I, Jessica L Frost, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music in Music History.

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A Longing for What Once Was…or Was It?: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Collins Foster

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A Longing for What Once Was…or Was It?: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Collins Foster

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Abstract

During the Industrial Revolution (c. 1820–1870), many Americans experienced feelings of nostalgia and longed for the simple life of plow and hearth after their move to industrial centers. At the height of the Industrial Revolution, Stephen Foster immortalized his own sentiments in his songs, which struck a chord for many Americans. In order to synthesize the subject of nostalgia found in Foster’s songs, including the longing for a place, person, or time, this study draws on current nostalgia scholarship from comparative literature, including Svetlana Boym’s theory of restorative and reflective nostalgia found in her 2001 book, The Future of Nostalgia. Mapping this theory onto Foster’s songs contextualizes their sentiments, and places them within the cultural framework of time and place. Susan Key’s 1995 American Music article, “Sound and Sentimentality: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Foster,” represents the only previous scholarship on this topic. My research expands Key’s consideration of how Foster’s musical style invokes nostalgia by demonstrating that the lyrics and topics of these songs illustrate nostalgia as well.
Acknowledgements

The songs of Stephen Collins Foster hold a special place in American music history. While many people grow up singing “Oh! Susanna” and “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” in grade school music classes or may hear “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” on the annual televised Kentucky Derby, most associate these songs to American folk music and are unable to name the composer. My interest in American music, specifically that which associates with American sentiments, led me to explore the music of Stephen Foster during the autumn of 2010. I would first like to thank my advisor, Bruce D. McClung, for his constant support and advice throughout my research. The time he invested brainstorming ideas and reading drafts has not gone unnoticed. Without him, this project would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the additional members of my thesis committee, Jonathan Kregor and Valerie Hardcastle, for their valuable input and guidance. Deane L. Root and the staff of Center of American Music went out of their way to provide me with scholarship and resources pertaining to my project. I am honored to have had the opportunity to converse with Dr. Root on multiple occasions and greatly appreciate his involvement in my research. My musicology friends and colleagues have provided me with advocacy and accountability, pushing me on toward graduation. They have taught me much, and I have enjoyed sharing my life with each one of them. I am truly grateful for the literary expertise provided by Phillip Lorey that contributed to the first chapter of my thesis. Many thanks to my parents, Charles and Mary Jo Frost, and my brother, Joe Frost, whose love, encouragement, and strength has made me who I am today. I am blessed to be a part of such a wonderful family. Finally, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through whom all things are possible. My passion and my joy in life rest in Him.
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Introduction

The emergence of commercial popular music in the United States coincided with the rise of the literate middle class and the transition from rural to urban communities. Its success resulted from an increase in income and time for leisurely activities, which many Americans of the middle and upper classes enjoyed during the nineteenth century. In terms of musical style, English, Italian, Scottish, and Irish melodies influenced many American popular songs. English songwriter Henry R. Bishop became successful with his “Home Sweet Home” (1823), one of the most popular songs of the nineteenth century, while Thomas Moore’s *A Selection of Irish Melodies* could be found on the music desk of many pianos in the front parlor of homes across the United States.¹ Moore had added his own poetry to traditional Irish tunes to create songs that remained in print throughout the nineteenth century. Their popularity stemmed from a “direct expression of universal sentiments” and melodies drawn “from a musical style already familiar to the musically educated and uneducated alike.”² Many of Moore’s songs expressed nostalgic sentiments, a characteristic that American songwriter Stephen Foster, who became familiar with Moore’s tunes, would subsequently invoke in his own music.

Americans began viewing musical literacy as a desirable trait during the early nineteenth century. Many women studied music at private schools or “seminaries” in order to appear accomplished.³ Around the same time, piano manufacturing increased, and many middle-class Americans could now afford to have one in their home. The rise of musical literacy and piano

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² Ibid., 3:593.

³ Ibid., 3:591.
production directly benefited Stephen Foster as many of his songs became quite popular in parlor settings.\(^4\)

In contrast to his parlor songs, which were composed for domestic use, Foster’s minstrel tunes were intended for the stage. Minstrelsy, commonly associated with blackface stage productions, was a popular form of entertainment during the nineteenth century. American entertainers George Nichols, Bob Farrell, and George Washington Dixon published their comic “negro” songs, allowing their popularity to spread through sheet music.\(^5\) Mid-century minstrel troupes such as the Virginia Minstrels and Christy’s Minstrels sang many of Foster’s minstrel tunes. For unknown reasons, Foster originally sold the authorship of “Old Folks at Home” (1851) to Christy’s Minstrels. After Edwin P. Christy refused Foster’s request to regain authorship at a subsequent date, Foster decided to leave minstrelsy.\(^6\)

In addition to sheet music sales and minstrel performers, touring vocalists helped disseminate Foster’s songs. One of the most well-regarded American groups in mid-century, the Hutchinson family, toured throughout the country singing songs with sentimental, social, and political themes that directly targeted their audience’s emotions. These topics ranged from abolition, temperance, and women’s suffrage.\(^7\) The years leading up to the Civil War gave rise to popular culture with increased domestication of the piano and increased publications aimed at

\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^5\) Ibid.


\(^7\) Hamm, “Popular Music,” 3:592.
aspiring amateurs. Stephen Foster, like the Hutchinson family, knew how to relate to the psychological struggles experienced by a rapidly transitioning nation.  

American music scholars credit Stephen Foster as being the first American composer to make a living solely from writing popular songs. Born on 4 July 1826, Foster grew up in an elite Pittsburgh family who lost their social status following the foreclosure of their home just before Stephen’s birth. Foster grew up in a financially unstable family void of a permanent place to call home. When Foster was a child, his parents handed the responsibility of his future over to their older and successful son William Jr. Despite William’s efforts to educate his brother, Foster found more joy in writing parlor and minstrel songs for his friends to perform than studying. As a young man, Foster moved to Cincinnati in 1846 to become a bookkeeper for his older brother Dunning. The industrialism that characterized antebellum America surrounded Foster during his formative years in Cincinnati. The telegraph in his bookkeeping office, trains that ran parallel to Front Street where his brother’s office was located, and steamboats along the Ohio River exemplify the industrial age. Here he met Jane McDowell, a fellow Pittsburgh transplant and the woman who would later become his wife.

Upon returning home to Pittsburgh in 1850, Foster signed a contract with a leading New York music publisher, Firth, Pond, and Company. Though positively received both during his

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8 Ibid., 3:593.
9 Ibid., 3:590.
10 O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 70.
11 Ibid., 103.
12 Ibid., 111.
13 Ibid., 171.
14 Ibid., 122.
life and posthumously, Foster lived a relatively troubled life characterized by loss. Nostalgic sentiments that likely result from this loss resonate throughout his works. Most famous for his minstrel tunes such as “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” and “Old Folks at Home” and parlor songs such as “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,” and “Gentle Annie,” Foster pulled on the heartstrings of his audience.\(^{15}\)

Many of Foster’s songs gained popularity during his lifetime because they reflected the spirit of the age in which he lived.\(^{16}\) During the early nineteenth century, many Americans moved to the large industrial cities and left the rural farmland behind. An unintended consequence of this mass urbanization was the increased spread of disease (such as cholera), which led to the premature loss of loved ones and touched the lives of many American families. Though excitement existed for the burgeoning urban centers, some Americans longed for the simple past: a past that in their minds, could be connected with their idealized lives in rural environments.\(^{17}\) Poetry and literary sources from this period in American history reify these sentiments.\(^{18}\)

Stephen Foster maintained a sense of nostalgia in his own life at a time when nostalgic sentiments longing for an idealized past resonated throughout many facets of American culture. Uprooted from his family home of the White Cottage when he was just a child, Foster never


\(^{16}\) O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 2.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 7.

again found a stable place to make roots and call “home.” The death of Foster’s sister Charlotte in 1829 and later his parents in 1855 left a lasting impression on Stephen. Parting with his beloved mother was especially challenging for Foster, and memories of a mother figure are reflected in songs such as “Farewell Sweet Mother” (1861) and “A Dream of My Mother and Home” (1862). Separation from his wife from 1853–1855 and 1861–1864 during a period when marriage was held in high regard and divorce was frowned upon, may have also contributed to a sense of grief and longing that led him to retreat into an idealized past through song. Thus, nostalgia characterizes both Foster’s personal life and some of his songs.

The topic of nostalgia has received a great deal of attention in recent years. In their research scholars have explored the perspectives on nostalgia throughout history as well as its psychological, social, and cultural functions. In his *Journal of Popular Culture* article “Nostalgia, Identity, and the Current Nostalgia Wave,” sociologist Fred Davis provides a clear explanation of the concept of nostalgia. He describes the etymology of the word nostos, meaning “to return home” and algai meaning “painful condition.” He also describes nostalgia as a reaction to a dissatisfying present. Davis’s discussion gives the reader the history of nostalgia, detailing how its treatment has changed over time. Originally coined by the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer in his 1688 “Dissertatio Medica de Nostalgica oder Heimwehe” (“Medical

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19 O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 70.

20 Ibid., 82.


22 Emerson, *Doo-dah!*, 13.


24 Ibid., 416.
Dissertation on Nostalgia or Homesickness”) for the University of Basel, nostalgia associated itself with the homesickness experienced by Swiss mercenaries who longed to return to their homes near the picturesque Alps while fighting in foreign lands.\(^\text{25}\) Common symptoms of nostalgia included sad, melancholy behavior, obsessive thoughts of home, insomnia, weakness, loss of senses, heart palpitations, constipation, unusual body movements, and loss of appetite.\(^\text{26}\) Physicians attempted to treat their afflicted patients by finding distractions, giving them hope of returning home, or actually sending them home.\(^\text{27}\) If this did not work, they would resort to opening their brachial veins in order to purge their patients of the disease.\(^\text{28}\)

During the late eighteenth century, physicians produced terror and pain through the application of red-hot irons to the nostalgic patient’s abdomen.\(^\text{29}\) Some believed their condition related to atmospheric pressure and therefore recommended their patients moved to places of higher altitude in order to “breathe lighter.”\(^\text{30}\) Though physicians used many of these methods well into the nineteenth century, people did not associate the sentimental condition that characterized antebellum America with this same condition. Instead, most Americans related their homesickness and sentimentality to an inefficient use of their time.\(^\text{31}\) Though Americans of that time did not consider themselves nostalgic, their discontent with the present and fears for the

\(^\text{25}\) Ibid.


\(^\text{27}\) Ibid., 3.

\(^\text{28}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{29}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{30}\) Ibid.

future led to longings for a simpler past; characteristics that we now associate with the term nostalgia.

In her book *The Future of Nostalgia*, Harvard comparative literature professor Svetlana Boym identifies two types of nostalgia: restorative and reflective. Boym proposes that restorative nostalgia “attempts a trans-historical reconstruction of the lost home” while reflective nostalgia “delays homecoming” having more to do with the state of longing. Similar to Davis, Boym lays a foundation for her discussion by providing a general definition of nostalgia as well as a background on its development over the past four centuries. She mentions that Americans first experienced nostalgic sentiments during the nineteenth century. She claims that “as a result of society’s industrialization and secularization in the nineteenth century, a certain void of social and spiritual meaning had opened up.”34 In their evaluation of past and present contributions on collective memory, Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy subsequently referenced Boym’s ideas in their *The Collective Memory Reader* published in 2011.

In this thesis, I demonstrate that Stephen Foster was overwhelmingly a reflective nostalgic composing at a time marked by restorative nostalgia. I will show that while most Americans yearned to recreate their simple past, Foster lived in a dream-like state, longing for a past he may have never fully experienced. Although his nostalgic experience may have differed somewhat from that of many Americans of the period, the use of predominantly restorative nostalgia in his songs contributed to their positive public reception.

32 Ibid., xviii.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 42.
Though scholars have published several biographies of Stephen Foster and his name appears in several general American music histories, new information about him remains limited. In his 1987 book, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home”: The Songs of Stephen Foster From His Time to Ours, William W. Austin explores the various meanings of Foster’s songs in relation to their social and historical contexts. He categorizes Foster’s songs into three main types: comic, poetic, and pathetic.\(^{36}\) He intended not just to explore the meanings behind Foster’s songs, but to discuss their relation to one another.\(^{37}\) Though Austin mentions the nostalgia present in Foster’s tunes, he does not expound on this topic nor did he make it one of the themes of his biographical study.\(^{38}\)

Ten years after the publication of Austin’s book, Ken Emerson released Doo-dah!: Stephen Foster and the Rise of American Popular Culture. Unlike the earlier accounts of Foster’s life, Emerson revealed details that the Foster family had originally censored. These aspects include Foster’s alcoholism, his father’s propensity to drink, and details on marital struggles between Stephen and Jane. In addition to these new biographical details, Emerson considers Foster’s songs in the context of an emerging nineteenth-century popular culture. Like Austin, Emerson refers to Foster’s songs as containing a nostalgic sentiment yet he also fails to further explore it.\(^{39}\)

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\(^{36}\) William W. Austin, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home”: The Songs of Stephen Foster from His Time to Ours (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987), x.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., xi.

\(^{38}\) Austin mentions nostalgia on the following pages: 30, 101, 162, 201, 215, 306, 308, 312, 315, 345, and 346.

\(^{39}\) Emerson, Doo-dah!, 195.
Joanne O’Connell discusses Foster’s life and music in her dissertation, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster: His World and Music.” By considering Foster in terms of the world in which he lived, O’Connell explains Foster’s popularity by showing how he could relate to his own generation. O’Connell’s dissertation provides the reader with a helpful foundation for studying the life and music of Stephen Foster; however, it rehearses much of the same information found in Emerson’s Doo-dah!, such as the discussion on Stephen and Jane’s marital struggles. Though each of the sources discussed thus far provide pertinent information for my study of Stephen Foster, they do not go beyond mentioning that some of his songs have a nostalgic theme.

Susan Key’s article “Sound and Sentimentality: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Foster” remains the sole piece of scholarship to consider nostalgia in Foster’s music. Key highlights the cultural significance of nostalgia in Foster’s songs by considering musical elements or procedures that evoke this sentiment. Using Fred Davis’s article to define the concept of nostalgia, Key defines nostalgia as a juxtaposition of an idealized past and an alien present. She then analyzes what aspects of Foster’s musical style might invoke nostalgia. Key also addresses nostalgic musical characteristics in an article she co-wrote with Lee Glazer entitled “Carry Me Back: Nostalgia for the Old South in Nineteenth-century Popular Culture.”

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40 O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster.”

41 Key, “Sound and Sentimentality.”

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 146.

44 Ibid., 157.

This article focuses on the northern population’s idealized view of the southern plantation as they longed for their pre-industrial state. Though Key does an excellent job examining nostalgia in terms of Foster’s musical style and explaining the nostalgic state of nineteenth-century American culture, she does not consider the types of nostalgia present in his songs topically or lyrically.

Using the critical edition of the complete works of Foster, I have compiled a comprehensive list of Foster’s songs, identifying those that contain a nostalgic sentiment (see appendix). In this thesis I aim not only to map my own typology onto Foster’s songs, identifying whether each nostalgic song expresses a longing for a person, place, or time in order to determine the foci of Foster’s nostalgia, but also to use Boym’s 2001 study (published six years after Key’s initial article) to investigate how nostalgia functions in Foster’s oeuvre. In particular, I will demonstrate that Foster was largely a reflective nostalgic living and working in a culture marked by restorative nostalgia. I also discuss Key’s conclusions as they relate to Foster’s musical nostalgia. For example, my study will identify whether the musical characteristics identified by Key that make Foster sound nostalgic apply to each nostalgic song in his repertoire or if aspects of these songs’ topics or lyrics may be equally significant. Though Key’s discussion of Foster’s musical style is applicable to some of his songs, a comprehensive musical examination of Foster’s works reveals that Key’s observations do not apply to all of Foster’s songs with a nostalgia sentiment.

Before examining the types of nostalgia in Foster’s works, I will briefly summarize the types of nineteenth-century sentiments found in American poetry and literature, such as those

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46 Steven Saunders and Deane L. Root, eds. The Music of Stephen C. Foster: A Critical Edition, 2 vols. (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990); I have compiled Foster’s complete works in the form of a table and identified the type of nostalgia present in each song along with words and phrases that indicate a nostalgic sentiment. This table also identifies the year published, publisher, dedicatee, key, form of the piece, lyricist, and type of piece (minstrel, parlor, etc.).
written by Edgar Allen Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and James Fenimore Cooper. My study will not extensively focus on American literature, but I have employed it to outline the sentimental tendencies of the period, which may help explain why many people gravitated to Foster’s songs. Though much of Foster’s personal life provides an example of reflective nostalgia, his songs reflect both types. This suggests why his nostalgic songs became popular during a time that American culture exhibited primarily a restorative type of nostalgia. Although it is not my intention to retell Foster’s biography, I will highlight elements of his life that relate to nostalgia, including his longing for home and his wife after their separation. Musicologists have yet to determine how many nostalgic songs Foster wrote and to identify what they are nostalgic for and how Foster represented nostalgia lyrically. My discussion provides an original contribution to Foster scholarship by assessing how restorative and reflective nostalgia manifest themselves in his music, which may help to explain why Foster’s music was so positively received during his lifetime.

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Chapter 1
Bittersweet Beginnings:
Restorative Nostalgia in Nineteenth-Century America

Stephen Foster was born in 1826 into a period of transition as America experienced a series of changes. Under the presidencies of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, and Andrew Jackson, the government expanded while cutting public expenditures. As the country grew, American citizens grew in their sense of national identity as they attempted to unite religiously and morally with one another through Christian revivals. All the while, the nation endured the aftermath of the War of 1812 and the destruction of the Federalist Party while the Mexican War of the 1840s drew near. During this time, transportation improved by way of steamboats and railroads, and communities began to be connected to one another, causing the nation to feel smaller than in previous years. Though America thrived as it grew, tensions involving the issue of slavery rapidly increased, politically dividing the nation.

These sentiments found their way into poetry and literature of the time. Despite the excitement for the progress of American culture under the mindset of manifest destiny, a sense of longing for the simple past remained. Poems, novels, and other literary sources such as Edgar Allen Poe’s “The Landscape Garden,” Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin, Ralph Waldo Emerson’s The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks, James Fenimore Cooper’s The Pioneers, M. J. Holmes’ Meadowbrook, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s The Song of Hiawatha and The Courtship of Miles Standish, reflect the sentiments and values of the antebellum generation with its sense of nostalgia during a period of transition.

Many Americans connected their memory of their lives in the countryside to what must have seemed to be an un tarnished Eden. The American Industrial Revolution (c. 1820–1870)
resulted in Americans moving their families to urban centers for better job opportunities. With the increase in city populations and the demands brought on by an urban lifestyle, some found themselves longing for the simple times associated with their prior life in the countryside. Images of the rural farmland painted pictures of beauty and comfort in the minds of people faced with the pollutants of industrial factories. The once clean river waters and green valleys surrounding them now housed steamboats used to transport goods up and down America’s waterways.

Analyzing nineteenth-century American literature reveals that people did not consider themselves nostalgic, but longed to restore the past. Mid-nineteenth-century Americans associated nostalgia with a medical condition rather than a common feeling experienced by those longing for the past.¹ This chapter will show that many American city dwellers viewed the restoration of the past as complete truth—a striving to restore a lost Eden. Much of the restoration occurred through reading, writing, and recalling memories of the past.

Elected to the presidency in 1801, Thomas Jefferson sought to make the Federal government more responsive to the people’s will. In order to do this, Jefferson cut public expenditures and contested Federalist control of the judiciary.² The 1803 Louisiana Purchase resulted in the acquisition of the territory between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains nearly doubling the nation’s size.³ It allowed more states to enter the union and to expand the country’s agriculture industry, thus foreshadowing the growth and change to come later in the century.⁴

¹ For more information regarding nostalgia as a medical condition, see the introduction.


³ Ibid., 233.
Following Jefferson’s presidency, the election of James Madison in 1809 led the country through the War of 1812, which destroyed the Federalist Party. Federalists organized the Hartford Convention in 1814, its purpose being to summarize the grievances of those from New England. Many New Englanders felt they were becoming a minority in a country being taken over by southern Republicans. The group proposed various changes to the Constitution including abolishing the three-fifths clause, requiring a two-thirds vote of Congress to declare war or admit new states, limiting the number of terms served by a president, and prohibiting successive presidents from the same state.\(^5\) Because the Federalists issued their proposals at the same time that Andrew Jackson led the country to victory at the Battle of New Orleans, their efforts failed. Americans elected Republican James Monroe in 1816, destroying any hope for the Federalists.\(^6\) During Monroe’s term, the Transcontinental Treaty of 1819 and the Monroe Doctrine expanded the United State’s territory therefore increasing the nation’s confidence in its ability to stand on its own.\(^7\) This confidence led to a pulling away from European ties, causing most Americans to feel a strong pride for their nation and its accomplishments.

During the 1820s many improvements in transportation transformed the United States. The inventing of the steamboat, building of canals, and advent of the railroad led to the growth of towns into major urban centers.\(^8\) Andrew Jackson’s 1824 election led to political upheaval. His philosophy on internal improvements, tariffs, and banking led to the formation of the Whig

\(^4\) Ibid., 252.
\(^5\) Ibid., 246.
\(^6\) Ibid., 247.
\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Ibid., 282.
party and created strong political party divisions.\(^9\) In an attempt to reunite, Americans developed their religious pursuits, placing a greater emphasis on making God the center of their lives.\(^{10}\) The Second Great Awakening brought people of different faiths together with the idea that anyone could attain salvation.\(^{11}\) As conflict and change transformed the lives of Americans living in the north, it seemed the southern states developed at a slower rate, clinging to the simplicity that Northerners associated with the past.\(^{12}\)

Between 1840 and 1860, developments in technology transformed American society. With improvements in gun manufacturing and the invention of the sewing machine, many products previously afforded by only the upper class became accessible to the middle class.\(^{13}\) Through transportation and communication the spread of the railroad and the invention of the telegraph helped to connect the American people.\(^{14}\) Advancements in printing resulted in increased literacy. More than ever before people read newspapers, novels, and commercial amusements released by opportunists such as P. T. Barnum, uniting people across the country through the written word.\(^{15}\) Since the invention of the cotton gin in 1794, the nation had become more dependent on cotton into mid century, which resulted in an increase in slave labor.\(^{16}\)

\(^9\) Ibid., 314.

\(^{10}\) Ibid.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., 299.


\(^{13}\) Boyer, *The Enduring Vision*, 342.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 343.

\(^{15}\) Ibid.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 373.
As tensions involving slave labor increased, conflicts also rose amongst the 277,000 German and Irish immigrants entering the states each year. This resulted in the Whig Party’s nativism and anti-Catholicism, and led most German and Irish immigrants to join the Democratic Party. Not long after this, the Whig Party dissolved leading to Democrat James K. Polk’s election to the presidency in 1844. A supporter of expansion, President Polk supported the annexation of Texas during his presidency, which led to the Mexican-American War. His expansionist goals also encouraged the move west in search for gold. These events each contributed to the disturbance of the family and home as many men left to fight in the war or traveled west in hopes of striking it rich.

As waves of Americans began moving into the cities or out west in order to enhance their financial situation, they found themselves in a part of the country in which they had no roots. American music scholar Nicholas Tawa describes these people as having “no sympathetic connection with their new environments.” Those uprooted from their homes may have reflected on the past and longed for their home and loved ones because of their discontent with the new surroundings of the present. Even those who stayed behind may have experienced melancholy feelings due to increased disease and premature deaths that had become commonplace by mid-

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19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

century. Smaller and sicklier than the present day population, people frequently suffered from tuberculosis, diphtheria, and typhoid, most families across the nation lost at least one loved one as a result.24

During mid-century, the family unit held importance in the lives of most Americans. Each member contributed some part to making the unit function. Children completed chores while wives worked on household duties and husbands brought home the income.25 Extended family often lived within the family unit as well.26 This emphasis placed on family lent to significant loss when men left home for war or moved west.

Though many Americans certainly experienced a longing to return to the simple past as a result of their present situation, cultural norms discouraged the display of emotion as inappropriate.27 As a result, people suffering the loss of loved ones or adjusting to the changing nation around them found popular song a cathartic expression for their own emotions. Society accepted the display of emotion for a song rather than the expression of personal sentiments.28 Tawa describes popular song as attempting “to hold the Ideal before us, to demonstrate the possible consequences of diverging from that Ideal—however necessary or forced the divergence—and to suggest ways of returning to the Ideal.”29 He specifies the home as one representation of the “Ideal.” He depicts it as a sanctuary protecting the family who inhabits it.

23 Ibid., viii.
24 Bode, Midcentury America, xiii; Tawa, A Music for the Millions, viii.
26 Ibid.
27 Tawa, A Music for the Millions, 40.
28 Ibid., 40.
29 Ibid., 58.
from the changes of the outside world. Various nineteenth-century songs promise shelter and protection for the distressed wanderer who longs to return to the comforts of a prior dwelling, such as Henry Bishop’s “Home, Sweet Home” (1823) and Stephen Foster’s “Old Folks at Home” (1851), “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” (1853), and “A Dream of My Mother and My Home” (1863).

Similar to how song lyrics reflected popular nineteenth-century sentiments, poetry and literary sources can also provide insight into the longings of the time. In her book Sentimental Collaborations: Mourning and Middle-Class Identity in Nineteenth-Century America, Mary Louise Kete considers the importance in familiarizing oneself with poetry in order to fully understand and appreciate the culture of the time. She claims, “If, as Emerson explains in ‘The Poet,’ ‘words are also action, and actions are a kind of words,’ then the popular poetry of nineteenth-century America should provide a decipherable index to the dynamics of American culture.”

Slavery, depictions of the South, industrialization, home and domesticity, religion, mourning, and loneliness all are important themes in the literature of the antebellum period. In “The Landscape Garden” (1850), Edgar Allen Poe describes these themes as “modes of conduct.” Poe underscores the significance of these themes in the lives of the Americans around him and explains, “they comprise healthy, unfettered movement in the open countryside,

30 Ibid., 86.
31 Chapter 3 contains an in-depth discussion on Foster’s lyrics as they pertain to these commonly held sentiments. This chapter will further explore and clarify nineteenth-century American sentimentality as found in literary sources of the time.
33 Tawa, A Music for the Million, 64.
love of woman, absence of ambition, and unceasing pursuit of objects endowed with the highest spirituality.”

A common topic in nineteenth-century literature concerns the southern plantation. While some authors depicted the South as the ideal setting, unharmed by the pollutants of industrialization, many abolitionists, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), painted a horrific picture of the South. Abolitionists attempted to depict the appalling behavior of plantation owners toward their slaves. Despite some Northerners’ efforts to portray the South as evil, other Northerners found it difficult not to romanticize the beauty and simplicity that came with a southern lifestyle. They found themselves taken in by images of the southern belle, stately mansions, and regional savories. Ralph Waldo Emerson describes his longing for an ideal society existing in the countryside but found it “always to be only a dream, a song, a . . . vision of living.” Emerson’s association of an ideal society situated in the countryside seems to be a common sentiment in literature by urban Northerners. It reflected both the desire for their own past prior to industrialization in the North and their idealized and romanticized view of the southern plantation.

*The Pioneers*, part of James Fenimore Cooper’s five novel series known as *The Leatherstocking Tales* (1823–1841), attempts to create a realistic subject for American readers.

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34 Edgar Allen Poe, “The Landscape Garden” in *Works* (New York: Redfield, 1856), 337, quoted in ibid., 64.


36 Ibid., 247.


Together, The Leatherstocking Tales have been referred to as Cooper’s “romance” about the “myth of America.” More than any other American novel, The Pioneers (1823) contains a sense of Nature “rapidly altering under the hand of man.” The story features Leatherstocking character Natty Bumppo living in the rapidly changing frontier of New York. It depicts Bumppo’s regret at adapting to these changes in the natural world and the sense of nostalgia he feels toward the pristine world first discovered by the original pioneers. Cooper indicates his sympathies for the environment in Chapter 3:

Many a pile of snow [in Templeton] betrayed the presence of the stump of a pine; and even in one or two instances, unsightly remnants of trees that had been partly destroyed by fire were seen rearing their black, glistening columns twenty or thirty feet above the pure white snow. These, which in the language of the country are termed stubs, abounded in the open fields adjacent to the village, and were accompanied, occasionally, by the ruin of a pine or a hemlock that had been stripped of its bark, and which waved in melancholy grandeur its naked limbs to the blast, a skeleton of its former glory.

He concludes: “Five years had wrought greater changes than a century would produce in older countries where time and labour have given permanency to the works of man.”

Domesticity and the longing for home became a popular topic by midcentury. Many men went off to fight in the Mexican War (1846–1848) and with industrialization, the movement from rural settings to urban centers became a normal occurrence for many American families. Oliver Wendell Holmes described Americans as “gypsies—a mechanical and migratory race.”

The idea of leaving home for some young men seemed exhilarating and certainly a necessary

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39 Ibid.
41 Ibid., 34.
42 Ibid., 35.
43 Tawa, A Music for the Millions, 89.
endeavor. In a letter written to his father, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow described his feelings of inadequacy at having never left home:

I was never fifty miles from Portland in all my life, which I think is rather a sorrowful circumstance in the annals of my history. When I hear others talking, as travelers are very apt of do, about what they have seen and heard abroad, I always regret my having never been from home more than I have hitherto. 44

Mary Louise Kete describes Longfellow’s American as “bound by memories of the past.” 45 His narrative poems *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855) and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858) describe the prevailing sense of rootlessness. The male protagonists in each poem experience the loss of homeland that gave their lives meaning. 46

Despite the sense of adventure for many young men traveling the country, feelings of rootlessness increased, and some began to realize the importance of the family unit and long for the simplicity found in the idealized picture of their childhood home. Because domesticity held great importance during this point in American history, married women found themselves occupied with their families and daily chores. 47 As a result topics relating to the old homestead became popular amongst novelists. 48 Growing up during this era, L. Frank Baum created the fictional world of Oz in his novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* published in 1900. In this famous story, a young Dorothy finds adventure in a land of witches, scarecrows, tin men, and lions as she attempts to follow the yellow brick road in order to find the great Oz who will send her

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46 Ibid.


48 Ibid., 283.
home. Her famous line “there’s no place like home” exemplifies the sentiment felt by many Americans during the nineteenth century.

The simplicity of the old homestead provided a cure for family members “hardened by contact with the world” surrounding them.49 An excerpt from M. J. Holmes’s *Meadowbrook* (1857) demonstrates the sentiments associated with the mid-century home relating these feelings to the Thanksgiving holiday, a time associated with family gathered around the hearth:

Thanksgiving! How many reminiscences of the olden time does that word call up, when sons and daughters, they who had wandered far and wide, whose locks, once brown and shining with the sunlight of youth, now give token that the autumnal frosts of life are falling slowly upon them, return once more to the old hearthstone, and, for a brief space, grow young again amid the festive scenes of Thanksgiving Day.50

Another depiction of sentimentality concerning the home and family can be found in an 1847 editorial essay found in the *Farmer and Mechanic*:

There is something in the word home that wakes the kindest feelings of the heart. It is not merely friends and kindred that render the places so dear, but the very hills and rocks and rivulets throw a charm around the place of one’s nativity. It is not wonder that the loftiest harps have been tuned to sing of home, “sweet home.” The rose that bloomed in the garden where one has wandered in early years careless in innocence, is lovely in its bloom, and lovelier in its decay. No songs are sweet like those we heard among the boughs that shade a parent’s dwelling, gay as the birds that warble over us. No waters are bright like the clear silver stream that winds among the flower-decked knolls, where in childhood we have often strayed to pluck the violet or the lily, or twine a garland for some loving school-mate. We may wander away and mingle in the “world’s fierce strife,” and form new associations and friendships, and fancy that we have almost forgotten the land of our birth; but at some evening hour, as we listen perchance to the autumn winds, the remembrance of other days comes over the soul, and fancy bears us back to childhood’s scenes, and we roam again amid the familiar haunts, and press the hands of the companions long since cold in their graves—and listen to voices we shall hear on earth no more. It is then a feeling of melancholy steals over us, which like Ossian’s music, is pleasant, though mournful to the soul.51

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49 Ibid., 284.


In addition to the topic of home in nineteenth-century American literature, subjects such as marriage, children, family, and religion were also popular. Some writers turned to topics of domesticity, exalting the position of housewife and the importance of marriage.\(^{52}\) While American culture changed rapidly during the nineteenth century, the institution of marriage remained steadfast.\(^{53}\) Maintaining the home was the chief occupation for many women. The 1845 manual *Keeping House and Housekeeping* illustrates the importance of domesticity in nineteenth-century American culture: “Every married woman in good health should keep her own house. It is a sacred office from which she has no right to shrink, it is a part of her married covenant—it gives dignity to her character.”\(^{54}\) Marriage represented an important institution and as a result most people frowned upon divorce.\(^{55}\) Connected to the domestic realm, children became a popular literary topic as well, considered pure by the sentimental.\(^{56}\) Mark Twain’s novels *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) are representative of popular stories about children and social issues in nineteenth-century American culture.

Amidst the turmoil felt in the world surrounding them, many American families remained strong in their relationship with one another and their faith in God. Religion brought them through the difficult transitions that came with life as well as the loss of loved ones due to disease. Ellen Montgomery in S. Warner’s 1852 novel, *The Wide, Wide World*, exemplifies this


\(^{53}\) Ibid., 286.


\(^{55}\) Ibid., 315.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., 300.
attitude. Despite the loss of her beloved mother and mistreatment from family members, Ellen presses forward in life, relying on her faith in God to get her through tragic situations.

Themes of loss and loneliness permeated American literature of the mid nineteenth century. The reading and writing of sentimental works most likely helped people with their grief and mourning. *Harriet Gould’s Book* (1837) demonstrates the themes of loss that infiltrated poetry written during the 1830s and 1840s. A collection of writings from Harriet Gould and her friends, the manuscript passed from one young lady to another, each contributing either something written by another who inspired them, an original piece, or a poem written by another and altered to better depict their current circumstances. Though the practice of keeping such a book remained a popular activity throughout the century, *Harriet Gould’s Book* is unique in that its writings span several decades. Central topics included the family and home clouded by loss, as exemplified by this poem that Olive S. Gould contributed:

How sweet to dwell where all is peace  
Where calm delight ensues  
How sweet to feel superior bliss  
And have our souls renewed.

Or should our path with thorns be strewed  
And we by all forgot  
How sweet in heaven a friend to view  
That will forget us not.

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59 Ibid., 20.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid., 32.
The first quatrain of this poem describes the delights of home and all that it might provide for the writer. In contrast, the second quatrain begins by dwelling on a sense of loss or inability to obtain the desired resting place.

Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne also wrote about loss in their novels and short stories.⁶² For instance, in Melville’s novel *Moby Dick* (1851), Ishmael looses himself by giving up his identity in order to fit in with those surrounding him. Hawthorne’s novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) provides another example of loss; however, he chooses to focus on the loss of innocence leading to a sense of loneliness felt by Hester Prynne as she becomes isolated from the Puritan society in which she lives. Regarding mid-century American literature and poetry, American literary scholar and critic R. W. B. Lewis describes loneliness as a dominant theme: “[Walt] Whitman’s image of the evergreen, ‘solitary in a wide, flat space. . . without a friend or lover near’, introduced what more and more appears to be the central theme of American literature. . . loneliness.”⁶³

Descriptions of loss in nineteenth-century literature depict the culture as experiencing nostalgia. Sentimental themes of the hearth and family express nostalgia for a tangible existence associated with the past. This type of restorative nostalgia first began to associate itself in the United States during the nineteenth century. The antebellum generation experienced an age of industrialization causing a rapid development of change. Improvements in transportation and the relocation of many people to urban centers rather than the rural farmland spread families apart and led to faster paced life styles than what had been previously experienced.

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Defined as a reconstruction of the lost home or an attempt to rebuild a past that actually existed, restorative nostalgia characterized antebellum American culture. While nineteenth-century America endured industrialization, the sentimentality expressed in writings of the time show that many were discontent with their new circumstances. Present anxieties and fears for the future led to bittersweet feelings and the longing for the simplicity associated with the past. Writings from the time including the poetry in Harriet Gould’s Book and reflections of the lost homeland from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow describe the sentimentality of American culture during this time period. Feelings of loss and reflections on the past exemplify the nostalgic experience. Those experiencing restorative nostalgia dealt in real events, people, and places of the past and present, not fancied pictures of what they longed for but never actually experienced.

Emerson’s vision of the countryside and Cooper’s nostalgia for a pre-industrialized world show the attempt through writing to restore the past through memory and recollection. Many readers were able to experience their own sentimentality as these writings helped in restoring memories of their own past. Dorothy’s observation “there’s no place like home” as she clicks her heels and attempts to return to her Kansas farmhouse and Auntie Em following her journey down the yellow brick road shows the attempt of a literary character to restore lost realities that existed within her fictionalized past. The restorative nostalgia found in nineteenth-century American literature reflects the sentiments experienced by many Americans. They did not consider themselves nostalgic but attempted to restore the past through reading, writing, and sharing their memories. These activities characterize restorative nostalgia.

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64 Ibid., xviii, 41.


66 Ibid.
Antebellum America existed in a period of rapid transition marked by industrialization, change, and political and social tensions. The nation remained in a state of cultural unrest for the majority of the era. Despite pride in their nation and excitement in industrial improvements and additional opportunities, many Americans felt a sense of unrest amidst the increasingly fast-paced world around them. They experienced bittersweet feelings, longing for the simplicity of their past prior to industrialization. Expressed throughout writings of the time including Cooper’s *The Pioneers* and Longfellow’s *The Song of Hiawatha* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, nostalgia became a theme in the literature of the period as many Americans attempted to restore what they had individually lost.
Chapter 2
Distant Dreams of “Jeanie” and the “Old Kentucky Home”: Reflective Nostalgia in the Life of Stephen Collins Foster

Foster’s lack of a place to call home originated with his family. Prior to Foster’s birth in 1826, the Foster family resided at the picturesque White Cottage. Constructed in 1814, the White Cottage sat on Alexander Hill facing the Allegheny River. With a fashionable address on Penn Street, the Foster’s surrounded themselves with the other elites of Pittsburgh. Benjamin Henry Latrobe, the architect who subsequently designed the capitol building in Washington DC, had designed the White Cottage. Residing in Pittsburgh between 1812 and 1814, Latrobe hoped to design steamboats that would travel the Mississippi River. Because his steamboat designs did not work on rivers of the west, Latrobe found himself in a financial hardship. When he received the Foster family’s inquiry to design a home, he gladly accepted.\(^1\) Built in the simple style popular during the early nineteenth century, the cottage had white sides with green shutters. Behind the home sat a smokehouse, horse stables, pig pens, and a summer spring house.\(^2\)

Though born at White Cottage in 1826, young Stephen found himself uprooted in 1830 before he had lived there long enough to make many memories. His father, William Barclay Foster, prioritized serving his country over providing for his family.\(^3\) His patriotism would later lead to the family’s financial ruin. During the Battle of New Orleans (1815), William B. Foster had used his own savings to equip a supply ship known as the *Enterprize* to send to Andrew

\(^1\) Joanne O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster: His World and Music” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2007), 45.

\(^2\) Ibid., 46.

\(^3\) Ibid.
Jackson down the Mississippi River. Though recognized by the United States government, William Foster never received repayment for his generosity. The idea of a lost home has the potential to conjure up nostalgic sentiments. This chapter discusses Foster’s personal objects of longing including his home and his wife, and helps to contextualize what type of nostalgia he may have experienced and how that might relate to the sentiments present in his music.

Prior to 1830 the Foster family enjoyed its status as one of the elite families of Pittsburgh. William B. Foster worked as a politician taking the role of state representative and mayor of Allegheny City. The family also enjoyed socializing with other prominent families. A common past time involved rehearsing amateur theatrical productions at the Foster family’s White Cottage. Household servants completed any necessary chores so that the Foster girls could spend their time working on cultivating their accomplishments. The Foster’s upper-class lifestyle came to an end when the Bank of the United States foreclosed on all property in the southern half of Lawrenceville. Because the Bank held mortgages on the Foster property, White Cottage foreclosed in 1826, the year of Stephen’s birth. Though given a few years to remain as tenants in the cottage while searching for a new home, the Fosters never again experienced the high social status of a property-owning family and spent their remaining years living off the charity of others.


5 O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 50.

6 Ibid., 54.

7 Ibid., 57.

8 Ibid., 67.

9 Ibid., 70.

10 Ibid.
The eldest Foster son, William Jr., provided much of the family’s charity. An illegitimate son of William Barclay, young William came to the Foster family at the age of seven.\(^ {11}\) His subsequent financial success as Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad led to the expectation that he would support his father’s family during their financial hardship. William Jr. initially seemed willing to care for his family,\(^ {12}\) and his purchase of a house in Allegheny City in 1835 for them was the first of many charitable actions.\(^ {13}\)

At the age of thirteen, Stephen’s parents sent him to live with William Jr. because of their inability to provide for his education. After attending various schools, including the Academy at Towanda (1840), the Athens Academy at Tioga Point (1841), and Jefferson College (1841), Stephen proved that he was not a student. According to biographer Harold Vincent Milligan, Stephen felt unhappy with the various boarding houses he lived in while in school and preferred spending study time in the field collecting strawberries.\(^ {14}\) After abandoning the idea of graduating, he moved in with his parents back in Allegheny City in 1841. Here he spent most of his time composing while studying mathematics privately with a Mr. Moody.\(^ {15}\)

In 1846 Stephen traveled south to Cincinnati in order to work as a bookkeeper for his older brother Dunning, who ran a steamboat company that transported local manufacturers’ products downriver.\(^ {16}\) Part of Stephen’s job involved walking down to the levee and recording

\(^ {11}\) Emerson, *Doo-dah!*, 21.


\(^ {13}\) Ibid., 86.


\(^ {15}\) O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 106.

\(^ {16}\) Ibid., 123.
what went on and off each boat. While doing his job, Stephen often heard free blacks who worked on the steamboats singing work songs.\textsuperscript{17}

When Stephen first arrived in Cincinnati he roomed with Dunning at the Broadway Hotel. Later he moved into a boarding house run by a Mrs. Jane Griffin located on Fourth Street.\textsuperscript{18} In 1847 Dunning Foster decided to join General Winfield Scott’s forces in the war with Mexico and left Stephen behind to work with his business partner, Archibald Irwin.\textsuperscript{19} At this time, Stephen began spending less time with the account books and more with his music.

In Cincinnati Stephen Foster entered into the music trade. Publishing songs with W. C. Peters or a variation of that company, Foster dedicated his tunes to either minstrel performers or various young ladies with whom he socialized.\textsuperscript{20} Upon his return to Pittsburgh in 1850, he apparently believed that he could make an adequate living as a composer. Foster signed a contract with New York music publisher Firth, Pond, and Company, which guaranteed that he would receive royalty payments for each song he composed.\textsuperscript{21}

Not long after his return to Pittsburgh in 1850, Stephen Foster married Jane McDowell. The birth of their daughter, Marion, followed shortly thereafter in 1851. During the first part of their marriage, they lived with Stephen’s parents in the home purchased by William Jr. They later moved in with Jane’s mother.\textsuperscript{22}

\[\text{Footnotes:}\]

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 124.


\textsuperscript{19} O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 126.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 127.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 122.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 185.
daughter, to New York City where Stephen could live closer to his publishers. The family first lived with a Mrs. Stewart upon arriving in New York. At first Stephen and Jane kept an active social life, but soon Stephen began upsetting his publishers with his meager output. Jane departed with their daughter in 1861, leaving Stephen moving from one boarding house to the next during this darkest period of his life.

During his last four years of life spent in New York, Stephen Foster lost all self respect. The lyricist of Foster’s late songs, George Cooper, described him as having holes in his shoes and selling clothes given to him for alcohol money. He further claimed that Foster became indifferent to food, preferring rum over dinner. Following his death in 1864, the hospital entered his name in the register as “laborer, evidently because he was poorly dressed and unidentified as belonging to any particular occupation.”

Stephen Foster had resided in many boarding houses throughout New York City including a room along the Bowery. During this period the Bowery was inhabited by many thieves, murderers, alcoholics and prostitutes. Located on the southern edge of Manhattan, Foster’s room at the New England Hotel on Bowery Street had cost twenty-five cents a night. Before he lived there, the 1857 Bowery B-hoy riots occurred with the Bowery B-hoy gang fighting an Irish gang known as the Dead Rabbits. The gangs had fought using bricks, bats, and

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23 Ibid., 429.
26 Milligan, Stephen Collins Foster, 103–5.
27 Ibid., 100.
This neighborhood in which Stephen Foster lived during his last years was not in keeping with the home described in many of his early songs, such as “Farewell! Old Cottage” (1851) and “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” (1853).

Before his time at the New England Hotel, Foster had resided in a cellar room on Elizabeth Street. Cellar dwellings became popular in the early 1850s with the arrival of many immigrants. People packed into basements, sleeping in dark, windowless rooms. Mildew, dirt, and odor characterized these filthy dwellings—a far cry from the White Cottage.

Stephen Foster spent his life longing for a home he barely knew. From age four Foster moved between boarding houses, never establishing a permanent home. Songs such as “Farewell! Old Cottage,” “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!,” and “A Thousand Miles from Home” relay sentiments for a lost home. Later in life, his collaboration with George Cooper produced “Sweet Emerald Isle That I Love So Well” about a lost home never recovered. In his 1862 “No Home, No Home,” Foster subtly admits the lack of a home in his past:

No home! No home on my weary way I seek,
When laden with grief and care,
No voice of love that one gentle word will speak,
No lips that will breathe for me a prayer;
I wander along o’er the wide wide world,
In sorrow where e’er I roam,
But, ah! while through all its busy scenes I’m hurled,
I find for my drooping heart no home,
I find for my drooping heart no home,
No home for my heart, no home.

Just as Foster longed for a place to call home yet never experienced the comforts provided by a homestead, he also longed for love, a love he evidently never fully felt or received.

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31 Ibid.
from his wife, Jane. Nineteenth-century Americans considered bonds of the family unit important, and looked down upon divorce, regarding the institution of marriage as sacred. The man of each household typically worked to support the family financially while most women fulfilled domestic duties and acted as a maternal comforter to her family. The marriage between Stephen Foster and Jane McDowell did not fit the nineteenth-century stereotype. It seems neither party felt contentment in the relationship, which begs the question as to why they married.

Stephen Foster first began to court Jane McDowell while living in Cincinnati and working for his brother Dunning. Jane came from an upper class family, the daughter of a leading physician in Pittsburgh. The McDowell family resided on Penn Street near the intersection of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, not far from where Foster’s parents had originally built their White Cottage. Jane first traveled to Cincinnati in January 1849. While staying with the Stewart family, Jane hoped to draw the attention of eligible bachelors. Stephen began paying visits to the Stewart household shortly after her arrival. Foster family legend claims that Stephen may have began to visit Jane because of the comfort in conversation with a woman from home. Following the death of her father in May 1849, Jane returned to Pittsburgh. Stephen followed in February 1850, marrying Jane the following summer.

Though Stephen certainly courted Jane and proposed marriage, the reason why they chose each other remains unclear. Both Stephen and Jane dated others around the same time they

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33 Ibid., 169.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., 170.

36 Evelyn Foster Morneweck, Chronicles of Stephen Foster’s Family (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1944), 348.

were courting. Less than a year before she married Stephen, Jane had another proposal of marriage from a man from Lisbon, Ohio.\textsuperscript{38} Stephen also seriously dated another woman named Martha A. Morse in the early months of 1850, between the time when he first courted Jane and their wedding day.\textsuperscript{39} No record remains as to why Stephen and Martha broke off their relationship. Competition may have driven Stephen to propose marriage to Jane. According to his granddaughter, Mrs. A. D. Rose, Foster quickly proposed after realizing a Mr. Richard Cowan also frequently courted Jane.\textsuperscript{40} Cowan practiced law and had a distinguished career.\textsuperscript{41} Formerly members of the Knights of the Square Table, Cowan and Foster may have experienced common teenage rivalry in the past—competition perhaps involving musical ability or lady friends. Formed around 1847, the Knights of the Square Table consisted of Foster and his friends gathering in each other’s homes to sing songs.\textsuperscript{42}

Foster’s unexpected proposal likely forced Jane to make a quick decision. Perhaps the couple acted hastily and lacked readiness for marriage. An account of the marriage left by Jane’s sister Agnes reads that Stephen appeared quite fearful on his wedding day.\textsuperscript{43} Foster’s song written about Jane depicts her in a positive light:

\begin{quote}
I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Borne, like a vapor, on the summer air;
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{38} Morneweck, \textit{Chronicles}, 365.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 160.

\textsuperscript{42} Morneweck, \textit{Chronicles}, 365.

\textsuperscript{43} Letter acquired by the Foster Hall Collection from Mrs. Scully’s (recipient of the letter) grandson, Charles Manning of Pittsburgh, quoted in Howard, \textit{Stephen Foster}, 165.
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
Happy as the daisies that dance on her way.

However, does “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” accurately depict the Jane McDowell he married or an image of the wife he longed to have? Stephen’s sisters Henrietta and Ann Eliza commented that the Jeanie in his poetry did not correspond to the real “Jeanie.”

“My Wife Is a Most Knowing Woman,” composed in 1863 with lyrics by his friend George Cooper, more closely relates the reality of their marriage:

    My wife is a most knowing woman,
    She always is finding me out,
    She never will hear explanations
    But instantly puts me to rout,
    There’s no use to try to deceive her,
    If out with my friends, night or day,
    In the most inconceivable manner
    She tells where I’ve been right away,
    She says that I’m “mean” and “inhuman”
    Oh! my wife is a most knowing woman.

Stephen Foster’s song dedications and multiple references to a girl by the name of Mary Keller, even following his marriage to Jane, also raises questions about the security of their relationship. Mary, Rachel, and Margaret Keller sang with Stephen Foster’s Pittsburgh club, the Knights of the Square Table. The Keller sister’s home became one of the popular gathering places for the group to sing. Though no record indicates a romance between Mary and Stephen, in her Chronicles Foster’s niece Evelyn Foster Morneweck refers to affections between the pair. Foster’s granddaughter also believed he considered Mary his sweetheart at one point.

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45 Morneweck, Chronicles, 282.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

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The first to sing many of Stephen’s songs, Mary became Stephen’s favorite to spend time with during their club meetings. Foster’s “Where is Thy Spirit, Mary?” shows the strong affections of an emotionally distraught young man following Mary’s death in December of 1846:

Where is thy spirit, Mary?
Dwells it in the air?
Friends thou hast forsaken
Fondly deem ’tis ling’ring there.
I heard an old-time ballad,
Low and plaintive was the strain
So pure and clear, I seem’d to hear
Thy gentle voice again.
She who sang was lovely,
She was innocent and fair
And I said, if angels guard us,
Thy sweet spirit lingers there.

Stephen presented this song to Mary’s sister Rachel, but it remained unpublished until 1895. Mary also received a dedication in “There’s a Good Time Coming,” published just two months prior to her death.

Knights of the Square Table member Bill Rose wrote an obituary in Mary’s memory following her death in 1846: “But a few days ago, she was in full flush of health, bright with the promise of life, and her very last errand upon the street was connected with the choice of the attire in which she was expected soon to stand, not at death’s, but at the bridal altar!” Though Rose refers to a certain romance in Mary’s life, no record indicates a male suitor. Stephen’s devastation following Mary’s death and his multiple references to her throughout his songs even up until the birth of his daughter in 1851 suggest that he felt deeply for this young woman—

48 Howard, Stephen Foster, 130.
49 Agnes M. Hays Gormly, Old Penn Street: The Old Fourth Ward (Sewickley, PA: Gilbert Adam Hays, 1922), 15; Morneweck, Chronicles, 282.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 299.
perhaps even deeper than the feelings he had for his own wife. “Mary Loves the Flowers,” composed in 1850, contains no dedication, yet scholar William W. Austin believes Foster refers to Mary Keller with his words:\textsuperscript{52}

\begin{verbatim}
Let no elfin finger  
Blur from memory’s sand  
Her name—ah! let it linger  
While my air-built castles stand…  
To die beneath her tender care  
Were life to me.
\end{verbatim}

Composed around the same time, “Molly Do You Love Me?” may refer to Jane, however it does not explicitly reference her.\textsuperscript{53} According to William Austin, a month prior to his marriage to Jane, Stephen again may have remembered his early days with Mary in his “The Voice of Bygone Days”.\textsuperscript{54}

\begin{verbatim}
Ah, the voice of by gone days  
Bids my memory rove  
To the fair and gentle being  
Of my early love.  
She was radiant as the light,  
She was pure as dews of night,  
And beloved of angels bright,  
She join’d their bless’d and happy train.
\end{verbatim}

“Once I Loved Thee, Mary Dear,” penned just before Marion’s birth in 1851, again refers to his love for a girl named Mary:

\begin{verbatim}
Once I loved thee, Mary dear,  
O how truly!  
As the dewdrop bright and clear,  
Born but newly,  
Sparkling in the solar rays,  
To the rosebud’s beauty, pays Tribute duly,
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{52} Austin, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home,” 115.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 116.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
Tribute duly
Once I loved thee, Mary dear,
O how truly!

Around the time he composed “Once I Loved Thee, Mary Dear,” Foster paid for an “artistic headstone” at Mary’s gravesite.  

Stephen’s dedications to Mary, along with various other women, may have become an annoyance to Jane following their marriage, as she never received a single dedication from her husband. In addition to his dedications to Mary Keller, Foster dedicated songs to other women. Before meeting Jane, Stephen dedicated “Open Thy Lattice Love” (1844) to Susan E. Pentland, who would later marry Knights of the Square Table member Andrew Robinson. The Pentland family lived close to the Fosters and, though friends growing up, no love interest evidently existed between Stephen and Susan. They first became acquainted at an age too young to court, and Susan married Andrew Robinson not long after she came of age. Stephen remained friends with Susan throughout his life, dedicating “Willie My Brave” (1853) to her. “Soiree Polka” (1850) and “Ah! May the Red Rose Live Always!” (1850) contain dedications to the young daughter of Judge Dallas, a family friend of the Fosters. Because Judge Dallas’s daughter died at the age of sixteen, most likely no love interest existed between the pair. Mary Irwin, daughter of Judge Thomas Irwin, received the dedication for “What Must a Fairy’s Dream Be?” (1847) during the time Foster lived in Cincinnati. Daughter of former Pittsburgh mayor,

55 Ibid., 117.
56 Howard, Stephen Foster, 129.
57 Ibid., 117.
58 Ibid., 178.
60 Walters, Stephen Foster, 28.
Magnus Murray, Julia N. Murray also received a dedication along with Mary Keller’s sister Rachel and Mrs. J. Edgar Thompson, sister to Foster’s sister-in-law. The dedication to Sophie Marshall refers to the granddaughter of the Cassilly family. Sophie was one of Foster’s childhood playmates during his first visit to Cincinnati with his mother in 1833 where they resided in Cassilly mansion. Additional dedications to other women include Thalia Bental, Eliza T. Denniston, Mrs. W. H. Whitney, Ada Holmes, and Mrs. Mary Henhaus. Though Foster often dedicated songs to female acquaintances, Mary Keller received the most attention. It is evident that Foster enjoyed female companionship throughout his life, though according to biographer John Tasker Howard, he tended to lack strong physical emotions for most.

Despite the dedications to various women, only “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” seems to be expressly about his wife. Songs such as “Jenny’s Coming O’er the Green” (1860), “A Penny for Your Thoughts” (1861), “Little Jenny Dow” (1862), and “Jenny June” (1863), also reference “Jenny.” Two men who knew Foster during his later years made contradictory claims regarding the Jenny to whom Foster referred. George Birdseye believed the Jenny in Foster’s songs referred to his wife, Jane, although he admitted that Foster avoided ever mentioning her in conversation. John Mahon, however, claimed that the Jenny of Foster’s late songs refer to a much younger girl by the same first name. Jane Foster insisted that her husband delete the girl’s

61 Ibid.
62 Howard, Stephen Foster, 296.
63 Walters, Stephen Foster, 6.
64 For a full listing of Foster’s songs and their dedicatees, see the appendix.
65 Howard, Stephen Foster, 159.
66 Ibid., 158.
67 Austin, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home,” 118.
young age of seventeen mentioned in the first line of “Jenny Doe” following its composition, which infers that she was not the Jenny described in these later songs.\textsuperscript{68}

Following Stephen and Jane’s marriage in 1850, they did not make a happy couple. Stephen devoted his life to making music. His Knight’s of the Square Table, and the hours spent on composing minstrel tunes took up most of his time. Jane did not support his musical career and evidently did not feel any desire for participating in his musical circle herself.\textsuperscript{69} This became a hindrance early on in their marriage as they spent their honeymoon traveling to Baltimore and New York so that Stephen could visit his music publishers, evidently not Jane’s first choice of destinations.\textsuperscript{70} Jane often talked during music performances that they attended, which most likely became an irritation to Stephen. According to one of his biographers, Foster gradually became more moody in the early years of his marriage.\textsuperscript{71} Because Stephen worked from home and acquired a less than steady income, Jane felt obligated to recover the masculine role in their relationship by becoming a telegrapher.\textsuperscript{72} This, along with her inability to provide the maternal comfort for her family that characterized the nineteenth-century housewife, may have contributed to their rocky marriage.\textsuperscript{73}

While Stephen wrote songs that were well-received by the nation, he struggled to be loved by his own wife. Following their boat trip to New Orleans with a group of friends in 1852,

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{69} O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 175.

\textsuperscript{70} Austin, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home,” 91.

\textsuperscript{71} Howard, \textit{Stephen Foster}, 162.

\textsuperscript{72} O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 225.

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 222.
Stephen and Jane separated in 1853. The separation occurred following Stephen’s signing a new contract with Firth, Pond, and Company. It stated that he would receive 10 percent royalty but could sell his songs only to that company. Though Jane evidently desired for Stephen to obtain a steady job, multiple issues within their marriage most likely led to the separation. Morrison Foster reported the situation to his sister Henrietta who responded on June 20, 1853 with the following letter:

How sorry I feel for dear Stephy, though when I read your letter, I was not at all surprised at the news it contained with regard to him and [illegibly expunged]. I last winter felt convinced that she would either have to change her course of conduct, or a separation was inevitable. Though I never wrote a word of the kind to Stephy, for I thought he had trouble enough already. Tell him to come out and stay a while with me, we have a delightful house, well shaded by trees, and I know it must be pleasanter than it Pitts. this hot weather. You did not tell me what he had done with little Marion, dear little lamb, who is she with? Give much love to Stephy for me, and tell him to feel assured that he has the prayers and sincere sympathy of his sister Etty, dear boy, may God lead him in the ways of peace, and fill his heart with that love which alone is satisfying, and which never disappoints. A love that will take such complete possession of the Soul, as to make all other loves but matters of small importance.

Henrietta’s letter reveals that she felt sympathy for Stephen and was not surprised that he and his wife had separated. Jane’s strict, non-supportive attitude and Stephen’s drinking were no doubt factors that contributed to their separation. A year later, however, in a letter written from Dunning to Morrison, the family seems to have changed its attitude toward Stephen, referring to his “foolish and unaccountable course.” Though the Foster family apparently blamed Jane, she remained a faithful mother to Marion while Stephen spent what little money he had on alcohol.

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74 Ibid., 189.
75 Letter by Henrietta Foster written to Morrison Foster (June 20, 1853), quoted in Austin, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home,” 92.
76 Ibid., 93.
The death of Stephen’s mother in 1855 brought the couple back together as they cared for his dying father in Allegheny.\(^\text{77}\) During this time Stephen revealed his dreamy side in a letter dated 19 March 1855 to his sister Henrietta. His false sense of cheer and ignorance to the reality of life exhibits itself in this letter, revealing that he often dreamed of a life that never existed.

My dear Sister

You will be delighted to hear that I have received a letter from Dunning written at New Orleans conveying cheering news with regard to his health. He says that he is so much improved in health as to feel that he will ultimately overcome his complaint entirely, at the same time saying that he has suffered a great deal both in body and mind. His letter full of kindness and affection expressed towards us all and of deep feeling on the subject of our dear mother’s death. He hopes to visit us all in the summer, nameing in this connection Youngstown, Allegheny City & Philada.

Pa’s health has been excellent ever since you left us. I have taken great care to see that he is treated with regularity and system. . . . [Five lines are devoted to servants.] I hope dear Mary’s health [Henrietta’s older daughter] is firmly established by this time. Mit is in Philada.

With love to all

Your affectionate brother

Stephen

Jane sends her love.

She is making summer dresses for Marion.

Please let me hear from you.\(^\text{78}\)

Stephen and Jane separated a second time following their move to New York in 1860. Unhappy living in boarding houses and with Stephen’s lack of initiative in making money in 1861, Jane took Marion and moved in with her sister in Lewistown, Pennsylvania.\(^\text{79}\) Though married for fourteen years, they lived together for only ten.\(^\text{80}\)

Growing up in a family who found shelter as a result of other’s charity and moving between boarding houses as an adult, Foster rarely had a permanent place to call home. Though

\(^{77}\) Ibid.

\(^{78}\) Letter by Stephen Foster written to Henrietta Foster (March 19, 1855), quoted in Austin, “Susanna,” “Jeanie,” and “The Old Folks at Home,” 93.

\(^{79}\) O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 220.

\(^{80}\) Ibid., 184.
his lyrics reflect dreams of home, Foster’s attempts to restore that which was lost in his own life are meager as seen through his transitory lifestyle moving from one boarding house to the next. Unlike the restorative nostalgic who makes an effort to rebuild the past, Foster remained in his state of longing exemplified through his music; thus, in his lyrics he can be considered a reflective nostalgic. Like restorative nostalgia, in reflective nostalgia the longings for a past state occur as a result of the dissatisfaction with the present. Reflective nostalgia, however, doubts the truth of the past while restorative protects and attempts to restore it.  

81 Comparative literature scholar Svetlana Boym describes this type of nostalgia as lingering within the state of longing.  

She defines reflective nostalgia as “a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own fantasy.” While restorative nostalgia deals with realities, reflective nostalgia dwells on dreams or fantasies.  

Foster spent four years of his marriage separated from his wife. The tensions between Stephen and Jane existed from the onset of their relationship; thus it can be questioned whether the visions of the woman described in his song “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” existed in reality or remained idealized images Stephen longed to experience. The longing for something never experienced characterizes reflective nostalgia.  

While growing up in a culture marked by restorative nostalgia, Foster’s lyrics long for a lost home, friends and family members. While memories of his parents exemplify longings of a restorative nostalgic, Foster predominantly associates with the characteristics of a reflective nostalgic, longing for that which he never fully had in his own past. Dreaming for things never


83 Ibid.
fully experienced, the attempt to restore the past remained impossible for Foster; thus, reflective nostalgia characterizes his personal life. Despite his reflective nature, Foster successfully wrote songs exemplifying both reflective and restorative nostalgia. His ability to invoke multiple types of nostalgia in his songs contributed to their positive reception. Surviving records of Foster’s finances show that of the songs written prior to 1857 and published by Firth, Pond, and Company, the top three songs for which he earned royalties contain restorative nostalgia sentiments: “Old Folks at Home” (1851), “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” (1853), and “Old Dog Tray” (1853). These records demonstrate that the popularity of Foster’s nostalgic songs lay in his ability to capture common nineteenth-century sentiments.

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Chapter 3
Dreaming, Grieving, Wandering:
Stephen Foster’s Nostalgic Songs

Nostalgic sentiments were prevalent in antebellum America. Though people did not associate what they were feeling with this term, their discontent with present situations and longings for a simpler life surrounded by loved ones and the comforts of home characterize those of nostalgia.¹ Similarly Stephen Foster primarily lived in a state of longing although his type of nostalgia differed from that of many of his contemporaries. While most Americans tended to long for realities of their past and attempted to restore them in some manner, Foster lingered in the state of longing, dreaming for idealized images rather than realities. Despite his emotional state, Foster wrote predominantly in the restorative manner rather than the reflective. Of the forty-two songs that depict the narrator’s state of longing, thirty-seven contain a restorative nostalgia sentiment while the remaining five are reflective in nature.²

In order to understand the significance of nostalgia that characterize Foster’s songs as well as how they were received by the American public, I have identified those songs of Foster that contain a nostalgic sentiment in the collected edition of his works (see appendix).³ After labeling a song as nostalgic, I have identified the object for which the song’s narrator longs. The appendix lists these songs noting in the table whether a song longs for a person, a place, or a


² This excludes the three nostalgic instrumental works that will be discussed later in this chapter.

certain time. Several songs long for multiple objects. In studying these topics, I demonstrate what Foster tended to long for as well as how he referenced them textually. Then, drawing from psychological and sociological studies of nostalgia, I use the terminology from comparative literature specialist Svetlana Boym to map the different types of nostalgia onto Foster’s works, identifying each as either restorative or reflective.

Words such as “dream,” “longing,” “gone” and “vanished” exemplify common nostalgic sentiments that Foster and his lyricists employed. In order for a song to contain a nostalgic sentiment, it must depict a state of unrest in the present and some type of longing for a better state associated with the past. By examining these types of nostalgia in Foster’s songs, I have developed a sense of where Foster’s nostalgic sentiments fit with the sentiments of the antebellum generation surrounding him. My conclusions help to explain the positive reception of his work. Though these typologies primarily involve textual interpretation, I have also examined the music, noting what techniques Foster employed in order for the tunes to evoke nostalgia. Susan Key addresses musical markers for nostalgia in her article “Sound and Sentimentality: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Foster.” My conclusion to this chapter includes a discussion of Key’s findings and a discussion of their comprehensiveness.

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4 The compilation of a complete list of Foster’s works can be found in the appendix and identifies the type of nostalgia present in each tune and phrases that indicate a nostalgic sentiment. This table also identifies the year published, publisher, dedicatee, key, form of the piece, lyricist, and type of piece (minstrel, parlor, or plantation song).

5 Foster wrote the lyrics to thirty-four of the forty-two songs that contain a nostalgic sentiment (see appendix).

Foster’s songs primarily comprise two musical genres: minstrel/plantation songs and parlor ballads. Though nostalgic sentiments appear in both genres, they appear less frequently in the minstrel/plantation songs. Minstrelsy became a northern urban phenomenon during the nineteenth century. Populations in western cities, such as Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, were becoming quite diverse including many Irish, German, and African slaves and free blacks. The increase in ethnic diversity began to create class struggles and tension as Anglo Americans began to fear loss of jobs to immigrants. Minstrelsy relieved some of these tensions as it attempted to portray black characters in an exaggerated, non-threatening manner in order to entertain a white audience.

Led by Edwin P. Christy, the Christy Minstrels characterized blacks sympathetically compared to other minstrel troupes. Their influence led Foster to create minstrel and plantation songs in a sympathetic manner. Plantation songs contained a sentimental, sympathetic treatment of African Americans unlike the typical racist minstrel song. Foster’s plantation songs synthesized minstrel characteristics with the sentimentality of the parlor ballad. By doing this, he demonstrated a respect for African Americans that scarcely existed in nineteenth-century America. Songs such as “Old Folks at Home” showed America that African slaves could feel the same emotions as the dominate white culture. Though Foster most likely did not transform the genre of minstrelsy out of courtesy for African Americans, the rise of sentimentality in

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7 The majority of Foster’s songs fit into either the minstrel or parlor genre; however, he also composed several campaign songs and hymns.


9 Ibid., 255.

10 Ibid., 146.
nineteenth-century literature and music influenced his sympathetic portrayal in his minstrel/plantation songs.\textsuperscript{11}

Many of Foster’s plantation songs evoke an idealized view of the southern plantation. As discussed in Chapter 1, many Northerners were forced economically to live in an age of industrialization and longed for the simplicity of their rural past. Because the South existed in a largely pre-industrialized state, Foster’s portrayal of the South in a positive light reflects a Northerner’s nostalgia for a non-industrial, agrarian state.

Thirty-four of Foster’s forty-two nostalgic songs fall into the category of parlor ballads (this excludes the three nostalgic instrumental works that will be discussed later in this chapter). As musical literacy became a desirable trait, many women studied music at private schools and played instruments, such as the piano, harp, and guitar, in their homes in order to be accomplished. Young middle class women commonly spent leisure time in elaborately decorated parlor rooms at the piano. Because of the rise of parlor ballads as a form of domestic entertainment, sheet music sales increased and publishing companies attempted to cater to the female consumer. Decorated lithographs with fanciful lettering on the title pages attracted young women’s attention (see Figure 1).\textsuperscript{12} Composers catered to this market with simple piano accompaniments.\textsuperscript{13} Many texts contained nostalgic sentiments, longing for past times, a distant home, or a lost loved one. As the United States quickly transitioned from an agrarian to industrial economy, many Americans felt like foreigners in their own land. In search for financial gain, many Americans traveled west or to an industrialized city. Moving away from familiar

\[\text{\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 268.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{12} O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 330.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 331.}\]
surroundings and the simplicity of their rural past often caused homesickness and feelings of nostalgia.

Figure 1. Stephen Foster’s “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,” decorated lithograph.

Many of Foster’s nostalgic songs concern the death of a loved one. Death at an early age was common in the nineteenth century due to diseases such as cholera, which spread quickly in crowded, urban environments. Because antebellum society considered the expression of emotion as inappropriate, Americans clung to song in order to convey their sentiments and gradually allow themselves to heal. The singing of a parlor song enabled the lamenters to grieve as they
reflected on memories of a lost loved one. Though many of Foster’s songs speak of death, not all contain a nostalgic sentiment. Some discuss someone’s passing without ever mentioning a longing or bittersweet memory.

Restorative nostalgia characterizes most of Stephen Foster’s nostalgic songs. Of his forty-two nostalgic songs, restorative nostalgia or referencing past events, people, and places, characterizes thirty-seven of them. Though fictional, these songs reflect the past as relayed by the narrator’s experiences. The nostalgic narrator clearly speaks of a person, a home, or a time they once experienced. Those who endure this type of nostalgia spend their time attempting to restore the object for which they long. This restoration may be through memory or by physically bringing something of the past into their present situation. As with any type of nostalgia, a discontent with the present must exist for nostalgia to be present. To classify a song as having restorative nostalgia, it must contain nostalgic sentiments that fall into one of three categories: nostalgia as a result of death, nostalgia as a result of someone who has departed, or nostalgia through some sort of memory. Though these categories may overlap—such as nostalgia caused by the memory of someone who has passed away—a song must contain at least one of these in order for it to be classified as restorative nostalgia.

The first category of restorative nostalgia results from a loss of a loved one. The nostalgic narrator of the song longs for a deceased person. Songs of this category contain reflections on a past experienced with the deceased individual, demonstrating that the narrator had some type of relationship with the deceased. Though actual physical restoration of the object of nostalgia is

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15 Ibid.

impossible, the narrator attempts to restore them through memories that in turn will help to heal the pain. Stephen Foster’s “Gentle Annie” (1856), a parlor ballad, exemplifies restorative nostalgia:

Thou wilt come no more, gentle Annie,
Like a flower thy spirit did depart;
Thou are gone, alas! like the many
That have bloomed in the summer of my heart.

*chorus:*
Shall we never more behold thee;
Never hear thy winning voice again
When the Spring time comes, gentle Annie,
When the wild flowers are scattered o’er the plain?

We have roamed and loved mid the bowers
When thy downy cheeks were in their bloom;
Now I stand alone mid the flowers
While they mingle their perfumes o’er thy tomb.

Ah! the hours grow sad while I ponder
Near the silent spot where thou are laid,
And my heart bows down when I wander
By the streams and the meadows were we strayed.

Though Foster did not typically associate with the characteristics of a restorative nostalgic, restorative nostalgia sentiments resonate with the loss of Mary Keller in 1846, his older sister Charlotte in 1829, and his mother in 1855. In the lyrics of “Gentle Annie,” phrases such as “Thou wilt come no more,” “thy spirit did depart,” “never more behold thee,” and “thy tomb” clarify to the performer and listener that the object of nostalgia has passed away. The narrator’s reflection on past experiences with the deceased individual shows his attempt to restore her to memory. Phrases such as “never hear thy winning voice again” and “the streams and meadows where we strayed” suggest that the narrator has heard Annie’s voice and walked with her through a meadow at some point in the past.
A second example of restorative nostalgia as a result of death shows Foster’s empathy for African Americans. His 1849 minstrel song “Nelly Was a Lady” depicts her groom as a person with sentiments no different than the narrator mourning over the death of a loved one in “Gentle Annie.” Foster’s ability to invoke the sentiments of loss transcends race and class:

Down on de Mississippi floating,  
Long time I trabble on de way,  
All night de cotton wood a toting,  
Sing for my true lub all de day.

chorus:  
Nelly was a lady  
Last night she died,  
Toll de bell for lubly Nell  
My dark Virginny bride.

Now I’m unhappy and I’m weeping,  
Can’t tote de cotton wood no more;  
Last night, while Nelly was a sleeping,  
Death came a knockin at de door.

When I saw my Nelly in de morning,  
Smile till she open’d up her eyes,  
Seem’d like de light ob day a dawning,  
Jist ’fore de sun begin to rise.

Close by de margin ob de water,  
Whar de lone weeping willow grows,  
Dar lib’d Virginny’s lubly daughter;  
Dar she in death may find repose.

Down in de meadow mong de clober,  
Walk wid my Nelly by my side;  
Now all dem happy days am ober;  
Farewell my dark Virginny bride.

Words and phrases such as “unhappy” and “Now all dem happy days am ober” depict the turmoil and grief experienced by the groom. Through longing for Nelly, he restores her to memory. Lyrics in the text such as “Down in de meadow mong de clober/ Walk wid my Nelly by my side” demonstrate Nelly’s existence and the narrator’s courtship of her prior to her passing.
A second type of restorative nostalgia includes the loss of someone who has left home. In this type of song, the narrator attempts to restore the object of nostalgia through searching for his or her whereabouts. The text includes memories of this person, reassuring the listener of his or her existence. Foster’s 1858 parlor ballad “Where Has Lula Gone?” exemplifies this type of restorative nostalgia:

Little voices laughing free,
Laughing on the lawn,
Tell me can you answer me,
Where has Lula gone?
Where is that merry form
Ever on the move,
Glancing through calm and storm
Living beams of love?
Soft rays of mellow light
From her eyes were thrown,
And her smiles were summer bright,
Where has Lula gone?

She has left the sunny hills
In their blushing bloom
She has left the running rills
Gushing round her home,
Far in some distant land
She may yet be seen
Leading a fairy band
Like a fairy queen.
Far, far my longing heart
On her path has flown,
Yet no answer can impart;
Where has Lula gone?

Summer days have come and gone,
Starry nights have passed,
Many dreams of hope have flown
Since I saw her last
Roaming in rapture wild
On the mountain side,
Smiling when roses smile,
Sighing when they died.
Wild as the honey bee,
Gentle as the fawn,
Fairer than the dawn was she;  
Where has Lula gone?

The lyrics to “Where Has Lula Gone?” describe a narrator in search of her. The use of words and phrases such as “gone” and “longing heart” depict a nostalgic sentiment. Foster implies that Lula has disappeared, perhaps to a distant land, and the narrator attempts to restore her through the refrain: “Where has Lula gone?” Revealing a restorative nostalgic sentiment through separation or death in the lyrics of a song reminded Foster’s American listeners of their own losses. This strife may have resulted from relocation from one’s family in this new age of industrialism or premature deaths. The relevancy of his music gave Foster a way to relate to the nation around him regardless of race or class.

Restorative nostalgia through death or departure involves the longing for a person. Like the examples given above, Foster’s 1859 parlor ballad “Thou Art the Queen of My Song” longs for a departed person, but in memory only:

I long for thee; must I long and long in vain?  
I sigh for thee; will thou come not back again?  
Though cold forms surround us  
To sever all that bound us,  
Gentle queen of my song,  
The fields and the fair flowers shall welcome thee,  
And all to thy pleasures shall belong;  
Pride of my early years,  
Thou art the queen of my song.

The days are gone, days of summer bright and gay,  
The days of love we so fondly whiled away;  
But still while I’m dreaming  
Thy smiles are o’er me beaming,  
Gentle queen of my song  
The wind o’er the lone meadow wails for thee,  
The birds sing thy beauties all day long;  
Prides of my early years,  
Thou art the queen of my song.
I turn to thee; though our happy hours have flown?
I turn to thee; and my saddest thoughts are gone,
For love will be burning
And memory still returning,
Gentle queen of my song.
Come let thy warm heart rejoice with me,
Come from the bright and luring throng;
Pride of my early years,
Thou art the queen of my song.

In this song the narrator attempts to restore the object of nostalgia through memory. Phrases such as “I long for thee,” “I sigh for thee,” “the days are gone,” and “our happy hours have flown” depict the narrator’s nostalgic sentiments. Stating “will thou come not back again?” implies that the object of nostalgia once existed in the life of the narrator and her restoration takes place through his “memory still returning.” At first glance this type of restorative nostalgia might seem closely related to the nostalgia in “Where Has Lula Gone?”; however, a significant difference can be found in the narrator’s method of restoration. In “Where Has Lula Gone?” the narrator attempts to physically locate the departed Lula. In “Thou Art the Queen of My Song,” the narrator restores the object of his affection through memory.

The narrator in Foster’s nostalgic songs sometimes attempts to restore a place. Foster’s plantation song “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” (1853) depicts a slave longing to return to his home “far away”:

The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home,
’Tis summer, the darkies are gay,
The corn top’s ripe and the meadow’s in the bloom
While the birds make music all the day.
The young folks roll on the little cabin floor,
All merry, all happy and bright:
By’n by Hard Times comes a knocking at the door,
Then my old Kentucky Home, good night!

chorus:
Weep no more, my lady,
Oh! weep no more today!
We will sing one song
For the old Kentucky Home,
For the old Kentucky Home, far away.

They hunt no more for the possum and the coon
On the meadow, the hill and the shore,
They sing no more by the glimmer of the moon,
On the bench by the old cabin door.
The day goes by like a shadow o’er the heart,
With sorrow where all was delight:
The time has come when the darkies have to part,
Then my old Kentucky Home, good night!

The head must bow and the back will have to bend,
Wherever the darkey may go:
A few more days, and the trouble all will end
In the field where the sugar canes grow.
A few more days for to tote the weary load,
No matter ’twill never be light,
A few more days till we totter on the road,
Then my old Kentucky Home, good night!

Phrases such as “no more” reflect the narrator’s nostalgic sentiments while “sorrow where all was delight” implies that he did in fact live in the “old Kentucky Home.” The first stanza describes the home in detail, reflecting on memories of “young folks roll[ing] on the little cabin floor.” After forced to leave his home due to “hard times,” the narrator begins lamenting his former home through memories of the “bench by the old cabin door” and “the field where the sugar canes grow.” These memories recall the place for which he longs, bringing a sense of comfort during his present state of alienation.

Scholar Joanne O’Connell has shown that Foster wrote “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” with Harriet Beecher Stowe’s abolitionist novel, Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Written in 1852, one year prior to the publication of Foster’s song, it depicts slavery’s separation of family

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members.\textsuperscript{18} “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!” also reflects on separation however more so on the separation from home. Foster’s notebooks indicate that the original chorus concluded “Poor Uncle Tom, Good Night.”\textsuperscript{19} It is unknown exactly why Foster changed the lyrics, but he may have wanted to free the song from the politics of the novel.\textsuperscript{20}

Longing for a certain time that the narrator believes was better than the present provides the final example of how Stephen Foster invoked restorative nostalgia in his songs. The first stanza of “Happy Hours at Home” (1862) demonstrates this type of nostalgia:

\begin{verbatim}
I sit me down by my own fireside
When the winter nights come on,
And I calmly dream as the dim hours glide,
Of many pleasant scenes now gone;
Of our healthful plays in my schoolboy days,
That can never come again;
Of our summer joys and our Christmas toys,
And rambles o’er the streamlet and plain.

chorus:
Happy hours at home!
Happy hours at home!
How the moments glide by the bright fireside,
In the happy hours at home.
\end{verbatim}

As the narrator “dream[s]” of his “schoolboy days,” “summer joys,” and “Christmas toys,” he evokes a sense of nostalgia. Dwelling on the “pleasant scenes now gone,” the narrator recalls the fond memories of his childhood. This song begins by maintaining a sense of longing for times past as it reads “pleasant scenes now gone,” causing the listener to nostalgically reflect back on his own bittersweet life.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
When Stephen Foster nostalgically reflected back on his own life, he evidently cultivated idealized images of what he longed to have experienced rather than bittersweet memories of what had actually occurred. His dreams of Jeanie and a stable home do not comport with his biography. Though reflective nostalgia characterized his personal life, only five of his songs depict this sentiment. Svetlana Boym describes reflective nostalgia as delaying the restoration and having more to do with the state of longing itself.\(^{21}\) The reflective nostalgic lingers in “dreams of another place or time.”\(^{22}\) Rather than attempting to recover the truths of the past, someone experiencing this type of nostalgia may focus on what they perceive the past held.\(^{23}\) While they may seem to exist in a state of mourning, that for which they long may have never fully existed. Because only five songs possess this sentiment, I will consider each in order to show how they depict this type of nostalgia.

Foster’s “Oh! Tell Me of My Mother” (1861) depicts nostalgia with such words as “departed,” “dreaming,” and “alone”:

Tell me, tell me, gentle lady,
Many things I’d love to know,
Of my dear and tender mother
Who departed long ago.
While she moved among the living
Were the days all bright and fair?
Did she dwell in happy sunlight
Or in dark clouds of care?
Was she beautiful like thee,
With thy voice of melody?
Did she love and cherish me?
Oh! tell me of my mother!
Gentle lady, let me know,
While she journeyed here below,

\(^{21}\) Boym, The Future of Nostalgia, xviii.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 41.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 49.
Was the world her friend or foe?
Oh! Tell me of my mother!

Tell me, tell me, of my mother!
Is she roaming in the skies?
I’ve been dreaming all about her,
And awoke with tearful eyes:
She was bending o’er my pillow
In a deep and earnest prayer,
And her voice was like the breathing
Of the soft summer air.
Is the world so full of pain
That she will not come again,
Like a sunbeam on the rain?
Oh! tell me of my mother!
Does she know I’m here alone
While my early friends have gone
And my dearest memories flow?
Oh! tell me of my mother!

As the narrator inquires over things he’d “love to know” about his mother, he’s creating an affect of reflective nostalgia. Though the mother for which he longs existed, the narrator never personally experienced her presence. The image he creates in his own mind concerning his mother causes him to dwell in happy dreams of his mother’s possible character, establishing a mood of reflective nostalgia.

Reflective nostalgia dwells in the longing for a place in Foster’s “No Home, No Home” (1862). The narrator’s claim “I find for my drooping heart no home” implies his discontent with the present circumstances and lack of a place to call home. The reflective nostalgia in these lyrics describes a place for which the narrator longs that never existed. The lack of specific memories or words inferring that something has “gone” or “departed” evince that the narrator dwells in a dream-like state, longing for something beyond his own memory:

No home! no home on my weary way I seek,
When laden with grief and care,
No voice of love that one gentle world will speak,
No lips that will breathe for me a prayer;
I wander alone o’er the wide wide world,
In sorrow where e’er I roam,
But, ah! while through all its busy scenes I’m hurled,
I find for my drooping heart no home,
I find for my drooping heart no home,
No home for my heart, no home.

No home at night with its bright and cheerful hearth,
To soften the cares of day,
No smiles of joy and familiar sounds of mirth,
Beguiling my bitter hours away.
The mild skies may lend unto me their light,
And meadows around me bloom,
But through the long and the cheerless hours of night,
I find for my drooping heart no home,
I find for my drooping heart no home,
No home for my heart, no home.

While the first two songs represent reflective nostalgia, the subject of the remaining examples is somewhat ambiguous. A parlor ballad entitled “Summer Longings” (1849) features lyrics from the *Home Journal*. Longing for a certain time, the narrator speaks of “weary waiting,” “sick with longing,” and “sighing for their sure returning”:

Ah! my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the May
Waiting for the pleasant rambles,
Where the fragrant hawthorn brambles,
With the woodbine alternating,
Scent the dewy way.
Ah! My heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the May.

Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May.
Longing to escape from study,
To the young face air and ruddy,
And the thousands charms belonging
To the summer’s day.
Ah! my heart is longing,
Longing for the May.

Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May.
Sighing for their sure returning
When the summer beams are burning,
Hope and flow’rs that dead or dying
All the winter lay.
Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May.

Ah! my heart is pained with throbbing,
Throbbing for the May
Throbbing for the seaside billows,
Or the water-wooing willows;
Where in laughing and in sobbing
Glide the streams away.
Ah! my heart, my heart is throbbing,
Throbbing for the May.

Waiting sad, dejected, weary,
Waiting for the May.
Spring goes by with wasted warnings
Moonlight evenings, sunbright mornings
Summer comes, yet dark and dreary
Life still ebbs away
Man is ever weary weary
Waiting for the May.

Initially the poem sounds like the expression of a restorative nostalgic. As the narrator describes summer once “the May” arrives and speaks of “sighing for their sure returning,” he recalls previous summers. However, the last six lines of the poem suggest a different focus of his longings:

Spring goes by with wasted warnings
Moonlight evenings, sunbright mornings
Summer comes, yet dark and dreary
Life still ebbs away
Man is ever weary weary
Waiting for the May.

Despite the narrator’s longing for the month referred to as “the May,” the ending of the song alludes to its lack of arrival as mankind grows “weary/Waiting for the May.” As the narrator dreams of this ideal time, he realizes mankind is incapable of restoring its existence.
“Beautiful Dreamer” (1862) provides another example of reflective nostalgia. When the narrator cries out for the “beautiful dreamer” to “awake unto me,” he expresses a longing and “sorrow” for this object of his nostalgia:

Beautiful dreamer, wake unto me,  
Starlight and dewdrops are waiting for thee;  
Sounds of the rude world heard in the day,  
Lull’d by the moonlight have all pass’d away!  
Beautiful dreamer, queen of my song,  
List while I woo thee with soft melody;  
Gone are the cares of life’s busy throng,  
Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!  
Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!

You can view the rest of the text. Remember to check for display rounding issues and ensure the text is readable.
I see her tripping where the bright streams play,
Happy as the daisies that dance on her way.
Many were the wild notes her merry voice would pour.
Many were the blithe birds that warbled them o’er:
Oh! I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Floating, like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

I long for Jeanie with the day dawn smile,
Radiant in gladness, warm with winning guile;
I hear her melodies, like joys gone by,
Sighing round my heart o’er the fond hopes that die:
Sighing like the night wind and sobbing like the rain,
Wailing for the lost one that comes not again:
Oh! I long for Jeanie, and my heart bows low,
Never more to find her where the bright waters flow.

I sigh for Jeanie, but her light form strayed
Far from the fond hearts round her native glade;
Her smiles have vanished and her sweet songs flown,
Flitting like the dreams that have cheered us and gone.
Now the nodding wild flowers may wither on the shore
While her gentle fingers will cull them no more:
Oh! I sigh for Jeanie with the light brown hair,
Floating like a vapor, on the soft summer air.

“Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” represents Foster’s only autobiographical song. Composed to depict a fanciful state, the narrator “dreams” and “sighs” over an image of a woman that he fails to describe in actual memories. His descriptions of Jeanie “floating like a vapor” as “daises dance” creates a sweet fantasy in which he dwells while “her light form that strayed” gives the depiction of a blurry dream rather than an undeniable reality. The song fails to mention any experience shared between Jeanie and the narrator, which lends the air of a dream for an idealized past rather than the reality of either her existence or the truthfulness of her character.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Foster’s wife, Jane McDowell, did not fit the description of the “Jeanie” in “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair.” Foster’s sisters Henrietta and Ann Eliza
admitted that the woman in his lyrics did not correspond to his wife’s character.\textsuperscript{24} Henrietta Foster’s 1853 letter to her brother Morrison documents Jane’s lack of support for Stephen’s career as a songwriter and demeanor in attempting to run her home: I am “convinced that she [Jane] would either have to change her course of conduct, or a separation was inevitable.”\textsuperscript{25} One can hardly blame Jane for her demanding character traits. She spent her marriage moving from one boarding house to the next and was forced to enter the work force as a telegrapher because of her husband’s failure to provide financial support due to his alcoholism.\textsuperscript{26} Foster’s attempt at false cheer in relation to his life and circumstances plays itself out in the lyrics to “Jeanie.” His “dream of Jeanie…tripping where the bright steams play” existed only as a fanciful image in his state of longing. Though he perhaps came to believe this image of Jane, the realities of their marriage and separation suggest otherwise.

Stephen Foster’s musical setting of these type lyrics also contributes to their nostalgic aura. In her article “Sound and Sentimentality: Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Foster,” Susan Key addresses Foster’s musical techniques that cause his songs to sound nostalgic.\textsuperscript{27} Key begins by listing the musical characteristics found of Foster’s minstrel tunes that Steven Saunders and Deane Root describe in their introduction to the collected edition of Stephen Foster’s music.\textsuperscript{28} These characteristics include stepwise melodies with limited range; root position tonic, dominant, and subdominant harmonies; periodic, four-measure phrases; and moderate to fast

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 92.
\textsuperscript{26} O’Connell, “Understanding Stephen Collins Foster,” 225.
\textsuperscript{27} Key, “Sound and Sentimentality,” 145–66.
\textsuperscript{28} Steven Saunders and Deane L. Root, eds., The Music of Stephen C. Foster, A Critical Edition.
\end{flushright}
tempo.\textsuperscript{29} Foster’s early parlor ballads, on the other hand, frequently employed melodic leaps used to emphasize the underlying text, chromatic ornamentation, and slower tempos.\textsuperscript{30} Saunders and Root then subsequently describe the musical characteristics of Foster’s late compositions, including the use of pentatonic melodies with special attention given to the sixth scale degree, descending pentatonic scales used as cadential material, and progressions climaxing on the subdominant.\textsuperscript{31}

In her article, Key addresses Foster’s use of pentatonic melodies, which most likely resulted from the influence of Scottish songs, particularly those of Thomas Moore, which were popular during the composer’s lifetime. Celtic traditions associated themselves with Romantic ideals, giving a sense of exoticism and lost innocence that attracted American listeners.\textsuperscript{32} The use of an inverted dotted rhythm known as a Scotch snap crossed musical genres. In slow parlor ballads, the Scotch snap transformed into a leap imitating a break in the voice caused by the narrator’s deep emotion.\textsuperscript{33} The use of a refrain in many of Foster’s songs gave a nostalgic appeal to the listener as well. Key claims that by repeating a set refrain multiple times throughout the song, Foster created a sense of lingering on a past statement. This emphasized the song’s emotional drama.\textsuperscript{34} Key’s final musical characteristic involves subdominant harmonic progressions. Because the dominant-tonic relationship creates forward momentum, the use of the

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., xxxvi.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Key, “Sound and Sentimentality,” 157.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 158.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 160.
subdominant provided the listener with a sense of dwelling on the past.\textsuperscript{35} As discussed by Saunders and Root in their critical edition, in his late songs Foster commonly employed the subdominant at the climax of his composition. Thus, Foster relaxed the momentum right at the song’s greatest point of tension.\textsuperscript{36} This relates to the tension created by nostalgically lingering on the past.

While Key’s stylistic analysis demonstrates Foster’s musical approach in creating a nostalgic affect, a comprehensive study of his entire nostalgic collection shows that these musical devices do not apply to every nostalgic song. Foster’s use of the Scotch snap with a leap to create a nostalgic affect is not present in his “Virginia Belle” (1860). This song provides an example of a highly nostalgic song that contains no such leaps. Key’s discussion of the refrain as a musical technique to emphasize nostalgia is also not applicable in all of Foster’s works. “Annie My Own Love” (1853) and “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” (1854) are nostalgic parlor ballads in strophic form without a refrain. While Key’s observations do apply to some of the songs in Foster’s nostalgic oeuvre, her claims do not consider the collection in its entirety.

While the lyrics to Foster’s melodies are more explicit in presenting the type of nostalgia present, musical characteristics can express nostalgic lyrics to enhance the song’s affective power. Though such text expression is not present in all of Foster’s nostalgic songs, a few examples demonstrate this relationship. “Gentle Annie” includes leaps to express emotion over the word “never” as the narrator states “shall we never more behold thee.” Though this leap is not the largest found in this piece, it is the sole musical gesture that displays word painting. “Beautiful Dreamer” similarly uses leaps with a seventh over the word “dreamer” and a fifth

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 161.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
over “depart” to convey the break in the singer’s voice as he reflects on his sentiments. “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair” contains an appoggiatura that distinctly depicts a sigh as the nostalgic narrator reflects at the beginning of each stanza: “I dream,” “I long,” “I sigh.”

Though some of Foster’s instrumental works contain musical elements that can be interpreted as nostalgic when used in conjunction with a nostalgic text, they do not necessarily sound nostalgic when used on their own. However, a few of his instrumental works do evoke nostalgic sentiments, such as “Autumn Waltz” (1846), “Old Folks Quadrilles” (1853), and parts of “Social Orchestra” (1854). Foster creates a sentimental aura in his “Autumn Waltz” through the use of octave leaps in the melody. Similarly “Old Folks at Home” from Foster’s “Old Folks Quadrilles” uses the Scotch snap and the same octave leaps heard in his minstrel tune by the same name, which creates a sense of longing. Foster’s contemporaries would have recognized this melodic phrase from his song published two years prior to the quadrilles. Though his “Social Orchestra” is not entirely nostalgic, Foster uses large leaps, the Scotch snap, and appoggiaturas throughout to evoke the gestures associated with the nostalgic sentiments of his parlor songs and minstrel tunes.
Nostalgia is integral to Foster’s oeuvre. The invocation of nostalgia over the course of his lifetime shows that Foster himself experienced sentimentality, usually in relation to his personal life. The years during which he composed the most nostalgic songs, for instance, were when he experienced the greatest strain in his life.

The first year Foster composed a significant number of nostalgic songs occurred in 1850: “Mary Loves the Flowers,” “Angelina Baker,” “The Voice of Bygone Days,” and “Lily Ray.” While three of these songs long for specific people (Mary, Angelina, or Lily), “The Voice of Bygone Days” longs for the past in general. In the last several lines of the song, he specifically refers to an “early love” as existing within this past state. It is ironic that the same year during which Foster composed these nostalgic songs with themes of loss he married Jane McDowell. Could the sentiments he poured into his music reflect the inner turmoil in his own life?

The following year (1851) Foster moved his family in with his mother-in-law not long after his own father survived a stroke. On a personal level one can assume that these experiences within his family led to stress in Foster’s life. That may explain the additional four nostalgic songs composed that year: “Farewell! Old Cottage,” “Laura Lee,” “Old Folks at Home,” and “Willie My Brave.”

The years Jane left Foster with their daughter Marion (1853–54), Foster’s nostalgic output climaxed with eight songs including two purely instrumental works. These songs include “My Old Kentucky Home, Goodnight!,” “Old Folks Quadrilles,” “Annie My Own Love,” “Old Dog Tray,” “Old Memories,” “The Social Orchestra,” “Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair,” and “Come with Thy Sweet Voice Again.” It is no coincidence that Foster composed the
autobiographical “Jeanie” during the time when he most likely missed his departed wife and longed for an image of his wife that probably never existed.

During 1858 Foster found himself in a downward spiral as a result of circumstances from the previous year. In 1857 he sold royalty rights to his music around the same time his brother William Jr. sold the house in which Foster, Jane, and Marion had lived.¹ Having no money and finding it difficult to compose, he began drinking more. That year Foster composed four nostalgic songs including “Lula is Gone,” “Where has Lula Gone?,” “My Loved One and My Own or Eva,” and “Sadly to Mine Heart Appealing.”

The final period that Foster composed a significant number of nostalgic songs occurred the year following his second separation from Jane and Marion. During 1861 he composed five songs containing a nostalgic sentiment, including “Our Bright Summer Days are Gone,” “Why Have My Loves Ones Gone?,” “Oh! Tell Me of My Mother,” “Nell and I,” and “A Thousand Miles from Home.”

Foster’s propensity to compose songs containing a nostalgic sentiment increased during the years in which he experienced greater hardship in his personal life. While these songs were not necessarily autobiographical, his increased output of nostalgic songs during these difficult periods of life is telling.

Though many people associate Foster with nostalgia, these sentiments characterize only 23% of his output. Most of his songs that have found a prominent place in the hearts of Americans come from this nostalgic corpus; thus suggesting the sentiments that most appealed to his audience. Despite Foster’s personal tendencies for reflective nostalgia, his music

¹ Two years prior to this Foster had reunited with Jane and Marion following the death of his mother in 1855.
predominantly resonates with the sentiments characteristic of restorative nostalgia, thus contributing to their positive reception.
Bibliography

Sources Pertaining to Stephen Foster and Nineteenth-century American History:


Sources Pertaining to Nostalgia:


## Appendix

### Typology of Nostalgia in the Songs of Stephen Foster

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<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>Lyricist</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Types of Nostalgia</th>
<th>Dedicatee</th>
<th>Type of Song</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Nostalgic Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open Thy Lattice Love</td>
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<td>D Maj</td>
<td>AAB</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Susan E. Pentland</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>George Willig</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>There’s a Good Time Coming</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>London Daily News (Charles Mackay)</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Mary Keller</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Peters &amp; Field</td>
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<td>Autumn Waltz</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Ab Maj</td>
<td>five-part rondo</td>
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<td>Thalia Bentel</td>
<td>piano solo</td>
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<td>Louisiana Belle</td>
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<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
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<td>minstrel</td>
<td>W. C. Peters</td>
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<td>What Must a Fairy’s Dream Be?</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
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<td>Mary Irwin</td>
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<td>Where Is Thy Spirit Mary?</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
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<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>Mary Keller</td>
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<td>W. C. Peters</td>
<td>“Where is thy spirit Mary?” “seem’d to hear thy gentle voice again” “linger”</td>
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<td>Uncle Ned</td>
<td>1848</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>minstrel</td>
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<td>Sophie Marshall</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
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<td>quick step piano solo</td>
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<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>minstrel</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>“unhappy” “now all dem happy days am ober”</td>
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<td>My Brodder Gum</td>
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<td>Home Journal</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
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<td>S. P. Thompson, Esq.</td>
<td>parlor</td>
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<td>Oh! Lemuel!</td>
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<td>The Spirit of My Song</td>
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<td>Metta Victoria Fuller</td>
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<td>F. D. Benteen</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I:106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Would Not Die in Springtime</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Milton Moore</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I:116</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turn Not Away!</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>F. D. Benteen</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I:122</td>
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<td>Key</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Text Case</td>
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<td>Village Bells Polka</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>rondo n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Henry Kleber, Esq.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 126</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lily Ray</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>W. D. Gallagher, Esq.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Give the Stranger Happy Cheer</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 134</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melinda May</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 138</td>
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<td>Wilt Thou Be Gone, Love?</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>modified rondo</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Julia N. Murray</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 142</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother, Thou'rt Faithful to Me</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>modified strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweetly She Sleeps, My Alice Fair</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Charles G. Eastman</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 152</td>
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<td>Farewell! Old Cottage</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Mrs. Harry Woods</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 156</td>
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<tr>
<td>Once I Loved Thee, Mary Dear</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Wm. Cullen Crookshank</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 160</td>
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<td>Ring, Ring De Banjo!</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 164</td>
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<td>Oh! Boys, Carry Me 'Long</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 168</td>
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<td>I Would Not Die in Summertime</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 173</td>
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<td>My Hopes Have Departed Forever</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>A Lady [Foster?]</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Laura Lee</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>F. D. Benteen</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 181</td>
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<td>Ah! My Child!</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Meyerbeer trans. Foster</td>
<td>A Maj</td>
<td>through composed with motivic unity</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 186</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Folks at Home</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>E. P. Christy (Foster)</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 191</td>
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<td>In the Eye Abides the Heart</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>German song trans. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>I: 199</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Melodic Function</td>
<td>Lyricist</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
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<td>Willie My Brave</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>Mrs. A. L. Robinson</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Eulalie</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>207</td>
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<td>Farewell My Lilly Dear</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Massa’s in de Cold Ground</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>The Hour for Thee and Me</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>219</td>
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<td>I Cannot Sing To-Night</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>Geo. F. Banister</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a time -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>223</td>
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<td>Maggie by My Side</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>modified</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Eliza T. Dennis-ton</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>227</td>
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<tr>
<td>My Old Kentucky Home, Good-Night!</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a place -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>235</td>
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<td>Old Folks Quadrilles</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-musically nostalgic throughout (Old Folks at Home)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>244</td>
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<td>Annie My Own Love</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>Charles P. Shiras</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Holiday Schottisch</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>ternary</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>258</td>
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<td>Old Dog Tray</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for people -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>262</td>
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<td>Old Memories</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a time -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>278</td>
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<td>Little Ella</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>283</td>
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<td>The Social Orchestra</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>287</td>
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<td>Ellen Bayne</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>372</td>
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<td>Willie We Have Missed You</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>modified</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>377</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Voicing</td>
<td>Arranger</td>
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<td>Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -reflective</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Come with Thy Sweet Voice Again</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Ab Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>I: 388</td>
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<td>Come Again No More</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor arr. for guitar</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>through composed with repeated refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor quartette</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Some Folks</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Village Maiden</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Comrade Fill No Glass for Me</td>
<td>1855</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>A Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Miller &amp; Beacham</td>
<td>I: 443</td>
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<td>Gentle Annie</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:7</td>
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<tr>
<td>The White House Chair</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Ab Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>campaign song</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>The Abolition Show</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>campaign song</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>I See Her Still in My Dreams</td>
<td>1857</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:14</td>
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<td>Lula Is Gone</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:22</td>
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<td>Linger in Blissful Repose</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Where Has Lula Gone</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>My Loved One and My Own or Eva</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Sadly to Mine Heart Appealing</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>Eliza Sheridan Carey</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>Mrs. Harry Woods</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>&quot;grieving thoughts&quot;&quot; sighing&quot;</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Mood</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>My Angel Boy</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>H. Brougham</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Wm. A. Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:47</td>
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<td>Linda Has Departed</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Wm. H. McCarthy</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:51</td>
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<td>Parthenia to Ingomar</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Wm. H. McCarthy</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>For Thee, Love, For Thee</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Wm. H. McCarthy</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>Fairy-Belle</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thou Art the Queen of My Song</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None Shall Weep a Tear for Me</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Richard Henry Wilde</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wife</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor Drooping Maiden</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cora Dean</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under the Willow She’s Sleeping</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Mrs. W. H. Whitney</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Glendy Burk</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>minstrel/ plantation melody</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny’s Coming O’er the Green</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Ballad for Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>II:97</td>
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<td>Beautiful Child of Song</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Dm/ F Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Song for Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>II:98</td>
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<td>Old Black Joe</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a place -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>plantation song</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Down Among the Cane Brakes</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>plantation song</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia Belle</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person -restorative</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>II:107</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>Key</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Verses</td>
<td>Refrain</td>
<td>Accompany</td>
<td>Setting</td>
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<td>The Little Ballad Girl</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Songs for Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mine Is the Mourning Heart</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>duet for Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>Root &amp; Cady</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t Bet Your Money on de Shanghai</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>plantation song</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly Dear Good Night</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Edgar Thompson</td>
<td>Root &amp; Cady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Willie Dear Is Dying</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Edgar Thompson</td>
<td>Firth, Pond, &amp; Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our Bright Summer Days Are Gone</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>“remem-bers” “gone”</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’ll Be a Soldier</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor, war tune</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Why Have My Loved Ones Gone</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a time and place</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>“gone to return no more” “passed”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oh! Tell Me of My Mother</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a time and place</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>“departed” “dreaming” “alone”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farewell Mother Dear</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweet Little Maid of the Mountain</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farewell Sweet Mother</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>A Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little Belle Blair</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Napoleon W. Gould, Esq</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nell and I</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a time and place</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>“heart will sigh for those days gone by”</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Penny for Your Thoughts!</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Thousand Miles from Home</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a time and place</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>“faded” “old times return to me”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little Jenny Dow</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>A Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Will Be True to Thee</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Type</td>
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<td>Performers</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Merry, Merry Month of May</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Quartet for Clark’s School Visitor</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Dream of My Mother and My Home</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a person and place -restorative</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>“gone”</td>
<td>185</td>
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<td>That’s What’s the Matter</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better Times Are Coming</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Slumber My Darling</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Merry Little Birds Are We</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>No One to Love</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>S. T. Gordon</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Home, No Home</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a place -reflective</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>209</td>
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<tr>
<td>Was My Brother in the Battle?</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>We Are Coming, Father Abraham, 300,000 More</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>President of the U.S.</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>S. T. Gordon</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>I’ll Be Home To-morrow</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Firth, Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Happy Hours at Home</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>-longing for a time -restorative</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>“dream”</td>
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<td>Gentle Lena Clare</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>S. T. Gordon</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>We’ve a Million in the Field</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Union Army</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>S. T. Gordon</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Beautiful Dreamer</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>-longing for a person -reflective</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Wm. A. Pond &amp; Co.</td>
<td>“sorrow”</td>
<td>237</td>
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<td>The Love I Bear to Thee</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Bb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Bury Me in the Morning, Mother</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Little Ella’s an Angel!</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn/ duet</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Willie’s Gone to Heaven</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>duet</td>
<td>Horace Waters</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>I’m Nothing But a Plain Old Soldier</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>F Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>I’d Be a Fairy</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Ab Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Bring My Brother Back to Me</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>George Cooper</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>war song</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oh! There’s No Such Girl as Mine</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>parlor</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Beautiful Shore</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Mrs. O. S. Mattkson</td>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn for Waters’ Golden Harp for Sunday School</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Oh! ’Tis Glorious!</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Rev. Edwin H. Nevin</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn for Waters’ Golden Harp for Sunday School</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Tears Bring Thoughts of Heaven</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn for Waters’ Golden Harp for Sunday School</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leave Me with My Mother</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>call/response</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn for Waters’ Golden Harp for Sunday School</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>He Leadeth Me beside Still Waters</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Joseph H. Gilmore</td>
<td>C Maj</td>
<td>verse/refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn for Waters’ Golden Harp for Sunday School</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>Eb Maj</td>
<td>strophic</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Seek and Ye Shall Find</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>G Maj</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>hymn for Waters’ Golden Harp for Sunday School (duet w/ accomp.)</td>
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<td>We’ll All Meet Our Savior</td>
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<td>We’ll Still Keep Marching On</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Mrs. M. A. Kidder</td>
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<td>S. C. Foster</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>While the Bowl Goes Round</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>George Cooper</td>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
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<td>George Cooper</td>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Son &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>Firth, Son &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>1863</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>verse/ refrain</td>
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<td>-longing for a person-restorative</td>
<td>John J. Daly</td>
<td>“gone” “sigh” II: 296</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>S. T. Gordon</td>
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<td>1863</td>
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<td>Bb</td>
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<td>Eb</td>
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<td>-longing for a person-restorative</td>
<td>Wm. A. Pond &amp; Co.</td>
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<td>F Maj</td>
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<td>verse/refrain</td>
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<td>My Wife Is a Most Knowing Woman</td>
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<td>strophic</td>
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<td>Oh! Why Am I So Happy?</td>
<td>George Cooper</td>
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<td>F Maj</td>
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<td>The Song of all Songs</td>
<td>John F. Poole?</td>
<td>1863</td>
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<td>The Pure, The Bright, The Beautiful</td>
<td>Charles Dickens</td>
<td>1863</td>
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<td>We’ll Tune Our Hearts</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Tell Me of Thee Angels, Mother</td>
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<td>What Shall the Harvest Be?</td>
<td>Emily Sullivan Oakey</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Don’t Be Idle</td>
<td>Mrs. M. A. Kidder</td>
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<td>J. C.</td>
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<td>Dr. Duffy</td>
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<td>J. Frank Austen, Esq.</td>
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