

Popular songs for amateur and professional performance in the late 19th Century

All these recordings are freely available on YouTube; separate sheets of lyrics are supplied for each one

The Village Blacksmith

Composer unknown,, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZZD2QEjj2w>

This song was immensely popular in Victorian times, and performed at many of the local Walthamstow concerts. It was usually sung as a dramatic solo, and usually by a male singer. The poem was written by the American Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The Island

Composer Henry Dibdin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAQqmumiL4E>

This song was originally written in the eighteenth century, but remained popular right through the nineteenth century. There are many minor variations of the words, but they all convey the same patriotic pride in the British Isles. The words shown on the screen on this recording are a slight variant to the printed words used in the Walthamstow project

The Road to Mandalay

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fIEg24P0A4>

The words are by Rudyard Kipling, and refer to an incident in British Foreign policy in Burma in the 1860s. It was frequently sung, with the audience often joining in the chorus.

The Farmer's Boy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KBtDqtnOUQ>

Another popular moral story, the tale of a poor boy working his way to prosperity through the kind charity of others and his own industry. The tune is an old traditional one, with words written in 1800 by Robert Bloomfield. Frequently performed as a solo, with enthusiastic audience participation in the chorus

The last rose of summer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxJsXWHmFiA>

A very famous ballad with words by Thomas Moore, a popular Irish poet, set to an old Irish tune, usually sung by a soprano, but could be performed by anyone either as a solo or group number.

I dreamed I dwelt in Marble Halls

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1J7n52gpjSY&list=RD1J7n52gpjSY&index=1>

One of the most frequently sung pieces at any number of Walthamstow concerts; it is from an Opera 'The Bohemian Girl' by M. J. Balfe, whose music was in great demand for solo singers. The words are by Alfred Bunn. This version is by the modern singer Enya.