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THE SOUND OF THE ENGLISH PICTURESQUE IN THE AGE OF THE LANDSCAPE GARDEN

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ABSTRACT

In eighteenth-century England, painting, poetry and gardening were often labelled the 'sister arts'. An increasing interest in English landscape scenes and an emerging taste for 'nature tourism' gave rise to the 'picturesque' movement. Contemporary writers seldom considered English music as part of this 'sisterhood', however, or treated music as a medium for conveying national scenic beauty. When the picturesque was discussed in connection with music, eighteenth-century critics tended to use the concept to explain the tactics of novelty and surprise encountered in German instrumental music. Plays with regularity and expectation were analogous to the surprises and irregularities of picturesque 'beauty spots' – natural features studied and imitated by contemporary landscape gardeners. Accordingly, recent musicological studies of the picturesque have also preferred to emphasize its kinship with the unconventional or subversive formal schemas in instrumental music by German composers.

This article addresses the silent aporia in this discourse: the apparent absence of any participation in the picturesque movement by composers from England, the country most closely associated with this aesthetic. Focusing on the pictorialism and pastoralism of eighteenth-century English song texts and their musical treatment, this article reveals previously ignored connections between the veneration of national landscape and English vocal music. In consequence, the glee – a decidedly marginal genre in traditional eighteenth-century music historiography – emerges at the centre of contemporary aesthetic concerns, as the foremost musical vehicle for the expression of a distinctively English, painterly engagement with national landscapes.

Painting, poetry and gardening in eighteenth-century Britain were often collectively termed the 'sister arts', united in their preoccupation with nature and landscape – central concerns of the contemporary aesthetic of the picturesque.[1] Yet English music, indeed music of any nationality, was seldom spoken of as a member

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1 Any survey of the secondary literature on the picturesque ought to start with Christopher Hussey, *The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View* (London: Cass, 1967). Hussey was the first twentieth-century writer to conduct research on the picturesque (in the 1920s). He had excellent picturesque credentials: he was the grandson of Edward Hussey, who designed Scotney Castle in Kent on picturesque principles in the early nineteenth century. Hussey grew up there and inherited the property. See also Walter John Hipple, *The Beautiful, the Sublime, and the Picturesque in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1957). Malcolm Andrews and John Dixon Hunt did much to renew interest in the picturesque and inspire a new wave of scholarship in a range of disciplines. See Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760–1800* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1989) and John Dixon Hunt, *Gardens and the Picturesque: Studies in the History of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992). Among the most recent literature on the picturesque see also Stephen Copley and Peter Garside, eds, *The Politics of the Picturesque: Landscape, Literature and Aesthetics since 1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and Stephanie Ross, *What Gardens Mean* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

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Figure 1 Paul Sandby, *A View of Vinters, Boxley, Kent, with Mr. Whatman's Turkey Paper Mills* (1794). Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund (B2002.29). Used by permission

of this sisterhood, despite the large amount of critical commentary on music and music aesthetics at the time.[2] In eighteenth-century England, a painting could be thought to convey a picturesque landscape (see Figure 1), a landscape garden could embody the picturesque through its artful arrangement of natural elements (see Figure 2) and a poem could articulate picturesque sentiments. So how might music have contributed to this picturesque chorus? Answers to this question are hard to come by in either primary or secondary literature, despite recent musicological interest in the idea of the picturesque. Thus far, musicology has tended to concentrate on the reception of German instrumental music according to the English concept of the picturesque, examining contemporary testimonies as to how the music was heard and showing how analysis might account for those testimonies. English vocal music with unmistakably picturesque texts has been little discussed, however. This is a missed opportunity, since the English vocal music of the period (this article will ultimately focus on the genre of the English glee) amply demonstrates that English music

2 An exception is John Wheelock, *An Essay on the Beauties and Excellencies of Painting, Music and Poetry, Pronounced at the Anniversary Commencement at Dartmouth College* (Hartford: Eben. Watson, 1774), 5–8. Wheelock is something of a rogue voice. His short paper talks of all three forms as 'sister arts', although he elevates music to a more 'noble' level than painting as it can both 'enrapture the martial mind with glowing thoughts for victory' and 'inflame the friendly mind with sympathy and compassion'.

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Figure 2 Holkham Park, Norfolk

belonged as much to the picturesque movement as did the sister arts. Indeed, native music played a major role in nurturing and reinforcing picturesque tastes.[3]

Though the aesthetic of the picturesque concerned the natural environment and implicitly set up the countryside as a preferred opposite to the city, it did not partake of traditional pastoral tropes, such as an idealized Arcadia, mythical character archetypes or the artist in retreat from the city.[4] Instead, one might regard the picturesque as a late eighteenth-century aesthetic offshoot of the pastoral tradition – one that

3 I have deliberately referred to the picturesque movement as an 'English' phenomenon, since much of the writing on the subject, and the picturesque arts discussed then and now, originated there. As a consequence, it is music in England, not Britain, that is the concern of this project. Where I have referred to Britain, it is to account for the fact that much important and influential writing on aesthetics was done by Scots and to allow for the emerging interest in Scottish and Welsh beauty spots at the end of the eighteenth century (locations that were none the less sought out, and discussed as picturesque wonders, by Englishmen).

4 On these and other pastoral tropes see Paul Alpers, *What is Pastoral?* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996) and Harold Toliver, *Pastoral Forms and Attitudes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971). For a discussion of the semiotics of the pastoral in eighteenth-century music see Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), especially 35–94 and 186–204. Several literary scholars have addressed the relationships between pastoral and picturesque; see, for instance, Robert Aubin, *Topographical Poetry in XVIII-Century England* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1936), 16; Sandro Jung, *Poetic Meaning in the Eighteenth-Century Poems of Mark Akenside and William Shenstone* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 2002), 181; and J. R. Watson, *Picturesque Landscape and English Romantic Poetry* (London: Hutchinson Educational, 1970), 11. Ann Bermingham's categories of the 'rustic' and the 'topographical' are also relevant here; see *Landscape and Ideology: The English Rustic Tradition, 1740–1850* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 10.

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concerned itself with the details and structure of nature scenes and emphasized discovery and the seeking of new experiences.[5]

Two late eighteenth-century theorists who associated music with the picturesque (as opposed to the merely pastoral) were the landowner, theorist and amateur musician Sir Uvedale Price and the composer, pedagogue and amateur painter William Crotch. In his 1794 *Essays on the Picturesque* Price expanded Edmund Burke's account of the sublime and the beautiful by introducing the picturesque as a third term. For Price, the picturesque was a species of beauty sometimes capable of encompassing the sublime, as when, for example, one surveyed scenes of rocky outcrops, perilously steep cliffs or raging torrents.[6] Price used an analogy with music to explain how principles of design and organization, and a mix of styles and affects, could best be employed in garden design, invoking the keyboard sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti.[7] Crotch observed similar parallels between the effects of unpredictability and humour in music and the irregular lines and eye-catching surprises of landscape gardens. However, adopting Sir Joshua Reynolds's tripartite model of styles in the visual arts (the 'grand', the 'splendid' and the 'composite') and aligning them with Price's three aesthetic categories,[8] Crotch ultimately reached more negative conclusions about the musical picturesque, which, in his view, ranked far below the beautiful and sublime in aesthetic worth, denoting music that was merely humorous, skittish and crowd-pleasing.[9]

For these writers, Italian and German music provided the model for the musical picturesque. The situation has changed very little nowadays. Those few musicologists who have discussed the picturesque have tended to propose new readings of instrumental works, mostly from the Austro-Germanic canon.[10] Annette Richards, in her important book on the free fantasia and the musical picturesque, focuses predominantly on the

5 The pastoral represents (even more than a sense of place) a state of mind, an artistic rejection of the iniquities of the city. The arch neoclassicist Alexander Pope was forever stressing his splendid isolation in Twickenham (today, of course, as much a part of the metropolis as Trafalgar Square, despite the riverside setting and the tranquillity of Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill). Some scholars see the pastoral as imaginary and idealistic (Terry Eagleton) or simply as a metaphor (Michael Spitzer) – useful notions when comparing it to the picturesque, which was more grounded in the materiality of actual landscapes. See Terry Eagleton, 'England's Dreaming', *The Guardian*, 1 July 2011 (review of Roy Strong's *Visions of England*) <www.guardian.co.uk/books/2011/jul/01/visions-of-england-roy-strong-review> (29 May 2012) and Michael Spitzer, *Metaphor and Musical Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 208. For John Barrell, the picturesque is a version of 'anti-pastoral' inasmuch as it resists notions of the countryside as a resource and instead concentrates on charming or elevating visual images; John Barrell and John Bull, eds, *The Penguin Book of Pastoral Verse* (London: Allen Lane, 1974), 297.

6 Uvedale Price, *Essays on the Picturesque, As Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful; And, On the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpouse* [*sic*] *of Improving Real Landscape*, volume 3 (London: J. Mawman, 1810), 153–155.

7 Price, *Essays on the Picturesque,* volume 1 (London: Robson, 1796), 56.

8 John Sime, *Sir Joshua Reynolds* (London: Methuen, 1904), 36. Reynolds had in turn adapted these terms from Cicero, who wrote of the great, middle and plain styles, as had Joseph Addison in the third of his *Essays on Taste and the Pleasures of the Imagination from The Spectator* (London: John Taylor, 1834). On this subject see also Roger Barnett Larsson, 'The Beautiful, the Sublime and the Picturesque in Eighteenth-Century Musical Thought in Britain' (PhD dissertation, State University of New York Buffalo, 1980), 9 and 27, and Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 174.

9 William Crotch, *Substance of Several Courses of Lectures on Music: Read in the University of Oxford and in the Metropolis, by William Crotch*, ed. Bernarr Rainbow (Clarabricken: Boethius, 1986), 40–70.

10 For example, Peter Brown's reading of Haydn's 'Drum Roll' Symphony claims that the juxtaposition of the sublime introduction with the otherwise 'ornamental' (Crotch's synonym for the musical picturesque) first-movement Allegro is an example of the picturesque acting as a foil to the sublime, wherein sublime gestures mark enhanced climaxes. He cites the contrapuntal development in the second movement of Symphony No. 99 as a further example of this stylistic mix, 'sublime in treatment, ornamental in content'. See A. Peter Brown, 'The Sublime, The Beautiful and the Ornamental: English Aesthetic Currents and Haydn's London Symphonies', in *Studies in Music History Presented to H. C. Robbins Landon on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Otto Biba and David Wyn Jones (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 44–71.

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instrumental music of C. P. E. Bach, Haydn and Beethoven.[11] Less interested in overtly picturesque themes or narratives in this music, Richards develops non-mimetic analogies between musical form and certain tropes of the landscape-garden aesthetic.[12] She thus discusses the picturesque from the point of view of reception: there is not necessarily any landscape represented or thematized in the music she surveys. In this vision, music – as many eighteenth-century theorists would have agreed – is apt to behave and 'move' in the same way as a natural landscape; like landscape, it has a topography.[13] The pleasure of picturesque musical designs is that they prompt the listener to imagine and contemplate, to create new landscapes of thought. For Richards (as for Price and Crotch in the eighteenth century), the content of these thoughts is of little consequence.

Yet, as Richards also acknowledges, there is ample evidence that eighteenth-century audiences, particularly in England, often did imagine picturesque scenes upon hearing picturesque music. When Charles Burney called instrumental music 'picturesque', for example, he usually meant that the music encouraged him to listen 'visually'.[14] Indeed, the musical picturesque on occasion described a species of 'characteristic' music – a genre that, in the eighteenth century, frequently sought, with the aid of descriptive titles or programmes, to arouse thoughts of scenes from nature.[15]

In any case, given the amount of English vocal music that interacted explicitly with cultures of the picturesque in other artistic media, it seems remarkable that musicologists have by and large sought elusive manifestations of the picturesque that are encoded in technical details and formal schemes, mostly because of the continuing desire to focus on German instrumental music. Musicologists' aversion to understanding the picturesque more concretely – in terms of nature imagery or evocations of the English landscape – combined with the troubled historiography of English music, has prevented a debate about the relationship of post-Handelian music in England to the aesthetic of the picturesque.[16] Yet the picturesque was so

11 Annette Richards, *The Free Fantasia and the Musical Picturesque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

12 Richards thus continues with the kinds of approaches that have characterized musicological work on the Kantian sublime in the music of Haydn – research that has generally led to considerations of some late eighteenth-century Viennese works as non-mimetic conduits to elevated thoughts and experience, independent of preconceived narratives. Among a large literature on the late eighteenth-century musical sublime see Lawrence Kramer, 'Recalling the Sublime: The Logic of Creation in Haydn's *Creation*', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 6/1 (2009), 41–57; Richard Kramer, *Unfinished Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 153–170; and James Webster, 'The *Creation*, Haydn's Late Vocal Music, and the Musical Sublime', in *Haydn and his World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 58–102.

13 That music figured 'movement' and 'motion' was, for the majority of eighteenth-century British critics on music, its only imitative facet. See John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 152–157.

14 See Larsson, 'The Beautiful, the Sublime and the Picturesque', 154–155. Likewise, the poet Anna Seward, when recording her reactions to music by Handel heard during the third commemoration in 1786, expressed surprise at the 'picturesque effect of the choruses, which caused the ear to *perform the office of all the other senses*' (my italics). See Simon McVeigh, *Concert Life in London from Mozart to Haydn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 24–25.

15 On the eighteenth-century concept of the characteristic see Richard Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Today, more popular uses of the term 'picturesque' in reference to music (in programme notes and textbooks, for example) use the term where perhaps 'pictorial' might be better, since it is seldom contextualized as an Enlightenment aesthetic or a category described by Price or Crotch. See, for instance, Andreas Friesenhagen, 'Es werde Licht!', liner notes to recording of *Die Schöpfung* by the Freiburger Barockorchester and Rias Kammerchor, conducted by René Jacobs (Harmonia Mundi HMC 992039.40, 2009).

16 Histories of English music, such as those by John Caldwell and Roger Fiske, have attempted to address the poor coverage of the period between 1700 and 1900. Even here, the tone can be apologetic or even at times despairing. John Caldwell, *The Oxford History of English Music*, volume 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Roger Fiske, *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

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ubiquitous an expression of English national identity (to the point that it was subject to ridicule in the subsequent century) that it is hardly likely that English musicians would have remained oblivious to it.[17]

MUSIC AND POETRY IN THE BRITISH CRITICAL CONTEXT

Although a search for the picturesque in English instrumental music is not necessarily fruitless, it is not the best place to start. England had a strong tradition of song and musical theatre, and both were thriving in the late eighteenth century in London locations such as the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, Drury Lane, the Pleasure Gardens, series such as the 'Vocal Concerts', and in glee and catch clubs. Moreover, British critics and theorists, like most of their continental counterparts at this time, tended to regard vocal music as superior to instrumental music. Although there were many disagreements about what music alone could and should represent, there were, as John Neubauer points out, 'few defenders' of music that directly represented natural sounds.[18]

Yet the most important British critics of the mid- to late eighteenth century took the Platonic line that music was only truly meaningful when it was allied with words. As James Beattie wrote in 1776:

> Nor do I mean any disrespect to music, when I would strike it off the list of imitative arts. I allow it to be a fine art, and to have great influence on the human soul: I grant, that, by its power of raising a variety of agreeable emotions in the hearer, it proves its relation to poetry, and that it never appears to the best advantage but with poetry for its interpreter: and I am satisfied, that though musical genius may subsist without poetical taste, and poetical genius without musical taste; yet these two talents united might accomplish nobler effects, than either could do singly.[19]

Music, in this way of thinking, was the servant of the words – an ancillary feature that aided verbal expression. Writing some thirty years earlier, James Harris had argued that when music and words were merged skilfully, a kind of alchemy took place; the result was a 'force irresistible'. (Harris had also stressed that text-setting was an elevation of speech, a 'noble Heightening of Affections' quite different from mere 'arbitrary' differences in pronunciation or delivery.)[20] Later in the century the cleric and critic Thomas Twining – who otherwise advocated for music's independent powers of expression in more modern vein – argued that

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17 Many composers of continental European descent resided in England for the greater part of their lives, yet they were often employed for the reason of their 'foreignness' and were perceived as 'imports' long after they had settled in England. For the purposes of this study, if a composer was born in England, or to English parents – even if extensive musical education was gained abroad – I describe them as 'English' (thus Stephen Storace was English; Muzio Clementi was not).

18 Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language*, 74. In France in 1779, Boyé had argued against musical mimesis by saying that the imitation of nature was not music's goal and that music could only be memorable, never 'pittoresque'; see Katherine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France: La Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris, 1834–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 4. This was a view endorsed thirty years earlier by Abbé Charles Batteaux; see Peter Le Huray and James Day, eds, *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 3.

19 James Beattie, *Essay on Poetry and Music, As They Affect the Mind; On Laughter and Ludicrous Composition; On the Usefulness of Classical Learning*, third edition (Edinburgh: W. Creech, 1779), 119–120.

20 James Harris, 'A Discourse Concerning Music, Painting and Poetry', from *Three Treatises Concerning Art*, excerpts of which appear in Edward Lippman, ed., *Musical Aesthetics: A Historical Reader*, volume 1: *From Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Pendragon, 1986), 177–184.

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> Those who talk of instrumental Music i.e. of Music by its self, as *unmeaning* . . . and expressing nothing, forget that if that was the case, it could not possibly *add* expression to verse. If it cannot move the passions separately, it cannot conjointly. If it assists [the poetry], it must be by some strength of its own which it brings with it.[21]

Such ideas reflected a widespread view in late eighteenth-century criticism that fine expression was the goal of music. Though composers might attempt to paint pictures, tell stories or mimic sounds in their compositions, for most British critics, this was futile. Good music was imitative only to the extent that it imitated affects rather than natural sounds. Accordingly, critics tended to apply the term 'imitation' only to ill-fated attempts at tone painting.[22]

PICTURESQUE MUSIC'S VEHICLES AND ALLIES

The picturesque is a broad and in some ways unwieldy concept, with many contradictions between its theory and its practice – not to mention ambiguities wrought by its status in the eighteenth century as a theoretical category, a term for a fashionable pursuit and a description of natural or pseudo-natural artefacts.[23] Even though there has recently been renewed academic interest in the *theory* of the picturesque, therefore, key aspects of its *practice* have often been overlooked. Moreover, the most prominent eighteenth-century theorists of the picturesque – Price, Richard Payne Knight and William Repton – were concerned mainly with landscape gardens (William Gilpin, also an important figure, wrote primarily about natural landscapes);[24] the remaining sister arts of poetry and painting have tended to be discussed far less outside of their own disciplines. Both eighteenth-century and present-day writing on the musical picturesque thus reflect a bias towards theory over practice and gardening over other arts.

English picturesque music, especially given the aesthetic contexts sketched above, was most likely to have been conceived of as music *about* a natural landscape, not music *like* a natural landscape (which is largely the way in which musicologists such as Richards understand the musical picturesque – partly as a consequence of Price's and Crotch's aesthetic predilections). Eighteenth-century topographical poetry and landscape painting amply show that the picturesque was predominantly a matter of theme and ambience rather than abstract design. For this reason alone English music might be included in the sisterhood of picturesque art. First, as in contemporary poetry and painting, English music frequently served to celebrate the beauty of the countryside. Second, it was almost invariably in partnership with these other media, whether heightening the expressive power of picturesque poetry or adopting an almost painterly method of presenting landscape scenes.

Crucial to any exploration of the picturesque in English music is nationalism. Though the theory of the picturesque tended to emphasize universality rather than parochialism, the eighteenth century none the less saw an increase in artworks that took as their subject distinctively English nature scenes, as opposed

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21 Cited in Kevin Barry, *Language, Music and the Sign: A Study in Aesthetics, Poetics and Poetic Practice from Collins to Coleridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 102. Twining, with his unusual preference for instrumental music, was to go further in pursuing the idea of music's being *suggestive*, signifying in a way that the listener could respond to subjectively. Music was, in his view, a starting-point – a basis for negotiation and a vessel of psychological activity. See Barry, *Language, Music and the Sign*, 94–104.

22 See Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language*, 151–166.

23 The awkward nature of the picturesque as a category is observed by Stephen Copley and Peter Garside in the Introduction to *The Politics of the Picturesque*, 1.

24 The principal texts here are William Gilpin, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and On Sketching Landscape: To Which is Added a Poem, On Landscape Painting* (London: R. Blamire, 1792); Richard Payne Knight, *An Analytical Enquiry into the Principles of Taste* (London, 1805); Humphry Repton, *The Art of Landscape Gardening* (London: Archibald Constable, 1907). Christopher Hussey speaks of painting and poetry as being 'infected' with the picturesque. He wryly reports that poetry had 'had the picturesque' but recovered from it. See *The Picturesque*, 5.

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to idealized biblical, classical or otherwise continental European vistas – a focus that betokened a new national confidence and pride in the 'natural art' to be found within England's 'wooden walls'.[25] English poetry, painting and music that glorified nature invariably used real English locations as their subject. And even when the location was not specified, these detailed depictions of nature tended to proceed as though they had been experienced, perhaps in one's own surroundings, rather than imagined, employing a topographical language distinct from the usual pastoral tropes that conjured a mythical Arcadia.

The shift from a universalizing pastoral – which either invoked Arcadia as a symbol of all of nature's works or depicted generic classical scenes – to an art that treated real domestic locations as worthy subjects was the English picturesque's coming of age. This was galvanized by a new breed of native artists that included James Thomson (whose *The Seasons* was the basis for Gottfried van Swieten's libretto for Haydn's oratorio of the same name) and George Cowper, as well as landscape painters such as Thomas Gainsborough and Richard Wilson.[26] As Malcolm Andrews has argued, there was 'growing impatience' with the veneration of classical civilization and the belief in Italian artistic pre-eminence – predilections that had found expression in the eighteenth-century culture of the Grand Tour. One distinctively national response was to promote purportedly vernacular styles and, towards the end of the century in particular, to reclaim the idea of the 'gothic', with its supposedly Anglo-Saxon roots.[27] By late century newer gardens eschewed the antiquarian symbolism of classical structures, such as those dotted around the landscapes at Stowe and Stourhead, and sought a greener, more 'natural' (which is to say, less regular) appearance, held to be characteristically English. Gothic structures became more prevalent in these gardens.[28] By the century's end, ruins – whether artfully constructed or discovered in their sublime state of disrepair – were virtually a picturesque requirement. Gothic ruins became popular visitor attractions, the subject of many paintings and the backdrop for numerous novels, songs and theatre pieces.[29]

Literary scholars have long recognized that English poets from Alexander Pope to Thomas Gray played an active role in shaping and propagating the culture of the picturesque: Robert Aubin has suggested that Thomson's *The Seasons* might have been partly responsible for arousing the public's interest in landscape

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25 This is a phrase that crops up repeatedly in English theatre of the time, the oak being a symbol of English fortitude. The implication is that the land is guarded by the sturdy oak and that England is thus resistant to invasion.

26 In the first half of the century, however, the influence of Virgil and Horace on English poets such as Pope and Thomson was manifest. But Thomson in particular believed that he lived in an age of Augustan glory that had arrived within the borders of England. See Barrell and Bull, eds, *The Penguin Book of Pastoral Verse*, 295. George Cowper's poetry, especially in 'The Task', takes a topographical approach, ranging widely over a series of scenes as the speaker walks through the landscape. The scenes are frames and prompts for Cowper's moral and political reflections, which distinguish his poetry from the observational, topographical verse of, for instance, Mark Akenside or John Cunningham. See Tim Fulford, *Landscape, Liberty and Authority: Poetry, Criticism and Politics from Thomson to Wordsworth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 38–54. See also John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), 649. On the move away from imagined and idealistic classical landscapes towards the recording of national scenes in the wake of the establishment of the Royal Academy, see Andrews, The *Search for the Picturesque*, 4 and 11–13.

27 Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque*, 11. See also Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (London: Pimlico, 2003), chapter 4. Colley argues that a sense of national identity and patriotism grew steadily through the eighteenth century, particularly through changing attitudes to art. This growing national confidence, she argues, was caused in part by Britain's expanding empire and resulting influence on the world stage, as well as increasing self-consciousness in the face of more frequent encounters with others, both at home and abroad.

28 Dabney Townsend sees this as a move away from an allegorical register, indicating a rejection of the idealization of nature, towards a more immediate Lockean psychology; see 'The Picturesque', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55/4 (1997), 366.

29 See Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque*, 41–50, and John Dixon Hunt, *The Picturesque Garden in Europe* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 41–43. The ruined abbey at Netley on Southampton Water was a case in point. Much discussed in print, notably by the poet Thomas Gray, Netley became the backdrop for an opera by William Shield.

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gardens,[30] while J. R. Watson has shown that William Gilpin's illustrated tour guides borrowed substantially from the tone and method of Thomson's topographical poetry.[31] Horace's dictum *ut pictura poesis* (as in a picture, so in a poem) was one that guided the English pastoral poets of the eighteenth century, who sought to 'paint' nature scenes in words and record the sentimental reflections prompted by them.[32] Jean Hagstrum, for example, argues that the 'series of pictorially static moments with attached reflection' in Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* are hallmarks of the poetic picturesque.[33]

A great deal of picturesque poetry was set by English composers, texts by William Cowper, Gray, William Shenstone and Thomson in particular. English secular vocal music in the late eighteenth century is thus replete with lyrical descriptions of the rural English landscape. These picturesque songs were among the most fashionable of the period: in the early nineteenth century William Horsley reported that the 'descriptive compositions' of the glee composer John Wall Callcott were his most popular.[34] Precisely how glee composers chose their material is unclear, though it seems that suitable or fashionable verse was sometimes proposed by educated patrons.[35] In any case, leading figures in the picturesque movement, such as Uvedale Price, Sir Henry Hoare and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, were members of catch and glee clubs, where questions of taste and fashion were frequently discussed.[36] And musicians regularly mixed with poets and painters in London's concert rooms and parlours.[37] The glee composer R. J. S. Stevens recalled an evening in the autumn of 1793 thus:

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30 Aubin, *Topographical Poetry*, 51.

31 J. R. Watson, *Picturesque Landscape and English Romantic Poetry*, 37–38.

32 Some literary critics are reluctant to unite pastoral and topographical verse under the same heading. John Barrell convincingly explains the observational technique of Thomson's *The Seasons* in terms of the planar structure found in the landscape paintings of the seventeenth-century artist Claude Lorrain. Claude figures prominently in eighteenth-century literature on the picturesque: his name was even given to a handheld mirror for use in the field, the 'Claude glass'. Yet Barrell prefers not to associate Thomson's poetry with the picturesque, despite his later reception – even though Barrell refers to the English 'picturesque poets' (though without making it clear which ones belonged in the group). He does indicate, though, that the picturesque poetry he has in mind is of inferior quality, echoing Gray's (and, later, Wordsworth's) contempt for 'mere' description without moral or psychological underpinning. See John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place, 1730–1840: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 50–63, 79.

33 Jean Hagstrum, 'Description and Reflection in Gray's *Elegy*', in *Pre-Romanticism in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. J. R. Watson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 157. More recently, the work of Sandro Jung has shone a light on the marginal figures of Akenside and Shenstone (the latter a favourite poet among English song composers) and their rejection of the Augustan idea of nature as a 'background to the celebration of man's importance within the context of creation'. Akenside and Shenstone made nature itself their focus; Shenstone explained that this writing was elegiac rather than pastoral. See Jung, *Poetic Meaning*, 87 and 181.

34 *A Collection of Glees, Canons and Catches by the Late J. W. Callcott Selected and Arranged with a Memoir of the Author by William Horsley*, volume 1 (London, 1824), 15. The growth of scenic print-collecting, and the clamour for travel guides that went hand in hand with a new culture of tourism, was part of the same trend.

35 See Brian Robins, *Catch and Glee Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 149. The glee composer R. J. S. Stevens apparently received advice on poetry from Lord Thurlow, Alderman Birch and a 'Dr Relph'; see Charles Cudworth, 'Two Georgian Classics: Arne and Stevens', *Music and Letters* 45/2 (1964), 153. The 'memoir' of Callcott by Horsley records that a 'Judge Hardinge' recommended Gray's poem 'Thyrsis' to 'Dr Callcott, Dr Cooke and Mr Danby'; see Horsley, *Memoir*, 14.

36 See Robins, *Catch and Glee Culture*, 13. Fanny Burney's diaries recount an occasion at the Devizes residence of Henry Hoare (owner of Stourhead) when a game of cards was interrupted by one of Hoare's guests playing the overture to *La buona figliuola* on the pianoforte. See *The Diary of Fanny Burney*, ed. Lewis Gibbs (London: Dent, 1950), 46.

37 It may appear paradoxical that songs about the countryside should find their primary outlet in urban settings. But, as Tim Fulford has observed, picturesque tourism was an interest that involved many city dwellers. Further, in the second half of the eighteenth century, mobility between the town and the country had much increased. Poets, composers, singers and club members would be all too aware of the difference between the two. (See Fulford, *Landscape, Liberty and Authority*, 117.) Indeed, Humphry Repton and William Wordsworth were critical of townsfolk who thought that they could adapt to life in the countryside.

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> I went one Evening to meet Mrs. Hughes (wife of the Rev. Thomas Hughes, Prebend of Westminster) at Mrs. Blencowe's in Little King Street, St. James's Square, near Market Lane. Mr. Blencowe was an intolerable miser, tho' a well-educated man; and of considerable Landed Property ... His Concert Room, was on the first floor, over a large Baker's Shop ... I squeezed into the Concert Room, which was intolerably full of a mixture of Company: all devotees at this miserable miser's shrine. Poets, Painters, Musicians; *all* were crowded together ... Blencowe introduced me to Cumberland the Poet; and afterwards to Lawrance the Painter.[38]

The English musical picturesque, then, should be seen as part of a complex, broad-based cultural movement, not merely as a musical illustration of an abstract theoretical model. Music occupied the same social spaces as the picturesque and came into contact with picturesque subjects via the poetry that it set, making it not merely a sister art but a willing companion.

A TYPOLOGY OF PICTURESQUE SONG TEXTS

As we have seen, picturesque poetry in this period can be distinguished from traditional pastoral verse in its emphasis on a sense of (English) place and the personal, psychological impact of rural topographies. In the picturesque songs of the Georgian period one might distinguish between two types of text: a 'framed' scene that portrays a landscape as if the observer is sedentary (as in poems such as John Dyer's 'Grongar Hill' or Gray's 'Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College') and another, 'moving' scenario in which the rural terrain is ranged over, as if during a walk (as in passages of Cowper's 'The Task' and Gilbert White's 'Invitation to Selborne'). These two subject positions have distinct topographical and temporal implications. When the scenery is described by a walking subject, the ever-changing character of the topography is a given; but in a fixed scene topographical modulations can still be recorded – as, for example, when the eye shifts between the three planes of foreground, middleground and background. Should a poem take the perspective of a wandering subject, time clearly elapses as the text progresses; meanwhile, in an unmoving scene the progress of time can also be charted, and in ways that a landscape painting cannot easily replicate – for example, the lighting of a scene might change as twilight or dawn approaches.

The landscape of picturesque song can be thought of as either the principal subject or the point of departure. In the former, a scene is relished in painterly fashion for its pleasing arrangement and its variance of colour. These types of poems sometimes encompass analysis too: explorations of the reasons behind the scene's particular interest. Where the landscape is a point of departure, however, descriptions ultimately recede in order to develop associated ideas and feelings. These generally divide into tropes of well-being or tranquillity and those of regret, fear or horror – though the latter can also be a kind of pleasure or thrill (as Uvedale Price averred, the sublime, far from being a distinct aesthetic, is actually an important element of the picturesque).

Tropes of well-being include the pastoral motif of 'rural ease' associated with the eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil. This is closely related to the notion of 'retirement' (also a pastoral theme from antiquity, and a state of being explored by Pope, among others): the countryside as a symbol of rest and retreat, either temporary or as a reward for a life of dutiful industry. One also frequently encounters expressions of belonging or attachment, which might also prompt pride – especially patriotic pride – in the English landscape. By contrast, the more negative tropes of the picturesque include feelings of regret or loneliness brought on by the rural surroundings: thoughts of a lost loved one, memories of happiness long past and stories of poverty or drudgery. Some landscapes may cause a frisson of excitement tinged with fear, especially if one feels lost, intimidated or haunted by intimations of the spirit world. This is the sublime

38 Mark Argent, ed., *Recollections of R. J. S. Stevens: An Organist in Georgian London* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 92. Callcott's setting of William Collins's 'Ode to Thomson' suggests that glee composers' attitude to poetry and poets was more than merely utilitarian.

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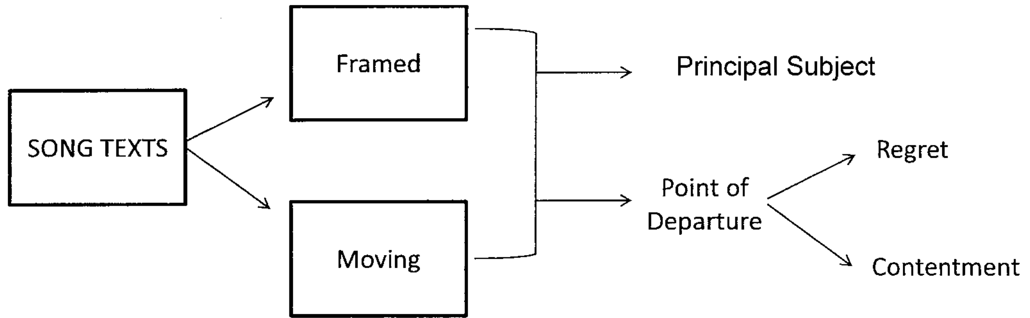

Figure 3 A typology of picturesque song texts in the eighteenth century

landscape – all the more affecting when experienced at night, illuminated only by the moon.[39] (This typology is summarized in Figure 3.)

THE ENGLISH GLEE: CONVIVIALITY AND PATRIOTISM

The eighteenth-century English glee is a genre scarcely touched by today's musicologists. Its marginal status stems principally from its limited distribution and audience, its association with the catch (a generally more light-hearted and lightweight genre encompassing ribald and occasionally extremely coarse texts) and of course the somewhat thin secondary literature on English music of the Georgian period altogether. In the late eighteenth century, however, the glee made a rich contribution to English musical and cultural life.

Unlike the catch, the glee was a fully formed part-song set to substantial poetry. Although glees occasionally hymned the glory of Priapus, the vine and the hop, they tended to explore refined subjects too, adopting a fashionably sentimental outlook or celebrating gentlemanly patriotism.[40] Borrowing from J. Merrill Knapp's typography of the glees of Samuel Webbe the elder, one might parse the English glees of this period into Anacreontic drinking songs, serious songs that set the verse of exalted poets (such as Milton and Pope) and pastorals.[41] Among the last group were myriad examples of the English musical picturesque (indeed, in Emanuel Rubin's table of glee composers' chosen poets, the most popular were those associated with picturesque poetry: Gray, Shenstone and Thomson).[42] These glees brought a painterly approach to detail and a topographical exactness to the mythic pastoral register, while expressing the kind of patriotic pride that suited the ethos of the English glee club.[43]

No single, recognizable formal design predominates in the English glee. Strophic forms were rare and were by and large employed only when glees were composed for the commercial market (indeed, itinerant glee composers such as Webbe the elder and Callcott preferred to remove the appellation 'glee' in such examples). Rather, in the glee one tends to see each stanza, line or even phrase given contrasting textural, metrical and temporal treatment – as John Hullah's entry on the glee in the first Grove dictionary described:

39 The 'Lunar Men', a group of scientists and artists, were mutually fascinated by astronomy and the poetic possibilities of the theme of night; see David Fraser, 'Joseph Wright of Derby and the Lunar Society: An Essay on the Artist's Connections with Science and Industry', in *Wright of Derby*, ed. Judy Egerton (London: Tate Gallery, 1990), 15–24.

40 For McVeigh, this places the glee in a negative light, 'as pastoral charm lapsed into the sentimental'; *Concert Life*, 139.

41 J. Merrill Knapp, 'Samuel Webbe and the Glee', *Music and Letters*, 33/4 (1952), 346–351. The Bacchanalian verse of the Greek poet Anacreon made him a heroic figure for the glee club members; banquets and drinking sessions were common at club meetings. One prominent London club was dubbed The Anacreontic Society; see Robins, *Catch and Glee Culture*, chapter 4. Emanuel Rubin has cautioned that 'pastoral' is too broad a term to apply to all glee settings of poetry concerned with matters of the natural world; see *The English Glee in the Reign of George III: Participatory Art Music for an Urban Society* (Warren: Harmonie Park, 2003), 195.

42 Rubin, *The English Glee*, 31–33.

43 See Rubin, *The English Glee*, 226–228.

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> The short phrases, incessant cadences, frequent changes of rhythm, and pace of the average glee contrast unfavourably with the 'long resounding' phrases of the madrigal, never brought to an end in one part till they are begun in another, overlapping one another, bearing one another up, and never allowing the hearer to anticipate a close till everything that can be done with every subject has been done, and the movement comes to a natural end.[44]

This analysis highlights the importance glee composers attached to the conveyance of discrete sentiments, moods and topics. Such an approach was particularly suitable to the picturesque glee, which sought to represent a varied landscape, suggesting an analogy between the affects reaching the ear and the visual information reaching the roving eye (this analogy is particularly prominent in the glees of Benjamin Cooke, discussed below). To be sure, this approach to text-setting did not always find favour among English critics: William Jackson expressed concern that the overall expressive effect (in his words, the 'general expression') would be impaired by local expressive details (what he called 'particular expression').[45]

THE PICTURESQUE GLEE: FOUR CASE STUDIES

1. *Webbe's Dreaming Spires*

Samuel Webbe the elder's four-part glee of 1788, 'Swiftly from the Mountain's Brow', is one of several of Webbe's settings of pastoral poetry by the Irish poet and dramatist John Cunningham.[46] Cunningham's poetry was described by his near-contemporary Joseph Ritson as

> possess[ing] a pleasing simplicity which cannot fail to recommend him to a reader of unadulterated taste. This simplicity may, perhaps, in some of his compositions, be thought too great; but when it is known that they were necessarily adapted to the intellects of a country-theatre, little censure can be justly incurred by the poet.[47]

Indeed, despite Cunningham's painstaking attention to topographical detail, his poetry lacks the surrounding philosophical discourse characteristic of the pastoral poetry of Thomson or Cowper.

Webbe's glee deals exclusively with a picturesque scene, lingering in painterly fashion on such details as the retreating shadows, which, 'nurs'd by night retire'.[48] He is moved to see these shadows as visual echoes that dart before the eye before settling into shade, and the treatment of the word 'shadows' is accordingly imitative, before stasis is engineered with two consecutive perfect cadences on 'retire' (see Figure 4a). In the next section (see Figure 4b), the peeping sunbeams that 'paint with Gold the village spire' constitute a

44 John Hullah, 'Glee', in *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. George Grove (London: Macmillan, 1900), 598.

45 William Jackson, *Observations on the Present State of Music in London* (Dublin, 1791), 14. Jackson's objection appears to be that glee textures were harmonically conceived, either with three- to six-part block harmonies or three- to six-part counterpoint. On the previous page of the *Observations*, Jackson praises English opera composers for allowing simple melody to shine. Perhaps this coloured his low opinion of glees: denouncing the genre, he complained of the 'numerous doleful Ditties with which our Benefit-Concerts are so sorely afflicted'. Rubin detects a move away from the kind of 'particular expression' to which Jackson refers as the eighteenth century came to an end – a sign, for Rubin, of the emergence of the glee from the aesthetic paradigm of the madrigal; see *The English Glee*, 215.

46 See Knapp, 'Samuel Webbe and the Glee', 350–353.

47 Joseph Ritson, 'A Historical Essay on the Origin and Progress of National Song', in *A Selection of English Songs with their Original Airs, the Second Edition with Additional Songs and Occasional Notes by Thomas Park,* volume 1 (London, 1813), xci.

48 This glee was performed at The Freemason's Hall on 6 January 1791 as part of the second concert in the Academy of Ancient Music's 1790–1791 series; see McVeigh, *Concert Life*, 244. In *The World* (31 January 1794) 'a clergyman' contributed a poem after hearing Charles Knyvett (a pupil of Webbe and Cooke, and a well-known singer in London circles) and his three sons sing this glee. The poem included the words 'Hear Nature's voice, hear souls impassion'd, Whose tuneful notes from cordial feelings spring ... So soft, so smoothly flows th'harmonic strain, The "*Universal Song*" it *felt* thro' ev'ry strain'.

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Swiftly from the Mountains Brow.

PRIZE GLEE 1788, Composed by S. WEBBE.

LONDON. Printed and Sold by J. BLAND at his Music Warehouse No. 45 Holborn. Price 1s.

Allegretto

Swiftly Swift- -ly from the Mountains Brow Shadows
Swift- -ly from the Mountains Brow
Swift- -ly from the Mountains Brow
Swift-ly Swiftly from the Mountains Brow Shadows

Shadows nurs'd by Night re- - tire Dim do re- -tire
Shadows Shadows nurs'd by Night re- - tire Dim do re- -tire
Shadows nurs'd by Night re- - tire Dim do re- -tire
nurs'd Shadows nurs'd by Night re- - tire Dim do re- -tire

Swiftly Swift- -ly from the Mountains Brow Shadows Shadows
Swift - ly from the Mountains Brow Shadows
Swift - ly from the Mountains Brow
from the Mountains Brow Shadows nurs'd Shadows

nurs'd by Night re- - - tire Dim do re- - tire
Shadows nurs'd by Night re- - - tire re- - tire
Shadows nurs'd by Night re- - - tire re- tire re-
nurs'd by Night re- - - tire re- - tire

Figure 4a Samuel Webbe the elder, 'Swiftly from the Mountain's Brow', bars 1–20. © The British Library Board. H.2831.h.(28.)

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painterly detail that none the less has an implicitly temporal dimension: the sun 'peeps' where once it hid, and only now paints the spire with gold ('The church, as the centre of the village, should be the object of the landowner's particular attention', wrote Uvedale Price, describing the ideal picturesque harmony between trees and village buildings).[49] As in another Cunningham poem simply entitled 'A Landscape', in which the poet's eye roves over a series of busy, modern eighteenth-century vistas, changes are recorded in physical geography and in time: 'Hamlets, villages and spires/ Scatter'd on the landscape lie,/ Till the distant view retires/ Closing in an azure sky.'

'Swiftly from the Mountain's Brow' contains a similar description, during which Webbe's glee changes the metre (to compound duple time) and presents broad dotted crotchets descending in the soprano. Although the tenor and bass lines anticipate this motion in bars 24–25, it is the soprano, supported in compound thirds by the tenor, which springs from the texture with particular registral and rhythmic emphasis (see Figure 4b).

'Swiftly from the Mountain's Brow' is thus concerned with the changing impressions of a fixed scene, an example of the 'framed picture' in which the eye roves from background to middleground and foreground. We can think of this not only as a written eye-witness account but also as a little collection of paintings that record the contrasts imparted to the scene by the day's breaking. Webbe's episodic treatment of the verse enhances the impression of a viewer's eye shifting across a distant scene, much as it would when contemplating a picturesque painting, and uses musical contrast to delineate visual data.

2. *Cooke's Perambulations*

The words of Benjamin Cooke's four-part glee 'As Now the Shades of Eve' also record changing impressions of a landscape under the setting sun, but here the verse encompasses a moving perspective as the speaker embarks on a walk.[50] Cooke responds to a text of considerable emotional range and painterly character with a musical setting of suitably wide stylistic compass. The scene is benign and calm – 'from care remote' – and is seen in a soft light ('the shades of eve imbrown'). This kind of landscape is where 'poets pensive rove' – a topos of such poetry, and perhaps also a gesture towards the habit of some eighteenth-century poets, such as Thomson and Cowper, of roaming whilst writing (see Figure 5a).

In 'As Now the Shades of Eve', the speaker travels until a particularly special location – 'favour'd ground' – has been reached; there, as with 'Swiftly from the Mountain's Brow', the scene is framed as a picture. But in this case, once the visual splendour has been registered, it gives rise to an emotional response – a sensation of spiritual 'presence': 'What holy strains around me swell'.

The shift from tranquil, quasi-visual scene-setting in the first stanza to the following stanza's focus on sound and bodily sensation is one that Cooke responds to musically, the increased tension and spiritual dimension announced with striking textural, dynamic and tonal contrast (see Figure 5b). The terraced dynamics of the first stanza are now replaced with crescendo (notably in the approach to the word 'swell') and diminuendo, sudden contrasts and layered differentiations of dynamic between parts. The sense of transfiguration suggested by the verse is denoted by the move to a distant C major, which also perhaps responds to the allusion to 'holiness'. Cooke replaces the dotted rhythms and legato quaver runs with broader, long-limbed phrases of minims, semibreves and breves, within which crotchets move constantly through the parts. This creates a harmonious noise, a sustained ringing wall of sound to illustrate the swelling 'holy strains', not 'wildly rude' or 'tumultuous'. The experience transfixes the wanderer and serves to 'fix the soul in magic spell'. Cooke's tone changes once again here: the crotchet movement dissipates, the dynamics are reduced to a hush with rapid rising and falling swells, and the sense of tonality is restless. The section closes with the words 'in magic spell' sung to a whisper in rhythmic unison.

49 Cited in Hussey, *The Picturesque*, 207.

50 The words appear in the collection of song and glee texts entitled *A Select Collection of English Songs with their Original Airs* compiled by the poet and antiquarian Thomas Park. The title-page implies that all unattributed poems in the anthology are by Park.

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Figure 4b 'Swiftly from the Mountain's Brow', bars 21–36

The perspective comes now from the 'favour'd ground', selected as a painter might choose a scene. The speaker tells us that one must 'tread soft', a moment of recognition that Cooke isolates in the form of a brief, slow, triple-time introduction to the final Allegro.[51] This disjunction is destabilizing – an episodic gesture that threatens the unity of the song – but Cooke clearly saw this moment as a *peripeteia*, requiring

51 A similar sentiment is the subject of George Berg's glee 'Lightly Tread, 'tis Hallowed Ground', written around ten years later.

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89

6

As now the shades of Eve imbrown the scenes.*
A favorite Glee, for 4 Voices,
as Sung by
Mrs Billington, Mr Harrison, Mr W. Knyvett, & Mr Bartleman,
at the
CONCERT of ANTIENT MUSIC,
Composed by Dr. Cooke.

Price 1s.

London Printed for R. Birchall at his Musical Circulating Library 133 New Bond Street

LARGHETTO

GLEE

As now the shades of Eve im - brown im - brown the Scenes where
As now the shades of Eve im - brown the Scenes where
As now the shades of Eve im - - brown - the Scenes where
As now the shades of Eve im - - brown - - the Scenes where

pia. pensive Poets rove for. from care remote from care remote from en - vy's frown pia. the
pia. pensive. Poets rove for. from care remote - - from en - - - vy's frown
pia. pensive Poets rove for. from care re - mote from en - vy's frown pia. the
pia. pensive Poets rove for. from care - - re - mote from envy's frown pia. the

joys of inward calm I tr prove, the joys - - - - of for. inward calm tr I prove.
pia. the joys of tr inward - calm - - - the joys of inward calm tr I prove.
joys of inward calm I prove, the joys the joys of for. inward calm I prove.
joys of inward calm I prove, the joys of for. inward calm I prove.

*This gained a Prize Medal 1782.

Figure 5a Benjamin Cooke, 'As Now the Shades of Eve', bars 1–18. © The British Library Board. H.2832.l.(6.)

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2

pia. Cres: rinf: Mez: voce

What holy strains a-round me swell a-round me swell what ho--

rinf: dim:

What ho--ly holy strains a-round me a-round me swell--- what

Cres: dim:

What ho--ly strains---a--round me swell what ho---

Cres: dim:

What ho--ly strains a-round me a-round me swell what ho--ly

for.

---ly strains a--round-me swell------ no wildly

ho---ly strains---------a--round me swell---

Cres:

----ly strains a---round---me swell-------

for

strains a--round me swell no wild-ly rude tumultuous sound---

dim: pia.

rude tumultuous sound----------- they fix the Soul in

for. pia.

---- no wildly rude-tumultuous sound they fix the Soul in

for. pia.

---- no wildly rude-tumultuous sound they fix the Soul in

for. pia.

--- no wildly rude-tumultuous sound-- they fix the

Cres: for. dim:

ma---gic spell-in ma--------gic spell in ma-gic spell.

Cres: for. dim:

ma--------------gic spell in ma-gic spell.

Cres:

ma--------------gic spell in ma-gic spell.

Cres: for.

Soul--in ma--gic spell in ma---gic spell in ma-gic spell.

Figure 5b 'As Now the Shades of Eve', bars 19–48

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Figure 5c 'As Now the Shades of Eve', bars 49–71

a separate voice to enunciate it (see Figure 5c). The closing section constitutes the wanderer's comparison of the delights of the scene – the warm spring wind and the attractive stream 'winding' through the vale – with those of love and friendship (see Figure 5d). But the 'sweet notes of love's warblers' (the prevalent melisma *gruppetti*) seem to be trumped in the end by 'friendship's solemn theme' (the closing broad, chorale-like texture).

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4

- - are the notes Love's war - - blers sing - - - Love's war - - -
notes Love's war - - - - - - - - blers sing Love's
notes Love's war - - - - - - - - blers sing Love's war - - -
- - - are the notes the notes Love's war - - - - - - - -

- - - blers sing - - but sweet - er Friend - ships so - - - - - - -
war - - - blers sing - - - but sweet - - - er Friend - - - ships
- - blers sing - - - but sweet - - - - - - - - - er Friend - - ships
- - - - - - - blers sing - - - - but sweet - - - - er Friend - - ships

- lemn Theme sweet - er
so - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - lemn Theme sweet - er
so - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - lemn Theme sweet - er
so - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - lemn Theme sweet - er

Friend - - ships so - - - lemn Theme.
Friend - - ships so - - - lemn Theme.
Friend - - ships so - - - lemn Theme.
Friend - - ships so - - - lemn Theme. 90

Figure 5d 'As Now the Shades of Eve', bars 72–90

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3. *Callcott's Architecture*

The title-page of John Wall Callcott's 'Queen of the Valley' announces that the words have been taken from 'The Madoc of Southey', Robert Southey's 1798 poem *Madoc*. This epic rescue tale concerns the rescue of the Hoamans from barbaric Aztecs by enlightened travellers from Wales.[52] Callcott's excerpt contains no reference to the setting or the story, however. Removed from its context, the extract, to the uninitiated, might seem to be a description of, and an elegy to, a building (a country house, perhaps? A Grecian temple?) in an otherwise natural environment (the principal object of praise is located in a green space).

The title of the glee is mischievous, therefore. For one might expect the 'Queen of the Valley' to be the quintessentially pastoral figure of the fair maid from the hillside village. But the queen turns out to be a building. Indeed, the composer seems willing to exploit this potential confusion to the full; the opening line, 'Thou art beautiful, Queen of the Valley', is treated to a number of antiphonal repetitions until, at last, a lone bass line starts to describe the object of this panegyric: 'Thy walls like silver, sparkle to the sun' (see Figure 6a).

But the glorification of a building was not Southey's intention in *Madoc*. The lines preceding the excerpt in Callcott's glee run: 'Hark! From the towers of Aztlan how the shouts/ Of the clamorous joy re-ring! The rocks and hills/ Take up the joyful sound, and o'er the lake/ Roll their slow echoes . . .'. The Hoamans are rejoicing, literally shouting from the rooftops of the city, at their liberation. The Queen of the Valley is thus the city of Aztlan, freed from the despotic Aztecs, and now – for the speaker, the Hoamans and their Welsh rescuers – it takes on a new lustre in the sun. The city walls 'sparkle', as do its groves, gardens and lake.

Callcott's five-line extract stops with the words 'thy temple pyramids arise'. In *Madoc*, however, the temple pyramids 'high/ In heaven . . . arise,/ Upon whose summit now, Far visible/ Against the clear blue sky, the Cross of Christ/ Proclaims unto the nations round, the news/ Of thy redemption'. For the rescue is an act by Christian missionaries who have educated the saved Hoamans in the teachings of the scriptures. Callcott has no use for this theological reference, so for his coda he borrows from later in the stanza: 'Long, may'st thou flourish in thy beauty, long/ Prosper beneath the righteous conqueror/ Who conquers to redeem!' In the poem it is the city and its peoples who are urged to prosper. In the glee, without reference to any citizens, it can only be the building (and its grounds and estate?) that should flourish. Yet who is Callcott's 'righteous conqueror'? What is the relationship of the conqueror to the built structure? Is this perhaps the landowner, lord of all he surveys?

Callcott has stripped Southey's text down to the picturesque essentials, then, and his compositional response revels in its painterly character. For many English writers on the picturesque, man-made structures were not inimical to the style, even though the aesthetic was founded on a feeling for the beauty of nature. Indeed, as with the developing English vogue for ruins in verdant surroundings, the picturesque frequently described the harmony of a building and its natural context. William Gilpin's character Callophillus, in the *Dialogue upon the Garden at Stowe*, says of the Temple of Bacchus, 'Don't you think this Building too is a very genteel one and is extremely well situated? These Trees give it an agreeable, cool Air, and make it, I think, as elegant a Retreat for the Enjoyment of a Summer's Evening, as can well be imagined.'[53] Joseph Heely, in his *Letters on the Beauties of Hagley, Envil, and the Leasowes*, argued that architecture should be considered one of the sister arts:

52 See Nigel Leask, 'Reimagining the Conquest of America', in *Robert Southey and the Contexts of English Romanticism*, ed. Lynda Pratt (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 133–150.

53 See William Gilpin, *A Dialogue upon the Gardens of the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Cobham at Stow in Buckinghamshire* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1976), 14. See also Humphry Repton, *The Art of Landscape Gardening*, 17–31, and Hussey, *The Picturesque*, 186–204.

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QUEEN OF THE VALLEY,
The Words from the Madoc of Southey,
Composed & inscribed to
John Heaviside Esq.r
By D.R CALLCOTT.

Ent.d at Sta. Hall.
London, Printed & Sold by R.t Birchall, N.o 133, New Bond Street.
Price 3.s

Thou art beautiful
Thou art beautiful Thou art beauti_ful Queen of the
Thou art beautiful Queen of the valley. Thou art beauti_ful Queen of the
Queen of the valley. Thou art beauti_ful
Queen of the valley. Queen of the

2

Thou art beautiful Thou art beautiful art beautiful
valley. art beautiful Thou art beautiful art beautiful
valley. art beautiful art beautiful
Thou art beautiful art beautiful Thou art beautiful art beautiful thy
valley. art beautiful

thy walls like sil_ _ver sparkle to the
walls like sil_ver sparkle to the Sun thy walls like silver like sil_ _ver sparkle to the
sparkle spar_kle

Figure 6a John Wall Callcott, ‘Queen of the Valley’, bars 1–22. © The British Library Board. E.359.(6.)

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> Architecture and gardening may be called sister arts, tho' diametrically opposite in their principles; the excellencies of the first are founded in a mathematical exactness, and regularity; in the latter, on an assemblage of scenery without either: yet when both unite, each graces the other so powerfully, and affords so striking a contrast, that, it is much to be lamented, they are ever seen but in inseparable connection.[54]

But it was the architect Robert Adam who most eloquently explained how much was shared between the form of landscape and of architecture:

> Movement is meant to express the rise and fall, the advance and recess with other diversity of form, in the different parts of a building, so as to add greatly to the picturesque of the composition. For the rising and falling, advancing and receding, with the convexity and other forms of the greater parts, have the same effects in architecture that hill and dale, foreground and distance, swelling and sinking have in landscape. That is, they serve to produce an agreeable and diversified contour, that groups and contrasts like a picture, and creates a variety of light and shade, which gives great spirit, beauty and effect to the composition.[55]

William Horsley, in his memoir of Callcott, seems in no doubt that 'Queen of the Valley' is a piece of landscape painting, divorced from its poetic and theological origins and about the beauties of a house in 'inseparable connection' with its rural placement, to adopt Joseph Heely's words. Horsley makes no mention of *Madoc*, suggesting that Callcott's intentions were to erase all trace of Southey's America in favour of a subject more in keeping with the English picturesque:

> *Thou art beautiful, Queen of the Valley* . . . may be called a *musical landscape* throughout the whole of which a delicious tranquillity prevails . . . It is related of Mozart, that coming suddenly to a place, whence he had a very fine prospect, he exclaimed, 'Oh, that some one would *set all this to music*'. Such an exclamation may be quite unintelligible to those, who are unacquainted with the secret workings of a composer's mind, and of the delightful faculty which he possesses.[56]

Callcott aurally paints the sparkling walls beneath the sun with two sonic metaphors, the scalar melisma and the two-note chordal declamation (see Figure 6b). The composer assigns a markedly different affect to three further aspects of the house: its 'melodious groves', 'gardens sweet' and 'high temple pyramids' whose shadows 'upon the lake lie'. The house's splendour is celebrated in rich five-part counterpoint and sharply delineated rhythms until the opening line returns, this time as a fanfare (see Figure 6c).

The closing section, set in a more solemn, sedate 3/2, serves as a prayer for the preservation of the house's beauty, a hope enfolded in the belief that the building symbolizes the prosperity and honour of its owner. The wish is for 'long years of peace', peace to thwart threats to the house and its grounds' present glory, and peace for the owner, whose own contentment is guaranteed by this (see Figure 6d).

A country house is an unusual object for such a hymn of praise, perhaps, and the words thus apostrophize it directly, treating it as an object of almost erotic desire: it has a beauty that the speaker wants to 'possess', as one might a lover. It is in this respect that the glee is most clearly picturesque as opposed to pastoral: the house has as much potential for beauty as a natural landscape; indeed, in this text it is the most important element in the rural scene, entirely transcending its functionality. Bricks and mortar are

54 Joseph Heely, *Letters on the Beauties of Hagley, Envil, and the Leasowes; With Critical Remarks, and Observations on the Modern Taste in Gardening*, volume 1 (London, 1777), 21.

55 Quoted in Peter Bicknell, *Beauty, Horror and Immensity: Picturesque Landscapes in Britain, 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 22.

56 Horsley, *Memoir*, 15. On the previous page, Horsley praises Callcott's 'Father of Heroes', which contains references to the Wye valley, a picturesque hotspot following Gilpin's *Observations on the River Wye*. Horsley says, 'the effect is grand and highly picturesque throughout; and . . . the contrasts, and the beautiful *descriptions* with which it abounds, can hardly have escaped the most careless auditor'.

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Figure 6b 'Queen of the Valley', bars 23–35

given a hymnic treatment reserved customarily for the 'pride of the valley' (the village nymph) or – as was becoming more common at this picturesque moment – the valley itself. This recognition of the beauty of the house itself – its contribution to the 'composition' of the landscape and the symbolic importance of a grand dwelling within rural surroundings – signals a picturesque sensibility more tellingly than perhaps any other Georgian glee.

By the same token, if Callcott's audience, and the glee's dedicatee John Heaviside, knew Southey's poem (and there has to be some doubt about this, as it had only just been written when the glee was composed), then this glee might have constituted a hidden allusion for an inner circle. But why did Callcott leave out any mention of Aztlan? One answer is that the exoticism of the Americas is inimical to the style of the glee and to Callcott's purposes; Callcott wished to emphasize Southey's picturesque language, the loving and elegiac description of vales, lakes and groves that sparkle in the sunlight.[57] But the architectural 'Queen of the Valley' is the glee's main focus, which is what marks the piece as picturesque rather than merely pastoral. It is unclear whether the composer had a particular house or scene in mind. But since the glee's text, in isolation, appears to be a kind of a prayer for a house's preservation, it seems to be an example of the subgenre of the 'request'.

Callcott's only well-known contemporary by the name of John Heaviside was a surgeon – indeed, 'surgeon-extraordinaire' to George III. Horsley tells us that Callcott had ambitions to be a surgeon (before fainting on

57 There are myriad examples of songs whose literary borrowings are taken, as it were, 'out of context'. Brahms's *Magelonelieder* might be an example, their texts excerpted from Ludwig Tieck's *Phantasus*. Schumann also took snippets from Heine's verse in *Dichterliebe* in order to create a 'quasi-story'. Schubert's Ossian settings could also be seen as borrowing for the sake of creating atmosphere, as opposed to conveying the stories of Macpherson. I thank David Owen Norris for drawing my attention to these examples.

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Figure 6c 'Queen of the Valley', bars 58–83

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Long years of peace years of peace years of peace of peace and
Long years of peace years of peace years of peace of peace and
Long years of peace of peace and
Long years of peace years of peace of peace and
Long years of peace of peace and

hap--pi--nefs a---wait thy Lord and thee. Queen of the val-ley.
hap--pi--nefs a---wait thy Lord and thee. Queen of the
hap--pi--nefs a---wait thy Lord and thee. Queen of the val-ley.
hap--pi--nefs a---wait thy Lord and thee. Queen of the
hap--pi--nefs a---wait thy Lord and thee. Queen of the val-ley.

11

Queen of the val--ley. Queen Queen of the val------
valley. Queen of the val--ley Queen of the
Queen of the val--ley Queen of the
valley. Queen of the valley Queen of the val--ley of the valley Queen of the
Queen of the val-ley. Queen of the valley Queen of the val--ley the

--ley Queen of the val----------ley.
val--ley Queen of the val----------ley.
val--ley Queen of the val----------ley.
val--ley Queen Queen of the val----------ley.
val--ley Queen of the val----------ley.

Figure 6d 'Queen of the Valley', bars 84–103

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Figure 7a John Wall Callcott, 'The Cliff', bars 1–26. © The British Library Board. G.806.a.(4.)

observing an operation, summarily scuppering his plans), so it is likely that this Heaviside was the dedicatee.[58] Could Heaviside have been the owner of the 'Queen of the Valley'?

4. Callcott's Cliff

In Callcott's miniature glee 'The Cliff' we encounter vividly painted pictures of a dramatically precipitous coastline under assault by storm. Yet the storm in the picture has not completely obscured some residual sunshine. After the first phrase Callcott introduces a rising sequence with a crescendo on the words 'Swells

58 See Horsley, *Memoir*, 2.

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Figure 7b 'The Cliff', bars 27–61

from the vale, and midway leaves the storm', an image that suggests that the cliff's peak is untouched (see Figure 7a). This is confirmed by the following pair of lines: 'Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread', an image painted by Callcott's sequential broken thirds and rumbling bass scales, and then 'Eternal sunshine settles round its head'. The peak, illuminated by the sun's glow, is painted with a fermata and a new, march-like affect (see Figure 7b).

The text is by Oliver Goldsmith, often portrayed as an anti-pastoralist. But even in his 'The Deserted Village' – an elegy for the downtrodden rural poor later echoed in George Crabbe's 'The Village' – this apparent anti-pastoralism does not rule out a picturesque register. Read against the background of poems such as 'The Deserted Village', the text of 'The Cliff' is not merely a picturesque scene but also a social and theological metaphor. The torso of the cliff, enshrouded by cloud, and the shining dome of the cliff's top

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represent the piety of the village rector, a character introduced near the beginning of the poem: 'His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,/ Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest;/ To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,/ But all his serious thoughts had rest in Heaven'. Only at this point does Goldsmith pursue the analogy with the cliff; earthly cares and concerns are the reverend's preoccupations (the 'rolling clouds spread' around the 'midway'), yet he has unbending faith: the eternal light shines in heaven ('Eternal sunshine settles round its head').[59] As with 'The Queen of the Valley', Callcott has latched onto picturesque poetic imagery – in this case, imagery that strongly implies the sublime – and has loosened it from its moorings. The musical setting completely transforms the language so that it functions as a picturesque vignette, a vivid illustration of the sounding English landscape.

CONCLUSION

The English glee has no clear position in conventional historiographies of eighteenth-century music. Its minor status owes much to the long-standing indifference to English music of this period, as well as the tendency of glee composers to set pastoral and pictorial verse – supposedly lower artistic registers. The picturesque provides a fresh context for this genre, however, restoring English music's links with topographical poetry and landscape painting in the eighteenth century.

As noted earlier, music's participation in the culture of the picturesque has hitherto been discussed by musicologists largely in connection with the Austro-German instrumental repertoire. While the picturesque as it has been understood in these studies is undoubtedly useful in explaining the ways in which these works were heard and experienced in England, it is nevertheless a blunt instrument when it comes to assessing the music from the country considered to be the cradle of the picturesque. The genre of the glee is not about playing Haydnesque games with musical form; spinning formal patterns that might remind listeners of the pleasing irregularity of landscapes was not for the glee composer. Instead, the glee provided a medium for a heightened form of speech that spoke elegiacally of the idyllic natural beauty of England's green pastures. Through words, through music, the vision of the landscape sounded.

59 Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village* (London, 1770), 11.

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