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AULD LANG SYNE

A Song and its Culture

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10. A Song Abroad

A piece for two pianos by Gregory Stone, published in 1934, claims to show *Auld Lang Syne as it Would Be Played in Various Nations*: in rumba style in Cuba, in Celtic harp style in Ireland, as a Hungarian dance, an Italian tarantella, and as a "Marcia alla Turca" from the Russian orient (*sic*). The piece begins and ends with *Auld Lang Syne* as supposedly played in England: first time "Pomposo", second time "Grandioso".[1] Is this what really happen when a song "migrates"? Does it take on characteristics of its new surroundings, and how? What comes in the baggage, what is thrown overboard? The previous chapters have given some clues to the answers in the specific case of *Auld Lang Syne*, beginning with traditions in Britain and America in the main but expanded, in the last chapter, by a case study looking at the history of the song in Germany. This chapter explores some of the other threads spun out in the course of the history of a song abroad and at large. The examples introduced in this section cannot go into nearly as much depth as the previous chapter's analysis of German-language versions of *Auld Lang Syne*. Nor can they be viewed as in any sense comprehensive: the song is too common for that. Those examples reviewed here provide, however, further corroboration for many of the points already revealed as significant in explaining the spread of the song, and for many of the specific contexts in which it has done so. In this way, as the final section of this chapter discusses, these threads lead back to the centre of the web as much as they expand outwards from it.

10.1 Princess Constance Magogo's Song

Princess Constance Magogo (ca. 1900–1984), a member of the Zulu royal clan, was widely regarded as one of the foremost experts on Zulu musical traditions, in addition to being a highly regarded composer and musician. Magogo's repertoire included songs going back at least to the eighteenth century, and in her later years she was probably the last player of the type of musical bow known as the *ugubhu*: Magogo also played several other types of musical bow and further instruments including the autoharp, which features on the recording discussed below.[2] Magogo was a primary informant to ethnomusicologist David K. Rycroft, and also a musical consultant for the film *Zulu*,

1 Stone 1934.
2 Rycroft 1975, Joseph 1983.

https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0231.10

which portrayed the 1879 Anglo-Zulu war from the perspective of the British.[3] Other researchers who beat a path to her door included the South African composer Kevin Volans: like Rycroft's extensive fieldwork recordings, including hundreds featuring Magogo, Volans' recordings were later gifted to the British Library's sound archives.

It is in Volans' recordings that we encounter a song composed and sung by Magogo which uses the verse melody of M2, along with a second section presumably by Magogo herself.[4] The words, meanwhile, are her own, and given with English translation in Figure 10.1. The verses are sung to the verse section of M2, with the refrain sung to different music. "I know that song" says Volans on the recording, when Magogo has finished singing it; he tells his translator that it was originally a Scottish song. Emphasizing that the words were her own, Magogo in response relates that before FM radio,[5] she had an extensive collection of gramophone records: "I received this song from a music record, which I got directly from a white soldier…which is the reason why I sing the way/tune that I sing in it".[6]

Fig. 10.1 Text of *Jesu Nkosi Yokuthula* by Princess Constance Magogo, from a recording made in 1976; transcribed and translated into English for this book by Mmangaliso Nzuza with assistance from Magogo's granddaughter.

Jesu Nkosi Yokuthula	Jesus Lord of Peace
Nkosi enomusa	Lord who has kindness
Jesu Nkosi Enothando	Jesus Lord who has love
Nkosi enathando	Lord who has love
Ngiyeza nkosi kuwe	I am coming to you my Lord
Umdluli kaSomandla	Lord of all Lords
Ngiguqa esiphambanweni	I kneel at the cross
Ngihawukele Nkosi yami	Have mercy on me my Lord
Izitha ziyangihleka	My enemies are laughing
Ngoba ngingazali	because I have not given birth
Abamise 'kabhile	Mine have wept
Ngoba ngingazali	because I have not given birth
Ngiyeza nkosi kuwe …	I am coming to you my Lord …
Umsindisi owavula	Jesus Christ who opened
Endulo 'izinyuka	those who could not conceive

3 Rycroft 1975; Jorritsma 2001.

4 "Princess Magogo: Songs and self-accompaniment on autoharp. 'Auld lang syne' (sung in Zulu)", Kevin Volans Southern African Music Collection, shelfmark 2CDR0005462 (copy of C740/5/25). Digital version available at https://sounds.bl.uk/World-and-traditional-music/Kevin-Volans-South-Africa/025M-C0740X005X25-0100V0

5 Perhaps meaning before radio generally, given the timeline suggested here.

6 "Manje keleliculo ngalithatha kelinye'irecord lamasoldier yesilungu…indlela". Transcription and translation by Mmangaliso Nzuza.

Vula nanini Nkosi Jesu	Open anytime for me Jesus my Lord*
Ngimithe ngizalwe.	So I may be pregnant and give birth.
	*figurative

Magogo married into the Buthelezi clan in 1926, and her first child, future Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, was born in 1928. If the song relates directly to her own experience, this gives a date of composition of around 1927, which would correspond to the technology she mentions. She gives no further information in the recording made by Volans as to why she chose this melody as the basis for her song, though the fact that she specifically remembered the source around half a century later might suggest a fondness for that particular gramophone record and its contents. The story of her song is a further demonstration that, even in the age of recording, it is often direct, personal connections that bring us to "our" music. And this is, very much, *her* song: the British Library Sounds catalogue may refer to this as *Auld Lang Syne*, but this is not a translation, nor even simply a contrafactum given that the chorus is sung to a different tune. It is both her own work and a beautiful, unique thread among the many others which this chapter explores.

10.2 Foreign-Language Versions of *Auld Lang Syne*

Foreign-language versions of *Auld Lang Syne* can be broadly divided into two groups: those which translate Burns's text, and those which are new creations referring to the traditions with which the song is connected, most notably SΩ. Denmark and Japan can be taken as representative of these tendencies, respectively.

The most common Danish version of *Auld Lang Syne* goes back to the 1920s, and is an almost direct translation of Burns's text, into the dialect Jutlandish, by the poet Jeppe Aakjær (1866–1930); it is reproduced in Figure 10.2. It was first published in 1927, with one source—the fifth edition of the *Arbejder Sangbogen* (Worker's Songbook)—stating that it was written on 31 January 1922.[7] Aakjær was a strong promoter of the regional culture of Jutland, and Burns is said to have been an inspiration for him in this regard. Non-Danish speakers like myself who however have knowledge of adjacent languages like English, Scots, and German, may gather that the text is a reasonably faithful translation of Burns's song in the verse order of B2, adapted at points in keeping with the sentiment in order to ensure rhymes and the correct scansion. In the 1950 edition of the *Arbejdersangbogen*, some words in Aakjær's text are provided with translations into standard Danish.

7 Bib. II/1950. Research on Danish versions used resources in the Deutsches Volksliedarchiv.

Fig. 10.2 Aakjær's translation of *Auld Lang Syne*, attributed to Burns, as published in *Syng: Gesangbog for Danmark*, ca. 1943, 52.

Skuld gammel venskab rejn forgo
og stryges frae wor mind?
Skuld gammel venskab rejn forgo
med dem daw så læng, læng sind?

Chorus:
Di skjøne ungdomsdaw, åja,
de daw så swær å find!
Vi'el løwt wor kop så glådle op
for dem daw så læng, læng sind!

Og gi så kuns de glajs en top
og vend en med di kaw'.
Vi'el ta ino en jenle kop
for dem swunden gammel daw.
Chorus: Di skjøne ungdomsdaw, åja…

Vi tow—hwor hår vi rend om kap
i'æ grønn så manne gång!
Men al den trawen verden rundt
hår nu gjord æ bjenn lidt tång.
Chorus: Di skjøne ungdomsdaw, åja…

Vi wojed sammel i æ bæk
frae gry til høns war ind.
Så kam den haw og skil wos ad.
Å, hvor er å læng, lång sind!
Chorus: Di skjøne ungdomsdaw, åja…

Der er mi hånd, do gamle swend!
Ræk øwer og gi mæ dind.
Hwor er æ skjøn å find en ven,
en håj mist for læng, læng sind!
Chorus: Di skjøne ungdomsdaw, åja…

The publications reviewed here suggest that Aakjær's translation, called *Skuld gammel venskab rejn forgo*, became established quite quickly, and that it was generally recognized to be a translation of Burns's text. Several editions of the *Arbejdersangbogen* published by the Arbejdernes Oplysningsforbund (Worker's Educational Association) include the song, from no later than 1936 onwards.[8] This may suggest that the song was

8 The earliest source I had access to is an edition of the *Arbejder Melodiebogen* (Ring 1936), which provides the music for the songs contained in the *Arbejder Sangbogen*. It gives the music as M2 and includes one verse of the Danish text (the full text presumably being in the *Sangbogen* itself); the contents page also refers to this song under the additional title *Auld Lang Syne*. The earliest edition of the *Arbejdersangbogen* itself which I had access to is from 1950, and contains the full Danish text (Bib. II/1950).

known already from the context of workers' associations and their meetings, perhaps the British Trades Union Congress specifically which, as previously mentioned, has traditionally ended with *Auld Lang Syne* since the late nineteenth century. These were not the only sources to print Aakjær's Danish text, however: around 1943 it appeared in *Syng: Gesangbog for Danmark*—attributed to Burns, but with no mention of Aakjær as translator.[9] In 1948 it appeared in the *Nordens Sang Bok,* with music and text again attributed solely to Burns.[10] The 1996 edition of the army songbook *Sangbog for forsvaret* includes both the first and last verses of the Scots song, along with Aakjær's full text: the text in both cases is attributed to Burns, with the Danish/Jutlandic version listed as a free translation by Aakjær.[11] This book also includes a few other foreign-language songs, including *Loch Lomond* and *My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean*—perennial favourites in German publications as well. The 1972 edition of the same book also had the full Danish version and two verses of the Scots, with the Danish version being printed first.[12]

The course taken by the Danish song would seem to be the exact opposite to that taken in German-speaking countries: whereas in that case the song finally became established in versions aimed at young people and Scouts in particular, in Denmark it appears first to have been introduced in books intended for adults, and only later, as part of an established tradition, in books aimed at younger people or a broader cross-section of the community. Another difference is the way that the Danish sources more coherently maintain a sense of the song's Scottish origins, including its links to Burns. For example, the 1963 edition of a songbook called *Lystige Viser*, vol. I, contains four verses of the Scots song, with music; the chorus text is given as the syllabic "And days of auld lang syne, my dear" rather than "For auld lang syne, my dear". The text is illustrated by line drawings featuring two cheerful men in kilts in the foreground, a couple of sheep grazing the hills in the background; and also by hands raised in a toast beside an open whisky bottle.[13] The pint-stowp verse is missing, and the second of the childhood verses has "sported i' the burn" rather than "paidl'd"– a "translation" which also appears in some recent American versions (see Chapter 12, below). There are a number of other Scots, English and international songs in this volume, including *Coming Through The Rye*. Volume VIII of this collection, from 1983, contains Aakjær's Danish version of *Auld Lang Syne*, with a picture of two boys fishing at a burn. The 1964 edition of the *Folkehøjskolens Sangbok*, for students at high schools and agricultural colleges, contains the Danish version; the 1978 edition contains both the Danish version and, separately, the full text of the Scots version.[14]

9 Bib. II/ca. 1943.
10 Bib. II/1948.
11 Bib. II/1996.
12 Bib. II/1972.
13 Bib. II/1963.
14 Bib. II/1964.

Possibly the most interesting publication relating to Aakjær's version is a bilingual edition of the song published in 1966. The verses of the Scots and Danish language versions are on facing pages, and the book is illustrated with pictures by Povl Christensen appropriate to each stage of the song. These also indicate the two different countries represented: the two boys, and the two men they grow into, are the same in each instance, but the landscapes are different—either a land of hills (Scotland), or a flat, marshy terrain (Denmark). There are also two frontispiece pages with corresponding pictures. The first, in Danish, names Aakjær, and states that the publication marks the hundredth anniversary of his birth; this frontispiece features a picture of a young man sitting on a plough, reading a book. The second reads "Robert Burns: Should auld acquaintance be forgot, Ellisland Farm 1788": Burns is depicted, side on, standing near some cliffs, and to underline that these are Scottish cliffs, it's raining.[15]

All the Danish sources reviewed therefore show a strong tendency to attribute *Auld Lang Syne* to Burns, and to recognize the melody as a Scottish folktune. The army songbooks mentioned are interesting for their inclusion of two verses of the Scots version—this occasionally happens where *Auld Lang Syne* appears in songbooks from non-English-speaking countries, and reflects how the song has tended to be sung in communal contexts in Scotland (as opposed to the single verse that is more common in other English-speaking countries). These Danish publications give no clues as to exactly how the song was sung, but I have heard anecdotally of at least one instance of it being sung at the end of a wedding in Denmark, where the guests made a circle and joined and crossed their arms in the usual fashion.[16]

In Japan, by contrast, the origins of the local version are much older, and are firmly linked with the tradition SΩ. Travellers to Japan will know that the symbolic use of M2 as a song of parting goes quite beyond what is normal practice elsewhere: it is played in shops, clubs and other establishments at the close of business. Like the German *Nehmt Abschied, Brüder*, the origins of the common Japanese version are not simply SΩ, but a particular context in which the tradition appears: its use at graduation ceremonies.

The text sung to M2 in Japan is *Hotaru no hikari*, or *By The Light Of Fireflies* (Fig. 10.3). It dates from the later nineteenth century, and therefore coincides with the major period of modernization and Westernization instigated by Japanese leaders from the 1860s. This modernization included an overhaul of the education system, with Japan's first university established around this time. The song, sometimes attributed to Inagaki Chikai, was published in the first songbook produced for the new Japanese primary schools in 1881, but in his study of this songbook Mark Jewel (2018) notes that *Hotaru no hikari* was widely available in printed sources before this point.

15 Aakjær & Burns 1966.
16 Personal communication.

Fig. 10.3 *Hotaru no hikari* (*Fireflies*); translated by Mark Jewel. Copyright (c) 2018 by The Liberal Arts Research Center, School of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University. Reproduced by permission of the translator.

hotaru no hikari / mado no yuki	*After spending so many days and months in study*
fumi yomu tsukihi / kasanetsutsu	*By the light of fireflies and window's snowy glow,*
itsushika toshi mo / sugi no to o	*On this morning—the years having somehow passed by—*
akete zo kesa wa / wakareyuku	*We open the cedar doors and go our separate ways.*
tomaru mo yuku mo / kagiri tote	*Both those who are leaving and those who stay behind,*
katami ni omou / yorozu no	*Mindful that the time they've shared has come now to an end,*
kokoro no hashi o / hitokoto ni	*Gather together the strands of their countless thoughts*
sakiku to bakari / utau nari	*And join in singing a heartfelt message of farewell.*
Tsukushi no kiwami / Michi-no-oku	*Though separated far, by mountains or by seas,*
umiyama tōku / hedatsu tomo	*In remote Tsukushi, or in Michi-no-oku,*
sono magokoro wa / hedate naku	*Let no distance come between your hearts,*
hitotsu ni tsukuse / kuni no tame	*But devote yourselves wholly to the country as one.*
Chishima no oku mo / Okinawa mo	*The far reaches of the Kuriles, and Okinawa, too,*
Yashima no uchi no / mamori nari	*Are outposts that protect the homeland of Japan;*
itaran kuni ni / isaoshiku	*No matter what your destination, dear friends,*
tsutomeyo wa ga se / tsutsuganaku	*Go in good health, and serve with firm resolve.*

Hotaru no hikari is a song about student life, and about graduating from this life into wider society. It may be, therefore, that the arrival of *Auld Lang Syne* and its traditions in Japan comes by way of, or in deference to, the American tradition of singing the song at graduation. If this is true, and the song was introduced along with the introduction of universities and their associated Western-style traditions, then the use of *Auld Lang Syne* as a song of parting in Japan would be almost as old as it is in any English-speaking country.

This long history and, again, the linking of the song to a particular ritual, would help explain why the song could have become so well established in Japan. As noted in Chapter 1, it does not take very long for a song to become established as an "old"

song: a generation or two can suffice. Again, we see how the use of a song in one context—originally limited to those attending university—is transferred into a new, broader one in the commercial sphere. And from there, the Japanese branch of the web continues to expand: for example, *Hotaru no hikari* has recently been used as the name of a Japanese television series adapted from a Manga, about the exploits of a twenty-something woman called Hotaru.[17]

Hotaru no hikari underlines, again, that *Auld Lang Syne*'s successful transmission and adoption is linked to the tradition of singing the song at parting, and the human tendency to copy the best practice of other humans. Link a song to a particular tradition, especially a particular ritual, and its repeated use is not only almost guaranteed, but guaranteed in a way that makes it significant for those who experience it. As with the twentieth-century German versions discussed in Chapter 9, the text of *Hotaru no hikari* picks up on the *inherited* significance of *Auld Lang Syne* as a song of parting, and renders this as a text which has this significance *implied*.

French translations of *Auld Lang Syne* reflect this tendency for the song to become established as a translated tradition rather than simply a translated text. There were French translations of *Auld Lang Syne* before Jacques Sevin wrote his version (discussed in Chapter 9), yet it is the latter which is most often associated with the song in France today. Several translations of Burns's poetry appeared in France in the nineteenth century, though not all include *Auld Lang Syne*. Two that do come in the edition by Léon de Wailly published in 1843, and in the translations published by Richard de la Madelaine in 1874: in both cases, it is titled *Le bon vieux temps*. Madelaine's translations are in prose; Wailly's are not, but his translation of *Auld Lang Syne* still cannot be sung to M2.[18]

In the British Crown Dependency of Jersey, the situation is a little different. Several versions of the song exist in Jèrriais, the local dialect of the Norman language, and would appear to have been written around the time that the song and its traditions were becoming widely established in Britain and elsewhere. One is a translation attributed to Ph'lippe Langliais, who died in 1884. To the extent that a knowledge of French enables one to read Jèrriais, his text appears to be a direct translation of Burns's text, in the verse order most common in the nineteenth century (i.e., B4). In Langliais' manuscript, held in the library of the Société Jersiaise and dated 2/2/[18]72, he specifies "Air: Auld Lang Syne".[19] A version contributed by John D. Hubert, a resident of Gaspé, to the *Nouvelle Chronique de Jersey* in 1895 differs in many respects to that by Langliais, and a further version was published in the *Nouvelle Chronique de Jersey* in 1902: this appears to be a contrafactum extolling the local dialect and

17 Written by Hiura Satoru, directed by Yoshino Hiroshi, Nagumo Seiichi, and Shigeyama Yoshinori (2007).

18 Wailly 1843; Madelaine 1874.

19 I am indebted to Geraint Jennings of the Société Jersiaise for providing a copy of this manuscript, and the other information on this version given here. He has also suggested that the Jersey versions may be related to one of the versions in use in the neighbouring island of Guernsey.

culture. A few years later, Mathilde dé Faye—pen-name *Georgie*—composed a further version, with six verses: this is the basis of the song as sung on a field recording made by Peter Kennedy in Clair Val St. Saviour's, Jersey, on 24 April 1960, and held in the National Sound Archive.[20] In the recording, two verses are sung by a mixed group, to the accompaniment of an accordion; in Appendix 5, the verses in question are marked by an asterisk.

Of the four Jèrriais versions given in Appendix 5, it is notable that all but one use the same basis for the refrain: "Pour l'amour du vieir temps/vier temps"; the contrafactum version (the third in the example) uses this phrase as the basis for the beginning of each verse as well. Given the many differences in the lyrics apart from this, this seems to suggest that the refrain was in some sort of common use—perhaps from French: the two pre-Sevin French versions mentioned above were published under the name *Le bon vieux temps.* The name *Not' Bouon Vieir Temps* is commonly used for the song as now known in Jersey. Though it was noted that neither Madelaine nor Wailly's French versions could be sung to M2, this raises the possibility of a further and more familiar, sung French version which may have inspired the chorus of the Jersey versions.

Translating Burns's poetry has always been a favourite pastime of Burns enthusiasts with a talent for languages, as in the case of an unnamed Scot in Honolulu who translated *Auld Lang Syne* into Hawaiian in the 1890s; they noted that "This is the first attempt, so far as I am aware, to give in Hawaiian any of Burns's songs".[21] Given a steady stream of Scottish and other immigrants to the islands, and some persistent royal connections—King David Kalakaua visited Scotland in 1881, and his sister was married to a Scot; their daughter would have become queen had the monarchy continued—it is entirely possible that the song was sung in the original language quite apart from this.[22]

10.3 Bells and Anthems

In 1948, authorities in the Maldives decided that it was time to replace the previous state anthem, which had no words, with a new anthem, the text of which was provided by Mohamed Jameel Didi. A tune had to be found. According to legend, the poet's uncle, chief justice Husain Salahuddine, had just acquired a new clock which chimed a tune at midday. Didi noticed that this tune would function very well to the poem he had written, and until 1972 the anthem of the Maldives, *Guamee Salaan*, was sung to a

20 From field recordings made by Peter Kennedy; British Library Sounds call number T7991/05 C 5.

21 Anon. 1893, which notes that it was originally published in *The Paradise of the Pacific* in 1891.

22 Information from http://www.mauiceltic.com, which in turn derives its information from various sources, including Rhoda E. A. Haeckler (ed.), *The Story of Scots in Hawai'i.* The website also describes the annual Burns supper on the island of Maui. An arrangement of *Auld Lang Syne* for Hawaiian guitar was published by A. P. McKinney and R. F. Tomlinson in 1936. The cover shows palm tree, beach, sea, and a local couple waving to a distant ship: this image was used for several arrangements by McKinney. I have been unable to obtain any more information on this arrangement.

tune better known in other countries as *Auld Lang Syne*.[23] There is a rumour that the tune was only changed when it was pointed out that a song normally associated with drunken farewells at parties was perhaps not suitable for a royal anthem, particularly in an Islamic country. The real catalyst for change, however, seems to have been the visit to the Maldives of Queen Elizabeth II, the first time since full independence in 1965 that a foreign head of state had visited the country. The new tune was written by the Sri Lankan composer Pandit Amaradeva.

The Maldives was not the first Asian country to turn M2 into an anthem: the words of the Korean national anthem, written around the turn of the twentieth century, were also originally sung to M2. The Maldivian example, however, brings us back very neatly to the subject of clock chimes and bell towers as musical media, as already discussed in Chapter 8. The simple structure of M2 makes it very amenable to this form of transmission, as the following tale also makes clear: When the eighteenth-century church of St. Martin's in Birmingham fell into disrepair, the steeple in particular was at risk, and in the 1850s it was restored at great expense. As part of this renovation, the clock and chimes were renewed and played *God Save the Queen*, *Rule Britannia*, *The Blue Bells of Scotland* and some hymns. The chimes did not prove durable, however, and fell into disuse by the late 1860s. In 1878, they were repaired and put into service again, but with one change: the revamped chimes could no longer play *God Save the Queen* and so this was replaced by a tune that could be played—*Auld Lang Syne*.[24]

This is not the only instance of *Auld Lang Syne* trumping *God Save the Queen.* In Chapter 7, we saw how, in nineteenth-century Britain, *Auld Lang Syne* often formed a triumvirate of patriotic songs along with *Rule Britannia* and the national anthem, whereby traditionally, the anthem came last. It was noted, too, that in Thomson's 1841 volume of the *Select Collection*, Beethoven's arrangement of *Auld Lang Syne* was followed by Henry Bishop's arrangement of *God Save the Queen*. At the Last Night of the Proms however—the gala concert which ends the series of summer concerts in the Royal Albert Hall originally staged by Henry Wood, and now hosted by the BBC—*Auld Lang Syne* is now traditionally sung after *God Save the Queen*. It is not actually on the official programme of the Last Night, but has developed as a Proms tradition, possibly beginning during Scottish conductor James Loughran's stint as conductor of the Last Night in the 1970s and 1980s.

The continuing tradition of playing *Auld Lang Syne* either as the last song of the evening, or—at official events—as the last before the national anthem, occasionally leads to confusion. David Cookson, who made his debut as a conductor during the centenary festival of the D'Oyly Carte opera company in 1975, reminisces as follows:

23 Information taken from www.maldivesroyalfamily.com/maldives_anthem.shtml. The Maldives have been a republic since the late 1960s: this site appears to be maintained by descendants of its previous monarchy.

24 Harmon & Showell 1885.

> Our percussionist, Gerry, had been ill for a long time, and made his comeback on centenary night. Royston Nash and Glyn Hale (M[usical] D[irector] and chorus master) were to go on stage to take their bows, along with Bridget D'O[oyly]C[arte] and Harold Wilson (the then PM, and a fan [of Gilbert and Sullivan]), amongst others. It fell to me to conduct at the end, firstly Auld Lang Syne and then the National Anthem. I had rehearsed and rehearsed, in my mind, the upbeat for Auld Lan[g] Syne, and all the band and company had been told what would happen. All except Gerry.
>
> When I gave the upbeat for Auld Lang Syne, Gerry thought to rescue me by giving the drum-roll for the National Anthem. My world fell slowly apart. Half the audience started to stand up, and half the band, taking their cue from Gerry, started to play the National Anthem. The other half started into Auld Lang Syne, and what followed sounded like a Charles Ives seminar.
>
> Harold Wilson looked alternately nostalgic and patriotic, the company looked confused, and I wanted the floor to open up and swallow me [...][25]

10.4 Quotation and Quodlibet

In the nineteenth century, and as discussed in Chapter 7, domestic musicians were most likely to enjoy their *Auld Lang Syne* in the form of variations and other musical arrangements of the song itself. Around the later nineteenth century and increasingly in the early twentieth, these publications recede and are replaced by the new type of popular song which, in the USA, was most at home on a street known colloquially as Tin Pan Alley. Textual or musical references to *Auld Lang Syne* in these songs occur for a number of reasons: some explicitly appeal to the sentiments of the song itself, or directly sing its praises; some include musical or textual quotations from *Auld Lang Syne*. They divide neatly into four groups: love songs; social songs; Christmas or New Year songs; and songs dealing with the difference between olden and modern times.

Not surprisingly, most of the love songs deal with the parting of lovers, or less frequently with a lover's return. Some contain at least a passing reference to M2, but at least half do not—as for example *The Girl I Loved In Auld Lang Syne* by Verna Wilkens and Robert F. Roden.[26] One the most interesting songs from this period takes the sentiments of *Auld Lang Syne* right back to its early roots as a song about charity as well as friendship: this is *You Used To Be A Friend To Me* (*For The Sake Of Auld Lang Syne*), advertised as being sung by Ida Barr, a music hall singer born in 1882.[27] The verse of this song begins with a direct quotation from M2, and again makes frequent use of its opening rhythmic motif, though the song's chorus—which switches to 3/4 time—has little in the way of clear reference to the tune. It is the text, however, which

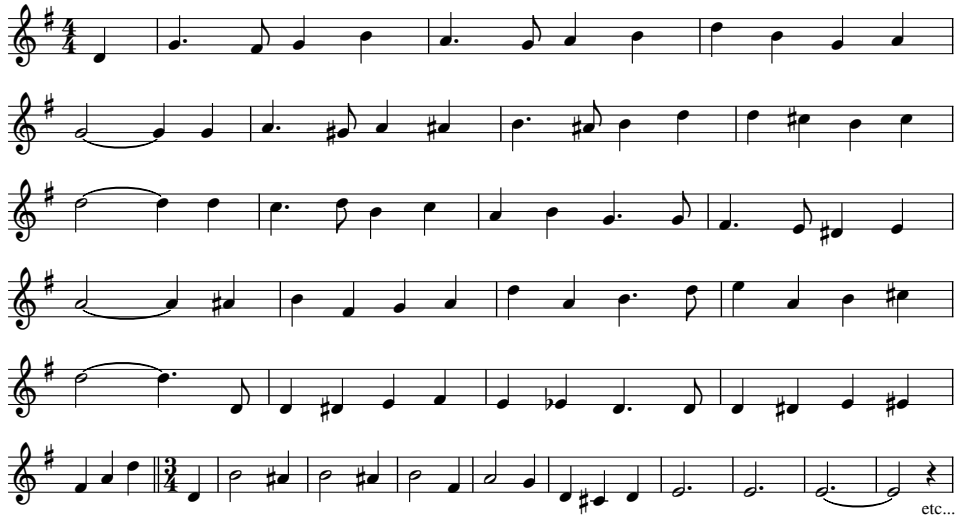
25 From an online discussion on the Gilbert and Sullivan opera *Utopia Limited* compiled by Nick Sales, at *The Gilbert and Sullivan Archive*, https://www.gsarchive.net/utopia/discussion/9.html

26 Wilken & Roden 1913. The song is now out of copyright and can be freely downloaded at https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4202&context=mmb-vp

27 Pelham, Lang, & Barr 1910.

is most interesting, and it is copied here in full in Figure 10.4. "Friendship can live to more than forty years", as Mrs Dunlop once put it.[28]

Fig. 10.4 The text, and the verse music and start of the chorus, of Paul Pelham and J. P. Lang's *You Used To Be A Friend to Me* (*For the Sake of Auld Lang Syne*) (1910).



Audio example 13.

https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12434/b176d2db

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot"
Is quoted near and far,
And when you're down upon your luck
What welcome words they are!
Two old acquaintances once met
One rich, the other poor;
One hid his face with shame because
The wolf was at his door.
The rich one said, "Give me your hand,
For, rich or poor, just understand,

CHORUS
"You used to be a friend to me
In the days gone by
Whether the sun was shining bright,
Or clouds were in the sky,
And now the times have changed,
And the sun has ceased to shine,

28 See Chapter 3.

I'll always be a friend to you
For the sake of auld lang syne."

"We'll take a cup of kindness yet
As oft we've done before.
You're just as good a man to me
As in the days of yore.
I'm still your friend, and you are mine,
No matter what betide.
It's not the coat that makes the man,
It is the heart inside.
For old time's sake I don't forget,
True friendship never faded yet."

In Chapter 8, it was noted that a song published in London in 1907 is an early indication of the establishment of S_{NY} as a general tradition. Thomas Walter Partridge's *The Bells of Auld Lang Syne*, published in 1905, could similarly be a reference to the song's use at New Year. It is written for piano and bells, and was published as an "Intermezzo" with vocal parts *ad libitum*. The voices, if included, are to sing two verses of the song (not, however, the chorus) and the score carries the following instruction: "In singing cross arms (right over left) and join hands and shake to the time of the music".[29] Another song from the period when S_{NY} was generally established in Britain is the *Snowball Song* (*Auld Lang Syne*), from 1923, written by Max Darewski and John Graham;[30] according to the score, it is "From J. L. Davies' production The Nine O'Clock Revue at the Little Theatre, London. Sung by Anita Elson". The introduction includes a direct reference to M2, and although most of the text focuses on the fun to be had with snowballs, the song also includes a "special chorus" which we may presume was intended specifically for the New Year Period:

Can't you hear those Ragtime Ringers
Cuttin' out the Carol Singers
But the same old melody is here (Yes it's here! Yes it's here! Don't you hear?)
You can do your best to change it,
Turn it round and rearrange it,
But the same old sentiments appear!
In the hour of season's greetings
And of alcoholic meetings [*sic*!]
Come along and drink a glass of wine, (Pass the wine! Pass the wine! Pass the wine!)
If the final touch of kindness
Brings a final touch of blindness,
Lap it up! It's just for Auld Lang Syne!

Yet again, one realises why the Temperance movement was so keen to produce new sets of words to M2.

29 Partridge 1905.
30 Darewski & Graham 1923.

Several songs specifically introduce *Auld Lang Syne* as the archetypical "old song", or use the phrase in this way. C. Crawford's *The Song Of Auld Lang Syne* (1903), for example, features a traveller reflecting on "the old, old folks / As they were long ago", while the chorus contains the invitation to "sing the song, that dear old song, / The simple song of auld lang syne." The melody refers rhythmically to M2, and the bassline of the chorus begins with an echo of the beginning of M2. Another song, Eugene Claire and Samuel A. White's *A Sweet Farewell to Auld Lang Syne* (1908) is a sort of *John Anderson My Jo* meets *Auld Lang Syne*, with an elderly man asking his wife to sing him "A song of long ago". The music's only clear reference to M2 is the frequent use of the rhythm of M2's first bar.

Other songs take a slightly more tongue-in-cheek look at *Auld Lang Syne* and what it represents. *The Days Of Auld Lang Syne: A Song Of The Colonial Days* by Harry von Tilzer and Eddie Moran (1917) quotes a little too convincingly from the "jazz talk" of the day for its yearning for the days when "Dresses were not scant and men were gallant" to be taken seriously; the music has little in the way of reference to M2. A thematic riposte is found in a song published three years later, in 1920, by J. Worth Allen: *I Like A Little Jazz In My Auld Lang Syne* is the grandson's response to the visiting grandfather's request for a song round the family piano; the chorus of the "real" *Auld Lang Syne* is sung in the bass, and the story ends happily with grandfather conceding to dance a foxtrot with the rest.

The title of A. Solman and G. Brown's *When You Played The Organ And I Sang "Auld Lang Syne"* (1931) is probably a reference to an older and more popular song called *When You Played The Organ And I Sang The Rosary,* although the commonalities between the songs end there. Again this is a tale of days long past:

> Gone are the songs we used to know
> We're out of place in the world of today,
> But we still have our yesterday.

There is no obvious reference to M2 in the tune, the simple style of which is perhaps purposefully reminiscent of hymn tunes, given the title's reference to the organ.

Finally, we come to songs that focus on the social sentiments and contexts of *Auld Lang Syne*. Hubert W. David's *Hands Together* (*For The Sake Of Auld Lang Syne*) (1926) is another appeal to the general sentiment of SΩ, though there is only a passing reference to a phrase from M2 and hardly any textual reference. The song, "Sung with great success by Victoria Carmen" according to the score, was obviously intended to be sung in the theatre with at least some participation from the audience. *Dear Old Pals* (*For The Sake Of Auld Lang Syne*) by Roy Regan and Rob Scott (ca. 1929) announces its general tone on the front page, which features four gentlemen gathered around a guitar rather than a punchbowl. The verse notes that

> Old Songs bring memories
> Of Pals that I once knew

and when the chorus specifically quotes the line "Should auld acquaintance be forgot", it does so to the appropriate music from M2.

None of these songs make any reference to the Scottish origins of their model. An exception is *For Auld Lang Syne. A Toast* by Edith Harrhy and John McGlashan (1931), which is written in very derivative "Scots"; the music, unrelated to M2, has a corresponding sprinkling of Scotch snaps. *The Stein Song* (*Fill The Stein For Auld Lang Syne*), from 1955, was published with a reference not to a theatre production or music hall performer, but to the recording of it made by Michael Holiday. This is in fact an adaptation of a song known as *The University of Maine Stein Song* or simply *The Maine Stein Song*, by E. A. Fenstad and Lincoln Concord, originally published in 1910.[31] The 1955 adaptation, it can be surmised, aimed to make the song more universal by replacing the reference to Maine with one to "auld lang syne". Like several other twentieth-century sources, including the iconography mentioned in Chapter 7, and the song's rendition in *Klondike Annie* (discussed in Chapter 8, and below), this is a further indication of the long-standing connection between *Auld Lang Syne* and gentlemanly toasts. Indeed, the line of toasts suggested in the second verse of *The Stein Song*—to the trees, the sky, God, the fates, to the lassies, and quite a few more besides—would not look out of place at nineteenth-century formal dinner, or indeed at a Burns Supper.

10.5 The Song of War and Peace

In Chapter 1, we discussed how parodies and contrafacta on popular tunes have often proved significant in the context of campaigning, whether to political, religious or other ends. Not surprisingly, a song as popular and as easy to sing as *Auld Lang Syne*, and with the resonances provided by both its implied and inherited significances, has also generated more than a fair share of such extended usages. For example: a *World Peace Song* published in Boston in 1912 is a contrafactum on M2. The text was written by James E. Campion,[32] who clearly understood how to write a successful campaign song: the structure of each of the four verses is kept simple to reiterate that verse's main message, and—like its model—the same phrase is reiterated for three of the verse's four last lines. The third verse can be taken as an example, also for the way in which it reflects some of the "larger themes" (to borrow Elgar's phrase) that we have encountered, and of which Burns himself would no doubt have approved—the sentiments are those he himself expressed in *Is There For Honest Poverty*:

> The nations all, shall brothers be,
> The poets' dreams come true,
> The nations all, shall brothers be,
> And each shall have its due.

31 The earlier version is digitized at https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mmb-me/200

32 Campion 1912. It is unclear if this was the same James E. Campion who in the 1890s was active in the Populist Party and stood for Congress.

And each shall have its due from all,
And each shall have its due,
The nations all, shall brothers be,
And each shall have its due.

And yet as we know now, the dream expressed in this song was to be spectacularly frustrated just two years later; and *Auld Lang Syne*, too, was pushed into war service.

In both World War I and World War II, the Australian armed forces made use of a song called *For Auld Lang Syne: Australia Will Be There* by W. W. Francis; slightly different texts were used in each war. The sentiment *Australia Will Be There* is a staple of Australian war songs. *Motherland! Australia Will Be There* by Felix McGlennon, for example, was published during the Boer War, while Harold Betteridge and John Beuker's *Australia Will Be There* also dates from World War I. It was the version quoting *Auld Lang Syne*, however, which was adopted as "The Official March Song of the Australian Expeditionary Sources. Sung by command before the Govenor [*sic*] General of the Commonwealth".[33] The words and music were written by W. W. Francis, or, as he was named in an early edition, "Skipper Francis (The British Channel Swimmer) to whom the Full Theatrical Performing Rights are Secured and Reserved". A recorded version featuring Stanley Read, now published on the website of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, includes the original sheet music's quotations from both the *Marseillaise* and *Rule Britannia* in its instrumental introduction. In the chorus, at the words "Should auld acquaintance be forgot", the music slows, quotes M2, and the soloist is joined by other voices; the answer to the question is a resounding "No! No! No!"[34]

The text of *For Auld Lang Syne: Australia Will Be There* makes it clear that Australians are to participate in the far-off war not because they themselves are threatened, but out of respect for the plight of "Old England" [*sic*]. Hence the reference to *Auld Lang Syne* in the title, text, and music—not so much a case of an old friend, but an entire continent, returning to fulfil the ties of auld lang syne. The instrumental introduction to the World War I versions begins by quoting *La Marseillaise* before striding forth with a reference to the chorus of *Rule Britannia*. The original version of the song is even more directly propagandistic, dealing with the question of whether "England" should have gone to war at all—presumably this was an argument heard against Australian troops getting involved. The text was later changed to include a reference to what for Australians was the defining moment of World War I, the action at Gallipoli. Even by that point, 1916, *For Auld Lang Syne. Australia Will Be There* was being advertised as "The Song That Has Become Historical"; the score of this newer version—published in London—lists the different troops that had already sung it, and the occasions.[35] The

33 Francis 1915. The original sheet music is available at https://digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/nodes/view/3582
34 The recording is available at https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/curated/australia-will-be-there
35 Francis 1916.

song was resurrected in World War II, though with some changes: in the published version, the references to the *Marseillaise* and *Rule Britannia* are missing.[36]

As a well-loved song, and one whose sentiment could only too well be appreciated in times of war, it is not surprising that *Auld Lang Syne* should also be included in the US army songbook issued by the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities in 1918. The book also includes the French, Belgian and Italian national anthems, some religious songs, and some old favourites including the Scots songs *Annie Laurie* and *Scots Wha Hae*.[37] The version given there of *Auld Lang Syne*—the tune being described as an "Old Scotch Air", and Burns named as author—is a shortened version of Burns's text including the first verse, the second "childhood" verse, and the "here's a hand" verse.[38] In the edition of the book produced for World War II, however, only the first and last verses are printed.[39]

World War II also produced further musical references to the song. *Let Us All Sing Auld Lang Syne* by Lew Brown and Ray Henderson, published in 1946 but with copyright in 1945, clearly appeals to the experience of all those separated from their loved ones, with the words "I know you're waiting but they're waiting too". This song may have been specifically intended for the war's end, given that its text says "we'll all give a toast with a cup full of cheer". The piano introduction is based on a motif from M2, and the first line of the main melody is based on the first line of M2. *Auld Lang Syne* also played a prominent role in a feature film released in 1940, *Waterloo Bridge*.[40] It is set just before the outbreak of World War II, and features a man reminiscing on the woman he met and loved just before leaving for the front during World War I: *Auld Lang Syne* appears as the *Farewell Waltz* which they dance the night before. This formed the basis for *Vals de Adios* by Melle Weersma and Enrique Cadicamo, published in Argentina in 1941, which includes both a Spanish translation of the text and also the two most standard verses of the Scots song. The Spanish translation in this case is directly related to the imminent parting, the first two lines, for example, reading

Adiós...Adiós...Me voy Amor...	Goodbye...Goodbye...I am going, Love,
Pronto...Pronto volveré	Soon...Soon I will return

Of all the wartime renditions, parodies and contrafacta, the final two discussed here are perhaps most poignant. As mentioned in Chapter 9, a Scouting contrafactum on

36 Francis ca. 1941. A World War II edition of the song is available at https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-164862247/view?partId=nla.obj-164862252#page/n0/mode/1up

37 Bib. II/1918. See also Grant 2019.

38 The same three verses were those sung many years later in one of Kenneth McKellar's recordings of *Auld Lang Syne*, released in 1983 on the album *McKellar in Scotland* (Lismor, LIDL 6009).

39 Bib. II/1941.

40 Dir. by Mervin LeRoy (1940).

M2, using only repetitions of "We're here because we're here", was picked up by soldiers in World War I as well (soldiers, perhaps, who a few years earlier would have sung the song as Scouts). This so simple of contrafactum texts takes on wholly new resonances in the context of servicemen on campaign: it is typical of the dark humour and resilience of many soldiers' songs, and captures only too well what for many, as the war continued, must have seemed the genuine futility of their situation. In 2016, during the centenary commemorations of the war, the song became a central part of a performance memorial conceived by Jeremy Deller and Rufus Norris: over 19,000 men dressed as World War I soldiers appeared, flashmob-style, at central locations in major British cities on the hundredth anniversary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme, one of the most deadly and iconic battles in British history. Each soldier represented one of the British servicemen who died that day; at certain points through the day the "soldiers"—otherwise engaged in that most frequent of military activities, simply waiting—would sing the song after which the event was named.[41]

Auld Lang Syne, a song of parting but implicitly also of reunion, was naturally disposed to be significant in wartime; further significance comes from its power as one of the "old songs", in the sense discussed by Walter Heimann (Chapter 1)—a old song of reminiscence, of absence, and of hope. This is certainly true of the arrangement by Margaret Dryburgh for the vocal orchestra she and Norah Chambers organized in a Japanese internment camp in Sumatra in the 1940s. This and many other arrangements made by Dryburgh were rediscovered in the 1980s, and a film, *Paradise Road*, was made about the story.[42] Helen Colijn, whose sister Antoinette sang in the vocal orchestra and who herself was interned, described in liner notes to the accompanying CD how singing helped the women and girls deal with the inhumane conditions of the camp:

> Groups of women sang popular songs in English or Dutch. When after a year no one could remember any new ones, two of the British women created the vocal orchestra. Margaret Dryburgh, a Presbyterian missionary in Singapore, long-time piano teacher, choir director, and church organist, wrote from memory scores of piano and orchestral works. Norah Chambers, a government engineer's wife in Malaya, helped Miss Dryburgh rearrange the scores for four voices and, during secret rehearsals, conducted a new Dutch/English choir of thirty women, including my sisters. The impact of the first concert on December 27, 1943, on all of us was tremendous. Instead of the popular songs we expected, the glorious sounds of the Largo of Dvorak's *New World* filled the compound, followed by more music by Bach, Beethoven and Chopin, and Tchaikovsky. The music seemed a miracle among the hunger, disease, rats, cockroaches, bedbugs and smell of latrines. The music reinforced our sense of human dignity. We could rise above it all. We would struggle on.[43]

41 The memorial event is documented at https://becausewearehere.co.uk

42 Dir. by Bruce Beresford (1997).

43 Liner notes to the soundtrack CD recorded by the Malle Babbe Women's Choir, *Paradise Road. Song of Survival*, Sony CD, 1997.

Auld Lang Syne, one of several songs sung by the vocal orchestra in the camp in the years that followed, is sung without a text. After the first verse—a simple, quiet homophonic setting with the tune sung by the middle voices—it plunges briefly into a loud and harrowing minor key before resolving back into a major tonality by the end of the second line. A third complete rendition of the verse is then sung, and only after this is the chorus tune heard. The arrangement concludes with another verse and chorus, with some more movement in the voices accompanying the main tune, and sung on the open, resonant vowel "o". Even without the larger context of the story, it would have to go down in history as one of the most moving arrangements of the song ever made. Most of those who originally sang it would never see the song's hope of reunion realised: when almost half its members had died from malnutrition and tropical diseases, the vocal orchestra sang no more.[44]

10.6 Threads Lead Back to the Centre

> *Harry*: What does this song mean? My whole life I don't know what this song means. I mean, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot", does that mean we should forget old acquaintances or does it mean that if we happen to forget them, we should remember them, which is not possible, because we already forgot?!
> *Sally*: Well, maybe it just means that we should remember that we forgot them or something... Anyway, it's about old friends.[45]

> Now at midnight, we're all going to sing *Auld Lang Syne*, right? And I don't know about you, but I've always wondered what it meant! [laughter from crowd]. So, I looked it up. It was written in old Scottish by a very famous poet, Robert Burns, and "auld lang syne" means "time remembered with fondness." But to me it's a song about remembering people who have meant something to you in your life—a mentor, a teacher, a friend from your childhood.[46]

The discussion in this chapter of early twentieth-century popular songs referencing *Auld Lang Syne* has already shown that many of them seem to draw a direct line back to usages of the phrase in song that predate even Burns. The quotations above demonstrate likewise that, even in the context of the newer tradition $S_{NY,}$ and with Burns's original five verses abbreviated in most cases to just the first verse and chorus, the song's original content continues to resonate. And yet, one of the questions I have been most frequently asked when introducing this study—and everyone recognizes the song by the third line of the melody at the latest—is "What does 'auld lang syne' actually mean?" The irony is that most people who claim they do not know the meaning

44 More information on the orchestra, its members and its music can be found at https://singingtosurvive.com, created in connection with a 70th anniversary concert of the repertoire.

45 Dialogue (by Nora Ephron) from the New Year's Eve denouement of the film *When Harry Met Sally*, dir. by Rob Reiner (1989).

46 Barbra Streisand, transcribed from the recording of her concert on 31 December 1999, commercially available on both CD and DVD.

of "for auld lang syne" demonstrate, in the way they use the song, that they do. Their actions speaker louder than the strange words, as it were, and often hark back to some of the oldest contexts in which the song was sung. When Barbra Streisand sang the song at the close of 1999 and in the first few minutes of the year 2000, leading into it as quoted above, she introduced a countermelody, the text of which focussed on "friends that stand the test of time". This is not quite the same story as the friends that return after a long absence, but the underlying principle is the same, despite her claim not to know what the song is *actually* about. The countermelody is sung by her while the audience (supported by her backing singers) sing the main tune: unlike Sims Reeves in the nineteenth century, she not only tolerates this, but invites them to do so.[47]

Thus, while *Auld Lang Syne* has accumulated several new layers and shades of meaning as the years have passed, older meanings and significances of the song have not merely died away. Sometimes, they are replicated in the actions and explanations of a whole new generation of users. This section will look at some further evidence of how the song's uses and significances have changed and yet not changed over the twentieth century,

Earlier, it was noted that *Auld Lang Syne* was one of the first songs ever captured using the new technology of sound recording. The song is also very well represented in the first years of the commercial recording industry. The famous Australian soprano Nellie Melba recorded it in 1905, taking great care to roll her "rs" and do everything else she could to make the song sound authentically Scottish (she was actually of Scottish descent).[48] Melba sings only the first verse and the first of the "childhood" verses; the chorus is repeated each time, with additional voices joining her for the repeats—not dissimilar to the glee-type arrangements of the early nineteenth century. The recording proceeds at an unusually slow and stately pace. It is accompanied by the band of the Coldstream Guards: military bands feature on a significant proportion of early commercial recordings, for technical as much as cultural reasons (instruments had to be loud to be registered at all). A military band also forms the accompaniment to the recording made by the Dutch mezzo-soprano Julia Culp in 1914; the band was conducted by Walter B. Rogers, who also published a cornet fantasia on *Auld Lang Syne*.[49] Culp, too, sings only two verses in addition to the chorus, but in this case they are the two verses most commonly sung nowadays. This is also the case in bass-baritone Peter Dawson's recording of 1930: like Melba, he sings each chorus first as a solo, and then with accompaniment of other singers.[50] The orchestral accompaniment is reminiscent of the simple style of accompaniment which appears in the earliest settings of the song.

47 See the quotation at the beginning of Chapter 7.

48 The recording can now be accessed at https://adp.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/1000003575/7201b-Auld_lang_syne

49 Culp's recording is now available at https://adp.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/200014657/B-14381-Auld_lang_syne. Roger's cornet solo version (1936) was published in the series "Famous cornet solos with piano accompaniment".

50 Re-released on *Ae fond kiss: Songs by Robert Burns Performed by Singers from Yesteryear*, Greentrax 2004.

Another nod to more recent practice comes in Dawson's version, though: while his recording, too, is slow and stately, the last chorus breaks into a more vigorous tempo. (This is the part of the song where, in my personal experience, the crowd start to yank their neighbours' hands up and down, or run into and back out of the centre of the circle they have formed.)

These recordings are interesting not least because they demonstrate a continuation in practice from some of the earliest publications and, presumably, performances of the song—the practice of singing the verse as a solo, the chorus as a part-song, is a feature of Beethoven's arrangement, and of that in the opera *Rob Roy Macgregor, or, Auld Lang Syne*. At the same time, the recordings also demonstrate a continuity from the late nineteenth century through to today of some elements of the song in performance. Such documents, then, are links between the song's performed present and its past in an era before recording.

Films are another important source for tracing the developing traditions of the song. They are useful not just for actual instances of the song being performed on the screen, but also for the way it is integrated into soundtracks, which thus can provide useful information on associations with the song at the time the film was made. Feature films from the early to mid-twentieth century provide further evidence regarding prevailing significances of the song other than $S_{NY,}$ which is the most frequent context for the song's use in more recent films. As mentioned in Chapter 8, the song is sung as refreshments are served at the reform meeting organized by Mae West's character in *Klondike Annie* (1936). In *The Little Princess* (dir. by Walter Lang, 1939), set at the time of the Boer War and starring Shirley Temple, the crowds on the London street break into the song in best patriotic fashion when news comes that the Siege of Mafeking has ended. *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (dir. by John Cromwell, 1936), like *The Little Princess* based on a book by Frances Hodgson Burnett, integrates M2 into the score when the youngster Ceddie, now Lord Fauntleroy, and his great friend, the grocer Mr Hobbs, reflect on Ceddie's imminent departure from New York for England. All these films feature storylines which take place some considerable time before the films themselves were made. They raise the question of the extent to which the song itself was associated with these earlier times not just by virtue of its implied significance, but also as a song which itself seemed "old" or even "old-fashioned". What is certainly clear is that the connection between *Auld Lang Syne* and the New Year, although already well established by the early twentieth century, did not begin to dominate in film references until much later, although films contemporary with those just discussed do already use the song in this way—for example, the 1938 film *Holiday* (dir. by George Cukor) starring Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant.

A similar transition takes place in literature. While in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century references to *Auld Lang Syne* in the title of a book normally indicated a collection of reminiscences, or a tale of exiled love, in the 1960s it graced the covers of two detective novels. In Jack Sharkey's *Death for Auld Lang Syne*, the murder takes place

on New Year's Eve, and is discovered at five to midnight (which perhaps explains why those present seem to have forgotten to sing the song).[51] In Doris Miles Disney's *Should Auld Acquaintance*, on the other hand, a recently widowed woman fakes an old acquaintanceship with the dead wife of an apparently eligible man whom she is eager to meet. Little does she know (though most readers have already guessed) that the woman's death was no accident; the guilty party is arrested on New Year's Day.[52] A rather more positive tale of love second time around comes in Pamela Browning's *For Auld Lang Syne*, a romantic novel published in time for Christmas 1991 in the USA, and Christmas 1992 in the UK. It is the tale of two old lovers who are separated and reunited by a quirk of fate; the story unfolds over the Christmas period and culminates in a marriage proposal made just after midnight on January 1st.[53]

Times change, and modes of communication have changed dramatically. The radio programme "Commonwealth Christmas", which was broadcast for an hour preceding the King's speech on Christmas Day 1949, included a report from Liverpool Street Station in London, where emigrants had just boarded a train taking them on the first stage of their journey to Australia.[54] As the train left the station, the band on the platform played *Auld Lang Syne*; it may have been missing when Mr Micawber made the same journey, but it had certainly been played on at least some such occasions when the tide of emigration had swept high in the nineteenth century. When Judy Garland performed at the Palace Theater in New York for the last time after an incredibly successful run in the early 1950s, the orchestra and audience took their leave with *Auld Lang Syne*, just like all those countless occasions in the nineteenth century when stars of the stage were closing their runs, generally before a long period abroad; John Sinclair himself sang the song at the farewell concert for Mr Fawcett, who was about to retire, in 1830.[55] And just as the song, in its earliest phase, was typically sung at the benefit concerts of singers and musicians, so the phrase *For Auld Lang Syne* was used, in 1938 and 1939, as the title of short appeal films in which stars of the screen asked cinema audiences to donate to the Will Rogers Memorial Hospital, a specialist institute for pulmonary disorders set up after actor Will Rogers' death in a plane crash.[56] Likewise, as the song of friendship and charity, it was quite naturally *Auld Lang Syne* which the friends and acquaintances of film character George Bailey struck up after emptying their piggy banks, savings accounts and mattresses to help him in his hour of need, reassuring him that, for all that, *It's a Wonderful Life*.[57]

51 Sharkey 1963.
52 Disney 1963.
53 Browning 1992.
54 British Library Sounds call number T7540WR TR1-TR2.
55 *Judy at the Palace*, Wiley BCD 1402 (1997); source for Sinclair information: playbill for Theatre Royal Covent Garden, May 20 1830, BL Playbills 101, UIN: BLL01016661273; available at http://access.bl.uk/item/viewer/ark:/81055/vdc_100022588879.0x000002#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=111&xywh=-316%2C502%2C3586%2C2367
56 Both released by Warner Bros.
57 Dir. by Franz Capra (1946).

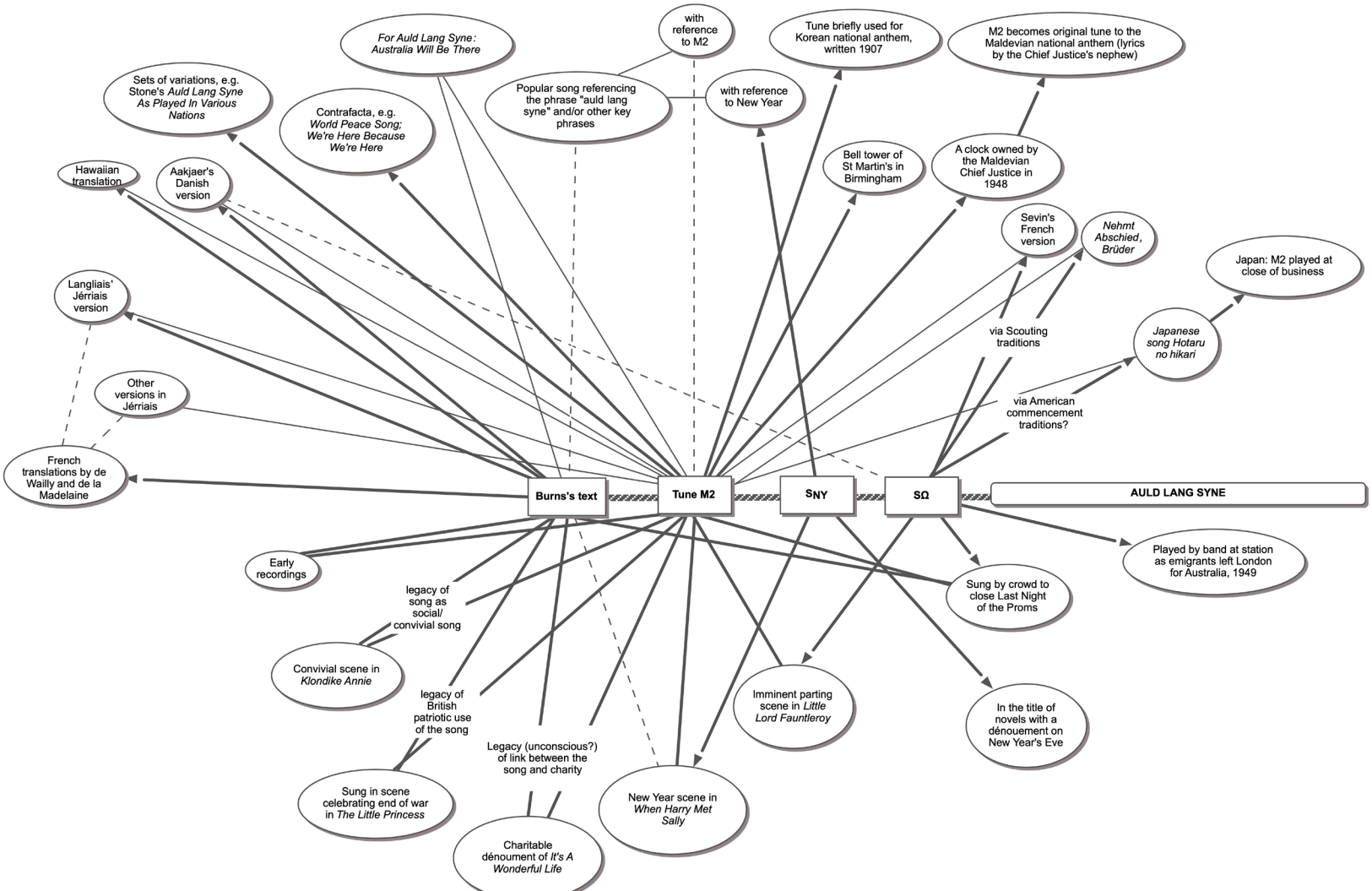


Fig. 10.5 A song abroad. Relative weighting of lines indicates relative significance/import: stronger lines indicate clear adoption of the tradition/element concerned. Figure created by author (2021).

Figure 10.5 attempts a visual representation of this expanding web of associations, threads leading back to the centre while the meanings and contexts continue to expand and shift. For all its complexity, it is a simplified diagram, drawing only on some of the instances of *Auld Lang Syne* discussed here, which in turn are a mere fraction of a larger whole. It is a summary of the musical communications and interactions around and through this song which lead us back to the questions posed at the beginning of the book: why, and how, has *Auld Lang Syne* proved so successful? Some conclusions are drawn in the next chapter, before a final chapter discussing the song's legacy in Scotland in the early twenty-first century.