

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE
ST. ALBANS FOLK MUSIC CLUB

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE ST. ALBANS FOLK MUSIC CLUB

by

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ABSTRACT

The folksong (or "folk") club is the primary performance outlet of the recent British folksong revival, which began in the 1950's. Like North American coffeehouses, they provide a reasonably small and informal milieu for the performance of the various types of music labeled "folk." This thesis examines one such club, the St. Albans Folk Music Club, from the point of view of the people directly involved in its organization. In order to arrive at an insider's point of view, the methodology of ethnoscience was employed. The theoretical base of ethnoscience and the specific techniques used to gather data are discussed in the thesis.

Revivalists are primarily a heterogeneous, urban, middle class group. Thus they are in clear contrast to the older concept of the "ideal folk society," defined as small, isolated, homogeneous, and nonliterate. However, in recent years this idealized notion of folk society has given way to the concept of the "folk group." A folk group is any group of people who, on the basis of some common bond, like religion, occupation, or nationality, share traditions. Revivalists can be seen as a folk group sharing a number of traditions, including folk clubs.

As there are few studies dealing with the British revival, the history and ideology of this movement are discussed in some detail.

In order to acquaint the reader with the St. Albans Folk Music Club, its history, physical setting, and format are outlined. The remainder of the thesis is devoted to topics of particular importance to informants. These are: the role structure of the club; the classification of performers apart from their role within the club; the "atmosphere" or mood of the club during an evening, and the classification, selection and use of repertoire. The concluding chapter compares informants' ideology with that of other revivalists, as well as with informants' actual behavior. Some basic differences between the folksong classification systems used in the revival and in folklore studies are also outlined.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Graham and Jen Goffee, for their kindness, patience, Guinness, and Ovaltine, and to Paul Mercer, for his more than generous moral, mental, and financial support. Without their help and understanding, this work might have been abandoned long ago.

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I

INTRODUCTION

In this study the St. Albans Folk Music Club, one of the many folksong, or "folk," clubs which have developed as part of the recent British folksong revival, is described from the point of view of those who are intimately concerned with its operation. This club is located in St. Albans, Hertfordshire, a city about twenty miles from London.

Like North American coffeehouses, British folk clubs provide a relatively small and informal milieu for the performance of "folk music."¹ Folk clubs were first formed during the 1950's, but did not appear in significant numbers until the so-called "folk boom" of the 1960's. Initially an urban phenomenon, they can now be found in more rural areas, as well. A conservative estimate of the number of clubs presently in existence is one thousand.

My interest in the present topic grew out of my personal involvement in both the American and British folksong revivals, as an enthusiast and amateur performer. In the early 1970's, while I was an

¹The term "folk music" implies both instrumental and vocal music; however, it has often been used synonymously with "folksong." The definition of these terms has become problematic in recent years, as they have been used to label such disparate forms as very old songs of unknown authorship and newly composed songs of the "Top Forty." Some definitions of "folksong" current in the revival are discussed on pages 3-4.

undergraduate at the State University of New York at Albany, I began attending coffeehouses frequently. I eventually became interested in and acquainted with the British revival, as well. Between 1972 and 1974, I made three trips to Britain, and spent much of my time there attending folk clubs.

Gradually my interest in the backgrounds of the British and Anglo-American folksongs I sang broadened into a more serious interest in folklore in general. In September 1974, I enrolled in the graduate program in folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland. As I learned more about folklore, my concern with the revival remained, but with an added dimension: I began to perceive it not only as a participant, but also as social scientist interested in both the music performed in the revival and the dynamics of the movement itself. My reasons for focusing on a single folksong club will be considered later.

The British Folksong Revival

This section describes the music performed in the revival, provides some general information on folk clubs and their participants, discusses reasons why the revival should be of concern to folklorists, and considers some existing studies of it. The history and ideology of this movement are dealt with in Chapters III and IV, respectively.

Participants in the British revival come from various socio-economic strata, and range in age from teenagers to senior citizens. However, middle class people (often from working or lower-middle class backgrounds) in their twenties and thirties appear to be

the most dominant group overall. Males outnumber females, particularly in terms of performance, on both amateur and professional levels.

A wide variety of music is performed in the revival, most if not all of which has been labeled "folksong" at some time or other. Not surprisingly, a substantial amount of controversy has resulted within the movement over the definition of this term. Some revivalists, like folksong scholars in the past, use "folksong" to indicate those songs which have been in "oral tradition" for a number of years (e.g., two generations), are usually of unknown authorship, and which exist in "versions" or "variants" rather than in a single, fixed form.² This body of song is now frequently referred to as "traditional song" by folklorists and revivalists alike, in order to distinguish it from other types of "folksong."

A more liberal definition includes as folksong recently composed, or "contemporary," pieces of known authorship and relatively fixed form, which are based stylistically or thematically upon traditional songs. "Folksong" has also been used as a generic term for contemporary songs/accompanied by acoustic guitar, regardless of whether or not they resemble traditional pieces. At the St. Albans

²"Oral tradition" refers to transmission from person to person (in this case, singer to singer) by word of mouth. "Version" usually refers to a basic form or type (as of a ballad), whereas "variant" is used to designate differences within a version. See W. Edson Richmond, "The Comparative Approach: Its Aims, Techniques, and Limitations," in Folksong and Folksong Scholarship, introductory remarks by Roger D. Abrahams (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1964), p. 27.

club; people tend to use "folksong" synonymously with "traditional song." To avoid confusion, the term will be used in this manner throughout the thesis.

Revival performers have a number of sources from which to choose in selecting their repertoires. There are, of course, the older collections of songs or "tunes" (i.e., instrumental music), such as Francis James Child's The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, and O'Neill's Music of Ireland: Eighteen Hundred and Fifty Melodies. Many of these books (including Child and O'Neill) have been reprinted in relatively inexpensive paperback editions.³ There are also numerous recent publications specifically designed for use by revivalists. The many records of traditional and contemporary music which have been issued in the last several years serve as another source of repertoire.⁴ Performers obtain material from each other, as well; revivalists

³Francis James Child, ed., The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, 5 vols. (1882-1898; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1965); Francis O'Neill, comp., O'Neill's Music of Ireland: Eighteen Hundred and Fifty Melodies (1903; rpt. New York: Daniel Collins, n.d.).

⁴Recently issued song collections include R. Vaughn Williams and A.L. Lloyd, eds., The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1959); Frank Purslow, ed., Marrow Bones: English Folk Songs from the Hammond and Gardiner Mss. (London: EFDS Publications, 1965); Fred Hamer, ed., Garners Gay, Folk Song Today, No. 2 (London: EFDS Publications, 1967), and the New City Songster, an occasional publication of contemporary songs, available from 35 Stanley Ave., Beckenham, Kent BR3 2PU, England. In addition, some revival magazines, such as English Dance and Song, print songs (see Chapter III, pp. 81-82). For a list of some revival records (featuring mainly traditional music), see the Records Cited section of this work, pages 240-243.

frequently own cassette tape recorders, and thus can learn songs or tunes from recordings they have made. Lastly, many performers write some, or all, of the material they perform.

The guitar is the most popular instrument in the British revival, especially among those who perform contemporary songs. Other standard instruments, used for playing tunes as well as for accompanying songs, include: fiddle, mandolin, banjo, concertina, tin whistle (or "flageolet") and (Appalachian) dulcimer.⁵ There is an increasing trend toward the use of electronically amplified instruments to accompany contemporary and, to some extent, traditional songs. Among performers who favor traditional music, there is also a fair amount of unaccompanied singing.

The various attitudes toward folksong described above are reflected in the way revivalists classify folk clubs. The most common basis for classification is the type or types of music they feature. Hence, at one extreme are "traditional" clubs, which present British traditional music almost exclusively; at the other end of the spectrum

⁵The concertina is similar to the accordion, but is generally smaller, with hexagonal bellows and ends. An Appalachian dulcimer is a hollow bodied, wooden instrument somewhat resembling a zither, with a fretted fingerboard running the length of the body; the strings (usually three or four) are strummed or plucked. For additional information on the concertina, see Frank Butler, *The Concertina: A Handbook and Tutor for Beginners on the "English" Concertina* (Duffield, [Derbyshire]: Free-Reed Press, 1974), and Alf Edwards, *Wheatstone's Instructions for the English Concertina* (London: C. Wheatstone, 1960). On the dulcimer, see Charles Seeger, "The Appalachian Dulcimer," *Journal of American Folklore*, 71 (1958), 40-51, and Jean Ritchie, *Jean Ritchie's Dulcimer People* (New York: Oak Publications, and London: Music Sales, 1975).

are "contemporary" clubs, whose programs of recently composed songs most often include pieces that bear no resemblance to traditional song. In between these extremes are a range of clubs offering both traditional and contemporary music (and sometimes other types as well), in varying proportions. There are no fixed names for these kinds of clubs. My own informants use terms such as "traditionally-based" to refer to clubs that primarily feature traditional music, and "half-and-half" for those at which the proportion of traditional and contemporary music is more or less equal. The St. Albans Folk Music Club is "traditionally-based."

The controversy over the definition of "folksong," and the division of folk clubs on a "traditional-contemporary" spectrum are characteristic of the dichotomy between traditional and contemporary song which pervades the British revival. In keeping with the bias of the St. Albans club, further discussion of the revival in this work will focus upon its "traditional" sphere.

There are a number of performance mediums in the revival, including folk festivals, records, and radio, but folk clubs are by far the most important medium.⁶ Clubs generally meet weekly or bi-weekly in the back or upstairs rooms of public houses, or "pubs." The pub is the British equivalent of the bar in North America, but, as one English visitor to the United States remarked, pubs are "friendlier"

⁶Festivals, records, and radio are treated briefly in Chapter III.

7
than bars.⁷ They are also more closely knit into the fabric of community life and less likely to cater to a particular segment of the population than bars.⁸

Historically, the social function of pubs accounts, in part, for the development of folk clubs in these institutions. Pubs have traditionally served as meeting places in British society. Their preeminence in this regard is indicated by the fact that it is common practice to refer to a folk club by the name of the pub in which it is held, rather than by its official name. In some instances, folk clubs are actually named after the pubs in which they meet.

The long tradition of singing in pubs also helps explain why folk clubs are held there. According to Michael Jackson, "There have been pub singsongs since the Anglo-Saxons 'wassailed' in their ale-houses; Shakespeare performed at inns; the music-hall was born in the Victorian public house; English pop-music has origins in the pub;

⁷ Author's notes from the Fox Hollow Folk Festival, Petersburg, New York, August 7, 1976. The comment was made by Heather Wood, an English revival singer, formerly with the well-known (now defunct) group, the Young Tradition.

⁸ A fair amount of literature exists on pubs; some of the more helpful works are: The Pub and the People: A Worktown Study, an excellent study by "Mass-Observation" (London: Victor Gollancz, 1943); H.A. Monckton, A History of the English Public House (London: Bodley Head, 1969), and Michael Jackson's glossy but informative book, The English Pub (Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1976).

Folk clubs are also held in inns and hotels, establishments which offer lodging as well as drink. See A.E. Richardson and H. Donaldson Eberlein, The English Inn Past and Present: A Review of Its History and Social Life (1925; rpt. New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1968).

and the London theatre's fringe is there, too."⁹ Today this tradition of pub singing is carried out in a number of ways. In addition to folk clubs, there are British country and western singers in pubs, piano and organ players, the occasional "impromptu singsong,"¹⁰ and so forth. Jazz clubs, the predecessors of folk clubs (see Chapter III), were often held in pubs. Thus, it was logical for folk clubs to develop in the same locale.¹¹

Finally, pubs have extra rooms which can be reserved by particular groups, either free of charge, or at a reasonable price. Having a separate room permits those running a club not only to regulate the amount of extraneous noise tolerable from patrons, but to charge an admission fee as well, in order to cover expenses.

The size of folk club rooms obviously varies from pub to pub, but they are generally small enough so that microphones -- which in any case would be beyond the financial means of most clubs -- are

⁹ Jackson, p. 131.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Clubs in general are a pervasive part of British life, and this helps explain the development of clubs as the primary performance outlets in both the jazz and folksong revivals. I have been able to find no study which looks at the phenomenon of clubs as a whole. Various types of clubs are discussed in: "Mass-Observation," The Pub and the People, cited above; Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, The Long Week-End: A Social History of Great Britain, 1918-1939 (1940; rpt. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1963); B. Seeborn Rowntree and G.R. Layers, English Life and Leisure: A Social Study (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1951), and Richard Hoggart, "Changes in Working-Class Life," in Michael A. Smith, Stanley Parker, and Cyril S. Smith, Leisure and Society in Britain (London: Allen Lane, 1973), pp. 28-39.

unnecessary.¹² Chairs in folk clubs are usually arranged in rows; tables may be placed among the rows of chairs. If there is no formal stage, a portion of the room will be used for that purpose.

A folk club is normally run by an organizer (or organizers), responsible for publicity, finances, booking performers, and overall administration. Residents -- one or more of whom may also be organizers -- are regular performers at a club, who have a commitment to perform there. The average number of residents at a club is from three to five. Depending upon club policy, all may perform each week, or they may take turns performing, with one or more appearing on a given night. It is the residents' job to begin the evening's performances, and to schedule and time the floor singers and the guest. Floor singers are audience members who perform during an evening;¹³ their performances are normally limited to from one to three songs or tunes. The artist booked for a particular evening is known as the guest. Guests are usually the only performers who receive any pay, although floor singers are frequently admitted free of charge, or refunded their admittance fee.

¹²Of course, when electronically amplified instruments are used, microphones are necessary for vocal amplification. In addition, microphones are a regular feature in a small proportion of clubs, regardless of the type of instruments being played.

¹³The expression "floor singers" refers to the fact that these people are singers "from the floor [audience]." In some folk clubs, floor singers do actually perform from their seats in the audience; in most clubs I have attended, they use the stage area. Although some people who perform "from the floor" are primarily or solely instrumentalists, the majority do sing, hence the term, "floor singers."

Some folk clubs meet throughout the year, but a sizeable proportion close during the summer months, when a number of people take their holidays. Most clubs meet in the evening, with admittance beginning at about seven-thirty or eight o'clock, and performances starting about half an hour later. They must close at ten-thirty or eleven, when pubs are required by law to shut down for the night. An evening at a folk club is usually divided into two "halves," each approximately an hour and a quarter long. Residents perform first, as noted above, after which the guest appears. The guest performs for about half an hour. Next is the "interval," or "break," lasting approximately fifteen minutes. The basic sequence of the first half is then repeated. In one or both halves the floor singers will be presented, often between the performances of the residents and the guest.

Many folk clubs hold weekly raffles for a record, or bottle of wine. Raffle tickets are available upon entering the club, and at the interval. The raffle is drawn sometime during the second half of the evening. Some folk clubs have a second prize in the raffle of free admission the following week.

The above description of the British folk club presents the typical, but there are numerous exceptions. Some clubs have no official organizer, and other people share the administrative duties. There are also folk clubs at which there are no residents. Lacking local performers willing and able to handle this position, these clubs rely upon floor singers to fill those portions of the evening when the guest is not performing. Other clubs, often because of financial

limitations, do not book guests every week. In addition, there are folk clubs whose basic social structure differs from that described above. These "singaround," or "singers'," clubs have neither residents nor guests. They depend entirely upon the performers who attend on a given night.

Having outlined some characteristics of the British folk-song revival, it is now possible to question whether or not this revival is of legitimate concern to academic folklorists. I believe that it is. However, as will be seen below, the British revival has received almost no attention from folklore scholars; I therefore feel that it is necessary to elaborate upon my reasons for considering this movement as part of the domain of folklore studies. In other words, it must be shown that revivalists are "folk," and that their activities constitute "folklore," in some accepted sense of these terms.

Revivalists, who are primarily an urban, heterogeneous, middle class group, clearly contrast with older concepts of "the folk." These concepts were synthesized and clarified by Robert Redfield, who characterized the "ideal folk society" as "small, isolated, nonliterate, and homogeneous," with a behavior system which is "traditional, spontaneous, and uncritical."¹⁴ Concomitant with this definition are the

¹⁴Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," American Journal of Sociology, 52 (1947), 297, 300.

requirements that the lore be transmitted orally "from generation to generation,"¹⁵ and not traceable to an individual author. Here, too, the revival conflicts with the folk ideal: revivalists rely heavily upon printed sources, and recent compositions whose authors are known are a standard part of the repertoire.

In recent years, however, this idealized notion of folk society has given way to the concept of "folk groups." A folk group "can refer to any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor."¹⁶ The nature of the "linking or isolating factor"¹⁷ is unimportant; what is considered significant is that the group have "some traditions which it calls its own."¹⁸ Thus, people related by occupational, religious, linguistic, national, regional, or familial bonds all qualify as folk groups. Fittingly, the traditions which bind these groups no longer must be oral, anonymous, and of great age in order to be considered folklore.

Application of the folk group concept can be seen in many recent studies by folklorists. The lore of smokejumpers, urban blacks, middle class office workers, and even folklorists themselves has been

¹⁵ Gertrude P. Kurath, "Folklore," in Maria Leach, ed., Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1972), p. 401, and Archer Taylor, "Folklore," in Leach, p. 402.

¹⁶ Alan Dundes, "The American Concept of Folklore," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 3 (1966), 232.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid. On the concept of "traditions" in folklore studies, see Chapter II, page 85.

examined. Individual "folk poets" have been studied as participants in a folksong tradition. Attention has also been paid to the role of print, as well as electronic mass media, in some traditions.¹⁹

According to these more recent views, the revival appears to be an appropriate area for folklore study. Revivalists, although a loosely-knit group, have certain common traditions, such as folk clubs. Subgroups within the movement share attitudes about "folk music." A particular club has many traditions, some of which are similar to those found in other clubs, and some of which are unique. These traditions include such things as the number of residents who perform each week, the time during the evening when floor singers are presented and the number of items they are permitted to perform, the duties carried

¹⁹On the folklore of smokejumpers, see Robert S. McCarl, "Smokejumper Initiation: Ritualized Communication a Modern Occupation," *Journal of American Folklore*, 89 (1976), 49-66; on urban blacks, see Roger D. Abrahams, *Deep Down in the Jungle: Negro Narrative Folklore from the Streets of Philadelphia* (rev. ed.; Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1970); on office workers, see Alan Dundes and Carl R. Pagter, *Urban Folklore from the Paperwork Empire*, Publications of the American Folklore Society: Memoir Series, Vol. 62 (Austin: American Folklore Society, 1975); on the folklore of folklorists, see Richard A. Reuss, "'That Can't Be Alan Dundes! Alan Dundes Is Taller than That!' The Folklore of Folklorists," *Journal of American Folklore*, 87 (1974), 303-317; on folk poets, see Edward D. Ives' two books, *Larry Gorman: The Man Who Made the Songs* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), and Lawrence Doyle: *The Farmer Poet of Prince Edward Island*, University of Maine Studies, No. 92 (Orono: University of Maine Press, 1971), and Henry Glassie, Edward D. Ives, and John F. Szwed, *Folksongs and Their Makers* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, n.d.); on the interplay between print and folksong see Rainer Wehse, "Broadside Ballad and Folksong: Oral Tradition Versus Literary Tradition," *Folklore Forum*, 8 (1975), 324/2-334/12, and on the importance of mass media in folklore, see Ed Kahn, "Folklore: A Sub-Discipline of Media Studies?" *John Edwards Memorial Foundation Quarterly*, 6 (1970), 2-5.

out by specific individuals running the club, and the policy regarding the type or types of music featured.

Yet revivalists differ from other "folk groups" in one way, which, for some folklorists, would place the revival well outside the realm of folklore studies. Folklore has long been considered to be "unconsciously" -- or more accurately, "unself-consciously" -- produced and utilized within a group.²⁰ The British folksong revival, however, is an extremely self-conscious phenomenon. A "revival," by definition, involves the self-conscious use of customs and values which may have, "for all practical purposes, died out"²¹ in their natural environment. Such a movement can be viewed within the general framework of "revitalization movements." Wallace defines a revitalization movement as "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfactory culture."²² As will be discussed in Chapter IV, many revivalists have seen traditional music as providing an alternative to other types of music, particularly that produced by the pop music industry. In addition, traditional music used in the revival is often deliberately changed. For example, revival performers frequently locate several variants of a traditional song, and select portions of each, thus creating a new, "composite" variant.

²⁰ See Dundes, "The American Concept of Folklore," 233.

²¹ Ibid., 234.

²² Anthony F.C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements: Some Theoretical Considerations for Their Comparative Study," American Anthropologist, 58 (1956), 265.

For those folklore scholars who agree with Alan Dundes' statement that "Materials which are consciously contrived and altered . . . would be literary or popular rather than folk,"²³ the deliberateness of the revival disqualifies it as a topic of concern. However, I would argue that upon closer examination, there is no logical basis for confining the discipline of folklore to those materials which have been unself-consciously produced. The idea that folklore is "spontaneous" stems, like the requirements of anonymity of composition, oral transmission, and antiquity, from the Redfieldian concept of "the folk," who were characterized by their "simplicity." Like these other criteria, unself-consciousness is "circumstantial and not essential to folklore."²⁴ There is, in fact, nothing intrinsic to the newer definitions of folklore which precludes the existence of conscious thought in folk activities.²⁵

Moreover, recent research has shown that folklore in general may not be as spontaneously produced as earlier scholars thought. For example, in "Individual Choice and the Control of Musical Change," Pandora Hopkins demonstrates "the importance of intentionality as a

²³"The American Concept of Folklore," 233.

²⁴Dan Ben-Amos, "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context," Journal of American Folklore, 84 (1971), 4.

²⁵Dan Ben-Amos defines folklore as "artistic communication in small groups" ("Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context," 13); according to Roger D. Abrahams, "Folklore is all conventional expressive devices available for performance and the achievement of performer status within a socially bounded group." ("Personal Power and Social Restraint in the Definition of Folklore," Journal of American Folklore, 84 [1971], 28).

determining factor in the occurrence (or non-occurrence) of change in music."²⁶ Folklorists must also begin to take account of the fact that "the evolution of man is moving in a direction towards more, rather than less, consciousness and awareness of culture" (Dundes, "The American Concept of Folklore," 234). If unself-conscious production continues to be used as a criterion for the existence of folklore, folklore scholars will once again be relegated to the collection of disappearing survivals.²⁷ This concept should, therefore, be discarded. Hence, we can conclude that the British revival is an appropriate topic for folklore study.

As noted above, the revival in Britain has received almost no recognition from professional folklorists, or indeed, from any social scientists. Most revival studies deal with the movement in America. This literature is of relevance here, however, not only because there are some ideological similarities between the American and British revivals, but also because the American revival has affected the development of the revival in Britain. This influence will be discussed in Chapter III.

Scholars have been studying aspects of the American revival since 1953, when John Greenway's American Folksongs of Protest was published.²⁸ This "pioneer work"²⁹ examines the relationship of music

²⁶ Journal of American Folklore, 89 (1976), 450.

²⁷ Ben-Amos makes a similar point regarding the criterion of "tradition" in "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context," 14.

²⁸ Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

²⁹ R. Serge Denisoff, Great Day Coming: Folk Music and the American Left (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), p. 9.

and social movements, mainly prior to the 1930's; it is also concerned with four writers of protest songs. Although Greenway's book does not deal with the American revival of the 1930's and 1940's per se, it discusses material and performers of significance to that movement. As well, this was the first in-depth academic treatment of "folksongs" of protest,³⁰ which played an important role in the American revival during the thirties and forties, as well as in the sixties. Thus, Greenway opened the way for other scholars to focus directly on aspects of this revival.³¹

Later works tend to follow one of two closely related paths, both of which can be seen in American Folksongs of Protest. First, research is historical in nature and broad in scope. Emphasis is usually on the earlier period of the revival, and its Communist

³⁰Greenway defines a folksong as "a song concerned with the interests of the folk, and in the complete possession of the folk." To Greenway, the "modern folk" are "most often the unskilled worker, less often the skilled worker in industrial occupations" (9). However, he notes that not all the songs in his collection are "folksongs" according to this definition, defending their inclusion on the grounds that "since most of these [songs] are on the periphery of folksong, there is a possibility that some of them may yet be taken over by the folk." Greenway employs the "folk" criterion of unself-consciousness in his defense as well, stating that these songs "are of interest also in establishing that amorphous line that separates folk material from conscious art" (9 n.).

³¹Prior to Greenway's study, Alan Lomax and others had collected from performers active in the revival of the thirties and forties, like Woody Guthrie (Denisoff, Great Day Coming, p. 70). Some of this material was published, in collections like John and Alan Lomax's Our Singing Country (New York: Macmillan Co., 1941). As well, in 1953, the year Greenway's book was published, musicologist Charles Seeger wrote a brief article containing suggestions on the use of "Folk Music in the Schools of a Highly Industrialised Society" (Journal of the International Folk Music Council, 5 [1953], 40-44).

associations. Denisoff, Reuss, Patterson, and Stekert have done work on the historical aspect of the revival.³² The second group of studies is concerned specifically with protest songs. This research covers a wide spectrum of material, from outside as well as within the revival, and from early manifestations of the genre through developments in the 1960's. Denisoff in particular has done extensive work on protest songs, and, in a recent study, Rodnitzky considered the role of the "folk-protest" singer of the 1960's as cultural hero.³³

The performers discussed in most studies have mainly been leading figures in the revival. This is a function of the broad

³² See R. Serge Denisoff's Great Day Coming; his "Folk Music and the American Left," in R. Serge Denisoff and Richard A. Peterson, eds., The Sounds of Social Change (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1972), pp. 105-120, and his "Folk Consciousness: People's Music and American Communism," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Simon Fraser University, 1970; Richard A. Reuss' "American Folksongs and Left-Wing Politics: 1935-56," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 12 (1975), 89-111; his "The Roots of American Left-Wing Interest in Folk Song," Labor History, 12 (1971), 259-279, and his "American Folklore and Left-Wing Politics: 1927-1957," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1971; John S. Patterson, "The Folksong Revival and Some Sources of the Popular Image of the Folksinger: 1920-1963," unpublished master's thesis, Indiana University, 1963, and Ellen J. Stekert, "Cents and Nonsense in the Urban Folksong Movement: 1930-1966," in Bruce Jackson, ed., Folklore and Society: Essays in Honor of Benjamin A. Botkin (Hatboro, Pa.: Folklore Associates, 1966), pp. 153-168.

³³ Jerome L. Rodnitzky, Minstrels of the Dawn: The Folk-Protest Singer as a Cultural Hero (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1976); Denisoff's writings of protest songs include Sing a Song of Social Significance (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1972); "The Evolution of the American Protest Song," in Denisoff and Peterson, pp. 15-25, and Songs of Protest: War and Peace: A Bibliography and Discography (rev. ed.; Santa Barbara: American Bibliographical Center-Clio Press, 1973).

historical approach, which has concentrated on the movement's major developments. Very little research has been done on local, typical, or recent aspects of the American revival. Exceptions to this include works by Kaplan and Sanders.³⁴ Kaplan, in the early 1950's, studied a folksinging group from the San Francisco Bay area; some twenty years later, Sanders dealt with performers in "Chicago's vigorous professional 'folk scene'." (265). In addition, I. Sheldon Posen's master's thesis, "Song and Singing Traditions at Children's Summer Camps," contains a section on the interrelationship of the American folksong revival and camp singing.³⁵

A few folklorists, notably Richard M. Dorson, have been concerned with the revival, not as a field of study, but in terms of its negative effects upon the development of folklore as a discipline. Most of this material dates from the 1960's, when folklore was still experiencing difficulty in establishing itself as an academic discipline.³⁶

³⁴Clinton R. Sanders, "Psyching Out the Crowd: Folk Performers and Their Audiences," Urban Life and Culture, 3 (1974), 264-282; Arlene E. Kaplan, "A Study of Folksinging in a Mass Society," Sociologus, 5 (1955), 14-28. Kaplan's article is actually an abstract of her master's thesis of the same title, submitted to the University of California, Berkeley, in 1954.

³⁵Unpublished, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1974, pp. 37-49.

³⁶For example, see Dorson's "Folklore in Higher Education," New York Folklore Quarterly, 18 (1962), 44-54, and his "The American Folklore Scene, 1963," Folklore, 74 (1963), 433-449. Also see Tristram P. Coffin, "Image of the Folklorist," New York Folklore Quarterly, 18 (1962), 39-43.

Publications about the American revival produced outside the realms of scholarship include those by revivalists themselves, as well as those by right-wing authors, who have viewed folksinging in general as a Communist conspiracy. Many of these right-wing documents were published in the 1960's, but the attitudes they express hark back to the Communist "witch-hunts" of the McCarthy era, during the early 1950's.³⁷

To the best of my knowledge, only one academic study treats the British revival in an in-depth manner. Trevor L. Fisher's master's thesis, "The Radical Revival,"³⁸ covers "counter-cultural" musical movements³⁹ in both Britain and the United States, from the 1930's to the

³⁷ Revivalist publications include Josh Dunson, Freedom in the Air: Song Movements of the Sixties (New York: International Publishers, 1965); articles by Pete Seeger, Sandy Paton, and John Cohen, among others, in David A. DeTurk and A. Poulin, Jr., eds., The American Folk Scene: Dimensions of the Folksong Revival (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1967), and numerous articles in the American folksong revival magazine, Sing Out!, since its inception in 1950. For example, see Alan Lomax, "The 'Folkniks' and the Songs They Sing," 9 (Summer 1959), 30-31, and John Cohen, "A Reply to Alan Lomax: In Defense of City Folksingers," 9 (Summer 1959), 32-34. Extreme right-wing views are found in David A. Noebel, Rhythm, Riots and Revolution (Tulsa, Okla.: Christian Crusade Publications, 1966), and Jere Real, "Folk Music and Red Tubthumpers," American Opinion, 7 (Dec. 1964), 19-24. For a general survey and criticism of publications on the revival, see R. Serge Denisoff, "Folk Music and the American Communist Movement: A Case of Historical Confusion," in Gary B. Rush and R. Serge Denisoff, eds., Social and Political Movements (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971), pp. 28-34. This article, with minor alterations, appears as "Urban Folk Music 'Movement' Research: Value Free?" in Denisoff, Sing a Song of Social Significance, pp. 40-47.

³⁸ Unpublished master's thesis, University of Birmingham, 1973. Used by permission.

³⁹ See Jens Lund and R. Serge Denisoff, "The Folk Music Revival and the Counter Culture: Contributions and Contradictions," Journal of American Folklore, 84 (1971), 394-405.

early 1970's; included are the jazz, blues, and rock movements, as well as the British and American folksong revivals. Fisher, a student of contemporary culture, describes "the dialectic of action and reaction" between these various "counter-cultural impulses and the wider popular culture" (394). He concludes that, with the possible exception of the British folksong revival, each of these "somewhat incoherent and culturally naive rebellions" against "admass culture" have failed "to develop a distinctive popular genre"⁴⁰ because of their association with, and subsequent re-assimilation into, admass culture. Fisher sees admass culture as primarily exploitive, although he acknowledges that those outside "the commercial elite"⁴¹ have some control over the industry.

"The Radical Revival" synthesizes a large body of information not previously compiled, but its value as a reference work is limited severely by the author's approach to the topic, and the level of scholarship exhibited. Fisher attempts to "describe a historical process" as well as "to contribute to a debate" on "the nature and development of popular culture" (394). However, instead of presenting his data and drawing logical conclusions from it, he editorializes, giving his personal opinions concurrently with factual information. For instance, in discussing a press release of an LP of British folksong, Fisher states, "Polydor's [the record company] idea of 'skilful and conscientious handling' [of the recording] . . . make me want to retch" (386). As

⁴⁰p. 395.

⁴¹p. i.

a result of such editorializing, the thesis fails to accomplish fully either of his aims.

There are also several factual errors in this study: the Copper cousins, singers from Rottingdean, Sussex, are cited as "the Copper Brothers . . . of Nottingdean in Kent," and Bert Jansch and John Renbourne, performers of contemporary music, are referred to at one point as "Bert Jonson and John Benbourne" (355, 358). Citation, too, is inadequate. There is a lack of sufficient footnoting, and no bibliography. These and other stylistic flaws render the thesis tedious to read and frustrating to use as a source for further research. The reader interested in Fisher's theories regarding counter-cultural movements and popular culture is advised to refer to his earlier, We're Only in It for the Money: A Discussion of Folk Song and Popular Culture, a pamphlet directed primarily at revivalists.⁴²

The relationship between pop and counter-culture is taken up again in The Electric Muse: The Story of Folk into Rock,⁴³ but from a different perspective. Written by four prominent music critics on the periphery of the revivals in the United States and Britain, the book "traces the myriad forms taken by what has been loosely called the 'folk revival' and examines its effects on the dominant popular music of the period [from the mid 1950's to the mid 1970's], rock."⁴⁴ Unlike Fisher,

⁴²n.p., [1972].

⁴³Dave Laing and others (London: Eyre Methuen, 1975).

⁴⁴Dave Laing, "Introduction," in Laing and others, p. 1.

the authors see the assimilation of folk with the more commercial idiom of rock in a positive light. In fact, they are generally critical of the "insularity" of those revivalists who have opposed such integration. One essay in this book, "The Roots of Tradition," by Karl Dallas (83-136), is of particular value to students of the British revival, primarily for its useful historical material on the revival's early development.

"The Radical Revival" and The Electric Muse, like many of the American studies mentioned above, take a broad, historical approach to the revival. In contrast to this, Justin Mackenzie's recent article, "A Note on the Sociology of Traditional Song," published in the British folksong revival magazine, Folk Review,⁴⁵ concentrates on traditional song within the social context of folk clubs. Mackenzie argues that although "the folk club may be seen as just another social venue, it possesses a sociological importance of a significantly greater stature" (27). The importance of folk clubs, according to Mackenzie, lies largely in their successful "social integration" of people of different social classes and ages. He also considers the significance to audience members of both the music performed, and the atmosphere engendered, in folk clubs (24-25/27).

At first glance, it seems as if folklorists have ignored the British revival entirely. Yet, although I know of no folklore study which focuses directly on this revival, it has served as a source of

⁴⁵ (Aug. 1976), 23-25, 27. For a general description of Folk Review and other revival publications, see Chapter III, pages 81-82.

informants and texts, specifically in monologue studies. Performance in the revival consists mainly of songs, and secondarily of instrumental music. Some performers, however, include humorous monologues in their repertoires. Three of the contributors to a special issue of Southern Folklore Quarterly, "Monologues and Folk Recitation,"⁴⁶ deal in some way with the use of monologues in the revival. Kenneth S. Goldstein, in his survey article of monologues and monologuists,⁴⁷ mentions folk clubs and festivals as types of formal public settings for the performance of monologues, and describes the monologue's role in the repertoires of revivalists. The texts analyzed in Edward K. Miller's article, "Symbol, License and Poetic Localization in British Humorous Monologues" (31-58), were all collected from revival performers. And the monologist portrayed in Roger deV. Renwick's "Two Yorkshire Poets: A Comparative Study" (239-281), performs mainly in his local folksong clubs.

These three articles, while they deal only marginally with the revival, nonetheless indicate a willingness among folklorists to accept the activities, participants, and artistic products of this movement as "folk." Direct and detailed study of the British folksong revival -- outside of the present work -- seems close at hand.

In choosing the topic for this study, I was influenced by the nature and scope of previous investigation. The distinct lack of

⁴⁶40, Nos. 1/2 (Mar. - June 1976).

⁴⁷"Monologue Performance in Great Britain," 7-27.

detailed studies on either the British or American revivals, combined with my own predilection to work with a small number of informants, guided me toward designing a study of smaller scope than most of those done previously. Originally I had planned to concentrate primarily on one singer, but later altered my topic to the study of a folk club. Reasons for this shift in focus will be considered in the next chapter.

I decided to approach the topic from the point of view of my informants. This perspective is a useful one under any circumstance, because it can result in some interesting insights that might otherwise be overlooked. However, where there is little prior research, as was the case here, I believe that obtaining the insider's point of view is especially important. As Ben-Amos has pointed out, the a priori application of analytical constructs to ethnic genres may result in misinterpretation.⁴⁸ Yet analytical classifications which can applied cross-culturally are necessary to folklore studies. This dilemma can be partially resolved by first acquiring knowledge of a group's cognitive system. Later analysis which takes this point of view into account will be less prone to error.

In order to arrive at an insider's point of view, I employed the methodology of ethnoscience. The theoretical base of ethnoscience and specific procedures used in my field research are described in Chapter II. The remainder of the thesis is organized as

⁴⁸"Analytical Categories and Ethnic Genres," Genre, 2 (1969), 275-301.

follows: Chapters III and IV deal, respectively, with the history and ideology of the British folksong revival; the emphasis in both chapters, as noted earlier, is on the revival's "traditional" sphere. In order to acquaint the reader with the history, location, and activities of the St. Albans Folk Music Club, Chapter V presents a brief discussion of each. Chapter VI outlines the formal and informal roles people assume within the club; Chapter VII examines how performers are classified apart from their club role. In Chapter VIII, the importance of the "atmosphere," or overall mood of the club on a particular night, is considered, and in Chapter IX, the way in which informants classify, select, and use their repertoires is discussed. Chapter X, the concluding chapter, draws together and examines some points made in previous chapters.

II

METHODOLOGY AND FIELDWORK

As noted in the previous chapter, I chose the methodology of ethnoscience in order to gain an insider's view of the St. Albans Folk Music Club. The first section of this chapter describes ethnoscience, defining some of its basic concepts, and briefly examining some parallels between concepts in ethnoscience and folklore. The second section deals with my fieldwork experiences, including the techniques used to gather information, and some problems encountered in collecting and collating data. This section also contains an explanation of the way in which quotations from tape recorded material have been handled in the text.

• Methodological Theory

Ethnoscience, also called "ethnographic semantics," and the "New Ethnography," is a branch of ethnography wherein the basic aim is "to discover the characteristic ways a people categorize, code, and define their own experience."¹ The concept that native cognition is important

¹James P. Spradley and David W. McCurdy, The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in Complex Society (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1972), p. viii. The discussion of ethnoscience presented in this thesis is understandably brief and incomplete. More detailed information can be found in the above work, and in: William C. Sturtevant, "Studies in Ethnoscience," in James P. Spradley, ed., Culture and Cognition: Rules, Maps, and Plans (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1972), pp. 129-167; Charles O. Frake, "The

has roots in the anthropology of Franz Boas,² but it is only recently that the complex theory and rigorous methodology of ethnoscience has been developed.

Central to ethnoscience is the concept of culture as knowledge, rather than as behavior or artifacts. Specifically, culture is defined as "the knowledge people use to generate and interpret social behavior" (Spradley and McCurdy, The Cultural Experience, 8). The culture of any society or group "consists of whatever it is one has

Ethnographic Study of Cognitive Systems," in Stephen A. Tyler, ed., Cognitive Anthropology (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), pp. 28-41; Harold C. Conklin, "Lexicographical Treatment of Folk Taxonomies," in Tyler, pp. 41-59; Stephen A. Tyler, "Introduction," in Tyler, pp. 1-23; Ward H. Goodenough, "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics," in Dell Hymes, ed., Language in Culture and Society: A Reader in Linguistics and Anthropology (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 36-39; Paul Kay, "Comments on Colby," in Tyler, pp. 78-90, and Brent Berlin, Dennis E. Breedlove, and Peter H. Raven, "Covert Categories and Folk Taxonomies," American Anthropologist, 70 (1968), 290-299. Further references may be found in Harold C. Conklin, Folk Classification: A Topically Arranged Bibliography of Contemporary and Background References through 1971 (New Haven: Department of Anthropology, Yale University, 1972). For a critical view of ethnoscience, see Marvin Harris, "Emics, Etics, and the New Ethnography," in his The Rise of Anthropological Theory (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1968), pp. 568-604.

² Franz Boas, the "father" of modern American anthropology, lived from 1858-1942. Additional information on the anthropology of Boas can be found in Ronald P. Rohner, "Franz Boas: Ethnographer on the Northwest Coast," in June Helm, ed., Pioneers of Anthropology (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), pp. 149-212; Walter Goldschmidt, ed., The Anthropology of Franz Boas, Memoir No. 89 of the American Anthropological Association (San Francisco: American Anthropological Association and Howard Chandler, 1959), and Helen Codere, "Introduction," in Franz Boas, Kwakiutl Ethnography, ed. Helen Codere (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. xi-xxxii. The reader interested in pursuing Boas' own work should consult H.A. Andrews and others, "Bibliography of Franz Boas," in A.L. Kroeber and others, Franz Boas: 1858-1942, Memoir No. 61 of the American Anthropological Association (n.p.: American Anthropological Association, 1943), pp. 67-109.

to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members," or "the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them" (Goodenough, "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics," 36). Behaviors and their resultant artifacts are seen as the products or by-products of a culture, rather than as the culture itself (Goodenough, "Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics," 36). An investigator operating within the bounds of this definition therefore concentrates upon discovering the mental "forms of things," or "cultural knowledge," of a people, rather than its patterns of behavior or material culture.

Of course, in any group, no matter how homogeneous, individual members have varying perceptions, concepts, and attitudes. But in spite of these individual variations, all groups, whether pagan societies, religious groups, or university students, share varying degrees of cultural knowledge. It is important to note that cultural knowledge depends largely upon the specific group (formal or informal) to which an individual belongs, and not simply the social situation or situations in which interaction occurs. As Spradley has shown, urban nomads, or "tramps," appearing in court for some offense, have a very different "definition of the situation" than the judges who hear these cases.³

³James P. Spradley, You Owe Yourself a Drunk: An Ethnography of Urban Nomads (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1970), Chapter 6 (171-192). Also see his "Beating the Drunk Charge," in James P. Spradley and David W. McCurdy, eds., Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology (2nd ed.; Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974), pp. 377-384.

The cultural knowledge of any group is organized, and its meaning discovered "by grasping the underlying pattern, the implicit frame of reference that people have learned" (Spradley and McCurdy, The Cultural Experience, 59). One of the key elements within this pattern is the category. Categories are simply classifications of objects, events, behavior, and the like, with regard to their perceived similarities to, and differences from, other phenomena. People make sense out of the vast amount of stimuli they receive each day by learning to treat certain things as if they were equivalent to one another. That is, they organize their experience so as to be able to cope with it:

We classify because life in a world where nothing was the same would be intolerable. It is through naming and classification that the whole rich world of infinite variability shrinks to manipulable size and becomes bearable. Our methods of classification are entirely arbitrary and subjective. There is nothing in the external world which demands that certain things go together and others do not. It is our perception of similarities and differences . . . that determine which things go together. We not only react to certain discriminable stimuli as if they were the same, we name them and organize them into groupings (Tyler, "Introduction," 7).

Most, although not all, categories have names. Conventionally named categories are known as "segregates"; unnamed groupings are sometimes referred to as "covert categories."⁴

Just as raw experience is organized into categories, categories are organized in relation to each other. Certain clusters

⁴See the article on covert categories by Berlin, Breedlove, and Raven, cited above (p. 28, footnote 1).

of categories will be perceived as being similar in some way by a particular group of people. Such a set of categories, "all of which share at least one feature in common which differentiates them"⁵ from other sets, is known as a "semantic domain," or "domain." Relationships between categories in a domain may be on a part-to-whole or sequential basis; however, the type of relationship described most in the literature is inclusion of reference. A "sedan," for example, is a type of "car," which is, in turn, a type of "motor vehicle." The hierarchical structure used to represent a group of categories related by inclusion is called a "taxonomy" (see Table 1).⁶ Categories at one hierarchical level are mutually exclusive, "but when included in the same higher level category are somehow like one another."⁷ A "tractor-trailer" cannot be a "pickup" truck, yet both share certain features which make them types of "trucks." Terms such as "tractor-trailer" and "pickup" truck, or "convertible" and "station wagon," form "contrast sets." A contrast set is a class of mutually exclusive categories, all of which are "immediately dominated by"⁸ the same general category. The members of a contrast set are said to be in "restricted contrast"⁹

⁵Tyler, "Introduction," p. 8.

⁶While it is universally accepted that taxonomies can be used to represent "type of" relationships, they have also occasionally been used to represent other hierarchical relations, such as those of a "part-to-whole" nature.

⁷Tyler, "Arrangements: Introduction," in Tyler, p. 26.

⁸Kay, p. 87.

⁹Conklin, "Lexicographical Treatment of Folk Taxonomies," p. 48.

Table 1: Partial taxonomy of motor vehicles

Motor vehicle	Truck	Pickup
		Tractor-trailer
	Bus	Single decker
		Double decker
	Car	Sedan
		Station wagon

with one another: the differences between them are "significant for defining their use" (Frake, "The Ethnographic Study of Cognitive Systems," 33). Categories which are mutually exclusive as well as completely dissimilar, such as "snow" and "pencil," are in "total contrast."¹⁰

A taxonomy indicates the categories in a domain, and shows how they are related to one another. For any term in the domain, it is possible to determine the categories it includes, those with which it is in restricted contrast, and the category immediately dominating the contrast set. Such a taxonomic definition does not, however, indicate the attributes, or "dimensions of contrast," used (by members of a cultural group) to distinguish a particular category from the other members of its contrast set. The process of "finding significant differences in meaning among a set of terms"¹¹ is known as "componential analysis." This procedure results in a set of culturally relevant rules by which newly encountered items can be placed in their proper category within the contrast set.¹² These rules may be plotted on a grid, with

¹⁰Ibid. The characteristics of taxonomies outlined here are those of "model," or "regular," taxonomies. As Conklin has noted, folk classification systems frequently do not exhibit all the traits of such model structures ("Lexicographical Treatment of Folk Taxonomies," 49). For example, in my own research, I sometimes found that members of a contrast set were not mutually exclusive.

¹¹Spradley, You Owe Yourself a Drunk, p. 76.

¹²Researchers differ in their opinions as to whether componential analysis should be "psychologically valid" or "structurally valid." The proponents of the latter point of view drop, at this stage of research, "the requirement that an ethnoscientific analysis should

the terms in restricted contrast listed vertically on the left-hand side, and the dimensions of contrast placed horizontally across the top.¹³ A componential definition of the categories included in the domain "car" (on the next lowest hierarchical level) would tell us how each type of car is distinguished from any other. Some features common to more than one type of car would also be revealed.

To date, ethnoscience has been applied most fruitfully in kinship studies; other areas of application include medicine, botany, verbal behavior, law, witchcraft, and color terminology. In addition, Spradley has made an extensive study of urban nomads. Ethnoscience has also been used in combination with other anthropological approaches.¹⁴

Some parallels can be drawn between concepts in ethnoscience and folklore, which make the ethnoscientific approach especially useful in folklore studies. The "folk group," as defined in this thesis, is

reflect the cognitive world of the bearers of the culture being analyzed," and concentrate instead on "predictability, economy, and inclusiveness" (Sturtevant, 141-142). Because I believe that culturally relevant componential analyses can add significantly to the understanding of a culture, I chose to maintain the goal of psychological validity throughout my research.

¹³There are other methods of mapping componential definitions. See, for example, Tyler, "Introduction," pp. 9-11.

¹⁴For listings of some representative studies using ethnoscience, see Sturtevant, pp. 146-157, and Conklin's bibliography, Folk Classification. In addition, newer works by Basso, Gossen, and Spradley are listed in the Selected Bibliography of this thesis. Ethnoscience has been combined with other anthropological perspectives in James P. Spradley and Brenda J. Mann, The Cocktail Waitress: Woman's Work in a Man's World (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975).

very similar to the "cultural group" of ethnosience.¹⁵ A folk group is a group of people who, on the basis of some common experience, share "traditions." A cultural group is a group which, on the basis of some common experience, share "cultural knowledge."

The difference between "traditions" and "cultural knowledge" is one of emphasis rather than kind. Folklorists have tended to focus mainly on traditional behavior or its products, whereas ethnoscientists have concentrated on cognitive traditions, or patterns of perception and thought which are shared and passed on from one generation to another. Because thought guides behavior, neither approach can entirely exclude one or the other of these factors from its consideration. The knowledge gained from each type of study can enrich the other. Throughout this thesis, I have tried to show the interrelation between the thought and behavior of my informants, in order to benefit from both approaches.

Fieldwork

Originally, as mentioned earlier, I had planned to focus on a singer rather than a folksong club. The performer I chose is Frankie Armstrong. Frankie, a semi-professional living in London, is well-known among revivalists interested in traditional music (although she is not one of the "big names" of the British revival).¹⁶ I met her during my

¹⁵The term "cultural group" is taken from Spradley and McCurdy (The Cultural Experience, 23, 52). While the concept of the "cultural group" is standard in the literature on ethnosience, the term itself is infrequently used.

¹⁶See Ethel Raim, "An Interview with Frankie Armstrong," Part I, Sing Out!, 23 (May - June 1974), 6-8, 11-12, 16; Part II, 23.

first trip to England in 1972. Frankie's repertoire, style, and attitudes toward both of these are of particular interest to me, academically as well as aesthetically.

After drafting a brief thesis proposal, I wrote to Frankie and asked her permission to do such a study, explaining what it entailed. She replied that although she would be happy to participate in the research, her schedule did not leave her enough time to act as principal informant. When I discussed Frankie's response with my supervisor, Neil V. Rosenberg, he recommended that I change the topic from a single performer to a folk club. This seemed like an excellent idea: it would still permit intensive research, but from a somewhat broader perspective than would be possible in a study of a single performer. Dr. Rosenberg and I agreed that the main thrust of my research should be aimed at eliciting the cultural knowledge of the residents and organizer of the club I chose; they would probably have the most complex culture, because of their close involvement with club activities.

I informed Frankie Armstrong of the change in topic, and asked if she knew of any clubs with which I might be permitted to work. She suggested the St. Albans Folk Music Club, at which her companion, Brian Pearson, is a resident singer. I wrote to the organizer of this club, Vicki North, who replied that she had no objections to my conducting

(July - Aug. 1974), 6-9. Frankie Armstrong has appeared on a number of records, including the "solo" LPs Lovely on the Water (Topic 12TS216), and Frankie Armstrong: Songs and Ballads (Topic 12TS273). Full listings are given in the Records Cited section of this work, p. 243.

research there. However, there was one drawback to studying the St. Albans Club, which at the time I thought would be a serious one: it closes at the end of June, and does not reopen until September, although informal "workshops"¹⁷ are held weekly during July and August. Since my field research was limited to the period between mid May and early September, 1975 (when I had to resume classes at Memorial), the club would be open during less than half of my stay in England. I decided to wait until I arrived before making a final commitment.

Brian Pearson accompanied me on my first visit to the club, and introduced me to Vicki North. During the course of that evening, I also met several of the residents, who seemed quite interested in my work. When I explained that I had not yet made a definite decision to base the thesis on the St. Albans club, they tried to convince me to do so.

Following this initial visit, I looked into the possibility of studying a club I had attended on a previous trip to Britain, one which remains open throughout the summer. Although I received permission to work there, I chose the St. Albans club. Despite its apparent drawbacks, this club had two important advantages. First, there were a large number of residents (twelve), who seemed to have sufficient free time for regular interviews. The other club had only three residents, all of whom were quite busy. Second, and more important, was the

¹⁷ For a definition of "workshops" as used at the St. Albans club, see Chapter V, page 108, footnote 17.

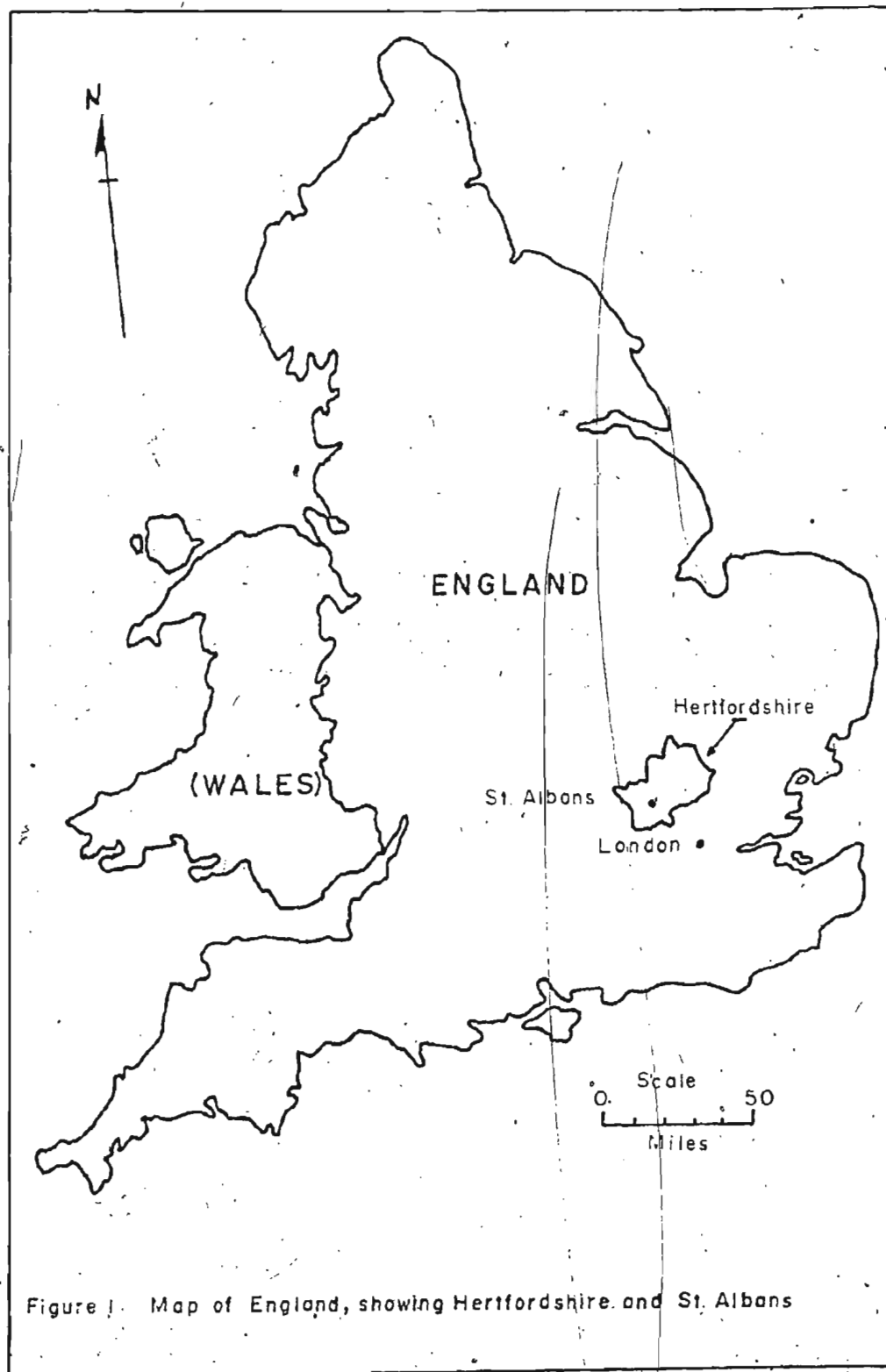
rapport that I had quickly established with the St. Albans residents, and the interest they expressed in the study.

As it turned out, the fact that the St. Albans Folk Music Club closes during the summer was not a serious drawback at all. I was able to attend six evenings at the club before the end of the season; moreover, the summer workshops often included informal discussions, which gave me more insight into my informants' cultural knowledge than the regular meetings had done.

The St. Albans Folk Music Club meets weekly during "the season," on Sunday evenings, at the Goat Inn in St. Albans. Established in 1960, it is one of the older folksong clubs in Britain. Most of the music performed at the club is British traditional. At the time of my field research, this was one of two folk clubs in St. Albans, the other being a Thursday night "singers'" club (see p. 11).

St. Albans, as noted above, is located about twenty miles from London, in the county of Hertfordshire (see Figure 1). This small city (population approximately 52,000) is typical of the surrounding region in general in that it is predominately middle class.¹⁸ Many of its residents commute to work in London, which is less than half an hour away by train. St. Albans attracts a number of tourists:

¹⁸Cf. B.E. Coates and E.M. Rawstron, Regional Variations in Britain: Studies in Economic and Social Geography (London: B.T. Batsford, 1971), especially pages 26-35.



it is the site of the ancient Roman city of Verulamium, and also of a cathedral which was formerly a Benedictine abbey.¹⁹

My fieldwork consisted of formal interviewing, acting as a participant-observer at the St. Albans Folk Music Club and related events, and keeping notes on pertinent information from informal conversations, observations, and so forth. As well, in order to obtain additional background information on the British revival, I occasionally attended other folk clubs, and interviewed people not associated with the St. Albans club. All interviews were recorded, as were most musical activities. Field notes and tape transcriptions were used in developing further lines of questioning.

During my initial interviews with residents, aside from trying to acquire some basic information about the club, I kept an eye out for a good main informant -- someone who was knowledgeable, articulate and cooperative. I chose to work chiefly with one, or possibly two, people because I felt that this would enhance the development of trust, and consequently the establishment of in-depth research. After several interviews of varying success, I found two people who can only be described as ideal main informants. Graham Goffee is a resident at the club; Jen Goffee, his wife, is not a

¹⁹For additional information on St. Albans, see Elsie Toms' three books: The Story of St. Albans (rev. ed.; Luton, Bedfordshire: White Crescent Press, 1975); The New Book of St. Albans (Chesham, Buckinghamshire: Barracuda Books, 1976), and St. Albans as It Was (Hendon Mill, Nelson, Lancashire: Hendon Publishing Co., 1973).

resident, but has frequently collected admission fees, and has also participated in other events sponsored by the club. The Goffees are articulate, easy to relate to, knowledgeable about various aspects of the club, and more than cooperative.

Like the other St. Alban's residents, the Goffees are middle class: Graham is an accountant, Jen, a homemaker. They own their own home, an attached house, and have such amenities as an automobile, a telephone, television set, and stereo system (record player, radio, and cassette tape recorder). The Goffees, both twenty-seven during the fieldwork period, have been married for several years, and have two young children, both girls.²⁰

In my research, I relied more upon Graham than Jen, because Graham's involvement with the club is greater than Jen's. But Jen's help was invaluable, since she is more familiar with some aspects of the club than Graham. Although Jen is not a resident, her cultural knowledge, gained through her own participation, and through association with Graham and other residents, closely approximates that of a resident. For research purposes, she has been treated as a member of the resident group.

In addition to working with the Goffees, I interviewed a total of eight other residents, and the organizer. As well, audience members and performers who have appeared as guests at the club were interviewed.

²⁰Photographs of Graham and Jen Goffee appear in the appendix, Figures 26 and 27 (pp. 270-271).

The techniques I used to discover my informants' cultural knowledge were derived from various readings in ethnosience; particularly helpful in this respect were James P. Spradley's You Owe Yourself a Drunk, and The Cultural Experience, by Spradley and David W. McCurdy.²¹ The latter is primarily a field guide directed specifically toward researchers employing ethnosience. Although designed to suit the needs of undergraduates, it is also useful in more advanced work. In addition, I had had some practical experience with ethnosience; this made me aware of some of the problems of its application (described below), and increased my confidence in both the methodology I had chosen and my ability to apply it effectively to a specific situation.

Basically, my research consisted of three interdependent processes: determining the categories relevant to participants in the St. Albans Folk Music Club, discovering the implicit relationships of these categories, and finding the attributes by which one category in a set is distinguished from another. Because most categories have names, I began by making note of category names. Additional terms were elicited by using previously obtained labels in question frames like, "What are all the things you do as _____?"

²¹Also helpful were: Frake, "The Ethnographic Study of Cognitive Systems," cited above; Mary B. Black and Duane Metzger, "Ethnographic Description and the Study of Law," in Tyler, pp. 137-165, and Metzger and Gerald E. Williams, "Some Procedures and Results in the Study of Native Categories: Tzeltal 'Firewood'," American Anthropologist, 68 (1966), 389-407.

Relationships among categories (as well as further category labels) were discovered by similar questions. Having been given the term "entertainer" as one type of performer, I asked if there were different types of entertainers, thereby eliciting another four categories. The frame, "Is _____ a type of _____?" was also used in determining taxonomic relationships.

Once I had discovered some of the domains of importance to the resident-organizer group, obtained a fairly complete list of the categories within these domains, and attempted to find the relationships among categories, I began to look for the distinguishing features of various categories. Some of these were obvious from previous research, but most were elicited via two specific techniques. Both techniques require the use of cards (such as filing cards), each of which contains the name of a single category.

In the first task, a pile of cards containing the category names within a certain contrast set was handed to an informant, who was asked to divide them into two or more piles, using any criteria desired. The informant was then questioned as to the reasons behind the particular groupings. This task was repeated until the informant could think of no further ways of dividing the cards.

The same piles of cards were used for a three-item sorting task developed in the 1950's.²² An informant was given three cards at a time, and asked to place any two together, and separate the third, on

²² Spradley, You Owe Yourself a Drunk, p. 75.

the basis of any criterion or criteria desired. Again, upon completion of the task, the informant was questioned as to the reasons for the division employed. After all the cards had been used once, the pile was shuffled and the entire sequence repeated, often a number of times.

The three main areas of my research were dealt with primarily in the order described above. However, there was no rigid adherence to this format, as the processes overlap, and I continued to seek clarification of, and expansion upon, previously received information. Graham Goffee was especially helpful with the clarification and expansion of material, checking all domains for errors and omissions. Graham also drew up useful diagrams of the relationships among terms within given domains; all taxonomies appearing in this thesis are based upon Graham's work.

In addition to taxonomic and componential definitions, I sought dictionary type definitions of terms, both to ascertain that my understanding of them was correct, and to obtain further information. For this type of definition, I simply used the question frames, "What is _____?" or "What is a _____?"

There are some important considerations for the researcher applying ethnoscience. It is imperative to avoid making assumptions, as this can lead to asking questions which are not actually relevant to informants, and consequently to general misinterpretation of the culture. Therefore, investigators must be on the alert against employing their own categories and value systems (in relation to the culture) with informants. This is especially important, because informants are

occasionally familiar with some of the researcher's concepts, and may "translate," so to speak, into these concepts when answering questions framed according to them. Furthermore, informants may then continue to employ these alien concepts in describing their experiences to the researcher, who will have unwittingly failed to discover the insider's point of view.

Avoiding the imposition of one's own concepts is not always easy, especially when the fieldworker is familiar, as I was, with related but different cultures. My earlier experience in the revival provided me with background information useful in the thesis, but this experience, as well as my training in folklore, was also a hindrance. I had to be careful not to assume that the classifications and attitudes that I had learned in the past were applicable to my informants. Although I made certain hypotheses for the sake of convenience prior to beginning my fieldwork, I continually kept these hypotheses in mind, and checked them out carefully in the field. They included such things as tentatively placing club participants in categories standard in the British revival (such as "resident"), and classifying the residents and organizer together as a group which shares a good deal of cultural knowledge.

Another consideration in ethnoscientific research stems from the fact that in this approach, informants are asked about things that they know, but do not realize they know. Cultural knowledge is organized, sometimes in great detail, but this knowledge is seldom on a conscious level. People do not visualize their world in terms of charts and diagrams; these are merely tools with which the investigator can

comprehend the culture, and communicate this understanding to others. Informants are likely to find many of the questions they are asked rather strange. Because of the necessity of avoiding assumptions, some of the researcher's questions may seem not only odd, but imbecilic, as well. These problems may cause informants to become suspicious of the investigator, or to answer questions inappropriately, thinking that the interviewer must actually be looking for something quite complex. When informants know that the researcher is not totally ignorant of their culture, these difficulties become magnified.

As my informants were aware of my previous involvement in the British and American folksong revivals,²³ it was very important for me to take precautions against the occurrence of such misunderstandings. Thus, I told each informant, at the beginning of our first interview, about the basics of the methodology I was using (without employing much jargon), and outlined my reasons for using it. I explained that I could make no assumptions, and that as a result, many of my questions were likely to appear elementary to the point of stupidity. Occasionally it was necessary to remind informants of these facts, but on the whole, my initial explanation worked out quite well. Informants were usually very open with me, and quite patient as well. Moreover, since I had placed myself in the role of a novice and a student, and my informants in the

²³ Soon after my arrival, informants began asking if I performed, if I had been to folk clubs before, and so forth. Because I felt that it was important to be honest with them despite any resultant methodological problems, I explained my earlier involvement with folk music.

role of experts -- as indeed they are -- feelings of trust and respect were fostered on both sides.

The researcher using the ethnoscientific approach often faces an additional problem: working with a relatively small number of informants while seeking information relating to the group as a whole. It was noted earlier that even in the most homogeneous cultural groups, individual differences occur. There are certain precautions which the fieldworker can take to increase the reliability of the data received. For example, I told my informants why it was important for them to respond with what they believed were the opinions of the group in general, rather than with personal opinions. As well, secondary informants were used to verify information obtained from my main informants. Finally, I sometimes repeated areas of inquiry with the same informant. This was done mainly for the purpose of clarification, but it also served as a check upon the consistency of the informant's responses.

While the difficulties described above were solved with relative ease, my application of ethnoscience was not always as smooth as I would have liked. I did not go into the field expecting that all the information I gathered would fall neatly into place with no ambiguity. I was not, however, prepared for the amount of complexity I encountered, which led, at times, to a fair amount of anxiety on my part. Much of my confusion was resolved through specific questioning of informants; occasionally I found it helpful to explain the problem in detail.

Another difficulty arose from the painstakingly slow process by which information is gathered in this approach. I was aware of this

drawback before entering the field, but its full implications did not strike until I was deeply immersed in my research. It became clear that I would not have time to accomplish everything I had hoped, and that the scope of my research would have to be narrowed. Certain areas of investigation had emerged as being of particular importance to informants, and I began to focus almost entirely upon these. Also, because of the complexity of the cultural knowledge of the resident-organizer group, I found myself concentrating more fully on this group than I had originally intended.

After I returned to Newfoundland, I kept in touch with several of my informants, as we had become fairly close friends during the course of my research. Before leaving England, I had asked some of them if they would be willing to send me the answers to any additional questions that might come up. No one refused, and I took advantage of their good nature on several occasions. Graham Goffee was, as always, particularly reliable -- if slow -- in responding to my sometimes desperate pleas for help.

In January, 1975, while in the Albany, New York area, I interviewed some American revivalists to obtain comparative material. However, I later abandoned plans to include this material in the present work, as it is not directly relevant to the topic. I acquired further background information on the British revival in the summer of 1976 from three British graduate students in the folklore department at Memorial.

When I began to collate the information about the club that I had gathered, it became increasingly evident that there was far too much material for a work of this length. I decided, first of all, to limit the discussion to the cultural knowledge of the residents and the organizer. Subsequent limitations in focus were suggested by the emphasis that informants placed upon particular areas.

In the spring of 1977, I returned to St. Albans, primarily for a much needed holiday. While there, I did carry out some fieldwork, though, mostly relating to the early history of the St. Albans Folk Music Club. When I attended the club I found, not surprisingly, that a number of minor changes had taken place since 1975. Therefore, whenever I asked questions which were not of a historical nature, I was careful to request that answers (to the best of the informant's ability) be given as if it were 1975. Unless otherwise noted, then, the material in this thesis concerns the club as it existed during the 1974-1975 season.

In all, I recorded over one hundred hours of tape; about ninety percent of this material was recorded in England. An estimated half of the tape was used for recording interviews, with the remainder being used for folk club evenings, workshops, etc. These tapes have been submitted to the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, and have been given the accession number 76-390. As the tapes have not yet been individually numbered according to the archive system, the tape numbers cited throughout the text are my

own.

Quotations from taped material included in the text are cited by the name of the speaker, the date of the interview or performance (day/month/year), and the tape ("T") number. After initial citations, informants are identified by last name only (or first initial and last name, where necessary). A list of the full names of all informants cited is given at the end of this work, on pages 244-245. Quotations are verbatim: only false starts, conversational stalls, and the like have been omitted without indicating the omission by standard ellipsis marks. Explanatory remarks within quoted material are enclosed in square brackets.

It should be noted here that although I have attempted to present an insider's point of view of the St. Albans Folk Music Club, I have not refrained from hypothesizing and drawing conclusions, particularly in Chapter X, the final chapter. However, these hypotheses and conclusions have resulted from a thorough analysis of the cultural knowledge of my informants. While I cannot claim with certainty that no error is present in the information presented or conclusions drawn from it, I feel confident that because of the methodology employed, such flaws are at a minimum.

III

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FOLKSONG REVIVAL IN BRITAIN

The roots of the present-day folksong revival in Britain¹ reach back to the pioneering work of Cecil Sharp at the turn of this century, and recall the ballad revival sparked by Bishop Percy, a century and a half earlier.² However, the immediate sources for this movement stem from events which occurred during the 1940's.

During the Second World War, British people were particularly reliant upon their radios to provide them with music, because of the limitations placed upon record production, and the obvious restrictions that the war had on live performances. For the most part, states

¹The material in this chapter, and the next, has been compiled from numerous sources, both oral and written. Therefore, information is credited only when it has been obtained from a single source, or when quoted directly. The following are some of the major printed sources that I found valuable. John B. Wilson, Jazz: The Transition Years -- 1940-1960 (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966). Brian Bird, Skiffle: The Story of Folk-Song with a Jazz Beat, foreword by Lonnie Donegan (London: Robert Hale, 1958). Karl Dallas, "The Roots of Tradition," in Laing and others, pp. 83-136. "And So We Sang: Ewan MacColl Talks to Fred Woods," Part II, Folk Review, 2 (June 1973), 4-7; Part III, 2 (July 1973), 4-8; Part IV, 2 (Aug. 1973), 6-8. Richard Mabey, The Pop Process (London: Hutchinson Educational, 1969). Ian Whitcomb, After the Ball: Pop Music from Rag to Rock (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1973).

²For further information on Cecil Sharp, see Maud Karpeles, Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967). The ballad revival is examined in detail in Albert B. Friedman, The Ballad Revival: Studies in the Influence of Popular on Sophisticated Poetry (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961).

Ewan MacColl, a leading figure in the British folksong revival, the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) served up "the grimmest kind of musical fare":

All the worn out pop songs of the thirties, particularly of the late thirties, and the early forties, were churned out ad nauseam, through the mass media, particularly by radio And so for several hours of the working day, and for most of the leisure periods . . . you got the same twenty or thirty pop songs, for the best part of five or six years. And of course what happened was that people got turned off (Ewan MacColl, 4/9/75, T 73).

An exception to the above, during this period, was the taste of variety provided by American jazz.³ This was not the first exposure the British population had to jazz -- the idiom had been popular during the twenties and early thirties.⁴ But its popularity had diminished later in the thirties, for various reasons, including a dispute between the American and British musicians' unions which put a halt to live performances in England by American musicians (Wilson, 110). When the United States entered the war, there was a new influx

³The discussion of jazz presented in this chapter can be supplemented by consulting Alan P. Merriam and Robert J. Benford, A Bibliography of Jazz, Publications of the American Folklore Society: Bibliographical Series, Vol. 4 (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1954), and Carl Gregor Herzog zu Mecklenburg, International Jazz Bibliography: Jazz Books from 1919 to 1968, Collection d'Etudes Musicologiques, Band 49 (Strasbourg: Editions P.H. Heitz, 1969).

⁴British interest in "black" entertainment has quite a long history. Minstrel shows, featuring blackface performers, began in Britain in the late 1850's, and were still in existence there in the late 1940's, as the frontpiece to Reginald Nettel's Seven Centuries of Popular Song: A Social History of Urban Ditties (London: Phoenix House, 1956) shows. The above information is from Nettel's book, pp. 175 and 179.

of American jazz, not only in Britain, but in continental Europe as well. It appeared on American records, "in broadcasts and sometimes in the person of the excellent service bands led by Glenn Miller, Artie Shaw, Sam Donahue and others" (Wilson, 110).

Relief from the musical monotony of the day is one reason why jazz was welcomed in Britain. Also important is the reason cited by John S. Wilson in Jazz: The Transition Years -- 1940-1960:

[The] music was spread and to people fighting oppression jazz came to have a corollary appeal. It was the music of freedom. This idea was carried beyond the surface fact that jazz was American music and American soldiers were serving as liberators. It also led to carefully evolved analogies dealing with the democratic nature of jazz, the freedom it permitted the musicians to improvise, [and] the lack of traditional restrictions.

With the end of the war, when Europeans could once more make contact with jazz, they welcomed it with open arms (110-111).

In England, despite the fact that the aforementioned musicians' dispute was not settled until ten years after the end of the war,⁵ jazz flourished. Records became more readily available with the coming of peace, and English jazz bands began to appear. Very often, the English musicians learned from records of American jazz performers; this was the only means many people had of acquiring the style.

The form of jazz which took hold in Britain was traditional New Orleans jazz, usually referred to as "trad jazz," or simply "trad." This type of jazz "conjuges up an image of a polyphonic style which"

⁵Wilson, p. 119.

utilises a front line of cornet (or trumpet), trombone and clarinet, with a rhythm section using three or four of the following instruments -- piano, guitar (or banjo), string bass (or tuba), and drums."⁶

Variations on the instrumental line-up are not uncommon, "but at least there can be little disagreement on the essentials of the style" (McCarthy, 305).

During the 1940's and 1950's, jazz clubs arose throughout Britain. Activities in these clubs -- held in places as varied as pubs and church halls -- ranged from listening to records, and sometimes having a local group perform, to listening to performances by one of the professional groups.

Two important names in the British trad jazz revival of the 1950's were Ken Colyer, a trumpeter, and trombonist Chris Barber. In 1952, Colyer went to New Orleans to learn firsthand from the masters. Upon returning to Britain in 1953, he took over a band which had been organized by clarinetist Monty Sunshine and Chris Barber. According to Ian Whitcomb, a young British music critic, Ken Colyer's Jazzmen "sounded just like the old black men then living and playing in New Orleans" (244). Among the members of this band was banjoist Tony Donegan, a young man originally from Glasgow. He later changed his name to Lonnie Donegan, because of his great admiration of bluesman Lonnie Johnson. During the intermissions in the group's club

⁶ Albert J. McCarthy, "The Re-Emergence of Traditional Jazz," in Nat. Hentoff and Albert J. McCarthy, eds., Jazz (1959; rpt. New York: Da Capo Press, 1974), p. 305.

performances, Donegan would take up a guitar, and with some other members of the group, play some "skiffle" music.

In order to define "skiffle," it is necessary to return, briefly, to the United States. The origins of this music are found in the "spasm" bands of the late nineteenth century. This was the period when jazz was evolving in New Orleans; those who could not afford the instruments of jazz, but wanted to play the music, improvised, using "primitive and home-made instruments,"⁷ such as kazoos, combs-and-paper, washboards, jugs, bottles, and harmonicas. Old boxes or spare pieces of wood were fashioned into banjos, guitars, fiddles, and string basses.

This tradition was continued -- and expanded -- during the 1920's. While "skiffle," as it is sometimes referred to,⁸ was performed in various contexts, it is most often associated with "house rent parties" in Chicago, and the South. In order to raise rent money, black people organized parties, charging a small admission fee, taking up a collection at the end of the evening, or selling food and cheap liquor. Any available musicians would help out with providing the music at these parties. Instruments played were often those listed above; people simply used whatever was at hand, or could be made. The music was equally eclectic, and consisted of Negro work songs, white gospel songs,

⁷Bird, p. 27.

⁸The word "skiffle" does not seem to have been in common usage in the United States during this period. It has become much more common since the British skiffle era popularized it.

blues, French quadrilles, Anglo-American folksongs, popular dance tunes of the day, and so on. Nothing, apparently, was ruled out. Skiffle, then, was defined more by the type of instruments used than by actual musical content.

In Britain, when interest in trad jazz began to blossom, there was an accompanying interest in other forms of black music (Mabey, 51). Skiffle groups began to appear, at first, solely within the ranks of trad bands, such as Colyer's.⁹ But before long, skiffle enjoyed a tremendous popularity, which came about quite unexpectedly.

Within about a year or so of the formation of the Colyer band, Chris Barber left to form his own group, taking most of Colyer's musicians with him, including Lonnie Donegan. Chris Barber's Jazz Band also formed a skiffle group, in which Donegan performed. In 1954, the group made an album entitled New Orleans Joys, for the British Decca label (Decca LF 1198). Two songs from the band's skiffle group, "John Henry," and "Rock Island Line," were included. The latter was a "powerful but lighthearted number about a railway that ran to New Orleans, and the devices that were used by the engine-drivers to avoid the toll payments" (Mabey, 52). Donegan's version was a close

⁹ Although Ken Colyer's band is most commonly cited in discussions of the origins of British skiffle, the first British jazz band to form a skiffle group was the Crane River Jazz Band (of which Colyer was a member), in 1949 (Bird, 78).

copy of a Folkways recording by Leadbelly.¹⁰ The accompaniment used for the song was relatively simple, and consisted of guitar, washboard, and double bass. Donegan's vocal style was high-pitched, nasal, and imitative of Southern black dialect.

Despite its "rather specialist appeal,"¹¹ "Rock Island Line" was played on some BBC radio programs. "The result was startling: the B.B.C. was flooded with requests for the record to be played again, and for details of the singer and the song" (Mabey, 51). Eighteen months after the album appeared, Donegan's two songs were released as a "single" by Decca.¹² By the spring of 1956, the song had sold over a million copies internationally, and was a hit in the United States as well as in Britain.

The reasons for the success of the song, and of the skiffle movement which followed, are no doubt complex. Yet one factor clearly

¹⁰ Huddie Ledbetter, or "Leadbelly," as he was more commonly known, was a black singer, virtuoso of the twelve-string guitar, and convicted murderer, whom John and Alan Lomax "discovered" in prison. He was subsequently released, and eventually became something of a legendary musical figure. See John A. and Alan Lomax, Negro Folk Songs as Sung by Lead Belly (New York: Macmillan Co., 1936); Hector Lee, "Some Notes on Lead Belly," Journal of American Folklore, 76 (1963), 135-140, and the fictionalized biography by Richard M. Garvin and Edmond G. Addeo, The Midnight Special: The Legend of Leadbelly ([New York]: Bernard Geis Associates, 1971).

The version of "Rock Island Line" learned by Donegan appears on Leadbelly's record of the same title (Folkways FP 33-14).

¹¹ Mabey, p. 52.

¹² Robin Denselow, "Folk-Rock in Britain," in Laing and others, p. 141.

stands out as being of primary importance: boredom. Boredom with available music, although somewhat relieved by trad jazz, was still very much present. It was, in fact, merely symptomatic of the whole of British culture at the time. For young people, especially those in urban areas, there was little to do. Ian Whitcomb, discussing the reasons for the success of rock 'n' roll in Britain, describes a social climate also partly responsible for the rise of skiffle: "I remember being driven through empty high streets on Saturday afternoons and passing bunches of youths in freeze-shot on corners, waiting for something to happen, for animation" (192).

The only alternatives to standing on street corners, in most places, were youth-clubs of a rather puritanical nature, or expensive pubs (Mabey, 42). There was no youth oriented "pop scene" at the time; pop music, "however quaint it may seem now, was listened to by teenager and magistrate alike" (Mabey, 41). Sometimes boredom led to vandalism: "it was not surprising that these bored young men occasionally, for the fags [cigarettes], the money and the sheer thrill, prized a cigarette machine off some tradesman's wall."¹³

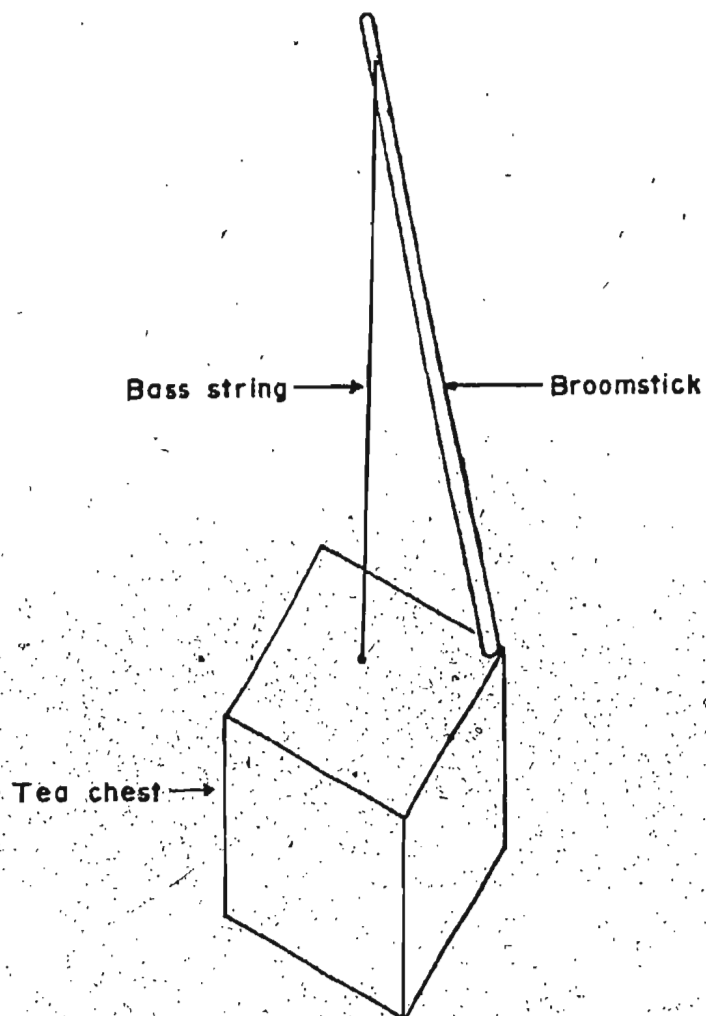
Skiffle, like rock 'n' roll, which hit Britain about the same time, provided a new and exciting musical form. It was also quite simple to play -- a fact which the youth of Britain was not long

¹³ Mabey, p. 43. It was during this period that the "Teddy Boy" craze arose. Teddy Boys were young men "who dressed in long drape jackets with velvet collars, elaborately decorated waistcoats, skin-tight trousers, and shoes with two-inch crepe soles." Some of them committed acts of delinquency, which, because of the group's eccentricity, were highly publicized (Mabey, 43-44).

in discovering. All that was really necessary were one or two people who could "bash out" a few guitar chords, someone with a fairly powerful voice, and a rhythm and bass section. The latter were often composed of a washboard, and a homemade bass, respectively. The most commonly cited type of bass was fashioned out of a tea chest (a large wooden box), broom handle, and a double bass string, or suitable substitute (see Figure 2). Other instruments, such as mandolins, banjos, kazoos, pianos, and so forth, were used by some bands. But the guitar-washboard-bass line-up was the one most often employed. It was also probably the easiest arrangement to master.

After the success of "Rock Island Line," amateur skiffle groups began forming all over the country. By mid 1956, only months after the song had been released as a single, it is estimated that there were six hundred skiffle groups in the Greater London area alone (Denselow, 141). Karl Dallas, a popular music critic once involved in the skiffle movement, notes that it was estimated at one point that this number had mushroomed to four thousand. Although Dallas believes that this figure is somewhat high, he nevertheless states that "there were an awful lot" of skiffle groups (22/5/75, T 3).

The proliferation of groups of young skifflers obviously demanded a good number of places in which to play. Before long, skiffle music appeared in coffee bars, pubs, in the open air, at summer fêtes, village halls, jazz clubs, and newly formed skiffle clubs; local skiffle contests were also common. In short, people played wherever they could.



Notes of varying pitch can be produced by moving the broomstick in order to alter the tension of the string.

Figure 2 : Tea chest bass, as played in skiffle bands

British skiffle resembled its American cousin in some respects (such as the homemade nature of many of the instruments), but developed a definite personality of its own. American skiffle, an indigenous folk music, was tremendously eclectic in nature, as we have seen. British skiffle, an imported pop music, was confined mainly to traditional and traditional-like songs; it was often called "folksong with a beat." Types of songs common to the repertoires of British skiffle groups were: blues, Negro work songs and spirituals, Anglo-American folksongs, cowboy songs, and railroad songs. Some groups incorporated English and Scottish traditional music into their repertoires, but the vast majority of skiffle songs were American in origin.¹⁴ Most skiffle singers also sang with an American accent (often Southern black).

Lonnie Donegan, the "King of Skiffle," was clearly the most significant figure in skiffle to many people, and he was imitated by countless youths. However, to the more serious aficionados of this music, Leadbelly and Woody Guthrie (the "dustbowl balladeer"),¹⁵ were

¹⁴ The lack of recordings by American skiffle groups, and the comparative ease with which records of American folk music could be obtained are at least partly responsible for the difference in repertoire between American and British skiffle music. One LP of American skiffle which was released (in the United States) at the height of the British skiffle craze in 1957 is American Skiffle Bands (Folkways FA 2610).

¹⁵ Woody Guthrie, "folk poet," singer, radical, and legendary character, was a leading personage in the American folksong revival. Additional information on Guthrie can be found in his autobiography, Bound for Glory (1943; rpt. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., and Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., 1968), and in Rodnitzky, Chapter 4 (43-62). Also see Guthrie's Born to Win, edited by Robert Shelton (New York: Macmillan Co., 1965), and Richard A. Reuss, comp., A Woody Guthrie Bibliography (New York: Guthrie Children's Trust Fund, 1968), especially Reuss' foreword, pp. i-v.

the real heroes. Their styles, too, were copied, occasionally remarkably well. Ewan MacColl claims that "There were kids in the skiffle movement who could imitate Leadbelly so brilliantly that you could close your eyes and swear that you were listening to the real thing" (4/9/75, T 73).

The skiffle craze reached its height from 1957 to 1958 (Mabey, 181). Its popularity was indicated not only by vast numbers of skiffle groups, clubs, and contests, but also by its exposure through the mass media, and its spontaneous use in the first of a series of anti-bomb marches. A noteworthy program, in considering media exposure, was a weekly radio series entitled Saturday Skiffle Club. In 1958, the program was expanded to two hours in length, and given a new name: The Saturday Club (Bird, 101). This series, hosted by Brian Matthew, featured both skiffle and jazz, and "developed a distinctive, coherent format, mixing live singers and records with interviews and an informed commentary from Matthew."¹⁶

Skiffle's peak coincided with the period of fairly intense protest against the hydrogen ("H") bomb. The first major act in protest of the bomb occurred in the spring of 1958, when young people gathered in Trafalgar Square in London to march the fifty-seven miles to Aldermaston, "the British H-Bomb center."¹⁷ On this first march, "The early plan for a dignified silence was soon shattered by a skiffle

¹⁶Charlie Gillett, The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll (New York: Outerbridge and Dienstfrey, 1970), p. 297.

¹⁷Pete Seeger, "From Aldermaston to London -- They Walked and Sang for Peace," Sing Out!, 10 (Dec. - Jan. 1960-61), 14.

band . . . breaking loose with 'Study War No More.' (Pete Seeger, 14). New songs, about "peace and international understanding,"¹⁸ were also sung on the march.

In subsequent marches over the next few years, the Direct Action Committee (DAC), which had organized the 1958 march, joined forces with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). The path of the march was reversed on all the later protests: they began in Aldermaston, and ended in London.¹⁹ The marches' organizers attempted to secure people to play on these marches, in hopes of recreating the spirit of the first four day long walk. Apparently, they were quite successful. In any case, skiffle was significant enough to the young marchers to play an important -- and spontaneous -- role in the 1958 march.

How, then, did this tremendously popular movement of "do-it-yourself folk-music" fade almost as suddenly as it had arisen? Again, a number of factors were undoubtedly influential, but two emerge as the prime movers. One of skiffle's major shortcomings was that it failed to develop rapidly enough, both in terms of repertoire and quality of performance. With so much skiffle music being performed, a good deal of skill and variety was required to keep audiences interested. Too many groups failed to become sufficiently diverse and competent, and audiences soon tired of the music that they were hearing.

¹⁸ Mabey, p. 136.

¹⁹ Jeff Nuttall, Bomb Culture (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1968), p. 50.

Some efforts were made to expand the repertoire, and writers began to note an increase in the proportion of British songs performed by skiffles.²⁰ Despite these efforts, the fact that skiffle was often "easier to perform than to listen to"²¹ contributed significantly to its early death.

The second major blow to the movement came, ironically, from the commercialization of the music. In addition to the amateur groups, there were also numerous professional and semi-professional skiffle groups, many of whom were apparently motivated chiefly, if not solely, by monetary concerns. Trevor Fisher writes that skiffle was "bedevilled by get-rich-quick promoters who pulled skiffle groups out of Soho coffee bars and onto stages literally before they had had time to go professional,"²² thus contributing to the low standards of musicianship so prevalent at the time.

When skiffle's popularity began rapidly declining, the commercial interests within the movement tried desperately to keep it going: "The commercialists tried to avert the collapse with manoeuvres intended to spread skiffle to a wider audience. But in fact they only served to accelerate it: raucous work songs simply sounded ridiculous against a lush orchestral backing" (Mabey, 54).

²⁰ For example, see Bird, p. 99.

²¹ John Hasted, "Don't Scoff at Skiffle!" Sing Out!, 7 (Spring 1957), 29.

²² We're Only in It for the Money, p. 5.

The irony in this is that the skiffle movement was, at least at the outset, popularly-based, and anti-commercial. Brian Bird, in his book, Skiffle, outlines attitudes shared by a fair proportion of skiffers; as will be seen, these attitudes have also had a substantial impact on the subsequent folksong revival. Bird stresses the naturalness of skiffle performers' dress and movements, and their lack of the theatrics and phoneyess so often associated with commercial pop music. Moreover, he indicates throughout the book that the most important aspect of playing skiffle was the enjoyment of the music itself, not the inflation of performers' egos -- or their bank accounts. Another attitude of the skiffle era echoed in the present folksong revival was that this was music of "the people." It was not solely for the enjoyment of highly trained musicians and the upper classes. Skiffle could be played by almost anyone with a reasonable sense of pitch and rhythm, and the motivation to practice.

In spite of the damage done to the skiffle movement by some of the professional musicians and promoters, young people had had a taste of performing, and had been exposed to some attitudes towards music which later flourished more fully in the British folksong revival. The skiffle craze opened the way for a widespread revival of British traditional song.

When the skiffle movement died, some of the people who had been involved simply stopped performing. But many did not, and the majority of these people were absorbed either by rock 'n' roll, or by the growing revival of traditional song. In a way, it is a bit artificial

to separate the trad jazz/skiffle and folksong revivals; during the 1950's, especially, there was a great deal of overlapping between them. Nevertheless, these movements were distinct, though closely associated for a time. They became rather firmly separated after the days of skiffle had passed.

During the mid and late 1950's, folksong, skiffle, jazz (and blues) were often presented in the same programs. The association between these musical forms was as close as it was largely because, during the early days of the folksong revival in Britain, the songs that were sung usually came, again, from the United States. The person responsible for much of the interest in American folksong was American folksong collector Alan Lomax, who was probably the most significant figure in the early days of the British revival. Lomax was, in fact, far more influential in the British revival than he was in the American.²³ His radio programs for the BBC date back to the 1940's.²⁴ In 1951, Lomax went to Britain, where he remained for

²³ Author's notes, conversation with Kenneth S. Goldstein, May 3, 1977.

²⁴ Lomax replaced Norman Corwin as the American producer of Transatlantic Call -- People to People, a wartime radio program, produced as a collaboration between CBS and the BBC. D.G. Bridson, well-known in British radio, was the general editor of the series. Half the programs were produced in the United States, and half in England (D.G. Bridson, Prospero and Ariel: The Rise and Fall of Radio [London: Victor Gollancz, 1971], 96).

One program in the series, "The Martins and the Coys," was produced in New York in 1944 by Alan and Elizabeth Lomax. Among the performers featured were Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Lily May Ledford of the Coon Creek Girls, Burl Ives, Will Geer, and Sonny Terry (F.J. Gillis, ed., Trimester Report, Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, 4, [1967], 3, accession no. 67-066-B).

approximately seven years, collecting folksongs, producing radio programs, and performing. During this period, he exerted a good deal of influence on almost every subsequent figure of importance in the British folksong revival.

The radio programs that were of greatest significance in the early 1950's were entitled Ballads and Blues. This series, which began in 1951, featured traditional songs from both Britain and the United States, as well as some jazz pieces from the early 1900's (MacColl, 4/9/75, T 73). The key performers, in addition to Lomax, were Ewan MacColl (an Anglo-Scot whose parents were traditional singers, and who had been heavily involved in theatre and politics), A.L. Lloyd (a self-trained British musicologist and singer), and jazz musician Humphrey Lyttelton. According to MacColl, the programs also featured such American performers as Kentucky balladeer Jean Ritchie and Chicago bluesman Big Bill Broonzy; later, other British performers were presented, as well ("And So We Sang," Part II, 7). Each program was built around a particular theme, such as the city, work, the sea, love, war and peace, and so on.

Response to the programs was sufficient for them to be re-broadcast on Saturday nights, a "peak listening time" (MacColl, 4/9/75, T 73). It is estimated that they had an audience in the vicinity of fourteen million (MacColl, 4/9/75, T 73). On the basis of the success of these programs, a series of concerts, also called "Ballads and Blues," was organized. Lloyd, Lomax, and MacColl performed, along with several others. Held at the Theatre Royal in London,

the concerts were, MacColl says, very successful:

From the very first one, it was obvious that we were on to something that was absolutely phenomenal. The place was sold out and there were hundreds of people outside trying to get in. At the second concert, black marketeers were selling bunches of tickets at a quid [one pound sterling] apiece, thirty bob [one and one half pounds] apiece, and we were still turning people away ("And So We Sang," Part II, 7).

The favorable response to these concerts led, in turn, to the establishment of the Ballads and Blues club by MacColl and others, in 1953.²⁵ This was one of the very earliest, and possibly the first, "folksong club proper". (A.L. Lloyd, 16/8/75, T 50). The club opened at the Princess Louise pub in High Holburn, London.

The next major contribution of radio to the interest in folksong came in the mid fifties. The series, entitled As I Roved Out, was broadcast on Sunday mornings, another peak listening spot. The program resulted from a collaboration between the BBC and the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS).²⁶ Peter Kennedy (the son of Douglas Kennedy, then head of the EFDSS), under the inspiration and guidance of Alan Lomax, went out into the countryside with other

²⁵This date is taken from Dallas, p. 89.

²⁶The English Folk Dance and Song Society, which presently has its headquarters at Cecil Sharp House in London, was formed in 1932, when the English Folk Dance Society merged with the Folk Song Society. Its basic goal is to "bring folk music to everyone by organising training courses in leadership and bandsmanship both at regional and national levels, by maintaining its unique library of books, tapes and records, and by working through its staff and members in the field of social recreation and leisure activities" (Cecil Sharp House, English Folk Dance and Song Society "Leaflet No. 12," revised 1974, p. 8).

collectors to see how much traditional music was still extant there. They found a good deal more than had been anticipated.

As I Roved Out was also quite a popular venture; it, too, "racked up remarkable audience figures" (Dallas, 88). Moreover, it was the first radio program to present traditional singers²⁷ on a regular basis, thus giving people interested in folksong the beginnings of a repertoire of British traditional music, as well as the foundations of a vocal style. This is not to say, however, that the series did not have serious shortcomings; it "banned all bawdry," and "forbade unaccompanied singing for more than a few stanzas, so that tapes were edited unmercifully . . ." (Dallas, 88).

Many of the recordings made during this time were released, in a series of ten LPs called The Folk Songs of Britain. These, however, were not produced until 1961 in the United States (by Caedmon), and were not re-released by Topic in Britain until 1973 (the Caedmon series had been available in Britain)²⁸.

Yet recordings were an important source of repertoire in the early years of the revival, despite their scarcity. In addition to

²⁷For a definition of "traditional singers," see page 82, footnote 45.

²⁸Author's notes, conversation with Kenneth S. Goldstein, August 23, 1976. Titles of the LPs in The Folk Songs of Britain Series (with Topic catalogue numbers) are as follows: Songs of Courtship (12T157), Songs of Seduction (12T158), Jack of All Trades (12T159), The Child Ballads No. 1 (12T160), The Child Ballads No. 2 (12T161), Sailors and Servingmaids (12T194), Fair Game and Foul (12T195), A Soldier's Life for Me (12T196), Songs of Ceremony (12T197), and Songs of Animals and Other Marvels (12T198). See the listings in the Records Cited section for the Caedmon catalogue numbers of this series.

records of American performers, there were some early records of British folk music. In the 1950's, the WMA (Workers Music Association) issued recordings of political and labor materials, as well as some of the first records of traditional music, on their own label, Topic. They also published sheet music and some small songbooks.²⁹

The role of the WMA in the revival was not fortuitous. It reflected the left-wing slant of some (though by no means all) of the activity in the movement. Revivalists have, correspondingly, sometimes identified strongly with the working classes, the bearers of much traditional music.³⁰ This political consciousness reached its peak in 1960's, and has since declined, although it is still true that a majority of revivalists lean toward socialism rather than conservatism.

Following the establishment of the Ballads and Blues club in 1953, there was a steady increase in the number of folksong clubs. Yet prior to 1960, clubs were generally few and far between, and they had not yet reached the more provincial areas. Repertoire, too, was difficult to locate. There were, as noted above, relatively few records, and printed material was even harder to find. Karl Dallas recalled that:

... we used to grab hold of almost anything we could find in the way of traditional repertoire. I had a recording by an operatic tenor called James Johnson

²⁹ Author's notes, conversation with Kenneth S. Goldstein, August 27, 1976.

³⁰ The identification of middle class people with the working classes is paralleled not only in the American revival, but in leftist movements in general. This phenomenon deserves further attention, but is beyond the scope of the present work.

singing a traditional song. I bought that record just to learn the words, and then tried to forget the way he sang, and tried and sing it in what sounded like a traditional style (22/5/75, T 3).

The success of the various Ballads and Blues activities and the As I Roved Out series is not surprising under the circumstances. Nor is it particularly surprising that the standards of singing throughout the fifties and early sixties were not well defined in comparison to those that exist presently, as there were few models available for the budding singer to follow.

Some British music was heard in folk clubs during the fifties and early sixties, but the American songs still dominated. American performers well known in the United States, including Pete Seeger, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul and Mary, the Weavers, and Woody Guthrie, were also quite popular in Britain. This American cultural domination was not restricted to the jazz, skiffle, and folksong movements. All of British pop culture, until the emergence of the Beatles,³¹ was quite thoroughly dominated by American products, or British copies of American products. People growing up during this era found that "any of the more exciting and vibrant and moving influences were coming from jazz, rock, [and] blues. None of it had actually been initiated in this country at all" (Frankie Armstrong, 16/8/75, T 48).

³¹ See Hunter Davies' book on this British rock group, The Beatles: The Authorized Biography (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1969).

Another factor which helped to keep British folksongs from being widely accepted during the early years of the revival was their presence in the schools. Ironically, the fruits of the folksong revival of the early twentieth century, led by Cecil Sharp, almost prevented the acceptance of British song in the later revival. One of Sharp's accomplishments was the addition of folksongs to the musical diet of schoolchildren. The way in which the music was presented, however, proved to be far from appetizing. In the mid fifties, one writer stated that "the schools appear to have affected the folk song rather more than folk song has affected the pupils. Music of utter banality is still the norm . . ."³² The expurgated versions of folk songs about milkmaids, shepherds, and the like (not to mention their association with school), did not, to say the least, encourage young people to examine this body of material any further. Some people were unaware that the songs they sang in school were folksongs. The end result, though -- avoidance -- remained the same.

There were a few people, notably Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger,³³ and A.L. Lloyd, who were particularly aware of the contents of the British tradition, and who became increasingly concerned with the lack of British song in the British revival. The performances in

³² Hylda Sims, "Editorial: Cecil Sharp in 1954," Sing, 1 (1954), 74-75.

³³ Peggy Seeger, married to Ewan MacColl, is an American singer and musician living in Britain. Charles Seeger, the American musicologist, is her father, and she is half-sister to Pete Seeger, a well-known singer in the American revival.

their own Ballads and Blues club reflected the eclectic nature of revival music during the late 1950's. In addition to British and American songs, the young revivalists who came to the club sang Greek songs, Russian songs, and Israeli songs -- in short, they sang songs from all over the world. This situation was primarily a result of the influence of the Weavers, a popular American group with an international repertoire.³⁴ The spirit of international brotherhood common in some left-wing circles probably influenced singers' repertoires in this direction as well, at least in the more politically oriented clubs.

Eventually, states MacColl, it was decided that some action would have to be taken:

And then a number of us thought that the time had arrived when we should try to develop some feeling of national identity. We began to say that it's ridiculous that so many of our kids should go around being quasi-Americans, quasi-Russians or anything else, when we ourselves had a folk music that was just as vigorous, just as tough, just as interesting musically as any other kind of folk music. And we initiated a rule at the club, that you sang the songs of the language you spoke or the language that you'd grown up with ("And So We Sang," Part III, 4).

³⁴ Formed in 1948, the Weavers originally consisted of Pete Seeger, Ronnie Gilbert, Lee Hays, and Fred Hellerman. Hays and Seeger had been members of the earlier and more politically oriented group, the Almanac Singers. Political blacklisting during the McCarthy era caused the Weavers to disband, but they later reorganized, in 1956. Seeger left the group, and was replaced by various other people. The Weavers finally disbanded at the end of 1963. It is interesting to note that some English people had their first taste of traditional English song -- apart from the songs sung in school -- from this group.

For more information on the Almanac Singers, see R. Serge Denisoff, "Take It Easy, But Take It: The Almanac Singers," Journal of American Folklore, 83 (1970), 21-32. Further material on the Weavers can be found in Denisoff, Great Day Coming, pp. 140-141, 146, and 164-165, and in David Gahr and Robert Shelton, The Face of Folk Music (New York: Citadel Press, 1968), especially pp. 103-104.

British traditional music, thought MacColl, Lloyd, and Seeger, was clearly in danger of being swallowed up by American songs, and by the international repertoire popularized by the Weavers. They felt that if this music was to get a fair hearing, a strict policy would have to be established: English people were to sing English songs at the club, Americans were to sing American songs, and so forth. At first, this rule was received with anything but widespread enthusiasm:

And this [policy] created a tremendous reaction on the part of a lot of people. I remember a young kid, he used to come from the Newcastle region, he used to sing Greek songs I remember that he was almost prepared to stand up there and fight for his right to sing Greek songs in the folk club. But we felt, rightly or wrongly, that it was necessary for us to develop a national identity so we persevered ("And So We Sang," Part III, 4).

For the first couple of weeks, there was a sharp decline in attendance at the Ballads and Blues club, but gradually, the audience began to build up again. This nationalistic policy started to gain a number of firm adherents, who, in turn, set about "converting" others. It was, though, a few years before this movement made a sizeable impact outside the London area.

Part of the rationale for the policy was (and is) that people can best perform the songs of their own cultural area -- that their speech and background will enable them to understand and communicate these songs more effectively than they could foreign songs. Even before MacColl, Lloyd, and others espoused this view, some people had come to similar conclusions. Karl Dallas, after listening to the As I Roved Out series, began to feel that it would be more logical for him to sing like British traditional singers than like, for instance,

Leadbelly. He realized that, in view of his urban upbringing, the English country singers were no more directly a part of his background than Leadbelly; nonetheless, he felt that there was more of a "connection" between his way of life and the English material than there was with American blues (Dallas, 22/5/75, T 3).

The spread of enthusiasm about British material was furthered significantly by another group of radio programs, the Radio Ballads, the first of which appeared in 1958.³⁵ These programs began when Charles Parker, then a producer with the BBC, came up with the idea of doing a special broadcast on John Axon, a railway-engine driver who had died heroically. Ewan MacColl was commissioned to write the program. "The Ballad of John Axon," painstakingly edited by Parker, combined portions of interviews with songs written by MacColl. The extremely favorable response with which "John Axon" was greeted prompted the BBC to invite Parker and MacColl to do an entire group of broadcasts.³⁶ There were another seven Radio Ballads, the last of which was produced in 1964. In chronological order they were: "Song of a Road," which concerned the building of a portion of the M 1, a part of the modern British highway system; "Singing the Fishing," dealing with the herring fishery; "The Big Hewer," a program about mining; "The Body Blow," on the psychological implications of pain; "On the Edge," a study of British teenagers; "The

³⁵Trevor Fisher cites the date of the first broadcast as July 2, 1958 ("The Radical Revival," 86). Other writers give 1957 as the year in which the first of the Radio Ballads was broadcast, but supply no specific dates.

³⁶MacColl, quoted in "And So We Sang," Part III, 6.

"Fight Game," dealing with the boxing profession, and "The Travelling People," a program about gypsies and tinkers.³⁷ The staff of each of the above varied, but the central figures of the Radio Ballads, Charles Parker, Ewan MacColl, and Peggy Seeger, remained throughout. The programs often reflected, naturally enough, the leftist political orientation of their creators.

MacColl wrote the majority of the songs used in the Radio Ballads, although some traditional material was also used. He attempted to make his own compositions sound "authentic" by copying the speech patterns of his informants. In order to determine whether or not he had captured the right feeling, MacColl sometimes brought songs back to his informants:

Having written the songs we then went back, we sang them or played them on a tape recorder to our original informants, and if their response was bad -- if they said 'no, we never talk like that' -- we'd take the song away and re-write it, or alternatively destroy it and start again. But if on the other hand they said, 'I've known that song all my life,' as Jack Pickford did say (he was one of our informers) we'd hit the jackpot ("And So We Sang," Part III, 5).

Here, then, was a series of programs dealing with various aspects of life in Britain, in which the music was clearly British (if not always traditional). The Radio Ballads awoke many people to the idea that British topics and music could indeed be exciting. Moreover,

³⁷ Ibid., 5-8. Six of the Radio Ballads were later released as LPs, on the Argo label: The Travelling People (DA 133), On the Edge (DA 136), The Ballad of John Axon (RG 474), Singing the Fishing (RG 502), The Big Hewer (RG 538), and The Fight Game (RG 539).

some found this type of material easier to identify with than American and other non-British song:

To just suddenly hear the Radio Ballads was really exciting. To suddenly hear "The Big Hewer," or "Singing the Fishing" . . . really was very exciting. This was much nearer home. And it did give some sense of producing something that was exciting and viable, and gave you something of the same actual sensation that good American rock and jazz had. And nothing coming out of Britain, up till the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, had come anywhere near it (Armstrong, 16/8/75, T 48).

The Radio Ballads were stopped by the BBC after "The Travelling People." The reasons given were financial, as the programs had been very extravagant in their use of such things as recording tape. However, some people believe that the programs were halted because the BBC became extremely uncomfortable with their contents, which revealed some rather unpleasant aspects of the British establishment. The most extreme instance of this occurred in "The Travelling People," when a local government official advocated genocide as a solution to the gypsy problem (Dallas, 93).

By 1965, the number of folk clubs had grown to an estimated three hundred,³⁸ leading one writer to remark, "There is almost nowhere in Britain at the present moment where you are out of reach of a 'folk club' . . ."³⁹ This rapid expansion of the number of clubs from

³⁸ Rory McEwen, "Bard of the Folk Song Boom," New Society, May 20, 1965, p. 26.

³⁹ "Folk Festival at Keele," English Dance and Song, 27 (1965), 96.

approximately eighty only three years earlier marked the period in the revival known as the "folk boom."

The popular music industry began to capitalize on the burgeoning interest in folksong, and this created a good deal of antipathy on the part of many revivalists, largely over the issue of the "commercial" nature of pop music. Many revivalists, well aware of the ephemeral nature of both pop in general, and of "booms" of particular types of music, felt that the folk boom could not last. Within the space of a few years, it did fade away, but the revival continued to grow, albeit more slowly, through the late sixties and early seventies. The commercialism of the folk boom will be discussed further in Chapter IV.

It was during the years of the boom that a very different kind of development took place within the revival. In about 1963, a group of singers, under the direction of Ewan MacColl, joined together to form the Critics Group. The primary purpose of this organization was to explore traditional styles of singing, and to incorporate them into the performances of members of the group.⁴⁰

At the Critics' weekly meetings, the group worked on elements of traditional singing styles, analyzed song texts, and participated in

⁴⁰ Some years earlier, Alan Lomax, after returning to the United States from Britain, wrote an article entitled, "The 'Folkniks' -- and the Songs They Sing". (*Sing Out!*, 9 [Summer, 1959], 30-31). In this article, he also advocated the adoption by revivalists of traditional singing styles. There has been, however, no American equivalent to the Critics Group.

acting exercises designed to foster identification between singers and the characters in songs. Here we see evidence of MacColl's extensive theatrical experience. In its seven or eight years of existence, the Critics Group performed in concerts, made records,⁴¹ and worked in the field of folk drama. Many members became residents at the Singers Club in London, the successor to the old Ballads and Blues club. The Critics, socialist in orientation, took an active part in the social and political events of the period.

Frankie Armstrong, presently a well-known singer in the revival, was a member of the Critics Group for several years. She found the experience very valuable, but feels that MacColl was too autocratic a leader, and that people were frightened of his judgments. Certain ideological positions were acceptable, and others clearly were not: "The most awful thing you could possibly be was a bourgeois individualist liberal" (Armstrong, 16/8/75, T 48). MacColl's autocracy is not surprising in view of his role in the sudden implementation of the British song policy at the Ballads and Blues club.

Though the existence of the Critics was and is fairly well-known in the British revival, it remained rather separate from much of the activity of that revival. Consequently, writes Trevor Fisher, both the group and its methods "had very little influence on the revival, and

⁴¹The Critics' LPs, produced on the Argo label, include: A Merry Progress to London (DA 46), Sweet Thames Flow Softly (DA 47), Waterloo-Peterloo (DA 86), As We Were A-Sailing (ZDA 137), Ye Mariners All (ZDA 138), and The Female Frolic (ZFB 64).

appeared somewhat arcane, elitist, outside the main stream, and thus irrelevant" ("The Radical Revival," 384). Although this remark is an overstatement, it is not without a good measure of truth. The Critics Group eventually disbanded in 1972 (Fisher, "The Radical Revival," 384).

Today the folk clubs remain the primary outlet for people involved in the revival. The exact number of clubs is still a mystery, and estimates in recent years have ranged from 860 to 1700.⁴² Each year the English Folk Dance and Song Society publishes a Folk Directory, which lists many of the folksong clubs in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A rather informal, but effective, network of communication now exists among revivalists. This is made possible by the printed materials available, such as the Directory, and also by the sheer numbers of people connected with the movement.

Another significant part of the "folk scene" in Britain are the folk festivals. These are larger scale events than folk clubs, ranging in audience size from about three hundred to perhaps fifteen thousand. Festivals occur throughout the year. From late spring to early autumn they are held outdoors; the rest are indoor events. The activities at a festival may vary greatly, from concerts and workshops presented by performers who have been booked for the occasion, to informal musical sessions, in which anyone may participate. Folk

⁴² The first figure is an EFDSS estimate, cited in Steve Bradshaw, "The Folk People," New Society, Jan. 3, 1974, p. 26. The second figure was quoted from Peggy Seeger, in "And So We Sang," Part IV, 6.

festivals may run for two days only, or for as long as a week. An important feature of festivals is the availability of alcoholic beverages. In this respect they are extensions of folk clubs, where drinking and singing occur together.⁴³

Through the years there have been many magazines of the folksong revival. Sing, which began publication in 1954, served as a vital source of repertoire for many performers during the early years of the revival. English Dance and Song, an outgrowth of the revival of the turn of the century, first appeared in 1936. Published by the EFDSS, English Dance and Song is still used by many revivalists as a source of songs.⁴⁴

The most popular publications in recent years have been the magazine, Folk Review, and the folk music section in the weekly newspaper, Melody Maker. Folk Review, which is published monthly, includes articles about performers and folkloric topics, editorials, book and record reviews, a "letters" column, and songs. Melody Maker is largely composed of features on rock and jazz, but also contains a "folk" section, consisting of brief articles, book and record reviews, and a schedule of some of the week's folksong events.

⁴³ I owe this observation to Kenneth S. Goldstein. For a list of British folk festivals, see Mira S. Curtis, ed., The Folk Directory: 1976 (London: English Folk Dance and Song Society, 1976), pp. 19, 21, 23.

⁴⁴ Author's notes, conversation with John Ashton, August 22, 1977.

In addition to these various national publications, there are several regional ones, both magazines and directories.

The number of records featuring British folksongs has multiplied many times over since the early days of the revival, when it was possible to purchase an entire set of such records with a moderate sum of money. Today the majority of records are those of "revival," as opposed to "traditional" performers;⁴⁵ nevertheless, there are a fair number of the latter, as well. Topic, an independent company since 1957,⁴⁶ and Leader-Tracker are the two largest producers of records featuring British traditional music. There are also numerous other companies which issue folk music records. An extensive list of record companies can be found in The Folk Directory, 1976 (113-116).

Some radio and television programs also present folk music. Notable is the weekly radio series Folkweave, hosted by Tony Capstick. This program consists of edited tapes of folk club and festival performances, selections from records, commentary, and a schedule of some upcoming club and festival events.

⁴⁵ Traditional singers are "people living within the folk tradition, whose musical horizon is to a great extent bounded by the conventions of home-made, orally-diffused, mainly anonymous song"; revival singers are "people of normal modern urbanized-industrial culture, whose artistic interests extend to folk music, either in its 'authentic' traditional shape or in more-or-less adapted and modernized forms" (A.L. Lloyd, "The English Folk Song Revival," Sing Out!, 12 [Apr. - May 1962], 34). "Field singer" is occasionally used instead of "traditional singer," presumably in order to emphasize the fact that the person being referred to is not just anyone who sings traditional songs.

⁴⁶ Fisher, "The Radical Revival," p. 81.

This chapter has traced some of the more significant events in the history of the British folksong revival, including the development of folksong clubs. It has not, however, examined many of the attitudes and beliefs which have influenced a considerable amount of the activity in the revival. Because these, too, will provide important contextual information, the next chapter will consider some of the major points of view which have gained expression in the British folksong revival over the years.

IV

SOME FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS UNDERLYING THE REVIVAL

The folksong revival is a complex social movement involving music. Some people within the revival feel that it is so complex that few, if any, statements can be made about the movement as a whole. Eric Winter, editor of Sing, stated in a 1972 interview with Trevor Fisher:

There's no black and white picture, because you were never at any time dealing with any cohesive body of people, and so you could never have said that there was any dominant policy of any kind. There were a lot of individual ideas, some of which could be roughly classified as being similar . . . (Fisher, "The Radical Revival," 124).

Peggy Seeger was even more reluctant to make any statements applicable to folk clubs as a group: "I think the club scene is extremely varied. It's very difficult to make any comment on the club scene, because there's a whole series of strata that are quite often mutually exclusive" ("And So We Sang," Part IV, 6).

Winter, Seeger, and others hesitate to make general statements about the revival because they are involved with it in a personal way, and are thus more likely to see its diversity than its unity. Yet the outsider, too, finds a great deal of variation in almost every aspect of the movement, including musical taste, performance styles, and attitudes of performers toward their audiences (and vice versa). The most constant factors appear to be such things as the format of folk clubs and festivals.

The great diversity of the revival is caused in part by the fact that it is a decentralized movement. With the exception of records and some specialized periodicals, the mass media do not play a large role in the revival. It probably could, in fact, continue with few radical changes entirely without their presence. Various clubs and performers are well-known throughout the country, but as we have seen in the case of the Critics Group, their influence upon outlying regions may be comparatively small.

Despite the complexity of the movement, and the unwillingness of those involved to make broad statements about it, the common reference by participants to "the revival" and "the folk scene" indicates the existence of some kind of self-concept, however tenuous. This concept is based on such things as similarities in the social structure of folk clubs, and in the attitudes of some participants. It is therefore possible to speak -- with caution -- of a revival ideology, or more accurately, aspects of revival ideology.¹ In order to arrive at a better understanding of the British folksong revival, this chapter will examine some of its underlying concepts. This discussion, as noted in Chapter I, will be concerned with the attitudes of people who are involved mainly or entirely with traditional music.

¹ Ideology, as used here, refers to a system of socially based attitudes, beliefs, and values. Robert Baron, in "Syncretism and Ideology: Latin New York Salsa Musicians" (*Western Folklore*, 36 [1977], 209-225), uses the term in this sense, criticizing "the typical view of ideologies as 'distortions' and 'oversimplifications.'" (210).

Revivalists have attempted to find -- sometimes largely intuitively -- an alternative to the forms of musical entertainment available to most people. More specifically, many have focused upon creating an alternative to the commercial music industry, often referred to as "Tin Pan Alley." This term was imported from the United States, whose Tin Pan Alley was located in New York City.² Until quite recently, "Tin Pan Alley" in Britain designated the cluster of London music publishers located on Denmark Street. This specific point of reference has now dissipated to some degree, due to "urban redevelopment and rocketing rents" (Dallas, 104).

An overview of some characteristics of the pop music industry which have alienated many revivalists will help illuminate various aspects of the folksong revival. The characteristics and criticisms of the industry cited here have been discussed by pop music critics and writers (who may or may not be sympathetic to the revival), as well as by revivalists themselves.³

One of the most common criticisms of the pop music industry is its supposed large-scale exploitation and manipulation of its

²For a discussion of the American Tin Pan Alley, see Whitcomb, especially "Inside Tin Pan Alley" (41-55), and "Alleyman versus the Allemands" (56-71).

³Some of the examples used in the ensuing discussion are not British. The aspects of the industry they are meant to illuminate, however, exist in Britain, as well as elsewhere. For various points of view on one of the primary forms of pop music, rock, consult the works listed in Neil V. Rosenberg's annotated bibliography, "Rock Books: An Incomplete Survey," John Edwards Memorial Foundation Quarterly, 8 (1972), 48-56, 109-116.

audience. This view has been disputed by Richard Mabey in The Pop Process: he argues that the consumers of pop music have a significant degree of control, although he does not deny the industry's power. Undoubtedly many of the industry's traits are brought about by the interaction between the producers and consumers of pop music.

Pop music is the most rapidly changing form of music in Western society, both in terms of the popularity of individual songs, and of general musical trends. Almost within a matter of weeks the status of a pop song may alter from "Number One" in the "Top Ten" to "Golden Oldie," receiving only very occasional radio play. And "a new approach to music is presented as something which outmodes its predecessor, instead of as an outcome of organic growth or even, as in [Bob] Dylan's⁴ case, instead of as something of entirely personal significance" (Dallas, 84).

Participants in the popular music industry often appear to be concerned with every facet of the business except the quality of the music being produced. Money is noted as the key motivating factor for many. Philip Springer, a composer of pop music, feels that, "Most guys have no pride in their work. All it means is a dollar . . . It's tough today. There's no fun. Everybody is walking around either

⁴ Bob Dylan is a very well-known American singer and songwriter, whose styles of performance and composition have undergone radical changes over the years. See Anthony Scaduto's biography, Bob Dylan (New York: New American Library, 1973), and Craig McGregor, ed., Bob Dylan: A Retrospective (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1972).

looking gloomy or arrogant. There's no joy any more in writing."⁵ Pop song writers, most of whom are free-lancers, are subject to the whims of performers, record companies, and the public. In order to survive, many write songs whose financial rewards far exceed their personal aesthetic satisfaction.

Performers of pop music (who may be songwriters as well) are also under a good deal of pressure, in regard to their "image," or projected personality and appearance. The title of Marilyn Beker's article about Canadian singer-songwriter Shirley Eikhard, "Packaging Shirley Eikhard: The Voice is Fine. It's the Rest of Her They Want to Change,"⁶ aptly sums up the situation in which aspiring performers can find themselves. According to Beker, Eikhard's primary interest is in performing, whereas her manager, Les Weinstein, focuses upon her physical appearance and projected personality. In an interview with Beker he said, "'Shirley's got to groom herself for stardom. She's got to lose weight. Nobody wants to see a fat girl singer'" (12). Beker describes Weinstein watching Eikhard during a performance:

Shirley's on stage and he seems to be watching and listening for everything, carefully going over facts in his head like some zealous computer. Shirley makes a funny little comment. Weinstein winces. He

⁵David Dachs, Anything Goes: The World of Popular Music (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Co., 1964), p. 46.

⁶Weekend Magazine, May 22, 1976, pp. 12-17.

hates Shirley to talk between numbers because he thinks she seldom says anything clever, and silliness ruins the image he's trying to build.

In the spectrum of pop music geared to teenagers, the importance placed upon appearance, specifically regarding clothes, applies to audiences as well as performers: "Clothes, in fact, have always been the most important subsidiary to records in the pop scene. . . . A whole new industry has sprung up to make and sell the uniforms that pop stars and their audiences copy from each other" (Mabey, 35).

Writers have also criticized pop songs themselves, saying that they frequently possess a false sentimentality, their range of subject matter (largely love) is too narrow, and that they are subsequently irrelevant to everyday life. Karl Dallas has written that:

. . . the pop-song writer of Denmark Street . . . is trafficking in the chewed-up clichés of art poetry and tasteless traditions of a worn-out form. "Lerve" may make the world go round, but the pop-song does not deal in love, it deals with a sentimentality which is the courtly romanticism of medieval chivalry gone to seed. The song does not touch our emotions because we know no one ever felt that way; that is why it goes on so about feelings, manufacturing an ersatz sentiment to mask the absence of the real thing, a monosodium glutamate flavour-enhancer of the emotions (129).

⁷ Becker, p. 16. James T. Coffman details the conflicting expectations of rock performers, their audiences, and the music industry, and discusses ways in which the conflict can be reduced, in "'So You Want to Be a Rock 'n' Roll Star!': Role Conflict and the Rock Musician" (Denisoff and Peterson, 261-273). See also Howard S. Becker, "The Professional Jazz Musician and His Audience" (Denisoff and Peterson, 248-260).

The concentration in much of the pop music industry seems to be on entertainment in and of itself: "To entertain is now not just one of pop music's ambitions -- it is the limit of its aims" (Mabey, 133). Consequently pop songs are seldom very topical.⁸ Many of those written in the past decade have been highly introspective, as well. This is especially true of the songs of the "singer-songwriters," which are said to be "concerned more with incantation than with communication" (Mabey, 184).

One of the most significant aspects of pop music vis-a-vis the folksong revival is the distinct separation that exists between pop music performers and their audiences. As discussed below, revivalists have sought to create a viable alternative not only to the music, but also to the performance situations of pop. In pop performances, audiences are commonly described as "passive"; they are entertained by professionals who are both literally and figuratively distant from them, whether the setting is a concert stage or television screen. "Stars," with their manufactured "images," are inaccessible to the average pop music enthusiast. They are therefore often perceived as being different, special, almost superhuman individuals.

Participants in the folksong revival regard it as being very different from the "market music"⁹ business; its industry is

⁸The "protest songs" which became popular in Britain and North America during the mid sixties were an exception to this norm. See below, pages 96-97.

⁹Roy Harris, 15/8/75, T 47. Harris is a well-known revival singer.

considered to be basically non-manipulative, and it has given many people an opportunity to participate actively:

You know, that the largest amount of music that people get to hear is that that's pumped into them via their transistor radios every day, which replay chart music so that the kids will go out and buy the records. In other words, they're being very subtly manipulated into pouring money into a music industry to make millionaires of a few people.

Folk music is the complete opposite, and therefore the great alternative to that. It's not going to make millionaires of anybody. But it's going to make them rich. You have to believe, as I do, that it's better, that there's more to be gained, from doing a bit of playing and/or singing yourself, or being with congenial friends who do so, than [to] receive music . . . via these peddlers (Harris, 15/8/75, T 47).

It is felt that because folk music, in the past, was largely an amateur phenomenon, used by the working classes for their own enjoyment, it is one form of music that can be played by the "average plodder,"¹⁰ as well as by the skilled professional. " . . . it is nice to think that the music that we do can be done by anybody. It is nice to encourage people to fulfill themselves in any way."¹¹

Revivalists often express a desire to break down the "barriers" (decrease the distinctions) between audience and performer that exist not only in pop music, but in other forms of entertainment, as well. The blurring of distinctions between performer and listener

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Graham Goffee, 6/8/75, T 39. Sometimes the idea that folk music can be played by the average person has been extended to a belief that it is facile, and thus requires little talent or skill to perform. Although this attitude is far more prevalent outside the revival, it does exist within the movement, as well.

is aided by the performance situation in folk clubs. The audience capacity of the average folk club room is about one hundred or less. This relatively small group allows for interaction between those on stage, and those in the audience. Many performers in folk clubs are acquainted with members of the audience; this, too, facilitates the establishment of a rapport. Moreover, the appearance of relaxed informality (in a situation which is often actually quite structured) is a goal of most folk club performers.

The intrinsic nature of traditional songs in general is also believed to help in developing rapport. This view was expressed by John Ashton, a Ph.D. candidate in folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland, who has been very active in the British folksong revival:

There's a rapport between an audience and performer in folk clubs. And I think it's not so much through the performance situation as through the material itself, because I think traditional English music lends itself to a kind of dialogue, albeit unspoken, between the audience and performer. So that, in that club situation [the first folk club John attended, in Barnsley, Yorkshire], where you had both contemporary and traditional music going at the same time, the contemporary performers were far more distant from the audience than the traditional performers were.

And there were the chorus songs [sung by the performers of traditional song], which one became involved in by actively participating. And then I think as well that the more involved narrative songs have a form of dialogue which one can comprehend more easily than contemporary songs, anyway. Because contemporary songs tend, I think, to be very individualistic. . . . Introspective, as well. Whereas, traditional songs, although obviously composed by someone at the outset, have a more communal application, I think, in that they express a more general sort of world view, in a way, than contemporary songs do.¹²

¹²13/9/76, T 85. This perceived contrast between the nature of traditional and contemporary songs helps explain the

Revivalists have frequently stressed that the music is more important than the performers. Performers are not considered insignificant, but people feel that the "mystery" of a performance should lie with the music itself, rather than with the performer.¹³ This attitude is based, in part, on the belief that folksongs are worthy of respect, and should be treated accordingly: "You've got to believe in it [the music], and that comes across" (Harris, 15/8/75, T 47). It also stems from the (sometimes mistaken) notions of some earlier folklorists, such as Cecil Sharp, with whose works many revivalists are familiar. Bertrand Bronson has stated, for example, that Sharp had "continual evidence, immediate and instinctive, on the basic level of simple human response, that the singers loved these songs for some essential value without any thought of self."¹⁴ That traditional singers are not always entirely selfless is clearly indicated in the article, "Repertoire Categorization and Performer-Audience Relationships: Some Newfoundland Folksong Examples."¹⁵

traditional-contemporary split in the British revival, mentioned in Chapter I (p. 6). The British song policy originally established at the Ballads and Blues club is also largely responsible for this division. As much of the contemporary material has been either American or American-styled, it has not been acceptable in clubs with an established British policy.

¹³ See Martin Carthy's comments on page 9 of "An Interview with Martin Carthy," Sing Out!, 24 (Sept. - Oct. 1975). Carthy is a very popular revival singer and guitarist.

¹⁴ "Cecil Sharp and Folksong: A Review Article," Western Folklore, 27 (1968), 203.

¹⁵ George J. Casey, Neil V. Rosenberg, and Wilfred W. Wareham, Ethnomusicology, 16 (1972), 397-403.

Although some revivalists are aware that egotistical concerns do enter into the performances of traditional singers,¹⁶ the belief within the revival that these people place their songs before their egos is still quite pervasive.

One of the aims of revivalists has been to prevent traditional British music from dying out completely. This was, as mentioned in Chapter III, the major reason for the institution of the British song policy in many folk clubs. British traditional song is believed to be a valuable form of music, not only in terms of aesthetics, but also in regard to its thematic content, and the sense of identity with which it provides many people. Folksongs are a link with the past that many people crave, feeling that they are, by performing or listening to folk music, regaining a part of their cultural heritage: "It's much more than the fact of being nice music. It gives me memories of things I couldn't possibly have known, I feel it's part of me somehow. There's a definite feeling of identity and rightness when I'm singing"¹⁷ Another singer stated, "It gives me a sense of place and identity, of being an Englishman, a native of the British Isles" (Harris, 15/8/75, T 47). Because cultural "roots" are felt to be a

¹⁶ For example, Martin Carthy has remarked that Joseph Taylor, an English traditional singer recorded early in the twentieth century by Percy Grainger, was a "great show off" ("An Interview with Martin Carthy," 4). Joseph Taylor's singing can be heard on the LP Unto Brigg Fair (Leader LEA 4050).

¹⁷ June Tabor, quoted in Colin Irwin, "Waltzing with June," Melody Maker, June 21, 1975, p. 35.

very important part of life, the concept of "giving the music back to the people" has gained currency in the revival.

While folksongs are considered to create a bond with the past, they are felt to be relevant to twentieth century life as well:

[One of the reasons folk music is important is] because it tells us about life, of people in the past, and we see just how parallel it is to our own -- how equal it is to our own. Songs about lost loves . . . or erring sweethearts. Songs about the pains of rejection, about the joys of meeting people you thought lost, about the sweat of hard labor, and sometimes the rewards of hard labor. All of those things. All those things still exist (Harris, 15/8/75, T 47).

Further, some people find traditional songs more meaningful and relevant than most contemporary music. One of my informants said, "The [traditional] songs have a meaning for me. Some chap ranting on about [how] he walked out this morning and the sun blew his mind -- [this] doesn't do anything for me. Modern songs tend to be very introverted And those kind of songs don't mean much, somehow" (Janet Simpson, 31/8/75, T 64). And Frankie Armstrong has stated:

In "The Cruel Mother", the superstitions in it may be archaic [sic], but they're nightmarish as well -- whether you believe in ghosts or re-visitation or whether you just believe that people are plagued by their own guilt and nightmares, it doesn't matter -- "The Cruel Mother" is right up-to-date! There are so many kids found down rubbish chutes . . . absolutely contemporary! And yet, where is a good contemporary song on a mother killing her child? It may have been written, but I haven't heard it!¹⁸

¹⁸ Raim, Part II, 9 (ellipsis in the quote is from the original). "The Cruel Mother," No. 20 in Francis James Child's The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, concerns a mother who murders her baby (or babies), and is later visited by its ghost.

Sometimes folksongs are felt to have meaning and relevance in regard to political matters. As we have seen, political activism among revivalists is not all-encompassing.¹⁹ Nonetheless, it is important to discern the reasons for the association of folksong with political song. Margaret Dean-Smith writes that the perceived relationship of "folk" and "protest" song has its roots in the Romantic period in Germany, when folksong became associated with patriotism.²⁰ This connection of folksong with national pride was continued in the early years of the American revival.²¹ More significant, however, was the eventual linkage, among American revivalists and the American public, of folksong with topical "protest" song.²² In the 1950's and early 1960's, when the British revival was greatly influenced by the revival in the United States, this idea was undoubtedly carried to Britain, along with the repertoires of American singers.

American influence in the mid sixties strengthened the link between folk and protest songs. During the folk boom, American singer-songwriters became popular in Britain. Among these performers were

¹⁹ The more politically oriented people, though, such as Ewan MacColl, tend to be the most vocal. This gives the revival the appearance of being more politically involved than it actually is.

²⁰ "The Pre-Disposition to Folkery," Folklore, 79 (1968), 164.

²¹ See Patterson, pp. 27-35.

²² See Reuss, "The Roots of American Left-Wing Interest in Folk Song."

people such as Bob Dylan and Joan Baez,²³ who sang protest songs. Dylan, Baez, and others were popularly known as "folksingers," which is not surprising in view of the earlier association of topical and traditional song in the American folksong revival. A host of singer-songwriter "folksingers" developed in Britain, many of whom wrote and sang protest songs. "Protest singers" performed in folk clubs; thus "folk" and "protest" moved closer together in the eyes of the general public, and some revivalists.

While some of the reasons for the association of folksong and protest in the British revival can be explained by the influence of other, related movements, a number of people in the revival perceive a direct connection between many British traditional songs and politics. These songs are seen as having arisen out of "some sort of strife, either national, local, or personal" (Vicki North, 6/8/75, T 38). Yet it should be noted that revivalists are usually aware that there are also songs of satisfaction and complacency within the British traditional repertoire. A person's musical taste and political orientation help determine the type of music performed or listened to.

Obviously, everyone who participates in some way in the revival is not consciously seeking an alternative to other forms of entertainment. A person may initially be attracted to the revival

²³ Joan Baez is a well-known American singer of traditional and contemporary songs, who has been very active in politics. See her autobiography, *Daybreak* (New York: Dial Press, 1968); Rodnitzky, Chapter 6 (83-99), and Wendy Caesar, "Joan Baez: A Bibliography," *John Edwards Memorial Foundation Quarterly*, 12 (1976), 147-157.

because of the music, the opportunity to socialize, or simply because folk clubs are "a different place to go drinking" (Martin Lovelace, 13/9/76, T 85). However, once involved in the culture, participants learn not only about folk music, but also about the revival's unwritten -- and often unspoken -- rules of conduct. As well, they will probably be influenced, to one degree or another, by the attitudes of other revivalists with whom they associate. Hence, the ideology of the revival continues (though not without alteration) despite the varied motivations of new participants.

There are, however, people within the revival who appear to hold attitudes antithetical to those outlined here, and this has proved to be a source of conflict. The most obvious example of this type of conflict occurred during the folk boom years of the sixties, over the issue of "commercialism." During the boom, the label "folk" was a very profitable one; people in the pop music industry were quick to take advantage of the monetary rewards it offered, as they had been with skiffle several years earlier. Resentment came from a lot of revivalists, primarily because of the commercial exploitation of the term "folk," which was used to describe almost anyone who played an acoustic guitar, regardless of the nature of the music performed (see p. 3). The folksong revival, which had been seen by participants as a refuge from exploitation, became, for a time, a party to it.

The popular music industry naturally lost a lot of its interest in "folk" after the boom had passed. Yet within the revival there are still performers who are apparently motivated by money and

ego rather than by artistic concerns. Such people are scorned by those who feel that musical quality should take precedence over other factors.

This discussion has focused on some of the concepts which are fairly widespread within the British folksong revival. The study of the St. Albans Folk Music Club, to which we now turn, will illustrate aspects of ideology within the context of a particular folk club.

V

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ST. ALBANS FOLK MUSIC CLUB

This chapter is divided into three main sections:

"Historical Development," tracing the major developments at the St. Albans Folk Music Club from its inception;¹ "Physical Setting," which describes the layout of the Goat Inn, where the club is held; and "Club Evenings," which outlines the format of a typical night at the club. The intention here is to familiarize the reader with some of the basic workings of the St. Albans club.

Today, the club meets weekly, from the first Sunday in September until the last Sunday in June. It was noted in Chapter I that the music performed there is largely, although not entirely, traditional, as well as British; thus the club is classified as either "traditionally-based" or "traditional." Both the audience and the residents are predominantly middle class. The most common age group among both audience members and residents is twenty-five to thirty-five. The total range in age of the audience is from eighteen to about sixty-five, while the approximate range for the residents is twenty-five to

¹The historical material in this chapter has been drawn almost exclusively from oral sources. Printed sources were occasionally helpful in determining dates and the like. When informants' statements conflicted and no printed source was available, I usually relied upon the testimony of the majority. If there was no majority, I relied upon the informant who had given the most accurate testimony in areas which could be checked against other sources.

fifty. As will be seen in later chapters, however, classifications of age and social class, although employed by informants, are far less important to them than distinctions based on a person's motives, behavioral attributes, and role within the club.

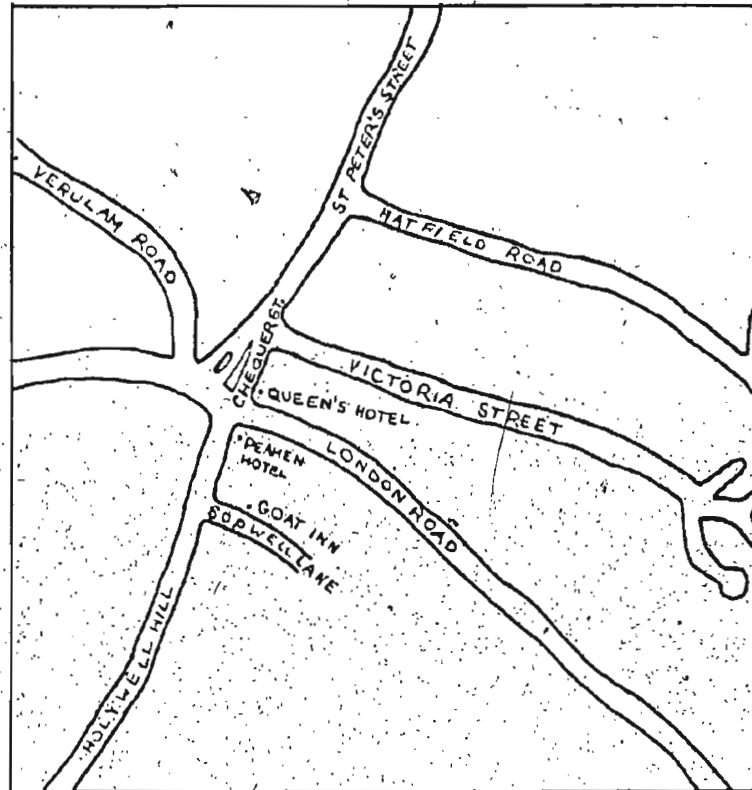
Historical Development

The St. Albans Folk Music Club was founded in 1960. It was first located at the Peahen Hotel, on Holywell Hill, one of the main streets in St. Albans (see Figure 3). The club was started by Ken Lindsay, a "small impresario"² of jazz clubs in Hertfordshire. Lindsay ran it along the same lines as his jazz clubs: a performer would be booked for an evening, and Lindsay would act as master of ceremonies. Sometimes other people were booked in addition to the principal act; few of the performers were from the St. Albans area.

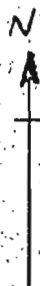
Music featured at the club during this period varied from English traditional to country and western. One of the most popular performers was Steve Benbow, a professional musician who performed with a group called the Steve Benbow Folk Four. This group, based in London, played a "jazz-blues type of music,"³ which included some folksongs, but "with a fairly up-tempo jazz background" (Aston, 25/4/77, T 92). Compared to most performers of traditional music today, their style was somewhat formal and "polished." Brian Pearson, a long-time resident at the club, recalls that Benbow's group "had a kind of gloss about

²Graham Brinsden, 11/8/75, T 43.

³Mike Aston, 25/4/77, T 92.



Note: Only main roads (and Sopwell Lane) are shown.



SCALE

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MILES

Figure 3: Map of central St. Albans, showing the Peahen Hotel, the Queens Hotel and the Goat Inn.

them, a kind of show-biz gloss. I mean, not to a drastic extent, but they were a pretty disciplined group. They could play their instruments and what-not, you know."⁴

The format of the club had considerable impact on the atmosphere of club meetings. Because most of the people who performed there were from outside the St. Albans area, they were not closely associated with the audience; either in terms of personal relationships or knowledge of local events. This, and the "professionalism" of Benbow and other performers, helped create fairly rigid distinctions between audience and performers. The present organizer, Vicki North, stated that the club "was definitely run on a star system basis. It was, 'You are being entertained by me, and I am a folksinger'" (3/6/75, T 10). And she said, "There would be an act and you would clap it, and laugh at the jokes" (16/6/75, T 16). These statements reflect the perceived separation of performers and audience at the time.

Lindsay ran the club for about a year. He freely admits that to him it was a "commercial thing";⁵ when he could no longer "make it pay,"⁶ he closed it down. The club was reopened in September 1961 by the Folklanders, a local musical group led by Mike Aston. The Folklanders were among the few local performers who had previously

⁴19/8/75, T 54. Steve Benbow has appeared on at least two LPs: Steve Benbow Sings Admiral Benbow (HMV CLP1603), and Steve Benbow Sings I Travel the World (HMV CLP1687).

⁵15/4/77, T 89.

⁶Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53.

appeared at the club. Their material was largely English, but they had been strongly influenced by the Weavers, and particularly Pete Seeger, whose style of "sing-along" the group emulated.⁷ The Folklanders were already performing as residents at a folk club in the town of Potters Bar, located about seven miles away from St. Albans. After taking over the club at St. Albans, they continued as residents in Potters Bar; the two clubs met on alternate Sundays.

This group was responsible for instituting some very important changes at the St. Albans club. They altered the format to the guest-resident-floor singer system, which already existed at Potters Bar. This has remained the club's basic arrangement. It was also during their "residency" that significant numbers of local singers began performing at the club. Reasons for this are not difficult to discern. The Folklanders were "local people,"⁸ known by club members on a personal level. They were therefore perceived as being "nearer"⁹ to the audience than most previous performers had been. As well, the group showed an interest in the audience, encouraging participation with their

⁷ Aston, 25/4/77, T 92. Pete Seeger, a popular performer in the American revival, is known especially for his ability to involve audiences in his performances. For further information on Seeger, see Denisoff, *Great Day Coming*, pp. 78, 80, 112-113, 140-144, 159-161. Seeger's stage manner is discussed in Peter Lyon, "The Ballad of Pete Seeger" (DeTurk and Poulin, 203-215), and in Jon Pankake, "Pete's Children: The American Folksong Revival, Pro and Con" (DeTurk and Poulin, 280-286).

⁸ North 3/6/75, T 10.

⁹ Ibid.

sing-along style of performance. It is hardly surprising that a growing number of local singers began to perform (as floor singers), given the change in format and the involvement of the Folklanders with club members.

The Folklanders clearly appear to have been the mainstay of the club, on both performance and administrative levels, but they were not the only such contributors. Other residents from the Potters Bar club also performed at St. Albans. Moreover, the club was "run by committee,"¹⁰ with the Folklanders being primarily responsible for booking guests.

After about two years the Folklanders found that, in addition to their other activities, running the St. Albans club was too great a strain. The club then underwent its second change of management. Vicki North (then Vicki Stevens), who had been handling some of the administrative duties, assumed responsibility for much of the organizational work; she has since become the sole organizer. Brian Pearson, a young singer from St. Albans, formed a group of singers and musicians, who took over as residents at the club. The St. Albans and Potters Bar clubs did not, however, sever their relationship completely. For "quite a time"¹¹ after Brian and Vicki took over the St. Albans Folk Music Club, it existed in close liaison with the Folklanders' club in Potters Bar. Residents from each club occasionally performed as residents at the

¹⁰ Aston, 25/4/77, T 93.

¹¹ Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53.

other. This fairly close relationship was eventually discontinued, but the split "wasn't traumatic, it just happened that way" (Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53).

The St. Albans club continued operating on its own, and Brian's group of residents gained and lost various members over the months and years. Tim Hart and Maddy Prior, now well-known members of the British folk-rock group, Steeleye Span,¹² once served as residents. Maddy Prior was, in fact, among the residents Brian initially brought together.

When Vicki North began running the folk club, it was still located at the Peahen Hotel. Eventually, however, new premises had to be found:

And we got chucked out of there [the Peahen] one night, because Paul Lenahan . . . an Irish singer, was singing, and the landlord's daughter was in the room, and the landlord came in, and heard Paul Lenahan singing this rude song, and said that we couldn't possibly go there ever again, and we got chucked out.¹³

The club was next housed in the Queens Hotel (refer to Figure 3, p. 102) located just up the road from the Peahen. The Queens was "a bit of

¹²This group is discussed in Denselow, pp. 163-167. Steeleye Span has made several records, including Please to See the King (Big Tree BTS 2004), and Below the Salt (Chrysalis CHR 1008).

¹³North, 3/6/75, T-10. According to Graham Goffee, Paul Lenahan used to be associated with a musical group called the Exiles, and the "rude song" that he sang at the club was "The Zoological Gardens." This song is printed in Dominic Behan's Ireland Sings (London: Tro Essex Music, 1973), p. 143, and has been recorded by Behan, on From Erin's Green Shore: Songs, Pipe and Fiddle Tunes in the Irish Tradition (Topic TPS168).

a grotty [seedy and dirty] pub, [with] a very grotty room" (North, 3/6/75, T 10). Tired of "moving about,"¹⁴ and desiring a more pleasant location for the club, Vicki, Brian, and four other people, including Ken Lindsay, bought an inn called the Goat, which was in need of renovation.¹⁵ Their collective intent was, according to Vicki North, to provide "a home for folk music and jazz" (3/6/75, T 10). The inn was renovated, and reopened about 1968. The St. Albans Folk Music Club moved to the Goat in the same year, and has remained there since.

Largely through the efforts of Brian Pearson, the music heard at the club over the years grew less eclectic, and more British, in character. When Brian first became a resident, the range of music performed was still quite broad. Although Brian sang mostly English, and some Scottish, traditional songs, Maddy Prior sang "Joan Baez stuff,"¹⁶ and the other residents performed "whatever came to mind" (Pearson, 9/8/75, T 53). Guests at the club during this period were individually less eclectic in their choice of repertoire, but collectively their material covered as broad a range as the residents'. Brian, however, soon came under the influence of Ewan MacColl, when he

¹⁴ North, 3/6/75, T 10.

¹⁵ For additional information about the Peahen, the Queens, and the Goat, see W. Branch Johnson, Hertfordshire Inns: a Handbook of Old Hertfordshire Inns and Beerhouses. Part Two: West Herts (Letchworth, Hertfordshire: Hertfordshire Countryside, 1963), pp. 93, 94, and 90, respectively. Also refer to F.G. Kitton's The Old Inns of St. Albans, with an Illustrated Account of the Peahen Hotel, Past and Present (St. Albans: Walter Price, 1899).

¹⁶ Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53.

joined the Critics Group. Like MacColl, he began to believe very firmly that British folk music had to be "given a chance to display and develop itself, without being overwhelmed, as seemed quite possible at that time, by American music" (Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53). Under Brian's guidance, American music began to disappear from the residents' repertoires, and the proportion of guests performing British traditional music increased.

As was indicated earlier, the idea that people should sing the songs of their own culture gained widespread acceptance in the folksong revival in Britain during the 1960's. Thus, it is likely that a "British policy" would have developed at the St. Albans club in time, even without the presence of Brian Pearson. Yet Brian provided a firm guiding figure toward this end. He is also basically responsible for the present abundance of residents at the club.

Until 1970, there were no shattering changes in the line-up of residents. Brian recalled:

Various people came and went. We generally had two or three, maybe four residents, something like that, over a period of years. One time we were down very low, and I think for the best part of a year, I was the only resident at the club. It may not have been that long, but it certainly seemed that long to me (19/8/75, T 53).

In spite of an increase in the number of residents, it was eventually decided that more were needed. "Workshops"¹⁷ were instituted in the

¹⁷A "workshop" is "an instructional, or basically instructional, gathering of people who want to know more about specific angles and aspects of music and allied things," such as dancing and folk crafts. Workshops are also occasionally held "just for discussion" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62).

summer of 1970 to recruit interested performers, who, it was hoped, would then become residents. Brian announced that workshops would be held "on singing, and learning songs, and whatever people were interested in" (Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53). These workshops met with an "extraordinarily large response,"¹⁸ much larger than had been anticipated: "We [the residents at the time] had this idea that there must be singers in that audience somewhere, but they weren't coming forward. But we didn't expect to find quite so many. And, in fact, we got something like eighteen or twenty people, I think, the first week" (Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53).

These first workshops continued running for approximately a year. They were largely concerned with "the process of producing singers,"¹⁹ as their primary purpose was to train interested and talented people for the task of being residents. Brian led some of the workshops alone, and some with Frankie Armstrong; occasionally other people ran them.²⁰ Topics included: styles of singing, vocal techniques, choosing a repertoire, and introducing songs. In leading sessions, Brian Pearson made use of his experience with the Critics Group, adapting some of MacColl's ideas to the situation at hand. He found that running the workshop was quite challenging: "It was an

¹⁸ Pearson, 19/8/75, T 53.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ G. Goffee, cassette tape sent to the author in August, 1976; T 84.

interesting group to work with because they were so bloody anarchic, and they would refuse to do anything you told them to do, which made life quite annoying in one way, and very pleasant in another" (19/8/75, T 53).

Exactly why most of these people had not previously sung at the club as floor singers is unclear. Perhaps nothing was done to discourage people from performing, but little or nothing was done which would have encouraged them, either. During the course of the workshops, there was some turnover in attendance. Some people dropped out, and others joined after the sessions had gotten under way. All of the participants in the workshops did not become residents, but enough people were found to eliminate the earlier problem.

Since 1970, several residents have left the club, "to go to college and university, or get married, or move away,"²¹ and several others have joined. At the time of my research, there were twelve residents; presently, as mentioned earlier, there are fifteen. This is an unusually large number of residents, in comparison with most folk clubs. Brian Pearson remains a resident, but his role in the club's activities has greatly diminished in recent years, as he now attends only on an average of once a month.

Workshops have continued for the past several years, running mostly during the summer months of July and August, when there are no regular club meetings. Their purpose and format vary from year to

²¹North, 16/6/75, T 17.

year, to suit the current interests of those who attend.²² The emphasis on singing techniques has declined (and at times, completely disappeared) in favor of such things as dance and craft instruction, and lectures and discussions on various topics.

One important reason for holding workshops in recent years has been to get -- or keep -- people involved in the club. This seems to be, in part, a sincere desire to involve people more directly in club activities, and to encourage people to perform. More importantly, however, workshops provide a continuity of a "sense of the club,"²³ which helps prevent a loss in audience numbers when the new season begins in September.

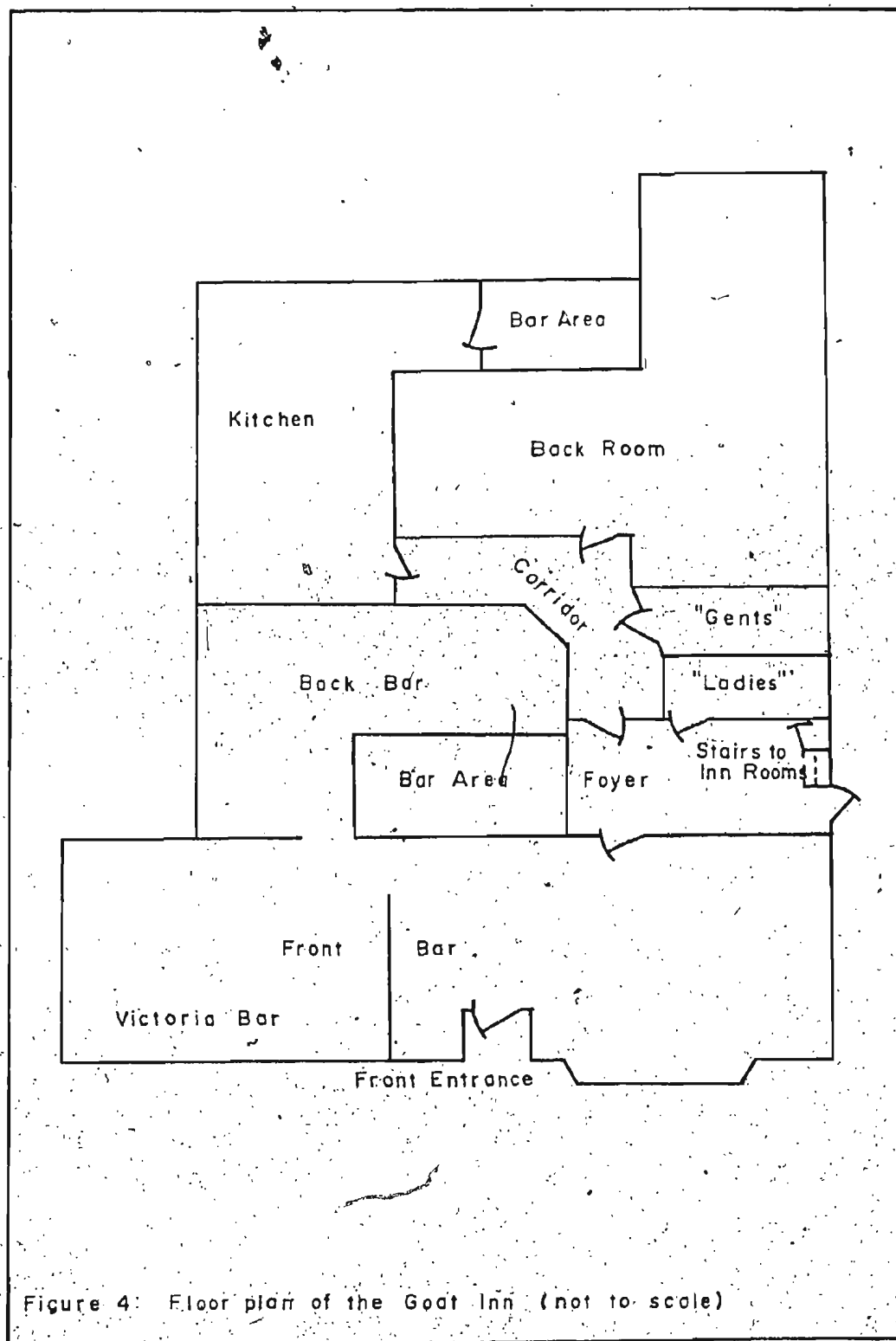
Physical Setting

The St. Albans Folk Music Club meets in the back room of the Goat Inn, which is located on Sopwell Lane, a quiet side street off Holywell Hill (see above, Figure 3, p. 102).²⁴ The main entrance to the Goat leads directly into the area known as the "front bar" (refer to Figure 4). Across from the entrance, to the left, is the bar area itself. Tables and benches or chairs are placed throughout the room. On the left-hand wall is a doorway leading to the "Victoria

²²For instance, resident Janet Simpson wrote, in a letter of June 1, 1976, "Clog dancing seems high on the list of priorities these days as so many people are interested."

²³G. Goffee; author's notes taken during a St. Albans Folk Music Club residents' meeting, July 6, 1975.

²⁴The appendix (pp. 246-281) contains photographs of the Goat Inn, as well as of performances at the club, and portraits of some informants.



Bar," another, less frequented section of the front bar. There is also a "back bar" in the Goat Inn, which serves as a dining room for guests at the inn.

To the right of the front bar area is a door leading into the foyer. A pay telephone, stairs to the inn rooms, and the women's rest room are located here. To the right, there is a side entrance to the Goat. Another door, on the far wall of the foyer, leads into a corridor, which, in turn, leads to the back room, where the St. Albans Folk club meets. On the right side of the corridor, there is a permanent sign with the name of the club, which lists the guest performer of the week, or the type of activity being held. Each week the relevant information is written on paper and tacked to the sign. Further down the hall, also on the right, is the men's rest room. At the entrance to the back room, the corridor turns left, leading into the kitchen. There is a table at the bend in the corridor, next to the back room door. This is where money is collected for entrance into the club. A sign is placed above the table each week, listing admission prices.

The back room itself is shaped like a backwards "L" (see Figure 5). It contains a stage, which is fairly low and shallow. For most events at the club, chairs are placed in rows, with a few tables scattered among them. The maximum seating capacity is between one hundred and one hundred and ten. The back room at the Goat also contains a bar, consisting of a large window-like opening.

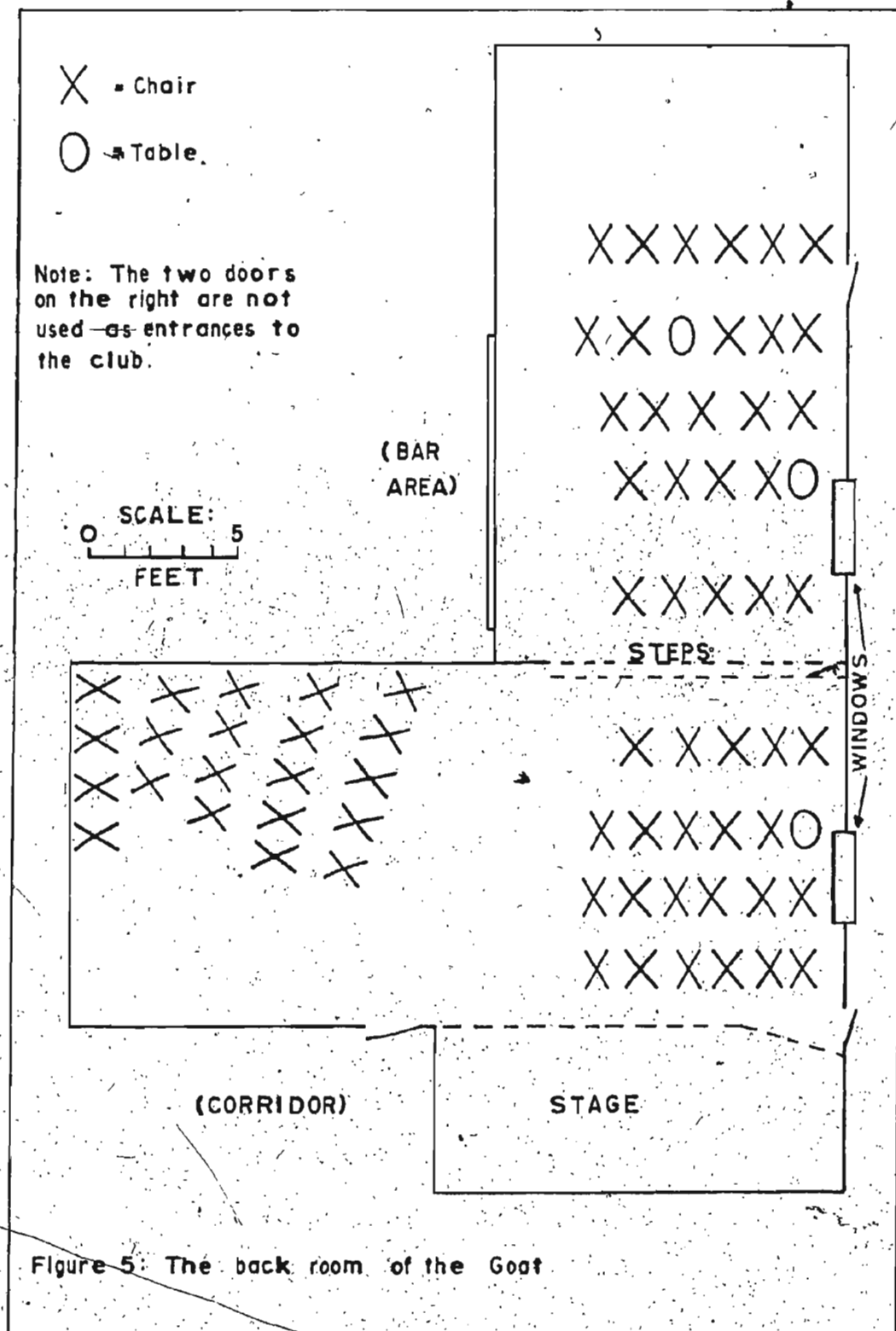


Figure 5: The back room of the Goat

Club Evenings

There are four types of Sunday night "club evenings," or "club nights": (regular) club evenings, ceilidhs, club nights, and feature evenings. Some amount of confusion can result from the use of "club night" and "club evening" for both broad and specific categories. To avoid any misunderstanding, when the terms are employed in their broader usage, they will be preceded by an asterisk. This practice will be adhered to throughout the thesis for all terms with both specific and general meanings.²⁵

Regular club evenings have a format similar to that described in Chapter I (see p. 10), the main difference being the presence of "the band," or the Goat Ceilidh Band, which performs before the evening formally begins, and during the interval. At 7:30, the members of the band (consisting of some of the residents and the organizer)²⁶ congregate on the stage, and begin to play. The room is usually sparsely populated at this time, and no one is concerned if people talk while the band performs. For all other performances during the evening, quiet is expected and demanded. If people talk, they will be told to be quiet, either by audience members or residents.²⁷

²⁵ The use of a single term for two different categories, one of which is included in the other, is dealt with briefly in Kay (85-86).

²⁶ At the time of writing, Tim Fienburgh, although not a resident, frequently performed with the band.

²⁷ Reasons for these different behavioral expectations will be discussed in Chapters VII and VIII.

The band stops playing about 7:45, and the four residents scheduled for the evening/come on to the stage. One of them has been chosen in advance to organize the evening's performances. This person formally begins the "first half" of the evening, welcoming people to the club, announcing the guest for the night, and introducing him or herself and the other three residents. Two or more of the residents, during their "spot," usually perform some items together. For example, one of the residents may accompany another who normally performs without an instrument, or all four may play some tunes together.

At 8:30, the guest is introduced. The guest spot lasts for approximately half an hour, after which performances stop for a ten to twenty minute interval. An announcement is made immediately preceding the break that anyone who wishes to perform (as a floor singer) should tell one of the four residents during the interval. The band re-assembles during the break, and at approximately 9:20, the evening's residents begin the "second half." During the residents' second spot, the raffle is drawn and the floor singers are presented. The guest's second half hour spot begins at ten o'clock. At 10:30 the pub closes, and the evening must end.²⁸ The next week's guest and any upcoming events which may be of interest to the audience are announced at this time.

²⁸ Liquor licensing regulations allow for ten minutes "drinking-up" time before the premises must be vacated. Therefore, performances do not have to end precisely at 10:30. Although I have not been able to find any written sources describing this licensing regulation, my British colleagues in the folklore department inform me that it is widespread.

It should be noted that this is the typical format of a club evening; it can be altered if the need arises. For example, occasionally the guest is an elderly traditional singer, who would find it difficult to perform alone for half an hour. In this case, residents bring the person on stage earlier than usual, and alternate their own performances with those of the guest.

Another type of *club evening, the ceilidh, is held on the last Sunday of each month.²⁹ The word "céilidh" is Scottish Gaelic for a visit, sojourn, or pilgrimage.³⁰ More precisely, it refers to a house gathering which includes singing and dancing. The term in this sense is still employed frequently in Scotland.³¹ A ceilidh at "the Goat," as well as in folk clubs in general, "is an event which involves a mixture of dancing and singing" (Tony Rundle, 20/8/75, T.58). The singing at ceilidhs is done by the ceilidh chairman (who organizes and runs these events),³² floor singers, and

²⁹ This has changed since the 1974-1975 season: ceilidhs are now held about every six weeks.

³⁰ Edward Dwelly, comp., The Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary (7th ed.; Glasgow: Gairm Publications, 1971, p. 185). The modern Irish Gaelic spelling is "céilí."

³¹ Author's notes, conversation with Kenneth S. Goldstein, October 29, 1976.

³² When ceilidhs were initiated at the St. Albans club, the residents took turns acting as ceilidh chairman. Later, Sandy Glover, who both sings and dances, was asked to assume the role on a permanent basis; Sandy is presently a resident, but was not at the time. More recently, residents have reverted to the earlier system of alternating as ceilidh chairman.

occasionally, residents. No guest is booked on a ceilidh night, but a dance caller is usually hired.

Club nights are the third type of *club evening; they were introduced in the 1975-1976 season, after my fieldwork was completed. On a club night, no guest is booked, and two or more of the residents perform. There is more time for floor singers to perform on these occasions.

Feature evenings, like club nights, are run by the residents, without a guest. As in the Ballads and Blues radio programs (see p. 67) there is a theme to the entire performance. There have been no feature evenings since the 1973-1974 season; they demanded a great deal of work, and according to Graham Goffee, the ideas for feature evenings were always superior to the finished products (17/6/75, T 17). They have not, however, been formally deleted as a type of club evening.

In addition to these regular meetings, the club is involved in a number of other activities.³³ These are important, as they do have a bearing upon the culture of the club. Yet it is the Sunday night meetings, and specifically the regular club evenings, which informants seemed to find most significant. This is not surprising, in view of the fact that

³³For example, each winter the St. Albans Folk Music Club sponsors a "weekend course" in folk music at Pendley Manor, in Tring, Hertfordshire. Workshops on various topics are run by residents and by other people booked for the occasion. This event is "residential": people spend the entire weekend, from Friday night until Sunday afternoon, at Pendley Manor. Other activities with which the club is involved include local folksong and folk dance festivals.

regular club evenings are the most frequently held club activity, as well as the most highly attended of the Sunday night meetings. Therefore, much of the material in ensuing chapters will focus upon these events.

VI

ROLE STRUCTURE OF THE CLUB

There are many roles an individual can fill at the St. Albans Folk Music Club, including those of organizer, resident, guest, and floor singer, mentioned earlier. This chapter will define and examine "types of people at the folk club" on regular club evenings, as perceived by the resident-organizer group. With the exception of the barman, all types fall into one of three major categories: *organizers, performers, or audience members (see Table 2).¹ Reasons for the barman's exclusion from these categories will be discussed later in the chapter.

*Organizers

The positions of organizer and "person sitting on the door" (collecting admission fees) constitute the organizational roles on regular club evenings. The organizer of the St. Albans Folk Music Club, Vicki North, is ultimately responsible for the running of the club. It is her job to make sure that "things take place as and when

¹In Table 2, "organizers" is preceded by an asterisk. As mentioned in the previous chapter (p. 115), when a term is used to identify two different categories, one of which includes the other, the term in its broader usage is preceded by an asterisk.

In this particular case, however, while the "person sitting on the door" is considered an organizational role, the actual term "*organizer" is not generally employed. I have used this term here for the purposes of constructing a taxonomy.

1

People at the folk club (regular club evenings)			
Organizers	Performers		Audience members
Organizer			
Person sitting on the door			
Floor singers			
Residents (scheduled to perform)			
Guest			
Band			
Regulars			
Non-regulars			
Outsiders			
Residents present but not performing			
Barman			

they should take place" (G. Goffee, 16/7/75, T 29). This involves numerous specific duties, which are listed and defined componentially in Tables 3 and 4.² As the tables show, Vicki divided her activities as organizer along four main dimensions of contrast: time, place, type of relationship to the club, and involvement of other people.

Many of the things the organizer does are carried out away from the Goat, at times other than during *club evenings. These include ordering records for the raffle, doing the banking and finances, and making up the folk club program (schedule). Vicki prepares the folk club program at home. For regular club evenings, the names of guests are listed on the schedule, along with brief descriptions of "what sort of thing they do,"³ or other pertinent information. Ceilidhs (and club nights) are listed as such, and the person or people running these evenings are indicated. Copies of the folk club program are available at the door on Sundays.

Some of the organizer's activities, such as representing the club at meetings of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) and the British Federation of Folk Clubs, and running the folk music

²Within the limited amount of time which I had to conduct my research, it was not always possible to obtain sufficient criteria to distinguish each term in a contrast set from all others. Therefore, the componential definitions in this thesis sometimes contain more than one term identified by a particular set of attributes.

³North, 3/6/75, T 10.

Table 3: Dimensions of contrast for things the organizer does

1.0 Time

- 1.1 Done on the night that the club meets
- 1.2 Usually not done on the night that the club meets
- 1.3 Not done on the night that the club meets

2.0 Place

- 2.1 Done at the Goat
- 2.2 Usually not done at the Goat
- 2.3 Not done at the Goat

3.0 Association with events at the club

- 3.1 Directly associated with events at the club
- 3.2 May be directly associated with events at the club
- 3.3 Not directly associated with events at the club

4.0 Involvement of others

- 4.1 Done without assistance from people associated with the club
- 4.2 Usually accompanied by someone else from the club
- 4.3 Involves communication with residents and/or other people associated in some way with the club
- 4.4 Can be (and sometimes is) done just as well by other people

Table 4. Componential definition of things the organizer does

Activity	Dimensions of contrast			
	1-0	2-0	3-0	4-0
Get things ready which have to be set up on the table [outside the back room at the Goat]	1-1	2-3	3-1	4-4
Make sure the chairs are set up [in the back room], or set them up	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-4
Set up thin on the table [outside the back room]	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-4
Collect and read the post [which has been sent to the club in % the pub], if any	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-1
Make sure all the residents are there	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-4
Tell residents about anything from the post which needs announcin	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3
Ascertain whether or not the guest is there	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-4
Find out if the guest needs accommodation	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3
Introduce the guest to the person running the evening	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3
Sit on the door	1-1	2-1	3-1	4,3,4
Pay people at the end of the evening	1-1	2-1	3-1	4,3,4

Find out if the guest needs accommodation	1-1	2-1	3-1	3
Introduce the guest to the person running the evening	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3
Sit on the door	1-1	2-1	3-1	4,3,4-4
Pay people at the end of the evening	1-1	2-1	3-1	4,3,4-4
Clear up	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-4
Chat to people [at the club]	1-1	2-1	3-1	4,3,4-4
Do the banking and finances	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Handle communication between the club and the pub	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3
Book guests	1-2	2-2	3-1	4-3
Order records for the raffle	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
"Donkey work" - e.g., advertising	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-4
Make up the folk club program [schedule]	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Organize the residents list [schedule]	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Answer queries - e.g., from people who have contacted the C A B	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-3
Work out reasonable prices for everything - e.g., admission	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Go to EFDSS meetings on behalf of the club	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-2
Represent the club at the British Federation of Folk Clubs	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-2
Run the folk music weekend at Pendley Manor	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-3
Help arrange folkson events in Hertfordshire	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-3
	1-3			

Chat to people [at the club]	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3,4-4
Do the bankin and finances	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Handle communication between the club and the ub	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3
Book uests	1-2	2-2	3-1	4-3
Order records for the raffle	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
"Donkey work" - e.g., advertising	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-4
Make up the folk club program [schedule]	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Organize the residents list [schedule]	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Answer queries - e.g., from people who have contacted the CAB	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-3
Work out reasonable prices for everything - e.g., admission	1-3	2-3	3-1	4-1
Go to EFDSS meetings on behalf of the club	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-2
Represent the club at the British Federation of Folk Clubs	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-2
Run the folk music weekend at Pendley Manor	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-3
Help arrange folksong events in Hertfordshire	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-3
Organize the annual residents' party	1-3	2-3	3-3	4-3

weekend at Pendley Manor,⁴ are not directly connected with the club itself. They are things Vicki does as a result of being the organizer, rather than tasks specific to running the club; however, since these activities were included in her list of "things the organizer does," they have not been omitted here. Because she is the club's chief administrator, Vicki is its representative in outside groups like the EFDSS, and because of her organizational skills (evidenced by her role within the club), she plays a significant part in organizing folk music events which involve people from the St. Albans Folk Music Club.

Vicki's administrative responsibilities also extend to the community at large. She is listed in the local directory of the Citizen's Advice Bureau⁵ under "Folk Music"; she answers people's questions on that topic, or just puts people onto "the right trail, [or] the right person" (North, 3/6/75, T 10). For example, if a group of people wish to have a "folk music evening,"⁶ Vicki will suggest someone from the club whom she feels would be suitable.

⁴For information on the EFDSS and the Pendley folk music weekend, see page 68, (footnote 26), and page 118, (footnote 33), respectively. The British Federation of Folk Clubs is a semi-autonomous organization within the EFDSS, whose purpose is to act as a liaison between EFDSS affiliated folk clubs and regional "folk federations."

⁵The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), created in 1939, was originally designed to provide "an emergency service in time of war." However, it has remained in operation since the Second World War. Presently, there are seven hundred local offices of the CAB, with the central administrative office located in London. Working in cooperation with other community services, the CAB provides "advice, information, referral, action, advocacy, and feedback" (St. Albans Public Library, "The Citizens Advice Bureaux Service," n.p., n.d., pp. 1-3).

⁶North, 3/6/75, T 10.

Most of the organizer's Sunday evening activities at the Goat are carried out at the beginning of the night, before the performance begins. She checks to see that the guest and all the residents scheduled for the evening have arrived. If the guest does not know the resident who is in charge of running the evening, Vicki will introduce them. She finds out if the guest needs accommodation for the night; if so, she usually serves as the host. During the evening's performances, her only responsibility is "sitting on the door," or arranging that someone else does so. Vicki plays in the band (see pp. 115-116) at the beginning of the evening and during the break, but this is in her capacity as a member of the band, rather than as the club's organizer.

At the end of a night, Vicki does a good deal of the clearing up. Not only must the beer glasses be returned to the bar, the chairs stacked and the floor swept, but the people who have remained in the back room to talk must also be told to leave, as the pub's closing time has past. This latter task is left to Vicki because, as she put it, no one else likes to yell, "Go home, you buggers!" at those people left in the room (16/6/75, T 16).

The organizer also pays people at the end of each evening. For all club evenings, the rental fee for the back room must be paid at this time. On regular club evenings, the guest and the residents must be paid, as well. The residents receive one pound each time they perform, to help cover the cost of beer, gasoline, etc.; the guest's fee

varies, depending upon the guest. For the 1974-1975 season, the minimum amount a guest received was twelve pounds.⁷

The last criterion Vicki used in dividing her activities as organizer concerned the involvement of other people. She noted that as the club's organizer, she does some things by herself, such as ordering records for the raffle, and handling the club's banking and finances. There are other things in which she is usually, but not always, accompanied by someone else from the club. Still other activities require communication with residents and/or other people associated with the folk club. For example, the organizer communicates with the other people running the Goat Inn about folk club affairs. Finally, Vicki noted that some of her tasks can be, and sometimes are, done by other people (normally the residents). Included here are checking to see whether or not the guest has arrived, clearing up, and "sitting on the door."

"The person sitting on the door"⁸ has a number of responsibilities, including selling admission tickets (see Table 5). When someone wants to enter the club, the person on the door must find out whether or not the individual is a member of the club. On a formal basis, the club audience consists of "members" and "guests," or

⁷At the time of my research, the British pound was worth approximately \$2.25 (Canadian), making twelve pounds equivalent to about twenty-seven dollars. I have no exact figures for the maximum pay guests received, but the average amount was in the vicinity of twenty pounds, or about forty-five dollars.

⁸"Sitting on the door" thus has dual status, both as a responsibility of the organizer, and as a distinct role.

Table 5: Taxonomic definition of things the person sitting on the door does

Things the person sitting on the door does	Make sure the 'fiver float' [five pounds of change] is in the money box
	Put out schedules-for the St. Albans club and various other folk clubs in the region
	Put up the notices - e.g. admission prices
	Sell entrance tickets and memberships
	Sell raffle tickets
	Sell other tickets (when applicable) for concerts festivals, etc.
	Divide the raffle tickets and put them in a hat
	Be friendly
	Explain what's going on inside the club
	Stop people from going in [the back room] during the singing
	Try to keep everybody quiet who is outside the [back room] door
	Take names of people who want to be floor singers, or tell them whom to contact inside the back room
	Refer people who ask for bookings to Vicki
	Pay people at the end of the evening (if Vicki is not at the club)

non-members.⁹ If the individual is not a member, the person on the door may ask if he or she would like to join. The annual membership fee at the time of the study was twenty-five New Pence ("P"); members were charged thirty-five P for admission, and non-members were charged forty-five P.¹⁰

The person sitting on the door also sells tickets for the raffle.¹¹ Raffle tickets come on a pad; each sheet contains two rows of five tickets with the same sequence of numbers. Tickets from one row are given to the customer. Those from the other row are later separated and placed in a hat in preparation for the raffle. During the interval, the person on the door often goes into the back room to try to sell more raffle tickets, in order to ensure that the cost of the raffle prize, a record, has been covered by the number of tickets sold. Raffle tickets, during the 1974-1975 season, sold for ten P per sheet, or two P each.

⁹ Although "guest" is the term officially used, "non-member" is understood as a synonym. To avoid confusion between "guest" performers and "guest" members of the audience, the latter are referred to as "non-members" throughout the discussion.

¹⁰ Since 1971, the pound has been decimalized; one pound consists of one hundred New Pence. Thus, the annual membership fee equaled about fifty-five cents, the members' admission fee, about eighty cents, and the non-members' admission fee, about one dollar.

¹¹ Because the person on the door sells various kinds of tickets, all of these activities could have been classified under "sell tickets" in Table 5. However, this is not how informants conceptualize their activities.

In order to avoid disturbing ongoing performances, people are supposed to enter or leave the back room only during the applause between songs. The person sitting on the door tries to keep people from entering the room while performances are in progress. He or she also attempts to keep people quiet, whether they are waiting to enter the room or just chatting outside.

In addition to keeping people quiet, however, the person on the door tries to "be friendly." Maurice Sibley, one of the older residents, pointed out that the person sitting on the door is the first person from the club that newcomers see. Therefore, he said, it is essential that they are made welcome, "so they start enjoying themselves from the start" (12/6/75, T 14). The person on the door also has to be prepared to tell people, especially those who have not been to a folk club before, "what's going on" inside the club (Simpson, 31/8/75, T 63). Moreover, sometimes "people turn up on nights when there are ceilidhs [see pp. 117-118] . . . and they're a bit taken aback because they expect to come and listen to people singing, and there's all these people leaping up and down through the door, and you have to explain" (Simpson, 31/8/75, T 63).

If the person on the door is someone other than Vicki, people who ask to be booked as guests are referred to Vicki. In addition, if Vicki is not at the club on the night in question, the person on the door is responsible for paying people at the end of the evening.

Performers

Within the structure of the club, there are four main categories of performers: floor singers, residents, guests, and the band. The band will be discussed in Chapter VIII, and is not given further attention here.

Floor singers are described as "the residue of people who sing who aren't residents or guests" (G. Goffee, 16/7/75, T 29). There are not many people who do "floor spots" (perform as floor singers) at the Goat. Presumably, said my informants, if there were fewer residents, there would be more floor singers. Some of the people who have become residents in recent years did "sing from the floor" initially, and may have remained with the club as floor singers if they had not been asked to be residents. One of the purposes of having floor singers is to encourage people to perform. Residents also remarked that floor singers provide them with a break, during which they can relieve themselves, and refill their beer glasses. At the St. Albans club, floor singers are limited to two songs or tunes apiece.

There are seven types of floor singers, as shown in Table 6.¹² The most salient distinctions between categories are based upon performing experience. Although most categories of floor singers are "experienced,"

¹²Categories of floor singers, for the most part, do not have standard names. The labels used here were obtained from informants, primarily Graham Goffee. Many other categories without standard names will be discussed in this thesis; like the floor singer sub-categories, they are generally labeled with lengthy descriptive phrases. In cases where non-standard but brief labels were elicited, they will be identified as such.

Table 6: Componential definition of floor singers

Floor singer	Experience	Size of repertoire	Likely to attend regularly?	Reason for singing	Likely to be asked to sing (by residents)?
Stand-by or reserve	Fairly experienced	Fairly large	Yes (must)	Feels like it, or is needed	Yes
Person who hasn't sung much or at all and fancies [feels like] singing	Inexperienced	Small	Yes	Feels like it	No
Person who gets "shotgunned" [coerced] into singing	Probably inexperienced	Probably small	Yes	Shotgunned into it	No
Person who has sung a lot and fancies singing on a particular night	Fairly experienced	Fairly large	Yes	Feels like it	No
Professional performer who just happens to be there—e.g., comes with the guest	Very experienced	Fairly large	No	Feels like it, or is asked	Yes (very likely)
Professional performer who is trying to get a booking	Very experienced	Fairly large	No	Utterly motives (making money)	No
"Professional" floor singer—i.e., does a spot at every club he or she visits	Very experienced	Fairly large	No	Feels like it	No

in terms of actual numbers, most floor singers are "inexperienced." Hence their repertoires tend to be fairly small. In fact, the term "floor singer" connotes a performer who is less experienced, less proficient, and more nervous than the residents or the guest. Yet Table 6 shows that informants are aware that this assumption may be unfounded.

One type of floor singer that does not fit the usual stereotype is the "stand-by," or "reserve," floor singer. Stand-bys are fairly experienced performers, upon whom the residents can depend to sing whenever necessary (e.g., when no other floor singers are present). As the term suggests, these are people who attend the club often, and are known by the residents.

Three other types of floor singers are likely to attend the club on a regular basis: the person who has sung a lot in public and thinks it would be nice to sing on a particular night, the person who has not sung much or at all, but feels like singing, and the person who does not really want to sing, but is "shotgunned" (coerced) into it. The person who is "shotgunned" into performing is usually someone with little or no experience at singing in public. He or she probably attends the folk club regularly; "otherwise, there wouldn't be enough people there to shotgun him into it. If he was going to a strange club that he'd never visited before, he wouldn't let himself be shotgunned into singing. He'd do it [sing] in front of his home crowd."¹³

¹³G. Goffee, 3/9/75, T 71. Subsequent quotations within this paragraph are from the same tape.

Similarly, people who are not experienced but want to perform "are going to sing where they feel most at home." Experienced floor singers who feel like performing are also more likely to do so at their "own club."

The professional singer who is looking for a booking, the professional performer who just happens to be at the club, and the "professional" floor singer who does a floor spot at every club he or she visits "certainly don't belong to the club on a regular basis" (G. Goffee, 3/9/75, T 71). In addition, professionals who are trying to get booked by doing floor spots have "ulterior motives"¹⁴ for singing. They make it obvious to the people connected with the club that they want to be booked, often by asking for a booking after singing, or by leaving a calling card. On the other hand, professional performers who just happen to be at the club are usually asked by one of the performing residents if they would like to do a floor spot. "Professional" floor singers, who perform at every club they visit, unlike the former two groups, do not make their living from performing. "Professional," in this instance, implies frequency of performance (probably at numerous clubs), and a certain expertise of performance.¹⁵

A resident is "one of the people connected with the club organization who performs at the club" on a regular basis (G. Goffee,

¹⁴G. Goffee, 3/9/75, T 71.

¹⁵The term, "professional," as used by informants, will be discussed further in the next chapter.

16/7/75, T 29). Unlike the organizer's activities, the "things residents do" are almost entirely concerned with the evening at the Goat (refer to Tables 7 and 8). Practicing in preparation for a residency is the sole activity carried out elsewhere, at a different time. The residents' list prepared by Vicki normally covers a three month period, so the four residents scheduled for a specific evening know well ahead of time when and with whom they will be performing. If they decide to perform some songs or tunes together, they meet to practice, generally once or twice. Before the evening, they will have decided which items are going to be performed, and the order in which they will be performed. On evenings when the scheduled residents are not performing together, they do not plan out their program, but merely take turns performing. Along with the items which they plan to do, residents are always responsible for having extra songs or tunes ("spares") for "emergencies." Emergencies include occasions when the guest is late, or there are no floor singers.

Residents must be ready to "open the evening" (formally begin the evening's performances) at 7:45. Singing and playing tunes are the most common types of performance activities; the other activities listed in Table 8 which "involve performance" are things that include singing and playing.¹⁶ However, there are other things which all performers

¹⁶Because singing and playing are included in the activities which "involve performance," the categories listed in Table 8 are not all at the same hierarchical level. Thus, strictly speaking, these categories do not form a contrast set, and should not be analyzed

Table 7: Dimensions of contrast for things residents do

1.0 Time

- 1.1 Before the evening
- 1.2 During the evening

2.0 Place

- 2.1 Away from the Goat
- 2.2 At the Goat

3.0 Type of activity

- 3.1 Involves performance
- 3.2 Involves organization

4.0 Concerned in some way with the evening's guest

- 4.1 Yes
- 4.2 No

5.0 Duration during the evening

- 5.1 Specific activity
- 5.2 Continuous activity

Table 8: Componential definition of things residents do

Activity	Dimensions of contrast				
	1-0	2-0	3-0	4-0	5-0
Practice (for a residency)	1-1	2-1	3-1 3-2 ?	4-2	0
Have a couple of "spares" [extra songs or tunes]	0	0	3-1 3-2	4-2	0
Turn up and open the evening	1-2	2-2	3-1 3-2	4-2	5-1
Sing	1-2	2-2	3-1	4-2	5-2
Play	1-2	2-2	3-1	4-2	5-2
Warm up the audience for the guest	1-2	2-2	3-1	4-1	5-2
Try to entertain the audience	1-2	2-2	3-1	4-2	5-2
Be available for people to talk to	1-2	2-2	3-2 ?	4-2	5-2
Keep the club going, before and after the guest—e.g., fill in gaps in time	1-2	2-2	3-1 3-2	4-1	5-2
See that the evening goes as well as possible—e.g., compensate for a bad guest	1-2	2-2	3-1 3-2	4-1	5-2
See that the raffle (if any) is drawn	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-2	5-1
Help the atmosphere	1-2	2-2	3-1 3-2 ?	4-1	5-2
See that the person doing the introductions knows about forthcoming events which need to be announced, including who the next week's guest is	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-2	5-1

Note: A question mark (?) indicates a lack of sufficient information with which to define a term adequately; the symbol "0" is used to show that the criterion in question does not apply to a term.

do -- many of which are performance activities -- that were not specifically cited in conjunction with the residents' activities. These include "introduce songs, tunes, etc." and "accompany other people who sing, play, or dance." Through their musical performances, introductions, and so forth, residents attempt to entertain the audience, to involve them emotionally in the performance.

The residents relate much of their onstage activity to the guest, who is considered by many people -- both audience members and residents -- to be the main feature of the evening. The residents see one of their primary functions as "warming up" (increasing the emotional response of) the audience for the guest. They also feel that it is their responsibility to "keep the club [performances] going before and after the guest." Should the guest give a poor performance, the residents try to compensate for this by giving as good a performance as they can. This is one of many ways in which they "help the atmosphere."¹⁷ Whenever residents succeed in improving the atmosphere, they also make the guest's job easier.

componentially (see pp. 31, 33). However, categories in this domain are related in other than a simply hierarchical fashion. For example, "sing" and "play" are ways to "help the atmosphere," but only if they are done well. In order to determine the complex relationships between many of the categories in Table 8 (and a few of those in Table 10 as well), research of far greater depth than was possible in the amount of time that I had would have been necessary. I therefore attempted a componential analysis of all the categories elicited in each domain. The results justify inclusion of this material in the present work.

¹⁷ Atmosphere is "the general feeling of the club" on a particular night (North, 11/7/75; T 25), and will be considered in detail in Chapter VIII.

Residents performing on a particular night should be available for people to talk to during part of the interval. This enables those who intend to do floor spots to inform the residents that they wish to perform. It also enables people to ask questions relating to folk music.

On every club evening, one of the four residents performing "is in charge of the organization of that evening" (G. Goffee, 16/7/75, T.29). This person arranges the practices for that evening, prepares the list of items to be performed, and makes the announcements and introductions during the evening. There is no formal name for this position, like "resident," which is employed in front of the audience and is in general use in folk clubs. There is, though, an in-group word, local to the St. Albans residents: "gruppenführer."¹⁸ The role of gruppenführer was devised to make club evenings run more smoothly. Prior to its creation, tasks would sometimes either be duplicated or forgotten entirely (see Tables 9 and 10).

The gruppenführer is chosen in advance by the residents scheduled to perform on a given night; people take turns acting as gruppenführer. One of the residents said that the gruppenführer is "volunteered in the military sense,"¹⁹ and another explained in a tongue-in-cheek manner:

¹⁸ Gruppenführer, a German word having political connotations, translates literally as "group leader." At some folk clubs, the person who makes the announcements and introductions is called the "compere"; this term, unlike gruppenführer, is used in front of audiences.

¹⁹ Alison Macfarlane, 7/6/75, T.11.

Table 9: Dimensions of contrast for things the gruppenführer does

1.0 Time

- 1.1 Before the evening
- 1.2 During the evening

2.0 Type of activity

- 2.1 Organizational
- 2.2 Informative
- 2.3 Courtesy

3.0 Directly concerned with creating good atmosphere

- 3.1 Yes
- 3.2 No

4.0 Involves interaction with:

- 4.1 Audience
- 4.2 Floor singers
- 4.3 Residents
- 4.4 Guest

5.0 Duration during the evening

- 5.1 Specific activity
- 5.2 Continuous activity

Table 10: Componential definition of things the gruppenführer does

Activity	Dimensions of contrast				
	1-0	2-0	3-0	4-0	5-0
Organize one or two practices	1-1	2-1	3-2	4-3	0
Create a list for the evening (with the running order of songs, etc.)	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-3	0
Know who else has "spares" and what they are	0	2-1	3-2	4-3	0
Make sure the guest has arrived	1-2	2-1	3-2	?	5-1
Make yourself known to the guest	1-2	2-3	3-1	4-4	5-1
Put the guest at ease	1-2	2-3	3-1	4-4	5-2?
Welcome people to the club	1-2	2-2?	3-1	4-1	5-1
Say who the guest is	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-1	5-1
Let people know who you and the other residents are	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-1	5-1
Time the evening in general	1-2	2-1,22 2-3	3-1	4-1,42 4-3,44	5-2
Warn the guest before he or she has to perform	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-4	5-1
Put the guest on	1-2	2-1,22	3-2	4-1,44?	5-1
Announce the break	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-1	5-1
Ask for floor singers	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-1	5-1
Tell people to buy raffle tickets	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-1	5-1
Arrange the order of floor singers	1-2	2-1,22	3-1	4-2	?
Run the raffle	1-2	2-1	3-2	4-1	5-1
Tell about events coming up	1-2	2-2	3-2	4-1	5-1
Create as good an atmosphere as possible between audience and performer	1-2	?	3-1	4-1,42 4-3,44	5-2

Well, there's only really one type of gruppenführer, and that is the reluctant gruppenführer. Gruppenführer is the job that everybody tries to get everybody else to do. . . . You daren't leave the room at a residency practice before the gruppenführer has been appointed, because if you go to the bog [toilet], when you come back you'll find you are gruppenführer (G. Goffee, 17/6/75, T 18).

Residents are reluctant to be gruppenführer mainly because it is an administrative rather than a performance oriented role. As Graham Goffee explained, residents are involved with the club because they enjoy performing, "not because we like organizing what other people are going to sing [or play]" (14/4/77, T 88). The importance of performance to residents is reflected in Tables 7 and 8 (pp. 136-137), where items are divided in terms of whether they involve performance or organization (or both). Tables 9 and 10 show that the gruppenführer's duties are largely organizational; no task specific to this role includes performance. Therefore, many residents try, whenever possible, to avoid being gruppenführer. Moreover, because so many dislike the position, making a "great show of reluctance"²⁰ about being chosen gruppenführer has become the norm, even among those who enjoy the job.

The gruppenführer's responsibilities during an evening begin upon his or her arrival at the club. If the organizer has not already done so, the gruppenführer checks to see whether or not the guest has arrived, and introduces him- or herself to the guest. The gruppenführer also attempts to make guests feel more at ease, by chatting with them. Most residents at the Goat have done "guest spots"

²⁰ Ibid.

elsewhere, and are personally aware of some of the problems a performer faces in going to a strange club as a guest. In fact, two musical groups, Gymel and Drumclog, whose members are residents at the St. Albans club, frequently perform as guests at other clubs.²¹ Janet Simpson, a member of Gymel, explained that it is unnerving to perform at a club without first having some amount of interaction with the people there (8/6/75, T 11). The gruppenführer always tries to ensure that this situation does not arise at the St. Albans club. When guests feel more at home, their performances will often be better and more relaxed, which improves the atmosphere. This appears to be a beneficial side effect of chatting with the guest, however, rather than a conscious reason for doing so. Nonetheless, the gruppenführer is quite concerned with atmosphere, as Tables 9 and 10 (pp. 140-141) show. For more information on atmosphere and conditions that affect it, see Chapter VIII.

The gruppenführer's direct interaction with the audience begins by welcoming them to the club when the residents "open the

²¹ The word "gymel" is a Medieval term for a particular type of vocal harmony (see Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom [5th ed., London: Macmillan and Co., 1961], III, 859). The musical group Gymel performs traditional and Medieval songs and instrumental music, using instruments uncommon in the revival, such as the hurdy-gurdy, psaltry, and lute guitar. The members of Drumclog, who perform traditional songs and tunes, took their name from the title of ballad No. 205 in Child's The English and Scottish Popular Ballads. In choosing their names, both groups sought something indicative of the type of material they perform, memorable, and unusual enough to ensure that it would not already have been chosen by another group. However, Graham Goffee, a member of Drumclog, said that this group had so much trouble in deciding upon a name that they finally chose "Drumclog" almost at random.

evening" at 7:45. At this time she or he also introduces the residents, and announces the guest for the evening. During the course of the night, the gruppenführer makes other necessary announcements, like telling the audience about upcoming events, and announcing the break. The gruppenführer also encourages people to buy raffle tickets before the interval, and runs the raffle during the second half.

One of the gruppenführer's most important jobs is timing the events of the evening. If things are running behind schedule, the gruppenführer is responsible for deciding which items to omit from the residents' planned performance. The gruppenführer tells floor singers who have not previously sung at the club that they are limited to two songs or tunes apiece. The guest's performance must also be timed. When there is sufficient time left for two more items, the gruppenführer signals the guest. This allows the guest to arrange the remaining material to his or her own best advantage. During the second half, it is especially important that the guest finish as close to 10:30 as possible, as licensing regulations require that the room be vacated by 10:40.

Some of the gruppenführer's tasks, as well as those of performing residents in general, are "specific," while others are "continuous" (refer to Tables 7-10, pp. 136-137, 140-141). Specific activities, like announcements, are of short duration. Continuous activities, on the other hand, such as warming up the audience for the guest, must be dealt with for a significant portion of the evening.

The guest spot, as stated earlier, is the "highlight of the evening" (Simpson, 8/6/77, T 12). The guest is expected, by everyone, to be a more proficient performer than the residents. The Goffees explained that guests have usually been performing for a longer period of time and more frequently than the residents; therefore guests should be better performers, although sometimes they are not (12/6/75, T 14). The residents and the organizer feel that people's expectations of guests make this job a particularly difficult one. Such expectations also tend to set guests apart from the rest of the people at the club, unless they are known on a personal basis by club participants. Chapter VII will examine a system of performer classification which is most often applied to people who perform as guests, and Chapter VIII will deal with the importance of guests to the atmosphere.

Audience Members

The formal classification of the audience into "members" and "non-members" (see above, pp. 127, 129) is generally used only by the individual who is, at any given time, the person sitting on the door. There appear to be two fundamental reasons for this. First, the member/non-member system was relatively new at the time of my fieldwork, having been introduced in September 1974. Prior to the 1974-1975 season, everyone who attended the club was required to become a member. Second, and more importantly, whether or not a person has purchased a membership card does not necessarily relate to frequency of attendance or behavior in the club. These factors are of great importance to informants, as

will be seen. While it is very likely that anyone who attends the club on a regular basis will become a member, by no means do all the members attend frequently.

The audience categories which have the most meaning to informants are the more informal groupings, "regulars," "non-regulars," "outsiders," and "residents present but not performing." Regulars are people who attend every week, or often enough to be recognized by the residents and the organizer. Table 11 shows that there are two main types of regulars: those who attend for musical reasons, and those who attend for social reasons.

The first of these two groups is subdivided into "regulars that go down [to the club] because they like [to listen to] the music," and "regulars who go predominantly to sing or play." Few regulars at the Goat are of this latter type, as most are "non-singers, non-performers" (G. Goffee, 17/6/75, T 17). The second major group of regulars is comprised of "regulars that go down for the social side of it," and "regulars who are lonely -- they don't know anybody and they don't mix in." The "lonely" regulars were placed in this group because socializing is thought to be their goal, although they are not successful at it. Regulars who attend mainly for the "social side of it" are the majority of regulars, the "hard core." They meet together before coming into the club, or inside the club, sit together, and talk to each other during the interval. Often these regulars spend a good deal of time during the evening talking to the person on the door. They like the music, said one

Table II: Taxonomic definition of regulars

Regulars	
Regulars who attend for musical reasons	Regulars who attend for social reasons
	Regulars that go down for the social side of it
Regulars who attend for musical reasons	Regulars who are lonely— they don't know anybody and they don't mix in
	Regulars that go down because they like [to listen to] the music
Regulars that go down predominantly to sing or play	

resident, but it is not their main reason for attending the club.²²

Regulars who attend for musical reasons spend much less time socializing during the evening.

Most regulars have a habitual time for arriving at the club: some always come at seven-thirty, some at eight o'clock, and so on. Regulars know they are supposed to be quiet during performances, and they usually are. In the event that they are not, residents feel that they can tell the regulars -- in no uncertain terms -- to stop talking, "because you know them and they know you" (G. Goffee, 17/6/75; T 17). Many regulars remain after the performance to chat while the room is being cleared up.

The regulars are the "backbone" of the folk club audience:

They come hell or high water -- whatever the weather, whoever the guest is. And very often by the end of the season, they're the only people left in the audience. . . . Because come the light summer evenings, see, people don't come because they go out on Sundays, and then they don't come to the club, but the regulars do . . . (J. Goffee, 17/6/75, T 17).

Regulars support the club not only by attending on Sunday evenings, but also by purchasing raffle tickets. Many of them attend other activities with which the folk club is associated as well, such as festivals and "weekend courses" in folk music. One resident expressed the opinion that the club could not, in fact, operate without the regulars: "We

²²G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14: This statement was confirmed by one of the "hard core" of regulars, who said that he goes to the club more to socialize with his friends than to hear the music, which is "really incidental" to him (Brinsden, 8/7/75, T 22).

like to sing, but it would be no point in singing if we had no audience. And it's those people that basically week after week we're singing to" (Simpson, 31/8/75, T 63).

Each week, many of the residents who are not scheduled to perform attend the club as members of the audience. These "residents present but not performing," although present most weeks, are considered to be a separate group from the regulars. They differ from the regulars (and other audience members) in that "they provide probably the best informed and most critical section of the audience."²³ As well, non-performing residents are classified as a distinct group because, like the regulars, they tend to socialize with one another during the evening.

The third major audience category, "non-regulars," is composed of people who do not come to the folk club very often. This group includes people who have moved away from the area and attend only when they return for a visit, students (who may be away for most of the year), and local people who, for whatever reasons, come only occasionally.

"Outsiders," the fourth main group, are people who are not "folk music orientated,"²⁴ and who may have never been to a folk club before.²⁵ One type of outsider consists of people who are the "equivalent

²³G. Goffee, letter to the author, June 21, 1977.

²⁴Steve Dickinson, 3/9/75, T 67. Dickinson is one of the club's younger residents.

²⁵Some informants classified "outsiders" as a subdivision of "non-regulars"; others defined them as a separate group, on the same hierarchical level as non-regulars, and this is how they have been treated here.

of distant [pop music] groupies";²⁶ these people are referred to as "groupies," "groupie-type people," or "hangers-on." They, like pop music groupies, follow a specific performer or performers from place to place. Hangers-on are not involved either in the club, or in folk music in general. Therefore, they "don't really have anything to do with the folk scene" (Dickinson, 3/9/75, T 67).

The Barman

The barman is the "odd man out" at the club: he is involved with the organization of the inn, not the club; he does not perform at the club, and because he is obliged to be there, he is not considered to be a member of the audience. The barman in the back room of the Goat Inn on Sunday evenings is usually an elderly man named Bill. Informants are rather fond of "old Bill," who has been serving drinks at the club for a number of years, and knows many people by name. He is therefore thought to be more a part of club events than other barmen. Yet he is not classified as a member of the audience because informants feel that he only attends the club because he is paid by the pub to be there.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the role structure of the St. Albans Folk Music Club on regular club evenings. Role designations are important for a number of reasons. For example, they help informants

²⁶ G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14.

anticipate various aspects of people's behavior. One such aspect is frequency of attendance. Regulars, by definition, attend most, if not all, weeks. The organizer and most of the residents (whether performing or not) are almost always present; the band is always there. On the other hand, the guest for any evening probably attends only once a season, if that often; non-regulars and outsiders (again by definition) attend infrequently. How often given individuals are present at the club is an important factor because those who attend most frequently "make up the community of the club. It's from all these people that whatever spirit and character a particular club's got . . . come" (Simpson, 31/8/75, T 63).

Role classifications also tell informants whether or not a person is connected with the club's organization. "Connection" implies a requirement to do "something active on a long-term basis" in affiliation with the club (Pearson, 4/9/75, T 72). Regulars, although part of the "community" of the club, are not part of its organization, because they have no commitment to do anything at the club. Even stand-by floor singers, who can be depended upon to sing when asked, have no formal commitment to perform at the Goat, whereas residents do.

In addition, an individual's role within the club guides the way in which informants relate to that person. Sometimes behavior is actually prescribed: it is part of the gruppenführer's job to chat with the guest. In other cases, behavior is not dictated, but certain procedures are normally followed. Stand-by floor singers, for example, may be asked to sing, whereas "professional" floor singers will not be.

The importance of role designations notwithstanding, there is a great deal of what I will call, for the purposes of this discussion, "role flexibility" at the club. Three types of role flexibility exist. First, a person can fill a different role from one club meeting to another. Someone who has appeared as a guest on one or more occasions may attend as a member of the audience on another occasion. Second, within the course of one evening at the club, a person can change roles, or more accurately, adopt more than one role. People who perform as floor singers are either non-regulars or regulars, as well. The organizer performs in the band, and, for part of each evening, is usually also the person sitting on the door.

The third type of role flexibility involves temporary alterations in the tasks performed by an individual filling a particular role, rather than actual role changes. This kind of flexibility occurs most often within the role of gruppenführer.²⁷ Theoretically, the gruppenführer decides which items are to be omitted from the residents' program, should the need arise. Yet sometimes one of the other three performing residents makes these decisions. Similarly, during a residents' practice, I noticed that the appointed gruppenführer was not preparing the list of items to be performed. Instead, another resident, who enjoys taking an active role in programing, had assumed this job.

²⁷ This is probably largely due to the fact that the role of gruppenführer is often assumed begrudgingly (see pp. 139, 142). Thus, if another resident wished to take over some of the gruppenführer's responsibilities, the gruppenführer most likely would not object.

Within the system, then, there is room for people with a particular interest or skill to perform some tasks extraneous to those of their own roles.

The role (or roles) an individual fills within the structure of the St. Albans Folk Music Club is one of the primary ways in which informants classify people at the club. In this scheme, there are four main categories of performers: guests, residents, floor singers, and the band. Chapter VII will examine a method of performer classification which is not directly concerned with an individual's function within the club setting.

VII

PERFORMER CLASSIFICATION

This chapter, as noted previously, deals with categories extraneous to the club's role structure which are used by informants to classify performers. All such categories do not fit into a single folk taxonomy, as individual performers can be classified by a number of different (non-hierarchic) terms.¹ These terms are based upon such things as the type of instrument a performer plays, the number of people performing, and the degree of seriousness or humor of the performance (see Table 12).²

A primary distinction applying to all performers is made between "singers" and "instrumentalists." "Singer," not surprisingly, is used to refer to someone who performs mainly songs, and "instrumentalist," or "musician," indicates a performer whose repertoire is based upon instrumental music. Either or both terms can be used

¹ Spradley and Mann discuss a similar classificatory problem in The Cocktail Waitress (60-66).

² All relevant information about performers does not appear in Table 12. For example, the regional or national origin of a performer is often indicated by informants, but such categorizations are not felt to constitute distinct types of performers. In addition, it should be pointed out that Table 12 only shows taxonomic relationships among categories within single columns. My attempts to arrive at a diagram featuring all possible relationships among categories in different columns proved unsuccessful. Some important category relationships will become evident in the text. I would like to thank Kenneth S. Goldstein for his help with the final draft of this table.

Table 12: Types of performers (extraneous to folk club role)

Performers — classified according to :		
Type of music: vocal or instrumental	Type of songs	Instrument played
Singers	Contemporary singers	e.g.: Guitarists
Instrumentalists	[People who sing traditional songs]	Fiddle players (or fiddlers)
	Revival singers	Banjo players
	Traditional singers	Whistle players
		Mandolin players

Note: In this diagram, hierarchical level is indicated by left-hand margin: categories in a column which have the same left-hand margin are at the same hierarchical level; those which are indented are subcategories of the category immediately dominating. Categories enclosed in square brackets are covert categories whose existence was inferred, on the basis of elicited data, after all fieldwork was completed.

Table 12 (continued): Types of pe

Performers			
Instrumental virtuosity	Singing style: accompaniment	Number of performers	Singing style: harmonization
Performers known for instrumental ability	Accompanied singers	[Solos]: [Solo singers]	Harmony singers (duos or groups)
[Performers without known instrumental ability]	Unaccompanied singers	[Solo instrumentalists] *Duos: Vocal duos Instrumental duos Duos *Groups: Vocal groups Instrumental groups Groups	[Singers who do not harmonize (duos or groups)]

Continued): Types of performers (extraneous to folk club role)

Performers — classified according to:

	Singing style:	Knowledgeability	Degree of seriousness or humor	Economic status	Overall degree of competence
Soloist	many singers duos or groups) [Singers who do not harmonize (duos or groups)]	Knowledgeable performers [Performers whose knowledgeability is unknown] [Performers who are not knowledgeable]	* Serious performers: Serious performers A Nic Jones Entertainers: Entertainers who are knowledgeable about their subject Entertainers who are amusing and inter- esting Entertainers who do something unusual Entertainers who sing the sort of songs the audience are likely to want to join in with Comedy men Comedians	Amateurs Semi-professionals Professionals	Amateur(ish) Semi-profess Professional
Groups					

mers (extraneous to folk club role)

classified according to :

knowledgeability	Degree of seriousness or humor	Economic status	Overall degree of competence
<p>Knowledgeable performers</p> <p>Performers whose knowledgeability is unknown]</p> <p>Performers who are not knowledgeable]</p>	<p>*Serious performers: Serious performers A Nic Jones</p> <p>Entertainers: Entertainers who are knowledgeable about their subject Entertainers who are amusing and interesting Entertainers who do something unusual Entertainers who sing the sort of songs the audience are likely to want to join in with</p> <p>Comedy men</p> <p>Comedians</p>	<p>Amateurs</p> <p>Semi-professionals</p> <p>Professionals</p>	<p>Amateur(ish)</p> <p>Semi-professional</p> <p>Professional</p>

to refer to people whose repertoires contain significant proportions of both songs and tunes.³

Singers may be classified by the traditional or contemporary nature of their repertoires. Those who sing mainly contemporary (recently written) songs are called "contemporary singers." Because the St. Albans Folk Music Club is traditionally-based (see pp. 6, 100) few contemporary singers perform there. Two types of singers perform traditional songs primarily or exclusively: "traditional singers" and "revival singers." Definitions of these terms used at the Goat are similar to those employed in the revival in general (see p. 82, footnote 45). Traditional singers are described by informants as "people that have learnt their repertoire locally, and have a tradition in the family of entertaining people";⁴ revival singers are performers "who have actually gone out and learnt folksongs,"⁵ rather than being "automatically"⁶ part of a singing tradition, as traditional singers are. The traditional-revival dichotomy will be discussed further below.

Instrumentalists are not usually categorized into "revival," "traditional," and "contemporary," as singers are, possibly because a

³"Singer" and "instrumentalist" therefore, although at the same hierarchical level, are not mutually exclusive categories. Thus, even the terms in some individual columns in Table 12 do not form "model" taxonomies. In a model taxonomy, categories at the same hierarchical level must be mutually exclusive (see Chapter II, pp. 30-33) and especially footnote 10).

⁴Tony Rundle, 20/8/75, T 58.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

larger proportion of musicians than singers fall into the "revival" category, making such a distinction unnecessary in most instances. Often, instrumentalists -- and singers who accompany themselves on an instrument -- are classified by the instrument or instruments they play. Thus, there are "guitarists," "fiddle players," "banjo players," and so forth.⁷ Exceptionally skilled musicians are "performers known for instrumental ability." This is another example of a category with no standard name. In discussing such a performer, informants normally use more specific classifications, such as "guitar king" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). These, too, are not standard names, although their meaning would be understood by all informants.

Some people do not play any instruments when they sing, and are referred to as "unaccompanied singers." The majority of singers in the British revival do accompany some, although not all, of their songs. Being an "accompanied singer," therefore, is "nothing particularly different";⁸ it does not make one "stand out from anybody else,"⁹ while being an unaccompanied singer does. Hence, although "accompanied" is a recognized category, it is not generally employed. More often, the instrument that a performer plays is specified.

⁷ All instrumentalists except those who play guitar, and occasionally those who play fiddle, are referred to as "players." People who play fiddle are sometimes called "fiddlers."

⁸ J. Goffee, 19/8/75, T 55.

⁹ Ibid.

Classification of performers is also made on the basis of the number of people performing. In addition to people who perform alone, there are "*duos," and "*groups," consisting of three or more people. Subdivision of the categories in this set is made, again, on the basis of whether the emphasis is upon vocal or instrumental music. Thus, there are vocal duos and groups, and instrumental duos and groups. Vocal duos or groups who sing in harmony are sometimes called "harmony singers." *Duos and *groups performing significant proportions of both songs and tunes would simply be referred to as "duos" or "groups."

Two important modes of classification are those based upon knowledgeability and seriousness (or humor). "Knowledgeable performers" are people who are well informed about the history of the songs or tunes they perform and/or related topics, such as British history, or customs mentioned in folksongs. In their introductions to pieces, knowledgeable performers communicate this information to the audience. The existence of a category based on the presence of knowledgeability implies that there is also a (nameless) category based on its absence. As well, the knowledgeability of some performers -- e.g., those who talk very little to an audience -- is undeterminable, unless informants know them personally.

The set of categories based upon the seriousness or humor of performances consists of "*serious performers," "entertainers," "comedy men," and "comedians." *Serious performers, as the name indicates, are those whose material and mode of presentation are predominantly serious in nature. There are two types of *serious performers.

Those who simply fit the above description, and may or may not be considered competent musically, are "serious performers." The second type of *serious performer is "a Nic Jones." Nic Jones is a well-known revival singer and guitarist. He is considered an excellent performer musically, but he tends to say little between pieces, and when he does speak, it is quietly.¹⁰ According to Graham Goffee, there is no one in the revival who is as accomplished musically as Nic Jones, while being as "bad between songs" (6/8/75, T 39). However, a performer who is musically competent but speaks very little to an audience is referred to as "a Nic Jones." This is an in-group name, and probably would not be understood by people outside the resident group.

Both types of *serious performers, as well as knowledgeable performers, are said to "concentrate" upon the musical aspect of their performances, rather than upon the "chat" between songs. The music is their "focal point": it is the part of their performance that informants perceive as having been given the most thought and rehearsal time, and the largest proportion of time during a performance.

The opposite is true regarding the focal point of comedians. "Comedian" is a derogatory term indicating a performer "to whom the bit in between songs is far more important than the songs," who "goes out of his way to be funny, rather than being a [good] singer" (G. Goffee,

¹⁰ Nic Jones has appeared on several LPs, including Ballads and Songs (Trailer LER 2014), Nic Jones (Trailer LER 2027), and The Noah's Ark Trap (Trailer LER 2091).

11/7/75, T 26; North, 6/8/75, T 38). Comedians sacrifice the quality of their musical performance in order to concentrate upon their "line of patter." Line of (or "in") patter is a phrase used either as synonym for the "chat that is put between songs or tunes or whatever, that is just intended to provide a link between things, or it is the same thing, only used in a derogatory term [sic], to mean it's slick, it's show business orientated" (G. Goffee, 16/7/75, T 29). A line of patter in the latter sense refers to a "practiced line": "It means that you have actually practiced what you're saying so that you get it word perfect. There is no spontaneity" (G. Goffee, 16/7/75, T 29). It is this second, more commonly employed definition of "line of patter" which applies to comedians. Part of a comedian's line of patter is composed of jokes. Other types of performers may tell jokes, I was told, but comedians inevitably do.

Both comedians and comedy men tend to perform a large proportion of humorous songs. But a comedy man, unlike a comedian, is considered to be a competent singer or instrumentalist. This type of performer "has a good line in comedy apart from his songs," or is simply "by his nature very funny" (G. Goffee, 11/7/75, T 26; North, 6/8/75, T 38).

Between *serious and knowledgeable performers on the one hand, and comedians and comedy men on the other, are "entertainers." An entertainer is not simply someone who attempts to involve the audience in his or her performance. Rather, the term is used in reference to a performer who appears to be especially concerned with

getting and keeping the audience interested and amused.¹¹ In order to attain this goal, most entertainers rely heavily upon their chat between songs, as well as upon their music. To these performers, the non-musical portions of their performances are "as important as the songs, in some cases more important" (G. Goffee, 11/7/75, T 26). The overall mood of an entertainer's performance is "light" rather than serious, but not as blatantly humorous as that of a comedian or comedy man. There are four types of entertainers: "entertainers who are knowledgeable about their subject," "entertainers who are amusing and interesting," "entertainers who do something unusual," and "entertainers who sing the sort of songs that the audience are likely to want to join in with" -- that is, songs with easy or interesting choruses.

Entertainers who are knowledgeable about their subject differ from knowledgeable performers in that the entertainer "shows his knowledge in a way that isn't necessarily an integral part of the songs."¹² It may be "knowledgeable chat about any particular subject," which may be "the focal point of the act." Conversely, "a knowledgeable performer is knowledgeable, and interesting, in the same way, except that it's all leading to the songs, and the songs are the focal point of what he is providing." The entertainer's performance is also likely to be of a less serious nature than that of the knowledgeable performer.

¹¹One informant disagreed with this definition of "entertainers." To him, the word does merely denote a person who is successful at emotionally involving an audience in his or her performance.

¹²G. Goffee, 26/8/75, T 61. All remaining quotations in this paragraph are from the same tape.

Entertainers who are amusing and interesting may also be knowledgeable entertainers, but the former category implies a greater degree of humor than the latter. Entertainers who sing the sort of songs that the audience are likely to want to join in with are people whose primary concern is believed to be the actual physical involvement of the audience in the singing.

With reference to entertainers who do something unusual, the "something unusual" can be the musical material, the instrument or instruments played, the performance style, or any combination of these. For example, Alistair Anderson is an instrumentalist who plays the English concertina. He was categorized as an entertainer who does something unusual because although concertina players are not uncommon in British revival, people who perform entire programs of tunes on the concertina are. In addition, Alistair Anderson's material is somewhat out of the ordinary: in addition to traditional tunes, he performs some classical and ragtime pieces.¹³

It is evident from the above that the definitions of categories relating to both knowledgeability and seriousness are based to a large extent upon whether the "focal point" of a person's performance is musical or non-musical. Knowledgeable and *serious performers, as noted earlier, emphasize the music in their performances. Their

¹³ Alistair Anderson's recordings include Alistair Anderson Plays English Concertina (Trailer LER 2074), and Concertina Workshop: Traditional Music on the English Concertina, Played by Alistair Anderson (Topic/Free Reed 12FRS501). Information as to how English concertinas differ from other types of concertinas can be found in Butler, pp. 3-4.

spoken communications with an audience are mainly directed toward furthering the audience's appreciation of the music. Such performers "get their main impact through singing or playing" (G. Goffee, 19/8/75, T 56). On the other hand, comedians, comedy men, and most entertainers rely, to varying degrees, on "something other than actually singing or playing to get their impact."¹⁴ Informants feel that entertainers and comedy men put effort into their musical performances as well as into their chat, whereas comedians work hardest on their line of patter. They do not appear to care about the quality of the music they perform, and it is for this reason that "comedian" is a derogatory term.

This concern with the "focal point" of a person's performance reflects informants' feelings that the music itself should be the most important aspect of a performance. I believe that it is primarily because the music is taken "seriously" that informants expect performances to be uninterrupted by conversation. Yet it should be pointed out that they do not always take themselves and their music quite so seriously. All informants at least occasionally enjoy singing parodies of traditional songs, accompanying songs in a manner considered highly inappropriate (for example, putting a rock 'n' roll accompaniment to an English traditional song), or the like. There seem to be two reasons

¹⁴G. Goffee, 19/8/75, T 56. Clinton R. Sanders, working with performers in "Chicago's vigorous professional 'folk scene,'" found that his informants make a similar distinction in performer classification. They categorize performers into "entertainers" and "musicians." Entertainers, to Sanders' informants, are people who emphasize "the totality of the stage presentation rather than the music itself"; a musician is a person who performs mainly to "transmit an aesthetic communication" (Sanders, 267-269).

for this. First, most informants feel that "the songs are there to be sung and to be used" (G. Goffee, 6/8/75, T 39). This means that, like other art forms, traditional music is subject to criticism, including mockery. Then, too, such irreverent treatment serves as a pressure release, ensuring that informants are not so solemn in their approach to the music that their enjoyment of it is lost.

The last two sets of categories in Table 12 both consist of the terms "amateur" (or "amateurish"), "semi-professional," and "professional." When used as nouns (e.g., "he is a professional"), these terms refer to a performer's economic status. Professionals earn their living from performing, semi-professionals earn part of their living from performing, and amateurs earn little or no money from performing. While this is the denotative meaning of the terms, they also connote varying degrees of competence. Many exceptions exist, but generally speaking, professionals are more competent performers than semi-professionals because they perform more often; in turn, semi-professionals are usually better than amateurs.

These connotative meanings may become denotative when one of the three terms is used as an adjective: "he is very professional" means "he is a very good performer," regardless of economic considerations. "Semi-professional," in this context, refers to a fairly competent performer, while "amateur(ish)" is used in reference to a performer who is not very skilled. More often, however, a performer's level of competence is specified by such statements as "And they're

bloody good," or "They were awful,"¹⁵ rather than by labels like "amateur" and "professional."¹⁶

It was stated at the beginning of the chapter that categories from several of the sets shown in Table 12 may be used to classify a single performer. The particular categories used depend, in part, upon the context. Usually, though, a performer will be described by the term which supplies informants with the greatest amount of relevant information. The terms most frequently used are those relating to seriousness or humor, and "knowledgeable performer" (where applicable). These classifications contain information about repertoire and overall mood, and about the amount and nature of extra-musical interaction with an audience. As we have seen, the "focal point" of an individual's performance is of great significance to informants. Some of the terms, such as "comedian," relate to competence, as well.

There is one important exception to classifying performers according to their seriousness or knowledgeability: people who are "traditional singers" are generally referred to by that name. With such a performer, this is the label which is likely to provide the

¹⁵ G. Goffée, 19/8/75, T 56; Wendy Rundle, 20/8/75, T 57.

¹⁶ Because the terms "professional," "semi-professional," and "amateur" are, in this second meaning, adjectives rather than nouns, they are not, in themselves, actual types of performers. Nonetheless, since they are terms used in classifying performers, Dr. Goldstein urged that they be included in Table 12. For a cross-cultural discussion of the concept of professionalism, see Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music* ([Evanston, Ill.]: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp. 124-130.

most information. Traditional singers are usually elderly people who sing unaccompanied; they seldom have a well-developed line of patter, in either sense of the term. But most importantly, a traditional singer represents, in a sense, the "genuine article" (G. Goffee, 19/8/75, T 55). Revival singers, who have not "automatically" learned their songs, are "to a certain extent, a manufactured product" (G. Goffee, 19/8/75, T 55). According to Graham Goffee, this distinction is of less importance now than it was several years ago,¹⁷ but it is nonetheless still significant.

The performer categories discussed in this chapter are those which are most representative of the way informants as a whole classify performers, yet they are by no means definitive. Not only are there minor variations in the way different informants define and label categories, but inconsistencies also occur in the classifications made by individual informants at different times. The following are examples of some typical kinds of variation.

First, the name used to refer to a category may vary. Janet Simpson, for instance, used the name "comedy man" at one point during an interview, and "funny man" later in the same interview (8/6/75, T 11, T 12). Yet it was obvious from the context that her definition of these two terms was the same. Second, category labels are not always defined in the same fashion. To Graham Goffee, "semi-professionals" are people who, although they work at other jobs, "do an awful lot" of performing for which they are paid (19/8/75, T 56). Tony Rundle, another resident, feels that anyone who performs

¹⁷ 12/6/75, T 14.

"occasionally for money" is a semi-professional (20/8/75, T 58).

Third, there are variations in the category designations assigned to particular performers. A performer labeled as a "comedy man" by one person was an "entertainer" to another. This type of difference is caused by varying definitions of category names, conceptual differences about specific performances, or a combination of the two.

This explanation, however, does not account for inconsistencies of this kind which occur with a single informant over time. During one interview, Graham Goffee named a certain singer as an example of an entertainer who sings the sort of songs the audience is likely to want to join in with (11/7/75, T 26). At another, later interview, he labeled the same performer as an entertainer who is amusing and interesting, and as an entertainer who is knowledgeable about his subject (19/8/75, T 55). Upon questioning, he said that his initial classification could also be applied. In this particular instance, it was apparent from Graham's statements that the shift in categorization resulted from a recent performance by the singer which we had both attended. This incident brings to light an interesting point: the classification of a performer can alter, to a minor extent, if the most recently witnessed performance or performances warrant it.

Despite the lack of stability of categories and labels within this scheme of performer classification, it nonetheless provides informants with a necessary means of communicating about performers, and especially guests. Because more people perform as guests in folk clubs than any individual will have heard, or even heard of, it is

essential to have a method of relaying information about such people. In addition, as the "highlight" of club evenings, guests are very important to the club. Therefore, Vicki must choose the guests she books carefully. When she is seeking information about a performer, the categories described above help her discover much of what she needs to know. For instance, her first consideration in determining the acceptability of a performer is whether or not the person is a comedian. Comedians, as is evident from the foregoing discussion, are never wittingly booked at the club.

For a number of reasons, the classification system described in this chapter is seldom applied to residents or floor singers. The residents are all quite familiar with each other's repertoires and performance styles. They deal with one another on a personal basis, and thus the need for, and ease in application of, a classification system is sharply diminished. Floor singers are not usually very experienced performers; like traditional singers, they are not often skilled at chatting between songs, nor are they frequently very competent musically. Hence categories such as "entertainer" and "performer known for instrumental ability" are not applicable to most floor singers.

Moreover, some of the categories within the system are, in practice, applicable only to guests. A notable example is "traditional singers." At the Goat (and most if not all folk clubs), there are no residents who are traditional singers, and seldom, if ever, do traditional singers appear as floor singers. The need to distinguish between

traditional and revival singers therefore only arises in classifying people who perform as guests.

The performers during an evening at the Goat, and particularly the guest, have a significant effect on the ambience, or "atmosphere" of that evening. Many of the category labels discussed in this chapter provide information which is revealing as to the effect a performer is likely to have upon the club's atmosphere. How certain types of performers influence atmosphere is one of the topics considered in the next chapter.

VIII

ATMOSPHERE

"Atmosphere" is the general feeling or mood of the club on a particular night. A number of different words are used to describe atmosphere, including "friendly," "hostile," "flat and dead," "jolly," "tense," and "superb." However, informants basically conceptualize it as running on a continuum from good to bad, with specific terms indicating types of good or bad atmosphere. They also sometimes use "atmosphere" as a synonym for "good atmosphere," and speak in terms of factors which build or destroy the atmosphere. It is significant that informants judge the success of an evening largely on the basis of atmosphere. A good evening results from the presence of good atmosphere; bad atmosphere inevitably leads to a bad evening.

Atmosphere -- of any kind -- is created primarily by the audience's response to the performers. Good atmosphere occurs when the audience is attentive, and reacts to performers in a positive fashion. Bad atmosphere arises when the audience is either apathetic, or actively antagonistic toward the performers. While "There can be a hundred things which make an atmosphere good or bad,"¹ that is, cause

¹G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14.

the audience to react favorably or unfavorably, all of these can be classified under three basic rubrics: communication, physical comfort, and relaxation. Good atmosphere requires "all around communication"² of a positive nature among the people at the club, a lack of physical discomfort, and relaxation of both the performers and the audience. Good atmosphere is fairly tenuous, because all of the above are necessary for its existence. Bad atmosphere can result if any of these components are not present. Communication, relaxation, and physical comfort can be more readily discussed as functions of the physical setting, and the interaction between performers and audience.

My informants have had experience with other folk clubs, both as performers and as members of the audience. Hence their comments concerning physical surroundings were often geared toward folk clubs in general, rather than just their own club. The Goat room was, however, discussed in relation to general features of club rooms which affect atmosphere.

Pub rooms are felt to be the best places in which to hold folk clubs, largely because of the presence of alcohol (specifically beer), which acts as a relaxant: "You're much more likely to enjoy yourself if you're relaxed" (North, 16/6/75, T 17). But alcohol is not the sole factor making pub rooms desirable, for informants consider bars in places other than pubs to be much less desirable locations for folk clubs. Such establishments are usually

²Ibid.

pavilions, which are "long and have lots of windows, and they're cold and impersonal" (North, 16/6/75, T 17). The initial atmosphere created by the physical surroundings is poor, making it more difficult for the residents to "help the atmosphere" (see p. 138, and Tables 7 and 8, pp. 136-137).

Rooms in pubs are normally smaller than rooms in other licensed premises, and this is also significant, as small, crowded rooms are felt to be the best settings for the creation of good atmosphere. According to the Goffees, good atmosphere almost always results from such settings, as they allow a feeling of intimacy to emerge. "Sort of rubbing shoulders with everyone else, all being together and being part of one thing" (J. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14).

The size of the audience in relation to room size in general is also of considerable import. If the capacity of the room far exceeds the number of people present, the atmosphere will probably not be good because, for example, "it's obvious that you've got ten people where you should have five hundred" (G. Goffee, 6/8/75, T 35). Similarly, an audience of forty would fill a small club room, helping to generate good atmosphere, but the same size audience at the Goat "would be lousy" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14). Vicki North pointed out, however, that a room which is too crowded is not likely to be conducive to the creation of good atmosphere. She explained that the people in the back of an overly crowded room tend to assume that no one else will be able to hear them, and they talk, disturbing other people (3/6/75, T 10).

Three additional aspects of the physical setting were cited as having an influence on the atmosphere: the temperature of the room, its formality, and acoustics. Some places in which folk clubs are held, including some pub rooms, are very cold in the winter months, and informants agreed that a cold room contributes to poor atmosphere. Cold rooms produce "cold" audiences, not necessarily because they dislike the performance, but because "it's physically freezing" (North, 3/6/75, T 10). Graham Goffee said that it does not seem to matter if a room is too hot, but "If it's too cold, it's really hopeless" (6/8/75, T 39).

According to informants, folk club rooms ought to be neither too plush and formal, nor "grotty" (seedy and dirty). Rooms should be informal, but reasonably well kept. Finally, acoustics "can make or break an atmosphere" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14). Poor acoustics make it impossible to project; those in the rear of the audience will not be able to hear well, and communication, for them, will be severed. Moreover, these people, cut off from the performance, may begin to talk, thus further interfering with the communication process.

Informants feel that the back room at the Goat Inn is a reasonably good folk club room in terms of all of the above criteria. It is small enough to maintain an intimate feeling, yet large enough for the club to operate financially. Performers who project can be heard in all parts of the room. It remains a comfortable temperature during the winter, and is neither too formal nor grotty. Some folk clubs, in order to improve their rooms, decorate them with such things

as record jackets and posters; but, Vicki North said, because the room is "quite all right" as it is, the St. Albans Folk Music Club has not done any decorating (3/6/75, T. 10).

An agent affecting atmosphere indirectly linked to the physical setting is the presence of "an outside inhibiting factor on the audience"³ that disrupts its concentration and makes it self-conscious. The prime example of this type of agent is the media, specifically the BBC, which broadcasts the weekly radio program, Folkweave (see p. 482). One of the features of this program is edited tapes of folk club performances. On one occasion, the BBC taped an evening at the Goat. The presence of their "big microphones"⁴ greatly inhibited audience members, who "hardly dared to clap too loudly in case their hands got on the radio" (G. Goffee, 6/8/75, T. 39). Although Graham Goffee thinks that the audience enjoyed the evening, there was little overt communication of that enjoyment, and the atmosphere was not very good.

In addition to physical surroundings, atmosphere is created by the interaction among people at the club. Good atmosphere, as mentioned earlier, is dependent upon the existence of positive communication (or an absence of hostility) between audience and performer. This communication must flow from both groups, and each must respond to the other: "It's got to be a two-way thing. As soon as

³ Ibid., 6/8/75, T. 39.

⁴ Ibid., 12/6/75, T. 14.

it stops being a two-way thing, the atmosphere drops apart" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14). In order to permit the flow of communication, informants feel that the barriers, both physical and emotional, between audience and performer must be broken down.⁵ On the physical level, barriers are reduced by having the audience as close to the stage as practicable (refer to Figure 5, p. 114, and Figure 20, p. 263). On a psychological level, the situation is much more complex. Almost any action on the part of a performer can directly or indirectly affect audience-performer distinctions. The nature of the audience, too, is significant in this regard. The ways in which performers and audiences affect atmosphere will now be considered.

Competence in singing and/or playing an instrument is one obvious way performers affect atmosphere. Included here are such things as whether or not a person makes a lot of mistakes, or is on pitch. A technically poor performance, especially by the residents or the guest, can have a devastating effect upon the atmosphere. On the other hand, an exceptionally able performer can help create a very good atmosphere. Confidence is also of great importance. Good atmosphere requires that the person on stage appear confident in his or her abilities, and consequently in control of the performance situation. A situation in which this person is obviously nervous, and not in control, will "put an audience right off": "There's nothing worse than sitting

⁵ Here is a clear example of revivalists attempting to minimize audience-performer distinctions, as discussed in Chapter IV (pp. 91-92).

in an audience and feeling terribly worried about the person performing" (J. Goffee, 17/6/75, T 18).

Programing of performers, and of the musical material within a performance, also affects atmosphere. The arrangement of performers on club evenings is largely a matter of tradition, but informants also noted some functional aspects of these traditions. People are presented when they will be of most benefit to the atmosphere, or when the existing atmosphere will be most helpful to them. Residents, for example, begin each half in order to warm up the audience (see p. 138), thereby building the atmosphere. This leaves the audience in a receptive mood for the guest, who is supposed to be the best performer of the evening. It is logical, in terms of building good atmosphere, to present the guest at the end of each half of the evening, when the audience is warmed up. In this way, both halves end at a "high spot,"⁶ or climax. The scheduling of floor singers also takes atmosphere into account. They are presented toward the beginning of the second half, a time perceived to be most beneficial to them. By this point in the evening, the audience should be warmed up, which makes performing easier, especially for an inexperienced person.

The programing of musical items in a performance is a complex process. One necessary consideration here is the timing between numbers. Taking long breaks for such things as altering the tuning of stringed instruments interrupts the smooth flow of an

⁶J. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14.

evening, causing the performance to become "disjointed." Therefore, songs and tunes are ordered to avoid frequent changes in tuning. Timing, as well as other dimensions of musical programing, will be discussed in detail in Chapter IX.

A factor affecting atmosphere allied in part to timing is the "chat" -- or lack of it -- between musical items. The atmosphere will suffer somewhat if a performer is "a Nic Jones," who says very little, and "mumbles into his beer" (G. Goffe, 17/6/75, T18). In this instance, the communication from the performer is curtailed. Conversely, performers who are skilled at talking to audiences, like "entertainers" and "knowledgeable performers," involve the audience to a greater degree in the events on stage. Communication from both groups increases, improving the atmosphere. Whether or not the audience comprehends performers' communications to each other is also significant in relation to atmosphere. "In-jokes" among the residents are harmful, because they emphasize and increase the separation of audience and performer. The atmosphere will be helped by performers who tease each other (in a good-natured manner) about things which are obvious to the entire audience.

In addition, performers' attitudes toward each other and the audience have an important effect upon the atmosphere. If a performer is condescending toward people in the audience, they will become alienated. Bad atmosphere will also result if performers do not like each other and make this fact obvious to the audience. The residents at the St. Albans Folk Music Club all get along quite well,

so this is primarily a problem which occurs with duos or groups who appear as guests. I was told of two well-known performers who dislike each other intensely, and do not manage to conceal this fact from the audience. Graham Goffee said that "It used to get embarrassing, sometimes" (12/6/75, T.14). In some instances, too, a performer's attitudes toward situations external to the club affect atmosphere. If the "particular political bias"⁷ of a performer is not appreciated by a significant portion of the audience, bad atmosphere may result.

Most of the foregoing aspects of performance affecting atmosphere are applicable to all types of performers within the social structure of the club. There are others which apply to one category alone. The band, the residents performing on a given evening, and the guest all affect the atmosphere in specific ways. These specific influences are related to the programming of performers, discussed above (p.177), but warrant separate consideration here.

The band, informants feel, always helps the atmosphere. Historically, it replaced records of folk music, which used to be played at the beginning of the evening and during the interval. Informants said that live music is always preferable to records, which are "impersonal." It is also more interesting because "you can see people playing" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T.14). Having music while

⁷G. Goffee, 17/6/75, T.18.

people are entering the club, before the residents begin each half, helps keep the audience from becoming restless. This is especially true if a person has no one to talk to. Jen Goffee said that such people will feel more a part of the activities of the evening if they have something to do other than "sitting and looking at the ceiling and the walls":

You can feel terribly out of it if everyone around you is nattering [chatting] to everybody else, and you're sitting there like a lemon. But, if you've got people on the stage who are playing, you can concentrate on that, or pretend you are, and still feel a part of it (12/6/75, T 14).

The band is not taken as "seriously" as the rest of an evening's performances. It is not considered to be a very proficient group, which is probably one reason why talking while the band plays is sanctioned. More important, though, in this respect is the band's historical background. Because it replaced records which were intended to fill periods during the evening when people were not performing, no one, including band members, expects quiet during the band's performances. Therefore, the members of the band are probably less concerned about their proficiency than they would be if everyone listened to them carefully. In any event, the very fact that the band is not a terribly competent group actually helps the atmosphere. Since the band's performances are not treated as seriously as those of other performers, people in the audience feel free not only to talk, but also to "take the piss out of [jibe] the band,"⁸ albeit in a friendly

⁸ ibid., 12/6/75, T 14.

manner. People in the audience converse with the musicians in the band, and laugh with them when they "cock things up" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14).

Of all performers during a club evening, the guest probably has the greatest impact upon the atmosphere. As the main feature, "he's the man that everybody in the room that night, residents and audience alike, is looking to to create the atmosphere for that particular evening, whether he's a funny man, a serious man, or whatever he does" (Simpson, 8/6/75, T 12). Then too, the particular guest may determine, to a large extent, who the non-regulars for that evening will be; as discussed below, the composition of the audience has a direct bearing upon atmosphere.

The residents performing during an evening have little, if any, effect upon attendance. Nevertheless, they are very important to the atmosphere, specifically with regard to how well the guest is received. One of the residents' duties, cited previously, is to warm up the audience for the guest. When residents give a good performance, in terms of technique, communication, and so on, the atmosphere will be good, and the audience will be in a receptive mood for the guest.

On occasion, however, the residents' performances are "disjointed," and despite the fact that all the residents are proficient performers, there are nights when they make a large number of noticeable mistakes. For example, Graham Goffee stated that he and three other residents had recently done "the worst residency that has been heard of at St. Albans for many a long year -- in 45 mins [sic] we only managed to get

thro' [sic] two things without a gross cock-up. It was really dire!" (letter to the author, January 1976). A poor performance by residents, according to informants, can spoil the atmosphere, and even a guest who follows with a good performance may not be able to rescue the evening.

Performers, depending upon when they are presented, their programing of material, their musical and verbal competence, and their attitudes toward each other and the audience can radically affect the atmosphere of a night. However, because atmosphere is created by the response of the audience to the performers, it lies, ultimately, with the former group. Performers feel that in many instances they have a large degree of control over the atmosphere; that is, they perceive that the audience's responses are directly related to the performances given. In such instances, good performances are received well, and poor performances are not. Likewise, a "serious" audience would result from the performance of a "serious performer," while an "entertainer" would yield a "jolly" audience. It should be noted that because a certain portion of the audience comes specifically to hear the scheduled guest, their reactions (e.g., serious or jolly) are, to some extent, predictable. Nonetheless, informants believe that the audience's responses are significantly influenced by the actual performances of the evening.

There are, however, some situations over which performers feel they have little, if any, control. Audiences classified as "apathetic and noisy" are not believed to be so in response to the performances. Therefore, informants feel that nothing can be done to

alter the situation: "Whatever you do, whatever you are, however good you are, or bad you are, they couldn't give a bugger. They shouldn't really be there at all" (G. Goffee, 3/9/75, T 70). This type of situation tends to arise in performances outside the St. Albans folk club, since the regulars, who are not normally "apathetic and noisy," compose at least half the audience on most nights.

There are also occasionally certain groups of people in the audience who, because of their behavior, exert an influence on the atmosphere which far exceeds their numerical proportions within the audience. Such groups are labeled as types of audiences, despite their minority status. An example of this type of group are "Paddies." Paddies come to the club when an Irish performer or group is booked. They tend to behave as if they were at an Irish pub session, rather than a folk club. In Irish pub sessions, quiet is not demanded during performances, as it is at the club (North, 11/7/75, T 24). The Irish people in the folk club audience tend to shout things at the performers, and to be generally rowdy. While there is never an entire audience of "Paddies," their behavior is so conspicuous that the audience is classified as "Paddies." Paddies, especially because they often become intoxicated, are a very difficult group for the performers to control, and they can be quite disruptive.

"Groupies," or "hangers-on," mentioned in Chapter VI, are another type of minority group. They stand out because they only attend the club when certain very well-known performers are booked, and because they often sit toward the front of the room,

forming "a great bristling row of bloody tape recorder microphones" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14). Ironically, despite the fact that the behavior of hangers-on is antithetical to informants' goals of breaking down the psychological barriers between audience and performer, and making the music of primary importance, their presence in the audience is beneficial to the atmosphere:

When you get an audience like that, it's invariably a good evening -- well, it's bound to be, because they've come to see the specific person, and they see the specific person, so it's a good evening. But, often the whole thing flows over into the audience as a whole, and there's more enthusiasm about everything on an evening like that (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14).

However, informants would not want to have an audience of groupies on a regular basis: "If you had that sort of audience every week, you would very soon find that your regulars were being edged out, and then the whole backbone [of the audience] would go" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14).

In the preceding pages, the main factors influencing atmosphere have been described. Atmosphere is created by the response from the audience, which, in turn, results from the physical setting, and the characteristics of and interaction between the performers and the audience. Performers influence the atmosphere in many ways, including their selection and arrangement of musical items. Chapter IX, "Repertoire Classification, Selection, and Use," will examine in depth the programming techniques used by residents at the St. Albans Folk Music Club.

IX

REPERTOIRE CLASSIFICATION, SELECTION, AND USE

The categorization of repertoire by informants is a fairly open-ended process. There are a great many categories of songs and tunes, and as was the case with performer classification, they cannot all be arranged in a single folk taxonomy. Some of the category terms provide information about the material itself, such as its form, content, or geographical origin. Other terms express informants' opinions about the material, while others reflect the status of an item in a performer's repertoire. To complicate matters even further, some terms (e.g., those relating to subject) are subcategories of more than one term within a single set of categories.¹

Categorization is closely tied to the processes of repertoire selection and programming (or use). In selection, for example, certain types of songs are automatically precluded as possible choices. Categories also help people decide upon the items to include in any given performance, and the order in which to put them.

Repertoire categorization, then, is not only extremely complex, it is interwoven with other processes, as well. For these reasons, it will be considered within the discussions of repertoire selection and

¹Complications such as these render it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to devise a workable classification scheme for types of songs or tunes.

programing, rather than as a distinct phenomenon. In keeping with the limitations of the thesis, programing will be dealt with only in terms of residencies, with specific attention to regular club evenings. The same basic principles apply to the programing of performances in general, but each situation brings with it special considerations. The following discussion is also directed more toward songs than tunes, although many factors of selection and programing apply to both. While there is a fair amount of instrumental music at the club, the majority of the residents' material is vocal, and it has been given a corresponding degree of attention here.

Repertoire Selection

Informants said that they could not describe the precise reasons why they choose particular items for their repertoires, but they did cite certain things which attract or repel them. Some of these attributes are linked to inherent characteristics of the music; others are based upon an item's past or current usage, either at the club, or more broadly within the revival. These intrinsic and extrinsic determinants will now be considered in some detail.

A basic factor in repertoire selection related to a song's intrinsic characteristics is its traditional or non-traditional status. This distinction serves as a guide to selection in two ways. First, because the club is traditionally-based, most residents feel, even if they do not give it much thought, that they must gear their repertoires toward traditional music. Second, and more importantly, most of my

informants feel that they usually "relate more closely"² to traditional music. Their overall feelings about it vary, but are basically similar to those outlined in Chapter IV: people find that traditional music is a link with the past, and that it is more meaningful and relevant than much of contemporary music. Thus, residents lean toward performing traditional music because of the club's policy, and because of personal taste.

There are, however, several categories of non-traditional songs performed at the club, including modern and contemporary songs, as well as Medieval songs, music hall songs,³ and rock 'n' roll. Contemporary songs are those written within the previous three or four years; modern songs extend from the 1930's until the past four or five years. Not all contemporary and modern songs are acceptable at the club; some criteria of acceptability for these will be examined below.

Classifications based upon national origin influence repertoire choice in a manner similar to the traditional/non-traditional dichotomy. That is, residents are guided both by social sanctioning and by aesthetics. There is a tacit rule against performing non-British

²T. Rundle, 20/8/75, T 57.

³Music hall is a form of variety theater which was popular in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, British Music Hall (rev. ed.; London: Gentry Books, 1974); Peter Davison, comp., Songs of the British Music Hall (New York: Oak Publications, and London: Music Sales, 1971), and Christopher Pulling, They Were Singing, and What They Sang About (London: George G. Harrap and Co., 1952.).

songs at the club (except as an amusing break from the norm). This rule has obviously evolved from the British policy introduced by Brian Pearson in the mid-sixties. The policy is no longer overt; it has become deeply rooted in the culture of the St. Albans club, as it has in much of the folksong revival. Like many other revivalists, the residents at the Goat find British material easier to identify with than non-British material. They also believe that they can perform British music better than the music of other nationalities (see above, pp. 74-77).

Of the factors influencing repertoire selection which are linked to the material itself, perhaps the most obvious is the aesthetic and emotional appeal of the words and the tune.⁴ The consensus among residents is that the words of a song are more important than the tune. People do find tunes significant, however, as a vehicle for the words. Moreover, even though they are generally considered of secondary importance by residents, tunes influence repertoire choice. Graham Goffee thinks that an individual will be attracted to a certain mode of tune: "There are obviously certain types of tunes that appeal to you, and that's probably got something to do with modes: a particular mode will attract you" (29/8/75, T 62). "Some people alter tunes that

⁴The term "mode" usually refers to any scale (or compositions based upon any scale) other than major or minor. This system of scales is often referred to as the "church modes." For additional information see Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, V, 797-804, and Willi Apel and Ralph T. Daniel, The Harvard Brief Dictionary of Music (New York: Washington Square Press, 1960), pp. 56-57, 180.

they do not like, if the lyrics appeal to them. Janet Simpson occasionally entirely rewrites a tune which she finds unsatisfactory, in order to produce what she feels is a better song (Simpson, 31/8/75, T 63).

In considering the words of songs, informants noted that they are drawn toward learning pieces in which they empathize with the feelings expressed or the situation of the characters involved. People also said that they tend to select songs which have some "meaning," or "message," and which are fairly realistic in their portrayal of real life. Often, they feel, this means that there is strife of some kind in the song. Janet Simpson labeled such songs as "strong folksongs" (31/8/75, T 63). "Fatty bacon songs," or "bacon," are almost the polar opposite to these. The name "fatty bacon" is peculiar to the St. Albans residents, and it comes from the chorus of a traditional drinking song, "Ale, Ale, Glorious Ale":

Oh ale, ale, glorious ale
Served up in pewter, it tells its own tale.
Some folks like radishes, some curleye kale,
But give I boiled parsnips, and a girt [great]
dish of taters
And a lump of fatty bacon, and a pint of good
ale.⁵

⁵ This song, performed by Bob Lewis, has been recorded on The Brave Ploughboy: Songs and Stories in a Sussex Pub (Xtra XTRS 1150). The notes to this record contain the lyrics to the entire song.

A fatty bacon song is a "song of no substance," which "ignores anything pertinent to the time in which the song evolved" (G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 15). Bacon songs are almost always traditional, often have lengthy choruses, and are generally about the joys of rural life -- e.g., eating and drinking (as in "the fatty bacon song" above), or hunting. Some songs of the sea, especially shanties, are also labeled "bacon." Fatty bacon songs are almost completely avoided by some residents; others include them in their repertoires in small doses.

The term "fatty bacon" is the most common example of a group of derogatory category terms, including "long boring ballads," "morbid industrial songs," "grotesque Victorian music hall songs," and "Red peril [political] songs." Most of these other terms, however, are used in mock derision of songs that are sung and enjoyed by residents. They seem to serve the same purpose as the occasional inappropriate accompaniments to, and parodies of, traditional songs, discussed on pages 164-165. That is, these derogatory terms help keep performers from being so solemn in their approach to traditional music that the enjoyment is taken out of their involvement in it.

Two further considerations in repertoire selection related to intrinsic qualities of the material are an individual's perceived ability to perform an item, and his or her ease in learning it. Some people feel that they do not perform a particular type of song well, and avoid learning many of that type. Informants also said that if a piece seems as if it is going to be very difficult for them to learn,

they usually do not bother. Of course, various people have trouble with different things. Wendy Rundle (married to resident Tony Rundle) has difficulty remembering lyrics, so she usually learns fairly short songs (W. Rundle, 20/8/75, T 58). Graham Goffee, on the other hand, has some trouble reading music. He said that if the key signature of a piece had several sharps or flats, he would be "buggered," and probably would not try to learn it (29/8/75, T 62).

Repertoire selection, as well as categorization, is sometimes dependent not only upon the abilities of the performers, but also upon the context in which the items are to be used. This point is illustrated by the following. The band's main purpose is to help create good atmosphere. Their music is more or less background music, or "music to be talked over." As mentioned above, the band is not a terribly proficient group. The band's level of proficiency and the purpose of its music influence the selection of tunes: members choose pieces which are relatively simple, and which they feel would not be greatly enhanced by spoken introductions. Conversely, during their spot the residents would play "tunes to be listened to," or "listening tunes," which are generally more complex pieces, and are sometimes introduced. It should also be noted that a single tune may be used for different purposes, in which case its treatment and classification will alter. A tune which the band plays at the beginning of one evening as a tune to be talked over might function on a ceilidh night as a "dance tune." In playing tunes for dancing,

musicians make them "ultra-rhythmic, [and] as loud as possible,"⁶ in order to aid the dancers.

Some things which encourage or discourage residents from learning a certain song are completely unrelated to its lyrics, tune, and so forth, but concern instead its previous use -- or lack of use -- within the revival in general, or at the St. Albans Folk Music Club. Each resident tries to attain a unique repertoire, largely by the inclusion of some lesser known items.⁷ Informants cited two major reasons for their desire to have personal repertoires: vanity, and the necessity of keeping the audience from becoming bored.

If the audience heard the same songs week after week, I was told, they would soon become bored. Informants said that they have a responsibility to the audience, even if they do not consider themselves to be "entertainers" (see pp. 161-164). They feel that they

⁶Macfarlane, 7/6/75, T 11.

⁷The desire for a unique repertoire also exists in other musical cultures. Traditional singers, for example, often have their "own" songs (see Casey, Rosenberg and Wareham; Kenneth S. Goldstein, "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions to the Study of Repertory," *Journal of American Folklore*, 83 [1971], 62-67, and Gerald L. Pocius, "The First Day that I Thought of It Since I Got Wed': Role Expectations and Singer Status in a Newfoundland Outport," *Western Folklore* 35 [1976], 109-122).

Rosenberg, in "Repertoire, Style and Role: Amateur and Professional Folk Musicians," an unpublished paper read at the 1972 meeting of the American Folklore Society in Austin, Texas, describes various stages of musical experience among country musicians. The third stage, "journeyman," is roughly equivalent in terms of experience to the position of resident at the St. Albans club. Rosenberg states that at this stage of development, a unique repertoire is quite important to the musicians with whom he worked, albeit for reasons different from my own informants.

must take the needs and desires of audience members, who have paid to attend, into account.⁸ In order to maintain interest, it is necessary for performers to have unique repertoires, so that there is not too much repetition. For the same reason, residents must also have reasonably large repertoires.

A unique repertoire also provides performers with a way to achieve status within the culture. At the club, and in much of the revival as well, stardom is not sanctioned. But residents nonetheless have a need, of which they are aware, to gratify their egos. There are various ways in which they can do this. An obvious one is to perform well, and hopefully "go down well."⁹ Another accepted way of fulfilling egotistical needs is to have items in one's repertoire that are not commonly performed: "You like to think that you can find something that nobody else is doing" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). A performer gains status from a unique repertoire largely because of the effort required to achieve it. It has become increasingly difficult to locate obscure items, because over the years the revival has exposed a tremendous amount of music to frequent public performance. In fact, public exposure of some items has been so frequent that informants consider

⁸ The desire to keep people interested is not, however, based solely on a feeling of responsibility. Performers must keep the audience satisfied in order to maintain attendance, and a reasonably large audience is necessary for both financial and atmospheric reasons.

⁹ Going down well means being noticeably appreciated in some way by the audience. Performers sometimes also use the term to mean getting the specific "reception from the audience that you set out to get, or hoped you would get" (G. Goffee, 16/7/75, T 29).

them "done to death," or hackneyed. For the most part, they do not perform such songs at the Goat. Residents who do not know a song which has been done to death will almost certainly not bother to learn it; such songs already known by residents fall into their inactive repertoires.¹⁰

In order to achieve repertoires with a significant proportion of reasonably obscure pieces, informants rely upon sources which provide them with songs that are not known by a great many people. The available sources cited are: books, records, live performances, tape recordings, and occasionally, writing songs. Residents vary in the degree to which they use any particular source, but most rely mainly on books, for it is here that the more obscure items can be located. Repertoire is obtained largely from older works which have not been reprinted in recent years; recently published or reprinted books are more easily secured and therefore their contents are less obscure.¹¹ In order to obtain older publications, some informants make frequent use of libraries. Graham Goffee, for example, relies heavily on the interlibrary loan service at the Hertfordshire County Music Library in the nearby town of Welwyn Garden City. When residents use sources which are readily

¹⁰ See Goldstein, "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions" (62-67), for a discussion of the movement of songs in a singer's repertoire from active to inactive status (or vice-versa), and of the factors which determine an item's status at any particular time.

¹¹ Unfortunately, informants could not cite either compilers or titles of the rarer works consulted, probably because of their very obscurity.

available, such as the Child collection, they choose songs (or versions of songs) which are not very well-known within the revival.

When informants use records as a source of repertoire, they usually limit themselves to those of traditional singers, or less well-known revival singers. Records by very well-known revival singers are normally avoided; informants who occasionally learn songs from these records make a special effort to individualize them, adding or changing an accompaniment, and so forth. There are two major reasons why informants steer clear of songs recorded by popular revival performers. Such material is going to be heard -- and learned -- by many people, and will no longer be unique. In addition, residents do not want to set themselves up to be unfavorably compared with a very experienced and well-known performer.

Live performances alone do not serve as a source of repertoire, as none of my informants are able to learn a song from only one or two hearings. However, live performances are often used in conjunction with another source. Residents sometimes learn songs from tape recordings of live performances; here they have the opportunity to listen to the piece repeatedly, or to transcribe the lyrics. When informants wish to learn a song that has not been taped, they often just make a mental note of that fact, for future reference: "Quite a normal cycle is that you hear somebody singing a song that you like, and you always think, 'I'll learn that song,' and then, one day you come across it in a book, and you do learn it" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62).

Sometimes residents ask the performer of the piece in question for a source. Occasionally that person will write down the words, and possibly transcribe the tune as well (Simpson, 31/8/75, T 63). More often, he or she will only cite a source.

It should be apparent by this point that because of the desire for a reasonably unique repertoire, the residents learn few songs from each other, or from regular floor singers. Most songs learned from the impetus of a live performance come from the repertoires of guests, whose appearances at the club are relatively infrequent. It is not socially acceptable at the Goat to perform a song active in the repertoire of another resident.¹² This has occurred on at least one occasion, and some amount of friction resulted (W. Rundle, 20/8/75, T 57).

Traditional singers (outside the context of the club) are a possible source of live performances from which tapes could be made. However, this source has not been exploited by residents because of a lack of time for research. As Tony Rundle explained, collecting obscure songs from traditional singers is "not the sort of thing you can do after tea and before Kojak."¹³ Some professional singers do carry out field research, because they have more free time in which to do so.

¹² The fear of being unfavorably compared with other residents does not enter into the rationale for this cultural rule. On a conscious level, at least, it is based solely on the desire to maintain a unique repertoire.

¹³ T. Rundle, 20/8/75, T 57. Kojak is an American television series about a New York City police detective.

The last source of repertoire is writing songs. This is by no means a major source, but occasionally one of the residents writes a song and performs it at the club. As noted earlier, although most of the material performed at the St. Albans Folk Music Club is traditional, some kinds of modern and contemporary songs are acceptable, in moderation. These are pieces which deal with similar subjects and themes as traditional songs, and whose treatment of them is perceived to be like that of traditional songs. "Treatment" here refers to the degree of personalization of the song, rather than how much it sounds like a traditional piece. When residents do write songs, they remain within these boundaries.

Very introspective songs are not performed at the club, except occasionally by floor singers who are not sufficiently cognizant of the club's culture. These "singer-songwriter songs"¹⁴ are normally about the writer's personal problems; they present an "enlarged view of the inside of the singer's head, which is very boring in most cases" (G. Goffe, 17/6/75, I 18). My informants believe, like many other traditionally oriented revivalists, that singer-songwriter songs do not have very much of value to communicate, and are thus really relevant only to the writer.

¹⁴ Singer-songwriters, discussed on pp. 96-97, often write introspective songs, hence the name, "singer-songwriter songs."

Use of Repertoire

In addition to choosing material for their overall repertoires, residents must select a portion of their repertoires for any given performance at the club. It was stated earlier that for a large percentage of club evenings, residents perform some items together. On these occasions, a list of the songs and tunes, and the order in which they are to be performed, is prepared in advance. When residents are not performing together, no list is made, and they simply take turns performing. In such cases, they often program their material during the course of the evening. This allows them to make their selections according to the audience's reactions. For example, if one resident sang a long ballad which was not received with much attention, others would probably avoid singing lengthy ballads for the remainder of that evening. However, residents find that when they are performing together for part of an evening, a list is essential. Otherwise, said Graham Goffee, mishaps can occur; for instance, residents might be preparing to perform a piece, only to discover that one of the performers required is in the process of relieving him- or herself (29/8/75, p. 62). Whether or not a list is prepared, though, the fundamental principals on which programing decisions are made remain the same.

Programing an evening is a difficult and complicated process, for which residents consider both their own desires, and those of the audience. Their basic goal is to provide an interesting variety of material. In attempting to do so, each resident must balance his or

her own material against the repertoires and styles of the other residents and the guest.

There are several aspects of musical material which affect programing, including: length, tempo, mood, key, whether or not an accompaniment is used, and whether or not there is audience participation. Each of these is considered in both selecting and ordering items. For example, songs of varying length will be chosen, and they will be arranged so that there are not several long numbers (such as ballads) together. Similarly, unaccompanied songs are mixed with accompanied songs, or tunes. Yet this is not done for the sake of variety alone. Despite a large amount of unaccompanied singing in the revival, some people find it tedious, especially if it persists for any length of time: "... it's amazing how many people still find continuous unaccompanied singing a strain" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). Residents are therefore careful not to perform several unaccompanied songs together. Audience participation, another factor, is thought to occur not only with chorus songs, but also with the faster types of tunes, such as jigs, reels, and hornpipes.¹⁵ Here the involvement is a physical response to the rhythm.

In regard to mood, the two classifications used most frequently in programing are "serious songs," and "rumbustious," or

¹⁵For definitions of these terms which are fairly standard in the revival, see Robin Williamson, English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish Fiddle Tunes (New York: Oak Publications, and London: Music Sales, 1976), pp. 12-13.

"mood songs."¹⁶ Serious songs are "songs that you want to make people sit and listen to. And what you really want to do is make them think in the same way about the song as you do" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). Singers want their audiences to listen to mood songs as well, "but they don't have to listen quite so hard, because a song [of this kind] has a particular mood about it . . . it has a particular air [feeling], and it's the air about the song that you want them to listen to, rather than the actual words to the song" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). Mood songs include various kinds of funny or amusing songs, such as songs of sexual symbolism.

The foregoing considerations apply to providing variety on a single evening. In order to maintain audience interest over a period of weeks, residents seek both large and unique repertoires, as discussed on pages 192-193. When choosing material for a performance, they ensure that a varied repertoire will be presented by selecting some items which they have not performed recently (if at all) at the Goat. Hence any new material which an individual has learned is likely to be included in that person's next residency.

It is important to understand that although variety is considered vital for good programming, there should not be too much "stark variation"¹⁷ during the course of an evening. Change should

¹⁶"Serious songs" is a term frequently employed by residents; "mood songs," on the other hand, is a label created by Graham Goffee to describe a category with no fixed name.

¹⁷G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62.

usually be more gradual, resulting in a feeling of continuity. This is necessary for good atmosphere to build. Introductions linking one item to another are sometimes used to foster continuity. For instance, a connection may be made between two items by noting that they date from the same period, or that they express different points of view about a particular subject, such as love. In planning this kind of an arrangement of material, categories dealing with subject matter often come into play. Some examples are "love songs," "sea songs," "rural songs," "military songs," "songs of ceremony," and "industrial songs." Other categories which may be employed here are those containing information about origin (such as "broadsides"),¹⁸ and form (such as "chorus songs" and "ballads").¹⁹

¹⁸A broadside is literally an unfolded sheet of paper, with printing on one side. Many different kinds of popular street literature, including songs, ballads, handbills, posters, proclamations, and religious documents were printed on broadsides. Broadside ballads (which include both narrative and lyrical pieces) flourished from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Both old and new songs were disseminated in this manner.

When informants use the word "broadside," they are referring specifically to broadside ballads. They are also less restrictive in their definition of this term, and would not, for example, distinguish between broadsides per se, and sheets printed on both sides, which are more correctly termed "broadsheets." Further information on broadsides can be found in two books by Leslie Shepard, The Broadside Ballad: A Study in Origins and Meaning (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1962), and The History of Street Literature (Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1973).

¹⁹It should be noted that specific categories may contain information about more than one of these main groups of subject, origin, and form. For example, the category "rural songs" refers to songs which are from the country, and which are also "about something that would happen in the country" (G. Goffee, 6/8/75, T 38).

Continuity is also affected by the timing between songs and tunes. If there are long gaps between pieces for tuning instruments, the audience is likely to become restless, and the atmosphere will suffer. Residents, as mentioned earlier, try to arrange their material so that this does not occur. If changes in tuning are required, whenever possible, items are ordered so that these changes do not occur in consecutive pieces. At least one item in which the instrument or instruments concerned are not involved is scheduled between the songs or tunes requiring different tunings. In this way, the performers can re-tune instruments during the time when others are introducing items.

Along with the concept of providing continuity as well as variety, residents base their choice of material for a residency on their desire to perform specific pieces at any given time. A person "feels like" doing particular items for any number of reasons. Topicality is a common one: an individual is likely to perform a song which is similar in subject or theme to some current news item. On one occasion, Graham Goffee sang a song about a mining disaster in which a large segment of a community's population had been killed.²⁰ In his introduction to the song, he stated that he had been reminded

²⁰ This song, "The Trimdon Grange Explosion," was written in 1882 by Tommy Armstrong, a Durham collier-songwriter, who lived from 1848 to 1919. Armstrong wrote "a great many songs of mining life," including "militant strike songs and disaster ballads" (A.L. Lloyd, Folk Song in England [New York: International Publishers, 1967], 359-360). "The Trimdon Grange Explosion" is printed in the above work (360-361), and has been recorded on Tommy Armstrong of Tyneside (Topic 12T122).

of it by a bus crash which had occurred a few weeks earlier, in which most of the people killed had resided in the same locality: "And this must have been the sort of feeling that was always running in the minds of people in mining communities -- that the whole of their population could get smashed up in one go" (22/6/75, T 19).

The people with whom one is scheduled to perform must also be considered in planning a program. Out of courtesy to each other, and for the audience's benefit, residents avoid performing several songs of a type normally performed by another scheduled resident. Similarly, residents try to provide a contrast to the guest's performance. When the guest is an unaccompanied singer, the residents perform a large proportion of tunes or accompanied songs. On occasions when a "guitar king" is booked, they perform a fair amount of unaccompanied material. According to Graham Goffee, the contrast in style in this instance is also caused by the fact that "you don't want to be made to look a prat [fool], because they're better than you" (29/8/75, T 62). For the same reason, and out of courtesy to the guest as well, residents do not perform songs or tunes which they know are in the guest's repertoire.

When two or more of the four scheduled residents select material to perform together, they are, of course, guided by the concepts outlined above. The basic "theory" behind their working together also influences their overall selection of repertoire, as well as their choice of material for specific evenings. Residents

decided to work together on a regular basis because they felt that it would be beneficial for each of them to be able to work with any of the others, thus broadening their musical experience, and improving them all as performers. This idea is not consciously applied to the selection of items performed together; nonetheless, it seems to have an impact upon the selection process. Thus, residents often try to find something which is out of the "normal rut"²¹ of their individual repertoires. Or, sometimes a person feels that an item already in his or her own repertoire would be improved by the addition of instruments, voices, or both, and will suggest that others join in performing the piece. In addition, if two or more residents are scheduled who have performed a certain piece together in the past, they may decide to repeat it, to "try and get it better still" (Sibley, 12/6/75, T 13).

The last major consideration in programing musical material is the time during the evening when it is performed. When a list is made, only pieces chosen for the first half are actually placed in order. The remaining items are listed, but in no particular sequence. This is because during the second half, floor singers' performances are interspersed with those of the residents, and residents must gear their choice of items to those of the floor singers. To illustrate, if a floor singer performs unaccompanied, the residents usually follow with accompanied material.

²¹G. Goffee, 12/6/75, T 14.

Because there are other performances sandwiched within the residents' second spot, they undoubtedly lose some amount of control over the atmosphere. Not surprisingly, they feel that this spot is "a bit of a mess" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). In fact, "the residency" is conceptualized as being the first spot, which runs from 7:45 until 8:30 (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). Within this forty-five minute period, the program is carefully planned. Residents want to create the best atmosphere possible, as well as to arrange things to their own best advantage. There are three critical periods in the residency: the beginning, the end, and the period from approximately 8:15 to 8:25. Different categories of songs are sung during each of these periods.

The choice of the first song²² is influenced by several factors. Length is important: the first song should be reasonably short. A number of people arrive at the club soon after 7:45; if a long song, such as a ballad, were being sung, they would accumulate outside the door, getting impatient, and possibly making a good deal of noise as well. It is also imperative to begin the evening with something cheerful. Serious songs will go down better once the audience is warmed up and attentive. Further, residents tend to start with something other than a chorus song because they feel that the audience is normally too small at the beginning of the night to make

²² Residents generally begin with a song rather than with tunes, so as to emphasize the change from the band. This is done mainly for the sake of variety. Perhaps another reason is that quiet is not expected for the band as it is for the residents, the start of whose performance marks the real beginning of the evening.

chorus singing worthwhile. An exception to this may be made when a well-known guest is booked, and a large crowd is expected early. In this case, a chorus song may help warm up the audience, putting them in "a singing mood" (Sibley, 12/6/75, T 13).

The first song is also almost invariably a "throwaway." There are three types of throwaways. The first two types are used as opening numbers, and are defined solely according to their status in an individual's repertoire, rather than by any inherent qualities. First, a throwaway may be a piece which a person knows very well and has performed a lot in public. In other words, it is something the individual is confident about performing. In addition, because the piece has been performed several times before, its novelty is gone, hence its status in the person's repertoire drops. It is logical to place this material at the beginning of a night, when residents may be nervous, and when some of the audience has not yet arrived. Residents also sometimes start with new material that they wish to try out before an audience, but are not yet completely confident about performing. This is the second type of throwaway. Informants feel that it is preferable to risk giving a poor performance in front of a small audience.

The definition of the third type of throwaway is based partly upon repertoire status, and partly upon intrinsic characteristics of the material. This type is not generally used to begin an evening, though it may be performed at the end of a spot. It consists of pieces

which are of a "totally different kind"²³ than the rest of a person's repertoire: "If you sang traditional songs, your throwaway song wouldn't be a traditional song. Or [if it were], it might be a gross bacon song that wasn't the sort of thing that you would normally sing at all" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). Other examples of this kind of throwaway are skiffle and rock 'n' roll numbers. These songs are intended "to amuse people, rather than be a seriously integrated part of what you're trying to do as a whole" (G. Goffee, 11/7/75, T 25).

Residents end a spot with material which is cheerful, and which they are fairly certain will go down well. It is important for residents to finish with a song which goes down well, because according to informants, the audience's impression of a performance is strongly influenced by the last item. I was told that even if the rest of the performance was not very good, a well done closing number leaves an audience feeling as if they have enjoyed themselves. The residents also want to leave the audience in a receptive mood for the guest, so they end their spots with something lively, like the third type of throwaway, described above.

The period near the end of the residents' first spot, from approximately 8:15 to 8:25, is considered to be the best time for performing: "That ten minute period is where you're most likely to put the things that you most want to do" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). By this point in the evening, most of the audience has arrived, and

²³G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62.

should be receptive and attentive. Yet residents place their best material toward the end of their spot not only because they want it to be heard by a large and responsive audience; they are also trying to build up the atmosphere. Therefore, it makes sense to save the best until this point. The period near the close of the spot is preferable to the very end because "you're not trying to get the 'up' [as you are] at the end, where you feel obliged to do something clever" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62). Many different types of songs are placed in this segment, depending upon the individuals performing, but this is the point where the bulk of serious songs, which require a fair amount of attention, are likely to be performed.

Conclusion

Categorization, as we have seen, plays a prominent role in repertoire selection and programming. For example, residents are attracted by "strong folksongs," and repelled by "singer-songwriter songs"; they begin an evening with a "throwaway," and they avoid performing several long "ballads" in a row. However, informants do not always employ actual category labels, either in communication with the audience, or in their own conceptualization. This may or may not be a deliberate action.

The use of certain terms in front of an audience would be dysfunctional, either because the audience would not understand their meaning, or because they would reveal information harmful to the performance situation. In-group expressions, such as "fatty bacon"

are normally not used, because very few audience members would know what was meant. Use of these terms would emphasize, rather than de-emphasize, performer-audience distinctions, causing the atmosphere to suffer. The term "throwaway" would likewise not be comprehended by most audience members. This term would remain dysfunctional even if it were explained, as the audience's opinion of the piece in question would be lowered.

Sometimes category terms which can be used with an audience, such as those referring to subject, are replaced by brief descriptions which are more or less equivalent to the labels. Janet Simpson, for instance, introduced a song as being "about a chap that charges off to go fishing for whale," rather than as a "sea song" (18/5/75, T.2). Similarly, Graham Goffee introduced a "chorus song" as "a song you can join in on" (22/6/75, T.20). Using description instead of category labels is not always a conscious process. Yet residents did cite two fundamental limitations of labeling which sometimes make description preferable to strict categorization: some songs fall between categories, making classification cumbersome, while the categorization of others depends upon an individual performer's interpretation.

On a strictly conceptual level, categories sometimes function indirectly rather than directly. In planning out a program, people try to include some "serious" and some "rumbustious" pieces, but during the actual process, they don't really think about it in such concrete terms" (G. Goffee, 29/8/75, T.62). Nevertheless, mood is considered in programing material, albeit in a rather intuitive fashion.

In this chapter, repertoire categorization has been examined within the context of discussions about repertoire selection and musical programing, to which it is closely related. Group norms, individual taste and ability, the context in which the material is to be performed, and the obscurity of a piece are basic considerations in repertoire selection. In order to attain unique repertoires, informants normally rely upon written rather than aural sources. Programing -- the selection and ordering of items from a repertoire for a specific evening -- is a complex task. Some factors which are influential here are: variety, continuity, the repertoires and styles of other performers, and the time during the evening when a song or tune is performed. Repertoire classification is vital to the above processes, although it is sometimes avoided, or used more intuitively than consciously.

CONCLUSION

A "folk group," as defined in this thesis, is a group of people who share some unifying factor, such as occupation, religion, or nationality. The residents and the organizer of the St. Albans Folk Music Club constitute such a group on the basis of their shared involvement in running the club. This involvement implies not only common traditions, but also shared ways of conceptualizing and interpreting the club environment, in other words, a common "culture."

The purpose of this thesis has been to gain a thorough understanding of this culture, by employing the methodology of ethno-science in order to elicit an insider's point of view. The scope of the thesis was intended to provide a contrast with other revival studies, which have been largely broad and historical in nature. As there has been little study of any kind on the revival in Britain, the ethnoscientific approach was chosen in order to avoid misunderstanding the culture through the a priori application of analytical concepts to ethnic genres. In keeping with this approach, the thesis has been primarily descriptive. However, analysis which resulted from a thorough consideration of the data elicited has also been presented. Four main areas have been examined: the role structure of the St. Albans Folk Music Club; the way in which performers are classified

(apart from social structural role); the causes of good and bad "atmosphere," and the categorization, selection, and programing of repertoire.

In each of these areas, native categories have been defined, and the ways in which they function for informants have been examined. An individual's role designation, for instance, helps informants to anticipate aspects of behavior which they find significant, such as frequency of attendance. Classification of performers apart from their role in the club is most useful when applied to guests. Here categories help the organizer book people whose performances are consistent with the club's orientation toward serious traditional music, and they enable residents to program their material so as to complement that of the guest. The labels assigned to songs and tunes guide both initial selection of repertoire, and programing for specific performances. Finally, the concept of atmosphere is of vital importance to informants, as they judge the success of an evening mainly on the basis of its atmosphere. The desire to create good atmosphere underlies many other aspects of the residents' culture.

In addition to illuminating the way in which informants conceptualize and function within their environment, the approach used in this study allows some interesting comparisons to be made. The ideology expressed by informants can be compared with the more general revival ideology described in Chapter IV; it can also be examined against informants' actual behavior. In addition, interesting insights

can be gained by comparing the cultural knowledge of the St. Albans group with that of other groups interested in British folk music.

Some similarities between my informants' attitudes and concepts widespread in the British folksong revival were noted in previous chapters. Overall, there is a close correspondence between the ideology common to revivalists interested in traditional music, and that of the residents and organizer of the St. Albans Folk Music Club. Both groups believe that active involvement of participants is important, and that the distinctions between audience and performer should be minimal. They also concur that a good deal of traditional music is still relevant today, that people should sing the songs of their native country, and that musical, rather than extra-musical, components should be emphasized in performance.

At the St. Albans Folk Music Club, each of these ideals is reflected behaviorally. For example, active participation in club activities is encouraged in two ways. First, residents try to ensure audience involvement in their performances by including some chorus songs and some rhythmical instrumental music. Second, the summer workshops, as well as the role of floor singer within the club's social structure, foster performance by non-residents. It is true that there are other, sometimes more practical reasons for having workshops and floor singers.¹ Yet the fact remains that both exist in part to

¹For instance, during the summer break, workshops help maintain an audience for the coming season; on a club evening, floor singers allow the residents to take a short rest from performing. Moreover, the role of floor singer is a standard part of folk club tradition.

encourage the active involvement of club participants. In addition, informants believe that minimizing the separation of performers and audience is essential to good atmosphere, and several techniques are employed toward this end. The first row of seats, for example, is placed quite near the stage. As well, in order to ensure that the audience will comprehend their "chat," residents try to avoid telling "in-jokes" while on stage. Informants' feelings about traditional music are reflected in their repertoires, which are heavily weighted toward traditional material. They identify more closely with British traditional songs than with other types of songs, finding them thematically relevant as well as aesthetically pleasing. They also feel that they can perform British music better than non-British music. The need to conform to club policy is also partly responsible for the large proportion of British traditional songs found in residents' repertoires, but this is a relatively minor factor. Finally, the classification of performers according to whether or not their "focal point" is musical indicates that informants consider music to be the most vital aspect of a performance. This attitude is also evidenced in the club's booking policy. "Comedians," who emphasize comedy at the expense of musical quality, are never intentionally booked at the club.

Behavior, however, is not always a mirror of ideology. Informants are opposed to the "star system" associated with the pop music industry, yet they actually support such a system within the club, chiefly in relation to the guest. This person is thought of as the "highlight" of a club evening, and as such, is expected to be the best performer of the evening. The residents even conceptualize their

own performances in terms of the guest. For instance, they "warm up the audience for the guest." In addition, because of the expectations placed upon the guest, he or she is often felt to be somewhat set apart from the rest of the people attending the club. Thus, in a very real sense, the guest is the "star" of a club evening.

This tendency to make the guest a star is reinforced by the audience. Audience composition changes considerably depending upon the particular guest booked for an evening; on occasions when no guest is booked (e.g., ceilidhs), audience size decreases. It follows that if guests were booked infrequently, or eliminated entirely, much of the audience would stop attending the club, seriously hampering its operation. Therefore, it may be more difficult to break away from the star system than people realize, for both the resident-organizer group and the audience seem predisposed to encouraging it, however unwittingly.

The conflict between ideology and action is also illustrated by the fact that although residents assert that music should be the primary factor in performances, they occasionally seem to be most concerned with the way in which they are judged as performers. They seek to maintain status via unique repertoires, and by programing their material so as to avoid performing items which they believe would cause them to be unfavorably compared with the evening's guest.

Ideology, then, is sometimes exemplified by, and sometimes contradicted by, behavioral norms. Norms which are in opposition to stated ideology appear to serve more pragmatic needs -- like achieving status and maintaining a good sized audience. Thus the club can be

seen as a successful compromise between ideology and practicality. The comments of some informants appear to support this statement. For instance, Graham Goffee and Steve Dickinson expressed the opinion that folk clubs represent less than an ideal arrangement, particularly due to the star system which has evolved. Nevertheless, both implied that clubs are the best possible alternative to the less formalized (hence more desirable) performance contexts of the home and the pub, which are seldom viable today (Goffee, 29/8/75, T 62; Dickinson, 21/5/75, T 3). As we have seen, the St. Albans Folk Music Club serves both as a social gathering place, and a place where people can enjoy making and listening to traditional music.

In addition to permitting comparisons within a single culture, the ethnoscientific approach allows the researcher to compare two different cultures. One of the basic premises of ethnoscience is that classification is not based upon a priori orderings in the natural environment. Rather, it is culture-specific. This explains why two diverse cultural groups may classify the same objects or events in a very different manner. The system each uses serves its particular needs, as can be readily seen vis-a-vis academic folklorists and the resident-organizer group at the St. Albans Folk Music Club.

These two cultures are concerned with some of the same materials -- e.g., British folksong -- yet their respective systems of classification of these materials are often markedly different in character.² The

²For an example of a scholarly folksong classification scheme, see D.K. Wilgus and Eleanor Long, "A Proposed System for

cognitive system of each group reflects the nature of its involvement. Professional folklorists are engaged as social scientists working to expand a body of knowledge. Their approach is necessarily analytical. Folklorists cannot limit the scope of their study to those things that they find aesthetically pleasing, or that express attitudes with which they are in agreement. Similarly, they must attempt to devise definitions and methods of classification which are value-free and which can be applied cross-culturally.

My informants, on the other hand, are not restricted by any of these concerns. Their involvement is ideologically and aesthetically based. With the exception of the organizer, all are primarily concerned with performance. In order to be effective, their classification system must contain categories which are evaluative as well as performance oriented. Labels such as "fatty bacon song" and "throwaway" have little place in folklore studies, but they are invaluable aids to the residents, both in repertoire choice and in programing.

It should be pointed out, though, that the discipline of folklore has had some effect upon the culture of my informants, through printed works of folksong scholarship. Consequently, some concepts

Classifying Balladry According to Narrative Themes (1972 Revision)" (paper read at the Folk Narrative Congress, Helsinki, 1974), and D.K. Wilgus and others, "The Wilgus-Long Proposal for Ballad Classification: Revision and Re-evaluation II" (paper read at the Folk Narrative Congress, Helsinki, 1974). The principles underlying this system (now intended for cross-cultural application) are outlined in D.K. Wilgus, "A Type-Index of Anglo-American Traditional Narrative Songs," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 7 (1970), 161-176.

(for instance, "ballad") are common to both groups. However, because it is primarily the older works (or those more recent works based upon older theories) with which my informants are familiar, the concepts from folksong scholarship which have had the most influence on the club are those which have been superseded -- a number of times -- within the discipline itself. This suggests that there is an intellectual time lag, so to speak, between the two cultures, as well as a difference in approach.³

The value of conducting small-scale studies designed to elicit the insider's point of view is now apparent. Yet the usefulness of this type of study is limited: it tells us only so much about the larger culture (in this case, the British folksong revival). One can conjecture, for instance, that because the ideology of those who run the St. Albans Folk Music Club is similar to that of many participants in the revival, other aspects of their culture exist on a broader scale. But further study is required before such conclusions can be drawn with any amount of confidence. Moreover, like Ellen Stekert, I am convinced that this study should be conducted now: "Instead of leaving the present to be picked over in the future, allowing it to fragment into myriad pieces for subsequent tedious reconstruction, we must investigate it now" (154).

³I owe this observation to Neil V. Rosenberg.

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RECORDS CITED

Entries in this discography are arranged according to record company and catalogue number. When more than one catalogue number was found, the numbers are listed in sequence, separated by a slash. For each entry, the catalogue number is followed by: the record title; the main performer or group (if there is one), unless given in the title; the series to which the record belongs, where applicable -- e.g., "The Folk Songs of Britain" -- and the copyright date of the record. Unless otherwise noted, all entries consist of 1-12" 33 1/3 rpm phonodisc. Explanatory notes are given at the end of citations. An asterisk preceding the catalogue number indicates those records which I have neither seen nor listened to.

ARGO

DA 46/ZFB 60. A Merry Progress to London. Critics Group. n.d.

DA 47/ZFB 61. Sweet Thames Flow Softly. Critics Group. n.d.

DA 86/ZDA 86/ZFB 68. Waterloo-Peterloo. Critics Group. 1968.
(Includes Frankie Armstrong and Brian Pearson.)

DA 133. The Travelling People: A Radio Ballad by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker. n.d.

*DA 136/ZDA 136. On the Edge: A Radio Ballad by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker. 1969.

*RG 474/ZDA 139. The Ballad of John Axon: [A Radio Ballad] by Ewan MacColl and Charles Parker. 1965.

RG 502/DA 142. Singing the Fishing: A Radio Ballad by Ewan MacColl and Charles Parker. n.d.

RG 538/DA 140. The Big Hewer: A Radio Ballad by Ewan MacColl and Charles Parker. 1967.

*RG 539/DA 141. The Fight Game: A Radio Ballad by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker. 1967.

ZDA 137. As We Were A-Sailing. Critics Group. n.d. (Includes Brian Pearson.)

ZDA 138. Ye Mariners All. Critics Group. 1971. (Includes Brian Pearson.)

ZFB 64. The Female Frolic. Critics Group. 1968. (Includes Frankie Armstrong.)

BIG TREE

BTS 2004. Please to See the King. Steeleye Span. n.d.

CHRYSALIS

CHR 1008. Below the Salt. Steeleye Span. 1972.

DECCA

*LF 1198. Chris Barber's Band: New Orleans Joys. [1954.] 1-33 1/3 rpm phonodisc, size unknown.

FOLKWAYS

FA 2610. American Skiffle Bands. 1957.

FP 33-14. Rock Island Line. Huddie Ledbetter Memorial Album, Vol. 2. n.d. 1-10" 33 1/3 rpm phonodisc.

HMV

*CLP1603/CSD1468. Steve Benbow Sings Admiral Benbow. n.d.

*CLP1687/CSD1519. Steve Benbow Sings I Travel the World. [ca. 1963.]

LEADER

- LEA 4050. Unto Brigg Fair. 1972. (Material on this disc was originally recorded in 1908, by Percy Grainger; includes traditional singer Joseph Taylor.)

TOPIC

- TPS168. From Erin's Green Shore: Songs, Pipe and Fiddle Tunes in the Irish Tradition. Topic Sampler No. 4. n.d. (Includes the song, "The Zoological Gardens.")
- *12T122. Tommy Armstrong of Tyneside. n.d. (Includes the song, "The Trimdon Grange Explosion.")
- 12T157. Songs of Courtship. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 1. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1142] in 1961.)
- 12T158. Songs of Seduction. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 2. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1143] in 1961.)
- 12T159. Jack of All Trades. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 3. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1144] in 1961.)
- 12T160. The Child Ballads No. 1: The English and Scottish Popular Ballads Numbers 2-95. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 4. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1145] in 1961.)
- 12T161. The Child Ballads No. 2: The English and Scottish Popular Ballads Numbers 110-299. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 5. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1146] in 1961.)
- 12T194. Sailors and Servingmaids. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 6. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1162] in 1961.)
- 12T195. Fair Game and Foul. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 7. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1163] in 1961.)
- 12T196. A Soldier's Life for Me. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 8. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1164] in 1961.)
- 12T197. Songs of Ceremony. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 9. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1224] in 1961, as Songs of Christmas.)

12T198. Songs of Animals and Other Marvels. The Folk Songs of Britain, Vol. 10. [1973.] (First issued by Caedmon [TC 1225] in 1961, as Animal Songs.)

12TS216. Lovely on the Water. Frankie Armstrong. 1972. (Includes St. Albans residents Graham Goffee and Andrew Brown.)

12TS273. Frankie Armstrong: Songs and Ballads. 1975.

TOPIC/FREE REED.

12TFRS501. Concertina Workshop: Traditional Music on the English Concertina, Played by Alistair Anderson. 1974.

TRAILER

LER 2014. Ballads and Songs. Nic Jones. [1970.]

LER 2027. Nic Jones. 1971.

LER 2074. Alistair Anderson Plays English Concertina. 1972.

LER 2091. The Noah's Ark Trap. Nic Jones. 1977.

XTRA

XTRS 1150. The Brave Ploughboy: Songs and Stories in a Sussex Pub. (Includes the song, "Ale, Ale, Glorious Ale"; lyrics are included in the notes to this record.)

INFORMANTS CITED

Informants described as "resident" are residents at the St. Albans Folk Music Club.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Frankie Armstrong | - Well-known revival singer; former member of the Critics Group. |
| John Ashton | - Ph.D. candidate in folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland; formerly very active in the British revival. |
| Mike Aston | - Member of the Folklanders, who were among the first residents at the St. Albans Folk Music Club; no longer associated with the club. |
| Graham Brinsden | - A "regular" at the St. Albans Folk Music Club. |
| Karl Dallas | - Music critic; was involved in the skiffle craze. |
| Steve Dickinson | - Resident. |
| Graham Goffee | - Resident; main informant. |
| Jen Goffee | - Has frequently "sat on the door" at the St. Albans club; main informant. |
| Sandy Glover | - Ceilidh chairman (during research period); resident (as of the 1975-1976 season). |
| Roy Harris | - Well-known revival singer. |
| Ken Lindsay | - Founder of the St. Albans Folk Music Club; no longer associated with the club. |
| A.L. Lloyd | - Leading figure in the British revival. |
| Martin Lovelace | - Ph.D. candidate in folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland, who has been active in the British revival. |
| Ewan MacColl | - Leading figure in the British revival; founder of the Critics Group. |

Alison Macfarlane - Resident.
Brian Pearson - Resident who was a leading personage in the St.
Albans Folk Music Club in the 1960's and early
1970's.
Tony Rundle - Resident.
Wendy Rundle - Resident.
Maurice Sibley - Resident.
Janet Simpson - Resident.

APPENDIX: PHOTOGRAPHS

This appendix contains three sections: "The Goat Inn," "The St. Albans Folk Music Club," and "Portraits of Informants." The following photographs were taken in August 1975: Figures 16, 29-31, 33-34, 36. The rest were taken during supplementary fieldwork in April 1977. All photographs were taken by Sandy Glover, except that of himself, which was taken by the author.

The Goat Inn



Figure 6: The Goat Inn, Sopwell Lane, St. Albans ("Whitbread" is the brand of beer sold at the Goat.)

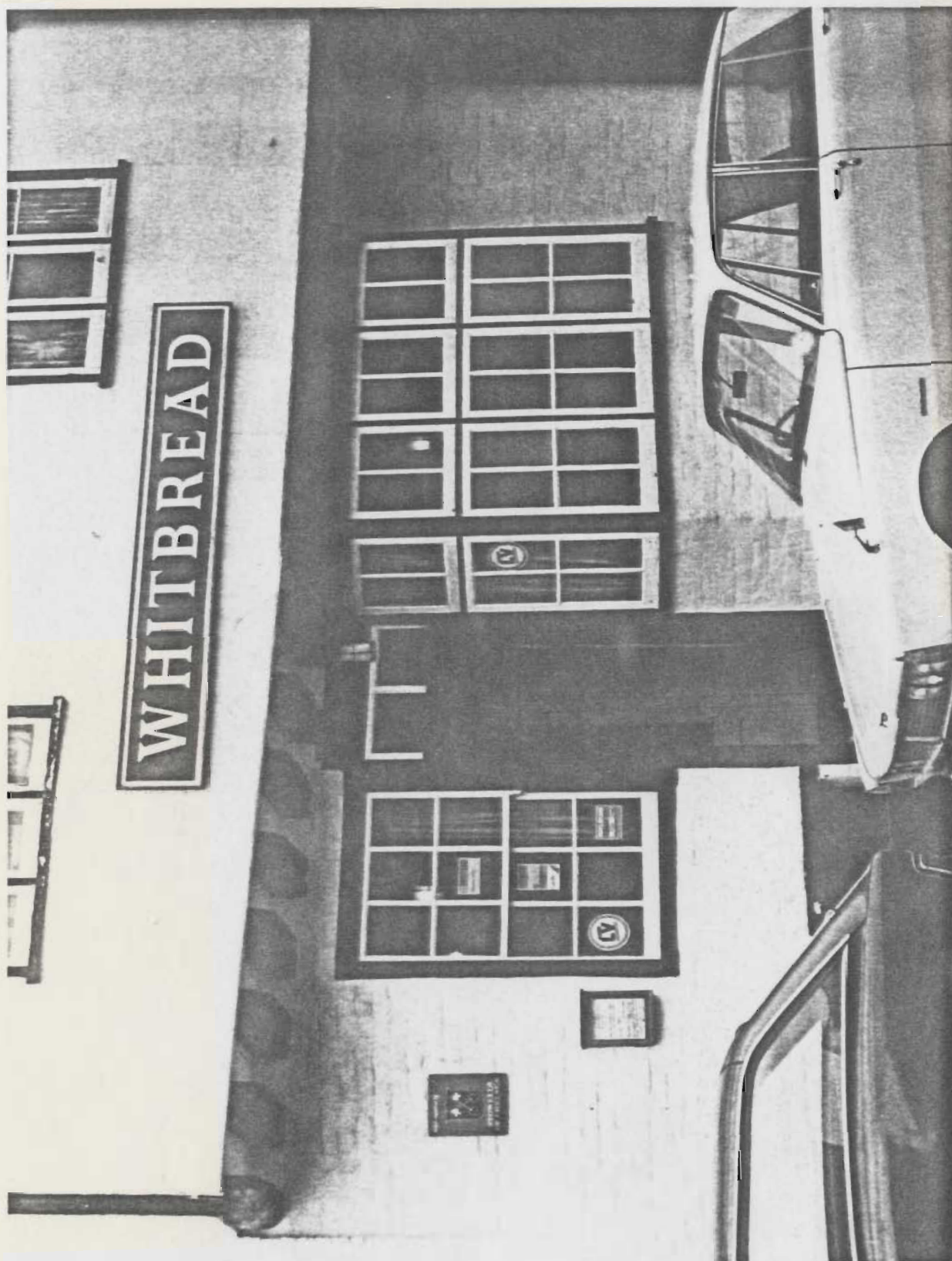


Figure 7: The Sopwell Lane entrance to the Goat



Figure 8: The sign outside the Goat

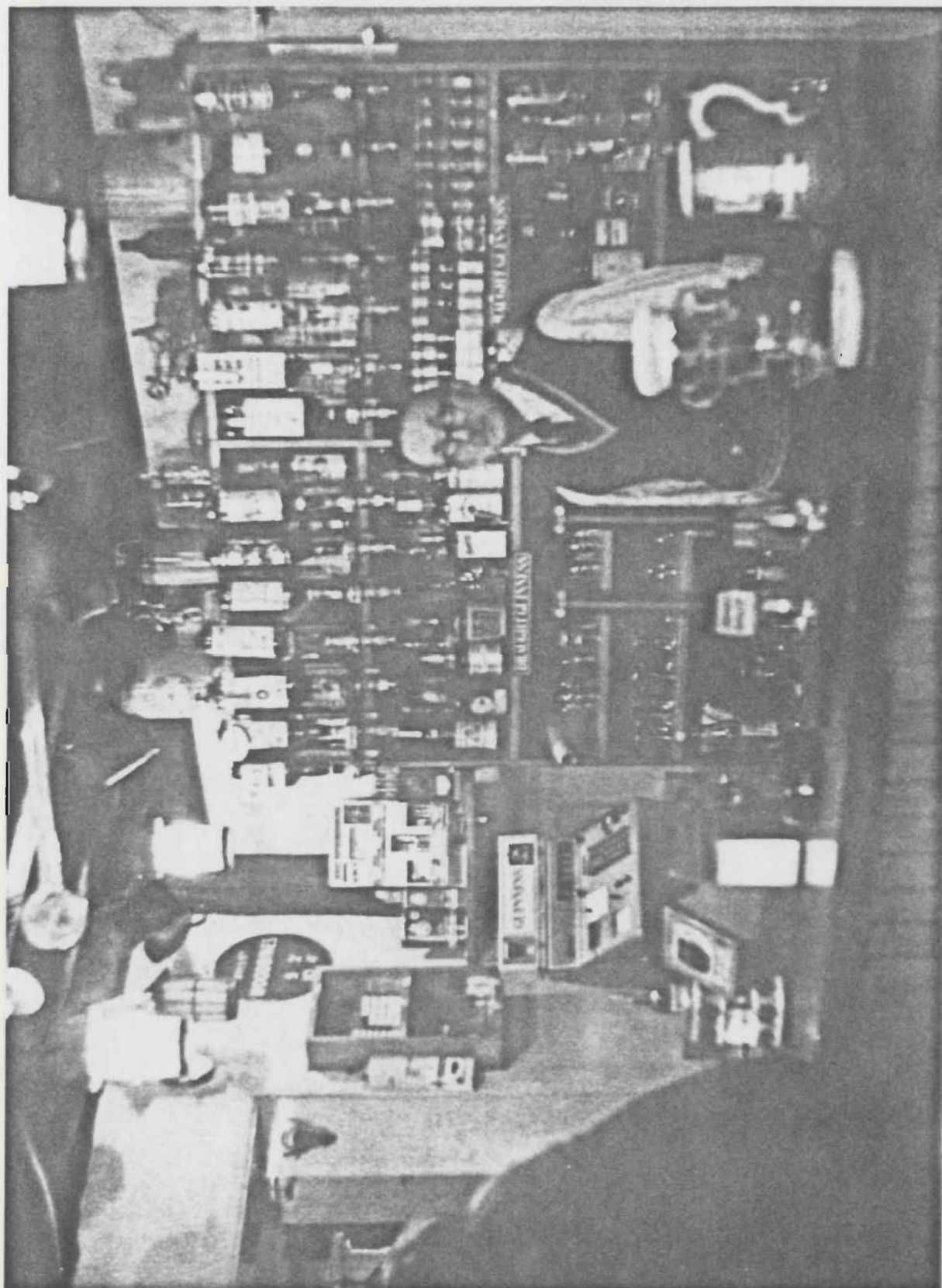


Figure 9: One of the barmen in the front bar area



Figure 10: The landlady filling a beer glass at the front bar



Figure 11: Customers in the front bar



Figure 12: A young couple in the front bar



Figure 13: The bar area serving the Victoria and back bars (The doorway shown at the left leads to the back bar.)



Figure 14: Customers in the back bar

The St. Albans Folk Music Club

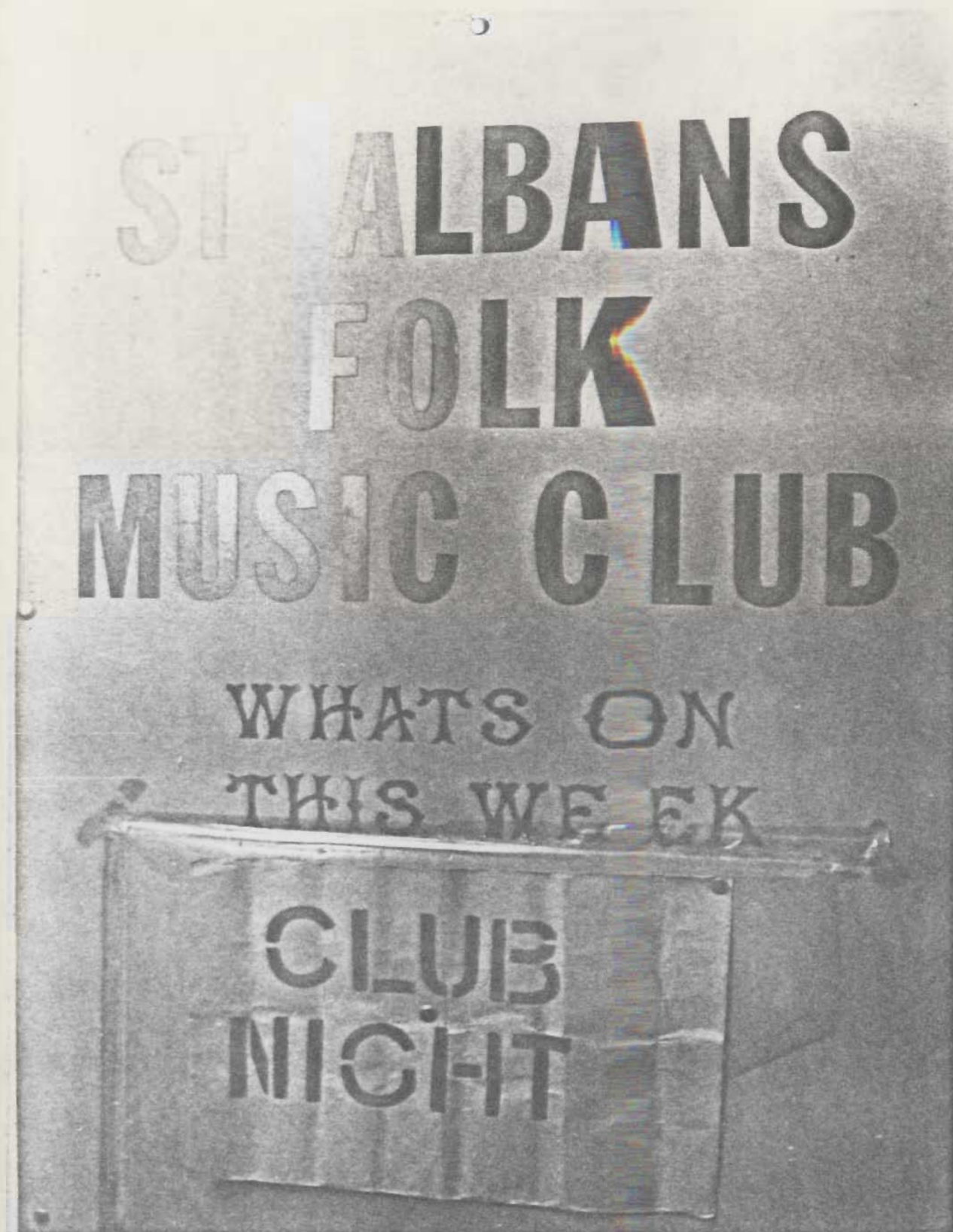


Figure 15: The permanent folk club sign, located in the corridor leading to the back room

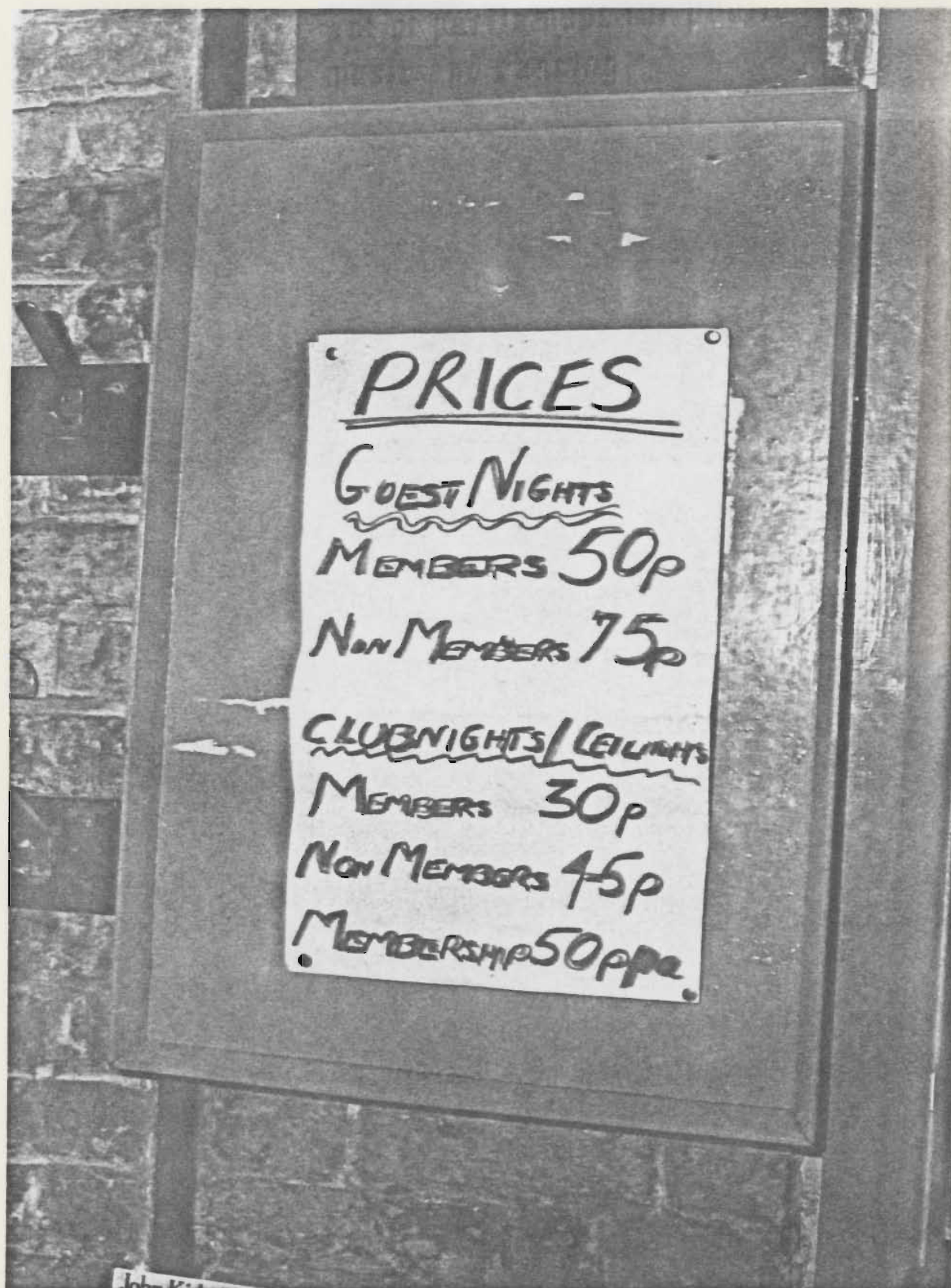


Figure 16: The sign listing admission prices, posted outside the back room (The terms "guest night" and "non-member" have come into common usage since 1975.)



Figure 17: The side portion of the back room, as set up for an evening at the club



Figure 18: The rear portion of the back room, arranged for a club evening



Figure 19: The band (From left to right: Maurice Sibley, banjo; Alison Macfarlane, melodeon; John ["Frank"] Francis, guitar; Tim Fienburgh, flute; Vicki North [partially obscured], drums, and Andrew ["Bru"] Brown, fiddle.)



Figure 20: The band, showing the stage area and proximity of the audience to the stage

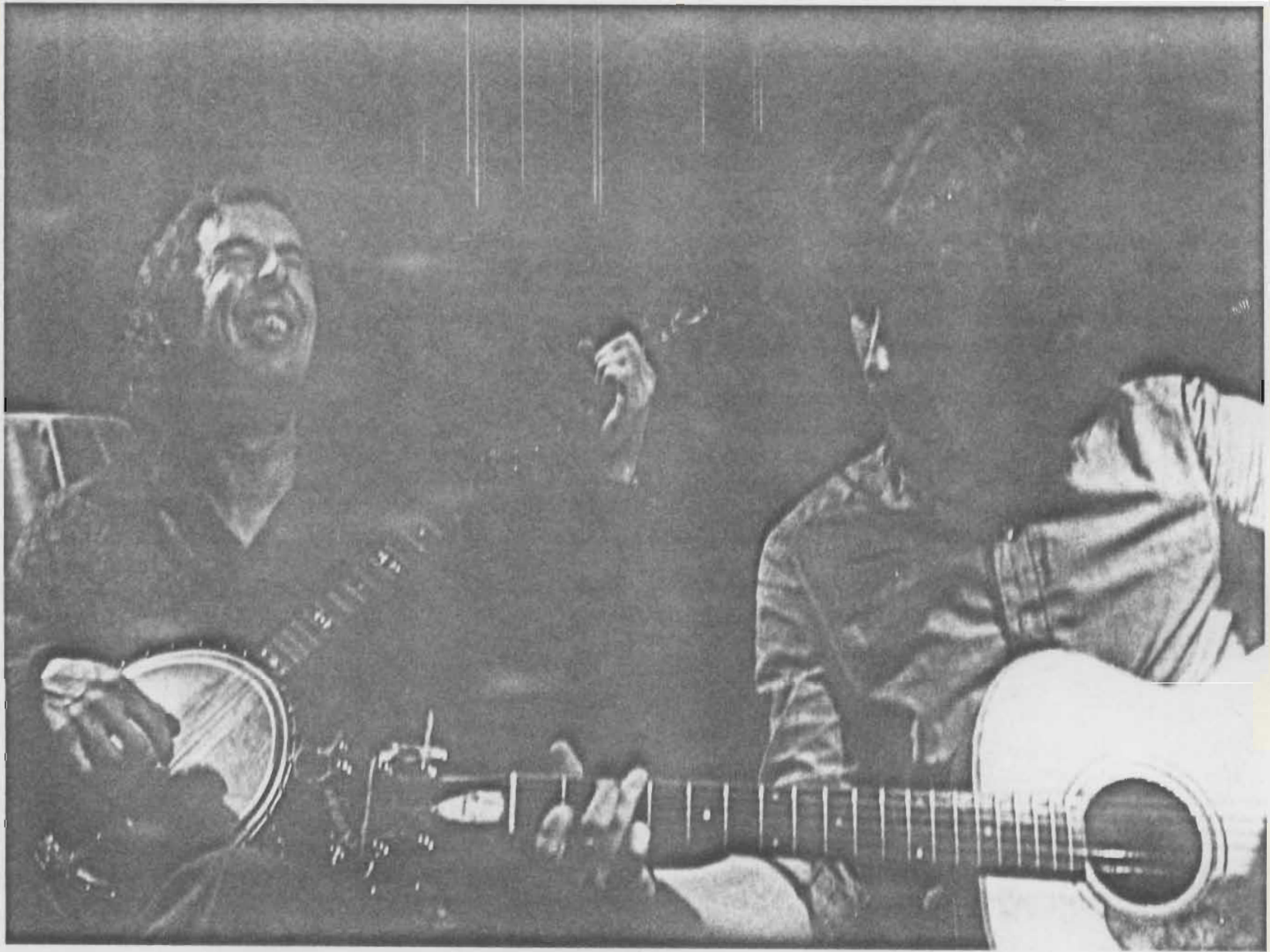


Figure 21: Maurice Sibley, banjo, and Graham Goffee, guitar, during a residency



Figure 22: Side view of the audience



Figure 23: Residents Maurice Sibley, voice; Graham Goffee, guitar, and Andrew Brown, harmonium



Figure 24: View of the audience from the stage



Figure 25: The author, performing as a floor singer, accompanied on guitar by Graham Goffee (Maurice Sibley is shown at the far left of the stage.)

Portraits of Informants



Figure 26: Graham Goffee



Figure 27: Jen Goffee, "sitting on the door"



Figure 28: Vicki North, "sitting on the door"



Figure 29: Janet Simpson



Figure 30: Residents Steve Dickinson and Tony Barratt



Figure 31: Tony Rundle



Figure 32: Wendy Rundle



Figure 33: Brian Pearson and Frankie Armstrong, at a vocal workshop



Figure 34: Alison Macfarlane



Figure 35: Maurice Sibley



Figure 36: Sandy Glover



Figure 37: Andrew Brown





