HARD TIMES COME AGAIN

by

Adam Stephen Hill

B.A., Whitman College, 2002
M.Mus., Western Washington University, 2010

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Abstract

*Hard Times Come Again* is a musical composition consisting of seven songs composed for alto voice, baritone voice, two violins, viola, cello, double bass, mandolin, banjo, guitar, and piano. In totality it is approximately thirty minutes in duration, and individual songs range from three to six minutes in duration. The songs take their text from poems constructed by the composer, along with poet Bren Simmers, from oral history of the Great Depression. The musical style of the composition draws on both folk music and classical music influences, with specific sub-genres, such as bluegrass, honky-tonk, and minimalism, also referenced.

The written document puts the musical composition into personal and historical context. Aspects of the author's personal musical experience are discussed in the first chapter in relation to both folk music and classical music. A brief discussion of North American folk music as well as classical music that has drawn on folk music influences follows in the second chapter. The third chapter discusses musical traits of the composition including form, text, harmonic language, rhythm, and texture, and the fourth chapter includes a brief aesthetic statement. A program note and a complete musical score of the composition are included as appendices.
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Adam Hill. Bren Simmers contributed editorial suggestions in the formulation of the lyrical content of the songs. An earlier version of “This Is What Happened” was arranged for soprano, tenor, violin, cello, guitar, and piano; this version was performed by the Erato Ensemble on March 27, 2014 at the Orpheum Annex in Vancouver, British Columbia as part of the Sonic Boom Festival.
# Table of Contents

Abstract...............................................................................................................................................................ii
Preface................................................................................................................................................................iii
Table of Contents..............................................................................................................................................iv
List of Tables.......................................................................................................................................................v
List of Figures....................................................................................................................................................vi
List of Examples...............................................................................................................................................vii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....................................................................................................................................1
  1.1 The Great Recession and My Return to Classical Music..........................................................1
  1.2 Early Commercialization of Roots Music and The Great Depression..............................3
  1.3 *Hard Times* and “Hard Times Come Again No More”....................................................5
Chapter 2: Influences and Precedents.............................................................................................................6
  2.1 A Polystylistic Approach...............................................................................................................6
  2.2 What is Folk Music?.......................................................................................................................8
  2.3 Some Characteristics of North American Folk Music.............................................................13
  2.4 Folk Music Influences on Composers of Classical Music.......................................................22
Chapter 3: Form and Style in *Hard Times Come Again* ............................................................................29
  3.1 Overall Formal Structure.............................................................................................................29
  3.2 Lyrical Content.............................................................................................................................31
  3.3 Instrumentation and Performance Considerations.................................................................34
  3.4 Folk-like Forms.............................................................................................................................36
  3.5 Less Folk-like Forms.....................................................................................................................43
  3.6 Harmonic Language.....................................................................................................................51
  3.7 Rhythmic Treatment.....................................................................................................................57
  3.8 Melodic and Linear Treatment...................................................................................................61
  3.9 Texture and Counterpoint...........................................................................................................63
Chapter 4: Closing Thoughts..........................................................................................................................69
  4.1 An Aesthetic Statement................................................................................................................69
  4.2 Coming Again...............................................................................................................................71
References..........................................................................................................................................................72
Appendix A: Programme Note......................................................................................................................76
Appendix B: Musical Score............................................................................................................................77
  “It Was Rough Going”..........................................................................................................................79
  “This Is What Happened”....................................................................................................................93
  “One of My Father’s”........................................................................................................................127
  “I Was Relieved”................................................................................................................................161
  “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres”.......................................................................................................188
  “I Had a Terrible Guilt”....................................................................................................................216
  “We Had So Little”............................................................................................................................231
List of Tables

Table 1: Formal outline of *Hard Times Come Again*........................................................................................................29
List of Figures

Figure 1: Quotations from the source text....................................................................................................31
Figure 2: Quoted fragments in poetic form..................................................................................................32
Figure 3.: Lyrics as they appear in the song.................................................................................................33
Figure 4: Formal outlines of “It Was Rough Going” and “One of My Father’s”........................................38
Figure 5: Formal outline of “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres”.....................................................................38
Figure 6: Formal outline of “I Had a Terrible Guilt” ..................................................................................46
List of Examples

Example 1: Banjo part from “We Had So Little” (mm. 83 – 87) ................................................................. 35
Example 2: Guitar and bass parts from “It Was Rough Going” (mm. 52 – 71) ............................................ 40
Example 3: Banjo and bass parts from “One of My Father’s” (mm. 96 – 116) ............................................. 41
Example 4: Guitar and bass parts from “One of My Father’s” (mm. 166 – 171) ....................................... 42
Example 5: Fragmented narratives in “This Is What Happened” (mm. 40 -71) ............................................ 45
Example 6: Baritone part from “I Had a Terrible Guilt” (mm. 5 – 6 and mm. 43 – 44) .............................. 47
Example 7: Alto and guitar parts from “One of My Father’s” (mm. 24 – 34) ............................................. 51
Example 8: Guitar and bass parts from “One of My Father’s” (mm. 36 – 40) ............................................. 52
Example 9: Composite harmonies from “I Was Relieved” (mm. 86, 98, 104, and 110) ......................... 53
Example 10: Banjo and guitar parts from “Three-Hundred-Acres” (mm. 40 and 91) ............................. 54
Example 11: Piano part from “This Is What Happened” (mm. 65 – 67) ..................................................... 55
Example 12: Baritone and mandolin parts from “I Had a Terrible Guilt” (mm. 12 – 15) ......................... 56
Example 13: Grouping structure of the refrain from “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” (mm. 37 – 60) ....... 58
Example 14: Vocal melody from “This Is What Happened” (mm. 1 – 13) ................................................. 60
Example 15: Vocal melody from refrain to “It Was Rough Going” (mm. 12 – 19) ................................. 62
Example 16: Imprecise unison and octave doublings in “This Is What Happened” (mm. 14 – 17) ....... 64
Example 17: Monophonic ending to “It Was Rough Going” (mm. 106 – 108) ........................................... 65
Example 18: Alto and baritone parts from “We Had So Little” (mm. 35 – 46) ......................................... 66
Example 19: Violin I and II, viola, and cello parts from “We Had So Little” (mm. 121 – 128) ............... 67
Example 20: Alto and banjo parts from “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” (mm. 37 – 40) ....................... 68
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Great Recession and My Return to Classical Music

As 2007 came to a close, the United States was entering into an economic recession that would be more devastating than any of the previous ten recessions the country had faced since World War II (Aliber 2012: 52). Over the next two years, the unemployment rate rose to 10.0%,1 and countless people defaulted on mortgages and other loans and payments (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012: 2). Contemporary economists have taken to calling this turn of events the Great Recession, referencing the troublesome times that followed the stock market crash of October 1929. Though the differences between the two eras regarding global impact and the effectiveness of governmental reactions are still being analyzed and debated, there is value in revisiting the stories of the Great Depression if only to inform our own navigation through troubled times in a modern age.

In the last month of 2007, I was leaving a six week fellowship as an artist-in-residence at the Wurlitzer Foundation of New Mexico. I had spent my time there writing and recording an album of bluegrass-tinged folk songs. Though my undergraduate training in music composition focused on classical music,2 I had engaged with that world little since obtaining my degree.3 Most of the music I had written during the previous five years was for various rock and roll, bluegrass, jazz, or new-acoustic groups with which I had been performing. While in New Mexico, however, I did make a connection with the Soundscapes Chamber Music Series, and the following year they would

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1 Though this figure is slightly lower than the unemployment rate of 10.8% that plagued the recession of the early 1980s, the long-term unemployment rate of the most recent recession was almost twice that of the 1980s (4.4% compared to 2.6%).

2 Though imperfect, I use the term “classical music” not to describe music from the classical period, but rather to describe the loose genre of music sometimes confusingly termed “concert music,” or sometimes pretentiously termed “art music,” and include in the definition of this term contemporary classical music that is often rather vaguely referred to as “new music.”

3 I did join the bass sections of several semi-professional symphony orchestras on a number of occasions.
premiere a song cycle I had composed for an operatic mezzo-soprano accompanied by jazz piano trio and string quartet. By all expectations, it appeared that 2008 would be a fruitful year; I had a busy tour schedule planned with a number of groups, including a gypsy-jazz-bluegrass ensemble, an alt-country-rock band, a folk and blues duo, and my own solo work performing songs from the album I had just recorded. Though as the saying goes, plans are meant to be broken.

The year began well with a few regional weekend dates and a recording session in Lexington, Kentucky, for which the airplane tickets had been bought and contracts negotiated months before. Upon returning home, I embarked on a series of tours throughout the western United States. As is customary, the bookings had been arranged several months previously, and the economic viability of the tour had been based on projected income versus projected costs. The income turned out to be roughly as expected, but the costs turned out to be well above the projections. The main culprit was the quickly rising price of gasoline; between February and July 2008, the average price for a gallon of gasoline in the United States rose from $3.08 to $4.11 (U.S. Energy Information Administration).

For a musician whose income depended on driving a hundred miles or more every day, gasoline (or diesel fuel) was an unfortunate lifeblood, and the rise in costs had detrimental effects.

There is another saying that goes: if you don’t have much, you don’t have much to lose.

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4 The price of fossil fuels, of course, has had a momentous impact on the modern economy in many regards. The peak price of gasoline in 2008 simply illustrates how those of us who began working as travelling musicians in 2002 (or even earlier), when the average price of a gallon of gasoline was $1.42, were unprepared for a changing business model.

5 It should be noted that various groups were more and less dependent on the price of gasoline. The size of the ensemble and our instruments dictated the size of the vehicle in which we travelled. When working with a four piece band, including drums, travelling with a tour manager and a sound engineer, we rode in a gas guzzling bus outfitted with sleeping bunks, a “living room,” and a refrigerator. When working as a duo performing on acoustic instruments and small amplifiers, however, we could travel in a relatively fuel efficient station wagon, provided that we could find inexpensive or free accommodations. More often than not these differences in luxuries of travel corresponded to increased revenue at the gig.
While I put my belongings into storage to avoid paying rent while on the road, I watched news stories of people losing their houses because their mortgages were beyond their reach. I watched my parents’ retirement savings evaporate as they turned sixty-one, only a few years from quitting time. I watched as the dreams of so many people disappeared and a generation was taken by a feeling of fear and helplessness. By September, I had enrolled in a graduate program to study music composition, finding both a relatively steady method of income and a non-commercial relationship with making music. It took a little longer than I had anticipated to save the money needed to release the album that I had created in New Mexico, but when I did, in 2009, several of the reviews appeared to retroactively foreshadow my turn back to classical music. One critic noted that I “seem[ed] less like a folk musician and more like a folk composer” (Williams 2009), while another called the penultimate track of the record “the best non-country country song [he’d] ever heard” (Koutsoutis 2009).

1.2 Early Commercialization of Roots Music and The Great Depression

In 1923, Okeh released the first commercial ‘hillbilly’ record, which captured Fiddlin’ John Carson performing “The Little Old Log Cabin in the Woods” and “The Old Hen Cackled and the Rooster’s Going to Crow.” 7 The tremendously positive reception to Carson’s record caused a wave of recordings by Okeh and other record companies ready to capitalize on the newly popular ‘hillbilly’

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6 The term “hillbilly” was not always a preferred descriptor of the music by those who performed it, though it was the most common genre name used by those who sold it. Several other terms including “old-time” and “old-familiar” were used before the term “country” music came into wide acceptance in the mid-1940’s (Malone 1993: 7). “Old-time” or “old-timey” are terms that are commonly used today to describe this genre of music.

7 In fact, a year before Carson’s recording was made, Ick Robertson travelled to New York from his home in the rural south for a recording session. Though these recordings were likely the first documented example of “hillbilly” music on phonograph recording, the unadvertised and poorly marketed recordings were largely forgotten and less influential to commercial trends than Carson's (Malone 1993: 74-75).
music, not unlike the previous rush to record African-American artists following the 1920 release of Mamie Smith’s “Crazy Blues” (Lornell 1994: 77). Largely using mobile recording studios, many record companies travelled throughout the southern United States to collect recordings for commercial release. Musicians from the greater region would congregate in each town where a record company would temporarily set up shop. The resulting dissemination of vernacular music through records and radio broadcasts gave rural people in the United States for the first time an awareness of both unique regional differences and overarching similarities in their folk musics (Rosenburg 2005: 19). This awareness allowed geographically isolated people to situate themselves as part of a larger community, and this sense of community would become crucial to surviving the hardships of the next decade.

Following the stock market crash of October 1929, the American economy plunged into the Great Depression, and the recording industry did not escape its impact. Record sales dropped, hitting a low point in 1933, and several record companies went bankrupt (Rosenburg 2005: 26). Many early ‘hillbilly’ musicians from this era produced only a couple records before returning to non-musical employment and a non-commercial relationship with their music making (Lornell 1994: 81). The folk genre, however, remained quite fashionable. The 1930’s were the height of popularity for cowboy music, a relationship that Bill Malone attributes to the “renewed consciousness of and search for roots inspired by the Great Depression” (Malone 1993: 90-91).8 While popular music of the day escaped into a world of fantasy dominated by a luxurious New York lifestyle (Ford and Henderson 1994: 296), Depression-era country music centred thematically

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8 Malone also goes into greater depth earlier in the work linking the styles of cowboy music and mountain music to the hillbilly genre, and this connection forms the thesis of Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers: Southern Culture and the Roots of Country Music.
around disappointment and tragedy. As Neil Rosenberg points out, “these were hard times, and the stories told by the songs were sad but true” (Rosenburg 2005: 27).

1.3 Hard Times and “Hard Times Come Again No More”

The mid-nineteenth century saw its share of economic turmoil as well, often marked by anxieties similar to those that characterized the Great Depression. In 1854 an economic panic resulted from the failure of the Knickerbocker Savings Bank, causing a run on several banks in New York City (O Grada and White 2003: 218). That same year, two notable works of art shared similar titles: Charles Dickens’ serialized novel *Hard Times* and Stephen Foster’s song *Hard Times Come Again No More*.

When the American historian Studs Terkel compiled an oral history of the Great Depression in 1970, he included an interview with a 14-year-old boy living on the streets of Chicago. The boy told Terkel:

“It’s so damn hard. Seems like everybody’s takin’ advantage of you. See, I never heard that word ‘depression’ before. They would all just say ‘hard times’ to me. It is still.” (Terkel 1970: 211)

Terkel titled his work *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*. Though the Great Depression is now a story of the history books and we are experiencing a recovery from the most recent recession, it is impossible to deny that these hard times have and will come again. It is in acknowledgement of that cyclical nature, and perhaps in acknowledgement of a similar cyclical nature that has brought me back to classical music, that I title this piece of original music *Hard Times Come Again*. 
Chapter 2: Influences and Precedents

2.1 A Polystylistic Approach

“The polystylistic tendency has always existed in concealed form in music, and continues to do so, because music that is stylistically sterile would be dead” (Schnittke 2002: 89). Indeed, music (like any art form) continues to grow and progress because those who create it are continually stimulated by new devices and techniques. As composers, we cannot ignore the music that has come before us; but we also cannot ignore that which exists around us. For better or for worse, I feel influenced by nearly every music that I have ever heard in my life, for it has shaped, however subtly, what I experience as music. This definition of the concept renders polystylistism in a diverse and interactive world as inevitable.

A more useful definition of polystylistism, however, might also address how an artist's use of multiple styles (whether intuitive or calculated and whether from across genre boundaries or varied dialects within a genre) in a work reflects the artist's lived musical experience rather than simply influences based upon exposure. The degree to which many modern composers consider polystylistism a priority rather than an inevitability makes a further discussion of this relationship between influence and experience a worthwhile endeavour.

My personal musical history has been multifaceted, and many composers coming to maturity in the age of Youtube and Spotify may empathize. The access to an unprecedented amount of recorded music is an overwhelming characteristic of our era. My musical experience, however, goes beyond simply being exposed to (and perhaps being an avid listener of) a wide array of music. As a performer, I have participated in symphony orchestras, rock and roll bands, jazz combos,
bluegrass sessions, and hip-hop jams.\textsuperscript{9} When I entered graduate studies in music composition, I began focusing on writing in a genre that I had practically ignored for the previous six years of being a working professional musician. In the journey towards finishing a doctoral degree in music composition, I have sought to fully harness my personal voice, one that allows the multiplicities of my musical life to emerge in my compositions. Schnittke’s concept of polystylistic methods, both quotational and allusional (and what he refers to as a hybrid of the two), draws a distinction between the composer’s voice and an “alien” style. This particular sense of otherness cannot resonate to a composer who composes polystylistically because various styles legitimately live within himself. Rather than considering my emerging\textsuperscript{10} compositional voice as a fusion of influences, I prefer to imagine my voice as a distillation of experiences. After all, a melting pot simply mixes substances together, while a still is selective in which elements it extracts. John Zorn addresses the question of polystylism aptly when he says: “Composers don’t think in terms of boxes and genres. They just do what they do, and they love good music” (McCutchan 1999: 163).

The polystylistic approach that I have pursued in \textit{Hard Times Come Again}, however, goes beyond the intuitive use of a personal voice informed by an eclectic musical life. While each movement in the song cycle certainly exhibits that subconscious sense of polystylism, there is a larger intentional polystylistic approach that exists across the movements. Referencing sub-genres of both folk music and classical music (among them bluegrass, old-time, honky-tonk, minimalism,}

\textsuperscript{9} As I write this chapter, even, I periodically step away from my computer to practice on the double bass that stands in the corner of my studio. I do not play to prepare for an upcoming performance or to actively improve my technique but just to gather my thoughts, and so I alternate between pieces that are comfortable and familiar to me: the “Menuet” from Bach’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Cello Suite, Rodgers and Hart’s “My Romance,” Bob Marley’s “Dem Belly Full,” and the traditional Irish jig “The Blackbird,” among other repertoire.

\textsuperscript{10} I hope that I will continue to consider my voice as emerging for the length of my career as a composer, for that perspective signifies the fortunate attitude of personal and artistic growth.
and jazz), the musical styles of the songs reflect the various emotions expressed in the lyrics, including romanticism, simplicity, suffering, relief, guilt, and acknowledgement. This more collage-like approach to multiple styles is used to reflect the diversity within the narrative of the Great Depression, for in the words of Charles Jencks, “master narratives become impossible in a scientific age” (Jencks 1989: 36). In broad strokes, the musical style of the piece could be described as a fusion of folk music and classical music, but this view would be overly simplistic. Since the process of defining styles, crucial to defining their fusion, becomes more troublesome than the process of identifying their influence, I will discuss *Hard Times Come Again* by indicating musical sources of its elements rather than describing how it joins disparate musical genres.

### 2.2 What is folk music?

“Facile categorizations . . . are always problematic on closer view, of course, and 'folk' and 'classical' are amongst the most problematic of all” (Gelbart 2007: 1). Gelbart's idea that the transition from function to origin as a primary distinction in characterizing musical genre, which he dates back to the eighteenth-century, is important in explaining our current conceptions of folk and classical music. Compare, for example, a contemporary performance of two tunes on a violin: “Sally Ann Johnson” and a “Gavotte” composed by Jean-Baptiste Lully. Many modern listeners might place these two tunes into different genres: folk music and classical music, respectively. Both tunes, however, share the function of being accompaniment for dancing, and Gelbart's argument would have a seventeenth-century listener placing these two tunes into the same genre. While Gelbart's research provides an insightful history as to how origin has come to replace function in the
conception of musical genre, it is also important to consider briefly how views towards the genre of folk music have changed over the past century. The study of folk music has gradually expanded to encompass more ideas of what the ‘folk’ actually accept as folk music rather than simply what the folklorists have defined as folk music.

Some of the earliest studies of English language folk song, from the mid-nineteenth century, were conducted through the lens of historical literature, equating ballad singing as a lifeline to ancient poetry. This viewpoint can be seen in the scholarship of Francis Child, particularly his collection *English and Scottish Ballads*, in which he published only the words to folk songs complete with poetic line counts. Twentieth-century folklorists, however, began to contemplate folk song as a living art form rather than simply as a link to the past, as D.K. Wilgus puts it: “the folk *speaketh*, not *spake*” (Wilgus 1959: 54). Thus, early North American\(^{11}\) folk song studies focused more on the expressions of the present day folk than on the link to their ancestors' expressions. They did, however, still place a heavy emphasis on poetic value. John Lomax's first collection, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* from 1910, refers to the “Homeric quality [of] the cowboy's profanity” (Lomax 1927: ixxx), and though he does notate a handful of tunes the bulk of the work is text. Cecil Sharp dutifully notated tunes while collecting folk songs throughout the Appalachian region in 1916, including musical notation for each song in his publication; but he, too, comments that many of the songs “contain all the essentials of genuine poetry” (Sharp 1960: xxx). As technological advances allowed portable tape machines to be brought along on song collecting trips, field recordings allowed for further analysis of musical style, and the focus of folk song studies shifted...

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\(^{11}\) In this context, and unfortunately many contexts, the term “North American” refers more to the European colonizers of North America than to the indigenous people of North America.
from the text to the music. The system of cantometrics, developed by Alan Lomax (John’s son) in the
early 1960s, formed an influential, if controversial,\textsuperscript{12} tool for comparing the musical style of folk
musics around the world through 37 musical categories that sought to describe elements of melody,
rhythm, harmony, and timbre (Lomax 2003: 252-254). As folk music has continued to evolve
alongside the folk that make it, the conception of what folk music is and how best to discuss it has,
likewise, continued to evolve.

In 1954 the International Folk Music Council offered this definition of folk music:

“Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved
through a process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition
are: (1) continuity which link the present with the past; (2) variation which
springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (3)
selection by the community which determines the form or forms in which
the music survives. The term does not cover composed popular music that
has been taken over ready-made by a community and remains unchanged,
for it is the refashioning and recreation of the music by the community that
gives it its folk character.” (quoted in Grunning 2006: 10)

Oral transmission is a common inclusion in the definition of folk music, but other less formal
definitions of folk music often additionally include the characteristic of anonymous origin. Both of
these features are worth examining in part because of the discrepancy that they create in the
conception of folk music by the folk who participated in these musical traditions as compared to the
folklorists who studied the traditions.

The concept of anonymous origin is especially problematic. Even those pieces of music
passed through generations began at some point as a composition, whether that composition was
intentional or improvised. “Lyrics are developed by individuals, and so are music and styles of

\textsuperscript{12} The system was not without its flaws, including its “failure to critically challenge mechanistic cultural determinism, Eurocentric views of human cultural evolution, and Orientalist legacies” (Averill 2003: 245), which has caused relatively few ethnomusicologists to adopt the system of coding.
instrumentation. Earlier music became ‘traditional’ only through ‘discovery’ by urban intellectuals. . . . the people have always had their gifted poets, bards, and minstrels” (Gritzner 1994: 305). The requisite of anonymous origin only acknowledges that the author is not known, not that the author is not a single individual. In the concept of folk music being formed by a community, anonymous origin seems to be unimportant, as it does not address the particularly relevant criteria of being shaped and recreated by a community. Furthermore, instances of singularly composed songs being adopted into the folk music repertoire, and changed by various communities, are quite common. Though of little value to the Child-ballad scholars, many songs ordinarily referred to as traditional songs at contemporary jam sessions were composed by a singular person. “Grandfather’s Clock” by Henry Clay Work, “The Old Rugged Cross” by George Bennard, “The Baggage Coach Ahead” by Gussie Davis, and “Mid the Fields of Virginia” by Charles Harris are just a few of the examples, as Bill Malone points out.  

He goes further to discuss how these tunes were often re-imagined and reclaimed by the folk by “omit[ting] those words and chord progressions that seemed needlessly ‘fancy’ or superfluous,” what he characterizes as the ‘folk’ having “‘democratized’ the songs, making them more singable and acclimated to the sensibilities of the folk” (Malone 1993: 60).

The concept of anonymous origin has further complications in the modern era, which revolve around the emergence of folk music as a commercial category and as a genre of original creation. Following the folk revival of the 1960s,14 many artists that largely performed original

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13 I have even heard jam session participants refer to Ola Belle Reed’s composition from the 1970’s, “High on a Mountaintop,” as a traditional song, and Stan Rogers’ “Barrett’s Privateers,” from the same era, is often similarly confused.

14 This era is often referred to as ‘the’ folk revival; however, considering the commercialization of folk music through recordings in the 1920s, what occurred in the 1960s might be seen as a second folk revival. A third folk revival in North America was seen in the wake of the 2000 release of Joel and Ethan Coen’s film Oh Brother, Where Art Thou.
material, such as Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Townes Van Zandt, and Phil Ochs, were labelled as folk musicians. That label continues to be widely relevant at the time of writing, as exhibited by the fact that the Canadian Folk Music Awards include two categories for songwriter of the year (one in English and one in French). Even 2014 nominees for “Traditional Singer of the Year” Kim Beggs and Sarah Jane Scouten sing largely original music (Canadian Folk Music Awards 2014). It is quite evident that in the contemporary era, the 'folk' acknowledge not only traditional music, but also originally composed music as folk music.

The issue of oral transmission is also problematic in the modern age, and some scholars have amended 'oral' to 'aural' to include an era in which sound recordings are widely available. While this sufficiently addresses the fact that many folk musicians (myself included) have learned some of their repertoire from recordings rather than in-person, it does not entirely solve the problem. The folk revival of the 1960s created such an interest in folk music that it also spawned an industry of instructional records and books that have continued into the next century. As early as 1955, Folkways Records released Pete Seeger’s instructional record *The Folksinger’s Guitar Guide*. The liner notes include extensive instructional material such as lyric and chord charts, drawings and diagrams, and songs notated in tablature (Seeger 1955). Homespun Tapes began producing instructional materials in 1967 and continues to put out video, audio, and written instructional material at the time of writing (Homespun Music Instruction). In the late twentieth-century and the twenty-first-century, then, many folk musicians have learned their trade not from an oral transmission of traditional song, nor necessarily from an aural transmission of recorded song, but often from written materials.
A quick survey of the schedules of any of the dozens of folk festivals that occur every year in North America will reveal that the definition of folk music has, perhaps, never been more nebulous as it is in the present. As Bruno Nettl points out, “the homogeneity of modern American life, and particularly the prominence of radio, television, and the recording industry, has also homogenized musical life to the extent that the old tripartite view of music (art, popular, and folk) has lost much of its meaning” (Nettl 1990: 258). Since a complete exploration of the history and current state of North American folk music is beyond the scope of this discussion, I will use the term ‘folk music’ to include both traditional music of anonymous origins along with individually composed music, as well as music transmitted both orally and through recordings. As a result, my definition of ‘folk music’ will resemble what many refer to as ‘roots music,’ as it will additionally include other genres either encompassed within folk music (such as blues) or evolved from folk music (such as bluegrass).

2.3 Some Characteristics of North American Folk Music

In order to aid the discussion of how various influences of folk music can be seen in *Hard Times Come Again*, as well as other pieces of music that have shaped my creative process, it is useful to identify some characteristics of North American folk music. I will address particular musical characteristics that have most influenced my creative work, including acoustic instrumentation, generally tonal harmonic and melodic structures, consistent pulse, regular metrical structures, and vocal and instrumental performance styles, as well as specific deviations from these norms commonly found within the tradition. A wide diversity of musical traits can found in folk music
traditions throughout North America, and further diversity can be seen by examining the differences with which these traditions are engaged by amateur and professional music making communities. Focusing on the music that has most influenced *Hard Times Come Again* this discussion will primarily pertain to characteristics of traditional folk music from the Appalachian region as well as certain commercialized genres of music that have evolved from that folk music (such as bluegrass, country, and honky-tonk).

The instruments used in American folk music are, like most folk musics, primarily acoustic instruments. Stringed instruments are the most common, and a variety of them are utilized, including fiddles, guitars, banjos, mandolins, and dulcimers. Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys established the typical quintet instrumentation of the bluegrass genre: guitar, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, and string bass. Country groups have often included electric guitar in addition to, or in replacement of, the acoustic guitar and have also augmented the instrumentation to include a drum set. Several instruments played in the manner of a slide guitar, including the dobro, lap steel, and pedal steel, have also joined country and honky-tonk bands. The piano is less common, but present in some country and honky-tonk groups, though generally absent from bluegrass and old-timey ensembles. In *Hard Times Come Again* I explore augmenting the traditional bluegrass instrumentation with an expanded, more ‘classical’ bowed string section consisting of two violins (or fiddles), a viola, and a cello.

Much of American folk music, not surprisingly, is stylistically similar to the folk musics of the English and Scotch-Irish people that colonized the Appalachian region of North America. Melodies are often diatonic using mostly triadic harmony in their accompaniment, and songs are
unlikely to include change of tonal centre.\textsuperscript{15} Phrasing is often symmetrical, and pulses are generally divided into two equal parts.\textsuperscript{16} American folk music, however, has developed its own characteristics and, as Bruno Nettl points out, includes “more melodies in major, fewer pentatonic tunes, more songs in duple metre, and less use of accompaniment” (Nettl 1990: 267) than British folk music.

North American folk music could be deceptively characterized as harmonically basic; Charles Seeger and Ruth Crawford Seeger have observed that “traditionally, few chords are required to accompany any one song” (Seeger and Crawford Seeger 1966: xviii), an influence that can be seen in \textit{Hard Times Come Again} through substantial sections of the music utilizing only tonic, subdominant, and dominant harmonies. There are some unusual vertical alignments present in North American folk music, however, that challenge this sense of simplicity. In her study of the fiddle-song tradition of West Virginia, Erynn Marshall finds instances where “the third and the seventh scale degrees of the song are often a semitone apart” (Marshall 2006: 151). These periods of dissonance, which do tend to resolve, add a level of vertical complexity that cannot be adequately characterized by the chord symbols in many folk-style songbooks. Furthermore, Marshall finds appearances of ‘blue notes’ in West Virginian fiddle music; “the third, the seventh, and occasionally the tonic are microtonally changed” (Marshall 2006: 151). Her observations show that while the music may seem diatonic at face value, there are more complex tonalities in play, and I explore this interplay between diatonicism and chromaticism most clearly in “This Is What Happened,” the second song in \textit{Hard Times Come Again}.

\textsuperscript{15} Notable exceptions to this include songs which switch between relative major and minor modes. This tonal structure is especially found in two-part fiddle tunes, such as “Blackberry Blossom,” where one section resides in the major mode and the other section begins in the minor mode but ends in the major mode.

\textsuperscript{16} Again, there are exceptions here. Compound metres are found in 6/8 tunes, though the 9/8 slipjig, common to Irish fiddling tradition, is rare in North American folk music.
The illusion of rhythmic simplicity is also present in some discussions of American folk music. Part of this illusion might be attributed to the fact that many of the song books that transcribe American folk songs are prescriptive rather than descriptive in nature. This method of notation might render a song’s rhythms rather plain on the page that are, in practice, quite varied and complex. Ruth Crawford Seeger acknowledges this in her analysis of American folk song when she writes that “folk singers habitually divide beats and measures in . . . highly irregular ways. . . . Some of these are simple enough to be allowed inclusion in a singing book of this sort; many were, of necessity, excluded” (Crawford Seeger 1941: 61). Much of the presentation of simplicity in American folk rhythms, then, seems ‘necessary’ because the folklorists don’t believe that the ‘folk’ are capable of reading the rhythms that come naturally to them. Of course, the other benefit of prescriptive notation is that it allows each performer to adapt and alter the performance of the piece to suit their own personal interpretation.

While prescriptive notation explains some of the confusion around the perception of rhythmic simplicity in American folk music on an intra-phrasal level, there exists a more complex rhythmic structure on an inter-phrasal level as well, which I explore in several songs in Hard Times Come Again including “It Was Rough Going” and “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres.” I can recall musicians in jam sessions referring to certain tunes as ‘crooked,’ this meant that the phrasing of the tune either added or dropped a beat (or two, depending on one’s sense of the pulse) from the regular symmetrical phrase. This is true of instrumental tunes like “Clinch Mountain Backstep” that

17 The ‘folk’ might not necessarily dispute their inability to read certain musical notation, at least on a personal level. I can recall at least one conversation with a friend, much more commercially and popularly successful than I, who responded to the charge of illiteracy (not from myself, but from a well-known American composer) with indifference.

18 Because folk music is, for the most part, an unwritten music there are often discrepancies among players as to what constitutes one pulse.
include mixed metres. Ruth Crawford Seeger goes further to identify vocal songs, such as “Po’ Lazarus” and “Johnny Stiles,” that prolong or contract the phrase metrically, contravening the symmetry of the tune’s phrasal construction (Crawford Seeger 2001: 55). In each of these examples, a notable characteristic of the metric irregularity is that it occurs at phrase endings or beginnings. While Crawford Seeger does illustrate instances where certain words are prolonged in the middle of a phrase, these words do not appear to be haphazardly chosen by the singer; rather, they seem to illuminate a grouping structure made of sub-phrases within the phrase. Furthermore, these prolonged notes seem to differ from the use of a fermata in a classical score, for one rhythmic characteristic of American folk music is a steady pulse which “holds strictly to a tempo, once it is started” (Seeger and Crawford Seeger 1966: xviii). This element of consistent pulse is evident throughout Hard Times Come Again, with only a few specific exceptions which I will discuss further in Chapter 3.

Though these aforementioned complexities of rhythm and harmony are surely present in the genre of American folk music, it is probably wise not to overemphasize their prevalence. While it is certainly easier to identify the unusual than the usual, it is more likely the usual that sustains the genre. Ruth Crawford Seeger struggled with this conundrum in her studies of American folk music style:

“As a professional musician, my inclination was to ask: How ‘different’ is this song? Does it contain irregularities which set it apart as something unusual, unique? These questions I could answer without difficulty. But . . . their opposites were not so easy. . . . How ‘nice and common’ (in one singer’s words) is it? Of that sort of commonness which keeps a thing alive and growing? And where lies the dividing line between the common and the commonplace?” (Crawford Seeger 1941: xvii-xviii)
Like the subtle shifts of hypermeter in a Beethoven symphony, these complexities are irregular occurrences that contribute to the overarching dramatic tension of the genre, subverting our sense of expectation not continually, but occasionally. And when these complexities are found, they tend to avoid the laboured sound of some modernist compositions in favour of a sense of ease. As Amanda Petrusich puts it, “good functional folk songs are . . . effortless to sing” (Petrusich 2008: 165).

Putting styles of musical construction aside for a moment, it seems important to address styles of sound production, particularly singing. American folk singing differs from classical singing in aspects of timbre and word emphasis. Many folk singers seem to place little importance on the clear, open vowel sounds that predominate the 'bel canto' style of classical singing. In fact, among folk singers, if one's voice sounds “reedy or nasal, so much the better” (Crawford Seeger 1941: xx). Likewise, clear, crisp enunciation of syllabic boundaries can be masked by more natural speech-like pronunciation that might replace a written consonant with a sounded glottal stop, as in the word 'button,' for example. While not evident from the notation of the score in Hard Times Come Again, it is my expectation that the singers will adopt this approach to timbre and pronunciation.

One particularly notable characteristic of American folk singing that distinguishes it from classical or popular singing, that can be seen reflected in the score to Hard Times Come Again through the sparsity of dynamic markings, is the lack of dramatic interpretation. In her suggestions for using Our Singing Country as a songbook, Ruth Crawford Seeger instructs the potential folk singer: “Do not sing 'with expression,' or make an effort to dramatize” (Crawford Seeger 1941: xix). Neil Rosenberg documents that this style of singing carried over into the early commercial 'hillbilly'
recordings, noting the “impersonality of delivery” and the fact that the “dynamics of the story were not carried over into the dynamic of singing; a humorous novelty item was performed in basically the same way as a serious sad song” (Rosenberg 2005: 22). Common examples of this discontinuity between subject matter and musical style can be seen in the sub-genre known as ‘murder ballads,’ which often combine stories of cold-blooded killing (sometimes of a loved one) with major key melodies and medium- or up-tempo bouncy rhythms.19

Styles of sound production as they pertain to instruments besides the voice are worth mentioning as well. Mandolins, not unlike their use in the classical style, are customarily played with a plectrum, while string bass (not a traditional folk instrument, but common enough in folk and folk-derived ensembles today) are generally played pizzicato. Guitars, which are usually equipped with steel strings, are often played with a flatpick, though sometimes played in the fingerpicking style, with or without fingerpicks (plectrums that attach to the fingers of the right hand). In Hard Times Come Again, the mandolinist and guitarist are asked to play with flatpicks, while the bass part includes both arco and pizzicato sections.

Banjos20 are played in two methods. The old-time clawhammer21 style, in which I write the banjo material for “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres,” involves a three stroke pattern that includes a stroke with the back nail of the index (or middle) finger followed by a light strum (or brush stroke) by all the fingers and finished with a stroke by the flesh of the thumb (usually on the short string).

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19 “Tom Dula” (or “Tom Dooley) and “Banks of the Ohio” are two good examples that fit these characteristics. Many other murder ballads, such as “Little Sadie” and “Maddy Groves,” do employ the minor key, but still exhibit a dance tempo rhythmically.

20 Most common to American folk music is the five string banjo rather than the four string banjo. Many of the traditional Appalachian banjos were fretless and strung with gut. While these are still played by some banjoists, fretted banjos strung with steel are now more common.

21 Also variously referred to as frailing, thumping, beating, knocking, rocking, racking, rapping, and whomping (Conway 1995: 205).
The three-finger style of playing, which is popular in bluegrass, involves various combinations of alternations between strokes using the fleshy side (though often mediated by fingerpicks) of the thumb, index, and middle fingers. I write large sections of the banjo part for “One of My Father’s,” the third song in *Hard Times Come Again*, in this three-finger style. The resulting sounds of each style are further influenced by the short fifth string, which is often used as a drone. This drone effect combined with the various tuning schemes used in the clawhammer style (useful for playing melodies with the finger stroke while keeping dissonances in the brush stroke to a minimum) contributes to the banjo’s role in American folk music as “a background of sonority rather than a sequence of chords” (Seeger and Crawford Seeger 1966: xviii).

Fiddle playing is also worthy of discussion partly because of how the instrument, which is shared with the classical style, is played uniquely, and partly because of the way that classical music has in recent years come to influence folk styles of playing. Fiddle playing in the American folk music style could be considered by some listeners as rough around the edges. Bow technique displays a set of values regarding sound quality that can result in a scratchiness of tone. Left hand technique uses little or no vibrato, which minimally masks any discrepancies of pitch. These inflections of pitch, however, are often used to great effect, especially when combined with an open string to produce a near unison double stop. Slides and scoops also contribute to the less than exact orientation to an equal tempered scale of semitones.

In recent years, fiddle playing has become a concert and contest art in addition to a community activity as accompaniment to song or dance. This change in context has impacted the playing style of some fiddlers; imprecise intonation and tone that might be considered abrasive by a
typical symphony-goer are less frequently considered acceptable practices among a professional class of fiddlers. Many young, aspiring folk fiddle players are just as likely to drill scale patterns as a classically trained violinist, and in fact, many fiddle players have had some classical training. Classical music's effect on folk style fiddle playing has resulted in what Peter Cooke refers to as “the Westernization of Western music” (quoted in Blaustein 1993: 269), and this effect might be heard in *Hard Times Comes Again* by the bowed instruments often sounding the most 'classical.' An increase in virtuosity among folk musicians is clearly not limited to fiddle players; the past several decades have seen guitarists, mandolinists, and even bassists of extraordinary skill elevate the technical standards of their instruments. Nor is this trend unique to folk music, as similar trajectories can be seen in jazz and classical music. Exceptionally significant about this transformation in folk music, however, is not only the way it has changed stylistic elements of the genre, but also how it has created an exclusive elite rank of professional performers within a genre that is often characterized by its widely inclusive and amateur nature.

This description of North American folk music style is not intended to be exhaustive, by any means. Rather, it should simply give the necessary background information to understand a discussion of creative choices that I have made in *Hard Times Come Again* based on my experience as a performer in the genre of folk music. Furthermore, this brief discourse should help to create an environment in which an exploration of the interplay between 'folk' and 'classical' styles can be initiated.
2.4 Folk Music Influences on Composers of Classical Music

The influence of folk music on classical composition is not a new practice. Many early composers wrote pieces based on the French folk tune “L’homme Ar mé,” and Mozart wrote variations on the French folk song “Ah, vous direr-je, maman,” though these examples use folk song more as source material than as a stylistic guide (a practice that I avoid in *Hard Times Come Again*). Amidst the national revivalism of the 19th century, the Bohemian composer Antonín Dvořák, who once said that “all of the great musicians have borrowed from the songs of the common people” (An Interview with Dvořák 1893: 72), turned to the folk music of his homeland for inspiration. The Moravian composer Leoš Janáček took interest in folk song a step further; in the 1880s he worked with the folklorist František Bartoš collecting folk songs and analyzing speech patterns of Moravian dialects (Zemanova 2002: 60). Roger Scrutton finds in Janáček’s writings the theory that common chords can retain their individual identity even when ornamented with added tones or overlapping harmonies, thus allowing for an advancement of tonality based in a “deep psychology of musical connection” (Scrutton 2009: 167).

In 1905, Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály began working together to investigate Hungarian folk song, and their research would yield many transcriptions and field recordings (Erdely 1983: 51), as well as impact their own compositional output.

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22 It is interesting to note that Dvořák admitted to not only borrowing from the songs of the common people from his native Bohemia, but also from African-American melodies, which he called “the folk songs of America” and to which he encouraged American composers to turn to for inspiration.

23 Bedřich Smetana is often similarly characterized as drawing on Bohemia for inspiration, perhaps mostly notably in *Ma Vlast*; however, according to Ralph Vaughn Williams, Smetana “denied that he owed anything to folk music” (Vaughn Williams 1956: 366).

24 See Michael Brim Beckerman’s *Janáček as Theorist* for a much more detailed discussion of Janáček’s theories on musical perception, including his influential ‘moment of chaos’ theory.

25 While Bartók is perhaps more popularly known as an early ethnomusicologist (then referred to as comparative musicology) than Kodály, Kodály’s doctoral dissertation, entitled “Strophic Structure of Hungarian Folk Song” had earned him a Ph.D. from the University of Budapest. An element of Kodály’s theories that was particularly forward thinking at the time was his conception of folk song as “vocal text” where melody and poetry are intertwined and inseparable (Erdely 1983: 54).
Similar to composers from Moravia and Bohemia, North American composers were saturated with a historical canon of French, German, and Italian music. In the struggle to find a personal voice that reflected a North American culture, some American composers have also turned to folk music for guidance. This search for a voice more connected to a composer's specific personal existence is not unlike my process in *Hard Times Come Again* of calling upon my lived musical experience for inspiration. One of the earliest prominent American composers, Edward MacDowell, turned not to the folk music of European colonizers, but to the music of Native Americans in his *Indian Suite*, from 1896. His conception of Native American culture and music was largely theoretical, however, drawing mostly from Theodore Baker's dissertation entitled *On the Music of the North American Indians* (Gardner 2004: 376). Perhaps one of the most unique American composers, Charles Ives was influenced by a tremendous amount of diverse musical sources, ranging from European symphonic repertoire to North American folk song. When Henry Cowell, one of Ives' most dedicated champions, described Ives' authenticity as an American composer by his use of “folk materials” (quoted in Paul 2006: 406), he was likely referring more to Ives' invocation of a folkish style complete with out-of-tune pitches, bends, and slides, than to his quotations of American popular songs, folk songs, and hymns. Later American composers would also attempt to mimic folk music style; Aaron Copland’s string writing in *Rodeo* borrows the melody of the fiddle tune “Bonaparte’s Retreat,” but the orchestral rendition loses the grit of true fiddling. Interestingly enough, Copland’s turn to “imposed simplicity” during the Great Depression might be described as

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26 It is interesting to note that some of the quoted material in Ives' pieces were popular songs, from minstrel show repertoire or Stephen Foster's songbooks, that have made their way into the folk music repertoire despite their having been singularly composed.

27 It is also interesting to note that in another ballet from the era, *Appalachian Spring*, Copland quotes the Shaker hymn “Simple Gifts,” which has, in my experience, been treated as a folk song.
an attempt to write music that would speak to the common man, the ‘folk,’ one might say (Crist 2003: 410). Though I use folk idioms in *Hard Times Come Again* primarily to craft an honest personal expression, I very much relate to the desire to be communicative that is implied by the use of a more direct musical language.

In recent years, several American composers have written music that reveals folk music influences. Quite notable is the music of Paul Elwood. A banjo player himself, Elwood had won the 1986 Kansas State Bluegrass Banjo Competition before receiving his Ph.D. in music composition from the State University of New York – Buffalo in 1995, where he studied with David Felder. His piece *Stanley Kubrick’s Mountain Home*, from 2001, combines a Pierrot ensemble with a bluegrass band and can be seen as a direct influence to the combination of a string quartet and a bluegrass band in the instrumentation of *Hard Times Come Again*. Elwood uses the two forces as separate entities at first, alternating between the ‘classical’ musicians and the ‘folk’ musicians, with one striking exception; early on in the piece the banjo plays in unison with the vocal melody. As the piece progresses the two groups overlap, but their combination brings a chaotic atmosphere that layers more abstract harmonies from the Pierrot ensemble atop the diatonic tunes of the bluegrass band. While this technique produces a blend of the two sonic worlds, the two ensembles remain at odds throughout the piece, sounding never coordinated, and the piece ends with a similar

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28 Elwood had previously studied with several well-known composers including Donald Erb, Charles Wuorinen, and Peter Maxwell Davies, among others.
29 The Pierrot ensemble of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano has become a common ensemble for contemporary classical music. In this piece, Elwood does not employ the doubling from *Pierre Lumaire*, but he does use a soprano vocalist.
30 Later on in the piece, the banjo accompanies the vocal melody in a more arpeggiated figure idiomatic to the instrument along with cello and piano. Considering that Elwood performs the banjo part on the recording, and in many performances, it is perhaps not surprising that writes himself into more of the piece than the rest of the bluegrass band.
31 I am quite certain that at least some of the material played by the bluegrass band are arrangements of traditional folk tunes; one tune appears at the beginning that I distinctly recognize but cannot place the name of.
alternation of the forces that began it. Another noteworthy piece of Elwood’s is *Border Radio X*, from 2006, for solo banjo, voice,\(^{32}\) and live electronics.\(^{33}\) This piece draws less on folk styles of instrumental performance, using bowed banjo for textural effects that are then processed by the electronic component; however, the piece does invoke folksinging with sung quotations from the folk song “In the Pines.”

Wayne Horvitz’s 2004 composition *Joe Hill, 16 Actions for Orchestra, Voice, and Soloists* is another recent example of a concert piece that alludes to elements of folk music. Much of the instrumentation is rather conventional,\(^{34}\) but the inclusion of an improvising electric guitarist indicates that the piece was written for specific performers (the guitarist is Horvitz’s longtime collaborator, Bill Frisell). The importance of this aspect of the piece is that one of the vocalists for whom Horvitz writes is the bluegrass banjo player and singer, Danny Barnes. Barnes’ singing, by nature of his personal style, gives the piece a folk flavour by utilizing the nasal tone and pronunciation indicative of North American folk music, much like what I ask the singers in *Hard Times Come Again* to adopt.

Julia Wolfe’s chamber piece *Steel Hammer*, from 2009, is remarkable for its allusions to folk tradition in both its subject matter as well as aspects of its musical style. The piece is a musical dramatization in nine movements depicting the legendary American folk hero John Henry. In the program notes to the piece Wolfe recalls her admiration of Appalachian music as well as her first public musical performance, which was on the mountain dulcimer (Wolfe 2014). While the musical

\(^{32}\) The banjo player also performs the voice part.

\(^{33}\) There is no commercial recording of this piece, but the reader can find view a performance by Joti Rockwell played on mandolin and banjo that has been posted on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L72juonnhaU.

\(^{34}\) I have not seen the score, but the recording sounds like a standard chamber orchestra with a small number of winds and brass.
style of *Steel Hammer* is primarily minimalist with a predilection for driving rhythms and overt repetition rife with slowly changing variation, Wolfe does weave in musical images that reference folk styles. In the first movement, entitled “Some Say,” the three female vocalists are asked to perform grace notes that at times seem to resemble the yodelling characteristic of Jimmie Rodgers and other country singers. In the second movement, entitled “The States,” Wolfe calls on each of the instrumentalists to stomp their feet and asks the percussionist, along with the guitarist and clarinetist, to play body percussion on their thighs and chests. Furthermore, the guitarist is asked to double on dulcimer and banjo. Interestingly enough, while Wolfe meticulously notates much of the score, the banjo part is liberally improvised. In “The States” she simply instructs the player to perform a “banjo riff,” a “bigger banjo riff,” or a “banjo country riff,” while in the sixth movement, entitled “Polly Ann – The Race,” she instructs the banjo player to begin playing a pattern and to add variation as the piece progresses (Wolfe 2009). While I have chosen in *Hard Times Come Again* to compose specific lines for the banjo based upon my own research into performance styles for the instrument, I do include sections in the mandolin and guitar parts that have some element of improvisation which may harness the same sense of naturalness that I presume Wolfe seeks.

The work of composer Dan Trueman is also interesting in its debt to folk music, though as much to the music of Norway as to that of his native North America. In addition to being active as a composer of classical music, Trueman is a skilled computer programmer and an avid fiddler. Much of his work is focused on harnessing new sounds from the violin, and he utilizes the electric violin to achieve this in several compositions. Additionally, his discovery of the Hardanger fiddle, a Norwegian folk instrument that includes drone strings, has had a major impact on his purely
acoustic work; he has performed on it and composed for it in a variety of ensembles (Trueman 2014). A particularly interesting aspect of how Trueman’s experience as composer and performer interact is the transcriptions that he provides to several of his own recordings; however, a comparison of the printed version of “Fosclachtha” and the recorded performance of that tune by Trueman and Brittany Haas displays that stylistic characteristics such as slides, trills, and shakes are expected to be freely added by any potential performer (Trueman 2014, Haas and Trueman 2012).\^35

In a similar fashion, though I do not expect performers in *Hard Times Come Again* to add unwritten material to the piece, I would not discourage the addition of stylistically appropriate ornamentation.\^36

Finally, the work of Matt McBane shows an interesting intersection of classical and folk music. As a classically trained composer and violinist in the band Build, much of McBane’s music combines the dictated precision of classical music with the frenetic rhythms of rock and roll. His chamber piece *Drawn*, from 2013, is notable not for its musical style, but for its instrumentation. *Drawn* was composed for and premiered by the Jake Schepps Quintet. Led by Schepps on the banjo, the group shares its instrumentation with Bill Monroe’s Bluegrass Boys, including guitar, fiddle, bass, and mandolin in addition to banjo. In the first, third, and fifth movements, McBane writes in a minimalist style that focuses on groove,\^37 giving each player a carefully crafted role in the interlocking rhythms that create a swirling, energetic texture. Considering that Monroe’s personal innovation was to create the bluegrass genre out of assigning roles to each instrument in the

\^35 In some ways this speaks to the state of fiddle culture in North America in the 21st century, where keen fiddlers are increasingly likely to learn new songs and technical tricks from recordings of international fiddle stars rather than in person from people in their close communities.

\^36 This is not unlike compositions that I have written for jazz orchestra, in which lead players of any given section are invited to guide other members of the band in the stylistic interpretation of the written lines.

\^37 In the second and fourth movements, McBane uses more atmospheric textures.
ensemble, which created a specific groove from interlocking rhythms, McBane's piece seems like a logical progression for this instrumentation. *Drawn* sets the groundwork for *Hard Times Come Again* by using these instruments in a 'concert' setting as well as by adapting the interlocking rhythmic qualities of bluegrass to a post-minimalist language.

The course of musical history has shown a fruitful interaction between folk and classical music, with each influencing the other to various degrees. The result is a current culture in which one is likely to encounter both classical composers who are also folk musicians and folk musicians who perform Bach partitas. This diverse and intertwined culture is where my musical life as a composer and as a performer exists, and this is the context for *Hard Times Come Again*. 
Chapter 3: Form and Style in *Hard Times Comes Again*

3.1 Overall Formal Structure

Composed of seven songs that exist independently, but also contribute to a greater dramatic momentum when combined, *Hard Times Come Again* fits best into the song-cycle genre. While the most overtly shared characteristic across the songs is the subject matter of the text, there are additional continuities to be found in the tonal centres that form the boundaries between songs, as detailed in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Number</th>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Approx. Duration</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Beginning Key</th>
<th>Ending Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It Was Rough Going</td>
<td>3 min.</td>
<td>Baritone, Bass, Mandolin, Banjo, Guitar, Piano</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>GM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This Is What Happened</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>Alto, Baritone, Viola, Cello, Bass, Banjo, Guitar, Piano</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>One of My Father's</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>Alto, 2 Violins, Viola, Cello, Bass, Mandolin, Banjo, Guitar</td>
<td>DM</td>
<td>EM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I Was Relieved</td>
<td>5¼ min.</td>
<td>Alto, Baritone, 2 Violins, Viola, Cello, Bass, Mandolin, Banjo, Guitar, Piano</td>
<td>GM</td>
<td>GM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres</td>
<td>3½ min.</td>
<td>Alto, 2 Violins, Viola, Cello, Bass, Banjo, Guitar</td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I Had a Terrible Guilt</td>
<td>3¼ min.</td>
<td>Baritone, 2 Violins, Viola, Mandolin, Piano</td>
<td>gm</td>
<td>ebm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>We Had So Little</td>
<td>6¼ min.</td>
<td>Alto, Baritone, 2 Violins, Viola, Cello, Bass, Mandolin, Banjo, Guitar, Piano</td>
<td>ebm</td>
<td>DM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Formal outline of *Hard Times Come Again*

The first two songs share the starting key of A major, and the second song’s ending key of G major creates a dominant relationship to the third song’s beginning key of D major. Similar shared and
dominant relationships between keys of adjacent songs are found between the sixth and seventh
song and the fourth and fifth song, respectively.

Further structural organization can be seen in the varieties of instrumentation and duration
among the songs. Only two songs, the fourth and seventh, utilize the entire ensemble, while the
remaining songs use various subsets of the ensemble. Furthermore, those songs that use the largest
forces are also the longest in duration. The entire song cycle, then, can be divided into two dramatic
halves that build to climaxes in the fourth and seventh songs, the second climax being the larger of
the two. There are other musical factors besides instrumentation and duration that impact the
perception of musical importance in these two songs as well, but those elements of harmony,
rhythm, and thematic development will be discussed further in later sections.

Each song in the cycle also exists as an individual composition, with its own beginning and
ending, capable of being performed apart from the remainder of the cycle. While the songs combine
to create an overall dramatic arc throughout the cycle, each song has a self-contained dramatic
contour as well. A variety of beginnings and endings are used which exhibit various levels of energy
and definition of commencement or conclusion. The first song, “It Was Rough Going,” for example,
begins clearly with loud, accented chords that establish the rhythmic pulse and tonality
immediately. The fourth song, “I Was Relieved,” by contrast, begins with sustained chords, out of
which the rhythmic pulse emerges. The seventh song, “We Had So Little,” concludes with a soft, but
definite, authentic cadence, while the fifth song, “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres,” culminates in a
half cadence that insinuates a feeling of uncertainty. Each of these individual forms seeks to
complement the expression of the text, which constructs the dramatic tension of the piece through a
series of vignettes rather than an overarching narrative.

### 3.2 Lyrical content

Each song in *Hard Times Come Again* takes its text from a poem constructed of quotations from Studs Terkel’s work of oral history *Hard Times*. Terkel examines the Great Depression through interviews with various people, some famous, some unknown, some who had lived through the Depression, and some who had heard about it from family members. The resulting work is a book that avoids a greater narrative in favour of a series of glimpses into what life was like during the Great Depression, and *Hard Times Come Again* works in much the same way. Each song addresses one perspective of life during the Great Depression, and while the seven songs build upon each other to offer a wider view of the era, a tightly intertwined narrative is avoided.

Developing the lyrical content of *Hard Times Come Again* was a multi-step process. Figures 1, 2, and 3 exhibit the process of arriving at the lyrical content for “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres.” After having digested Terkel’s work through several readings, I compiled a list of quotations from the text. I subsequently selected fragments of quotations that shared similar themes, emotions, or perspectives and grouped them together, as shown in Figure 1.

| “320 acres of farm land, fine land, that my uncle owned and cleared, he lost it.” (Terkel 1986: 214) |
| “Men in the theater, whom I’d known, who had responsible positions. Who had lost their jobs, lost their homes, lost their families. And worse than anything else, lost belief in themselves. They were destroyed men.” (Terkel 1986: 381) |
| “Even the good year was no good . . . . The most valuable thing we lost was hope. A man can endure a lot if he still has hope.” (Terkel 1986: 230) |

Figure 1: Quotations from source text
Finally, I arranged these fragments into a poetic form, as shown in Figure 2.

```
Three hundred twenty acres of farm land,
fine land,
my uncle owned and cleared.
He lost it.

   Even the good year was no good.

Men whom I'd known who had lost their jobs,
lost their homes, lost their families. And worse
than anything else lost belief in themselves.
They were destroyed men.

   A man can endure a lot if he still has hope.

Three hundred twenty acres of farm land,
fine land,
my uncle owned and cleared.

   The most valuable thing lost was hope.

He lost it.
```

Figure 2: Quoted fragments in poetic form

When composing each song, I treated each poetic text as I would any poem, liberally repeating words and occasionally reordering words or phrases, as exhibited in Figure 3.

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38 Occasionally, phrases were slightly changed through the omission of a word or two, but in most cases larger fragments remained entirely intact. In only one instance did I decide, on Simmers’ advice, to change a word from the original citation; the second song uses the term “juke joint” rather than “gyp joint,” which appeared in Terkel’s interview, to appeal to a modern, more politically correct audience. In this case, I believe that the adjusted version still captures the imagery of the original description.
Figure 3: Lyrics as they appear in the song

Throughout these steps I worked closely with Canadian poet Bren Simmers to ensure that each poem and each song would exhibit the carefully thought-out choices of a trained wordsmith. One feature of this process that contributes to the absence of a single narrative throughout the work is the fact that each song contains pieces of several different interviews. Though the text was crafted by two people, it consists of the voices of more than two dozen.

An additional aspect of this process that befits a piece drawing influences from both folk and classical music is that the text is, by nature, folksy. Though the typical definition of the 'folk' emphasizes the 'common' person over the elite, the lyrics to these songs epitomize the language of the 'folk' by their conversational tone regardless of the identity of the original speaker. These lyrics, however, are also the result of careful construction; bulky and intellectual words and phrases are avoided by choice as much as by availability. Consequently, this method might have more in common with classical music's highly constructed manner than folk music's looser, sometimes
improvised, demeanour. The dichotomy that arises from simple, folksy language that is rigorously chosen and arranged falls into step with the duality of the music that invokes both folk and classical styles.

3.3 Instrumentation and Performance Considerations

A further element that overtly alludes to both folk and classical idioms is the instrumentation for which *Hard Times Come Again* is composed. The score calls for eleven musicians consisting of two singers (a baritone and an alto), a string quartet (two violins, viola, and cello), double bass, mandolin, banjo, guitar, and piano. The mandolin should be a folk style mandolin (either A-model or F-model) rather than a classical mandolin, and the guitar should be outfitted with steel strings and played with a flatpick. By combining folk instruments (guitar, banjo, mandolin) with classical instruments (piano, viola, cello), the ensemble offers sonic references to both styles of music. The ensemble, however, also includes an element of continuity, for all the instruments (besides voice) produce sound from vibrating strings.

In assembling an ensemble to perform *Hard Times Comes Again*, I expect to encounter certain challenges. The piece requires three musicians (mandolin, banjo, and guitar) that should be able to play convincingly in the folk and bluegrass styles. In my experience, those musicians who can play in this style and also read traditional notation are less common, though they do exist. For this reason, I anticipate that these players might learn the music in one of two alternate methods. The first method would involve written notation that utilizes tablature rather than traditional notes, as

39 To be fair, this categorization of folk instruments and classical instruments is overly simplistic, for it does not account for artists such as Bela Fleck or Chris Thile who play Bach on the banjo and mandolin, respectively; nor does it account for artists such as Nancy Blake or Rushad Eggleston, who play folk (and folk-derived) music on the cello. Additionally, this ensemble includes instruments such as violin/fiddle and voice which are commonly found in both styles of music.
shown in Example 1.

Most players of the mandolin, banjo, and guitar who are comfortable playing in the folk and bluegrass tradition would be familiar with this notational method, and tablature has the added benefit of specifying where certain notes should be played on the fingerboard. The standard notation in Example 1, for instance, does not necessarily indicate that the figure should be performed as a roll, whereas that information is clearly conveyed in tablature notation. The other method would be to have these players be taught their parts by ear which would then be memorized. This may sound daunting at first to a classical musician, but it is a common enough practice in the folk and bluegrass world. While this method can take considerably more time, several rock and roll and new-acoustic bands have shown that intricate and complex multi-part compositions can be learned and performed in this way. Furthermore, in *Hard Times Come Again* the mandolin, banjo, and guitar parts include sections that allow the players to improvise as they see fit. The written notation offers a guide to the general groove of the music, and the harmony is additionally notated with chord symbols. Giving the players some liberty to stray from the exact rhythms and voicings on the page may allow them to play what they feel is a personal and authentic expression in the folk or bluegrass style while still coordinating with the more strictly

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40 The roll is a technique used in three-finger style banjo playing that is characterized by groups of successive notes played on adjacent strings. This often results in arpeggiated figures, like that in Example 1, though more scalar figures are also possible because of the banjo’s tuning scheme.
notated instruments.

The vocalists should also be comfortable singing in a folk style rather than a classical style, and similar issues pertaining to literacy of written notation may arise. In this case, it would be assumed that the singers learn their parts by ear, possibly using recordings as learning tools. For those singers unfamiliar with what singing in a folk style means, I have included instructions in a performance note, however, it is undesirable to perform *Hard Times Come Again* using singers for whom the folk idiom is foreign territory. It is likely that those vocalists singing in a folk style will not have the capability to project at the same volume as those singers trained in a classical style, and for this reason all the musicians in the ensemble should be amplified. The choice to amplify the singers will allow them to sing in a natural manner, without strain, and achieve a dynamic balance with the ensemble. The amplification of the instrumentalists will help to smooth over any issues of balance between instruments of varying dynamic capabilities, but will also provide the perception of all the sound in the ensemble occupying the same sonic world.\(^4\)

### 3.4 Folk-like forms

The seven songs in the cycle use a variety of forms ranging from more simple two-part arrangements to more elaborately through-composed constructions based on thematic development. Though each of the songs blends stylistic elements of folk and classical music, the forms of the songs play a significant role in determining a song’s character as belonging more in the

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\(^4\) Of course, purely acoustic instruments and amplified acoustic instruments have different timbres, and this choice to amplify the musicians in the ensemble will result in what might be characterized as a modern sound rather than a traditional sound. Many ensembles working in the folk and bluegrass style utilize a single microphone approach, which mitigates some of the timbral differences associated with amplification of acoustic instruments. This approach requires a keen sense of choreography among the performers, however, and the stationary aspect of certain instruments in this ensemble (piano and cello) make this approach unreasonable.
folk or classical genre. Common features of folk song forms, such as refrains or verses, identify certain songs as more folk-like from a formal perspective. Three songs in the cycle, “It Was Rough Going,” “One of My Father’s,” and “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres,” fall into this category, though each also integrates musical characteristics less common to folk music.

Two songs, “It Was Rough Going” and “One of My Father’s,” have song forms that clearly contain a refrain section (that might be compared to a chorus in pop song structure). In both songs, this refrain is the first section of sung music in the piece (making it particularly ‘hooky’) as well as the last sung section of music, and both songs include the refrain one additional time in the middle of the piece. Both songs also include instrumental introductions, but that of “One of My Father’s” is longer and more thematically related to the refrain material. “It Was Rough Going” has a twelve measure introduction divided into two sections; the first four measures consist of chordal punctuations and a unison riff, while the following eight measures lead into the groove for the upcoming vocal refrain. “One of My Father’s,” on the other hand, begins with eleven measures of a pizzicato string figure which sets up an instrumental rendition of the refrain played by the banjo at measure 12. Both songs employ melodically contrasting vocal sections that might be compared to a verse or a bridge in pop song structure, though the repetition separated by a chorus often associated with a verse is not present in either song, as shown in Figure 4.

42 By pop song structure, I refer to the more modern song form consisting of chorus-verse-chorus-bridge-chorus rather than the AABA structure that was so common to the songs of the Tin Pan Alley-era of popular songwriting.

43 The pizzicato string figure recurs in the final three measures of the song, as well as during the refrain at measure 85. It also appears in an arco version during the last refrain at measure 173.
“Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” also uses a simple form consisting of two alternating parts, one of which has the 'hooky' characteristics analogous to a refrain (or chorus). This vocal section, which contains the words that title the song, is the first sung section of the song following a brief instrumental introduction, as shown in Figure 5, much like “It Was Rough Going” and “One of My Father's.”

Unlike those songs, however, “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” consists of two alternating sections in
relative major and minor keys, each of which occur only twice. This use of alternating sections in relative key relationships is not uncommon in many binary form folk songs, as previously discussed; however, there are other matters of changing tonal centres in these three songs which run contrary to the folk-like character of their forms.

All three of the previously mentioned songs include a change of tonal centre between the initial refrain and the final refrain, which challenges the simplicity of the folk-like forms. Changing tonal centres can be found in folk music; Erynn Marshall’s analysis of Phyllis Marks’ performance of “Redwing” is a distinct example (Marshall 2006: 162). Marks’ performance seems to exhibit a wandering sense of tonic, however, while the songs in *Hard Times Come Again* exhibit the more classical trait of a goal-oriented harmonic journey. “It Was Rough Going” modulates from the beginning key of A major to the ending key of G major through the use of chords borrowed from the parallel key of A minor, as shown in example 2.

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45 Figure 5 uses the terms “refrain” and “verse” for these two alternating sections, although “verse” may be a less than perfect description of the minor key sections.

46 The refrain section which begins with the words of the title contains an internal level of repetition such that one interpretation of the song’s form might show this section occurring twice in succession (as AA’), in which case this section would be shown to occur four times throughout the entire song.
The G major harmony in measure 59 resolves to D major in the following measure, which might initially appear to be a plagal resolution to a new tonic. The introduction of C major in measure 64 begins to cloud that assurance (though also references the borrowed VII chord from the previous key). The appearance of the supertonic, A minor, in measure 70 finally leads to a half cadence in measure 71 that solidifies G major as the new key.

“One of My Father’s” also exhibits an ending tonal centre that lies a major second away from

47 The dominant seventh quality of the C major harmony here is more bluesy than functional.
the beginning tonal centre, though it lies a step higher rather than lower. The modulatory journey in “One of My Father’s,” from D major to E major, is also more circuitous than that of “It Was Rough Going,” arriving by way of a stopover in the key of A major (closely related to both D and E major), as shown in Example 3.

![Example 3: Banjo and bass parts from “One of My Father’s” (mm. 96 - 116)](image)

The modulation uses harmonic vocabulary that might sound out of place in a folk song, namely a major triad built on the third scale degree. In measure 97, this F-sharp major chord acts as a half-step approach to the diatonic G major chord in measure 98, and the phrase concludes with a clear half cadence. This half-step chordal motion is repeated in measures 105-106, but this time followed by a B minor chord (whose mediant relationship to the G major chord is related to the earlier D
major/F-sharp major relationship), which acts as a pivot chord leading to what appears to be a half cadence in F-sharp minor. The new 'tonic' of F-sharp minor is deceptive, however, as it functions instead as the submediant in A major, which emerges as the new key. Furthermore, the blurred sense of mode in the new key is deepened by deceptive resolutions in measures 116, 126, and 142. The ambiguous nature of the F-sharp minor harmony is also utilized in the next modulation where it acts as a pivot chord leading to a half cadence in the new key of E major, as shown in Example 4.

![Example 4: Guitar and bass parts from "One of My Father's" (mm. 166 - 171)](image)

The change of tonal centre in the fifth song, “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres,” from C major to E-flat major involves distantly related keys, however, the two halves of the song consist of a refrain in the major key (C and E-flat) followed by contrasting material in the relative minor key (A and C), such that the beginning and ending keys have a parallel relationship. The harmonic limitations of the banjo place additional importance on these particular tonal centres; only three major keys (C major, G major, and E-flat major) can be played on the banjo that allow the drone string to function as part of the tonic triad. Because of these limitations, the use of the banjo’s drone string shapes much of the drama in this song, both harmonically and thematically. Harmonically, the drone string creates a consonant sonority in the opening key, builds tension during the modulatory transition as it is included in harmonically ambiguous diminished chords (made all the more ambiguous by the inclusion of the drone string), and finally delivers a sense of release when it
emerges as the harmonious major third in the new tonic triad. Thematically, the banjo part is based on the role of the drone string in the clawhammer style, and that thumb stroke is doubled with harmonics in the violins, viola, and cello. Furthermore, the high energy clawhammer rhythm does not simply start and stop; instead, it emerges at the beginning of the song and dissolves at the end of the song. Throughout these multiple sections of varied tonality and texture, the droning G-string is a constant fixture in the music.

“It Was Rough Going,” “One of My Father’s,” and “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” each use formal structures that reference the folk genre. Melodically memorable, repeated refrains exhibit an essential characteristic for folk music: the ability to invite listeners to participate after only a minimal number of hearings.48 These songs, however, also integrate a harmonic journey, a distinguishing component of many classical forms. While the tonal centres shift between repeated refrains, they are prepared through smooth modulations. As a result, a listener may be able to sing along to each refrain, not necessarily knowing that the actual pitches they sing are different. In this way, these three songs show a blending of folk and classical structures in which the most salient features are folk-like.

3.5 Less Folk-like forms

The remaining four songs in the cycle use forms that allude to folk music much more subtly or not at all. “I Was Relieved” and “We Had So Little” are organized around thematic development and transformation. This formal trait, combined with each song’s placement in the cycle, facilitates the

48 I have noticed some folk music audiences for whom I have performed that have begun singing along as soon as the middle of the first refrain in a song, even when never having heard the song before. This is one of the most joyful aspects of folk music to me.
perception of dramatic climax that occurs within the cycle at these points. “This Is What Happened” and “I Had a Terrible Guilt” illustrate more elusive forms. While they both utilize repetition as a method for establishing a sense of cohesiveness, this repetition does not function as a folk-like refrain in an invitation to participate.

Perhaps the most folk-like of the four above-mentioned songs is “This Is What Happened,” as the repeated material most resembles a refrain. This sung material begins the song and is then immediately repeated. The same thematic material ends the piece, but in this occurrence it is played by the viola and cello. Unlike a true refrain, however, it never appears in full throughout the song, only materializing as fragments. This fragmentation is a distinguishing feature of the song in general, as each singer's narrative is broken into pieces, which are interrupted by segments of the refrain, as shown in Example 5.
In this way, the form of “This Is What Happened” alludes to folk song form, but in actuality it shows a deconstruction of that stylistic form. This deconstruction directly addresses questions of memory and truth, particularly when linked with the lyrics of the ‘refrain’: “This I remember.”
Because this is what happened.” As Alan Lomax wrote, “folk song, like any serious art, deals with realities” (Lomax 1966: ix), but this song seeks to propose the idea that our memories are never as clear as our initial experiences. Past realities are always seen through the lenses of present realities, and this recollection is what allows for a diversity of realities to be expressed throughout the cycle. Not only was the Great Depression experienced in a variety of ways, but differences in experiences after the the Great Depression have effected the manner in which the era has been remembered by various observers.

One the more underrepresented narratives, at least in stereotypes, of life during the Depression is examined in “I Had a Terrible Guilt.” This departure is addressed through musical characteristics such as harmonic language and orchestration that will be discussed later, but form also plays a role. The form is much more nebulous than that of a folk song. Though repetition of sections does occur, they occur with much more variation than might be found in a song form (necessitating the more classical nomenclature of A, A’, and A” rather than refrain), as seen in Figure 6.

![Figure 6: Formal outline of “I Had a Terrible Guilt”](image)

When the opening lyrics, “I had a terrible guilt,” repeat at measure 43, not only have the actual pitches changed, but a crucial interval has also changed. In the second version the melody appears to outline an E-flat major harmony where the original statement outlined a G minor harmony, as seen in Example 6.
This alteration is different than the harmonic changes in the above mentioned folk-like refrains since the melodic variation overtly effects the emotional characteristic of the phrase. Furthermore, this modification is more salient than a repetition that maintains the same melodic intervals transposed to a different tonal centre. In this way, the form of “I Had a Terrible Guilt” relies less on simple, exact repetition and more on development of materials.

“I Was Relieved” and “We Had So Little” are also both typified by development of materials, and this aspect of each piece helps to contribute to the aforementioned sense of dramatic climax that occurs in these two songs. Exhibiting a broad arch form (ABA’), “I Was Relieved” employs one of the basic forms in the cycle even though the song is the second longest in the cycle. The length of each section along with the limited amount of material presented gives the piece an expansive quality despite the simplicity of the formal structure. The A sections are characterized by a harmonic stasis, and in the opening section the momentum is pulled along by two slowly developing elements. The first element is the melodic material sung by the voices, the full lyrical phrase emerging only one word at a time and marked by a considerable amount of repetition. The singers enter at measure 12 with three repetitions of the single word “I” before the phrase is allowed to move forward with “I was” at measure 17. Not until measure 69 is the lyrical sentiment expressed in its entirety. The second aspect of slow development in this section is the interlocking rhythms in the mandolin, banjo, guitar, and bass parts, which begin in the first measure as
simultaneously struck chords. These chordal iterations begin to alternate by measure 15, and at measure 25 an interlocking groove is created from single notes in each part. Throughout the course of the A section, this rhythmic structure becomes more active, and the harmony, though still statically centred around the pitch G, becomes more colourful with added tones.

The B section, which arrives at measure 86, contrasts with respect to harmonic progression, rhythmic material, and melodic presentation. While the mandolin, banjo, guitar, and bass maintain their collective role as a rhythm section, their individual roles are more self-sustaining and less reliant on the interplay of their rhythms to create the overall groove. Equally self-sustaining is the clarity with which each of these instruments articulates the harmony of the moment, which progresses in large blocks ranging from six to twelve measures in length. The singers contrast with their earlier melodic presentation as well, singing in a homophonic texture which progresses to octave doubling for the final phrase.

The return of the A section at measure 117 brings back the lyrical material from earlier in the piece as well as the static harmony centred around the pitch G. The vocalists begin monophonically, but by measure 126 they are alternating iterations of the phrase. In the instrumental ensemble both the sustained chords and the chordal alternations of the first A section return. Unlike the building up of the opening section, however, here the dynamic and dramatic characteristics create a fading away. This development of, departure from, and return to the musical materials in this piece create a dramatic journey far larger in scope than other songs in the cycle with more complex forms. In part, the simplicity of form allows for this journey to take on importance through the elongation of each section in the temporal realm. Because the material
evolves slowly, it need not travel very far to feel like it has arrived. This sense of arrival is what helps to give the song a greater sense of dramatic climax in the overall form of the song-cycle.

Similarly, “We Had So Little” undergoes a musical journey within its form that gives it a greater sense of dramatic importance in the cycle. Unlike “I Was Relieved,” however, the form in “We Had So Little” has many parts that are tied together through the recurrence of two important themes. The two themes occur as the first and last sections that are sung, but their placement in the overall development of the piece gives quite different dramatic functions to their appearances. One theme offers a sense of familiarity while the other gives a sense of foreshadowing. This duality of repetition within the song along with the relative length within the cycle helps “We Had So Little” to deliver the emotional climax that brings closure to the cycle as a whole.

The song begins with an introduction that carries more dramatic weight than any other in the cycle in part because of its length, twenty-six measures, and in part because of its harmonic motion, moving from E-flat minor to B-major. After arriving in the key of B-major, the first theme is presented by the baritone at measure 27 and is immediately repeated at measure 35 by both voices. This immediate repetition along with the repetition within the section’s phrase structure gives this material the recognizable quality of a refrain, even though only one additional repetition occurs later in the song. When that repetition does occur, at measure 121, the first half of the phrase is not sung; instead it is played by the violins. Though the voices sing only the last phrase of the section, the occurrence has the recognizable qualities of a fully periodic event due to the great amount of repetition during the initial appearance of the material.

This section at measure 121 is also notable because the two repeating themes of the song are
heard simultaneously. While the violins play the theme that matches the words “we had so little money in the bank,” the viola and cello play a variation on the final theme in the song. This ending theme is first heard at measure 48 in the string quartet, though the melodic line is masked by its being stated once in each instrument in an overlapping manner. At measure 88, the opening motive of the theme is presented in a harmonized version in the string quartet, but it dissolves into counterpoint that again hides its totality. By its appearance at measure 121, the musical seed has been planted twice but never cultivated. The two themes sounding simultaneously elicit both senses of familiarity and foreshadowing since one theme has been heard only once (or twice, counting the immediate repetition) before and the other, never heard in full, has set up the expectation of development.

Immediately following the vocalists’ reiteration of the opening theme, a rhythmically energetic section gives the most overt statement of the final theme, at measure 135, in the piano and mandolin. When the theme is finally sung at measure 165, the tune is fully recognizable to listeners, and the coupling of lyrics with the music delivers an additional significant layer. Furthermore, this realization of the theme musically illustrates the lyrical allusion to a change “in point of view,” the words that are sung as the orchestration shifts. The song’s form, which arrives at this crucial moment after several modulations involving two repeated themes intertwined with other non-repeating sections gives the song an understated grandiosity that can bring closure to a song-cycle examining the historic struggles of hard times with the simple statement: “I just want one happy life, that’s it.”
3.6 Harmonic Language

While the harmonic language used throughout Hard Times Come Again shows a variety of approaches towards vertical alignment, there are some commonalities that are prevalent in most, if not all, of the songs. Triadic and tonal chords are frequent, though they do not always progress in an order customary to common-practice harmonic theory. Moreover, added colour tones are often included in these triadic harmonies. Sometimes the resulting chord clearly appears to fit into concepts of extended tertian harmony, while other times extended tertian harmony is implied but not fully realized (like many jazz voicings). On occasion, vertical alignments are based on non-tertian intervals, although in these instances elements of triadic harmony are often juxtaposed.

Some of the clearest examples of simple triadic harmony appear during moments in the score where the rhythm section is given instructions to “ad lib as desired.” The first refrain in “One of My Father’s” uses only tonic, subdominant, and dominant triads, as shown in Example 7.

![Example 7: Alto and guitar parts from "One of My Father's" (mm. 24 - 34)
The melody sung by the alto is anchored in chord tones, and nearly all the non-chord tones could be easily assigned common-practice labels. In this way, the vertical alignment of pitches in this section of the song alludes overtly to the harmonic language of folk music. One aspect of this harmonic movement that does not strictly follow the conventions of common-practice progression, however, is the interplay of dominant and predominant space. The dominant harmony is followed by the subdominant not once, but twice, and this harmonic movement functions to delay the ultimate resolution to the tonic at the end of the phrase.

Shortly following the passage illustrated in Example 7, one can find the use of triadic language that would be much more rare in folk music, if found at all. In measure 37, a major triad built on the third scale degree is used; and, this triad contains the raised fifth scale degree, an uncommon pitch in folk music. This harmonic peculiarity was discussed previously in the context of the modulation shown in Example 3, and some parallels exist between the two occurrences (m. 37 and m. 97). In both instances, the third scale degree is used as a stepwise approach in the bass line to the fourth scale degree. In measure 38, however, the fourth scale degree appears as part of a supertonic chord in first inversion, as shown in Example 8, rather than the subdominant triad found in measure 98.

Example 8: Guitar and bass parts from "One of My Father's" (mm. 36 - 40)
The stepwise bass line continues upwards becoming a leading tone to the dominant chord, and the diminished triad carries a common-practice secondary function. This passage points towards a hybridity of styles, the chromatic harmony, indicative of classical music, pushing the diatonic boundaries commonly found in folk music.

Extended tertian harmony is also used habitually throughout the song cycle, and a notably folk-like occurrence of extended tertian harmony can be found in “It Was Rough Going.” A dominant seventh harmony in measure 31 is adorned with a raised ninth (spelled as a minor third), and the tonic resolution in the following measure includes a lowered seventh. These non-diatonic tones allude to blues music, a significant influence on the honky-tonk and early rock and roll music that inform much of this song’s musical style. Other examples of extended tertian harmony resemble voicings commonly found in jazz music, which can also be seen as an evolutionary offspring of the blues style. Each of the four triadically based harmonies that appear in the B section of “I Was Relieved” includes added tones that can be interpreted as harmonic extensions regardless of their placement in the vertical structure of the chord voicing, as shown in Example 9.

![Example 9: Composite harmonies from “I Was Relieved” (mm. 86, 98, 104, and 110)](image)

This particular section of the song, with its large blocks of ‘jazzy’ harmonies, exhibits the harmonic characteristics of modal jazz music, albeit in a more diatonic way that might suggest a hybridity 49 John Coltrane’s “Impressions,” Miles Davis’ “So What,” Freddie Hubbard’s “Little Sunflower,” and Herbie Hancock’s.
with folk music.

Several places in the song cycle exhibit the use of a specific added tone within a triadic landscape that cannot be explained by the previous discussion. These instances are characterized by the instrumental limitations of the banjo, which employs a fifth string shorter than the other four. Because this string is not as readily stopped as the other four strings, the pitch of that string (in this piece, and in most banjo tunings, G) functions as a drone in most banjo music. This drone note plays a significant role in “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres,” which, as previously discussed, utilizes the clawhammer technique as a thematically unifying feature. In many instances, this pitch (G) functions within the diatonic realm and appears as an added tone in the harmony of the moment. This use of the drone pitch can be clearly seen in measure 40, where G becomes the ninth of the F-major harmony, as shown in Example 10.

Elsewhere, the drone pitch clashes with the harmony of the moment. In measure 91, the G-natural of the short string clashes with the G-flat in the A-diminished seventh harmony, adding to the dissonant tension in that section of the song.

There are other examples of vertical alignment in the song-cycle that stray further from triadic tonal harmony, and these vary in their method of organization. One example of non-triad
harmony that is constructed from triads can be found in “This Is What Happened.” The formal structure of the song, as previously discussed, is fragmented, and the piano’s role in the piece is to blur the seams between those fragments. In measure 65, for example, the piano plays an arpeggiated figure constructed of a B-major triad, a G-minor triad, and an F-sharp-minor triad (with the final note blurred by a half-step neighbouring tone), as shown in Example 11.

![Example 11: Piano part from "This Is What Happened" (mm. 65 - 67)](image)

The section before this figure resides clearly in F-major, while the section that follows sounds more vaguely, but perhaps most saliently, like C-major. The vagueness of tonal centre in the following section is caused in part by the fact that the voice and the guitar are operating in two different keys, and this juxtaposition simply adds to the sensation of fragmentation that exists throughout the song.

Elsewhere in the song-cycle juxtapositions of non-tonal harmony are used to create a musical environment that sounds very unlike folk music. This sound-world can be heard throughout “I Had a Terrible Guilt,” and it alludes to the stereotypically imagined distance between the ‘folk’ of Great Depression and the narrative of this song. As exhibited in the opening measures,

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50 Another example of vertical alignment worth mentioning in “This Is What Happened” is the concurrent sounding of major and minor thirds and sevenths in the introduction. This is a direct musical reference to the research of Erynn Marshall discussed in Chapter 2.

51 One could also hear a D-major triad in this construction since the D from the G-minor triad and the F-sharp and A from the F-sharp-minor triad are repeated.

52 Besides the C mixolydian scale from which the vocal melody is constructed in this section, the chromatically ascending banjo chords and the guitar’s leading tones, to A, also blur the sense of tonality. Nevertheless, given the clear reference to the opening thematic material, the vocal melody points the listener’s ear toward C-major.
the piano part is typified by low octaves in the left hand and pandiatonically moving chords, constructed of a second atop a third, in the right hand. The shape and density of these right hand chords develop throughout the song, and the piano’s vertical arrangements are often referenced, though not doubled, in the violins and viola. Throughout the piece, the mandolin weaves between the vocal melody and the motivic use of rising sevenths, as shown in Example 12, and this motivic use of sevenths often clashes with the pandiatonic landscape in the other instruments.

![Example 12: Baritone and mandolin parts from “I Had a Terrible Guilt” (mm. 12 - 15)](image)

Though the harmonic language used in “I Had a Terrible Guilt” implies a distant relationship to the other songs in the cycle, references to tonal construction are present. In the final measure, for example, the mandolin uses the rising seventh motif to outline an E-flat-minor harmony. These moments of tonal reference ensure that the song’s distance is not too far removed as to be excluded from the greater narrative.

The harmonic language used throughout the song-cycle is generally consistent within each song, but varies across the seven songs. Despite the diverse approaches to vertical organization, there are overarching references to tonal construction, which helps to disclose the influence of folk music. Also clearly present, however, are harmonic arrangements that betray the influence of classical and jazz music. Combined with the text, this variety of harmonic language aids in expressing the multifaceted narrative of the era.
3.7 Rhythmic Treatment

As with other stylistic elements used in the song cycle, rhythmic elements in the various songs show influence of both folk music and classical music. Many of the songs are predominantly in 4/4 time, a metre that is common in American folk music, and several of the songs use the metrical device of 'crookedness' that gives many folk songs rhythmic interest. Most of the songs use the folk-like trait of a constant pulse from first note to last, although two songs employ classical performance techniques of sectional tempo changes and/or ritardando. Additionally, other songs use mixed metre in a fashion that would be uncharacteristic in folk music, but quite at home in contemporary classical music.

Two songs that are most influenced by American folk rhythms are “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” and “It Was Rough Going.” Both songs have rather fast tempi, at 184 and 152 beats per minute, respectively, and both songs maintain an unchanging tempo from beginning to end. Additionally, both songs use a metre of 4/4 with occasional 'crooked' phrases. The refrain in “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” illustrates a clear example of an asymmetrical phrase structure that might be called 'crooked' by a folk musician. By examining the grouping structure of the refrain, three phrases can be found with lengths of thirty-two, thirty-two, and twenty-four beats, as shown in Example 13.
Each of these phrases is also divided asymmetrically. The twenty-four beat phrase can be grouped into two groupings of eight beats and sixteen beats. Each of the thirty-two beat phrases can be divided into two groupings of eighteen and fourteen beats, and each of these groups can be further broken into two groupings of eight beats and either ten beats or six beats. Through this analysis, several layers of asymmetry are apparent in the phrase structure of the refrain, and, specifically, what is notated as mixed metre is the source of the ‘crooked’ quality of the phrase.

“Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” also shows folk influence though its rhythmic treatment of the banjo and guitar material. The banjo plays in a clawhammer style throughout the song, and this results in a rhythmic pattern marked by a quarter note (or two eighth notes slurred) on beats one and three, and two eighth notes on beats two and four (the second of which is the short drone string). The compositional application of this clawhammer material, however, reveals classical influence as well, for the rhythmic pattern does not simply begin and end as it might in a folk song. Instead, the rhythmic pattern emerges, develops into the characteristic clawhammer rhythm, and
then dissolves into its elements as the piece concludes. The notated guitar part also reveals folk rhythms characterized by bass notes in half notes with the remainder of the two beats filled by various combinations of eighth and quarter note strums. This rhythmic pattern, like the banjo's clawhammer material, emerges rather than begins. Unlike the banjo, however, the guitarist is given the freedom to improvise an accompanimental role throughout much of the piece, since the guitar's material is more bass oriented and less melodically oriented than the banjo's.

Though a folk-like 'crookedness' can be seen in the phrase structures of “It Was Rough Going,” the rhythmic treatment of this song owes more to the honky-tonk and early rock and roll music that evolved out of the folk music of the southern United States. The piano, guitar, and bass parts show quite literal rhythmic influences from the genre, while the parts for banjo and mandolin, which were not commonly found in early rock and roll or honky-tonk music, are given invented rhythmic ideas based upon the genre. The bass and guitar parts are typified by a two measure pattern that shows syncopated elements, and the downbeat of the two measures is usually articulated on the beat, though occasional anticipations that reinforce the melodic rhythm also occur. The piano part borrows from the constantly repeated eighth notes found in the playing of Jerry Lee Lewis or Little Richard, and the mandolin takes its rhythmic conception from this influence as well. The banjo part, marked by a hemiola pattern often using the minor and major third, brings to mind the playing of honky-tonk pianists such as Fats Domino and Jelly Roll Morton.

A slightly more complex rhythmic irregularity that takes its influence from folk-music can be found in “This Is What Happened.” The opening section, which emulates fiddle-song in its instrumentation and vertical arrangement, also uses elements of phrase elongation and
compression, as discussed in the research of Ruth Crawford Seeger. As shown in Example 14, this section can be broken into three phrases, each of which would be four measures of equal length if symmetrically arranged.

Instead of this more regular phrase structure, however, beats are added or subtracted at phrase boundaries. The first phrase adds two beats, which permits the singer to pause on the word “remember” before taking a breath and continuing. The second phrase subtracts a beat, as if to stress the importance of the next phrase. That final phrase adds one beat to the measure of rest that concludes it, allowing the solemn sentiment of the statement to sink in.

Further irregular rhythmic treatment in “This Is What Happened,” however, betrays classical music influence as well. Apart from the opening section, mixed metre is used elsewhere in the song to create an unpredictability that aids in the blurring of seams between fragmented sections. Moreover, tempo changes, which are quite rare in folk music, are used to propel the
dramatic momentum out of the introduction and to ease the dramatic motion into the coda. Though most of the songs in the cycle utilize a steady tempo, brief uses of ritardando can also be seen in “One of My Father's.” These examples, along with mixed metre used in “I Had a Terrible Guilt,” “I Was Relieved,” and “We Had So Little” show clear influences of both folk and classical music in the rhythmic approach to *Hard Times Come Again*.

### 3.8 Melodic and Linear Treatment

It is important to mention that while the compositional style of the song cycle is influenced by American folk music, there are no direct quotations of folk song in the piece. All the melodies are original creations, though many of them may evoke aspects of traditional repertoire. Like most folk music, many of the melodies in *Hard Times Come Again* share an easy singability. Melodic intervals larger than a perfect fourth are rare, although fifths and sixths do occur on occasion, and dissonant melodic intervals are generally avoided.

The refrain to “It Was Rough Going” provides an excellent example of melodic treatment that is particularly folk influenced. As exhibited in Example 15, the range of the melodic line is relatively narrow; it spans only a minor seventh, reaching to the fourth scale degree at its upper limit and the fifth scale degree at its lower limit.

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53 The third phrase in the refrain of “One of My Father's” is marked by a rising major sixth, for example.
Melodic intervals of seconds and thirds are prevalent, excepting the fifth in measure 14 and the fourth in measure 16 that occur between phrases. All of the pitches, with the exception of C-natural, are not only diatonic, but pentatonic. The C-natural functions as a blue note, and this quality is reinforced in measure 14 by the slide from the C-natural to C-sharp. A similar slide can be seen in measure 16 between F-sharp and E. Analogous folk-like treatment of melodies, including restricted range and pitch material, use of slides and scoops, and use of blue notes to colour diatonicism, is also apparent in “This Is What Happened,” “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres,” “One of My Father’s,” and “We Had So Little.”

Elsewhere in the song-cycle, a departure from some of these folk-like melodic characteristics are used specifically to confront that voice of the ‘folk.’ As has been discussed previously, “I Had a Terrible Guilt” challenges this sentiment, and the treatment of melody in the song follows suit. While the vocal melodies do generally lie within a diatonic structure, the use of larger, less stepwise, melodic intervals occurs more often than in any other song in the cycle. Furthermore, melodic sixths are used motivically in the vocal theme and a melodic tritone also appears in this vocal melody. These intervallic traits might make this song less immediately singable by a large number of people, distancing its melodic style from that of folk music. Instrumentally, the use of a motive constructed of successive sevenths in the mandolin, previously discussed in reference to its harmonic
implications, also contributes to this melodic distance from folk music.

Melodic treatment in “I Was Relieved” also reveals more significant influence from classical music than from folk music, particularly in the opening A section. The melodic material is largely repetitive and fragmented; and, rather than being presented immediately, it slowly develops into the melodic statement that is heard at measure 69. Once the melodic statement is sung by the baritone, it is repeated exactly by the alto (although an octave higher) before the two voices overlay presentations of the melody. As the voices deliver the melodic statement, another classically influenced melodic element is superimposed; the string quartet plays a gesture constructed from a descending octatonic scale. Later in the piece, the voices reprise a variation of the melodic statement that occurs first at measure 69, but here the overlapping structure is less regular. It is this unpredictability of the melodic structure that speaks most to its being at odds with folk music, for folk music often has predictable qualities in order to encourage a participatory environment.

Whereas many moments in *Hard Times Come Again* are composed with consideration for this communal aspect, other moments seek to allow a more personal, individual expression for the performers.

### 3.9 Texture and Counterpoint

Though the textures vary from song to song, a melody-dominated homophonic texture is frequent throughout much of the cycle with a vocal melody accompanied by a rhythmically active and harmonically supportive framework in the plucked strings. The bowed strings are often included with sustained tones and less often with rhythmically propulsive motives. At points in which no
voice is singing at all, the bowed strings often take on the melodic role, many times in a thickened line texture. An important texture that takes its influence directly from folk music is the loose doubling of the vocal melody by certain instrumentalists, particularly in the clawhammer banjo material as well as the fiddle-like material in the strings. More polyphonic counterpoint does occur on occasion, but polyphony is not the defining characteristic of the compositional style in *Hard Times Come Again*.

The most transparent textures that occur in the song cycle are monophonic, and these occur with only limited frequency in the piece. One instance can be seen in the opening to “This Is What Happened,” where the alto melody is doubled at pitch by the viola. When the baritone enters at measure 14, this voice is in turn doubled at pitch by the cello. A particularly striking characteristic of the monophonic texture in these two phrases is that all the voices are not always sounding the same pitch, as shown in Example 16.

![Example 16: Imprecise unison and octave doublings in "This Is What Happened" (mm. 14 - 17)](image)

This phenomenon occurs in part because of the previously discussed co-existence of major and minor thirds and seventh, which emulates West Virginian fiddle-song. These imprecision of
doubling also occurs, however, because the 'monophonic' lines are composed with rhythms that are at times slightly askew from each other. This looseness of rhythm is intended to complement the looseness of pitch alignment such that the result portrays four (or two) independent interpretations of the same monophonic line occurring simultaneously. Other instances of monophony are more conventional, as in “It Was Rough Going” at measure 106, as seen in Example 17.

Here the entire ensemble presents a tutti line in three octaves, and the monophonic texture contributes to the loud dynamic in bringing an energetic and exciting closing to the song.

Homophonic textures are much more common throughout the song-cycle than are monophonic textures, and one example of a homophonic texture that takes its influence directly from folk music can be found in “We Had So Little.” Early in the piece, at measure 27, the baritone presents thematic material that is immediately repeated by the alto at measure 35. When the alto
enters, the baritone sings a harmony line in the same rhythm and mostly similar contour. As shown in Example 18, this homophonic texture between the two voices is particularly notable for its abundance of perfect intervals, often approached in a manner contrary to conventional rules of counterpoint, which give bluegrass singing what many call a 'high and lonesome sound.'

Example 18: Alto and baritone parts from "We Had So Little" (mm. 35 - 46)

One of the more thematic uses of polyphony occurs in the same song with some of the same material utilized in similar ways. At measure 121, the refrain like material that was sung by the two voices at measure 35 is presented by the two violins, as shown in Example 19.
A homophonic texture with many perfect intervals between the two violins resembles the vocal material in measure 35. Added to the texture at measure 121, however, is a second melodic line in the viola and cello; this melodic material foreshadows the final thematic presentation in the voices at measure 165. At measure 121, as elsewhere in the piece, contrapuntal rules governing avoidance of similar or parallel motion towards perfect intervals are largely ignored. Not to be misinterpreted as a disregard for the sense of independent line, this more loose treatment of contrapuntal writing gives the music a character of what Doc Watson calls “country counterpoint” (Watson).

Two unique textures that reveal influence of vocally derived folk accompaniment can be found in the banjo part to “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” and the viola part to “This Is What Happened.” Both instances involve the instrument loosely doubling the vocal melody with rhythmic embellishment characteristic of a folk style playing technique. In the refrain to “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres” at measure 37, the banjo plays a unison doubling with the alto melody. Because the vocal melody is sung to a speech-like rhythmic pattern and the clawhammer technique is subject to rhythmic limitations, the melodic pitches do not always align, as exhibited in Example 20.
In measure 37, for instance, the melody changes pitch from E to F on the second half of the third beat, which allows the banjo to articulate this pitch at the same time as the singer by utilizing a hammer-on. In the following measure, however, the vocal melody changes from A to G on beat four, a strum stroke in clawhammer style, and the banjo articulates the pitch change half a beat earlier. In a similar, but idiomatically unique way, the viola adds the rhythmic drive of shuffle bowing technique to the loose doublings with the baritone melody in “This Is What Happened.” One occurrence of this texture can be seen at measure 106, and in this instance the viola doubles the baritone melody at an octave above.

These two instances show how textures throughout the song cycle are generally motivated by rhythmic considerations. At times this condition results in the loose ‘country counterpoint’ that has been discussed above, and at times this rhythmic motivation results in an interlocking groove. These grooves take on a variety of characters, from the rocking honky-tonk of “It Was Rough Going” to the bluegrassy two step of “One of My Father’s.” At other times the rhythmic grooves are more pulsating in a reference to minimalism, as in “I Was Relieved,” or more ethereal, as in the high strings in “Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres.” This discussion of texture, then, reiterates a prevailing concept in the discussion of form and style throughout the song-cycle—the concept of diversity.
Chapter 4: Closing Thoughts

4.1 An Aesthetic Statement

As an artist and as a musician, my primary concern is that of honest expression. Originality for the sake of newness can seem contrived, but by accessing each of our own unique wells of personal experience any artist can be original by being personal. The technological age makes an immense amount of shared information, both musical and otherwise, available to anyone. This access to ideas (artistic, political, philosophical, and economic) from around the world can begin to blur cultural boundaries and elevate the importance of the individual experience, though as James Clifford points out, “persistent hope for the reinvention of difference risks downplaying the destructive, homogenizing effects of global economic and cultural centralization” (Clifford 1988: 15). It is all the more important in the face of this “cultural gray out,” as Alan Lomax calls it, to draw on personal authenticity of expression in art, rather than newness for newness’ sake, in order to avoid “the smog of the phoney” (Lomax 2003: 285).

It is my intention in composing Hard Times Come Again to create a piece of music that expresses a personal voice based upon my own musical experiences. The musical style of the piece might be described as metrical, pulsed, generally tonal, and largely homophonic. Alternately, it could be described as ‘folky’ or even ‘poppy,’ and in the current musical landscape these labels could lead some to write the piece off as pedestrian. It is important to consider, though, that “a musical device becomes banal when it is borrowed, but not earned” (Scrutton 1997: 482). Through my musical experience as an insider in both the culture of North American folk music and the culture of classical music, I trust that I have earned the permission to use these musical devices as my own
personal expression in an honest and meaningful way.

The enigma tangled up in the concept of authentic expression is that authenticity can often only be determined by the creator of the expression. The observer cannot fully parse the creator's intention, and so the observer can only guess as to the level of authentic expression. Interpretation is therefore equally if not more important than intention; after all, “aesthetic interest . . . is an interest in appearances: its object is . . . the revealed presence of the world—the world as it is encountered in our experience” (Scrutton 1997: 5). Consequently, it is also my intention to create a musical composition that intertwines the aesthetic of classical music with that of folk music. I, unfortunately, can only own my intention and not others’ interpretation of the work, and so I can only express my hopes for how the work might be interpreted. I hope that the music is immediately graspable on a first listen, but that subsequent listenings continue to illuminate deeper connections. I hope that a listener might be invited to experience the piece in enraptured silence, but be equally comfortable tapping their feet and humming along. In short, I hope that the music will speak to an elite with a language of an everyman, and I hope that the music will speak eloquently to everyone.

In 1945, nearly seventy years before I began composing *Hard Times Come Again*, the folklorist A.L. Lloyd wrote:

“Till recently it always seemed there was a clash between what was cultured and what was traditional, and it was reckoned that culture would win and the traditional would die out. Now it is not so clear, and it really looks as though there may be a blending of the two kinds. Each has something the other needs.” (Lloyd 1945: 17)

As shown by the music of some the previously discussed artists, the blending to which Lloyd referred has continued into the next century. This era where genre distinction is less important than
ever, from an aesthetic perspective,\textsuperscript{54} is the era in which I live as an artist. The lines in the sand between classical music, folk music, popular music, jazz music, rock music, and electronic music are being washed away with each new performance, as musicians of many genres continue to explore the musical expanse readily available to them in the information age. Similar blending can be seen in other art forms as well; novels have been written in poetic verse, paintings have three dimensional protrusions. The word “dramedy” is a widely accepted term referring to a hybrid of comedy and drama among television programming. Hybridity is a defining characteristic of the twenty-first century so far, though I wish that Hard Times Come Again be categorized as neither classical music, folk music, nor a hybrid of the two, but simply as music.

\textbf{4.2 Coming Again}

An unusual thing happened during the writing of this piece: the price of gasoline dropped dramatically. In January 2015, the global price of oil was roughly half of what it was only six months before (Blatchford 2015). In my new home of Canada, the national economy is heavily impacted by the price of oil, and some economists have issued less than rosy predictions for the near future. With uncertain prosperity ahead, the lessons of the Great Depression appear to be quite relevant still. Hard times, it seems, come again and again and again and again.

\textsuperscript{54} Though certainly not from the economic perspective of anyone seeking to market or advertise music.
References


Appendix A: Programme Note

In late October 1929, the US stock market took a devastating plunge, losing more than a quarter of its value in a matter of days. The crash signified the beginning of a financial crisis that would last more than a decade and impact countries around the globe. Though the stereotypical imagery of life during the Great Depression includes dour faces of migrant workers standing in breadlines or well-suited businessmen leaping from skyscraper windows, actual personal experiences were varied. I recall my grandmother telling me her story of moving from northern Ohio to Detroit, where a dozen (or more) family members were living in a small house. Her most vivid memory of the Great Depression was a beautiful feathered hat. She had saved bits of her earnings for weeks and used them to purchase the hat rather than extra food to share among her family; that crowded house took a long time to forgive her.

*Hard Times Come Again* takes its text from oral history of the Great Depression. Some of the words come from those recollecting their own experiences; some of the words come from stories that have been passed down from one generation to another. Each song’s words give a unique account of getting by when times were tough, and all the words are real tales from real people. Throughout the piece, folk music idioms are referenced, and these references are intended to reflect the commonplace language used in the text. After all, as Ruth Crawford Seeger and Charles Seeger wrote in the introduction to John and Alan Lomax’s *Folk Song U.S.A.*, “folk song deals with realities.”
Appendix B: Musical Score

Hard Times Come Again
for two voices and chamber ensemble

by

Adam Hill
Duration: 30-35 minutes

Instrumentation:
- Alto Voice
- Baritone Voice
- 2 Violins
- Viola
- Cello
- Bass
- Mandolin
- Banjo
- Guitar
- Piano

The text of the piece was constructed by the composer with the assistance of Bren Simmers out of interviews conducted by Studs Terkel and published as *Hard Time: An Oral History of the Great Depression*.

Performance Notes:
- All the performers should take care to adopt a North American or Appalachian folk style to the piece. For arco strings, this will result in little or no vibrato. For the guitarist, a steel string guitar should be used and played with a flatpick. For the mandolinist, it is preferable to use a folk style instrument (either an A or F model is suitable) rather than a classical style instrument. The banjo player should use standard tuning (g-D-G-B-D) throughout and should be able to play in both clawhammer and three-finger styles.
- The singers should pay extra special attention to performing in a folk style, and for those performers unfamiliar with the direction, it may be useful to heed a few of Ruth Crawford Seeger’s instructions included in the preface to *Our Singing Country*:
  1. Do not hesitate to sing because you think your voice is *not good* -- i.e., has not been *trained*. These songs are better sung in the manner of the natural than the trained (bel canto) voice. Do not try to *smooth out* your voice. If it is reedy or nasal, so much the better.
  3. Do not sing *with expression*, or make an effort to dramatize.
  5. Do not hesitate to keep time with your foot. Unless otherwise indicated, sing with a fairly strong accent.
  6. Do not *punch* or *typewrite out* each tone. When two or more tones are to be sung to one syllable of text, bind them together rather than articulate each separately.
  7. Do not make too much difference between major and minor degrees in songs containing both.

- All instruments and voices should be lightly amplified using microphones and/or pickups. The voices and piano must use microphones for amplification, and the singers should both be comfortable “working the mic.” For the remaining instruments it is preferable to be consistent in the method of amplification (i.e. either pickups or microphones), and this will help the ensemble have a well-blended sound.

Programme Note:
In late October 1929, the United States stock market took a devastating plunge, losing more than a quarter of its value in a matter of days. The crash signified the beginning of a financial crisis that would last more than a decade and impact countries around the globe. Though the stereotypical imagery of life during the Great Depression includes dour faces of migrant workers standing in breadlines or well-suited businessmen leaping from skyscraper windows, actual personal experiences were varied. I recall my grandmother telling me her story of moving from northern Ohio to Detroit, where a dozen (or more) family members were living in a small house. Her most vivid memory of the Great Depression was a beautiful feathered hat. She had saved her earnings for weeks and used them to purchase the hat rather than food to share among her family; that crowded house took a long time to forgive her.

*Hard Times Come Again* takes it text from oral history of the Great Depression. Some of the words come from those recollecting their own experiences, some of the words come from stories that have been passed down from one generation to another. Each song’s words give a unique account of getting by when times were tough, and all the words are real tales from real people. Throughout the piece, folk music idioms are referenced, and these references are intended to reflect the commonplace language used in the text. After all, as Ruth Crawford Seeger and Charles Seeger wrote in the introduction to John and Alan Lomax’s *Folk Song U.S.A.*, “folk song deals with realities.”
It Was Rough Going

Rockin' \( (q = 152) \)

Baritone

Double Bass

Mandolin

Banjo

Guitar

Piano

Adam Hill

It Was Rough Going

Adam Hill

Rockin' \( (q = 152) \)

Baritone

Double Bass

Mandolin

Banjo

Guitar

Piano

It Was Rough Going
It was rough going. You'd get a
little relief. You'd get a day's work now and then on the farm. That's the way people got a long. You'd see
freight trains, you'd see hun-dreds of kids just wan-d'ring all o-ver the coun-try. You'd see hun-dreds of kids just wan-d'ring all o-ver the coun-try. You'd see hun-dreds of kids just wan-d'ring all o-ver the coun-try. You'd see hun-dreds of kids just wan-d'ring all o-ver the coun-try.
It was rough going. You'd get a little relief. You'd get a day's work now and then on the farm. That's the way people got along.
people got a - long.
Freight trains were amaz-ing in those days. So many riding the freight. When a
train would stop in a small town, and the bums got off, the pop-u-lation trip-led.
No-body was really your enemy. These were guys who didn't have work.

Who'd probably work if there was work. They were hard luck guys.
rough going. You'd get a little relief. You'd get a day's work now and then on the farm. That's
the way people got along, the way people got along.
B

D.B.

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pno.

B

D.B.

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pno.

B

D.B.

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pno.
This Is What Happened

Leisurely, but not too slowly ($q = 132$)

This I re-mem-ber. Because this is what hap-pened.
A

I don't want to forget it.

This I remember.

B

This I remember.

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pno.
Because this is what happened, I don't want to forget it,
I don't want to forget it.

Picking it up $\frac{3}{4} = 152$
They were living on the canal banks in
stinking quarters and barracks.

43

99
This I remember.
morning before dawn they climbed onto trucks bound for the bean fields.
this is what happened.
night again when they got back to quarters.
working class that weren't allowed to eat the food it pro-
duced was a working class that could be brow beat.
I don't want to forget it.

I don't want to forget it.
All night
long the juke joints stayed open, where whiskey,
dice, and wo-men ate up the earn-ings of the day.
The poor are so busy trying to survive from...
one day to the next they have n't the time or en - er - gy to keep
I remember.
isn't just a bunch of starving people that are going to...
start a revolution.
It's gonna be a people that have
been asserting themselves.
Because this is what happened.
A
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

B
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

Vla.
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

Vc.
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

D.B.
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

Bjo.
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

Gtr.
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

Pno.
\[ \begin{array}{cccc}
\dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} & \quad \dot{)} \\
\vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots & \quad \vdots \\
\end{array} \]

165

I don't, ___

pp

mp
I don't want, I don't want it.

want, I want to forget.

I want to forget.

I don't want to forget.
Leisurely again, but still not too slowly ($d = 132$)
One of My Father's

Lively \( \tfrac{d}{d} = 168 \)

Alto

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Mandolin

Banjo

Guitar

Adam Hill
Money is one of my father's big values. He wishes he was a millionaire, he wishes she was a millionaires.

ad lib as desired
I don't think of money in that way.

lionaire. But I don't think of money in that way.
father had been a salesman all his life. In the great financial period he sold...
bonds. A salesman all his life, a very successful one even though
he had a fifth grade education.
The house he worked for went broke

My
father had been a sales-man all his life
Went back to selling trucks but there were
no trucks to be sold.  There were times when we didn't know.
Money is one of my father's big values. He wishes he was a millionaire,
he wishes he was a millionaire. But I don't think of money in that way.
I remember all of a sudden we had to move.
landlord didn't charge us rent for seven years. It was awfully cold.
when you opened those doors. My father did the

doors.
Money is one of my father's big values. He wishes he was a millionaire.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

ad lib as desired

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

ad lib as desired
He did the best he could.

As written

Arco

Pizz.
He wishes he was a millionaire

Ad lib as desired
he was a millionaire

But I don't think of money,
Oh I don't  No I don't  I don't
think of money in that way.
I Was Relieved

Moderately Fast \( \frac{d}{= 112} \)

Adam Hill

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Alto} & \quad - - - 2 \quad 2 - 4 - 2 \\
\text{Baritone} & \quad - - - 2 \quad 2 - 4 - 2 \\
\text{Violin I} & \quad \text{pp} \quad \dots \quad \text{ppp} \\
\text{Violin II} & \quad \text{pp} \quad \dots \quad \text{ppp} \\
\text{Viola} & \quad \text{pp} \quad \dots \quad \text{ppp} \\
\text{Cello} & \quad \text{pp} \quad \dots \quad \text{ppp} \\
\text{Double Bass} & \quad f \quad \dots \quad \text{ppp} \\
\text{Mandolin} & \quad f \quad \text{ppp} \\
\text{Banjo} & \quad f \quad \text{ff} \\
\text{Guitar} & \quad f \quad \text{ff} \\
\text{Piano} & \quad f \quad \text{ff} \\
\end{align*}
\]
I was,  
was,  

I was,
I was,

I was relieved,
I was relieved, when, I was relieved, when the,
the crash came, when the crash came,
came, when the crash came,
was relieved, when the crash came, I was relieved.
when the crash came.  

I was relieved.

I was released.
I was relieved when the crash came.
When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.

When I lost my illusions.
I had a few bad hours, a few bad years.

I had a few bad hours, a few bad years.
But I found excitement. It was an a-
I felt I was being born for the first time.
I was relieved when
Three-Hundred-Twenty Acres

Lively \( \frac{\text{\textbf{l}}}{\text{\textbf{j}}} = 184 \)

Alto

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Banjo

Guitar
Three hundred twenty acres of farm land, fine land,
Three hundred twenty acres of farm land, my uncle owned and
cleared, he lost it. Even the good year was no good.
Men whom I'd known who'd lost their jobs,
lost their homes, lost their families. And worse than anything else,
lost belief in themselves.
They were destroyed.
they were destroyed,
man can endure a lot if he still has hope.
Three hundred twenty acres of farm land, fine land,
my uncle owned and cleared.
Three hundred twenty acres of farm land, my fine land, my

Three hundred twenty acres of farm land, my fine land, my
unc-le owned and cleared, he lost it.
Men whom I'd known
who'd lost their jobs, lost their homes,
lost their families.
The most valuable thing we lost
I Had a Terrible Guilt

Adam Hill
terrible guilt. I was living rather well. I would never want to admit it if I was
broke. I would never want to admit I was a millionaire.
They
don't give you medals for money.
I never did get interested in the sufferings of the world.
But I became aware of it. I am grateful for what I have.
But it's only human nature that we all want to find something better.
44

terrible guilt

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Mdn.

Pno.
really wanted to help someone you could. By making it easier for them, you made it...
They don't give you medals for easier on your self.
money. But they don't give you medals for

mon. ey.

But they don't give you medals for

med als for

But they don't give you medals for
We Had So Little

With a bounce \( \text{(} \text{d} = 128) \)

Adam Hill

Alto

Baritone

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Mandolin

Banjo

Guitar

Piano
We had so lit-tle money in the bank,
we had so little money in the bank even if the bank was closed it didn't matter much
We had so little money in the bank, we had so little money in the bank,
Money in the bank even if the bank was closed it didn't matter much.
We had so little money in the bank... it didn't matter.

We had so little money in the bank... it didn't matter.
fear of being trapped.

fear, a real
fear of being trapped into more than I need.

fear a fear.

I need.
A
I've got

B
I've got a suit on and that's about all I want.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pno.
A

B

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pno.
When you go through a lot, you in better condition,
better condition to survive,
When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

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When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.

When you go through a lot, you in better condition to survive.
all these kinds of things

these kinds of things.
Even if the bank was closed, it didn't matter.
150

Security to me is not what we have.

Curiosity to me is not what we have.

150

...
cur-i-ty to me is not what we have,
but what we can do without.
A bit slower ($J = 108$)

What really happened was a revolution,

What really happened was a revolution,

A

B

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Mdn.

Bjo.

Gtr.

Pho.

165

264
what really happened was a revolution, what really happened,
What really happened was a revolution in point of view,

What really happened, What really happened was a revolution in point of view,

What really happened, What really happened was a revolution in point of view,
a re-v-o-lu-tion in point of view.

I just want one hap-py life,

a re-v-o-lu-tion in point of view.

A
B
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.
Mdn.
Bjo.
Gtr.
Pho.
I just want one happy life,