moscrop family interviews, 2002.

the Parker brothers John and Bernard and Bill Brown and Peter Wybergh from the Cumberland Farmers Hunt as well as singer-songwriters who proudly foregrounded Cumbrian themes in their songs. Notable among these were Rob Brown ('Bloody Sandale'), Rose Wolfe ('Allonby') and Tom Thompson. Tom's comic songs 'Song of the County Council Roadman', 'Ballad of the North West Water Authority' and 'Cumberland's Troubles' with their lively choruses were particular favourites. 'Cumberland's Troubles', written in 1969 to the tune of 'The Mardale Hunt', with its pro-Cumbrian/anti-everyone-else sentiments was generally known to the audience as 'The Cumberland Protest Song' and was requested every time Tom put in an appearance. These sessions were what stimulated my own interest in local songs, and where I learned many of them – although there was an unspoken rule about certain songs 'belonging' to certain people, so I would not have dreamed of embarking on a rendition of 'Sally Gray', 'La'al Dinah Grayson' or 'The Beagle Inn', for example, if Angie was there as they were 'her' songs – although enthusiastic singing along with choruses was of course obligatory.

Ballad sellers at the fair

The twice yearly hiring fairs where farm workers were taken on by farmers for a six month term and the large cattle and horse fairs such as those at Rosley, Brough and Appleby were not only a necessary forum for rural business to be done, but also provided an opportunity for a welcome holiday and merry-making. As Jollie noted in 1811: 'At fairs as well as hirings, it is customary for all the young people in the neighbourhood to assemble and dance at the inns and alehouses', he goes on to note disapprovingly that in their jigs and reels, 'they attend to exertion and agility, more

than ease and grace', leading inevitably to 'scenes very indelicate and unpleasant to the peaceful spectator.'²⁶

Rosley Fair, by the end of the eighteenth century, was one of the largest cattle and horse fairs in the county, if not the country. Sitting on a prominent site along the drove route from Scotland, which might see 80,000 cattle being driven there over the year. The fair was awarded a Royal Charter in 1631 and held every Whit Monday, with fortnightly horse and cattle sales continuing until Michaelmas, at least in its earlier years.²⁷ Alongside the buying and selling of animals, there were stalls and sideshows and ballad singers and sellers, and the fair became a byword for rural recreation in the area and often referred to in dialect poetry. The note glossing Anderson's song 'Betty Brown', which opens with Geordie and Betty off to Rosley Fair, offers a colourful description of the occasion: 'One part of the hill is covered with horses and black cattle, with dealers, drovers, and jockies... [while]...another part is overspread with the booths of mercers, milliners, hardwaremen, and bread-bakers. Here you see the mountebank, hawker, and auctioneer, addressing the gaping crowd from a wooden platform; and there you hear the discordant strains of the ballad-singer, the music of the bagpipe and the violin, of the fife, and the "spirit-stirring drum"', the fiddlers being 'tormentors of cat-gut for almost half a century'²⁸

Jonathan M. Denwood's book *Rosley Hill Fair*, published in 1933, relates the tale of a visit to Rosley Fair at the end of the eighteenth century in prose, poetry and songs. There are 43 songs in all, of which eight came from his personal folk song collection, transcribed by Frank Warriner, and the remaining ones were popular songs published in street literature, a number of them Scottish, including 'Maggie Lauder',

²⁶ Francis Jollie, *Jollie's Sketch of Cumberland Manners and Customs* (Carlisle, 1811) p. 40.

²⁷ www.rosley-cumbria.co.uk/rosley_fair.htm, accessed on 12 June 2014; William Rollinson, *Life & Tradition in the Lake District* (London; 1974), p. 260.

²⁸ *Anderson's Cumberland Ballads*, (n.d.), p. 116.

'The Bush aboon Traquair' and 'Logan Braes'.²⁹ Fairs provided the ballad sellers with their best markets, and at Egremont Crab Fair in 1877 in amongst all the stalls of merchandise 'itinerant sellers of ballads and songs, street musicians, cheap jacks, hawkers ...' were busy selling their wares.³⁰ Carlisle ballad seller, singer and fiddler Jimmy Dyer (1841-1903) was one of the most familiar figures at Rosley Fair in the late nineteenth century, although his repertoire did not suit all: according to a contributor to *The Carlisle Journal* on 27 May 1913, it was made up largely of ballads he had written himself, 'some of which displayed ability and humour, but others, it must be confessed, were coarse and vulgar ditties, unfit for publication.'³¹ Cheaply printed broadsides were also sold on street corners and pinned up in pubs and village shops, as we saw in Chapter 2.³²

Most, if not all, ballad sellers were also singers, employed by printers to travel around singing their wares, as a means of enticing people to buy and also to give them the tunes.³³ These people were often socially peripheral, as ballad selling was frequently a last resort for the destitute seeking a legitimate way to beg and, as Gammon notes, they only really come into historical visibility when they are in trouble, die or are killed. Such is the case of John Tarrbrook, an unemployed young man discharged from the army who, according to an Appleby quarter sessions court report of 1765, travelled with his wife Ann to Carlisle and 'got some books of songs

²⁹ Jonathan Mawson Denwood, *Rosley Hill Fair* (London, 1933), pp.104, 108.

³⁰ William Lewthwaite, 'Reminiscences of Egremont Crab Fair', *Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society* (1940), p. 34.

³¹ Letters, *Carlisle Journal*, 27 May 1913.

³² Richard Ferguson, 'On the Collection of Chap-Books in the Bibliotheca Jacksoniana, in Tullie House, Carlisle, with some remarks on the History of Printing in Carlisle, Whitehaven, Penrith, and other north country towns', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, XIV (1896), p. 5.

³³ Traditional Song Forum/efdss Broadside Ballad Study Day, London Feb 2011: Vic Gammon, *Ballad Singers and Sellers*.

printed there which his wife and he sung about the streets and sold.’ They were arrested as vagrants.³⁴

(ii) Semi-formal

Between the informality of singing in the home and pub and the formality of the concert hall lie a series of contexts I classify as ‘semi-formal’: the Harmonic Society (in Carlisle), the traditional Cumbrian rural celebration around Christmas time known as a ‘Merry Neet’, farming celebrations after sheep shearing (‘boon clippings’) and harvest (‘kurn suppers’), shepherds’ meets and hunt suppers – all events where a Chairman or President is elected to take charge of the proceedings. Then, finally, from the mid-1960s we have the county’s folk clubs, which not only have an MC but are also run on a commercial basis.

The Harmonic Society

Musical entertainment for all classes burgeoned in the eighteenth century, including the commercial London pleasure gardens, London and regional theatres and assembly hall concerts (the latter two considered as formal contexts, below). However, amateur singers and musicians outnumbered all those attending professional entertainments, which led to the growth in popularity of participative music groups like catch and glee clubs and Harmonic Societies, which allowed people to hear and also take part in music in their locality.³⁵ Some Societies seem to have been linked with an ‘improving’ agenda, like the Mechanics’ Institutes, while others were formed as, or evolved into, choirs like the Cockermouth Harmonic Society, founded in 1867 and still going strong. Other Societies, such as those on Tyneside, comprised small,

³⁴ CASKAC, Westmorland Quarter Sessions, WQ/SR/319/8-9, Report on examination of John Tarrbrook and his wife Ann, 1765.

³⁵ J.S. Bratton, *The Victorian Popular Ballad* (London, 1975), p. 23; Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 121-122 - ‘Catches’ being humorous and often bawdy part-songs sung in gentlemen-only gatherings in taverns, while ‘glees’ derive from madrigals, usually featuring more parts than catches, often sung in canon, and frequently including women.

lively gatherings in upper rooms of taverns featuring both instrumental and vocal music, including local songs, as Joseph Pegg writes: ‘The audience would have been small by today’s standards, ten members of the Society with invited guests, some of whom may well have performed. There would also have been audience participation. There would certainly have been eating and drinking.’

One imagines that situation might have been similar in Cumbria, although the Harmonic (or Philharmonic) Society in Carlisle, founded in 1839, does appear to have operated on more formal lines.³⁶ Robert Anderson’s diary entries between 1800 and 1803 include 22 references to what must have been an earlier Harmonic (sometimes Phil-Harmonic) Society, which Anderson attended most Tuesday evenings. There is no reference to a venue, but it seems likely that the function or concert room of a local inn would have been used, with gatherings far less refined and more participative than the Carlisle Philharmonic established some thirty years later. On Monday 14 Feb 1803, for example, ‘...all were stupid, except when obscenity was started, then, like a pack of dogs in full cry, all gave mouth. Such are Societies in general, where instead of mental improvement, the morals of raw unthinking youth are frequently corrupted ...’ On 25 Dec 1801 he complains again of ‘mawkish company’, although on 25 May 1802 there is ‘pleasant company, but no singers’. The semi-formal nature of the meetings is evident, as Anderson often notes who was acting as ‘President’ for the evening, a role he himself took up on 12 Sept 1803. The repertoire performed is not identified, although it is likely that it would have comprised light material, some of which we might term folk song - including Anderson’s own songs - judging by the

³⁶ Joseph W. Pegg, <https://newcastle.gov.uk/wwwfileroot/legacy/educationlibraries/tbp/historyofmusic.pdf> (paper on music in Newcastle) accessed on 6 March 2016. For information on the Carlisle Philharmonic Society see: James Walter Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross: Old Stories Retold* (Carlisle, 1921), pp. 79-81. The Carlisle Society seems primarily to have been formed to promote a regular concert series. Records of its activities cease after 1841.

entries of 4 September 1802 when he ‘spent a pleasant evening at the Philo Harmonic. Saw the answer to Sally Gray,’ and 24 October 1803, when he ‘met a jovial few at the Har., where the song, tune, dance and jokes went off merrily.’³⁷

Merry Neets

The archetypal Cumbrian entertainment was the ‘Merry Neet’ (Merry Night). Jollie, writing in the early nineteenth century, describe a ‘common Merry-night’ as a dance organised by a publican for commercial gain during the Christmas holidays, ‘attended by ‘numerous companies of lads and lasses’, while Sanderson adds that the occasion was one ‘in which every Cumbrian peasant refuses to be governed by the cold and the niggardly maxims of economy and thrift.’³⁸

The most famous merry neet was of course that described by Anderson in his ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’. The opening verse sets the scene:

Aye lad! sec a murry-neet we've hed at Bleckell,
The sound o' the fiddle yet rings I' my ear,
Aw reet clipt and heel'd were the lads and the lasses,
And monie a clever lish hizzy was there;
The bettermer swort sat snug I' the parlour,
I' th' pantry the sweethearters cutter'd sae soft;
The dancers they kick'd up a stour i' the kitchen,
At lanter the card-lakers sat in the loft.³⁹

³⁷ ‘Fragments of Diary of Robert Anderson’, Carlisle, Jackson Library, 1A.

³⁸ Thomas Sanderson, ‘An essay on the character, manners and customs of the peasantry of Cumberland’, in *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson...*, pp.1-1i; Jollie, *Jollie's Sketch of Cumberland Manners and Customs*, p. iii; *Anderson's Cumberland Ballads* (1820), p. 122.

³⁹ Anderson, *Cumberland Ballads, with Autobiography, Notes and Glossary* (1893) pp. 68-70. ‘Bleckell’ is Blackwell, once a village, and now a suburb, on the outskirts of Carlisle; ‘lish hizzy’ translates as ‘lithe hussy’; ‘bettermer swort’ means ‘better sort of people’, i.e. more prosperous or middle class; ‘cuttered’ is ‘whispered’; ‘lanter’ is a card game and to ‘lake’ is to ‘play’.

At the early twentieth century anniversary celebrations of the original ‘Bleckell Murry Neet’ (outlined in Chapter 3), singing was a major feature, although ironically in the original poem while dancers are described at length - exhibiting more agility than skill - there is no mention of singing. In more recent years, the occasional merry neet is organised by a Cumbrian village as a community/fund-raising event, or by the Lakeland Dialect Society, although not necessarily at Christmas. In March 2000, for example, a ‘traditional Cumbrian merry neet’ in aid of Crosby Ravensworth village hall featured a traditional tatie pot supper with entertainment provided by members of the Dialect Society, comprising dialect tales and poems and a range of songs, including some from Tyneside as well as Mrs Jean Scott-Smith’s rendition of ‘Tammy Green’, a rousing ‘Mardale Hunt’ by Ted Relph and a chorus of ‘John Peel’ to finish. Paradoxically, as the older records do not mention singing at all, we must conclude that it was only ever a very minor part of the proceedings, if indeed anyone sang at all, and a merry neet was primarily a dance, where the young folk did their courting.⁴⁰

Farming celebrations: ‘kurn suppers’, ‘clippings’ and shepherds’ meets

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and indeed well into the twentieth century, work and play in the farming community followed the seasons, with music making taking place at suppers after ‘boon clippings’ (shearing of a flock of sheep carried out with the help of neighbouring farmers) in summer, at ‘kurn’ or ‘kern’ suppers in the autumn and shepherd’s and hunt meets in the winter.⁴¹ I have found only two reference to music-making at kurn suppers, the first in a letter from Sydney

⁴⁰ ‘A Merry Neet’, *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald*, 1 April 2000.

⁴¹ A ‘churn supper’ because ‘a quantity of cream, slightly churned, was originally the only dish which constituted it’, often called ‘kurn’ supper in north Cumberland. See also Mrs Ann Wheeler, *The Westmoreland Dialect in Four Familiar Dialogues, in which an attempt is made to illustrate the provincial idiom* (London, 1840), p. 138; Rollinson, *The Cumbrian Dictionary of Dialect, Tradition and Folklore*, p. 91.

Nicholson in 1905 to Lucy Broadwood, accompanying his transcription of songs from James Walter Brown which, he was told, used to be sung at ‘the old kurn suppers’ which took place after the last load of corn had been led and lasted from 7pm till 5am ‘accompanied by much singing and dancing’. The second reference is from Robert Forrester, who in a radio interview talks about his grandfather Joe, ‘well-known around Bewcastle for his fiddlin’ at country weddings, barn dances, kurn suppers, timber raisins an’ other gatherins’.⁴²

When it comes to sheep ‘clippings’ or shearings, however, we have a little more information. This was one of the most important festivals of the farming year in Cumbria, particularly the ‘boon clippings’ which comprised a combined effort with neighbouring fell farmers to get the job of shearing whole flocks of sheep done more efficiently, followed by ale, food, sports and dancing late into the night.⁴³ A long poem by William Dickinson about the farming year in the early nineteenth century describes how the feast always ended with song:

Than somebody knattles on t' teable befoor.
He says "lads you mun join in my sang
"Here's a good health to the man o' this house,
"The man o' this house, the man o' this house,
"Here's a good health to the man o' this house,
"For he is a right honest man.

The song described here is, Dickinson says, a very old clipping song which became a raucous drinking game as it progressed, and was usually followed by ‘O good ale thou

⁴² Note with songs sent by Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle, Lucy Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/351; Robert Forrester interview about Cumberland song recordings broadcast on BBC Radio Cumbria 'Open Air' programme, BBC Radio Cumbria (1982).

⁴³ Rollinson, *Life & Tradition in the Lake District*, p. 89.

art my darlin’), ‘The Raven and the Rock Starlin’ and ‘Tarry woo’’, sung by the shepherds.⁴⁴

There were songs too, but no feast, at the sheep-shearing in the Bewcastle fells north of Carlisle, close to the Scottish border, attended by Carlisle musician Jeffrey Mark in the early twentieth century. The work was followed by sports and then ‘whiskey and songs for an hour or so’ in the barn, although he reports that the singers were bad and the songs poor, ‘except for an odd hunting song or two (entirely localised in words and sentiment) which might have been worth learning.’ There was just one old shepherd whose singing he did enjoy, whose songs ‘came to me with the same conviction as in the case of the singer of “Sally Gray”’. His delivery, too, was quite emotionless and his face impassive, and again only natural kindness prevented an interruption from some of the more lively or drunken members of the party.⁴⁵

The main social event in the sheep farmer’s calendar was the shepherds’ meet, when shepherds from a wide area would bring sheep that had strayed into their flocks over the previous year and return them to their rightful owners at a country inn. After the business of the day was complete there was a supper - ‘a bellyful of tatie pot, plenty of ale’ – and then a chairman would be appointed to take charge of the evening, who would call on individuals to perform stories and songs: ‘a hunting ditty with plenty of chorus, a sentimental song by Willy the shepherd, and the postman with a full rendering of “Sally Gray”’...⁴⁶

The shepherd’s meet at Mardale was one of the largest and longest established, incorporating races, wrestling, hound trails, sheepdog trials and riotous singing events at the Dun Bull, on the Saturday nearest November 20th, where ‘those that could sing,

⁴⁴ William Dickinson, 'Memorandums of Old Times, in Mid-County Dialect', in *Cumbriana, or Fragments of Cumbrian Life* (Cockermouth, 1913), pp. 213-232, .. Note re. dialect words: ‘Knattles’ is ‘knocks’, ‘teable’ is ‘table’, ‘befoor’ is ‘before’ and ‘mun’ is ‘must’.

⁴⁵ Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', pp. 181-182.

⁴⁶ William T. Palmer, *Byways in Lakeland* (London, 1952), pp. 28-30.

sang, and those that couldn't told a story.'⁴⁷ John Graham offers a more detailed description: 'A long table on trestles stands in the middle of the room, and around it sit all those who have gathered during the day. A chairman is appointed, and sits at the head of the table, whilst under the table are sheep-dogs and terriers galore. Toasts are proposed in the usual way; then the chairman calls for a song, and if there is a chorus so much the better. Everybody is supposed to sing at least one song. The chairman sends the hat round and a collection is made for the next lot of drinks; the chairman pays all.'⁴⁸

The situation is very different today: Mardale village is now drowned under Haweswater reservoir, and just a few traditional meets remain, some of them - Buttermere, Borrowdale, Stoneside, Walna Scar and Wasdale Head – now transformed more into sheep/agricultural shows, while those at Troutbeck, Mardale, Dockray and Matterdale and the Skiddaw Range are more low key than in earlier years, a decline hastened by the advent of Landrovers and trailers, mobile phones, and sheep ID numbers which enable sheep to be easily identified and returned to their owners.⁴⁹

Shepherds meets often combined with hunt meets: the Ullswater Foxhounds used to meet at Mardale while the Skiddaw Range shepherds' meet is still held at inns around the Skiddaw massif in early December each year and attended by the Blencathra Foxhounds. In a study of singing at shepherds' meets, Deborah Kermode quotes a shepherd saying that 'a lot of singers is hunting men', although some

⁴⁷ Deborah M. Kermode, 'The Shepherd's Voice: Song and upland shepherds of 19th and early 20th century Lakeland', unpublished MA dissertation, (Lancaster, 2003), p. 35.

⁴⁸ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*. Preface.

⁴⁹ <http://www.cumbriahillfarming.org.uk/hillfarming/shepherdsmeets.html>, accessed on 13 March 2016.

shepherds were also good singers as one twentieth-century meet was famous for ‘a 40-strong good sing-song’, the shepherds joined by huntsmen and followers.⁵⁰

Hunt suppers

A great deal of sociability is attached to fox-hunting, with most hunts starting out at a local hostelry and ending their day there with a hunt supper. Much singing took place on these occasions in the past, with hunting songs regarded as ‘the most typical of Cumbrian folk-songs’, revealing much about the place of hunting in rural society, an activity which brought together people living in a sparsely populated rural area as a community with an interest in common.⁵¹ At the hunt supper each person would tell a story or sing a song about huntsmen – ‘John Peel’, ‘Joe Bowman’, ‘Tommy Dobson’ being particular favourites, or hounds and terriers – ‘Drink, Puppy, Drink’ and ‘The Terrier Song’ for example - or even foxes – ‘Old Grandee’ or ‘Red Rover’ perhaps. Some of the songs might well have been penned by the people present, including some of those popular songs relating, sometimes at great length, what happened on a particular hunt like ‘Sharp Yeat or Five Foxes in One Day, written by John Dalton, huntsman of the Blencathra foxhounds 1894-1928.

The joint Mardale shepherds’ meet and hunt meet was so popular it attracted visitors from further afield. In 1924, the local newspaper reported that the ‘chief concert’ was held in the big room of the Dun Bull, and was packed out. The duties of chairman were shared between Master of Foxhounds Mr Norman de Courcy Parry, , Dr Eaton of Ennerdale and Capt. Digby-Seymour of Newcastle, ‘with apologies given for Mr Guy Mannering of Dover, who was unable to stay for the concert. Dr Eaton produced two new songs “We all go to Mardale every year” and “Toural Eay” and also contributed to the evening's sing-song.’ Others who sang included Norman

⁵⁰ Kermode, *The Shepherd's Voice: Song and upland shepherds of 19th and early 20th century Lakeland*, pp. 43-44.

⁵¹ Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties*, p. 99.

Hudson ('Jim Dalton'), Joe Wear ('Ullswater Foxhounds on Helvellyn'), Joe Bowman ('John Peel'), Captain Digby-Seymour ('The Horn of the Hunter'), J. Thompson ("Old Towler") and H. Jackson ('Asleep in the Deep' and 'John Bull'). The whole company rose to sing 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night', 'O God our help in ages past' and 'Tipperary,' with the singing accompanied on the piano by Mr W. C. Skelton of Windermere, which was certainly not usual at similar hunt gatherings, where the singing would have unaccompanied, with most songs 'sung to already established tunes and the words often adapted to be relevant to the local hunt. These tunes are described as being 'traditional' for the origin of many of them has been lost in the mists of time ...'⁵²

Hugh Machell, in his 1926 biography of John Peel, remarks on the difficulty of getting the singing going: 'It is an amusing point to reflect at these impromptu festivities how hard it is to get a vocalist at the beginning of them. Later on, it is equally difficult to prevent nearly everybody trying to sing. So true it is that your social foxhunter cannot warble without the general impulse of his need for ale.'⁵³ Not everyone who performed at a hunt supper was necessarily a hunter however: the magnificent baritone voice of Micky Moscrop of Carlisle, who never followed hounds, was the highlight of many an after-hunt celebration, his speciality being 'D'Ye Ken John Peel'.⁵⁴

Singing after hunts has been in decline for many years now, the two reasons for that usually put forward being the insularity resulting from too much TV watching and the introduction of drink-driving laws, rather than the hunting ban.⁵⁵ Edmund

⁵² *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald*, 29 November 1924; Jill Mason, *The Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhounds* (Ludlow, 2005), Chapter 2, 'Home Grown Entertainment' (no page no.); Sue Allan, interview with Edmund Porter, Joint Master and Huntsman of Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhounds, 2007.

⁵³ Hugh Machell, *John Peel - famous in sport and song* (London, 1926).

⁵⁴ Sue Allan, *Moscrop family interviews*, 2002.

⁵⁵ Mason, *The Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhounds*, Ch.2.

Porter, Master of the Eskdale & Ennerdale Foxhounds, says that hunts no longer have the sing-songs they used to in the days when he would walk the hounds to other dales and stay away hunting for a few days: ‘The singing’s mainly died out. I think the Ullswater hunt maybe still have a hunting song competition about Dacre, and a few of our lads after a show might have a bit of a sing, but a lot of people hunting with cars has changed the scene.’⁵⁶

(iii) Formal

Although it seems counter-intuitive to include the formal settings of theatre and concert hall as performance contexts for folk songs, in fact - as discussed in chapters 3 and 4 - many of these songs have their origins in theatres and the London pleasure gardens. The songs went on to be disseminated via chapbook ‘garlands’ and popular print songsters, while in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries folk songs would often be arranged for the concert platform. Other formal performance settings considered here are the folk song competitions, performances staged for folk song collectors in the early years of the twentieth century, recordings and broadcasts of Cumbrian folk songs from the 1950s onwards, and performance in folk clubs from the 1960s.

The theatre

Although far distant from the London theatres, songs from the London stage travelled the country via travelling theatre companies which, from at least the eighteenth century, toured the area performing in barns, makeshift theatres and assembly rooms.⁵⁷ As Frances Marshall notes in her preface to the memoirs of travelling actress Charlotte Deans, who performed all over the north of England and

⁵⁶ Sue Allan, Interview with Edmund Porter, , 2007. The singing competitions held by Ullswater Foxhounds, referred to by Edmund Porter - if they still exist - are certainly no longer advertised in the local press, presumably for fear of attracting the attention of hunt saboteurs.

⁵⁷ Rollinson, *Life & Tradition in the Lake District*, p. 157.

Scotland between 1783 and the mid-1830s, the north was far from being a cultural desert at that time, with ‘a continual to-and-fro of various companies or greater of lesser talent trying their luck at market towns, ports, mining communities or large villages, and hoping to create enough reputation to establish themselves as having a regular circuit.’⁵⁸ A typical Cumbrian tour by Charlotte Deans’s little company would have taken in towns like Egremont, Maryport, Wigton, Keswick and Ambleside and villages like Allonby, Ireby, Hesket-Newarket and Shap, and even smaller villages like Bampton and Dean.⁵⁹ Surviving playbills of the time reveal that an evening’s entertainment usually consisted of a programme of theatrical works, including extracts from Shakespeare as well as recent melodramas, interspersed with songs and dances and thus making new songs and dances accessible to all. At the theatre in Carlisle in 1805, for example, a programme in which the ‘Favourite Tragedy of Barbarossa’ heads the bill also includes ‘A Yorkshire Concert, by Mr Walton’ and ‘A Favorite Song, by Mrs Rowland’, as well as ‘A Hornpipe, by Miss Edwin’.⁶⁰

Concerts

Well before Cecil Sharp and his contemporaries were arranging folk songs for the concert platform, William Metcalfe was arranging songs in Cumbrian dialect for performance in concerts by members of Carlisle Choral Society. Although it was his arrangement of ‘John Peel’ for which he is best remembered, Metcalfe also published a wide range of his own compositions and arrangements, including books of hymns and carols for children, organ and piano pieces and part-songs, as well as settings for voice and piano of Cumberland dialect songs and ballads, including Anderson’s ‘Sally Gray’ and ‘Reed Robin’, Alexander Craig Gibson’s ‘Lal Dinah Grayson’ and

⁵⁸ Frances Marshall, *A Travelling Actress in the North and Scotland: Charlotte Deans (1768-1859) a Commentary on the Story of a Travelling Player* (Kendal, 1984), p. viii.

⁵⁹ Charlotte Deans, *Memoirs of the life of Mrs Charlotte Deans from her earliest infancy* (Wigton, 1837), p. 69.

⁶⁰ Collection of broadside ballads and playbills, Carlisle, Jackson Library, M174

‘Jwohunny Git Oot’, Susanna Blamire’s ‘The Waefu’ Heart’ and Rev T. Ellwood’s ‘Welcome into Cumberland’.⁶¹

Conductor of the Carlisle Choral Society for forty-five years from 1855, Metcalfe had been appointed by the secretary and founder of the Society, Robert Lattimer, a good baritone who often sang solos in local concerts and although his preference was for classical pieces, was also a gifted singer of comic songs as well as being ‘a master of dialects ... equally at home in Scotch and Irish, in his native Cumbrian, and in the vernacular of Lancashire and Northumberland’, according to fellow-singer and Society chronicler James Walter Brown. Lattimer’s singing of Cumberland dialect songs always delighted audiences, particular favourites being Metcalfe’s arrangements of ‘Canny oald Cummerlan’’, ‘Lal Dinah Grayson’ and ‘Jwohunny Git Oot’.⁶²

Metcalfe’s concert programmes of the 1870s and 1880s typically featured 20-25 songs, often his own arrangements, although not all included local songs. The ‘Grand Concert ‘at King’s Arms Assembly Room, Wigton in January 1876 and February’s ‘Grand Evening Concert’ at St Cuthbert’s School in Carlisle for example, had none, although they did feature Mr Lattimer singing some humorous songs. In June that year, however, we find Miss Metcalfe singing her father’s arrangement of Ellwood’s ‘Welcome into Cumberland’ at a Volunteer Fire Brigade Concert in Carlisle, while a ‘Literary & Musical Entertainment’ at the village of Cotehill, near Carlisle in August advertised Mr Metcalfe as ‘Composer of “D’Ye ken John Peel” and other Cumberland Songs’ and included ‘D’Ye Ken John Peel’ and ‘L’al Dinah Grayson’, both sung by Metcalfe, in the programme. By December 1878 Metcalfe had

⁶¹ James Walter Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross* (Carlisle, 1950), pp. 206-211; ‘The Works of William Metcalfe’, Vol.II, Carlisle, Jackson Library, D52.

⁶² Brown, *Round Carlisle Cross*, pp. 84-90.

arranged more Anderson songs, with ‘Gwordie Gill’, sung by Miss Beck, and ‘Sweet Sally Gray’, sung by Mr Brown, both featuring on the programme.⁶³

Forty years later, in 1927, composer Jeffrey Mark brought his arrangements to the concert platform ‘with the object of stimulating interest in the Cumberland dialect and folk songs’, encouraged in the venture by Dr W.G. Whitaker, conductor of the Newcastle Bach Choir, and an ‘authority on the folk music of Northumberland and the North’. Mark’s settings of ‘traditional airs’ for the Cumberland dialect songs, as well as for some in Northumberland and Scots dialects, were sung by Carlisle Male Voice Choir at a concert on 16 March in The Crown and Mitre Hotel in Carlisle. Also on the programme were an eightsome reel danced to a fiddle and two sets of Northumberland pipes, with the concert proving so successful it was repeated at Keswick, Cockermouth and Penrith and broadcast from the BBC’s Newcastle studio.⁶⁴

According to *The Carlisle Patriot*, ‘Mr Mark took the leading part in the concert, and the songs and choruses composed or arranged by him to dialect verses had a cordial reception, with the hope expressed that these simple folk tunes may prove the strongest barrier to the onward rush of ragtime.’ The most popular pieces were ‘Sally Gray’ and ‘Auld Jobby Dixon’, for which ‘Mr Mark’s robust tune did justice to the theme, and was well rendered by the choir’, while Miss Ena Mitchell’s rendition of ‘Lal Dinah Grayson’ brought out ‘its winsome qualities’. The programme concluded, inevitably, with ‘John Peel’, sung by the choir and audience.⁶⁵

Cummerlan’ Neets

More formal than a traditional rural Merry Neet, ‘Cummerlan’ Neets’ seem to have begun in Carlisle with the 100th anniversary celebration of Robert Anderson’s

⁶³ ‘Old Programmes of Concerts held in Carlisle, etc.’, Carlisle, Jackson Library, M1047.

⁶⁴ Norman Nicholson, ‘City concert launched a folk music revival’, *Cumberland News*, 12 June 1987. p.4.

⁶⁵ ‘Folk Song and Dialect: Mr Jeffrey Mark’s Concert’, *The Carlisle Patriot*, 18 March, 1927.

poem 'Bleckell Murry-Neet' - about a Merry Neet held at the pub in the village of Blackwell, now a suburb of Carlisle. An unattributed cutting in *Omnium Gatherum*, James Walter Brown's collection of local history miscellanea, reports that country people walked to Blackwell while some of the 'bettermer swort from Carlisle and elsewhere' drove out in cabs, 'some of them with copies of the first edition of Anderson in their pockets.'⁶⁶ In 1906 a pamphlet printing of the poem, fully glossed by George Crowther, carries a report from *The Carlisle Patriot* of 3 January 1902 where we learn that although there were five singing competitions during the course of the evening - 'Bleckell Murry Neet', Any Cumberland Song, Sentimental Song, 'John Peel' and Comic Song - it was noteworthy that even in the competition where a choice could be made of any Cumberland song, 'Bleckell Murry Neet' was selected by most singers.⁶⁷ An apparent dearth of Cumberland repertoire was even more in evidence at a similar event in 1927, at which the *Cumberland News* reported 'a marked dearth of dialect singers', such that the singing competition was opened up to 'any description of song', although in the end had to be abandoned entirely because of a dispute over entertainment tax. Mr Johnston though did give the occasion 'its distinctive touch' by singing the old ballad 'Bleckell Murry Neet'.⁶⁸

'Cummerlan' Neets' began again in Carlisle in 1933 with a dinner and entertainment to mark the centenary of the death of 'Cumberland Bard', Robert Anderson, at the Pageant Hall of the Silver Grill restaurant in English Street. A Centenary Celebration Committee, chaired by Dr C.W.Graham, organised the event, at which many notable county figures were present, including Sir Wilfrid Lawson, novelist Hugh Walpole, the Cathedral's Director of Music Dr Wadeley, Director of

⁶⁶ James Walter Brown, *Omnium Gatherum*, Jackson Library, M1046.

⁶⁷ Crowther, *Bleckell Murry Neet*.

⁶⁸ 'The Festive Season - Many Local Dances and Entertainments: Bleckell Murry Neet', *Cumberland News*, 8 January 1928.

Tullie House Museum Tom Gray, the Deputy Mayor of Carlisle H.K. Campbell and ‘representatives of the Cumberland Westmorland Societies and Associations, doctors, colonels and descendants of the bard.’ The Cumbrian menu was written out in dialect, the courses interspersed with toasts and speeches, including one to ‘Canny Aul Cummerlan’ by Walpole, ‘who talked of his association and depth of feelings for Cumberland and Westmorland’, Dr Graham’s recollections of his father singing Anderson’s songs, including ‘Canny Cummerland’ and ‘Reed Robin’, and the flute allegedly once owned by Anderson was played by H.K. Campbell, who gave a talk about Anderson as a musician and singer who ‘wrote songs meant to be sung’. A note of thanks was then given to Mr Robinson-Cleaver, organist at the Lonsdale Cinema, for playing the tunes of Anderson’s ballads on the Lonsdale organ over the previous week after which was a programme of songs and recitations, including ‘Canny Aul Cummerlan’, ‘Bleckell Murry-Neet’, ‘Reed Robin’, ‘Sally Gray’, ‘Jwohunny Git Oot’ (Alexander Craig Gibson), ‘Barbary Bell’ ... and of course ‘John Peel.’⁶⁹

The Cummerlan’ Neets became popular annual events - in 1936 ‘over fifty applicants for tickets had to be disappointed’. The declared aim of the organising committee was to ‘to foster an interest in dialect’, to which end they also ran competitions for dialect writing, before the formation of the Lakeland Dialect Society in 1939, when the events ceased for a while, but were revived in 1954 and ran until at least 1959.⁷⁰ In 1960 Harold Forsyth and other members of the Lakeland Dialect Society organised a ‘Cummerlan’ Neet Party’ in Workington in aid of charity. It was much more informal than the Carlisle ‘Cummerlan’ Neets’, featuring a Cumberland tatie pot supper but no formal toasts, followed by ‘A bit uv real Cummerlan’ entertainment wid plenty uv singen an’ music, huntin’ songs, comic songs, dialect

⁶⁹ ‘A reet Murry Neet at Centenary Supper: Dialect Stwories and Sangs’, *Cumberland Evening News*, 2 October 1933.

⁷⁰ Ted Relph, *‘Hoo’s ta gaan on? Harold Forsyth’s Cumberland Tales’*, (Carlisle, 2002).

Cummerlan' teals, an' lots uv fun be lads an' lasses fray Carlisle, Wukint'n, Cockermonth, Lamplugh, an' ae roond about.' The 'Parties' went on until at least 1965, first at the Jane Street Co-op Café and then at the Central Hotel, although they seem to have included less music and more talks and comic stories as the years went by. The 1963 programme put out an appeal for 'enny other Cummerlan entertainers' as well as 'words an' music of Cummerlan songs an' monologues', although the back page of the following year's programme does print the choruses of the hunting songs 'John Peel' and 'T'La-al Melbreak' on the grounds that 'Nee doubt t'follerin' songs'll be sung, so if thoo doesn't know t'choruses ther eer'.⁷¹

Competitions

Mary Wakefield's Folk-Song Competition at the Westmorland Music Festival in Kendal 1902 – 1906 was a very different type of competition from those held at the Bleckell Murry Neet celebrations: far more formal and with quite a different agenda, its aim being to winkle out traditional folk songs from singers in 'the six northern counties', not judge the performances of the singers. The competition, over the five years it ran, is described in more detail in chapter 2, but to summarise: the 1902 competition drew ten entries, of which only three fitted the judge's criteria, in 1903 only six of the nine competitors attended, in 1904 there were just five singers, in 1905 the cash prize on offer attracted eight singers, and in its final year in 1906 out of six entrants, only three turned up on the day.⁷² Sydney Nicholson fared little better with his competition at Carlisle in 1906 which attracted just seven singers, most singing

⁷¹ *Programmes of Workington Cummerlan' Neet Parties*, CASCAC, Wesley Park Archive, DX2206.

⁷² John Francmanis, 'The Folk-Song Competition: An Aspect of the Search for an English National Music', *Rural History*, 11 (2000), pp. 187-197.

Anderson songs, and he abandoned the experiment the next year when scarcely any entrants came forward.⁷³

Most of the singers who took part in the Kendal and Carlisle competitions were very far from being the sort of ‘peasant’ Sharp and the Edwardian collectors believed were the traditional custodians of folk song. They were in fact predominantly middle-class amateur musicians: just the sort of people who might enter a competition at a music festival. The one possible exception is the Kirkby Stephen blacksmith John Collinson of Kirkby Lonsdale who sang at Kendal 1904-1906, although as an aspiring poet and keen performer in the local community he could certainly not be described as uncultured. It is unfortunate that the competition organisers and judges failed to tap into popular rural gatherings such as hunt suppers, shepherds’ meets, clippings (communal sheep-shearings), kurn (harvest) suppers, and ‘merry neets’, where they could have heard a whole raft of other songs, including local hunting songs and broadside ballads, along with the obligatory sprinkling of Anderson songs.

Elsewhere, however, very different song competitions thrived at sports days and agricultural shows. At Egremont Crab Fair in 1920, for instance, the competition offered cash prizes and was divided into four categories of song: sentimental, hunting, Scotch and comic.⁷⁴ Most competitions though were not categorised in this way, as a folklorist present at Winster Sports in 1937 reveals:

‘the first singer ... sang a few verses of one of the old hunting songs. He was followed by singers of Victorian ballads in the old style, a choir boy who sang ‘Cherry Ripe’, an Irishman who sang ‘The Mountains of Mourne’, and various crooners of modern sentimental ditties. An old man of seventy sang ‘John Peel’, (and finally) ... the carpenter from a neighbouring parish pulled his cap

⁷³ ‘Folk Song Competition’, *Carlisle Patriot*, 23 February 1906. ‘Folk Songs in Cumberland’, *Carlisle Patriot*, 28 June 1907.

⁷⁴ Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties*, p. 175.

down over his eyes and sang in an impersonal voice the ‘Ballad of Balaclava’, which was recently republished in a collection of Victorian broadsheet.⁷⁵

Another notable difference from the formal folk song competitions was that the judging was done on the basis of the quality of the performance rather than the song itself. This was also the case at the hunting song competitions, which took place at many Cumbrian agricultural shows as well as in pubs, often organised by the various fell packs as fund raisers. Micky Moscrop of Carlisle was a popular singer, winning ‘John Peel’ singing competitions at Caldbeck and Eskdale, where, ‘... there were maybe 30 entrants in this singing competition [...] and it just went on and on and on. They were still singing when it was dark...’⁷⁶

Performing for folk song collectors

The Edwardian folk song collectors were keen to transcribe songs direct from singers, in their homes and elsewhere, and there are a few records of these occasions in Cumbria. In 1905, for example, Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle sent a letter to Lucy Broadwood, enclosing some song tunes sung by ‘an old man, Mr J.W. Brown (1851 - 1930) of Carlisle, formerly a cathedral chorister, and amongst other things a great authority on Cumberland dialect. He has known the songs from boyhood and learned most of them from Mr Robert Lattimer of Carlisle, now dead. All the songs Mr Brown sings are regularly sung by old Cumbrians.’ However Nicholson seems to have struggled to transcribe the songs accurately as they were, he says: ‘sung in a very jaunty fashion with many pauses etc, but I have done the best I could.’⁷⁷

The following year it seems that Nicholson was instrumental in arranging for Mr J. Carruthers perform seven Anderson songs for Vaughan Williams on his brief

⁷⁵ J.M. Wilson, ‘Folk Traditions in Westmorland’, *Journal of the Folklore Institute, Indiana*, 2 (1965), pp. 287-278 - paper originally given in 1938.

⁷⁶ Allan, *Moscrop family interviews*, 2002.

⁷⁷ Note with songs sent by Sydney Nicholson of Carlisle, London, VWML, Broadwood Collection, LEB/5/351.

song collecting trip to Carlisle. One might imagine that singing for a well-known London composer would have been a daunting proposition for Carruthers, although he was in fact well used to performing in public: he had come third in the folk song competition Nicholson had organised in Carlisle earlier that year with a song called 'Jemmy's Grey Meer' (a song I have been unable to trace) and is also mentioned in the 1906 'Bleckell Murry Neet' brochure, as Mr John Carruthers of Wigton, who won fourth prize in the 'Bleckell Murry Neet' singing competition.⁷⁸ The following year Nicholson made an appeal in the local press for singers to come to him so that he could 'take down the airs from their singing', adding that even 'uncultured singers' were welcome, 'as by far the greatest number and the finest examples of folk songs have been obtained from people who knew nothing of the art of music.' It is no surprise to find that no one came forward.⁷⁹

A rather different scenario pertained in the south of the county, where we find Anne Gilchrist visiting the homes of singers in the Kirkby Lonsdale area between 1905 and 1911, although there is little detail about the performances in Gilchrist's notes. The three singers are Kirkby Lonsdale blacksmith John Collinson, carpenter James Bayliff of Casterton and Mrs Carlisle from nearby Barbon.⁸⁰ The youngest of the singers, John Collinson, was 47 and is described by Gilchrist as a man with a fine ear for a song, who had 'some education' as well as a keen competitive streak - he had sung three songs in the 1904 Folk Song Competition at Kendal, gaining second place with 'In Yon Land' and two songs in 1906, but his greatest triumph came in 1905 when he won first prize with 'The Wa'ney Cockfeightin' Song', a song learnt especially for the occasion from his wife's father. James Bayliff, aged 70, sang what

⁷⁸ Songs collected at Carlisle, London, VWML, Vaughan Williams Collection, Book 11.

⁷⁹ 'Folk Songs in Cumberland', *Carlisle Patriot*, 28 June 1907.

⁸⁰ 'Notebook of words to songs', London, VWML Gilchrist Collection, AGG/8/5 Vol III and 'Tunes to songs collected in Westmorland', AGG/3/59.

Gilchrist considered to be the oldest song - 'A Brisk Young Sailor Courted Me', learnt as a boy from a fellow workman in Burton-in-Kendal - and she notes how delighted he was to hear the tunes of his songs played back to him on the piano in his cottage. Mrs Carlisle, at age 88, was Gilchrist's oldest singer and one of the few examples of a woman singer we have from that time. She is described being 'an aged dame of spirit and character', who sang a ballad learned from her mother, 'Admiral Hosier's Ghost'. Gilchrist reports that she was both surprised and impressed that a tune could be written down as well as the words: "Can you prick it down?" she said - using the old word [...] and turning to the friend who was with me she said admiringly "Isn't she clever?" Mrs Carlisle also appears to have been rather jealous of Collinson, on hearing he had also been singing for Gilchrist: "Does John Colli'son know this or that one?" she demanded ... In one case I replied "Well he does, but he says he doesn't care to sing that class of song." She retorted with scornful asperity, "Y'don't have to be too pertickler when y' get among them old Cumberland songs!" This seems an odd remark given that Mrs Carlisle lived in Westmorland and Gilchrist's article about the singers is entitled 'Some Old Westmorland Folk-Singers', but seems to be a reference to the two Anderson songs that she sang: 'Sally Gray' and 'Barbary Bell'. In the article Gilchrist makes a point of saying that her singers in the Kirkby Lonsdale area were not illiterate: 'a rather higher degree of literacy would have ranked them with the makers of some of the ballads they sang', and in fact we know that the enterprising John Collinson did indeed write songs, poems and articles, although Gilchrist's interest was really only in the songs they had learnt from an older generation.⁸¹

⁸¹ Gilchrist, 'Some Old Westmorland Folk-Singers'. pp.4-8.

It is also possible to class as folk song collectors Robert Forrester and Norman Alford who, some fifty years later, persuaded some of the regulars at the Plough Inn, Wreay and the Crown and Thistle in Rockcliffe to perform for the microphone, and likewise Peter Kennedy, who recorded singers for the BBC in Ambleside and Lorton a few years later, however these are considered in the next section on audio recordings.

Recordings and broadcasts

Recordings for archive purposes, for private collections, for commercial purposes or for BBC recordings and broadcasts all involve singers performing in a highly structured setting, hence their inclusion here in formal performance settings.

The 1953 Carlisle recordings, subsequently released as *Pass the Jug Round* in 1982, may appear to be recorded informally in the pubs at Wreay and Rockcliffe but were in fact staged performances. Of necessity the recordings had to be quite disciplined, as the recording method - recording directly on to acetate 78rpm discs - did not allow for any editing so each singer stood and introduced himself and his song, some in a rather stilted way. They were all 'grand old lads' Forrester and Alford had befriended on fishing and sketching trips and who, Forrester admits, initially took some persuasion to sing: 'It was a bit of a struggle at first to get the old singers going. However, Norman with his tin whistle and myself with the mouth organ invariably set their feet tapping and opened the way to some fine singing, usually with a preliminary "Thoo young lads disn't want to hear sek oald fashinned stuff as this ..."'⁸²

Peter Kennedy, meanwhile, on his song collecting and recording expeditions for the BBC Folk Music and Dialect Scheme was able to record on a slightly more

⁸² Sue Allan, personal correspondence, 5 July 1982.

informal basis, having state-of-the-art tape equipment for the recordings. His trip to Cumbria in August 1959 saw him visit around a dozen different places, making recordings at Ambleside, Cockermouth and Lorton. His expenses claim reveals the regularly purchasing of batteries for his portable tape recorder and most days, under the heading of ‘Entertainment: various’ small sums ranging from 4s.3d and £2.10s. are paid out – to Mr Moyland, Mr Ward, Mr Harker, Mr Dalton, Mr Nicholson and Mr Bainbridge – which are presumably payment by way of rounds of drinks in the pubs in which he recorded.⁸³ Kennedy’s subsequent commercial recordings, released on his Folktrax as, for example, *The Sound of his Horn - Lakeland Songs and Customs* feature a mix of speech and singing. The singers do not, however, give formal introductions to their songs, as in *Pass the Jug Round*, but are interviewed by Kennedy. The contrast between his extreme R.P. and the local accent is very striking, and makes the occasion seem rather forced and unnatural, although the singers seem pleased to be able to boast about their local heritage.⁸⁴

The later 1950s and early to mid 1960s also saw increased interest in local traditions and music by regional broadcasters, including the BBC Northern Service (based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne), who broadcast some distinctive programmes incorporating folk music. Producer Richard Kelly regularly used local performers like Joe Wallace, Robert Forrester, fiddler Alf Adamson with his Border Square Dance Band and dance caller Bill Cain for his programmes *Barn Dance* and *Voice of the North*, recorded in various venues across the north and *Voice of Cumberland*, *Merry Neet* and *Tally Ho*, all recorded in Cumberland.⁸⁵

⁸³ *Expenses Claim for Collecting Trip*, August 1959, Caversham, Peter Kennedy files.

⁸⁴ *The Sound of his Horn - Lakeland Songs and Customs*, Folktrax Recording, FTX-120 (Gloucester, 1959). R.P., or Received Pronunciation, sometimes referred to as BBC English, being the type of speech favoured by the upper and middle classes in the early to mid-twentieth century.

⁸⁵ *Voice of Cumberland*, Caversham, BBC Written Records Archive, N25/40/1, *Voice of the North*, N25/39/1.

Joe Wallace, the popular local entertainer from Carlisle who led the St James Singers and St James Quartet, featured on many *Merry Neet* and *Barn Dance* programmes produced by Kelly: BBC records include 102 contracts from January 1951 to November 1963. Robert Forrester took part in fewer programmes - seven in all - recorded in village halls at Low Hesket, Caldbeck and Great Orton as well as Carlisle City Hall with 'Horn of the Hunter'/'Cumberland Waltz', 'Hark, Hark Away', 'Bewcastle Two Step' all mentioned in the programme reports. He was, however, generally to be found playing harmonica rather than singing: 'Dick Kelly would not allow me to sing, having a voice like an explosive corncrake, and he was very properly concerned for his mikes – but to me the tunes were just as lovely'.⁸⁶ All the performers were paid for their performances, with Wallace getting nine or ten guineas plus travelling expenses, and Forrester five or six guineas per programme.⁸⁷

When it comes to television, whose production costs are much higher than radio, regional broadcasts to include folk music seem few and far between, although the BBC did broadcast two TV series of *Barn Dance* in 1963 and 1964 from their Manchester studios. Wesley Park, then a teenager living in Carlisle, took part as a member of The Stanwix Dancers and The John Peel Dancers, led by Bill Cain, but the only song material was provided by nationally known performers like The Ian Campbell Folk Group, The Spinners and Val Doonican.⁸⁸ Regional ITV programming came to Cumbria in September 1961 with Border Television which, in its early years, produced quite a number of local music programmes including, from the mid to late 1960s a folk programme entitled *One Evening of Late*. This programme featured nationally known names like Julie Felix and popular Scots duos Robin Hall and

⁸⁶ Robert Forrester in letter to Sue Allan about 1953 recordings, 5 July 1982.

⁸⁷ BBC Artist File: Joe Wallace, Caversham, BBC Written Records Archive, N18/3899; BBC Artist File: Robert (Bob) Forrester, N18/1215/1; Letter to Sue Allan Wigton. from Robert Forrester, 9 April 1982.

⁸⁸ BBC TV 'Barn Dance' Programme Scripts, CASCAC, Wesley Park Archive, DX2206.

Jimmie Macgregor and The Corries, and although local performers like The Runaways and singer Angie Marchant also performed occasionally, no local material seems to have been performed, even by Angie.

The advent of BBC local radio in 1973 brought more opportunities for folk music performance: it was after all a cheap and cheerful and largely royalty-free option for the broadcasters. BBC Radio Carlisle's 1973-1975 series *Folk Workshop* featured a number of performers keen to highlight their local heritage with songs like 'Sally Gray' and 'Upsiaridi' (Angie Marchant), 'The Fall of the Leaf' (Paul and Linda Adams) and new songs about Cumbria such as Robbie Ellis's 'T'Milken' and Mike Donald's 'Settle to Carlisle Railway'. Unlike the performers for the BBC Northern Service programmes ten years earlier however, none of the singers were paid.⁸⁹

Folk clubs and festivals

Marshall and Walton note that: 'There can be little doubt that the half-century before 1914 saw the disappearance of much in Cumbrian rural culture and tradition, although remnants of it survived well into the present [i.e. twentieth] century, and witnessed its partial replacement by systems of activities which were more urbanised and more continuously organised.' This, it seems to me, characterises very well the burgeoning of folk clubs and festivals in the period following the second folk revival, from the 1960s and discussed in this section.⁹⁰

In his 'Lore and More' column in *The Cumberland News* of 12 June 1987, local history writer Norman Nicholson reflects on the recent 'revival of interest in folk music', comparing it with the similar revival in Carlisle some 60 years earlier, notable for the concert featuring Jeffrey Mark's arrangements of local songs. The recent

⁸⁹ The station was re-named BBC Radio Cumbria in 1982. Some of the *The Folk Workshop* performances were collected together by Paul Adams of Fellside Recordings into an LP record, *The Best of BBC Radio Carlisle's Folk Workshop*, Fellside Recordings FE002, in 1976.

⁹⁰ Marshall and Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change*, p. 159.

revival Nicholson refers to was actually one spanning the period from the mid 1960s through to the 1980s, when folk clubs were established throughout the county, when towns in the county from Kendal to Whitehaven, Workington to Carlisle, Keswick to Cockermouth, Egremont to Dalton-in-Furness could boast of at least one folk club. At weekly meetings, usually in the function room of a pub, the clubs featured paid professional folk acts, while local musicians and singers provided 'floor spots' in return for free entry and sometimes free drinks. The heyday of such clubs was undoubtedly the 1960s and, as a *Guardian* article of 1963 observed, '...although there are definitely political elements on the left, there are also elements of "Tin Pan Alley"', the fare of a typical evening, 'carefully garnished by an easy flow of wisecracks and clowning', and of course with beer oiling the proceedings.⁹¹ This certainly squares with my own experience of clubs, both in Cumbria and in London - where I was often one of the 'floor singers' - where MCs tended to have a humorous style of delivery, cracking jokes and performing comic songs, while many popular touring professionals also had an easy humour, perhaps to leaven the performance of more serious songs, whether new or traditional. There also gradually developed a clear division amongst audiences between those preferring 'contemporary folk' and those preferring traditional songs, with some clubs specialising in one or the other.

In Cumbria, folk clubs seem to have thrived: the *EFDSS Lakes and Furness District Newsletter* in 1968, although mainly concerned with folk dancing (listing 26 dance clubs, most in Westmorland) also details seven folk clubs - at Maryport, Cockermouth, Workington, Millom, Dalton-in-Furness, Keswick and Windermere. Most of these continued into the 1970s although the North West folk magazine *Tamlyn*, which ran from 1973 to 1978 and covered Lancashire and Cheshire as well as

⁹¹ Peter Preston, 'An Emerging British Folk Music Scene', *The Guardian*, 15 October 1963.

Cumbria, only features the programmes of those at Egremont, Kendal and Dalton-in-Furness. However advertising was in fact the responsibility of the clubs' organisers themselves, not the magazine, so the listings probably do not reflect the number of clubs still active but simply those most pro-active at marketing.⁹²

As noted in Chapter 2, by the late 1970s the folk 'scene' had changed again: folk clubs were less prevalent but larger scale folk concerts and folk festivals more so - perhaps reflecting the increasingly professionalised nature of the sector. By way of contrast, informal folk sessions in pubs began to be more popular, offering more opportunities for participation - particularly for the increased number of musicians, most playing Irish music. Some of the earlier sessions of the 1970s though were more song-orientated and, as previously noted, when it came to local songs there was no better place to hear them than the Friday evenings sessions at The Sun Inn at Ireby, hosted by Angie Marchant .

The picture today is different again. In professional and semi-professional music circles, we find country and western style singer-songwriter Denis Westmorland touring the county playing a range of sentimental songs about the Cumbrian countryside, alongside some hunting songs, while professional community musician Dave Camlin writes Cumbrian songs for 'folk choirs' and Mike Willoughby adapts local material and writes new Cumbrian songs and tunes for south Cumbrian folk-rock band Striding Edge. Informal folk music sessions in pubs remain popular, although none now seem to feature Cumbrian songs and but instead attract many more instrumental players than singers. Meanwhile, the Cumbrian folk festival scene has burgeoned, those at Ireby, Castle Carrock, Dent and Kendal, for example, featuring a wide range of mainly professional folk acts with the only festival to consistently

⁹² Article entitled 'Clubs', *EFDSS Lakes and Furness District Newsletter*, (Kendal, 1968); 'Folk Club Listings', in *Tamlyn*, (Blackpool, 1975).

feature Cumbrian music being Furness Tradition at Ulverston, founded in 1997/8. This festival's stated aim is 'promoting awareness of, and participation in the folk music traditions of Cumbria, especially Furness', although even here it appears that it is the tune and dance traditions of the county which prevail, with local songs appearing to be little-known, still less performed.

(c) Expressions of regional identity and staged authenticity

What we might call the event of performance involves a singer, a song, a time and place. The singer's repertoire is a reflection of the performer and their taste, but in general the material is chosen to suit a particular performance setting, and during any performance the response of the audience might also affect a song's rendition.⁹³

Elbourne notes that folk performers sing with 'marked individuality', each responding to their audience at least as much as a professional singer and each also having a 'consciousness of audience appeal'. Singers too, of course, 'show varying degrees of skill, talent, taste and imagination', like John Collinson and Micky Moscrop, taking pride in their performances and 'practising to perfect their art'.⁹⁴

As already mentioned, the songs sung at informal gatherings like hunt and shepherds' meets were not necessarily 'folk songs'. As Gammon notes of the great Sussex singer Henry Burstow (1826–1916), who provided Lucy Broadwood with many folk songs, his vast repertoire consisted of a diverse range of songs, and there is evidence to show that such diversity in repertoire mirrors that of a great many English

⁹³ Fay Hield, *English Folk Singing And The Construction of Community*, unpublished PhD thesis (Sheffield, 2010), p. 53, 63; Roger Elbourne, 'The Question of Definition', *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, 7 (1975), p. 20.

⁹⁴ Roger Elbourne, *Music and Tradition in Early Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840* (Woodbridge, 1980), p. 104; A.L. Lloyd, *Folk Song in England* (London, 1967), p. 70.

rural singers of his day, and since.⁹⁵ Likewise, many Cumbrian singers would have had wide repertoires, but chose to sing only certain songs in certain contexts: ‘folk songs’ if they were requested, dialect songs at appropriate gatherings, hunting songs and songs on farming themes at hunt and shepherds’ meets, for example. I personally would always choose to sing a hunting song at a hunt sing-song, but would probably avoid performing one in a folk club, to avoid upsetting those members of the audience who held strong anti-hunt views – an increasing number over the past forty years. There are also questions of ownership: certain songs might always be performed by particular singers: I can remember hearing at a Blencathra hunt and shepherds’ meet I attended in the 1980s someone calling out, ‘Let’s have Esme with ‘Horn of the Hunter’!’, as it was ‘his’ song, just as at the Ireby sessions in the 1970s if no one would have dared sing ‘Sally Gray’ if Angie Marchant was present as it was ‘her’ song.

Song in general, as a form of communication, is ‘capable of reinforcing cultural values and beliefs’, renewing and strengthening group identity as the performance of those songs favoured by hunters, shepherds or ‘folkies’ shows, reinforcing the coherence of such groups.⁹⁶ Partly this is because such songs conjure up what might be called a ‘spirit of place’ which these communities can identify with, their performance essentially being therefore a performance of regional identity. A good example, albeit viewed through the rose-tinted glasses of the ex-patriot, is given by John Graham in 1910, in his preface to *Dialect Songs of the North*:

‘Whenever I hear “Sally Gray” or “John Peel” the picture is clear before me of the Cumberland homes where I heard them, and the singers who first sang

⁹⁵ Vic Gammon, ‘Not Appreciated in Worthing?’ Class Expression and Popular Song Texts in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *Popular Music*, 4 (1984), p.7.

⁹⁶ Kermode, *The Shepherd's Voice: Song and upland shepherds of 19th and early 20th century Lakeland*, p. 51.

them in my hearing. “Dalston parish”, where Sally lived, and “Caldbeck churchyard”, where John Peel lies, are places that I have visited in the spirit of the pilgrim. These pretty spots endear these lovely songs, and the songs justify the pilgrimage. In the same mood, I have walked the eleven miles from Shap to the inn at Mardale, not on the great day of the year, but to see the place where the shepherds sing the old songs and “like them best pure,” i.e. without accompaniment.’⁹⁷

Another point worth highlighting is that many Cumbrian folk song performances, from quite an early date, seem to have occurred in mixed class contexts – examples include the Mardale hunt meet described earlier in this chapter and the ‘Cumberland Free and Easy’ in London, as reported on by Carlisle journal *The Citizen* and described in Chapter 4.⁹⁸

What I call ‘performing regional identity’ became a major element of the mid-twentieth century performances of amateur and semi-professional singers Robert Forrester, Micky Moscrop, Billy Bowman, Joe Wallace and others, who show via the contexts they performed in, and sometimes in their own words, that they felt they were consciously performing songs asserting their Cumbrian identity. Later twentieth-century folk performers like Wesley Park, Stuart Lawrence, Angie Marchant, Paul and Linda Adams - and me - were also keen to assert our local identity and Cumbrian ‘difference’, consciously seeking songs which fostered a sense of ‘Cumbrian-ness’ to promote to a wider audience.

More recently it has been instrumentalists who have sought to do this, with Cumbrian tunes forming a large part of the repertoires of semi-professional performers like Greg Stephens of The Boat Band, the Old Friends Band and Carolyn

⁹⁷ Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North*. Preface.

⁹⁸ K.I., ‘Cumberland Free and Easy in London’. The venue was the Crown and Sugarloaf public house in Fleet Street.

Francis and Mike Willoughby who play with the band Striding Edge. Carolyn is a folk fiddler and teacher, who first came to the Lakes as a child and moved to the county permanently in 1997, partly because of her interest in the tunes of the Lakeland fiddlers, which she uses to teach her Lakeland Fiddlers group in Kendal, and partly in order to play with Striding Edge, who specialise in Cumbrian tunes and songs. Locally distinctive tunes have particular significance for her, she says, because of her love of the Lake District and her belief that ‘...landscape affects the way we think and look at things, and that’s why urban music is different.’⁹⁹ Fellow band member, singer and melodeon player Mike Willoughby, who grew up in Windermere, also credits the appeal of Cumbrian tunes and songs to his feeling of connection with the landscape: ‘It’s music with spirit, distilling the spirit of the landscape.’¹⁰⁰ In order for this connection of tunes and songs with place - whether deemed fanciful and Romantic or the expression of a deeply felt conviction - to be shared and communicated, requires a common repertoire others can recognise, and hopefully participate in if they are able. Within the hunting community a collective repertoire of songs still holds to a certain extent, but outside of that there is no widely known common repertoire of local songs.¹⁰¹

When performances of regional identity become more self-conscious they may then fall into the category of ‘staged authenticity’, where local songs and tunes become staged performances for a specific audience.¹⁰² A good example of self-conscious performance is that of singer and musician Robert Forrester, who helped organise the 1953 recordings at Rockcliffe and Wreay pubs, where each singer introduces themselves in a strong local dialect, including Forrester himself. Shortly

⁹⁹ Telephone interview with Carolyn Francis by Sue Allan, 24 November 2007.

¹⁰⁰ Telephone interview with Mike Willoughby, ed. by Sue Allan, 24 November 2007.

¹⁰¹ Dave Russell, 'Abiding memories: the community singing movement and English social life in the 1920s', *Popular Music*, 27/1 (2008), pp. 131-132.

¹⁰² MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings'.

before the release of the recordings as *Pass the Jug Round* in 1982 Robert was interviewed on BBC Radio Cumbria, a remarkably revealing interview, less for the content of what he said but for the way that he said it - not in the rich north Cumbrian dialect he used in 1953, but in Standard English. When he introduces himself before playing 'The Cumberland Waltz' with Norman Alford he says, 'Ma naame is Robert Forrester an' ah was born in Cumberlan'. The Border waltz which me friend Norman Alford an' me are goin' to plaay has come doon ta me with the fiddle me gran'faither used to play it on. As far as we know this tune has nivver been published, and nea printed tune is knawn te either of us.' This stands in stark contrast to the 1982 radio interview: 'My grandfather I never knew, as he died before I was born, but my father, he inherited tunes and songs from my grandfather, who was a great fiddler in the Bewcastle area. And of course I learned them at my daddy's knee sort of thing, you see. I always heard these tunes - from the time I was a two, three, four year old. I've always had a great love of these old tunes.'¹⁰³

It must be remembered that although Forrester and Alford clearly did have a love of local folk songs, they were far from being the unsophisticated purveyors of a music tradition they had 'inherited' as Forrester seems to imply. Although both were 'local lads' they were also trained graphic designers with a keen interest in local history, and active members of the Lakeland Dialect Society. On the 1953 recordings each of the other performers, like Forrester, introduces themselves and their song in a far broader dialect than they tend to use for singing – which in Micky Moscrop's case hardly any dialect at all - while Joe Thompson's 'Will that dee for ye?' ('Will that do for you') at the end of his introduction gives the distinct impression that the recording was a stage-managed performance, which indeed it was.

¹⁰³ Robert Forrester interviewed by Irene Mallis, BBC Radio Cumbria *Open Air* programme, 4 June 1980 .

The meaning of a performance is not, however, entirely inscribed in its stage-management or its context, but is different for every performer - and indeed for every one who listens. Some of the other singers who took part were indeed members of the hunting and farming communities, or had jobs which took them around the county like Micky Moscrop in wildly disparate roles as tweed salesman and pest control officer, or Tom Brodie the water bailiff and Harvey Nicholson the railway plate-layer. Their personal 'agendas' was not necessarily one of performing regional identity: for Joe Thompson, who sang 'Joe Bowman', 'The Horn of the Hunter' and 'The Welton Hunt' his motivation is clearly a love of hunting, while for Micky Moscrop it was his sheer delight in performing.¹⁰⁴ My conclusion is that even while the performance of regional identity is undeniably influential for some singers, for others in the range of different performance contexts examined in this chapter it is less important. These singers do not necessarily share a common experience and give the same meaning to their performances; what they share is simply their common participation – and a repertoire of songs capable of being invested with a diverse range of meanings.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Various, *Pass the Jug Round*, VT142CD (2002); original acetate recordings, Carlisle, CASCAC, DX938/1

¹⁰⁵ Victor Turner and Edward M. Bruner, *The anthropology of experience* (Urbana & Chicago, 1986), p. 11.

Chapter 6: CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG: SOME CONCLUSIONS

One of the lacunae of traditional music scholarship has been the lack of systematic study of folk song performance across a ‘culturally distinct geographical area’, with a few honorable exceptions, such as Ian Russell’s studies of the area around Sheffield.¹ On the other hand, a number of folk song scholars make the point that it should not be assumed that there is necessarily one unified local identity or ‘local singing tradition’, as there are likely to be a number of communities, each with their own interest in any given geographical area. In Cumbria, as we have seen, such ‘communities’ include shepherds, farmers, hunt supporters, those with antiquarian interests, Dialect Society members and ‘folkies’.² This study of Cumbrian folk song and its singers over the past two hundred years, primarily a social history of popular culture with elements of ethnography and a little musicology, has sought to address this gap in knowledge. What has emerged are a number of discrete and overlapping repertoires shared amongst certain groups, in total comprising a remarkably ‘heterogeneous assemblage’, but one with a strong regional focus.³

(a) The songs

This eclectic corpus includes many songs adopted and adapted from a range of disparate sources, including borrowings from other forms of popular music performance as well as songs derived from interaction with street literature - chapbooks, songsters and broadside ballads – and produced by a wide range of writers

¹ Michael Pickering, 'Recent Folk Music Scholarship in England: A Critique', *Folk Music Journal*, 6/1 (1990), p. 50; Ian Russell, 'Stability and Change in a Sheffield Singing Tradition', *Folk Music Journal*, 5 (1987); Ian Russell, 'The Hunt's Up? Rural community, song and politics'.

² Michael Pickering and Tony Green, *Everyday Culture: Popular Song and the Vernacular Milieu* (Milton Keynes, 1987), p. 40; Steve Roud and Julia Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* (London, 2012), p. xxi.

³ The term used by Pickering and Green, p. 12.

and composers. The interplay between commercial popular entertainment and oral folk song traditions over the past 350 years has been extensive, via the London theatres and pleasure gardens as well as glee clubs, travelling theatres, semi-professional singers in concert parties through to the music halls, as well as ballad singers at inns, fairs and festivals.⁴ As Gammon observes, we have inherited an oversimplified view of the social usage of songs, classifying folk songs as belonging to the rural working class while the urban working class had its music hall songs and the middle-class had parlour ballads, when in fact there was a great degree of interrelatedness.⁵ The importance of the role of print in particular is highlighted in the Cumbrian corpus by the sheer volume - 294 of the 515 songs - which have at some stage appeared as broadsides or in chapbooks, songsters and sheet music, including for example such broadside classics as 'The Dark Eyed Sailor' and 'The Green Bed'. By way of contrast, a distinctive regional repertoire unique to Cumbria also appears within the corpus, largely comprising hunting songs and songs in dialect.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the various folk music 'revivals' have tended to create their own canons of repertoire, style and views of what makes an 'authentic' folk song. Both collectors and performers have often had a very selective view of the past, constructing a narrative of the songs and their history to fit their own world-view. In Cumbria, songs have been written and have evolved, selected for performance, publication, recording or broadcast over the past two hundred years by numerous local writers, publishers, historians, professional musicians, song collectors and performers including, for example, Robert Anderson, John Stokoe, Anne Gilchrist, John Graham, Jeffrey Mark, Lakeland Dialect Society members, local folk

⁴ Steve Gardham at Traditional Song Forum seminar 'Where did the Oral Tradition get its Songs?', Cecil Sharp House, London, October 2009.

⁵ Vic Gammon, 'Not Appreciated in Worthing?' Class Expression and Popular Song Texts in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Popular Music*, 4 (1984), p. 19.

music performers and the hunting community. Historically, certain folk songs such as ‘D’ye Ken John Peel’ and ‘Canny Auld Cumberlan’’, framed as ‘popular re-presentations of the past’, appear to have served to bond communities, especially expatriot Cumbrians indulging in nostalgia for their home county.⁶ The Cumbrian corpus being so heavily weighted towards regionally specific dialect and hunting songs may be one of the factors leading to its having less currency nationally today, given that Cumbrian dialect is understood by so few, while fox hunting has become more socially unacceptable and is now illegal.

Hunting songs do have a special place in the local canon, and hunt communities have a long tradition of writing and adapting songs, albeit that is on a much reduced scale today. Interviews with huntsmen and hunt followers and recordings of hunt singing sessions have highlighted the importance of the songs to them, with some hunts even publishing song compilations. In the years leading up to the 2005 Hunting with Dogs Act, which banned fox-hunting, hunting songs were held up as an example of rural Cumbrian heritage under threat, in much the same way that Victorian and Edwardian collectors warned that the nation’s folk song heritage was disappearing. It is ironic then to find that those early collectors gathered so few hunting songs, as they failed to venture outside their charmed circle of middle-class musical friends when they visited the county.

Today, the fell packs are still active in pursuance of ‘legal hound activity’ - following an aniseed trail across the fells - although they go out less frequently, and have fewer opportunities for socialising and singing after hunt meets, which they are in any case reluctant to publicise for fear of attracting the attention of hunt saboteurs.

⁶ Alonso, ‘The Effects of Truth: Re-Presentations of the Past and the Imagining of Community’, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1/1 (1988), p. 47. ‘Imagined community’ here might include Cumbrian society as envisaged by the ex-patriots of the Cumberland Benevolent Institution, for example, or the founders of the Lakeland Dialect Society.

Other social factors, pre-dating the ban, had already affected hunts' social life: for example packs no longer stay away for a week at a time in neighbouring valleys, formerly an opportunity for big social gatherings, while the introduction of drink-driving laws in the late 1960s in a rural area where there is little, if any, public transport has seriously affected socialising in pubs after hunt meets.⁷ Edmund Porter, joint master of the Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhounds, admits that hunting songs have a lower profile today, but says they still occasionally feature at one or two shepherds meets or after an agricultural show, when 'one or two of our lads might have a bit of a sing.'⁸

Dialect songs have also historically been important as an expression of regional identity, not necessarily because of their content but because of their overt signification of a sense of place. Although Wordsworth is silent on the topic of the 'peasant and labouring class writers' of the area I believe, like Mevyn Bragg, that vernacular literature is as much a part of the story of Cumbria as 'more exalted writing' - and by extension vernacular or folk music.⁹ Most of the writers in the vernacular, the dialect poets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, celebrate the lives of Cumbrian 'peasants' and their bucolic festivities, populated by a cast of characters including dancers, fiddlers and singers - because music, as Robert Anderson's mentor Thomas Sanderson tells us, 'generally composes a part of the education of a Cumbrian peasant'.¹⁰ It is tempting to think that such lively narrative

⁷ Sue Allan, discussions with Edmund Porter, Master of Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhounds 2007, and with Barry Todhunter, Huntsman of Blencathra Foxhounds 2009.

⁸ Sue Allan, Interview with Edmund Porter, Joint Master and Huntsman of Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhounds, 2007

⁹ Scott McEathron, 'Wordsworth, Lyrical Ballads, and the Problem of Peasant Poetry', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 54/1 (1999), p. 4; *Melvyn Bragg's Travels in Written Britain*, ITV series (2008), episode 1: 'The North'.

¹⁰ Thomas Sanderson, *The Poetical Works of Robert Anderson ... to which is prefixed The Life of the Author ... and an essay on the character, manners and customs of the peasantry of Cumberland; and observation on the style and genius of the author by Thomas Sanderson* (Carlisle, 1820), p. xlvi. The term 'peasant' tends to be a problematical one for us today. For a full discussion of its long and

poems as Anderson's 'Bleckell Murry Neet' or Lonsdale's 'Th'Upshot' comprise a faithful alternative social history, describing rural life and times, but we need to remember that both poets are writing retrospectively about a past viewed through the prism of both nostalgia and Romanticism. Both too were familiar with writing for publication and, more pertinently, for performance in London's popular music theatre: Anderson at Vauxhall Gardens and Lonsdale at Sadlers Wells.

Dialect literature has today largely lost its significance in regional culture, although once had a powerful ability to connote ideas of the north, of Cumbria and of a simpler and more stable past - even if we believe this to be what might be called 'contrived realism'. It may also convey a sense that, like its speaker, what is perceived as a working-class dialect is direct, natural and honest, in contrast to what could be seen as the superficiality and affectness of upper-class language.¹¹ In actual fact a mix of different classes seems to have been involved in the production and consumption of dialect verse. Its core writers and audience came generally from the working- and lower-middle classes, although it is important to note that dialect would have been spoken by a wide range of middle-class people. The membership of regional dialect societies meanwhile was largely middle- and upper-class, and Anderson included fulsome dedications to members of the local gentry in his books, evidently feeling it necessary in order to get his work accepted by 'polite society'.¹² Retrospectively trying to define dialect production in class terms is problematic however, as the chief protagonists – the writers, publishers and printers – were often 'cross-class' or 'artisan

complex history, see Arthur Kneve and Vic Gammon, 'English folk song collectors and the idea of the peasant', *Folk Music Journal*, 11 (2016).

¹¹ Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination* (Manchester, 2004), p. 120; Taryn Hakala, 'A Great Man in Clogs: Performing Authenticity in Victorian Lancashire', *Victorian Studies*, 52 (2010), pp. 400,407; Larry McCauley, "'Eawr Folk": Language, Class, and English Identity in Victorian Dialect Poetry', *Victorian Poetry*, 39/2 (2001), pp. 293, 297.

¹² Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination*, pp. 121, 123; Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class* (Cambridge, 1991) p. 201.

class' auto-didacts. Class strata seem, to a degree, somewhat flexible and porous in the north Cumberland of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in any case. Similarly, the boundary between city and country was less sharply drawn than might have been supposed: as E.P. Thompson puts it: 'The urban culture of eighteenth-century England was more 'rural' ... while the rural culture was more rich.'¹³

Of all the dialect writers, it is Robert Anderson, the Carlisle-born artisan and poet who is outstanding in terms of a legacy of song, represented by 37 songs in the corpus. It can be argued that all dialect is to a degree a performance, and indeed many 'laboring-class poets' found outlets on the stage especially in Lancashire and Tyneside music hall, but what made Anderson pre-eminent as a song-writer whose work continued to be performed into the twentieth century seems to have been that he was himself a competent musician and performer.¹⁴ The same could also be said of genteel Susanna Blamire, who also had a reputation as an amateur performer, perhaps indicative that song, above all, provided the perfect 'interface of local and polite language'.¹⁵

Anderson's language is however notable for being only a lightly marked form of dialect: moderated to some extent, probably so that it could be understood by as wide an audience as possible in order to sell as many copies of his books or songs as possible. In just the same way, Robert Burns used 'stage Scots' - a hybrid language using linguistic stereotypes like 'lass', 'lad', 'guid', 'auld' and 'lang', widely-known and used in eighteenth century 'Scotch songs' - so that he could gain a wider audience

¹³ John Marshall and John Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the Mid-Twentieth Century: a Study in Regional Change* (Manchester, 1981), p. 49. R.S. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1991), pp. 445-446.

¹⁴ John Goodridge, 'Some Rhetorical Strategies in Later Nineteenth Century Laboring-Class Poetry', *Criticism*, 47/4 (2005) p. 534; Nicholas Coupland, 'Dialect Stylization in Radio Talk', *Language and Society*, 30 (2001), p. 348. Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class*, p. 220.

¹⁵ Michael Baron, 'Dialect, Gender and the Politics of the Local: The Writing of Ann Wheeler', in Tony Pinkney, Keith Hanley, Fred Botting, *Romantic Masculinities* (Keele, 1997), p. 50.

in England.¹⁶ This does beg the question, however, of why Anderson's songs in modified Cumbrian dialect (barring a few published in *The Universal Songster*) have not achieved national recognition and popularity on the scale of Burns. The answer may lie in the relative qualities of the two poets' work - Anderson often aims to emulate Burns but does not always succeed - or in the fact that Burns's oeuvre is deemed a national one, whilst Anderson's is merely regional, and therefore little published outside that region.

(b) Mediation: the role of self and others

Steve Roud recently observed that we are more inclined today to recognise the foibles of both the early folk song collectors and the mid-century collectors/revivalists Ewan MacColl and A.L. Lloyd, and accept that they were doing their best by their own lights. Foregrounding their own theories and agendas, rather than first of all discovering what is there on the ground in order to provide the evidence on which to base theories, has proved to be problematic, however, although did lead on to a second folk revival which was far more of a mass movement than the first.¹⁷ The main protagonists of the two main folk music revivals seem to have had quite a selective view of the past, with revivals tending to create their own canons of repertoire and style as both collectors and performers constructing a narrative of the songs and their history to fit their own world-view. In Cumbria, the folk songs identified have been historically selected for performance, publication, recordings and broadcasts repertoire over the past two hundred years by a fairly small number of local writers, publishers, historians, professional and amateur musicians, collectors and performers, notable amongst them Robert Anderson, John Stokoe, William Metcalfe, Mary

¹⁶ Broadhead, 'A Sprinkling of Stage Scots: Burns, Linguistic Stereotypes and Place', pp. 21-25.

¹⁷ Atkinson, *Revival: genuine or spurious?*, p. 152.

Wakefield, Anne Gilchrist, Sydney Nicholson, John Graham, Jeffrey Mark, Lakeland Dialect Society members, hunt singers and local folk music performers – including myself.

In the period from around the 1920s to the early 1950s, and with a few notable exceptions, there seems to have been little collecting done nationally.¹⁸ There may be a number of reasons for this, including the fact that most of the earlier collectors had died, the classical music establishment's interest in folk music waned, the inevitable disruptions caused by the Second World War, and the ubiquity of popular American music via cinema, radio and recordings. It was not until after the war, in the early 1950s, that the work of MacColl and Lloyd and the BBC – in its Folk Music and Dialect Recording Scheme and *As I Roved Out* radio programmes - stimulated a further folk music revival.

In Cumbria meanwhile, hunting songs were undoubtedly still being sung, and the activities of singers and dialect enthusiasts, in Carlisle in particular, did much to keep dialect songs alive. Their activities included, for example, the 1927 concert of Jeffrey Mark's dialect song arrangements, the 'Cummerlan' Neets' which became annual events from 1933 and the founding of the Lakeland Dialect Society in 1939. Then, in the 1950s, we find Tom Gray, Robert Forrester and Norman Alford all keen to document Cumberland music and dialect for posterity and recording local singers at Rockcliffe and Wreay, while the BBC's Northern Service began including local songs and singers in its regional programming. The role of Robert Forrester is particularly interesting, as he was both a performer and a mediator and someone who described himself as part of a continuum of Cumbrian peasantry, having 'fallen heir' to songs

¹⁸ The composer E.J Moeran and American folklorist James Madison Carpenter are notable exceptions, who both collected in the inter-war years. See: Vic Gammon, 'One hundred years of the Folk-Song Society', in Ian Russell, David Atkinson, *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation* (Aberdeen, 2004), pp. 14-27.

learned from his father ‘and his father before him’. Like the Victorian and Edwardian collectors before him, he wrote of being afraid that the songs would ‘sink back into the earth from which they came, submerged at that time by “Dreaming of a White Christmas” and all this sort of stuff’ which led him to be very selective in what he recorded, hoping to ‘sort the treasure from the trite’ by choosing only music that was ‘refreshing, and traditional, and of the earth.’¹⁹ Ironically, some of the songs he recorded such as the broadside ballads ‘Lish Young Buy-a-Broom’ and ‘The Keach in the Creel’ and ‘The Birds’ written by W.C. Robey in 1882 were in fact commercial productions: ‘commercial song taken over by the people’ as Richard Hoggart might express it.²⁰

Some twenty years later, in the early 1970s, another revival came about in the context of a burgeoning folk scene and the apparent dearth of local material to perform, prompting a new generation of young performers to seek out local songs and also write their own. Some of these songs were broadcast by BBC Radio Carlisle (from 1982, Radio Cumbria) and featured on commercial recordings produced by Paul and Linda Adams’ Fellside studios in Workington.²¹ My own decision to return to the county after a period away was taken at this time - drawn back by a renewed sense of attachment to the region and the excitement of finding songs which could express this. Despite enthusiastic commitment to local song, and dance, throughout the 1970s, however, only a handful of Cumbrian folk songs - ‘Horn of the Hunter’, ‘Joe Bowman’ and ‘The Beagle Inn’, new songs ‘Settle to Carlisle Railway’, ‘The Witch of Westmorland’ and ‘The Keswick Song’ for example - seemed to gain popular currency, and even fewer dialect songs - ‘Sally Gray’ and ‘L’al Dinah Grayson’

¹⁹ Robert Forrester, correspondence to Sue Allan, 9 April 1980.

²⁰ Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of working-class life with special reference to publications and entertainments* (London, 1957), p. 162.

²¹ Singers included Cumbrian amateur and semi-professional folk performers Paul and Linda Adams, Angie Marchant, Neil Bettinson, John Reay, Robbie Ellis, Tom Thompson, and the author.

perhaps. It was probably the case that fewer singers were comfortable using dialect, as by the 1970s it was less prevalent in general use, as well as in song.

With the benefit of hindsight and the guidance of recent scholarship we can see how the reception and understanding of folk song has changed down the years, and I recognise that my own understanding has too. My personal involvement had been first as a performer looking for local songs to perform, and I believe I came to the field with my own agenda: one of fierce regional pride, of nostalgia and home-sickness, and fully buying into the Romantic vision of the early folk song collectors - believing like Robert Forrester that I was uncovering the last remnants of my own heritage of song. I don't think I was alone in this: many of my generation post in the 1970s, 'the sickly, neglected, disappointing stepsister to that brash, bruising blockbuster of a decade' (i.e. the 1960s), felt the same - certainly those at Ireby.²² Whether this was because of a sense of disenchantment following the heady days of Sixties 'revolutions', or simply because we had reached the age of 'nesting' - pairing up, getting married, buying houses and having babies, I am not sure. Whatever the reason, no one was any longer looking to change the world, those of us who went to the Ireby sessions had largely settled upon traditional music as our area of interest, and then became more focused on home and community as we began to explore the local history and heritage for ourselves.

Like Forrester, I confess that I too was selective in my choice of folk music heritage. When re-presenting the original 1953 acetate recordings I'd found in the county record office as *Pass the Jug Round*, for example, I chose to omit two well-known and popular songs which I felt were hackneyed, clichéd folk club staples and not sufficiently 'local': 'Jim the Carter's Lad' sung by Joe Thompson, and Micky

²² Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York, 2001), p. 1. Although focusing on America, Schulman's insights seem equally applicable to Britain in the 1970s.

Moscrop's 'The Wild Rover'. Only later did I learn that 'Jim the Carter's Lad' was a widespread and popular broadside ballad just as worthy of inclusion as 'The Keach in the Creel' while, to my shame, my attitude to 'The Wild Rover' mirrored that of the Edwardian collectors, who largely overlooked the song because of its immense popularity.²³ In my defence, I was under pressure at the time to reduce the number of tracks to fit a standard LP, although there is no excuse for not highlighting the omissions in the sleeve notes.

On a more positive note, through being both local and being singers ourselves both Forrester and I were able to connect with singers and informants who might otherwise be chary of passing on songs, stories and information to strangers. This was the case too with Carlisle-born musician Jeffrey Mark who, when he visited singers and musicians in his home village, felt it better to be recognised as 'Leila Bell's son, the blacksmith's dowter' rather than a professional composer from London, because it qualified him as an 'insider'.²⁴ An insider perspective brings with it the danger of familiarity breeding contempt, as attested by my tendency to bias in song selection, akin to Scottish folklorist Alexander Campbell's position of being 'an insider when he needed to establish rapport; but when it came to the underlying goal of his project [...] became a commentator on and arbiter of his own culture.'²⁵ Rather than being simply a participant-observer, I find I have to a limited extent re-shaped and re-presented songs: a case of the 'ethnographic subjectivity' of one 'caught up with and loyal to a tradition'.²⁶ Russell's view on this, with which I would concur, is that objective impartial research is largely a myth achieved by hiding a vital part of the evidence –

²³ The song's roots lie in a seventeenth century alehouse ballad written by one Thomas Lanfiere: Brian Peters, 'The Well-Travelled 'Wild Rover'', *Folk Music Journal* 10 (2015), p. 612, 617. Roud and Bishop, *The New Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, p. 453.

²⁴ Mark, 'Recollections of Folk-Musicians', p. 180.

²⁵ Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music'*, (Cambridge, 2007), p.173.

²⁶ James Clifford, 'On Ethnographic Self-Fashioning: Conrad and Malinowski', in *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge, Mass, 1988), . p. 94.

ourselves. In the interests of achieving a deeper understanding we need to acknowledge that ‘the shadow we cast is of our own making and our ethnographies should reflect it’, as he strikingly expresses it.²⁷ I see my role now as being one of a guide to this repertoire of song, signposting others to it but acknowledging that performers and scholars - myself included - change the songs and the perception of them by others, each of us with our own perspective on their history. And that is fine, provided there is transparency and one’s approach clearly defined.

One of the things which has emerged from studying the role of the collectors in Cumbria is that while some very good songs were brought into the spotlight in the early twentieth century, at the Folk-Song Competitions in Kendal and Carlisle, the number of folk song enthusiasts and collectors was very small. We find just a handful of mostly professional musicians identifying and working with a tiny pool of singers, most of them middle-class, amateur musicians apart from the Kirkby Lonsdale blacksmith John Collinson. Meanwhile a whole raft of other material - hunting songs, along with some dialect songs and a sprinkling of popular songs of the day - was being sung by a wide range of working people. These other songs remained undocumented because the competition organisers and judges failed to tap into popular rural gatherings like hunt suppers, shepherds’ meets, sheep clippings, kurn (harvest) suppers, ‘merry neets’ and the song competitions held at country shows and fairs. As Lyn Murfin has noted: ‘Cumbrian singers and their audiences eschewed the distinction drawn by the Edwardian collectors between ‘folk-song’ and other, in their view, less worthy forms of popular song, and the competitions which were sometimes held at sports days made no such value judgement.’ The annual song competition at Egremont Crab Fair in 1920, for example, awarded prizes in four categories: ‘best

²⁷ Ian Russell, ‘Working with Tradition: Towards a Partnership Model of Fieldwork’, *Folklore*, 117 (2006), pp. 26-27.

sung Scotch song (for lady competitors only), £1; best sung old hunting song, 10/-; best sentimental song, 5/- and best comic song 5/- and a box of kippers.²⁸

(c) Questions of authenticity and invention of tradition

Questions of ‘authenticity’ and ‘invention of tradition’ frequently become entwined in debates about the nature of folk music, often expressed as polar opposites. However I believe that this is a false dichotomy in relation to folk music, as there are frequently aspects of both present since ‘the tradition’ tends to evolve and be continually re-shaped. A more nuanced view of the concept of invention of tradition might be that there is never pure invention, as the building blocks are generally taken from something which already exists. It is difficult to look at folk song through the prism of ‘invented tradition’ when performers’ interpretations of songs generally build on what has gone before with songs constantly evolving and traditions re-shaped over time.

In *The Invention of Tradition* Hobsbawm claims that the very appearance of movements for the defence or revival of traditions is indicative of a break in custom, whereas ‘where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented. On the face of it folk music revivals seem to fit this model, especially when song collection is believed to be a rescue mission as the songs are dying out, leading to revivals in practice which could then be termed ‘invention of tradition’.²⁹ However, as the evolution of ‘John Peel’ has shown, it depends where you are drawing the line between ‘the old ways’ and innovation and change over time. Customs, songs and tunes regarded as ‘traditional’ appear always to evolve and move forward, reflecting perhaps a more complex relationship between continuity and evolution, tradition and

²⁸ Murfin, *Popular Leisure in the Lake Counties*, p. 175.

²⁹ Trevor Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 7-8.

change.³⁰ I believe, like David Atkinson, that tradition expresses a relationship between the past and the present ‘which is both continuous and discontinuous, or both real and imaginary...’³¹ On this basis any search for ‘authenticity’ is mistaken, given that folk songs take so many different forms, militating against the simplistic binary opposition of authenticity/invented tradition: invention can then be framed as a vital part of the tradition.

Another basis for differentiating between ‘authentic’ and ‘non-authentic’ traditions has sometimes been held to be the level of consciousness participants hold for the aspect of tradition with which they are involved. From my own experience of hunt singers and insights gleaned from the production of the *Pass the Jug Round* recordings, I would say this is very far from the case, and agree with Fay Hield that the idea that participants in so-called authentic traditions ‘have no perspective on the tradition they are a part of is, at best, naïve’.³² It is also a myth that there are category and qualitative differences between ‘genuine’ folk singers and those ‘tainted’ with self-conscious professionalism: any singer who performs is both audience-conscious and audience-responsive. As Bert Lloyd eloquently put it: ‘The idea that somehow all folk music performers are on the same footing, and that folk song is something produced as naturally as a bird sings on the bough is a myth. Traditional performers no less than the performers of fine-art music show varying degrees of skill, talent, taste and imagination.’³³ In the Cumbrian context in particular, as we have seen, singers like John Collinson and Micky Moscrop were recognised as performers of note across large parts of the county. To further complicate the issue, with dialect

³⁰ Elbourne, *Music and Tradition in Early Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840*, p. 112.

³¹ David Atkinson, ‘Revival: genuine or spurious?’, in Ian Russell and David Atkinson, *Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation* (Aberdeen, 2004), p. 148.

³² Fay Hield, *English Folk Singing And The Construction Of Community*, unpublished PhD thesis (Sheffield, 2010), pp. 59-60.

³³ A.L. Lloyd, *Folk Song in England* (London, 1967) p.70.

songs in particular there may well be an element of ‘staged authenticity’, as the use of dialect tends to give an impression of authenticity when in fact it is almost invariably ‘performed’ – as will be discussed below.

(d) A distinctive regional voice

As Angus Winchester has observed, Cumbria - ‘The ‘Lake Counties’ of Cumberland, Westmorland, and that part of historic Lancashire which lay north of the sands of Morecambe Bay’ - are perceived both in academic literature and popular imagination as ‘possessing a strong regional identity.’³⁴ Studies of constructions of the North by Dave Russell and Rob Shields reveal that ‘outsider perceptions’ of the North have often tended to focus on either ‘the Industrial North’ or the ‘wild Romantic North’ - the latter being most pertinent in relation to the Lake District. I would hold that ‘insider’ perceptions of northerners probably mirror this to a degree, albeit perhaps in a more nuanced way. It should be noted, however, that such regional distinctiveness does not necessarily imply being isolated from influences from other places and certainly in terms of music, from the eighteenth century onwards, songs and tunes percolated into and circulated within the region via travelling musicians, the broadside press, ballad singers and theatre groups. While Wordsworth opened up a particular view of the Lake District, the folk songs sung in Cumbria reflect and refract other aspects of the area and its society over time.

The region’s strong identity seems to be reflected in the marked place-attachment exhibited by many Cumbrians both to actual geographical locations and to an ‘imagined community’ of Cumbria, comprising nostalgic images derived from childhood memories. It has been said that wherever you experience empathy with a

³⁴ Winchester, 'Regional Identity in the Lake Counties: Land Tenure and the Cumbrian Landscape', p. 29.

place you will feel at home, and for me that empathy was magnified significantly at the Ireby folk sessions, which moulded my musical interests and gave me the opportunity to learn and perform local repertoire.³⁵ Those evenings represent, for me, a perfect example of what Doreen Massey calls ‘the event of place’: where multiple trajectories, experiences, attachments and associations meet within a geographical location at exceptional moments (and I am aware of others who feel the same about Ireby).³⁶ Through my existing affection for my home landscape and feelings of connection with the people with whom I had developed ties of friendship and music, Cumbria became for me a significant place: a locus of attachment, emotional bonds, and community.³⁷ Being able to express some of this through song is not, I believe, unique to me, as many of those singing at shepherds’ and hunt meets as well as local performers of folk music have expressed similar feelings of place-attachment through Cumbrian song, as well as some concern that local song traditions – hunting songs for example – are gradually dying out.³⁸

Dialect has, historically, been very important in foregrounding regional identity particularly in the period 1780 and 1815, when regional poetry flourished as a cultural form, representative of what has been called the ‘emblematic interaction of Romantic aesthetic with pride in regional identity’.³⁹ Poets like Josiah Relph, Ewan Clark and Susanna Blamire were all self-conscious users of dialect as they also wrote

³⁵ Jane Howarth, 'In Praise of Backyards: Towards a Phenomenology of Place', *The Thingmount Working Paper Series on the Philosophy of Conservation*, 96-06 (Lancaster University, 1996)

³⁶ Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London, 2005), p. 141.

³⁷ Per Gustafson, 'Roots and Routes: Exploring the Relationship between Place Attachment and Mobility', *Environment and Behavior* 33 (2001), p. 672.

³⁸ When asked during the course of a conversation (10 October 2015) whether the hunting song tradition was dying out, singer and former whipper-in of the Blencathra Foxhounds John Parker, was unequivocal in his reply: ‘It’s not dying. It’s dead.’ However the Joint Master of the Blencathra, Jim Cox (20 February 2016) was more optimistic, in believing that there were still a few people intent on keeping the singing tradition going.

³⁹ Mike Huggins, 'Popular Culture and Sporting Life in the Rural Margins of Late Eighteenth Century England: The World of Robert Anderson, "The Cumberland Bard"', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 45, 2 (2012), p. 194.

in Standard English in other contexts, Blamire switching codes frequently between Standard English, Cumbrian and Scots, while John Stagg, Mark Lonsdale and Robert Anderson all published in Standard English first before going on to use dialect, most often to write about the Cumbrian society of the day and, more often, of their youth.⁴⁰ Anderson in particular is a complex figure: artisan, auto-didact, musician, singer, poet and composer of some talent, he espoused aspects of both rural and urban culture, celebrating the social life of rural north Cumberland in a far from naïve way, always with a knowing glance around for possible market for his poetry and songs.

The influence of antiquarianism and Romanticism continued right through to the twentieth century, with ‘educated Northern middle-class men, characteristically teachers or booksellers, took to collecting and printing local ballads and songs ... for a voracious middle-class local reading public, fond of music, who also read and even wrote them themselves in local newspapers.’⁴¹ In this latter category we find the later Cumberland dialect poets like Alexander Craig Gibson, John Richardson and the Denwoods, all of whom used dialect to assert their regional identity and then in the early to mid-twentieth century we find both amateur and semi-professional singers - John Collinson, Robert Forrester, Micky Moscrop, Billy Bowman and Joe Wallace et al - effectively performing regional identity. Whether they were using the power of dialect to invoke and conjure up for audiences the real Cumbria or some ‘imagined community’, it was reassuringly home. As John Graham expresses it in his introduction to *Dialect Songs of the North* in 1910: ‘We yearn nowadays for the simple life, and if we cannot have it in the large cities where most of us live, we at

⁴⁰ For information on the eighteenth century poets in particular see Stephen Matthews, *Josiah Relph of Sebergham, England's First Dialect Poet* (Carlisle, 2015), p. 250.

⁴¹ Katie Wales, *Northern English: A Cultural and Social History* (Cambridge, 2006), p. 29.

least have the pleasures of memory if we store up songs and visions of rustic simplicity.⁴²

(e) In conclusion

Folk music is continually re-fashioned and constantly re-interpreted in the light of new performances and new research as singers and sources are discovered, assessed, compared and re-evaluated in the light of other research. This is what I have tried to do in this study, which has revealed a Cumbrian corpus of song – a heterogeneous repertoire certainly, but with a seam of regionally distinctive songs embedded within it - performed by singers who are far from being artless carriers of tradition, but creative musicians moulding a repertoire.⁴³ The historical study of popular music, ‘requires careful analysis, a detailed knowledge of context, and a degree of sympathy and imagination’, according to Vic Gammon, and I hope and believe I have brought all of these to the table in this participant-observer thesis. I am aware, however, that there is also a ‘strand of advocacy’ running throughout, coming as I do from the position of believing that Cumbrian songs need to be better known and performed more widely.⁴⁴ Like Ian Russell, I am also a great believer in making the results of research available to a wider public, organising, indexing and depositing relevant material that has come to me in both national and local archives (as with the Stuart Lawrence and Wesley Park collections, now in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library and Carlisle Archive Centre respectively), as well as publishing

⁴² Larry McCauley, "'Eawr Folk": Language, Class, and English Identity in Victorian Dialect Poetry', *Victorian Poetry*, 39, 2 (2001), p. 297; John Graham, *Dialect Songs of the North* (London, 1910).

⁴³ George Revill, 'Vernacular culture and the place of folk music', *Social and Cultural Geography*, 6/5 (2005), p. 700.

⁴⁴ Vic Gammon, 'Problems of Method in the Historical Study of Popular Music', in *Popular Music Perspectives: Papers From the First International Conference on Popular Music Research, Amsterdam, June 1981* (Gothenburg & Exeter, 1982), pp. 16 - 31, 29. Russell, 'Working with Tradition: Towards a Partnership Model of Fieldwork', pp. 20-21.

both in print and via audio recordings (*Pass the Jug Round*, for example) where possible.

Because the field has been so little studied there is certainly **potential for future research**, perhaps in the form of in-depth analyses of folk song in other areas of the country. Within Cumbria, this thesis has thrown up a number of possible themes for further study, including: a review of the cheap print trade in the county and the broadside singers and sellers who distributed its wares; further exploration of the BBC archives, which hold more information on the use of folk music in regional broadcasts and a biographical study of Robert Anderson, incorporating his diary entries and contemporary reports in the local press as well as a much more wide-ranging study of Cumbrian folk music, to include Lakeland fiddlers, dancing masters and dance traditions, which is long overdue.

As I hope I have shown, songs which foreground Cumbrian identity have remained significant for singers and audiences over many years, with the late twentieth century seeing continual re-fashioning and re-creation by performers like Wesley Park, Stuart Lawrence, Angie Marchant, Paul and Linda Adams, John Reay, Greg Stephens, Carolyn Francis, Mike Willoughby - and myself. It is a body of songs which has never really achieved the recognition it deserves as a distinctive regional repertoire, possibly because of a lack of critical mass, although as there have been so few other regional studies it is difficult to compare. Traditional songs, many of whose roots go back a couple of hundred years, have proved robust enough to withstand translation into new, re-shaped forms which are also proving capable of reaching wider audiences via recordings and the internet. They are what anthropologist Greg Dening calls 'cargo' from the past, carrying forward into the future 'not only the meanings of their origins, but also translated into something else over the years they

survive', serving also to bind people together 'into a sense of community through time'.⁴⁵ Whether this will continue to be the case is open to question, given the relative decline of both Cumbrian dialect and hunting in recent years, and with the acceptability of singing hunting songs in folk music circles being more proscribed. Some local songs do still get an airing in their traditional settings, however, and in folk music circles singers are also writing new material based on Cumbrian themes, so I remain optimistic.

⁴⁵ G. Denning, 'A Poetic for Histories', in *Performances* (Chicago, 1996), pp. 45. The way that songs and singing can build community cohesion is examined in Hield, *English Folk Singing And The Construction Of Community*, pp. 64-65.

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APPENDIX 1: CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

Key to database fields:

ACFC no.	Allan Cumbrian Folk Song Corpus number
ROUD no.	Roud Folk Song Index number
PLACE	Song's origins or where collected, within modern the country of Cumbria: C Cumberland W Westmorland Y Yorkshire L Lancashire A few songs have been included from just over the county borders where these have a strong Cumbrian connection: N Northumberland S Scotland
TITLE	Titles listed alphabetically, with alternative titles in brackets
TEXT ONLY OR WITH TUNE	Indication of tune, if known, from text-only source of song
No. SOURCES	Number of sources from which songs have been identified
METHOD OF TRANSMISSION	The medium through which a song has been transmitted, indicative of how it has been transmitted: M manuscript P print R audio recording Tx broadcast (transmission) S direct from singer B indicates broadside, chapbook or songster
LANGUAGE	D song in local dialect, otherwise Standard English is assumed. A song by Robert Anderson
AUTHOR	KA indicates there is a known author
SUBJECT	Main themes of songs are divided into subject areas as follows: A&S Amatory and sentimental BB Border Ballad - relating to tales of Scottish Borders C Children's Dr Drinking F Farming H Hunting Hist Historical I Industrial Mar Maritime Non Nonsense Pl Place-centred song, listing and/or celebrating places in Cumbria R&M Religious and moral Misc Unclassified subject matter
Style	Co Comic song
DATE	Versions/sources of songs are listed in date order, with date of composition, if known, in brackets

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

ACFSC no.	Roud no.	PLACE	SONG TITLE	TEXT ONLY OR WITH TUNE	No. SOURCES	METHOD OF TRANSMISSION Type Broadside	LANGUAGE Dialect/Anderson	AUTHOR	SUBJECT	Style	DATE
1	22377	W	Admiral Hosier's Ghost	text, music	2	MP		KA	Mar		1905, 1942
2	23537	W	Ah Tek's Effer me Feyther	text	1	P	D		A&S	Co	1905
3		C	Ah Yance went to Lorton (also Cumberland Courtship and Not)	text, audio	6	PRS	D	KA	A&S	Co	1873, 1920, 1940, 1950s, 1957, 1968, 1970s, 2006
4	8819	C	Ah'll Dance on top of Hur	text	1	M	D		A&S		c1930 & 1970s
5	12972	CW	A-hunting we will go	text, audio	2	PR		KA	H		(1730-50) 1969, 1971
6	V5665	W	Allen Brooke of Windermere	text	1	P	B		PI		c1850
7		C	Ann o' Hethersgill	text, music (tune: Jack o' Hazelidene)	2	P	D	KA	A&S		1858, 1980
8	7546	W	Another Year	reference audio	1	M			R&M		c.1909 (poss hymn 1869)
9		C	Anthony Chapman	audio	1	R			H		2000-2009
10	16699	W	Appleby Fair (1)	audio	1	R			F		1973
11		W	Appleby Fair (2)	text, music	1	P		KA	F		1985
12	60	W	Apron Strings	text, music	3	M			A&S		1905, 1909
13	83	C	Archie of the Cawfield	text	1	P			BB		1870 c. Child
14	13218	C	Arise, Daughter Ellen	text, music (verse 1)	1	M			C		1911 c.
15		C	Armstrong and Musgrave	text	1	P	B		BB		1866
16	453	W	As Joseph was a-walking	reference, music	1	M			R&M		(+1723) 1909 c.
17	9218	W	At Last Peace has Come	audio	1	R			A&S		1968
18		C	Auld Jobby Dixon	text, music	1	P	D	KA	Dr	Co	1928

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

24	148	W	Banks of Sweet Dundee	audio	1	R	B							1965
25	2521	C	Barbary Bell	text (tune: John Anderson my Jo)	6	P	B	D	A	KA	A&S	A&S		1805 on, 1810-60, 1907, 1909, 1980
26		C	Barley Broth	text (tune: Crowdy)	4	PTx		D Scot		KA	A&S	A&S		c1780 (1842), 1928, 1961, 1980
27		C	Barrel of Beer, A	text, music	3	MPTx					Dr			1920, 1958 JW, 1960s
28	V9813	C	Bashful Wooer, The	text, music	2	PTx	B	D	A	KA	A&S			1910, 1958
29	23538	W	Beadle of the Parish, The	reference	1	P	B				R&M	Co		1905
30		C	Beagle Inn, The (Hunting Song & Chorus)	text, music	7	MP RTx				KA	H			pre 1914, 1958, 1960s, 1970, 1971, 1976, 2000-9
31		C	Beautiful Eden - Song	text, music	1	P				KA	PI			1900 c
32		C	Beautiful Hunting Day	audio	1	R					H			2000-2009
33		CL	Beautiful Lakeland (* version Bonny Lakeland?)	text	1	M					H			1965-70, 2000-9
34	8128	C	Beautiful Swaledale	audio	1	R					H			1962
35	23630	W	Because I Love You So	text, audio	1	PR	B				A&S			1965 (1915)
36		C	Because I was Shy	text, music, audio	3	PTx		D			A&S	Co		1915, 1958, 1960s
37		W	Beggar's Will, The	reference	1	P	B?				R&M			1906
38		C	Bella Ramsey's Lad	text	1	P	B				A&S			1978 (18??)
39	1514	Y	Benjamin Bowmaneer	text, music	3	MP					Nons			1931, 1933, 1959/2003
40		C	Best Beer in the Land	text (chorus only)	1	M				KA	Dr			c1973
41		C	Best in the World	audio	1	R				KA	PI			2000-2009
42		C	Bewcastle	audio	1	R				KA	PIF			1990
43		C	Bewcastle Hunt Song	text, audio	2	PR					H			1971 (1950s?), 2000-2009
44	849	C	Bewicke and the Graeme (as Graeme and Bewicke)	tune only	3	MP					BB			1866, 1892, c1905
45	9255	C	Billy Bowman's Band	audio	1	R				KA	PI			1959

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

46	158	W	Billy Taylor	music	1	M	B				A&S	1909
47	1863	C	Birds upon the Trees, The	audio	1	R				KA	A&S	(1892) 1953, 1981, 2001, 1968, 2006
48	3832	L	Black Bottle, The	text, audio	1	PR	D	D		KA	Dr	2010
49	1529	C	Bleckell Murry-Neet	text, tune	9	P		D	A	KA	Dr	1805, 1840s, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1907, 1980, 1983
50		C	Blencathra Foxhounds at Wythburn	text	1	P				KA	H	1971
51		C	Blencathra Hunt	audio	1	S					H	1985
52		C	Blithe Jwohny Graeme	Text, music (tune: Andro wi' his Cutty Gun)	1	P	D		A	KA	A&S	1980
53		C	Bloody Sandale	text (tune: version of Bloody Orkney)	1	MS				KA	PI	c1972
54	358	L	Bold Reynolds	text	1	M					H	1965-70
55		L	Bolton Gill Hunt	text	1	M					H	1965-70
56	15104	C	Bonnie Annie	text	1	M					C	c191
57	1656	C	Bonnie Black Hare, The	text (tune: March Boys)	1	M	B				A&S	c1930 & 1970s
58	745	C	Bonnie Green Fields of the Farmyard, The	text	1	M					F	c1930 & 1970s
59	45	C	Bonnie Maisry	audio	1	R	B				A&S	1976
60		C	Bonnie Rose of July, The	text	1	M	B				A&S	c1930 & 1970s
61	989	W	Bonnie Wee Wi(n)dow	reference	1	P	B				A&S	1906
62	293	W	Bonny Bonny Boy	text, music	2	MP	B				A&S	1905
63	664	W	Bonny Bunch of Roses	audio	1	R	B				Hist	1965
64		C	Bonny Lakeland	audio (tune: Horn of the Hunter)	2	R, web				KA	H	1969, 2000?
65	16568	C	Bootle Fell Hunt	audio	2	R					H	1954, 1969
66		C	Border Marching Song	audio	2	TxR				KA	PI	1961, 1970?
67		C	Borrowdale Collie	text	1	P					H	1971 (1885)
68		C	Borrowdale Johnnie	audio	1	R	D	A		KA	PI	2007
69	3961	C	Boy and the Mantle, The	text	1	P	B				BB	1866
70		L	Braeside Hunt 1960	text	2	P				KA	H	1960, 2011
71	522	W	Brave Nelson	text, music	2	M	B				Mar	1942

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

72		C	Breezy St Bees	audio	1		Tx	D		PI	1961
73	476	W	Brennan on the Moor	text	1		M	B		R&M	1906, 1909
74	867	W	Brewer Laddie, The	text, music	1		P	B		A&S	1891
75		C	Brimmer Head	text, music, audio	5		MP R			H	1963, ?, 1971, 2000- 9, 2011, 1933
76	509	C	Brisk Young Damsel who I wed down in Dent (Nutting Girl)	text	1		P	B	D	A&S	
77	60	W	Brisk Young Sailor Courted Me, A	text, music	8		MP	B		A&S	1906, 1909
78	379	CY	Broom Green Broom	text, music	1		P	B	D	A	1892
79		L	Broughton Mills Hunt	text	1		M			H	1965-70, 2010 (1984)
80	9257	CS	Brundenlaws, The	audio	1		R			BB	2000
81		C	Buck o' Kingwatter, The	Text, music (tune: The Breckans o' Branton)	1		P	B	D	A	1980
82		C	Bullgill's Bugged Marra	text (tune: Rising of the Moon)	1		S		D	I	1973?
83	5348	C	Bunch of Violets	audio	1		S			A&S	1985
84	1653	W	Bunch of Watercresses, A	reference	1		P	B		A&S	1905
85	8198	C	Bush Aboon Traquair, The	text	1		P	B	D	A&S	1933
86	8246	C	Candy Man	audio	1		R	B		R&M	1970?
87	2523	C	Canny Cumberland (Canny Cumberlan')	text, music, audio (tune: The Humours of Glen or Bleckell Murry Neet)	9		MP RTx		D	A	1805 on, 1903, 1907, 1958, 1963, 1960s, 1979, 1980
88		W	Capital Wife	reference	1		P	B		A&S	1905
89		C	Carlisle - Pride of the Roman North	audio	1		R			KA	2000-2009
90		C	Carlisle Canal	reference	1		S			KA	c1973
91		C	Carlisle Fair	audio	1		R				1968
92	964	C	Carlisle Gaol	text	1		M		D	R&M	c1900
93	553	C	Caroline and her Sailor Bold	audio	1		R	B		A&S	1978
94		L	Cartmel Fell Hunting Song	ref, text, music	5		M			H	1903, 1904, 1926, 1965070, 1971
95	2552	CW	Chickens in the Garden	audio	1		R	B		KA	1974 & 1975

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96	287	C	Christmas Day in the Morning	Text, music (tune: Christmas Day in the Morning) audio	1	P	D	KA	R&M	(1883)
97		C	Clifton	text	1	R		KA	Hist	1976
98		L	Clifton's Hunting Song	text	2	P			H	1971 (1911), 2011
99		C	Clipping Song	reference	2	P			F	1876, 1944
100		W	Cock Hagg hunting-song	reference	3	MP			H	1926, 1942
101		C	Cockermouth Sports & Picnic	reference, text + 1 verse & chorus	1	P	D	KA	PI	1940
102		C	Cockfeight, The	Text, music (tune: Jenny's Bawbee) audio	1	P	D	KA	F	1980
103		C	Cocks they Crew, The (Albert Edward Spence (or Bents?))	audio	2	S			F	1970s, 1985
104	3508	C	Collier's Lament, The (Parton Collier's Lament)	text, music, audio	3	PR			I (A&S)	1952, 1975, 1976
105		L	Come Gather Round the Fire Boys	text	1	P		KA	H	2011
106		L	Coniston Foxhounds	text	2	P		KA	H	1971, 2011
107		L	Coniston Pack, The	text	2	P		KA	H	1971 (1954), 2011
108		L	Coniston, The	text	1	P		KA	H	1971
109	167	CS	Copshawholme Butcher, The	audio	2	R	B		A&S	1953, 1981, 2001, 1998
110	9139	CS	Copshawholme Fair (also as Coupshawholme & Copshawholm Fair)	text, audio (no tune specified but usually The Wild Hills of Wannie)	8	PR		KA	PI	1868 (1830), 1891, 1953, 1981, 2001, 1957, 1960s, 1970, 1978, 1998
111	1867	C	Corby Castle (also known as Wetheral Green)	text, music	6	R		KA	A&S	(1864), 1880, 1953, 1981, 2001, 1959, 1960s, 1983, 2006, 2010
112		L	Country Coortin', A	text, music	1	PR	D		A&S	
113	12510	C	Country Hirings	Text	2	MR	B		F	c1930, 1976
114		C	County Driller Man, The (The Driller's Song)	text (tune: popular Irish)	1	MS		KA	PI	c1972

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115		C	County of Cumberland	audio	1	R					KA	PI		2000-2009
116		C	Courting Kitty	text, music	2	M	B	D				A&S		1964, 1965
117		C	Groglin Mill	text	1	P		D				PI		1933
118		C	Groglin Watty	tune only	1	M						BB		early 1900s
119	2637	C	Cumberland Carol (The Rich Farmer of Cheshire)	text, music	1	M	B					A&S		1960s & 1950
120		CWL	Cumberland Hunt, The	text	1	P					KA	H		1971 (1970)
121	V4621	C	Cumberland Nelly . Or, The North country lovers (also Cumberland Laddy & There was a Lass from Cumberland)	text (tune: The Lass that Comes to Bed with Me)	7	P	B					A&S		1662-91, 1664-79, 1719, 1859, 1866, 1897, 1976
122		C	Cumberland Protest Song, The (Cumberland's Troubles)	text (tune: Mardale Hunt)	1	MS					KA	PI		1969
123		C	Cumberland Way	audio	1	R						PI		1970?
124		C	Dacre Valley	audio	1	R					KA	PI		2000-2009
125		L	Dalesfolk's Hunting Song	text	1	M						H		1965-70
126	2439	C?	Dance for thy Daddy	text	1	M	B					C		c.1930 & 1970s
127	265	C	Dark Eyed Sailor (Fair Phoebe and her Dark-eyed Sailor)	text, music (rec)	3	MR	B					A&S		1968 (1906), c.1930, 1970
128		C	Dick Glendinnin	Text, music (tune: Pattie's wedding)	1	P	B	D	A		KA	A&S	Co	1980
129	4012	C	Dick o' the Cow	text, music	2	MP						BB		1866, c.1900
130	584	CW	Dido Bendigo (Dido, A New Hunting Song)	text, music	9	MP RS	B					H		mid 18c, 1961, 1960s, 1965, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1985, 1990(1948), 2000-9
131	1861	CWL	Doctor Mack	text	3	MP						H		1965-70, 1971, 1990
132	8534	C	Donald Cooper	text	1	M	B	D				A&S	Co	c.1930 & 1970s
133	13	CS	Dowie Dens of Yarrow	audio	2	R						BB		1978
134		C	Down Borrowdale	audio	1	R					KA	PI		2000-2009

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135	1736	C	Down in the Fields Where the Buttercups Grow	audio	1	R						F		1969
136	1113	W	Down, Down in Our Village	reference	1	P	B					A&S		1905
137	1862	CWL	Drink puppy, drink	text, audio	5	PR					KA	H		1959, 1969, 1971, 1985, 1990
138		CL	Duck Hunt, The	text	3	PR						H		1969, 1971, 2011
139		W	Early, Early	reference	1	P	B					A&S		1906
140		C	Edward, The	text	1	M					KA	Mar		1975?
141		C	Egremont Crab Fair	text, audio	3	MP R		D				PI		1960s?
142		C	Elizabeth's Birthday	reference	3	MP		D	A		KA	A&S	Co	1907, 1980
143		W	Ellen of Windermere	text	1	P	B					A&S		c1835
144		C	Empty Fields	audio	1	R					KA	F		2000-2009
145	9290	W	England I love you	audio	1	R	B					A&S		1968
146		C	English Beer	text, music (Tune: The Low Backed Car)	1	P		D			KA	Dr		1980 (1863)
147		CL	Eskdale & Ennerdale Song	text, music, audio	4	MP R					KA	H		1965-70, 1969, 1971, 1976
148		C	Eskdale Foxhounds, The	text	1	P						H		1971
149	9281	C	Eskdale Show	audio	1	R						H		1959
150	848	WC	Fall of the Leaf, The (or Autumn Leaves)	text	7	MP R	B					R&M		1905, 1909?, 1942, 1968, 1976, 1978
151		C	Fangs Moss Hunt December 8 th 1931	text	1	P						H		1971
152		W	Farewell to Longsleddal	text	1	P						PI		1902, 1903
153		C	Farewell to the Fells	audio	1	R					KA	PI		1978
154		C	Farewell to the Miner	audio	1	R					KA	I		1975
155	408	C	Farmer's Boy	text, audio	3	MR	B				KA	F		1962, 1968, 2000-9
156	2135	C	Father's Old Cwoat	audio	2	RTx	B	D				A&S	Co	1961, 1970?
157	3161	C	Favourite Song: Aw wish your murther wad cum	audio	1	P	B	D				A&S	Co	1890c (J Dyer)
158		C	Feckless Wully	Text, music (tune: Crowdy)	1	P		D	A		KA	A&S	Co	1980

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159		C	Fells of Cumbria	audio	1	R					KA	PI		2000-2009
160	226	C	Female Drummer	audio	1	R	B					A&S		1978
161	V6934	C	Fickle Northern Lass, The	text (tune: There was a lass in the North Country) text, music, audio	1	P	B					A&S		1866
162	580	CWL	Fine Hunting Day (We'll aw ga a-hunting to-day/ Hunting Day/The Morning looks charming)		15	MP R					KA	H		1916, 1959, 1964, 1965-70, 1968, 1969, 1971 (1925), 1975, 1978, 1990, 2000-9,
163		C	Finish them off a treat	audio	1	R					KA	PI	Co	1971
164	1140	CWL	Fox and the Hare, The	text, audio	1	PR						H		1971
165		L	Fox Hunt. September 11th 1899	text	1	P						H		1971 (1899)
166	131	CWL	Fox, The	text	1	P						H		1971
167	8190	CS	Fray of Suport, The	text	1	P						BB		1866
168		W	Ga Wi' Me T'Farleton	ref only	1	P		D				F		1905
169		C	Gamekeeper and Poacher	text	1	M	B					F		1968 (1906)
170		C	Gatesgarth Hunt, The	text	1	P						H		1971
171	16571	C	Gay Young Spark, The	audio	1	R	B					A&S		1954
172	1536	CY	Geordie Gill	text (tune Andro w' his Cutty Gun)	6	MP		D	A		KA	A&S		1805 on, 1892, 1906, 1906 (1795 etc), 1907, 1983
173	241	C	German Clockwinder, The	audio	1	R	B					A&S	Co	1975 (1860)
174	17774	C	German Musician, The	text	1	M	B?					A&S	Co	c1930 & 1970s
175		C	Gilsland Hunt Ball, The	text	1	P						H		1971
176		C	Glenridding, where the Rhododendrons Grow	audio	1	R					KA	PI		2000-2009
177	141	W	Golden Glove, The	text, music	3	M	B					A&S		1909, 1968
178	122	W	Golden Vanity, The	text, music	1	M	B					R&M		1909
179		C	Gone Far Away – in memory of Willie Irving, Huntsman to Melbreak	text	1	P					KA	H		1971 (1966)
180	1039	CWY	Gossip John	text, audio	6	PRS	B					H		1975 (1719, 1728, 1859), 1975, 1980,

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181	276	W	Green Bed, The	text, music	3	MP	B					A&S		1990, 2007
182		C	Grisedale Hunt 1930s	text	1	P						H		1909, 1942
183	1269	W	Ground for the Floor	text	1	P	B					R&M		1971, 1930s
184		C	Guid Strang Yell - A Cumberland Ballad	text	1	P	B					Dr		1903, 1905
185		L	Hampsfell 1955	text	1	P						H		1834
186		CWL	Hare Hunting Song	text, music	5	MP						H		1971, 1955
187	580	C	Hark, Hark Away	audio	1	R TX						H		1902, 1903, 1964, 1971, 1979 (1902), 1961
188		C	Harrier Hunt, The	text (tune: Limerick Races)	1	P		D				H		1987
189	310	C	Harvest Home (Your hay it is mowed)	reference (& 1 verse)	1	P	B				KA	F		1965, 1823
190		L	Hawkshead Hunt	text	2	P						H		1971, 2011
191		C	Hedger's Daughter, The	text	1	P		D				A&S		1933
192		CW	Helvellyn Shepherdess's Song	reference	1	P					KA	PI F		1902
193	4014	C	Hobbie Noble	tune only	1	M						BB		c.1910?
194	23753	W	Holm-Bank Hunting Song, The	text, music	2	MP						H		1902, 1903
195	22373	W	Honest Young Man of Westmoreland, The	text	1	P	B					PI		c.1840
196	1859	W	Hoo Happy We Liv'd Then	text, music, audio	5	MP R		D				R&M		1905, 1942, 1979
197		C	Horn of the Hunter, The (or John Peel's Echo)	text, music, audio	19	MP RTx					KA	H		1915, 1953, 1957, 1959, 1960s, 1970s, 1981, 1990, 2000-9, 2011
198		CWL	Hound Pup, The	text (tune: Mountains of Mourne)	3	MP						H		1960s?, 1971, 1990
199	10498	C	How did I ever become a corporal?	text, audio (ref)	2	PR						Misc	Co	1940? (1990)
200	84	CY	Hughie the Graeme	text, music	3	MP						BB		1866 (1803), 1892, c.1900
201		C	Hunt With Me	audio	1	R						H		2000-2009
202		C	Hunt with the Eskdale, A - about 1900	text	2	P						H		1971, 2011
203		C	Hunting Song	text	1	M	B?					H		1968 (1906)

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204		L	Hunting Song	text	2	P				KA	H		1971, 2011
205		W	Hunting Song (2)	audio	1	R					H		1982/3
206		W	Hunting Song (3)	reference	1	P					H		1902
207		C	Hunting song about Tommy Dobson, A	text	1	P				KA	H		1971
208	888	C	I am a Miller to my Trade (A butcher I am and a butcher so true) - fragment	text	1	M	B				F		c1930 & 1970s
209		C	I Trudged up to Lunnon	text, music (tune: Derry Down)	1	P		D			PI		1980
210		W	I went to Kendal Market	audio	1	R		D			F		1969
211	9513	W	I wish all my children were babies again	audio	1	R				KA	A&S		1968
212	858	W	I Wonder what's keeping my love	text, music	3	MP					A&S		1904, 1905
213	12907	CWL	I'll take you home again Kathleen	text	1	P				KA	H		1971 (1875)
214		C	Ike Jenkinson's Game Cocks	text (tun: Brimmer Head), audio	2	PR				KA	H		1969, 1971
215	1308	W	In the Downhill of Life	reference	1		B			KA	R&M		1905 (1853)
216		W	In Yon Land	ref, music	1	MP					Misc		1904, 1905
217		C	Ireby Fair	text	1	M				KA	PI		1976
218	5692	C	Irthing Water Hounds (Irthing Water Hunt)	text, audio	2	PR					H		1967, 1971
219		CW	It's Nobbut Me	text, audio	2	PR		D		KA	A&S	Co	1902, 1903, 1979
220		C	I've Gotten a Rock	Text, music (tune: The White Cockade)	1	P		D			R&M		1980
221	1454	W	Jack the Sailor	text, music	2	M	B				A&S		1906, 1909
222	2525	C	Jenny's Complaint	text (tune: Nancy's tae the Greenwood game)	2	P		D	A	KA	A&S		1805, 1983
223	1080	CW	Jim the Carter's Lad (Joe the Carter's Lad)	audio	2	PR	B			KA	F		1953
224	7951	W	Jimmy Murphy	text	1	M					R&M		1915
225		C	Jobby Teasdale's Tup	text, music (tune: When the Old Man Came Home Sober)	2	PR		D		KA	F	Co	?, 2010
226	1858	C	Joe Bowman (The Crack of the Whip)	text, audio	18	MP RTx				KA	H		1940, 1953/81/200 1, 1958, 19597, 1961, 1963, 1964, 1969, 1965-70, 1970?,

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227		C																	1971, 1975, 1985, 1990, 2000-9, 2011
																			1960s?
228		C																	1876 on
229		C	1239																c.1828, 1837-41, 1840, c.1860, 1869, 1890, 1892, 1910, 1915, 1916, 1923, 1931, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1965-70, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1986, 1990, 2001, 2000-2009, 2011
230		C	69																1780, 1803, 1857, 1977
231		CS	76																1866, 2000
232		C																	1971, 1969, 2011
233		W	V29358																1850-1900
234		C	167																1933
235		C	149																1933, 1930s/1970s
236		W	12441																1910 c
237		C																	2000-2009
238		C																	1880, c1890, 1938, 1960s & 1930
239		C	8498																1825

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240	120	C	Keach in the Creel, The		3	MP R	B	D			A&S	Co	1933, c.1930 (1970), 1953 (1982,2001)
241	24904	L	Keepers and the Drivers	text, audio	1	M					H		1965-70
242		C	Keswick Driver	audio	1	R				KA	PI		1975
243		C	Keswick Song, The	audio	1	S				KA	PI		1970?
244	5126	C+N	Kielder Hunt	text	2	MP					H		1965-70, 1971
245		C	King Dunmail	audio	1	R				KA	PI		1975
246	10	C	King Henry My Son	text, music, audio	7	MP R					R&M		pre 1868, 1907, c1909, c1930 (1970), 1959-1972
247	1535	CY	King Roger	text, music	5	MP		D	A	KA	R&M	Co	1906, 1909, 1910, 1983
248	4013	CS	Kinmont Willie	text, music	3	MR					BB		1866, c.1899, 2000
249		C	Kirkstone Top Foxhunt 1866	text	1	M					H		1866, 1960s?
250		C	Kiss is but a Touch, A	text	1	P		D			A&S		1933
251	506	C	Kneeband, The	text	1	M	B				A&S		c1930 & 1970s
252		C	L'al Dinah Grayson	text, music, audio	6	PR		D		KA	A&S	Co	1869, 1907?, 1927, 1970?, 1979, 2010
253		C	Lad on the Dole, A	text	1	M				KA	Misc	Co	1960s?
254		W	Lake of Windermere, The	audio	1	P	B				PI		mid 19th c
255		C	Lakeland	audio	1	R				KA	PI		2000-2009
256	199	C	Lament of the Border Widow	audio	1	R					BB		1975
257		C	Langdales	audio	1	R					H		2000-2009
258		C	Last Martinmas	text	1	P		D			F		1933
259		C	Last new Shoon our Betty Gat, The	text, music (tune: Tak Yer Auld Cloak About Ye)	1	P		D			R&M		1980
260		C	Leyle Steeberm (Lal Stephen in most editions	text, music (tune: Hallow	1	P		D	A	KA	A&S	Co	1980

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284		C	Matthew Macrae		1	P		D	A	KA	A&S		1980
				text, music (tune: The Wee Pickle Tow)									
285		C	Maybe I Will		1	P		D			A&S	Co	1920
				text, music									
286		C	Melbreak Foxhounds, The		3	P				KA	H		1916, 1971 (1919), 2011
				text									1971
287		C	Melbreak Hounds, The		1	P					H		
				text									
288		C	Melbreak Hunt		1	P					H		1971
				text									
289		C	Melbreak Hunt, A -February 1967		2	P				KA	H		1971, 2011
				text									
290		C	Melbreck Hounds December 24 1869		1	P				KA	H		1971 (1864)
				text									
291	124	C	Mermaid, The		1	M	B				Mar		1960s?
				text									
292	23534	W	Middleton Ha' Clippin'		2	P					F		1905, 1906
				text, music									
293	12513	C	Milking Mary		1	M	B				A&S		c1930 & 1970s
				text									
294		C	Miss Gilpin's Song		2	PR		D			R&M		1980, 2007
				text (tune: Logie o' Buchan), audio									
295		C	Monody' on the Death of John Peel		1	P				KA	H		1971 (1854)
				text									
296	878	L	Morning Stands on Tiptoe		1	M					H		1965-70
				text									
297		C	Mountains & the Valleys		1	R				KA	PI		2000-2009
				audio									
298		C	Muncaster Fell Boxing Day hunt 1921		1	P				KA	H		1971 (1921)
				text									
299		CL	Mungrizedale(sic) Hunt (Mungrisedale Hunt 1920)		2	MP					H		1965-70, 1971 (1920)
				text									
300	19637	C	Mutton Pie		1	R					F		2000-2009
				audio									
301	31	W	My Bonnie laddie's young, but he's growing		1	M	B				A&S		1909
				text									
302		C	My Cumbrian Home		1	R				KA	PI		2000-2009
				audio									
303	516	C	My Cwoartin' Cwoat		2	MP		D			A&S	Co	c.1930 (1970), 1933
				text									
304	850	C	My Fadder kept a Horse		2	MP		D			F		c.1930 (1970), 1933
				text									
305	1195	C	My Grandmother's Chair (The Old Armchair)		1	M				KA	A&S	Co	c1930 & 1970s
				text									
306	V18603	C	My Love She's but a (Northern) Lassie Yet		1	P		D	A	KA	A&S		1980
				Text, music. (My love she's but a lassie yet)									
307	2599	C	My Miner Lad		1	R					I (A&S)		1978
				audio									
308	1400	C	My Old Wife (Oald Wife)		2	P Tx	B?	D			A&S		1933, 1963
				audio									
309	620	C	My Poor Black Bess		1	M	B				A&S		c1930 & 1970s
				text									
310	1866	C	My Uncle Pete		1	R				KA	Nons	Co	1875, 1953, 1981, 2001
				audio									

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311		C	Ned Carnaughan			2	P	B	D	A	KA	A&S	Co	1805 on, 1980
312	V26081	W	New Song in Praise of Halliwell, A	text, music (tune: Miller of Dee)		1	P	B				Hist		c1848
313	16572	C	New Song on Carlisle Races	text		1	P	B				PI		c1860-1880
314		C	New Song on the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestlers	text		1	P	B				PI		c1860-1880
315	V3268	C	New Song on the Volunteer Review on the Banks of Eden	text		2	P	B			KA	PI		1895 c, 1978
316		C	New Year's Day Hunt at Kirkstile	audio		1	R					H		1954
317	19	CY	Nobleman and the Thrasher	text, music		1	P	B				R&M		1892
318	1367	CW	North Country Lass (also The Oak and the Ash)	text, music, audio		3	PR	B				A&S		1866, 1893, 1976
319		L	North Lonsdale Hounds	text		1	M					H		1965-70
320	469	C	Nursery Song	text, music (tune: Mrs McCloud)		1	P					C		1980
321	273	W	O Father, Father build me a Boat	text, music		2	M					A&S		1909
322	203	C	O Good Ale Though Art my Darlin'	reference		1	P	B				Dr		1876
323		C	O Jenny Dear	text, music (tune: Lucy Campbell)		2	P		D		KA	A&S		c1780 (1842), 1980
324	V1161	W	O What a world of Flammery! (Flummery)	text, music		1	M	B				R&M		1909
325	8156	C	Oald Robin Ritson	text		1	M		D			A&S	Co	c1930 & 1970s
326		C	Oald Wife	text only		1	P		D			A&S	Co	1933
327	23649	W	Oh William I Miss You	audio		1	R	B				A&S		1965
328		L	Old Anthony	text		2	P				KA	H		1971, 2011
329	9437	W	Old Dun Cow	reference		1	P				KA	F		1904 (1893)
330	12507	C	Old Fashioned Style, The (The Coachman & his Whip)	text		1	M	B?				A&S	Co	c1930 & 1970s
331		C	Old Grandee	text		1	P					H		1971
332		C	Old Hunt Ball	audio		1	R				KA	H		2000-2009
333		L	Old Manged Fox, The	text		1	P				KA	H		2011
334		C	Old Mardale	audio		1	R					H		2000-2009
335	1499	CWL	Old Shep	text		3	PS				KA	H		1971, 1985
336	190	L	Old Snowball & Bold Reynard	text		1	M					H		1965-70
337		C	On the 10 th Day of March	text		1	P				KA	H		1971 (pre- 1934)
338		C	One Fine Hunting Morn	text, music		1	M					H		1964

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

339		C+N	Opening meet at Blenkinsop, The (Nov 1862)	text	1	P				KA	H		1971 (1862)
340		C	Orthwaite Fells	text	1	P					H		1971
341		W	Other Terrier Song, The	text (tune: Why Paddy's not at work today)	1	P				KA	H		2011
342	575	L	Ould John Braddieum	text, music	1	P		D			C		1915
343		C	Our Johnny (Richardson)	audio	1	R					H		2000-2009
344	21	W	Outlandish Knight, The	music	2	P	B				A&S		1906
345		C	Owenie Hancock	audio	1	R					PI		1953
346	375	CS	Ower the Moor among the Heather	text	1	P		D			A&S		1933
347	875	C	Oyster Girl, The	text, audio	3	MP R	B				A&S		c1930 & 1970s, 1933, 1979
348	614	W	Pace Egging Song (also as Jolly Boys Song)	references, text, music, audio	15	MP R	B				C		1897 (1840), 1907, 1908, 1909, 1915, 1926, 1930s, 1942, 1948, 1975
349	12512	C	Packman, The	text	1	M	B				A&S		c1930 & 1970s
350	1860	CL	Pass the Jug Round/Ullswater Pack, The (Oo git awa', git awa', git awa')	text, audio	8	MP RS				KA	H		1953(1981/2 001), 1962, 1963, 1960s, 1965-70, 1971, 1985, 2011
351		C	Patterdale Song Contest (Kendal Lads)	text, audio	2	MR					H		1960s?, 1963
352	967	C	Paul Jones	audio	1	R	B				Hist		1975
353		C	Peace	text, music (tune: There's nae Good Luck)	2	P		D	A	KA	R&M		1805 on, 1980
354	V32924	C	Peck o' Punch, The (A Cumberland Ballad)	text, music (tune: O'er Bogle)	3	MP	B	D	A	KA	Dr		1825, 1960s, 1980
355		C	Peer Body	text, music (tune: Coming Through the Rye)	2	P		D		KA	R&M		1933 (1866, 1811), 1980
356		C	Peggy Pen	text, music (tune: Miss Forbes' Farewell to Banff)	1	P		D	A	KA	A&S	Co	1980
357		C	Persuasion - Kirkby's (?)	audio	1	R					H		1962

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

358		CW	Phillipson's Curse		audio	2	R				KA	Hist	1976
359		C	Place Fell		text (tune: Roaming in the Gloaming)	3	PR				KA	H	1962, 1969, 1971
360	23627	CWL	Place where the Old Horse Died, The		text, audio	3	PR				KA	H	1965, 1960s?, 1971 (pre 1878)
361	960	W	Plains of Waterfoo		audio	1	R	B				Hist	1965
362		C	Play, Beggars, Play		text	1	P		D		K	R&M	1933 (1593/1653)
363	346	W	Ploughboys (Follow the Plough)		audio	2	R	B				F	1959, 1965
364	5940	W	Ploughing Match		ref, text	2	MP					F	1902, 1903
365	793	W	Poacher, The (Van Diemens Land)		audio	1	R	B				F	1965
366	513	CWY	Poor Old Horse, the		text, music	3	P	B				F	1892, 1902, 1903, 1904
367		C	Porter and his pack		text	1	P					H	1971
368		L	Pull Scar Hunt		text	2	P					H	1971, 2011
369		C	Pup Song, The		text. Tune: Seasons in the Sun	1	M				KA	H	c1978
370		C	Raffles Merrie Nite		audio	1	R		D			Dr	Co 2007
371	12611	C	Rag Man, The (Rag Man's Kiss)		text, audio	2	M		D			A&S	Co 1930s, 1961
372	126	CW	Ram of Derbish Town, The		audio	1	R	B				Nons	1968
373		C	Raven and the Rock Starling, The		reference	1	P					Misc	1876
374	3505	C	Recruited Collier, The (Jimmy's Enlisted)		text, music, audio	4	PR		D	A	KA	I (A&S)	1952, 1967, 1972, 1975
375	128	C	Red Herring		reference	1	M	B				Mar	1922 (1825)
376	20418	W	Red Rover		audio	1	R				KA	H	1982/3
377	9648	C	Reed Robin		text, music	4	MP	B	D	A	KA	A&S	18??, early 1900s, 1960, 1960s (1947)
378		L	Road to Carlisle		ref. only - unclear whether song or tune	1	M					H	1965-70
379		C	Roadster's Song		text	1	P		D			A&S	1933
380	2526	C	Rob Lowry (or Lowrie)		text, music	5	M		D	A		A&S	1906, nd., 1960s (1947)
381	575	CL(3)	Roger's Courtship - A North Lancashire Song		text, music, audio	4	PR	B	D			A&S	Co 1871, 1915,

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

382		C		Rooster Song	audio	1	S											1933, 2010
383	12935	C		Rossler Fair (Betty Brown)	text, music (tune: John Anderson my Jo)	2	MP	D	A									1805 on, 1906
384		C		Rushbearing, The	text, music	1	P					KA						1910
385	273	W		Sailor Boy	reference	1	P	B										1905
386	2898	C		Sale of a Wife	text, music	1	M	B										1960s
387	1365	C		Sally Gray	text, music, audio	16	MP RTx	D	A			KA						1805 on, 1810-60, 1893, 1890s?, 1905, 1907, c.1909, 1910, 1920?, 1928, 1940, 1942, 1970?, 1976, 1983, 2010
388		C		Sally Holmes	text	1	P	D										1933
389	12515	C		Sandy Slee	text	1	M	D										c1930s & 1970s
390		C		Sarra tha Reet	text	1	P	D										1933
391	114	C		Satterday Neet	text	2	MP	B										c1930 & 1970s, 1933
392	16567	CY(3)		Sedbergh Fox Hunt	text, audio	4	PR					KA						1954 (1953), 1971 (1953), 2000-9, 2011
393		Y		Sedbergh Hunting Song	text	2												1971, 2011
394	3	W		Seeds of Love, The	text (1v), music	1	M	B										1905, 1906
395		CWY		Settle to Carlisle Railway	text, music	2	PR					KA						1971, 1976
396	277	C		Seventeen come Sunday	text	1	M	B										c1930 & 1970s
397		C		Sharp Yeat or Five Foxes in one day	text, music, audio	4	MP R											1961, 1962, 1971, 2011
398	1385	C		Sheep Shearing Song (1)	reference	1	P	B										1875
399		CW		Sheep Shearing Song (2) (Martindale Sheep Shearing Song)	text, audio	3	PR	B				KA						1839, 1898, 1969

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

400	5124	C	Shepherd's Life	audio	1	R					F	1976
401	775	W	Ship that Never Returned, The	audio	1	R	B				Mar	1965
402		C	Shy Sarah from Sillioth	audio	1	R		D			A&S	1963
403		C	Shy Young Widow	audio	1	R					A&S	1968
404	8500	CS	Siller Croun, The (And Ye Shall Walk in Silk Attire)	text, music (tune: The Siller Croun)	5	P	B	D-Scot	KA		A&S	c1780 (1842), 1787 (1853), 1803 & early 19thc, 1906, 1980
405		C	Silly Andrew	text, music (tune: Wandering Willie)	1	P		D	A		A&S	1980
406		C	Silly Hill Hunt	text, music	1	P					H	1979
407	561	C	Silvery Tide	text	1	M	B				A&S	1968 (1906)
408		C	Sing Ho! For our Lads	text, music	1	P		D		KA	R&M	1910
409	24911	CWL	Six Fell Packs, The	text (tune: Hark Forrad Good Hounds Tally-ho), audio	6	MP				KA	H	1963, 1965-70, 1971(1950s), 1990 (1948), 2000-9, 2011
410		C	Sixty Pound a Ton	audio	1	R				KA	F	2000-2009
411	23638	W	Slaveboy's Dream	audio	1	R	B				R&M	1965
412	2543	W	Sledburn Fair	text, music	3	MP				KA	F	1902, 1903, 1986
413	9682	W	Smithy Door, The	audio	1	R					A&S	1968
414		C	Song Contest at Patterdale	text, music	1	M					H	1963
415		C	Spring Song	text	1	S				KA	PI	1972?
416		C	Squire Crozier (Blencathra Foxhounds)	text (tune: Wearing of the Green)	4	PRS					H	(post 1903) 1969, 1971, 1985, 2011
417		L	Squire Logan - Sawrey Hunt	text	2	P					H	1971, 2011
418		CWL	Squire Rawthmel	text	1	P					H	1971
419		CL	Squire Sands (also A Furness Hunting Song)	text, music	5	MP					H	1960s?, c1968, 1965-70, 1971, 2010
420	540	W	Squire's Daughter, The	text, music	1	M	B				A&S	1906

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

421		CWL	Staintondale Hunting Song 1811	text	1	P				KA	H	1971
422		C	Statute Fair, The (or Carlisle Fair)	text, music	1	P				KA	PI	1910
423	16143	C	Stay by your Mother's Side	audio	1	R					R&M	1969
424		C	Story of Badger and Butcher, The	text	1	P				KA	H	2011 (1948)
425		C	Straw Rope, The	audio	1	R		D?			F	1979
426	9	CS	Sun Shines Fair on Carlisle Wall, The (It was an English Ladye Bright)	text, audio	2	PR				KA	BB	1866 (1805), 1975
427		C	Sunset at Gilsland	text	1	P	B				H	1851
428	1578	CWL	Swarth Fell Rocks (also as Duke's Hunt)	text, music, audio	6	MP R					H	1902, 1903, 1906, 1965-70, 1975, 1978
429	586	W	Sweet Primeroses	reference	1	P	B				A&S	1906
430	2870	C	Swinging down the Lane (Rosie Nell)	text, audio	3	MP RS				KA	A&S	c1972 & 1864, 1970s, 1978
431		W	Tally Ho!	audio	1	R					H	1965
432		C	Tammy Green	text, music	1	M		D		KA	A&S	1960s
433		L	Tarn Green Hunt	text	1	M					H	1965-70
434	1472	OWY(6)	Tarry Woo' (Tarry Wool, Tarry Wou)	reference, text, music	9	MP R					F	1876, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1906, 1961, 1975, 1979, 2010
435		C	Tatie Pot!	text, music, audio	2	MP R		D		KA	PI	Co 1960s, 2010
436	16570	C	Tenth Day of March, The	audio	1	R					H	1954
437		Y	Terrible Knitters of Dent, The	text, music	1	P				KA	PI	1971
438		CWL	Terrier Song, The	text, audio	6	MP RS				KA	H	1965-70, 1971, 1985, 1990, 2000-9, 2011
439	379	W	There was an Old Man	reference	1	P	B				Misc	1902 (1725)
440	1	W	Three Gipsies	reference	1	P	B				A&S	1906
441	19	W	Thresherman, The	text, music	5	MP	B				F	1906, 1909, 1915, 1942
442		C	Threshing Day	audio	1	R				KA	F	2000-2009
443		C	Thursby Witch, The (A Cumberland Ballad)	text, music (tune: John Anderson my Jo)	3	P	B	D	A	KA	PI	1805 on, mid 19thc.

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

444		C																1980	
445		C			Thwaites of Cumbria	audio													2000-2009
446	118	C			Tib and her Maister	text	2	MP	D										1805 on, 1960s
447		C			T'Jolly Beggar	text	1	P	B	D									1933
		C(2)L			T'Laal Melbreak	text	3	MP											1965-70, 1971 (1950s?), 2011
448		C			T'Middle Class	text	1	P	B	D									1933
449		W			T'Milken	audio	2	R											1976, 1979
450	17759	C			T'Oald Boar (Sow's took the Measles)	text	1	M											c1930 & 1970s
451		C			Tom Parker and Carlisle Otter Hounds	text	1	P											1886
452		C			Tommy Dobson	text	1	P											1971
453		CL			Tommy Dobson (2)	text (tune: John Peel), audio	5	MP R											1969, c1970, 1971, 2000- 9, 2011
454		C			Tommy Dobson (3)	text, audio	2	PR											1969, 1971
455		C			Trafalgar Sea Fight, The	text, music (tune: Mrs Casey)	1	P	D										1980
456		C			Tups	audio	1	R											1976
457		CW			Ullswater Foxhounds' Chorus of Victory, The	text	1	P											1971
458	289	C			Undaunted Female, The	text	1	M	B										c1930 & 1970s
459	V30824	C			Unfortunate Wife, The	text	1	P	B										1810-1860
460		L			Unicorn Hunt – Ambleside, The	text	1	P											1971
461	1454	W			Up Step't Jack	reference	2	P	B										1905, 1906
462	1212	C			Upsiaridi	audio	3	R		D									1959, 1970?, 1976
463		C			Vale of Mardale	audio	1	R											2000-2009
464		C			Village Gang, The	text (tune: Jenny Dang the Weaver)	1	P	D	A									1980
465		C			Visions of Cumbria	text, music	1	P											1971
466	8501	C			Waefu' Heart, The	text, music	3	P	D-Scott										c1780 (1842), 1971

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

467		C	Walla Crag	text	1	P					H	1971
468	211	CW(7) L	Wa'ney Cockfeightin' Sang (also as The Cockfight [The Cumbrian Lads])	reference, text, audio	9	MP R	B				F	1905, 1906?, 1907?, 1942, 1965, 1976, 1979, 2010
469	10872	C	Waste Not, Want Not	audio	1	R				KA	R&M	1969 (1871)
470		C	Waters of Eden	audio	1	R				KA	PI	2000-2009
471		C	Welcome into Cumberland	text, music	1	P		D		KA	PI	1890s?
472		C	Wellington Disaster	audio	1	R				KA	I	1976
473	1864	C	Welton Hunt, The	audio	1	R					H	1953, 1981, 2001
474		L	West Head	text	1	M					H	1965-70
475		C	Wey, Ned, Man	text (tune: Ranting, Roaring Willie)	2	P		D		KA	R&M	c1780 (1842), 1980
476		C	Weyfe for Wuillie Miller	text, music	2	MP		D	A	KA	A&S	1805 on, 1906
477		CWL	What a merry, merry jovial crew	text	2	P					H	1971, 2011
478	V1210	C	What Ails this Heart of Mine?	text (adapted to old melody: My Deary, if thou die)	2	P	B	D-Scot		KA	A&S	c1780 (1842), 1803 & early 19thc
479	728	C	When Adam was First Created	audio	1	R	B				R&M	1954
480	12606	C	When Ah was a Lad	text	1	M		D			A&S	c1930 & 1970s
481	139	C	While Johnson's ale was new	text	1	M	B				Dr	c1930 & 1970s
482	12509	C	Whistle, The	text	1	M					A&S	c1930 & 1970s
483		CW	White Fox of Placefell, The	text	2	P				KA	H	1971 (1970), 2011
484		L	White Lion Hunt	text	1	M					H	1965-70
485	228	W	Widow of Westmorland's Daughter, The	text, audio	2	PR	B				A&S	1827?, 1966, 1976
486		C	Wigton Mashers	text	1	M		D			Dr	early to mid 20th c
487	1173	C	Wild Rover, the	audio	2	R	B				Dr	1953, 1957
488	953	CL	William Graham (transportation of a poacher)	text	3	MP	B				F	c.1860, c1930 & 1970s, 1970

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

489	432	C	Will the Weaver	text	1	M	B?				A&S	Co	c1930 & 1970s
490		C	William Porter of Eskdale, In Memory of	text	1	P			KA		H		1971
491	273	W	William the Sailor Boy	audio	1	R	B				A&S		1965
492	433	C	Willie Green	reference	1	M	B				A&S		1923
493		L	Willie Porter Song	text	1	M					H		1965-70
494		W	Windermere Harriers, The	text	1	P					H		1971
495	9722	C	Windham	audio	2	R					H		1959
496		W	Witch of Westmorland	audio	2	R			KA		PI		1975, 1978
497		C	With Bowman Let's Go	audio	1	R					H		1985
498		C	With me Gloves in me Hand and me Hat on one side	text	1	M		D			A&S	Co	1960s?
499		W	Witherslack Hall	text, music	1	P			KA		PI		1971
500		C	Working on fer t'county (Song of the County Council Roadman)	text (tune: Paddy on the Railway)	1	SM			KA		PI		c1966
501		C	Worton Wedding, The	text, music (tune: Dainty Davie)	2	MP	B	D	KA	A	Dr	Co	1805 on, 1907
502	V9302	C	Wrestling Match between Atkinson and Jackson	text, music (tune: The Nutting Girl)	1	P	B				F		1980
503		L	Written after 20 years' hunting with the Coniston	text	2	P			KA		H		1971, 2011
504	16573	C	Ye Dalesmen	audio	1	R					PI		1954
505	12516	C	Yellow Yorling, The	text (tune: Bonnie Beds of Rose or The Collier Laddie)	2	MP			KA		A&S		1799 (1911), c1930 & 1970s
506	264	C	Yon Flowery Garden	text, music	1	M					A&S		1956, 1960s
507	2637	W	Yorkshire Bite, The	reference	1	P	B		KA		F	Co	1902 (1782, 1802)
508	12514	C	Yorkshire Lass	text	1	M	B		KA		A&S		c1930 & 1970s
509	1640	W	Yorkshire, though in London	text	1	M	B				A&S		1909
510		C	You had better pull down the blind	text	1	MR	B		KA		A&S	Co	1964
511	9723	Y	You'll Never Git in Without	audio	1	R		D			H		1954
512		L	Young Bob o' Cartmel Fell	audio	1	R		D			A&S	Co	1969
513	221	CL	Young Henry the Poacher (The Cockermonth Poacher or Copy of verses on the fatal fishing affray at Cockermonth)	reference, text, audio	4	MP R	B				F		c1930 & 1970s (1832), c1970, 1978

CUMBRIAN FOLK SONG CORPUS

514	60or55 3	W	Young Sailor	audio	1	R	B				A&S		1965
515		C	Young Susie	text, music (tune: Dainty Davie)	1	P		D	A	KA	A&S		1980
515	songs				1010	sources							
			Alternative names of songs:										
			And Ye Shall Walk in Silk Attire: Siller Croun										
			Charcoal Black & the Bonnie Grey: Wa'ney Cockfighting Song										
			Cockermouth Poacher: Young Henry the Poacher										
			D'Ye ken John Peel: John Peel										
			Duke's Hunt: Swarthfell Rocks										
			Furness Hunting Song: Squire Sands										
			Graeme and Bewicke: Bewicke and the Graeme										
			Lass of Cumberland, The: Cumberland Nelly										
			Plough Boy: Farmer's Boy										
			Ullswater Pack: Pass the Jug Round										
			Wetheral Green: Corby Castle										

APPENDIX 2: CARLISLE LIBRARY COLLECTION OF BROADSIDE BALLADS

Jackson Library M.174: Local songs and miscellaneous papers

Consisting of various printed papers, including broadside ballads, playbills, children's songs, etc., pasted into a scrapbook

Page no. (where given)	Title
1	A new song on William Graham the poacher
2	A new song on the Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling
2	A new song on Carlisle Races
3	Melancholy and sorrowful account of the sufferings of C
3	Betsy Brown
	The Brave old oak
6	Parson Brown
6	Highland home
7	Duncan Campbell
7	The Enniskillen dragoon
8	Pretty Susan the pride of Kildare
8	Poor Caroline of Edinboro' town
9	Burns and Highland Mary
9	Banks of the Dee
12	Drunken husband
12	Answer to the Banks of Sweet Dundee
13	Poor Irish stranger
13	Ailleen Mavourneen
	Drunkard's child, the
	Nice young gal, the
15	Henry's downfall
15	Isle of beauty
18	When my old hat was new
18	The female cabin boy; or, the row among the sailors
21	The two sober wives
21	I'm going to be a soldier Jenny
22	Donald's return to Glencoe
22	My skiff is by de shore
23	The cunning cobbler
23	The wanderer
24	Nut girl
24	Bold Irishman
25	The jolly roving tar
25	A new song called Bold M'lusky
27	Laird o' Cockpen, the
27	The crook and plaid
28	Hard struggle for the breeches
28	The pirate of the Isles
29	The unfortunate shepherdess
29	The little gipsy girl

30 What man would be without a woman
 30 The cliffs of old Tynemouth
 32 Phoebe Morel; or, the slave
 32 Poor Robin
 34 The emigrant's farewell
 34 Banners of blue
 38 Young Roger and the grey mare
 38 The Land of the West
 Van Dieman's land
 Home sweet home
 Mary Mccree
 Hearts of oak
 My ain fireside
 Pilot 'tis a fearful night
 42 Lines composed on George Robinson
 42 King of the forest glade
 43 The wife's dream
 43 The bonny moon,
 44 Irish emigrant
 44 My own granny dear
 45 Banks of the Clyde
 45 When the kye come hame
 46 The mariner's grave
 46 Roving young bachelor
 47 Fanny Gray
 47 Bold Princess Royal
 48 Rosa May
 48 Monkey turned barber
 Cavalier, the
 My new surtout
 50 Nothing at all
 50 Sight for a father
 51 Prince Charlie and his tartan plaidie
 51 The Sledmere poachers
 52 William and Mary
 52 The fisherman's boy
 53 Styles and fashions
 53 Jolly fellows that follow the plough
 Maid of sweet Gortein
 The breaking out of Derry jail
 56 Come under my plaidie
 56 The death of Dermot
 57 Thrashing machine
 Tinker's wedding
 58 Johnnie my man

- 58 Blow the candle out
The lamentation of Johnny Mcdermot
John anderson my jo
- 60 Nancy the winner of 11 prizes
- 60 The happy mother
- 61 Mow the meadow down
- 61 O wae's me for young Sorbie
The Paisley officer
Oakham poachers
- 63 General Monro
- 63 The Bonnie House o' Airly
The undaunted female
Three maids a-milking would go
- 65 Cheer boys cheer
- 65 Will you love me then as now
- 66 William and Harriet
- 66 A new song called Alexander Hill
Duffy's farewell
The old bog-hole
Charlie Stuart
Orphan child
- 69 The adventures of Sandy and Donald
- 69 Merry little soldier
- 70 A damsel's adventures
- 71 The drunkard's dream
- 71 Country hirings
English emigrant
Grand conversation on Sebastopol arose
- 73 Sheffield park
- 73 Soldier's farewell on going to the war
- 74 The sufferings of the British army in the camp before Sebastopol
- 74 Ben Bolt's reply
- 75 The maid that sold her barley
- 75 Kitty Jones
- 76 Jeanot and Jeannette; or, the conscript
- 76 Match boy, the
- 77 Little town boy, the; or Old England's going down the hill
- 77 The brave old oak

Note: most carry printer's imprint of John Ross of Newcastle, a few are William R. Walker and John Gilbert, also of Newcastle, and one is from Whitehaven. Almost all were distributed by printer and stationer B. Stewart, Botchergate, Carlisle.

APPENDIX 3: TEXTS OF 'D'YE KEN JOHN PEEL'

Words published in Sidney Gilpin's *Songs and Ballads of Cumberland and the Lake Country*, 1866 (pp.416-417)

and also in John Graham's *Dialect Songs of the North*, 1910 (pp.22-23).

D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gray?
D'ye ken John Peel at the break of the day?
D'ye ken John Peel when he's far, far a-way
With his hounds and his horn in the morning?

'Twas the sound of his horn call'd me from my bed,
And the cry of his hounds has me oft-times led;
For Peel's view holloa could 'waken the dead,
Or a fox from his lair in the morning.

D'ye ken that bitch whose tongue was death?
D'ye ken her sons of peerless faith?
D'ye ken that a fox, with his last breath
Curs'd them all as he died in the morning?
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.

Yes, I ken John Peel and auld Ruby, too,
Ranter and Royal and Bellman as true;
From the drag to the chase, from the chase to the view
From the view to the death in the morning.
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.

And I've followed John Peel both often and far,
O'er the rasper-fence and the gate and the bar,
From low Denton-holme up to Scratchmere Scar,
Where we vied for the brush in the morning.
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.

Then, here's to John Peel with my heart and soul,
Come fill – fill to him another strong bowl:
And we'll follow John Peel thro' fair and thro' foul
While we're 'waked by his horn in the morning.
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.

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D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gay,
D'ye ken John Peel at the break of the day?
D'ye ken John Peel when he's far, far a-way
With his hounds and his horn in the morning?

For the sound of his horn call'd me from my bed,
And the cry of his hounds, which he oft-times led;
Peel's "View halloo" would awaken the dead,
Or the fox from his lair in the morning.

Yes, I ken John Peel, and Ruby too,
Ranter and Ringwood, Bellman and True;
From a find to a check, from a check to a view,
From a view to a death in the morning.
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.

Then, here's to John Peel from my heart and soul,
Let's drink to his health, let's finish the bowl:
We'll follow John Peel, through fair and through foul,
If we want a good hunt in the morning.
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.

D'ye ken John Peel with his coat so gay
He liv'd at Troutbeck once on a day;
Now he has gone far, far away,
We shall ne'er hear his voice in the morning.
'Twas the sound of his horn &c.