

But Rous' work was altered in many places by the argumentative English legislative bodies and by his own assemblies in Scotland. But in 1650 the much adjusted work became the official Scottish Psalter...a position it would hold for nearly 300 years.

- c. It was the only official work...a composite creation and carried in it 14 meters for tune setting (I think). But while it held the fort a great battle was waged on the adequacy of the character of the music.

4. The Music Problems...some of 'em at least.

- a. The tune situation was difficult. Many secular tunes were adjusted, some poorly, for worship. Many complex tunes existed. Without instruments the tunes were learned by ear and that depended often on the abilities of the song leader.
- b. The quest for new, simple and common tunes was large but the readiness to accept these was small in most cases.
- c. The role of the precenter. This person was what we would call a song leader although his role was somewhat larger. He was often the official Scripture reader and at times an assistant minister to the congregation. His "job" involved the following at least:

- selecting and setting a tune for the Psalm to be sung.... announcing this tune to the congregation and establishing the proper pitch.

- lining out the Psalm (I will elaborate)

- gracing the Psalm (not always, but often)

In time this role matured and when the choirs came some precenters became famous music leaders. But for much of this time the office was one of great variety!

- d. Only 12 tunes were used --officially --all in the common meter. You can see how monotonous this could make a service. All the songs sung might be sung to the same tune!
- e. Acceptable practice verses...a custom we can hardly comprehend... but the actual Psalms could not be sung for the process of "learning" the tunes...make-up words of other source material was required. I think the ideas of this probably filtered into many a worshipper's singing mind.

As with most things, time resolved many of the problems. I will relate how in a few cases. And the music sensitivity of the members developed. The choirs worked to improve music order and works such as Thomas Moore's THE PSALM SINGER'S POCKET COMPANION were a great help. The objection to part singing passed and in some quarters the objection to instrumental music. With these objections partially quashed the need for printed music and words and greater precision with both increased and so did the quality of the performances.